

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative

Workshop Primer

A Comprehensive Community-Building Response
to the Challenges of Our Times

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The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative

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Foreword

The IPCR Initiative is dedicated to assisting fellow human beings, wherever they may be, who are also trying to fill in the blank in the statement below:

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

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The IPCR Workshop Primer

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Section 1

Introduction

This IPCR Workshop Primer provides an introduction to The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative.

There is much that can be done to generate goodwill and promote peace that has not yet been done. There are countless numbers of "things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives" which will contribute to peacebuilding and community revitalization efforts, in their own communities and regions— and in other parts of the world. Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. This writer understands that many people may like the concept of Community Visioning Initiatives—which is a key concept of The IPCR Initiative, and which is brought forward in many ways in this "IPCR Workshop Primer"—but may also find it difficult to imagine how such a concept could be translated into an actual community building process. "The IPCR Workshop Primer" is an effort to provide many pieces of a "big picture" view in one place, so that there is both understanding of why there is a need for Community Visioning Initiatives, Community Teaching and Learning Centers, and a variety of affordable workshops at the local community and neighborhood level—and understanding of the kind of tools and resources which can help make such community building processes most effective, and relevant to the greater good of the whole.

There will be people who are inclined, regardless of the difficulties and urgencies of trying to resolve multiple crises, to focus their attention on trying to make money by preying on people's fears and misunderstandings, or on trying to encourage people to set aside their higher aspirations, and indulge in destructive behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community.

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets which supply the "ways of earning a living". All of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges in the months and years ahead. We need our public discourse to be as honest, responsible, and transparent as possible, so we can identify, nurture, support, and sustain ways to build a collective force greater than the challenges we are now facing. True confidence is never really built up by merely convincing a majority of the people involved that they *believe* the markets are based on sound and practical principles; true confidence is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing. The tools and resources of The IPCR Initiative can inspire, support, and integrate many different initiatives at the same time, and thus create "constellations" of initiatives which can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region—and which can contribute much to the building of "close-knit" communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance. This writer believes that there are countless number of “things” people—in all parts of the world—can do to remedy that deficiency.

We—collectively—can become a greater force than the challenges we are now facing.

Section 2

The IPCR Initiative—Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature

The IPCR 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.

The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

The IPCR Initiative is a “constellation” of initiatives which provide a “trellis” for communities of people to “organically grow” towards their own collective definitions of “spiritual formation” and “right livelihood”.

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make, along the lines described by the four preceding paragraphs, are as follows:

- a) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of the “1000Communities²” proposal—so that Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
- b) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks”, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters) through workshops offered at the local community level (For an overview of these concepts, see the IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>)
- c) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- d) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- e) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 117 fields of related activity (see Appendix 1—Part A) and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local

community and regional model projects, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)

f) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in Appendix 1—Part B (“Starting Point Links for Learning About 113 Related Fields of Activity”)

—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

Section 3

An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times

Introduction

Included in this section is a short summary list which this writer uses as a more concise “risk assessment”, and a longer “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”. Some detailed Evidence relating to the risk assessment items is included in the “Notes and Source References” section at the end of this section.]

Special Commentary: Community Visioning Initiatives Can Help Build Consensus

In this particular section of the proposal, some of the evidence which has formed this writers’ views about the challenges of our times will be brought forward. This evidence is associated with issues that require some sifting of very complex information, which by its nature must be considered incomplete at best. Therefore, what is provided here is simply offered as starting points for readers who have not yet explored these issues in depth—and as an indication of the kind of sources this writer regards as trustworthy and service-oriented. (“...words that come from the depth of experience have the ring of sincerity that convinces.”¹) This writer recognizes that a significant degree of consensus may be needed to resolve the most complex challenges. *That is one of the reasons why he is advocating the use of Community Visioning Initiatives.*

The Short Summary List

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. These challenges include, but are not limited to:

- 1) global warming and reducing carbon emissions²
- 2) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products³
- 3) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death⁴
- 4) an increasing world population⁵ requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce⁷ (*with a special emphasis on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services indiscriminately*⁶)
- 5) the trend towards urbanization⁷ (half the world’s population now live in cities, and there are now more than 400 cities with a population of 1 million or more) is creating human settlements which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures just when there is a need to minimize our impact on ecosystems due to global warming and widespread resource depletion⁸

- 6) cultures of greed, corruption, and overindulgence have caused a crises of confidence in financial markets, and are in many ways slowing the restructuring of investment priorities needed to respond to the challenges listed here (and other challenges)⁹
- 7) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.¹⁰

A Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times

Note: The IPCR Initiative is aware that there are many very difficult issues which could be defined as “the most difficult challenges of our times”. By even making a list at all, The IPCR Initiative is not suggesting it can offer a definitive assessment.

The purpose of the designations made in the following ten point summary is

- a) to help other people appreciate how becoming involved in a comprehensive assessment of the challenges of our times can be useful for re-framing public discourse
- b) to help other people appreciate that these issues “pervade our globe; ... are complex due to the interdependent nature of all modern nation-states; (and) are all interwoven, making it difficult, if not impossible, to deal with one in isolation from the others....”¹¹
- c) to illustrate how The IPCR Initiative can contribute to the resolution of even the most profound challenges of our times.

The ten point assessment:

1. Community building associated with energy descent (see Challenges #4, 5, and 6) (as a result of either wise decisions, key supply shortages, or lack of other options) may or may not be accompanied by an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings. *Without such an exponential increase*, an increase in the need for emergency assistance to people with basic human needs [as a result of migrations from areas where carrying capacity has been exceeded (areas such as mega-cities), for example (see Challenge #8)] may coincide with a decrease in our capacity to respond to such emergencies

2. “Cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence which have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable⁹

3. The source of threats—whether perceived or real—to the identities and/or cherished meanings of many communities of people is too often linked to religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions; and such threats too often result in conflicts which cast a shadow of negative associations onto such traditions. These negative associations have caused many people to disassociate from the religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions linked to such threats; and have accumulated to such a degree that the real treasured wisdom of many such traditions now seems as if it is hidden—or remains undiscovered. This is unfortunate—as such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services

- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

[**Very Important:** Footnote #12 has further commentary on this “difficult challenge”.]

4. 5. and 6. Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming, the end of the era of cheap oil (“peak oil”), and widespread resource depletion and extinction (the “Triple Crises”)

Consider the following references (with additional corroborating quotes) to preconference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the “Triple Crisis,” the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- a) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming (“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.”²)
- b) The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”) (“The human community’s central task for the coming decades must be the undoing of its dependence on oil, coal, and natural gas in order to deal with the twin crises of resource depletion and climate chaos.”³)
- c) The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.⁸

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”¹³

7. The increasing world population⁵ and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion⁷ (with special focus on *the increasing number of people* who are consuming material goods and ecological resources *indiscriminately*⁶)

8. Current trends indicate that we are creating more and more “urban agglomerations” (cities with a population of more than 1 million people)⁷, which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures, where it is more and more difficult to trace the consequences of our individuals investments of time, energy, and money—and which are the least appropriate models when it comes to implementing resolutions to many of the other challenges included in this list. (Note: “Response nodes”

for emergency assistance, and centers for regional and international exchange of “weak link” materials do not require a mega-city infrastructure base)

9. Any shortages of goodwill in times of unprecedented transition could tilt already precarious systems into further disarray—and thus erode established systems in even the most stable communities and regions

10. Sorting out what are real challenges and what are sound and practical solutions is becoming more and more difficult, as there is now, in many parts of the world, a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time.

Additional Note: Section 5 (“Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”) and Appendix 2—Part A (“The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”) are “stand by themselves” documents which include the most recent evidence (also cited here) relating to what the IPCR Initiative identifies as the most difficult challenges of our times. Another IPCR document, not included in this 2010 version of the “IPCR Workshop Primer” because it was last updated in 2007, does include some commentary worth exploring. That document is titled “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”, and is accessible on the IPCR website homepage (at www.ipcri.net).

Follow-up Points, and Commentary

Two of the questions included in Section 10 “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions (in Preparing for Community Visioning Initiatives)” are

6. Most Difficult Challenges, Most Valuable Resources

(Included on pages 5-7 of this “IPCR Workshop Primer) is a “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”. Consider that “Ten Point...” list provided as one example of a response to part a) of this question. Then, following your own independent thinking on this important subject, please respond as best you can to the following questions.

- a) From your point of view, what are the most difficult challenges of our times?
- b) Do you believe that we—collectively—have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges you have identified as the most difficult challenges of our times?
- c) If your answer to Question #2 is yes, please describe the resources you believe will contribute the most to helping us—collectively—overcome the challenges you identified.
- d) If your answer to Question #2 is no, please offer any and all sincere, constructive, relevant, and practical suggestions for what we— collectively—can do to inspire, encourage, and/or create the resources you believe *would be necessary* to overcome the challenges you identified.

9. Identifying Experienced Practitioners, Stakeholders, and People Needing Assistance

Consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which you created as a response to question #6 part a).

a) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the ten challenges you identified?

(Special Notes: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community. Also, please be straightforward and honest: if you do not know who would be most qualified to respond, please respond accordingly.)

b) Who are the Stakeholders (the people who will be affected by the education provided and guidance given by the Experienced Practitioners)?

c) Who are the People Needing Assistance (the people who do not know how to respond to the challenges you identified)?

This writer's response to the first question (Question #6) is that One of the most significant consequences of carrying out any kind of Community Visioning Initiative which requires participants to become involved in a comprehensive assessment of the challenges of our times, is its potential to re-frame public discourse. The "Notes and Source References" part of this section, in Section 5, and in Appendix 2—Part A ("The Twilight of One Era...")—and additional references in the "1000Communities²" document (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>), and the document "An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times" (last revised August-September, 2007)(at <http://ipcri.net/images/3-Assessment-of-Most-Difficult-Challenges.pdf>), will provide the reader with examples of the sources which this writer considers trustworthy and reliable.¹

[Very Important: Note #1 in the "Notes and Source References" part of this Section 3 (at the end of the section, includes commentary on how this writer assesses sources, and decides that a source has a high probability of being trustworthy and reliable.)

This writer's brief commentary on the second question above (Question #9) is that he believes the relatively small number of "Experienced Practitioners" who see the "big picture" of difficult challenges described below, and have experience successfully responding to those challenges needs to be increased very quickly, and the vast multitudes of people who do not know how to respond to the challenges listed below needs to be decreased very quickly.

[Additional Note: Section 5 ("Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts") and Appendix 2—Part A ("The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another") are "stand by themselves" documents which include the most recent evidence (also cited here) relating to what the IPCR Initiative identifies as the most difficult challenges of our times. Another IPCR document, not included in this 2010 version of the "IPCR Workshop Primer" because it was last updated in 2007, does include some commentary worth exploring. That document is titled "An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times", and is accessible on the IPCR website homepage (at www.ipcri.net).]

Concluding Comments (Section 3 “Assessment”)

One approach this writer uses (see IPCR website homepage) to summarize the kind of comprehensive response needed to the above mentioned challenges is as follows:

There is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—to be

- 1) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- 2) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy” which are now accessible to us.

Fortunately, there is much potential which could be translated into a positive outcome. Another way of saying this is: *at no other time in the course of history have so many people had access to so much along the lines of resources necessary to overcoming the challenges of their times.*

We have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

The IPCR Initiative is dedicated to assisting fellow human beings, wherever they may be, who are also trying to fill in the blank in the statement below:

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

Notes and Source References (for Section 3 “Assessment”)

1. Special Note on Sources of Information:

In this “Assessment” section, some of the evidence which has formed this writers’ views about the challenges of our times will be brought forward. This evidence is associated with issues that require some sifting of very complex information, which by its nature must be considered incomplete at best. Therefore, what is provided as evidence is simply offered as starting points for readers who have not yet explored these issues in depth—and as an indication of the kind of sources this writer regards as trustworthy and reliable.

One important question, considered very carefully by this writer when evaluating information on the Internet, is: “Why is this source providing this information?” This writer is inclined to regard information as trustworthy and reliable a) if the source of the information has been working for a long time in their field of activity b) if the source of the information is highly regarded in their field of activity and c) if the source of the information is clearly trying to respectfully provide good service to their fellow human beings, and contribute to the greater good of the whole.

There are sources of information which are clearly trying to persuade people to support a particular agenda, without encouraging them to arrive at an independent assessment, without suggesting that the issue is complex and may require some time arrive at an independent assessment. And there are people who use irresponsible and disrespectful language in ways which do not suggest that their motive is to respectfully provide good service to their fellow human beings, and contribute to the greater good of the whole. This writer recognizes that a significant degree of consensus may be needed to resolve the complex challenges ahead. (Somehow or other, we need to sort through all this, and we need to do so in a way that helps us to realize how much we need to be learning so that we can be part of the solutions... and how much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other.) The need to be one the same side helping each other is one of the reasons why he is advocating the use of Community Visioning Initiatives. In all IPCR documents relating to Community Visioning Initiatives, residents are being encouraged to participate in as many ways as possible—and to help and support others who are making sincere efforts to contribute to the process. Are we up to the challenge? (For more on this discussion, see Footnote #4).

2. Here are four references to the urgency of mitigating global warming, with the footnoted quote coming from a):

a) From TimesOnline article “Global warming must stay below 2C or world faces ruin, scientists declare” on May 28, 2009 (see <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6380709.ece>) (confirmed October 21, 2009) [references document “The St James Palace Memorandum” from Symposium “Action for a Low Carbon and Equitable Future” London, UK, 26 – 28 May 2009) (for that document, see http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/pdfs/sjp_memorandum_290509.pdf) (confirmed October 21, 2009)]

(Excerpts from the news article at TimesOnline) (see paragraphs 1-4)

“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.

“The United Nations climate summit in Copenhagen in December must agree to halve greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050 to stop temperatures from increasing by more than 2C (3.6F), the St James’s Palace Nobel Laureate Symposium concluded.

“While even a 2C temperature rise will have adverse consequences, a bigger increase would create ‘unmanageable climate risks’, according to the St James’s Palace memorandum, signed today by 20 Nobel laureates in physics, chemistry, economics, peace and literature.

“The temperature target “can only be achieved with a peak of global emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2015”, the document said. If emissions continue to rise after that date, the required cuts would become unachievable.”

(Excerpts from the actual “St. James Palace Memorandum”) (see paragraphs 1, 4—and last paragraph)

“The robust scientific process, by which this evidence has been gathered, should be used as a clear mandate to accelerate the actions that need to be taken. Political leaders cannot possibly ask for a more robust, evidence-based call for action.”

“Leadership is primarily required from developed countries, acknowledging their historical responsibility as well as their financial and technological capacity. However, all countries will need to implement low carbon development strategies. *In this spirit of trust, every country must act on the firm assumption that all others will also act.*”

“All scientists should be urged to contribute to raising levels of public knowledge on these threats to civilization and engage in a massive education effort to popularize the principles in this Memorandum.”

b) From the “UN Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World” Director and Lead Author: Kevin Watkins Published for the United Nations Development Program Released November 27, 2007 In “Summary” of Complete Report (see http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_summary_english.pdf for free download) On p. 19, in section “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change: Strategies for Mitigation” paragraph 1 (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Avoiding the unprecedented threats posed by dangerous climate change will require an unparalleled collective exercise in international cooperation.”

c) From Lester Brown’s “Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization” Published by Earth Policy Institute 2008 (See <http://www.earth-policy.org/Books/PB3/Contents.htm> for free download) From “Introduction”, in section “Plan B—A Plan of Hope” p. 20, paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Plan B is shaped by what is needed to save civilization, not by what may currently be considered politically feasible. Plan B does not fit within a particular discipline, sector, or set of assumptions. Implementing Plan B means undertaking several actions simultaneously, including eradicating poverty, stabilizing population, and restoring the earth’s natural systems. It also involves cutting carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2020, largely through a mobilization to raise energy efficiency and harness renewable sources of energy. Not only is the scale of this save our-civilization plan ambitious, so is the speed with which it must be implemented. We must move at wartime speed, restructuring the world energy economy at a pace reminiscent of the restructuring of the U.S. industrial economy in 1942 following the Japanese attack on Pear Harbor. The shift from producing cars to planes, tanks, and guns was accomplished within a matter of months.”

d) From the “About Focus the Nation” section of the “Focus the Nation” website (see <http://www.focusthenation.org/about>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Our 2008 Civic Engagement campaign organized 1900 climate change teach-ins on college campuses on Jan. 31, 2008, engaging 64 members of Congress in direct dialogue with youth activists during the height of the early presidential primaries. Between teach-ins and web-casts, we directly engaged more than 240,000 people in climate change educational forums. The teach-ins generated more than 900 press hits, including articles in TIME, Grist, New York Times, Newsweek, NPR, USA Today, MSNBC, Los Angeles Times and nearly every major daily from the Houston Chronicle to the Boston Globe.”

3. From Richard Heinberg’s Museletter #184 titled “A View from Oil’s Peak” (at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/museletter/184>) (from Richard Heinberg’s website at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/> [Note: Richard Heinberg is widely acknowledged as one of the world’s foremost Peak Oil educators. He is a journalist, educator, editor, lecturer, and a Core Faculty member of New College of California, where collaborative efforts between faculty, students, and a variety of other “stakeholders” are creating models for “Powerdown” efforts at the regional and community level. Some of the books he has written: *The Party’s Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies*; *Powerdown*; *The Oil Depletion Protocol: A Plan to Avert Wars, Terrorism, and Economic Collapse*; and *Peak Everything: Waking Up to a Century of Declines*”]

Here also are some additional references and commentary regarding the subject of peak oil, and adaptations :

a) From the “Hirsch Report” [“The Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation and Risk Management”—Project Leader: Robert L. Hirsch (SAIC) Commissioned by the Department of Energy, and dated February, 2005] [Accessible at the website of Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)(USA) at www.bartlett.house.gov/EnergyUpdates/] (see <http://www.bartlett.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hirschreport.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

(in “Summary and Concluding Remarks”)

“Over the past century the development of the U.S. economy and lifestyle has been fundamentally shaped by the availability of abundant, low-cost oil. Oil scarcity and several-fold oil price increases due to world oil production peaking could have dramatic impacts.” (see Point #2: “Oil Peaking Could Cost the U.S. Economy Dearly”, p. 64)

“The world has never faced a problem like this. Without massive mitigation more than a decade before the fact, the problem will be pervasive and will not be temporary.” (see Point #3: “Oil Peaking Presents a Unique Challenge”, p. 64)

(in “Executive Summary”)

“The peaking of world oil production presents the U.S. and the world with an unprecedented risk management problem. As peaking is approached, liquid fuel prices and price volatility will increase dramatically, and, without timely mitigation, the economic, social, and political costs will be unprecedented.” (see paragraph 1, p. 4)

“The challenge of oil peaking deserves immediate, serious attention, if risks are to be fully understood and mitigation begun on a timely basis.” (see point #2, p. 5)

b) From Dr. Fatih Birol (Chief Economist, International Energy Agency) Interview with Astrid Schneider (Internationale Politik) Posted at www.relocalize.net “News Postings” section on May 3, 2008 (accessible at http://www.relocalize.net/fatih_birol_interview_leave_oil_before_it_leaves_us) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

(Excerpt)

Schneider: If I understand you correctly, you say that the demand for oil could rise 3 % globally every year, while we have to expect a decrease of 4 % in oil production in the time from now until 2015. That would be 7 % each year which are missing.

Birol: The demand might increase a little slower. But there could be a large gap between what should be there and what actually will be there, especially if we do not put massive efforts into improving the efficiency of cars or change to other transportation systems. If we don't take measures on the consumer side, the consumption will continue to grow. And if we have not invested enough into oil production, we will flounder.

Schneider: But when you think of the life cycle of goods, of the long investment cycles of machines, power stations or air conditioning systems: do you think an adjustment of the consumer side to a lower supply path could be done that fast?

Birol: No, but I don't think that prices will go up that rapidly. We can see a gradual incline and that will give the people some time to adapt. But on the long run it has to be clear: if oil will be gone by 2030, or in 2040 or 2050 does not change much.

Schneider: You really say that?

Birol: Yes, one day it will definitely end. And I think we should leave oil before it leaves us. That should be our motto. So we should prepare for that day - through research and development on alternatives to oil, on which living standards we want to keep and what alternative ways we can find.”

c) From Interview with Sadad al Hussein—“The Facts Are There” by Dave Bowden and Steve Andrews (Note: Sadad al-Huseini was the former head of exploration and production at Saudi Aramco) (Archived at the Energy Bulletin website September 28, 2009; see <http://energybulletin.net/node/50234>) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

(Excerpt)

Question: Assume for the moment that declines in demand have flattened and that we resume modest growth in demand in a year or so. Are there adequate new oil projects in the pipeline to meet rising demand for a few more years?

Sadad: I've been tracking the number of projects, globally, for a long time both in the Middle East and elsewhere—Russia, Brazil, west coast of Africa, and others. A lot of this information is in the public domain, so there is no mystery there. The International Energy Agency recently reported on the same numbers. The bottom line is that there are not enough projects. There is not enough new capacity coming on line, within say the next five to six years, to make up for global declines. And that's assuming a very moderate level of declines—6% to 6.5% for non-OPEC, perhaps a 3.5% to 4% decline rate for OPEC.

Even at these modest decline rates, we are basically going to see a shortage of capacity within two to three years. We're being lulled by this current excess capacity, which has more to do with lower demand than anything to do with supply. So we do have a problem in the near term. In the longer term it's even worse because in the longer term the lead time to discover, develop and put on line production runs into 10 years. And there isn't enough being done in the long term as well. So it's both a short and a long-term problem....

Question: Why do you think there is so much denial that world oil production is approaching or has reached a plateau?

Sadad: There is a push-back to the notion that there is a plateau in world oil supplies which is largely based on lack of information or lack of research. In fact, if you look at published information—for example, British Petroleum's annual statistical report—it very clearly shows that from 2003 forward, oil production has hardly increased. So the information is there. If you look at some of the advertising that Chevron has been putting out for years now, they clearly say we're half-way through the world's reserves. The information is there. The facts are there. Oil prices did not jump four-fold over a three- or four-year period for any reason other than a shortage of supply. Yes, there may have been some recent volatility in 2008, but the price trend started climbing way back in 2002-2003. So, these are realities and the push-back is a sense that somehow the market is not able to deal with these realities, that somehow people can't cope with these realities.

On the other hand, if you don't talk about them, you never will fix the situation. This is not going to get any better. This is going to get worse because you have population growth all over the world, you have a standard of living that is improving all over the world, you have aspirations across the globe for a better quality of life, and people want energy, so it's actually important to talk about the facts and come up with solutions rather than act as if these issues don't exist and then wait for some solution to materialize out of nowhere. That's a role of government—to highlight these issues and to fix them, or at least take a stand and try to fix them. So I think the push-back is probably ill-advised."

d) From "Reflections from Colin Campbell on Peak Oil and ASPO" by Dave Bowden (On September 23, Dave Bowden video-taped Colin Campbell at his home on the southwestern coast of Ireland. Excerpts of that interview are attached below) (Note: Above referenced excerpts were archived at the Energy Bulletin website on October 19, 2009; see <http://www.energybulletin.net/node/50427>) [Note: "**Colin J. Campbell**, Ph.D. Oxford, (born in Berlin, Germany in 1931) is a retired British petroleum geologist who predicted that oil production would peak by 2007. The consequences of this are uncertain but drastic, due to the world's dependence on fossil fuels for the vast majority of its energy. His theories have received wide attention but are disputed by some in the oil industry and have not significantly changed governmental energy policies at this time.... Influential papers by Campbell include *The Coming Oil Crisis*,

written with Jean Laherrère in 1998 and credited with convincing the International Energy Agency of the coming peak; and *The End of Cheap Oil*, published the same year in *Scientific American*.... The Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas, founded by Campbell in 2000, has been gaining recognition in the recent years. The Association has organized yearly international conferences since 2002. The most recent was in Denver, Colorado on 11-13 October 2009.” (From Wikipedia entry for Colin J. Campbell; at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Campbell_\(geologist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Campbell_(geologist))) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

(Excerpt)

“Question: What about the notion of making America energy independent?

Campbell: It can’t be done voluntarily. To make America energy-independent is not something I think any government can achieve. But within 50 years that’s what nature will deliver. Countries will have to be energy independent. They have no alternative. Some may get there quicker than others, but it’s not something some government will say, well this is our plan of action. It will be delivered to them by the force of nature. So America will indeed be energy independent and probably quite soon if these imports dry out. What that means and how they react to such a situation is another day’s work.”

e) Less and less availability of cheap oil will directly impact much more of the infrastructure of modern industrial society than most of us can easily imagine. (For some examples, see “The Oil Crash and You” by Bruce Thomson at www.oilcrash.com/roe.htm Note: Bruce Thomson is a technical writer in New Zealand, and moderator of the RunningonEmpty2 Internet Discussion Forum, which assisted in creating the document.)

f) As to the adaptations we—collectively—must make to live in much less energy intensive human settlements in the future, here (below) are four summary statements which may be helpful indicators of steps towards sustainable human settlements:

i) From an article titled “The Green New Deal” by Richard Heinberg, published on the website of Energy Bulletin on October 20, 2008 (at <http://energybulletin.net/node/46934>) (see paragraph 3) (Confirmed October 20, 2009) (Initially published on October 20, 2008 by Post Carbon Institute).

“Peak Oil and Climate Change present threats and imperatives of a scale unprecedented in human history. By taking up these imperatives through a de-carbonized retrofit of the nation’s (and ultimately the world’s) transport, food, and manufacturing systems, policy makers can address a number of crises simultaneously—environmental decline, resource depletion, geopolitical competition for control of energy, unemployment, balance of trade deficits, malnutrition and food related health problems, and more.”

ii) From the FAONewsroom section of The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website. In the “Focus on the Issues” subsection, see “High-level conference on world food security...”, and then see “Conference News” (6/6/2008). Specific article “Food Summit Calls for More Investment in Agriculture” (paragraphs 1, and 9) (at <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2008/1000856/index.html>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The Summit on soaring food prices, convened by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (June 3-5, 2008), has concluded with the adoption by acclamation of a declaration calling

on the international community to increase assistance for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices.

...“On climate change, the Declaration said: ‘It is essential to address (the) question of how to increase the resilience of present food production systems to challenges posed by climate change... We urge governments to assign appropriate priority to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, in order to create opportunities to enable the world’s smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people, in particular vulnerable areas, to participate in, and benefit from financial mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, mitigation and technology development, transfer and dissemination. We support the establishment of agricultural systems and sustainable management practices that positively contribute to the mitigation of climate change and ecological balance.’”

iii) From pdf version of “The Food and Farming Transition: Toward a Post Carbon Food System” by Richard Heinberg and Michael Bromberg, Ph.D Post Carbon Institute 2009 (Available online at www.postcarbon.org/food) Excerpt from Section “Farm Work” (see p. 28-29) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“While the proportion of farmers that would be needed in the U.S. if the country were to become self-sufficient in food grown without fossil fuels is unknown (that would depend upon technologies used and diets adopted), it would undoubtedly be much larger than the current percentage. It is reasonable to expect that several million new farmers would be required—a number that is both unimaginable and unmanageable over the short term. These new farmers would have to include a broad mix of people, reflecting America’s increasing diversity. Already growing numbers of young adults are becoming organic or biodynamic farmers, and farmers’ markets and CSAs are springing up across the country (Figure 11). These tentative trends must be supported and encouraged. In addition to government policies that support sustainable farming systems based on smaller farming units, this will require:

Education: Universities and community colleges must quickly develop programs in smallscale ecological farming methods—programs that also include training in other skills that farmers will need, such as in marketing and formulating business plans. Apprenticeships and other forms of direct knowledge transfer will assist the transition. Gardening programs must be added to the curricula of all primary and secondary schools, especially in summer programs.

Financial Support: Since few if any farms are financially successful in their first few years, loans and grants will be needed to help farmers get started.

Community and Cultural Revitalization: Over the past decades American rural towns have seen too many of their young people flee first to distant colleges and then to cities. Farming communities must be interesting, attractive places if we expect people to inhabit them and children to want to stay there.”

iv) From the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see section F, number 9, p. 5 at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked....”

v) Further commentary by this writer, on the implications of resolving the “triple crises” of global warming, peak oil, and widespread resource depletion:

This writer understands peak oil in the following sense: the increasing awareness that the era of “cheap oil” is over is one element among many (including global warming, widespread resource depletion, ecological footprint analysis, etc.) which are pointing to the need for much less energy intensive human settlements in the future. As high level investment portfolios shift in response to these indicators, the likelihood that the vast sums of investment necessary to produce “very costly oil”—and the likelihood that there will be customers willing to pay a high price to use it—will very likely diminish, and continue to diminish, *as more and more people discover that it is possible to have high quality of life while using much less resources*. Thus, while there may yet be more oil on this planet than we have used thus far, it is becoming more and more likely that we have arrived at a “peak” in terms of how much oil we—collectively—will use in one year.

4. From “Hunger Facts: International/Facts and Figures on Health” section of the Bread for the World website (see <http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics/hunger-facts-international.html>) (see “Facts and Figures on Health” Bullets #3, #4, and #6) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“In 2006, about 9.7 million children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Almost all of these deaths occurred in developing countries...”

Most of these deaths are attributed, not to outright starvation, but to diseases that move in on vulnerable children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger. “

“The four most common childhood illnesses are diarrhea, acute respiratory illness, malaria and measles. Each of these illnesses is both preventable and treatable. Yet, poverty interferes in parents’ ability to access immunizations and medicines. Chronic undernourishment on top of insufficient treatment greatly increases a child’s risk of death.”

5. From www.infoplease.com at www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0883352.html ; and U.S. Bureau of the Census POP Clock estimate at www.census.gov/cgi-bin/ipc/popclockw) (Both confirmed on October 20, 2009)

“In 1804, the world population was 1 billion.

In 1927, the world population was 2 billion (123 years later).

In 1960, the world population was 3 billion (33 years later).

In 1974, the world population was 4 billion (14 years later).

In 1987, the world population was 5 billion (13 years later).

In 1999, the world population was 6 billion (12 years later).”

“As of October, 20, 2009 at 00:43 GMT (EST + 5), the world population was estimated to be 6,791,794,939.”

6. Here are three references which, taken in context with the “Triple Crises” (Points 4, 5, and 6) in the “Ten Point Assessment”, ought to be sufficient to suggest that there is such a thing as “indiscriminate” use of resources and ecological services:

a) From the “Online Features/Consumption/State of Consumption: Trends and Facts” section of the Worldwatch Institute website at <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/810> (see paragraphs 1 and 2) (Confirmed June 8, 2008)

“By virtually any measure—household expenditures, number of consumers, extraction of raw materials—consumption of goods and services has risen steadily in industrial nations for decades, and it is growing rapidly in many developing countries.”

“By one calculation, there are now more than 1.7 billion members of ‘the consumer class’—nearly half of them in the developing world. A lifestyle and culture that became common in Europe, North America, Japan, and a few other pockets of the world in the twentieth century is going global in the twenty-first.”

b) The following passages are excerpts from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach” by Art Silverblatt and Nikolai Zlobin (July, 2004) (most content accessible at Google Books)

“The United States is the home of the world’s largest and most influential advertising industry. As of 2001, 43% of the advertising produced in the world originated in the United States. Indeed, half of the top 100 global marketers—and six of the top ten—are U.S. companies.” (p. 228)

“The international market is saturated with American entertainment programming. Hollywood films account for approximately 85% of movie audiences worldwide. Further, American programming makes up approximately 65% of global prime-time TV viewing.” (p. 69)

c) From Press Release (August 13, 2002) “Londoners Running Up Massive Debt on Earth’s Resources” at www.citylimitslondon.com/city_limits_press_release.htm (see paragraphs 2, 6, and 8) (Confirmed June 8, 2008)

“The City Limits Report reveals each Londoner has an ecological footprint of 6.63 global hectares.... The current calculation for a sustainable footprint is 2.18 global hectares.”

“Paper and plastics are the biggest hitters in the material and wastes footprint. Paper’s large contribution is accounted for partly by the large quantities Londoners use, 2,908,000 tonnes (per year).... Londoners consume less plastic than paper—691,000 tonnes (per year)—but because it is derived from fossil fuel and very little is currently re-cycled, plastic makes up a large part of the average Londoner’s footprint.”

“Forty one per cent of the Ecological Footprint (2.80 gha) is accounted for by the food Londoners eat.... In total, London consumes 6.9 million tonnes of food (per year), more than three quarters of which is imported. London throws away 560,000 tonnes of food (per year) as waste.” [“London throws away 560,000 tonnes of food (per year) as waste.”]

7. From website of Population Reference Bureau-- see <http://www.prb.org/Educators/TeachersGuides/HumanPopulation/Urbanization.aspx>) (see paragraphs one and two) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“In 1800, only 3 percent of the world's population lived in urban areas.”

“By 1900, almost 14 percent were urbanites, although only 12 cities had 1 million or more inhabitants.”

“In 1950, 30% of the world’s population resided in urban centers. The number of cities with over 1 million people had grown to 83.”

“In 2008, for the first time, the world's population was evenly split between urban and rural areas. There were more than 400 cities over 1 million and 19 over 10 million.”

8. Here is one source which provides evidence of widespread resource depletion:

The “Millennium Ecosystem Assessment”

a) From Washington Post article “Report on Global Ecosystems Calls for Radical Changes: Earth’s sustainability not guaranteed unless action is taken to protect resources” (Shankar Vedantam, March 30, 2005 p. A02 (see <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A10966-2005Mar29.html>) (paragraphs 1, 2, and 4) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

“Many of the world's ecosystems are in danger and might not support future generations unless radical measures are implemented to protect and revive them, according to the most comprehensive analysis ever conducted of how the world's oceans, dry lands, forests and species interact and depend on one another.”

“The new report collates research from many specific locales to create the first global snapshot of ecosystems. More than 1,300 authors from 95 countries participated in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, whose results are being made public today by the United Nations and by several private and public organizations.”

“The effort brought together governments, civil society groups, industry and indigenous people over a four-year period to examine the social, economic and environmental aspects of ecosystems.”

b) From the “Overview of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment” at the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment website (see <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/article.aspx?id=58>) See section “What are the main findings of the MA?” (see 4 “bullet” summaries)

i) “Over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of time in human history, largely to meet rapidly growing demands for food, fresh water, timber, fiber and fuel. This has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on Earth.”

ii) “The changes that have been made to ecosystems have contributed to substantial net gains in human well-being and economic development, but these gains have been achieved at growing costs in the form of the degradation of many ecosystem services, increased risks of nonlinear changes, and the exacerbation of poverty for some groups of people. These problems, unless addressed, will substantially diminish the benefits that future generations obtain from ecosystems. “

iii) “The degradation of ecosystem services could grow significantly worse during the first half of this century and is a barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.”

iv) “The challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystem while meeting increasing demands for services can be partially met under some scenarios considered by the MA, but will involve significant changes in policies, institutions and practices that are not currently under way....”

9. From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”

10. Some statistics associated with “cultures” of violence

a) From “Table on World and Regional Military Expenditures 1988-2007” in “Sipri Data on Military Expenditure” section of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute website (http://archives.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_wnr_table.html) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“According to an estimate by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, world military expenditures for the years 1997-2007 totaled 10.791 trillion dollars (\$10,791,000,000,000) (10,791 billion dollars).

b) From “Crime in the United States” section of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation website, (using the “Quick Finds” subsection at the bottom of the page, for the question “Where can I find the number of estimated violent and property crimes for the Nation over the past twenty years?”) (at http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table_01.html) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

According to FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) statistics, in a Table titled “Crime in the United States: by volume and rate per 100,000 inhabitants”-- there were an average of 16,757 deaths by murder or non-negligent manslaughter per year in the United States, during the years 1996-2005.”

c) From the “Publications” section of the Small Arms Survey website, in the subsection “Small Arms Survey 2003”, (in “About the Small Arms Survey 2003, see “Key Findings” box) (at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/sas/publications/year_b_pdf/2003/2003SAS_press-release_yb03_en.pdf) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“There are at least 639 million firearms in the world today, of which 59% are legally held by citizens.”

“At least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspect of the production of small arms and/or ammunition.”

d) From the “Publications” section of the Small Arms Survey website, in the subsection “Small Arms Survey 2007: Guns and the City” (in “About the Small Arms Survey 2007, under “Key Findings”, in “section “Guns and the City”) (at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/sas/publications/year_b_pdf/2007/2007SAS_English_press_kit/2007SAS_cover%20sheet_en.pdf) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“• Large-scale and uncontrolled urbanization appears to be associated with increased rates of armed violence.

• Rapid urbanization is generally coupled with decreasing levels of public safety, posing serious challenges to the provision of security and justice.”

e) From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”

11. From John D. Haas “Future Studies in K-12 Curriculum” Social Science Educational Consortium 1988 (page number not retrieved)

12. Many people may think it is naïve to imagine that people from so many diverse religious, spiritual, moral, and cultural traditions can decide to come together in such a way as to not only encourage, but participate in, a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in response to the difficult challenges ahead. From this writer’s point of view, such skepticism and cynicism depend for their existence on doubts as to whether it is possible for people to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion through genuine instruction and sincere effort. Thus it is that there is a great responsibility on those who are in any way representatives of religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions: “... the responsibility of demonstrating by your calmness, composure, humility, purity, virtue, courage and conviction under all circumstances, that the Sadhana (spiritual discipline or systematic learning process) you practice has made you a better, happier and more useful person.” (quote from “Divine Intervention...” document, p. 27)(“Sathya Sai Speaks” 7.17 p89)

13. From pre-conference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies [From Teach-In Flyer and Draft Program at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf (see p. 2)] (confirmed December, 25, 2009)

Section 4

The IPCR Mission Statement

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative is an effort to facilitate the practical application of the Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—at the community and regional level—as a way of contributing to the following goals:

- 1) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- 2) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions. etc.
- 3) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- 4) increasing our capacity to be responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money
- 5) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil
- 6) increasing our awareness of the countless number of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- 7) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- 8) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- 9) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence
- 10) creating local community and regional publications that provide a format for sharing the good news which would be identified, encouraged, supported, and sustained by contributions to the first 9 goals

Section 5

Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts

The Eight IPCR Concepts are:

- “Community Good News Networks”
- “Community Faith Mentoring Networks”
- “Spiritual Friendships”
- “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”
- “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace”
- “Spiritually Responsible Investing”
- “Ecological Sustainability”
- “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

Special Note: In addition to the brief descriptions of the Eight IPCR Concepts, a summary statement, three related fields of activity (from a list of “117 Related Fields of Activity”, see Appendix 1—Part B), and one sample question (from various IPCR documents) are included with each IPCR concept, as examples of starting points for workshop discussion.

Here are brief descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts (and their associated summary statements, three related fields of activity, and one sample question).

1. “Community Good News Networks”

“Community Good News Networks” is a name for participation by local community residents in an ongoing process of actively discovering, sharing, encouraging, and creating good news, for the purpose of “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

One way to begin creating “Community Good News Networks” is as follows: ongoing intergenerational programs—programs that bring together elders of the community with young people (ages 5-18) of the community—are created at appropriate meeting places such as local places of worship. Such intergenerational programs would include the following activities: 1) collecting and sharing good news articles, stories, etc., and making contributions to “Good News Reference Resources,” specific to local communities and regions 2) sending notecards of gratitude and encouragement—and invitations to visit—to people who are making good news in the local community or region 3) inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers” from the local community or region.

As more and more good news is discovered, shared, and created, participants can give special attention to identifying the “good news makers” who live near their specific meeting place. A local “Community Faith Mentoring Network” could then be established to facilitate matching people of all ages with “faith mentors” in their local community.

Summary Statement: Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

Related Fields of Activity—intergenerational projects, positive news, solutions journalism

Example Question for Discussion:

When future generations look back into the past for examples of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability, what do you hope they will find?

a) What individuals, organizations, or institutions will such future generations rely upon to provide records of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts of the past—especially peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts at the local community and regional level?

2. “Community Faith Mentoring Networks”

A “Faith Mentor” can be defined as “a person, who by word, action, and presence, models a meaningful lifestyle, clarifies important life issues, and provides guidance for deepening spirituality in a caring and accepting environment.”¹

Do most of us believe that we already have a “faith mentor” in our lives, and are progressing, consciously and deliberately, towards the full realization of our spiritual potential? Those of us who have had a “faith mentor” in our lives, or have one now, know how much of a difference such a person has made in our lives... surely, we can then sympathize with others who would like to have such a person in their lives, but do not.

While the development of a faith mentoring relationship often takes place within a particular faith community, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks” would be a partnership among many different places of worship and faith traditions, for the purpose of 1) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc. and 2) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions.

Applied at the local community and regional level, “Community Good News Networks” and “Community Faith Mentoring Networks” can create ongoing opportunities for people of one particular faith community or cultural tradition to experience the highest ideals of all local community specific and regional specific faith communities and cultural traditions, as representatives of such ideals are better appreciated, more easily recognized—and more numerous— in the everyday circumstances of community life.

Summary Statement: We reap what we sow.

Related Fields of Activity—individual spiritual formation, inspiring role models, right livelihood

Example Question for Discussion:

Please complete the following sentence (in as many ways as you believe might be helpful to people who might read what you have written).

“If only there was a way to _____.”

3. “Spiritual Friendships”

Currently, the “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment,” mentioned in connection with the “faith mentor” definition, is most often achieved within the context of specific faith communities, and faith-oriented family environments. This “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment” can be deliberately accelerated by the cultivation of “Spiritual Friendships.”

One way of developing “Spiritual Friendships” is as follows... Within a particular faith community—or among people from different religious, spiritual, or moral traditions—small groups are formed which would include the following three elements: 1) Participants (at least most participants) declare an intention to take a specific step towards achieving a goal associated with their personal spiritual growth (By making such a declaration, participants will thereby be motivated to “do their homework” before the next meeting... that is, they will, by their desire to be true to their word—and by their desire to encourage the integrity of the process as a whole—feel some sense of urgency and responsibility about making an honest effort related to their declaration.) 2) All participants are provided with an opportunity, in a respectful and considerate small group environment, to speak about their efforts they made in the interval between meetings 3) Participants have the right to choose how they will benefit from the small group process (they can choose to speak about their efforts, or choose not to speak about them; they can seek feedback or encouragement, or prefer no response; they can remain silent and listen, etc.)

Summary Statement: “Spiritual Friendships” are relationships based on a sense of responsibility and accountability in association with the process of individual spiritual formation—and thus inspire, encourage, and support honest efforts associated with specific spiritual goals.

Related Fields of Activity—interfaith dialogue, spiritual discipline, building community

Example Question for Discussion:

For the question below, please check the box (or boxes) which best corresponds to the way you view the following statement:

“Most people making efforts to realize their spiritual potential need to live in caring communities, so that they can find support from association with kindred spirits.”

agree

agree in some way

have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances

disagree in
some ways

disagree

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

4. “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”

Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action.

Questionnaires and surveys as a community building tool can provide:

- 1) the beginnings of a database of questions that can help build caring communities
- 2) a starting point for creating preliminary surveys, as preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives (Example: Responses and summarized results from sending preliminary surveys to 150 key community leaders can provide a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities b) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the planned Community Visioning Initiative c) starting points for workshop topics at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”)
- 3) a focal point for community and individual self-examination [Example: “Quaker's often use what they call ‘queries’ as a focus for individual and collective meditation, consideration and prayer—(and for) guiding Quaker seekers in their search for greater love, truth, and insight into how to serve humanity and live lives that are consistent with their core values.”² (Two Quaker queries: “Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs, and in service to society?”³ “When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?”⁴)]
- 4) a way to evaluate a Community Visioning process, so that the most valuable learning experiences can be shared with other communities.

Here are some example questions which are designed to be helpful in building caring communities:

a) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

[I believe it and there is much evidence to support it; I believe it, and there is sufficient evidence to support it; I would like to believe it, but there isn’t enough evidence to support it; It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now; I don’t believe it, there is no evidence to support it]

b) From your point of view, what are the most difficult challenges of our times? Do you believe that we—collectively—have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges you have identified as the most difficult challenges of our times?

c) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the challenges you perceive as most threatening to peace and well-being around the world? (Note: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community).

d) Consider the following commentary on preparation for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative.... People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community. The question: please list at least 5 preventative measures which you believe would proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during the carrying out of a Community Visioning Initiative in your community.

e) The person who will help me the most is the person who will _____ .

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

Questionnaires can be created which will accumulate information, suggestions, etc. that can be of critical importance in resolving the above mentioned “irony”—and which can provide the above mentioned assistance to the process of organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives.

Summary Statement: Ongoing community and individual self-examination can encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during Community Visioning Initiatives—and help communities of people deliberately focus how they spend their time, energy and money so that these “investments” are consistent with their core values.

Related Fields of Activity—identifying problems and solutions, community self-awareness, building consensus

Example Question for Discussion:

Please check the box which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement:

There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it | I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it | I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it | It is difficult to believe it, with way things are going now | I don't believe it-- there is no evidence to support it |

5. “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace”

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving the challenges ahead will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

This writer also hopes that more and more people are also coming to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else. Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

We are in need of innovative and imaginative solutions.

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.⁵

Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. The more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives (the “Vision 2000” initiative mentioned above took 5 months) carry out a series of meetings which focus on five particular areas: identifying challenges, prioritizing challenges, identifying solutions, prioritizing solutions, and creating action plans. Combined with ongoing workshops and much formal and informal educational activity, these meetings, though only a part of the Visioning Initiative, may last 4-6 months. These more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

One of the main goals of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives is to maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.

In addition, the job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process (as it is described in the IPCR document “1000Communities²”) 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

Using a system as comprehensive as the Community Visioning process outlined in the “1000Communities²” document (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) to identify challenges, resources, solutions, and action plans will eventually, over the years, result in people approximating “a highest synthesis of truth and community”, *from their point of view. It is also highly likely that, because the stakes are high—and because for those communities of people who are sincere*

enough to carry out comprehensive and time-intensive Community Visioning Initiatives will gravitate towards outcomes which are honest, responsible, compassionate, and service-oriented—what they will discover as a highest synthesis will be of such a similar spiritual essence to other communities (which have carried out Community Visioning Initiatives of a similar nature) as to significantly increase the likelihood of kinship experiences between many diverse communities of people. Even if much disagreement remains about the nature of the challenges ahead, the potential associated with Community Visioning Initiatives can be actualized to such a degree that significant gains can be made in many fields of activity.

Summary Statement: Community Visioning Initiatives can help sort through information and commentary to identify local community specific priorities, and do so in a way that will help residents to realize how much they need to be learning so that they can be part of the solutions... and how much they really need to be on the same side, helping each other.

Related Fields of Activity-- identifying goals, building trust, developing civic skills

Example Question for Discussion:

Please consider this brief description of community visioning initiatives in general, and of Chattanooga “Vision 2000” [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] in particular.

Community visioning initiatives have, in the past, been used most often for the purpose of maximizing citizen participation in the planning and development phases of community revitalization efforts. Community visioning initiatives can be described as a series of community meetings designed to facilitate the process of brainstorming ideas, organizing the ideas into goals, prioritizing the goals, and identifying doable steps. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a visioning initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.⁵

Now consider the following statement:

“The mission of a community visioning initiative (in the area where I am a resident) should be to encourage 100% citizen involvement/participation in identifying, creating, and gathering together all ideas for collective effort that

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

and then, further, to organize these ideas into goals, identify doable steps associated with such goals... and then facilitate the development of a coalition of citizens with the necessary faith, resources, patience, and perseverance to work through the steps and realize the goals.”

Please fill in the blanks in the above statement.

6. “Spiritually Responsible Investing”

The way we “invest” our time, energy, and money has a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

As J.C. Kumarappa expresses it in his book “Why the Village Movement?”: “A buyer hardly realizes he owes any duties at all in his everyday transactions.”⁶ (And yet), “... every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it.... Hence it behooves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy.”⁷ But, as we ourselves well know, the task of inquiring into the moral or spiritual history of every article we buy (and, similarly, the task of inquiring into the consequences of our “investments” of time and energy) is becoming increasingly complex... and is, for most of us, simply beyond our capacity to accomplish.

This level of complexity in our everyday circumstances should not discourage us to the point of abdicating our roles as responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money—for that would only increase the distrust and violence we are, hopefully, trying to minimize. Instead, we can make it a priority to carefully channel our “investments” of time, energy, and money into activities which are in accordance with our spiritual convictions or core values (as indicated by a full disclosure of information, which is readily available)—and which are in accordance with circles of activity which are closer to the community we live in [“The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfil our obligations as trustees.”⁸]

As a way of encouraging new exploration into the concept of “Spiritually Responsible Investing”, here are three propositions, and one definition. [Note: The following propositions and definition were first offered in the IPCR document “Spiritually Responsible Investing: Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life” (March-April, 2007) (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Spiritually-Responsible-Investing-paper-for-FSSC.pdf>)]

The first proposition is: There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

The second proposition is: The ways we “invest” our time, energy, and money have a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

The third proposition is: The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

And the one definition: Spiritually Responsible Investing can be defined as investments of time, energy, and money which increase our capacity to integrate spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.”

An IPCR Journal/Newsletter can contribute to the careful channeling of our “investments” of time, energy, and money by serving as a “clearinghouse” for “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.”

“If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked...”⁹

“... (The) more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.”¹⁰

Summary Statement: Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living.”

Related Fields of Activity—village industries, alternative gifts, emergency humanitarian aid

Example Question for Discussion:

Consider keeping a record of all of your “investments” of time, energy, and money for one month. And then, after one month, make a list of what goals receive the most significant “investments” of time, energy, and money—and rank each most significant, next most significant, etc., using 1 as most significant, 2 as next most significant, and so on.

7. “Ecological Sustainability”

Consider: the increasing world population, and the increasing number of people who are consuming material goods and ecological services indiscriminately.¹¹ Evidence is accumulating which suggests that “(the) planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared.” A September, 2007 conference program is focusing on the “Triple Crisis,” a “convergence of three advancing conditions”¹²:

- a) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming; (“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.”¹³)
- b) The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”) (“The human community’s central task for the coming decades must be the undoing of its dependence on oil, coal, and natural gas in order to deal with the twin crises of resource depletion and climate chaos.”¹⁴)
- c) The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.¹⁵

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”¹⁶

“The energy invested in a particular thing, during its life from cradle to grave, is called the ‘embodied energy’ of that object. The amount of embodied energy that an item contains depends on the technology used to create it (the origin of materials inputs, how they were created and transported,

etc.), the nature of the production system, and the distance the item travels from inception to purchase.”¹⁷ “By supporting items and processes that have lower embodied energy, as well as the companies that produce them, consumers can significantly reduce society’s energy use.”¹⁸ “If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked....”¹⁹

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living.” More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before— and that there is an urgent need to restructure our economic systems and our education systems to respond to these challenges. Energy descent pathways, community visioning initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, sister community relationships, spiritually responsible investing, peacebuilding, reconciliation, relocalization, green job training, permaculture, community supported agriculture, local currencies, ecovillages, accountability indicators, and community revitalization are among the many practical and appropriate responses to the challenges of our times.

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil-fuel based economy back to a solar based economy (agriculture and forestry) will (require making best use of) the embodied energy we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes, and ideas.... It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”²⁰

Summary Statement: Many hands make much work light.

Related Fields of Activity—world population awareness, energy descent pathways, permaculture

Example Question for Discussion:

Consider what ways of earning a living you would identify as “right livelihood.”

Now imagine a local community resource guide relating to employment, apprenticeships, training, and volunteer opportunities association with “right livelihood.”

And further: imagine a committee commissioned to produce such a “right livelihood” resource guide.... And the individuals who make up the committee commissioned to produce such a resource guide....

- a) What background (qualifications, experiences, etc.) would you like such individuals to have?
- b) What local institutions would you consider most appropriate to commission such a resource guide, and oversee its production?

8. “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

A collective effort by even a small community, to apply the seven previously mentioned IPCR concepts, would easily identify, develop, and create enough—

“good news makers;” descriptions of inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers;” examples of questionnaires that help build caring communities; results at various stages of community visioning initiatives; examples of carefully channeling our “investments” of time, energy, and money; examples of how we determine the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; statistics associated with ecological footprint analysis; successful practices associated with building ecovillages; practical ways of applying the principles of permaculture; examples and descriptions associated with: energy descent pathways, relocalization projects; village support centers; village industries, cottage industries, and home industries; community supported agriculture and community supported manufacturing; community land trusts and co-housing projects; community revolving loans; ecological tipping points; fair trade practices; extended producer responsibility; barter networks and local currencies; energy farms; achieving zero waste; building civic skills and building community; inspiring role models; service-oriented initiatives; right livelihood employment listings; accountability indicators and statistics; model project case studies; apprenticeship programs; workshop and conference information; volunteer work; commentary; essays; letters to the editor; “community journal entries”; resource reviews; and, in general, “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....”

-- and links to other service-oriented organizations, initiatives, and projects—

to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter... and, by its very nature, such a publication would be an ongoing contribution to the goals of

- a) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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”
- b) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individuals spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc.
- c) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- d) increasing our capacity to be responsible “stewards” of our time, energy, and money
- e) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of ecological footprint analysis, global warming, and the “peaking” of oil production
- f) increasing our awareness of the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- g) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- h) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- i) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence.

Wouldn't you like the opportunity to discuss the contents of such a publication with your family, friends, neighbors, etc.?

Summary Statement: Each person must do his or her part, and trust that the others involved will do their part.

Related Fields of Activity—clearinghouse (of “things people can do...”), community journal “entries”, right livelihood employment listings

Example Question for Discussion:

Please check the boxes which best correspond to the way you view the following statement:

“There will be a noticeable increase in trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions (i.e. Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, etc.; Chinese, African, Hispanic, American, etc.) in the next 20 years.”

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| would actively
contribute to
making it happen | with some
assistance
it could happen | it would take
a lot of effort
make it happen | even with a lot
of effort it might
never happen | it will
never happen | would actively
prevent it
from happening |

Notes and Source References

1. Sondra Higgins Mattheia in “Faith Mentor: Mediating God’s Grace Through Interpersonal Relationships” Dissertation: Thesis (Ph.D) School of Theology at Claremont (CA) 1989 p. 61

2. From the “Quaker Queries” section of the “The Co-Intelligence Institute” website (see paragraph 1, at <http://www.co-intelligence.org/QuakerQueries.html>) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

3. The "Faith and Practice" of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting is the source for examples (see Section 5. para. 1 at <http://www.bym-rsf.org/queries.html>) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

4. From The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting "Faith and Practice" [Adopted 1955 (Revised 1972 and 1997)] (at the end of the Table of Contents, from section Queries- 205) (see Section 4. para. 4 at http://www.pym.org/publish/fnp/fnp11-pages_205_to_214.pdf) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

5. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

The statistical information associated with the “Chattanooga Vision 2000” process was also cited in the following source: a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts in the Boundary Crossers Case Study titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”; however, this overview is no longer accessible via the Internet (it was accessible for some time at the website of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, at the University of Maryland, College Park). Here is a list of other, shorter overviews of the “Vision 2000” process: a) Sustainable Communities Network Case Study “Chattanooga: A City Worth Watching” at http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/tennessee/TN_af_chattanooga.html) b) Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence “Best Practice: Chattanooga Venture/Community Vision” at http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chatt/chatt_8.html) c) Project for Public Spaces “The Chattanooga Riverpark: Transforming a City and its Economy” at http://www.pps.org/topics/success/success_chatanooga) d) the University of Michigan’s Community Economic Adjustment Program “A Civic Vignette: The Chattanooga Story” at <http://www.irlee.umich.edu/ceap/chattanooga.html>) (All confirmed December 25, 2009)

There are additional publications which briefly cite the above mentioned statistics, and which are accessible via the Internet. One example is “The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance... and why politics will never be the same” by Matt Leighninger Vanderbilt University Press 2006 p. 16 (accessible through google books at

http://books.google.com/books?id=m_ZF8JZydPQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+next+form+of+democracy&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

Special Note: In the above mentioned book “The Next Form of Democracy...”, author Matt Leighninger offers perspective on the astounding success of the Chattanooga “Vision 2000” process by including the following commentary: “Many other communities followed Chattanooga’s example, but many of them stumbled because they failed to keep citizen and community organizations involved in implementing the visions. If a vision did not include measurable benchmarks, and specific commitments by people and organizations, it stood little chance of becoming reality.” (p. 16) (And *this commentary was footnoted*, as a general reference to the book “Results That Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done” by Paul D. Epstein, et al. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006)

6. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 72 (Note: The edition this writer has includes the 1939 edition foreword by Mahatma Gandhi, and was printed on handmade paper in Rajchat, Kashi (India) in 1960).

Here also is some biographical information about J.C. Kumarappa:

“In 1935, the India National Congress formed the All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA) for the development of (the) rural economy (in India), with Gandhiji as President and Kumarappa as Secretary and Organiser. Between 1935-1939, Kumarappa established the AIVIA headquarters at Maganwadi, developed various experiments of rural technologies, and helped others to reorganize village industries all over the country. (At Maganwadi), he edited a monthly journal, ‘Gram Udyog Patrika,’ and wrote a book, ‘Why the Village Movement?’ for AIVIA.” [Note excerpted from “Brief Life Sketch of J.C. Kumarappa (1892-1960) at the website of the Kumarappa Institute of Gram Swaraj (KIGS) www.kigs.org (click on picture, and see paragraph 8)] (confirmed December 25, 2009)

7. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 72

8. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 79

9. From the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see Section F, Number 5, on p. 9, at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

10. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 73

11. Here are six related source references: one on the increasing world population, and five on the increase of “consumer culture”.

a) From www.infoplease.com at www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0883352.html ; and U.S. Bureau of the Census POP Clock estimate at www.census.gov/cgi-bin/ipc/popclockw)
(Both confirmed on October 20, 2009)

“In 1804, the world population was 1 billion.

In 1927, the world population was 2 billion (123 years later).

In 1960, the world population was 3 billion (33 years later).

In 1974, the world population was 4 billion (14 years later).

In 1987, the world population was 5 billion (13 years later).

In 1999, the world population was 6 billion (12 years later).”

“As of October, 20, 2009 at 00:43 GMT (EST + 5), the world population was estimated to be 6,791,794,939.”

b) From the “Online Features/Consumption/State of Consumption: Trends and Facts” section of the Worldwatch Institute website at <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/810>
(see paragraphs 1 and 2) (Confirmed June 8, 2008)

“By virtually any measure—household expenditures, number of consumers, extraction of raw materials—consumption of goods and services has risen steadily in industrial nations for decades, and it is growing rapidly in many developing countries.”

“By one calculation, there are now more than 1.7 billion members of ‘the consumer class’—nearly half of them in the developing world. A lifestyle and culture that became common in Europe, North America, Japan, and a few other pockets of the world in the twentieth century is going global in the twenty-first.”

c) From Press Release (August 13, 2002) “Londoners Running Up Massive Debt on Earth’s Resources” at www.citylimitslondon.com/city_limits_press_release.htm
(see paragraphs 2, 6, and 8) (Confirmed June 8, 2008)

“The City Limits Report reveals each Londoner has an ecological footprint of 6.63 global hectares.... The current calculation for a sustainable footprint is 2.18 global hectares.”

“Paper and plastics are the biggest hitters in the material and wastes footprint. Paper’s large contribution is accounted for partly by the large quantities Londoners use, 2,908,000 tonnes (per year).... Londoners consume less plastic than paper—691,000 tonnes (per year)—but because it is derived from fossil fuel and very little is currently re-cycled, plastic makes up a large part of the average Londoner’s footprint.”

“Forty one per cent of the Ecological Footprint (2.80 gha) is accounted for by the food Londoners eat.... In total, London consumes 6.9 million tones of food (per year), more than three quarters of which is imported. London throws away 560,000 tonnes of food (per year) as waste.”
[“London throws away 560,000 tonnes of food (per year) as waste.”]

d) The following passages are excerpts from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach” by Art Silverblatt and Nikolai Zlobin (July, 2004) (most content accessible at Google Books)

“The United States is the home of the world’s largest and most influential advertising industry. As of 2001, 43% of the advertising produced in the world originated in the United States. Indeed, half of the top 100 global marketers—and six of the top ten—are U.S. companies.” (p. 228)

“The international market is saturated with American entertainment programming. Hollywood films account for approximately 85% of movie audiences worldwide. Further, American programming makes up approximately 65% of global prime-time TV viewing.” (p. 69)

e) From pre-conference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies [From Teach-In Flyer and Draft Program at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf (see p. 2)] (confirmed December, 25, 2009)

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the ‘Triple Crisis,’ the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming;
- The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”);
- The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”

f) From the Worldwatch Institute’s “Letter to the New Education Secretary”

“OPINION: Letter to the New Education Secretary by Worldwatch Institute on December 19, 2008 (see <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5971>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Transforming our nation's economic, energy, and environmental systems to move toward a green economy will require a level of expertise, innovation, and cooperative effort unseen since the 1940s to meet the challenges involved.”

12. From pre-conference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies [From Teach-In Flyer and Draft Program at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf (see p. 2)] (confirmed December, 25, 2009)

13. Here are four references to the urgency of mitigating global warming, with the footnoted quote coming from a):

a) From TimesOnline article “Global warming must stay below 2C or world faces ruin, scientists declare” on May 28, 2009 (see <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6380709.ece>) (confirmed October 21, 2009) [references document “The St James Palace Memorandum” from Symposium “Action for a Low Carbon and Equitable Future” London, UK, 26 – 28 May 2009) (for that document, see http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/pdfs/sjp_memorandum_290509.pdf) (confirmed October 21, 2009)]

(Excerpts from the news article at TimesOnline) (see paragraphs 1-4)

“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.

“The United Nations climate summit in Copenhagen in December must agree to halve greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050 to stop temperatures from increasing by more than 2C (3.6F), the St James’s Palace Nobel Laureate Symposium concluded.

“While even a 2C temperature rise will have adverse consequences, a bigger increase would create ‘unmanageable climate risks’, according to the St James’s Palace memorandum, signed today by 20 Nobel laureates in physics, chemistry, economics, peace and literature.

“The temperature target “can only be achieved with a peak of global emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2015”, the document said. If emissions continue to rise after that date, the required cuts would become unachievable.”

(Excerpts from the actual “St. James Palace Memorandum”) (see paragraphs 1, 4—and last paragraph)

“The robust scientific process, by which this evidence has been gathered, should be used as a clear mandate to accelerate the actions that need to be taken. Political leaders cannot possibly ask for a more robust, evidence-based call for action.”

“Leadership is primarily required from developed countries, acknowledging their historical responsibility as well as their financial and technological capacity. However, all countries will need to implement low carbon development strategies. *In this spirit of trust, every country must act on the firm assumption that all others will also act.*”

“All scientists should be urged to contribute to raising levels of public knowledge on these threats to civilization and engage in a massive education effort to popularize the principles in this Memorandum.”

b) From the “UN Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World” Director and Lead Author: Kevin Watkins Published for the United Nations Development Program Released November 27, 2007 In “Summary” of Complete Report (see

http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_summary_english.pdf for free download) On p. 19, in section “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change: Strategies for Mitigation” paragraph 1 (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Avoiding the unprecedented threats posed by dangerous climate change will require an unparalleled collective exercise in international cooperation.”

c) From Lester Brown’s “Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization” Published by Earth Policy Institute 2008 (See <http://www.earth-policy.org/Books/PB3/Contents.htm> for free download) From “Introduction”, in section “Plan B—A Plan of Hope” p. 20, paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Plan B is shaped by what is needed to save civilization, not by what may currently be considered politically feasible. Plan B does not fit within a particular discipline, sector, or set of assumptions. Implementing Plan B means undertaking several actions simultaneously, including eradicating poverty, stabilizing population, and restoring the earth’s natural systems. It also involves cutting carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2020, largely through a mobilization to raise energy efficiency and harness renewable sources of energy. Not only is the scale of this save our-civilization plan ambitious, so is the speed with which it must be implemented. We must move at wartime speed, restructuring the world energy economy at a pace reminiscent of the restructuring of the U.S. industrial economy in 1942 following the Japanese attack on Pear Harbor. The shift from producing cars to planes, tanks, and guns was accomplished within a matter of months.”

d) From the “About Focus the Nation” section of the “Focus the Nation” website (see <http://www.focusthenation.org/about>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Our 2008 Civic Engagement campaign organized 1900 climate change teach-ins on college campuses on Jan. 31, 2008, engaging 64 members of Congress in direct dialogue with youth activists during the height of the early presidential primaries. Between teach-ins and web-casts, we directly engaged more than 240,000 people in climate change educational forums. The teach-ins generated more than 900 press hits, including articles in TIME, Grist, New York Times, Newsweek, NPR, USA Today, MSNBC, Los Angeles Times and nearly every major daily from the Houston Chronicle to the Boston Globe.”

14. From Richard Heinberg’s Museletter #184 titled “A View from Oil’s Peak” (at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/museletter/184>) (from Richard Heinberg’s website at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/> [Note: Richard Heinberg is widely acknowledged as one of the world’s foremost Peak Oil educators. He is a journalist, educator, editor, lecturer, and a Core Faculty member of New College of California, where collaborative efforts between faculty, students, and a variety of other “stakeholders” are creating models for “Powerdown” efforts at the regional and community level. Some of the books he has written: *The Party’s Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies*; *Powerdown*; *The Oil Depletion Protocol: A Plan to Avert Wars, Terrorism, and Economic Collapse*; and *Peak Everything: Waking Up to a Century of Declines*”]

Here also are some additional references and commentary regarding the subject of peak oil, and adaptations :

a) From the “Hirsch Report” [“The Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation and Risk Management”—Project Leader: Robert L. Hirsch (SAIC) Commissioned by the Department of Energy, and dated February, 2005] [Accessible at the website of Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)(USA) at www.bartlett.house.gov/EnergyUpdates/] (see <http://www.bartlett.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hirschreport.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

(in “Summary and Concluding Remarks”)

“Over the past century the development of the U.S. economy and lifestyle has been fundamentally shaped by the availability of abundant, low-cost oil. Oil scarcity and several-fold oil price increases due to world oil production peaking could have dramatic impacts.” (see Point #2: “Oil Peaking Could Cost the U.S. Economy Dearly”, p. 64)

“The world has never faced a problem like this. Without massive mitigation more than a decade before the fact, the problem will be pervasive and will not be temporary.” (see Point #3: “Oil Peaking Presents a Unique Challenge”, p. 64)

(in “Executive Summary”)

“The peaking of world oil production presents the U.S. and the world with an unprecedented risk management problem. As peaking is approached, liquid fuel prices and price volatility will increase dramatically, and, without timely mitigation, the economic, social, and political costs will be unprecedented.” (see paragraph 1, p. 4)

“The challenge of oil peaking deserves immediate, serious attention, if risks are to be fully understood and mitigation begun on a timely basis.” (see point #2, p. 5)

b) From Dr. Fatih Birol (Chief Economist, International Energy Agency) Interview with Astrid Schneider (Internationale Politik) Posted at www.relocalize.net “News Postings” section on May 3, 2008 (accessible at http://www.relocalize.net/fatih_birol_interview_leave_oil_before_it_leaves_us) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

(Excerpt)

Schneider: If I understand you correctly, you say that the demand for oil could rise 3 % globally every year, while we have to expect a decrease of 4 % in oil production in the time from now until 2015. That would be 7 % each year which are missing.

Birol: The demand might increase a little slower. But there could be a large gap between what should be there and what actually will be there, especially if we do not put massive efforts into improving the efficiency of cars or change to other transportation systems. If we don't take measures on the consumer side, the consumption will continue to grow. And if we have not invested enough into oil production, we will flounder.

Schneider: But when you think of the life cycle of goods, of the long investment cycles of machines, power stations or air conditioning systems: do you think an adjustment of the consumer side to a lower supply path could be done that fast?

Birol: No, but I don't think that prices will go up that rapidly. We can see a gradual incline and that will give the people some time to adapt. But on the long run it has to be clear: if oil will be gone by 2030, or in 2040 or 2050 does not change much.

Schneider: You really say that?

Biorl: Yes, one day it will definitely end. And I think we should leave oil before it leaves us. That should be our motto. So we should prepare for that day - through research and development on alternatives to oil, on which living standards we want to keep and what alternative ways we can find.

c) From Interview with Sadad al Hussein—"The Facts Are There" by Dave Bowden and Steve Andrews (Note: Sadad al-Huseini was the former head of exploration and production at Saudi Aramco) (Archived at the Energy Bulletin website September 28, 2009; see <http://energybulletin.net/node/50234>) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

(excerpt)

Question: Assume for the moment that declines in demand have flattened and that we resume modest growth in demand in a year or so. Are there adequate new oil projects in the pipeline to meet rising demand for a few more years?

Sadad: I've been tracking the number of projects, globally, for a long time both in the Middle East and elsewhere—Russia, Brazil, west coast of Africa, and others. A lot of this information is in the public domain, so there is no mystery there. The International Energy Agency recently reported on the same numbers. The bottom line is that there are not enough projects. There is not enough new capacity coming on line, within say the next five to six years, to make up for global declines. And that's assuming a very moderate level of declines—6% to 6.5% for non-OPEC, perhaps a 3.5% to 4% decline rate for OPEC.

Even at these modest decline rates, we are basically going to see a shortage of capacity within two to three years. We're being lulled by this current excess capacity, which has more to do with lower demand than anything to do with supply. So we do have a problem in the near term. In the longer term it's even worse because in the longer term the lead time to discover, develop and put on line production runs into 10 years. And there isn't enough being done in the long term as well. So it's both a short and a long-term problem....

Question: Why do you think there is so much denial that world oil production is approaching or has reached a plateau?

Sadad: There is a push-back to the notion that there is a plateau in world oil supplies which is largely based on lack of information or lack of research. In fact, if you look at published information—for example, British Petroleum's annual statistical report—it very clearly shows that from 2003 forward, oil production has hardly increased. So the information is there. If you look at some of the advertising that Chevron has been putting out for years now, they clearly say we're half-way through the world's reserves. The information is there. The facts are there. Oil prices did not jump four-fold over a three- or four-year period for any reason other than a shortage of supply. Yes, there may have been some recent volatility in 2008, but the price trend started climbing way back in 2002-2003. So, these are realities and the push-back is a sense that somehow the market is not able to deal with these realities, that somehow people can't cope with these realities.

On the other hand, if you don't talk about them, you never will fix the situation. This is not going to get any better. This is going to get worse because you have population growth all over the world, you have a standard of living that is improving all over the world, you have aspirations across the globe for a better quality of life, and people want energy, so it's actually important to talk about the facts and come up with solutions rather than act as if these issues don't exist and then wait for some solution to materialize out of nowhere. That's a role of government—to highlight these issues and to fix them, or at least take a stand and try to fix them. So I think the push-back is probably ill-advised.

d) From “Reflections from Colin Campbell on Peak Oil and ASPO” by Dave Bowden (On September 23, Dave Bowden video-taped Colin Campbell at his home on the southwestern coast of Ireland. Excerpts of that interview are attached below) (Note: Above referenced excerpts were archived at the Energy Bulletin website on October 19, 2009; see <http://www.energybulletin.net/node/50427>) [Note: “**Colin J. Campbell**, Ph.D. Oxford, (born in Berlin, Germany in 1931) is a retired British petroleum geologist who predicted that oil production would peak by 2007. The consequences of this are uncertain but drastic, due to the world’s dependence on fossil fuels for the vast majority of its energy. His theories have received wide attention but are disputed by some in the oil industry and have not significantly changed governmental energy policies at this time.... Influential papers by Campbell include *The Coming Oil Crisis*, written with Jean Laherrère in 1998 and credited with convincing the International Energy Agency of the coming peak; and *The End of Cheap Oil*, published the same year in *Scientific American*.... The Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas, founded by Campbell in 2000, has been gaining recognition in the recent years. The Association has organized yearly international conferences since 2002. The most recent was in Denver, Colorado on 11-13 October 2009.” (From Wikipedia entry for Colin J. Campbell; at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Campbell_\(geologist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Campbell_(geologist))) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

(Excerpt)

Question: What about the notion of making America energy independent?

Campbell: It can’t be done voluntarily. To make America energy-independent is not something I think any government can achieve. But within 50 years that’s what nature will deliver. Countries will have to be energy independent. They have no alternative. Some may get there quicker than others, but it’s not something some government will say, well this is our plan of action. It will be delivered to them by the force of nature. So America will indeed be energy independent and probably quite soon if these imports dry out. What that means and how they react to such a situation is another day’s work.

e) Less and less availability of cheap oil will directly impact much more of the infrastructure of modern industrial society than most of us can easily imagine. (For some examples, see “The Oil Crash and You” by Bruce Thomson at www.oilcrash.com/roe.htm Note: Bruce Thomson is a technical writer in New Zealand, and moderator of the RunningonEmpty2 Internet Discussion Forum, which assisted in creating the document.)

f) As to the adaptations we—collectively—must make to live in much less energy intensive human settlements in the future, here (below) are four summary statements which may be helpful indicators of steps towards sustainable human settlements:

i) From an article titled “The Green New Deal” by Richard Heinberg, published on the website of Energy Bulletin on October 20, 2008 (at <http://energybulletin.net/node/46934>) (see paragraph 3) (Confirmed October 20, 2009) (Initially published on October 20, 2008 by Post Carbon Institute).

“Peak Oil and Climate Change present threats and imperatives of a scale unprecedented in human history. By taking up these imperatives through a de-carbonized retrofit of the nation’s (and ultimately the world’s) transport, food, and manufacturing systems, policy makers can address a number of crises simultaneously—environmental decline, resource depletion, geopolitical competition for control of energy, unemployment, balance of trade deficits, malnutrition and food related health problems, and more.”

ii) From the FAONewsroom section of The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website. In the “Focus on the Issues” subsection, see “High-level conference on world food security...”, and then see “Conference News” (6/6/2008). Specific article “Food Summit Calls for More Investment in Agriculture” (paragraphs 1, and 9) (at <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2008/1000856/index.html>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The Summit on soaring food prices, convened by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (June 3-5, 2008), has concluded with the adoption by acclamation of a declaration calling on the international community to increase assistance for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices.

...“On climate change, the Declaration said: ‘It is essential to address (the) question of how to increase the resilience of present food production systems to challenges posed by climate change... We urge governments to assign appropriate priority to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, in order to create opportunities to enable the world’s smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people, in particular vulnerable areas, to participate in, and benefit from financial mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, mitigation and technology development, transfer and dissemination. We support the establishment of agricultural systems and sustainable management practices that positively contribute to the mitigation of climate change and ecological balance.’”

iii) From pdf version of “The Food and Farming Transition: Toward a Post Carbon Food System” by Richard Heinberg and Michael Bromberg, Ph.D Post Carbon Institute 2009 (Available online at www.postcarbon.org/food) Excerpt from Section “Farm Work” (see p. 28-29) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“While the proportion of farmers that would be needed in the U.S. if the country were to become self-sufficient in food grown without fossil fuels is unknown (that would depend upon technologies used and diets adopted), it would undoubtedly be much larger than the current percentage. It is reasonable to expect that several million new farmers would be required—a number that is both unimaginable and unmanageable over the short term. These new farmers would have to include a broad mix of people, reflecting America’s increasing diversity. Already growing numbers of young adults are becoming organic or biodynamic farmers, and farmers’ markets and CSAs are springing up across the country (Figure 11). These tentative trends must be supported and encouraged. In addition to government policies that support sustainable farming systems based on smaller farming units, this will require:

Education: Universities and community colleges must quickly develop programs in smallscale ecological farming methods—programs that also include training in other skills that farmers will need, such as in marketing and formulating business plans. Apprenticeships and other forms of direct knowledge transfer will assist the transition. Gardening programs must be added to the curricula of all primary and secondary schools, especially in summer programs.

Financial Support: Since few if any farms are financially successful in their first few years, loans and grants will be needed to help farmers get started.

Community and Cultural Revitalization: Over the past decades American rural towns have seen too many of their young people flee first to distant colleges and then to cities. Farming communities must be interesting, attractive places if we expect people to inhabit them and children to want to stay there.”

iv) From the IPCC document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see section F, number 9, p. 5 at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked....”

v) Further commentary by this writer, on the implications of resolving the “triple crises” of global warming, peak oil, and widespread resource depletion:

This writer understands peak oil in the following sense: the increasing awareness that the era of “cheap oil” is over is one element among many (including global warming, widespread resource depletion, ecological footprint analysis, etc.) which are pointing to the need for much less energy intensive human settlements in the future. As high level investment portfolios shift in response to these indicators, the likelihood that the vast sums of investment necessary to produce “very costly oil”—and the likelihood that there will be customers willing to pay a high price to use it—will very likely diminish, and continue to diminish, *as more and more people discover that it is possible to have high quality of life while using much less resources*. Thus, while there may yet be more oil on this planet than we have used thus far, it is becoming more and more likely that we have arrived at a “peak” in terms of how much oil we—collectively—will use in one year.

15. Here is one source which provides evidence of widespread resource depletion:

The “Millennium Ecosystem Assessment”

a) From Washington Post article “Report on Global Ecosystems Calls for Radical Changes: Earth’s sustainability not guaranteed unless action is taken to protect resources” (Shankar Vedantam, March 30, 2005 p. A02 (see <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A10966-2005Mar29.html>) (paragraphs 1, 2, and 4) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

“Many of the world's ecosystems are in danger and might not support future generations unless radical measures are implemented to protect and revive them, according to the most comprehensive analysis ever conducted of how the world's oceans, dry lands, forests and species interact and depend on one another.”

“The new report collates research from many specific locales to create the first global snapshot of ecosystems. More than 1,300 authors from 95 countries participated in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, whose results are being made public today by the United Nations and by several private and public organizations.”

“The effort brought together governments, civil society groups, industry and indigenous people over a four-year period to examine the social, economic and environmental aspects of ecosystems.”

b) From the “Overview of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment” at the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment website (see <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/article.aspx?id=58>) See section “What are the main findings of the MA?” (see 4 “bullet” summaries)

i) “Over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of time in human history, largely to meet rapidly growing demands for food, fresh water, timber, fiber and fuel. This has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on Earth.”

ii) “The changes that have been made to ecosystems have contributed to substantial net gains in human well-being and economic development, but these gains have been achieved at growing costs in the form of the degradation of many ecosystem services, increased risks of nonlinear changes, and the exacerbation of poverty for some groups of people. These problems, unless addressed, will substantially diminish the benefits that future generations obtain from ecosystems. “

iii) “The degradation of ecosystem services could grow significantly worse during the first half of this century and is a barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.”

iv) “The challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystem while meeting increasing demands for services can be partially met under some scenarios considered by the MA, but will involve significant changes in policies, institutions and practices that are not currently under way...”

16. From pre-conference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies [From Teach-In Flyer and Draft Program at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf (see p. 2)] (confirmed December, 25, 2009)

17. In the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see Section F, Number 2, at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) From Worldwatch Institute “State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society” W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37 (Note: Most of “State of the World 2004...” , including this particular quote, is also accessible through google books) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

18. In the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see Section F, Number 5, at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) From Worldwatch Institute “State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society” W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37 (Note: Most of “State of the World 2004...” , including this particular quote, is also accessible through google books) (Confirmed December 25, 2009)

19. In the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (August, 2007) (see Section F, Number 2, at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>)

20. From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see paragraph 4 in subsection titled “Mollison”)
(<http://permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

Section 6

The “1000Communities²” Proposal (Description and Table of Contents)

[Note: The following description of the “1000Communities²” proposal is from Section 2, p. 6, of the “1000Communities²” at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>]

A. The “1000Communities²” proposal may be summarized as follows:

“1000Communities²” advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

1. which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to

a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges

b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges

c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies

d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources

2. which establish a significant number of local community points of entry called “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” [if use of the particular description “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” is permitted by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)] to act as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, classrooms for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and to provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

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(for the IPCR document “1000Communities2” (accessible at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

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15. Summary and Concluding Comments

Appendices

1. A Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times
2. About Global Warming, Peak Oil, and Population and Consumption Patterns
3. The Transition to Sustainable Communities
4. Evidence of the Need to Increase Compassion for Our Fellow Human Beings
5. Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can be Explored Through “Sister Community” Relationships
6. Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life
7. 105 Fields of Activity Related to Peacebuilding, Community Revitalization, and Ecological Sustainability
8. The IPCR Initiative Mission Statement

Section 7

Four Different Introductions to the “1000Communities²” Proposal

[“Notes and Source References” associated with these introductions are at the end of each separate introduction.]

a) The introduction written just after the “economic crises” began to unfold (in September, 2008)

“A Greater Force Than the Challenges We Are Now Facing” (p. 52)

<http://ipcri.net/images/A-Greater-Force-than-the-Challenges-We-Are-Now-Fac.pdf>

First posted at The IPCR Initiative website September 28, 2008 in the “Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal” section of the IPCR website homepage. (This document was also posted in the Discussion Forums of a few websites, as a way of introducing another approach to defining “confidence” in the marketplace, and another view on the subject of the general direction that many of our most deeply held beliefs are leading us.)

b) The shortest introduction

“The ‘1000Communities²’ Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature” (p. 61)

(11” x 17” display version at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2-for-Outreach-Package-B.pdf>)

First posted at The IPCR Initiative website, October, 2008 as part of “Educational Materials Outreach Package” (see bottom of IPCR website homepage). (In October-November, 2008, more than 80 of the “Educational Materials Outreach Packages” were posted mailed to individuals and organizations. The individuals and organizations were selected as most likely to make good use of the information—or most likely to share the information with others.)

c) The introduction which goes into the most detail of how such Community Visioning Initiatives can help with identifying and supporting more solution-oriented employment

“Transitioning from Less Solution-Oriented Employment to More Solution-Oriented Employment” (p. 65)

<http://ipcri.net/images/Transitioning-from-Less-Solution-Oriented-Employment.pdf>

First posted at The IPCR Initiative website December, 2008 in the “Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal” section of the IPCR website homepage. (This document was also posted in the Discussion Forums of a few websites, as a way of sharing ideas about how to create more solution-oriented employment.)

d) The introduction which emphasizes how all of us have important responsibilities, and how we really need to be on the same side, helping each other

“Community Visioning Initiatives ‘For the Duration of the Emergency’” (p. 76)

<http://ipcri.net/images/Community-Visioning-Initiatives-for-the-Duration-of-the-Emergency.pdf>

First posted at The IPCR Initiative website February, 2009 in the “Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal” section of the IPCR website homepage. (This document was also posted in the Discussion Forums of a few websites, as a way of focusing attention of the very relevant contributions that Community Visioning Initiatives can make, and as a way of providing links to this writers’ many efforts to introduce the “1000Communities²” proposal.

a)

A Greater Force than the Challenges We Are Now Facing

Dateline: September—October, 2008

We are living in very complex and challenging times. More and more people, in more and more parts of the world, are coming to the conclusion that all of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges. Currently, here in the United States, the crisis in the financial markets has become the challenge regarded as most in need of urgent resolution.

This writer has viewed or heard observations and commentary on the nature of this financial market crisis, and descriptions of possible solutions, from many credible sources—as a result of access to the Internet, and access to programming provided by C-Span (a private, non-profit company, created in 1979 by the cable television industry to provide public access to the political process). In the context of this essay, this writer will make reference to two comments made by Dr. Peter R. Orszag, who is Director of the Congressional Budget Office (briefly, a government agency with a mandate to assist the House and Senate Budget Committees). One comment is from his testimony before the Committee on the Budget, U.S. House of Representatives, on September 24, 2008 (“Federal Responses to Market Turmoil”)(testimony accessible at <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/97xx/doc9767/09-24-MarketTurmoil.pdf>), and one from the Director’s Blog section of the Congressional Budget Office’s website [see blog entry titled “Troubled Assets Relief Act and Insolvencies” (September 25, 2008) at <http://cboblog.cbo.gov/>].

Why Confidence is Dissipating: Yet Another Viewpoint

Consider first this comment:

“Over the past several weeks, the collapse of confidence in financial markets has become particularly severe.”¹ (Dr. Peter R. Orszag, House Budget Committee Testimony, see p. 3, 3rd paragraph)

It is this writer’s interpretation that Dr. Orszag’s comments in this particular testimony focus primarily on the kind of “confidence” which is built up or dissipated depending on whether there is more or less certainty about the structure and systems of the financial markets. It is also this writer’s interpretation that much of the observations and commentary he viewed or heard relating to the financial crisis focused on the structure and systems of the financial markets—in accordance with the view that the financial markets are the “grid” through which transactions are conducted, and if the “power stations” are constrained from generating “current”, there will be a limit to the number of financial transactions which can be “conducted”, no matter what else happens.

This writer believes that it will always be helpful for people with much experience in the related fields to assist the general public in understanding of the structure and the systems associated with financial and economic markets. However, public discourse of this nature will consistently fail to provide sufficient understanding of how to build up “confidence” as long as it cannot or will not identify enough of the “whole picture” to properly serve the needs of the problem solving process. For *true confidence* is never really built up by merely convincing a majority of the people involved that they *believe* the markets are based on sound and practical principles; *true confidence* is built up because people believe that the

efforts of everyone working together is a greater force *than the challenges they are facing*. In accordance with this point of view, confidence is dissipating rather than being built up—particularly in the United States—because our public discourse does not honestly and truthfully identify enough of the actual challenges we are now facing for all of us—collectively—to **know** that our efforts will be enough to overcome them.

How We Can **Know** Which Institutions Are More Likely to be Solvent in the Future

Here this writer will acknowledge that specific expectations are created by the above discussion: in particular, that this writer can offer a sufficiently compelling approximation of the “whole picture” with regard to the challenges which we are facing—and that this writer can provide suggestions for how we can arrive at **knowing** that our efforts will be enough to resolve those challenges. And here he will assure readers that he intends to fulfill those expectations. But first, it will be helpful to consider one additional comment from Dr. Peter R. Orszag, this one from the blog he provides as Director of the Congressional Budget Office (from September 25, 2008):

“As I stated in my testimony yesterday before the House Budget Committee, the current crisis is fundamentally one of collapsing confidence in the financial markets and ‘providing more transparency about the lack of solvency at specific institutions may be necessary to restore trust in the financial system.’ In other words, to restore confidence, participants in the financial markets need more clarity about which institutions are solvent and which are not. To the extent proposals like the Treasury one can accomplish this end, it would be a step toward resolving the crisis, not worsening it.”²

As a way of expanding on the above observation, this writer would add that *everyone* would be more confident if there was also more clarity about which institutions—*of every kind*—were more likely to be solvent **in the future**, and which less likely. But unless we can see into the future somehow, how can we be sure which institutions are more likely to be solvent in the future? This writer believes that even though we cannot see into the future, **we can achieve much more clarity than we have now about which institutions—of every kind—are more likely to be solvent in the future**. We can do so by being more honest and truthful in our public discourse. In our own personal lives, honesty, responsibility, transparency and confidence are all mutually supportive... we must find ways to inspire, encourage, and support honesty, responsibility, and transparency in our public discourse. Returning to the “electricity” metaphor, when the “power stations” are more honest, responsible, and transparent, the “current” more naturally flows to the institutions which are most critical to overcoming the challenges ahead.

We are living in very complex and challenging times. Currently, here in the United States, the crisis in the financial markets has become the challenge regarded as most in need of urgent resolution. However, there are other crises which are also in need of urgent resolutions, both here in the United States, and in other parts of the world. This writer identifies the following five challenges as sufficient to suggest that we—collectively—are in urgent need of problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before:

- a) global warming and reducing carbon emissions
- b) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products
- c) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death
- d) an increasing world population requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce (*with a special emphasis* on the increasing number of people

who are consuming resources and ecological services *indiscriminately*)
e) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.

There may be many readers who disagree with the emphasis on these particular challenges. Those readers may then just consider the above list *as an example* which will serve to illustrate how we can answer the question raised above: “Can we really **know** which institutions are more likely to be solvent in the future, and which are less likely?” Here is how we can **know**. Earlier in this essay, this writer stated the following:

“... *true confidence* is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing. In accordance with this point of view, confidence is dissipating rather than being built up—particularly in the United States—because our public discourse does not honestly and truthfully identify enough of the actual challenges we are now facing for all of us—collectively—to **know** that our efforts will be enough to overcome them.”

The above challenges identified by this writer may or may not be the challenges other people would identify as the five challenges most in need of urgent resolution, but the most important points to be made here are as follows:

- 1) if public discourse does not honestly and truthfully identify enough of the actual challenges we are now facing for all of us—collectively—to **know** that our efforts will be enough to overcome them—how will it ever be possible to build **true confidence**?
- 2) if our public discourse does succeed in bringing to the forefront enough of the actual challenges we are now facing—and also contributes to the creation of a greater force (in the form of high levels of citizen participation in local, regional, national, and international action plans) than the actual challenges—then we will have established a high degree of *true confidence* about what institutions will be more likely to be solvent in the future (*i.e. the ones which will be most helpful to us in overcoming the challenges ahead*).

What then do we need to do? We need our public discourse to be as honest, responsible, and transparent as possible, so we can identify, nurture, support, and sustain ways to build a collective force greater than the challenges we are now facing. The remaining part of this essay will focus on how we, collectively—through the efforts we can make in the everyday circumstances of our lives (by deliberately focusing our time, energy, and money)—can become that greater force.

Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature: The “1000Communities²” Proposal

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.³

This writer has recently created a 161 page proposal which expands on the community building tools used in the above mentioned Community Visioning effort, and which is tailored specifically so that it will be possible for communities of people to overcome even the most profound challenges. The proposal is titled “1000Communities²”.

The “1000Communities²” proposal advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities—or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities—with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

1. which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to
 - a) accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
 - b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
 - c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies
 - d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources
2. which expand on the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization) so that such local community points of entry function as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, educational centers for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and to building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise
3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

What are Community Visioning Initiatives?

Here it may be necessary to pause for a moment... for there is good reason to imagine that there are many people who do not know what a Community Visioning Initiative is. Unfortunately, at this particular point in time, there seems to be *many* important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” Thus, this writer believes it may be very helpful, as a supplement to the above proposal description, to offer in this place a brief “primer” on Community Visioning Initiatives. This “primer” is an excerpt from the “1000Communities²” proposal, mentioned above. It is worth noting that although there are at least 100 cities and towns in the United States which have carried out strategic visioning initiatives or community visioning initiatives, and although some of these initiatives have been time-intensive as suggested by the above proposal, there have not been any such initiatives—that this writer

is aware of—which identify community visioning initiatives as a “centerpiece” for problem solving as it might relate to the five challenges listed above... and thus as a “centerpiece” for helping us—collectively—to become a greater force than the challenges we are now facing.

Here is the excerpt from the “1000Communities2” proposal, offered as a brief “primer” on Community Visioning Initiatives.

[beginning of excerpt...]

[From Section 3—“A Summary of the Potential of Community Visioning Initiatives”]
(see pages 5-9 in the “1000Communities2” proposal)

A. What are Community Visioning Initiatives?

1. Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world.
2. In its most basic format, a Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) is simply a more comprehensive variation of the above mentioned approach to problem solving.
3. Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) are especially useful as a means of increasing or maximizing citizen participation in the planning phase of community revitalization efforts.
4. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars. (For source references, see p. 9 of the “1000Communities2” proposal)
5. Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) can be described as a series of community meetings designed to facilitate the process of brainstorming ideas, organizing the ideas into goals, prioritizing the goals, and identifying doable steps.
6. Many CVIs have followed a model which has three basic steps, and which requires 3 to 6 months to complete (this is a variation of the “Oregon Model”⁴):

a) Where are we now? (or What are we now?)

An assessment which incorporates:

- Community Values
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Most Difficult Challenges
- Most Valuable Resources

b) Where do we want to go? (or What do we want to be?)

Brainstorming and strategic planning sessions which involve:

- Brainstorming Positive or Desirable Community Improvements
- Developing these Ideas into Practical Goals
- Prioritizing the Goals

c) How can we get there?

Brainstorming and/or focus group sessions which answer the questions:

What action plans will help us achieve our goals?

Who will implement the action plans?

How will they be implemented? (With what funding?)

How will we know if our efforts are achieving the desired results?

7. Many CVIs require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, and collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

8. This “1000Communities²” proposal incorporates input from many different fields of activity, and emphasizes a time-intensive approach to Community Visioning, which may take up to 1^{1/2} years (18 months) to complete. (For more details, see Section 6 “A 15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative” of the “1000Communities²” proposal. Note: The 15 Step Outline is also accessible in the “Workshop Primer, see Section __)

[end of excerpt]

An Additional Note: The “1000Communities²” version of a Community Visioning Initiative includes a step (Step 12) which is described as follows: “Summary Presentations and Job Fairs”. Here is an excerpt relating to job fairs, from p. 39 of the “1000Communities²” proposal: “The job fairs which come at the end of the CVI process 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...”

If even a few....

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” Community Visioning Initiatives can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as this community building tool encourages and facilitates the creation of a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in view of the participants in the community visioning initiatives*) solutions to the most difficult (*in the view of the participants in the community visioning initiatives*) challenges can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of people’s time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money. The result can be a deliberate increase in the “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to overcoming the challenges identified by residents as priority challenges. As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

If even a few of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives generated results similar to those achieved by the Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA) Visioning Initiative carried out in 1984 (see references in both of the last two sections of this essay), people in all parts of the world—keenly attuned when it comes to resolving challenges which require urgent solutions at all levels of society— *could be* inspired to carry out similar Community Visioning Initiatives. And if many communities carried out similar initiatives, and

also achieved significant results, our collective capacity to resolve the challenges of our times *would surely* begin to accumulate at an accelerating rate.

Concluding Comments

“...the soundness of ideas must be tested finally by their practical application. When they fail in this—that is, when they cannot be carried out in everyday life producing lasting harmony and satisfaction and giving real benefit to all concerned—to oneself as well as to others—no ideas can be said to be sound and practical.”⁵

(D.T. Suzuki, from “Essays in Zen Buddhism”)

Are our economic and financial markets based on sound and practical principles? Are our government and educational institutions being honest, responsible, and transparent about the challenges we are now facing, so that we may be *truly confident* that our efforts will be enough to overcome the challenges of our times? Which institutions—*of every kind*—will be more likely to be solvent and sustainable into the foreseeable future, and which less likely?

The above mentioned “1000Communities²” proposal suggests one way in which a significant majority of people can attain a high degree of *true confidence* that economic and financial markets, government and educational institutions—and all other fields of activity which have a significant role in determining the quality of everyday community life—are based on sound and practical principles, and are likely to be solvent and sustainable into the foreseeable future.

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets which supply the “ways of earning a living”. All of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges in the months and years ahead. Communities of people can deliberately create countless “ways of earning a living” which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times. *We—collectively—can become a greater force than the challenges we are now facing.*

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” and “sister community” relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of “close-knit” communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

Note: In light of the urgent need to increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, anyone may access all IPCR documents (including the above mentioned 161 page “1000Communities²” proposal) for free, at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (www.ipcri.net). In addition, this writer has created an “Educational Materials Outreach Package” which introduces the “1000Communities²” proposal, and which is also accessible for free (see the bottom of The IPCR Initiative homepage).

Notes and Source References

1. Dr. Peter R. Orszag, Director of the Congressional Budget Office (briefly, a government agency with a mandate to assist the House and Senate Budget Committees). In testimony before the Committee on the Budget, U.S. House of Representatives, on September 24, 2008 (“Federal Responses to Market Turmoil”) (see <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/97xx/doc9767/09-24-MarketTurmoil.pdf>) (see p. 3, paragraph 3) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)
2. Dr. Peter R. Orszag, Director of the Congressional Budget Office, from the Director’s Blog section of the Congressional Budget Office’s website [In the Director’s Blog Archives, in the subsection “September, 2008 [in blog entry titled “Troubled Assets Relief Act and Insolvencies” (September 25, 2008) at <http://cboblog.cbo.gov/?m=200809> (see paragraph 3)]
3. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

The statistical information associated with the “Chattanooga Vision 2000” process was also cited in the following source: a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts in the Boundary Crossers Case Study titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”; however, this overview is no longer accessible via the Internet (it was accessible for some time at the website of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, at the University of Maryland, College Park). Here is a list of other, shorter overviews of the “Vision 2000” process: a) Sustainable Communities Network Case Study “Chattanooga: A City Worth Watching” at http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/tennessee/TN_af_chattanooga.html) b) Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence “Best Practice: Chattanooga Venture/Community Vision” at http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chatt/chatt_8.html) c) Project for Public Spaces “The Chattanooga Riverpark: Transforming a City and its Economy” at http://www.pps.org/topics/success/success_chatanooaga) d) the University of Michigan’s Community Economic Adjustment Program “A Civic Vignette: The Chattanooga Story” at <http://www.irlee.umich.edu/ceap/chattanooga.html>) (All confirmed December 25, 2009)

There are additional publications which briefly cite the above mentioned statistics, and which are accessible via the Internet. One example is “The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance... and why politics will never be the same” by Matt Leighninger Vanderbilt University Press 2006 p. 16 (accessible through google books at http://books.google.com/books?id=m_ZF8JZydPQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+next+form+of+democracy&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

Special Note: In the above mentioned book “The Next Form of Democracy...”, author Matt Leighninger offers perspective on the astounding success of the Chattanooga “Vision 2000” process by including the following commentary: “Many other communities followed Chattanooga’s example, but many of them stumbled because they failed to keep citizen and community organizations involved in implementing the visions. If a vision did not include measurable benchmarks, and specific commitments by people and

organizations, it stood little chance of becoming reality.” (p. 16) (And *this commentary was footnoted*, as a general reference to the book “Results That Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done” by Paul D. Epstein, et al. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006)

4. Adapted from “Community Visioning: Planning for the Future in Oregon’s Local Communities” Steven C. Ames (At <http://www.design.asu.edu/apa/proceedings97/ames.html> , see section “The Oregon Model: Comprehensive Community Visioning” p. 7-9) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)

5. D.T. Suzuki in “Essays in Zen Buddhism” (1st Series) Grove Press New York 1961 p. 317 (Originally published in 1949)

b)

The “1000Communities²” Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature

Introduction

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.¹

Many Difficult Challenges Ahead

We now live in very complex and challenging times. More and more people, in more and more parts of the world, are coming to the conclusion that all of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges, which include (but are not limited to):

- a) global warming and reducing carbon emissions
- b) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products
- c) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death
- d) an increasing world population requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce (*with a special emphasis* on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services *indiscriminately*)
- e) cultures of greed, corruption, and overindulgence have caused a crises of confidence in financial markets, and are in many ways slowing the restructuring of investment priorities needed to respond to the challenges listed here (and other challenges)
- f) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.

The “1000Communities²” Proposal

One suggestion which could assist in bringing many solutions to light at the local community level is a 161 page proposal by this writer titled “1000Communities²”.

The “1000Communities²” proposal advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities—or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities—with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

1. which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to

- a) accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
- b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies
- d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources

2. which expand on the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization) so that such local community points of entry function as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, educational centers for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

If even a few....

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” Community Visioning Initiatives can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as this community building tool encourages and facilitates the creation of a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in view of the participants in the community visioning initiatives*) solutions to the most difficult (*in the view of the participants in the community visioning initiatives*) challenges can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of people’s time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money. The result can be a deliberate increase in the “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to overcoming the challenges identified by residents as priority challenges. As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

If even a few of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives generated results similar to those achieved by the Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA) Visioning Initiative carried out in 1984 (“Vision 2000”)(see reference in first paragraph), people in all parts of the world—keenly attuned when it comes to resolving challenges which require urgent solutions at all levels of society— *could be* inspired to carry out similar Community Visioning Initiatives. And if many communities carried out similar initiatives, and also achieved significant results, our collective capacity to resolve the challenges of our times *would surely* begin to accumulate at an accelerating rate.

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities

around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” and “sister community” relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of “close-knit” communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

[Note: In light of the urgent need to increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, anyone may access all IPCR documents (including the above mentioned 161 page “1000Communities2” proposal) for free, at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (www.ipcri.net). With Kind Regards, Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator The IPCR Initiative P.O. Box 163 Leesburg, Virginia 20178 (USA)].

Notes and Source References

1. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

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Special Note: In the above mentioned book “The Next Form of Democracy...”, author Matt Leighninger offers perspective on the astounding success of the Chattanooga “Vision 2000” process by including the following commentary: “Many other communities followed Chattanooga’s example, but many of them stumbled because they failed to keep citizen and community organizations involved in implementing the visions. If a vision did not include measurable benchmarks, and specific commitments by people and organizations, it stood little chance of becoming reality.” (p. 16) (And *this commentary was footnoted*, as a general reference to the book “Results That Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done” by Paul D. Epstein, et al. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006)

c)

Transitioning from Less Solution-Oriented Employment to More Solution-Oriented Employment

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy back to a solar-based (agriculture and forestry) economy will involve the application of the embodied energy that we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes and ideas, mostly inappropriately configured for the “solar” economy. It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”¹

(David Holmgren, from “Energy and Permaculture” article)

Introduction

We now live in very complex and challenging times. More and more people, in more and more parts of the world, are coming to the conclusion that all of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges, which include (but are not limited to):

- 1) global warming and reducing carbon emissions
- 2) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products
- 3) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death
- 4) an increasing world population requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce (*with a special emphasis* on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services *indiscriminately*)
- 5) cultures of greed, corruption, and overindulgence have caused a crises of confidence in financial markets, and are in many ways slowing the restructuring of investment priorities needed to respond to the challenges listed here (and other challenges)
- 6) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.

The “1000Communities²” Proposal

One suggestion which could assist in bringing many solutions to light at the local community level is a 161 page proposal by this writer titled “1000Communities²”. (The “1000Communities²” document is accessible in the “Keynote Documents” section of The IPCR Initiative website homepage, at www.ipcri.net, or through the following link <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

The “1000Communities²” proposal advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities—or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities—with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

1. which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to

- a) accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
- b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies
- d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources

2. which expand on the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization) so that such local community points of entry function as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, educational centers for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

The following three sections of this article will provide some further information about the concepts Community Visioning Initiative, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, and “sister community” relationships.

What are Community Visioning Initiatives?

Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. In its most basic format, a Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) is simply a more comprehensive variation of the above mentioned approach to problem solving.

Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) are especially useful as a means of increasing or maximizing citizen participation in the planning phase of community revitalization efforts. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.²

Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) can be described as a series of community meetings designed to facilitate the process of brainstorming ideas, organizing the ideas into goals, prioritizing the goals, and

identifying doable steps. Many CVIs require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, and collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

The “1000Communities²” document referred to in this article incorporates input from many different fields of activity, and emphasizes a time-intensive approach to Community Visioning, which may take up to 1½ years (18 months) to complete. (For more details, see Section 6 “A 15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative” of the “1000Communities²” document.)

[Note: The “1000Communities²” version of a Community Visioning Initiative includes a step (Step 12) which is described as follows: “Summary Presentations and Job Fairs”. Here is an excerpt relating to job fairs, from p. 39 of the “1000Communities²” document: “The job fairs which come at the end of the CVI process 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...”]

What are Community Teaching and Learning Centers?

The concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) was created by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see www.teacherswithoutborders.org). The website of “Teachers Without Borders” includes the following description of CTLCs: “Community Teaching and Learning Centers (CTLCs) are local, practical education centers designed to be embraced by and emerge from the community itself.... CTLCs use existing facilities and are often outfitted with libraries [(which include) dictionaries, references, educational material of general interest] ... computers, face-to-face classrooms, and break-out spaces, used primarily to serve several essential functions for community sustainability.”³

In this “1000Communities²” proposal, the concept of CTLCs is expanded so that such local community points of entry function as

- 1) information centers, resource centers, clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- 2) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” [see Step 3 of the 15 Step Outline (Section 6)], and as determined by the CTLC Coordinator
- 3) practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”
- 4) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal
- 5) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)
- 6) locations for “Final Version” Document submission (“voting”) as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Outline (see Section 6 of the “1000Communities²” document)
- 7) locations for “Summary of CVI Process to Date” Notebooks, for latecomers, and as an information resource for media
- 8) central locations for listings of employment opportunities
- 9) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

How would the “sister community” concept work?

Programs for developing the sister community concept already exist as a result of the work of Sister Cities International.

“Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. As an international membership organization, we officially certify, represent and support partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states and similar jurisdictions in other countries.” The mission of Sister Cities International is “to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.” “Sister Cities International represents more than 2,500 communities in 134 countries around the world.” Key program areas include: Sustainable Development, Youth and Education, Humanitarian Assistance, and Arts and Culture.⁴

Unfortunately, there are often so many different activities which require our attention during the course of any given day, and many of us simply do not know how much good can be done in the world with even minor contributions of time, energy, and money. Here this writer will provide the names of ten organizations—and a brief description of their work—which should be sufficient to bring to mind how many different kinds of positive outcomes could result from such “sister community” relationships. [see Appendix 5 of the “1000Communities²” document (“Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can be Explored Through ‘Sister Community’ Relationships”) for more detailed information about these organizations.]

The Ten Organizations (or concepts) are:

Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
World Food Programme
Doctors Without Borders
Teachers Without Borders
S3IDF (Small-Scale Sustainable Infrastructure Development Fund)
IDE (International Development Enterprises)
Alternative Gifts
Peace Corps
Foreign Student Exchange
Adopt a Child (“Sponsoring” a child)

1. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

There are many circumstances in communities around the world where the activity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is essential for communities of people to survive natural—or human-created—disasters, and progress to a recovery and rebuilding phase.

2. World Food Programme

“WFP is the United Nations frontline agency in the fight against global hunger.”⁵

3. **Doctors Without Borders**

“Every year, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) provides emergency medical care to millions of people caught in crises in nearly 60 countries around the world. MSF provides assistance when catastrophic events — such as armed conflict, epidemics, malnutrition, or natural disasters — overwhelm local health systems.”⁶

4. **Teachers Without Borders**

“As a non-profit, organization (founded in 2000), TWB’s diverse and talented members (in 183 countries) have designed and led educational programs to address community development needs. We support teachers by gathering and creating free and open educational resources; empowering the voices of innovative and compassionate teachers and community leaders; and nurturing partnerships from the village to the government.”⁷

5. **Small Scale Sustainable Infrastructure Development Fund (S3IDF)**

“Our Mission: To foster pro-poor, pro-environment small scale infrastructure services with financing and technical assistance for the electricity, water, sanitation and other infrastructure (eg. transport and telecommunications) necessary for poverty alleviation.”⁸

6. **International Development Enterprises (IDE)**

“Based on more than 25 years of experience, IDE has developed a unique market-oriented development model that benefits the rural poor. We call it **PRISM** (Poverty Reduction through Irrigation and Smallholder Markets). Using PRISM, IDE integrates small farm households into markets and develops sustainable businesses that reduce rural poverty worldwide.”⁹

7. **Alternative Gifts International (AGI)**

“AGI is a nonprofit, interfaith agency. AGI provides education for people of all ages about global needs and raises funds each year in its Alternative Gift Markets and from individual donors to respond to those needs. Designated grants then are sent to the established international projects of several reputable nonprofit agencies for relief and development.”¹⁰

8. **Peace Corps**

“... 190,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have been invited by 139 host countries to work... (in the following areas): Education (36%), Health & HIV/AIDS (21%), Business (15%), Environment (14%), Youth (6%), Agriculture (5%), Other (4%).”¹¹

9. **Foreign Student Exchange Programs**

“A student exchange program is a program in which a student, typically in secondary or higher education, chooses to live in a foreign country to learn, among other things, language and culture.”¹²

“American Foreign Exchange (AFS) is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world.”¹³

10. **Sponsor A Child**

What does Children International do?

“Our child sponsorship solution provides health, educational, material and emotional aid to impoverished children around the world. One-to-one sponsorship gives these children the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and realize their full potential.”¹⁴

Transitioning from less solution-oriented employment to more solution-oriented employment

Section 6 of the “1000Communities²” document is titled “A 15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative”. (The “1000Communities²” document is accessible in the “Keynote Documents” section of The IPCR Initiative website homepage, at www.ipcri.net, or through the following link <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

Step 12 of this 15 Step Outline begins as follows:

Step 12 Summary Presentations and Job Fairs

(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Steering Committee members (with help from volunteer Advisory Board members, etc.) will summarize the Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) process
- 2) Steering Committee members-- and key community leaders who were very much involved in the CVI process—will make presentations based on the summaries
- 3) Specifically, information will be provided on how residents can deliberately focus their time, energy, and money so that their actions
 - a) can have positive repercussions on many fields of activity relating to solutions
 - b) can result in an increase in the “ways of earning a living” which are related to solutions and action plans
- 4) Job Fairs will provide a forum for organizations and businesses working in solution oriented fields of activity to describe employment opportunities and future prospects, to discover local talent, to hire qualified prospects, and to build knowledge bases and skill sets for the future

The following passage is also included as “Special Commentary” for Step 12:

“Special Commentary: By now, there will have been sufficient public discourse for those people with understanding about high level shifts in investment portfolios to have learned something about what directions future shifts will be leaning towards. The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.”

As mentioned on p. 125 of the “1000Communities²” document, one aspect of this just transition can be that people who do deliberately focus their investments of time, energy, and money towards solutions identified by the Community Visioning Initiative being carried out in their community may receive, as encouragement, local currency. *And then such local currency can, in its turn, be redeemed in ways which will be particularly helpful to people transitioning from less solution-oriented employment to more solution-oriented employment.*”

Especially important to this kind of transition will be a community's capacity to identify local specific "engines of economic stability". The 15 Step Outline for a "1000Communities²" version of a Community Visioning Initiative (mentioned above) includes Step 3 "Preliminary Surveys". One question which is recommended for such "Preliminary Surveys" is as follows: (for all of the questions, see Section 9 of the "1000Communities²" document, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

Question #5: Identifying Engines of Economic Stability

Many people seem to be worried that "the economy" will collapse if some form of "voluntary simplicity" philosophy becomes more and more accepted... and yet many of the challenges of our times have chronic elements (see Appendix 1), suggesting that it may require decades, generations, or even centuries to overcome such challenges. (There *will* be work to do....)

a) Please name as many engines of economic stability and methods of economic conversion as you can which you believe would result in communities that

minimize resource requirements
maintain ecological sustainability
maintain a high level of compassion for fellow human beings

and which represent what a significant majority of community residents surveyed would describe as a high quality of life.

Important Note: Having responses to the above question (and many others, through "Preliminary Surveys") from 150 key leaders from a significant variety of fields of activity in the community will, by itself, be a significant contribution to the "(reconfiguring) the embodied energy from the industrial age, and applying it to the development of sustainable systems" (see quote at the beginning of this article).

Problems that may arise

Even though there may be a sense of shared urgency among a majority of the residents in a given community, there are problems, issues, and challenges which can turn the whole Community Visioning Initiative process into an unfortunate experience with few positive outcomes. And yet—given circumstances which require problem solving unlike anything most of us have experienced before—experiments must be tried, and risks must be taken. However, every precaution should also be taken to avoid costly efforts which result in unfortunate experiences with few positive results. Such experiences might be demoralizing, and impair the effectiveness of other constructive efforts in the future.

As a way of minimizing destructive and demoralizing thinking and maximizing constructive thinking and constructive action, the "1000Communities²" document (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) includes a section on "Problems That May Arise" (Section 13). As one example from that section, consider the following:

3. *The need to proactively encourage constructive thinking*

“There will be people who are inclined to focus their attention, regardless of the difficulties and urgencies of trying to resolve multiple crises, on trying to make money by preying on people’s fears and misunderstandings, or on trying to encourage people to set aside their higher aspirations, and indulge in destructive behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community.” [Note: This particular “problem that may arise” is formulated into a question (see question 7) which is included in Section 9 “15 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions” in the “1000Communities²” document.]

Concluding Comments

This writer understands that creating the knowledge base, skill sets, and the compassion for our fellow human beings necessary to resolve the challenges of our times will require

- 1) recognizing deficiencies in the knowledge base and skill sets of our communities as they are now (an awareness which can be brought to the forefront by Community Visioning Initiatives)
- 2) recognizing deficiencies in compassion for our fellow human beings (an awareness which can also be brought to the forefront by Community Visioning Initiatives)
- 3) linking together the concepts of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, “teacher-leaders”, ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships
- 4) curriculum development “on the fly”
- 5) teacher training “on the fly”
- 6) community centers which are neighborhood-friendly, and which provide ongoing workshops that are deliberately affordable
- 7) encouraging as much formal and informal meetings with other people in the local neighborhoods for discussion, information sharing, mutual support and encouragement, fellowship and friendship—so that the result will include the building of a close-knit community of people with a healthy appreciation for each others strengths, and a well developed capacity to resolve even the most difficult challenges.

This writer—and the “1000Communities²” document—also advocate three propositions which are especially relevant when considering the value of local community points of entry information clearinghouses, and ongoing workshops....

- a) There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world. [As one example of the countless numbers of things people can do, consider the list of “117 Related Fields of Activity”, located at the website of The IPCRI Initiative at <http://ipcri.net/related-fields.html>]
- b) People can, one by one, decide to deliberately focus the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on many or all of the action plans which emerge from Community Visioning Initiatives.

c) The result can be that there are countless ‘ways to earn a living’ which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets which supply the “ways of earning a living”. All of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges in the months and years ahead. Communities of people can deliberately create countless “ways of earning a living” which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” and “sister community” relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of “close-knit” communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

Notes and Source References

1. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

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2. From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see paragraph 4 in subsection titled “Mollison”) (<http://permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

3. From a “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website before it was revised to the current website content (At current TWB website, see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)

4. From the “Sister Communities International” website Excerpts a)-d) are from Fact Sheet titled “About Sister Communities International” in the “Media Contacts” section (see <http://www.sister-cities.org/about/press/FactSheet-FINAL-pdf.pdf>) (on p. 1) (all excerpts confirmed October 20, 2009)

5. From the “What We Do”/“Introduction” section of the “World Food Programme website (see http://www.wfp.org/operations/introduction/index.asp?section=5&sub_section=1) (See paragraph 1) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

6. From the website of “Doctors Without Borders”. In the “About Us” section, see the “Activities” subsection (at <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/aboutus/activities.cfm>) (paragraph 1) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

7. From the “About Us” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website (see subsection “Who We Are”, paragraph 1) (at <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/who-we-are>) (Confirmed January 18, 2010)

8. From the homepage of S³IDF at <http://www.s3idf.org/index.asp> (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

9. From the “About Us” section of the IDE website. See the subsection “Our Method” (at <http://www.ideorg.org/method/index.php>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

10. From the “About AGI” section of the Alternative Gifts International website, see the subsection “Mission Statement” (paragraph 2) (at <http://www.alternativegifts.org/pages/about/mission-statement/>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

The current catalog of humanitarian assistance projects which people can donate to is at <http://www.alternativegifts.org/projects/>

11. From the website of The Peace Corps, see the section “What is the Peace Corps?” (at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatisp>) (paragraphs 2) [Note: Statistics from the “Fast Facts” subsection of “What is the Peace Corps?” (at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatisp.fastfacts>) (see “Volunteers by Work Area”)] (Both confirmed June 12, 2008)

12. From keyword “student exchange program” at Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student_exchange_program) (See paragraphs 1-4) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

13. From the “What We Do” section of the AFS website (at http://www.afs.org/afs_or/view/what_we_do) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

14. From the “How We Help Children” section of the Children International website. (See <http://www.children.org/howHelpChildren.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (paragraph 5) (Confirmed June 13, 2008)

d)

Community Visioning Initiatives “For the Duration of the Emergency”

(or: how to sort through all this, and arrive on the same side, so we can help each other)

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. These challenges include, but are not limited to: the economic crises, global warming, peak oil, resource depletion, an ever increasing world population, global inequities, cultures of greed, corruption, and overindulgence, a marginalization of the wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions, and insufficient understandings of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to enduring peace and which do not. More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

Given the nature of complex societies, it is understandable that many of us would like to believe there are experts “somewhere” who understand how we got into this, and must therefore know how we can get out of it. However, this writer very sincerely hopes that more and more people are also coming to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else... Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

Unfortunately, sorting out what our responsibilities are—or sorting out what the real challenges are, and what are sound and practical solutions—is becoming more and more difficult, as there is now, in many parts of the world, a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time.

Somehow or other, we need to sort through all this, and we need to do so in a way that helps us to realize how much we need to be learning so that we can be part of the solutions... and how much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other.

One suggestion which could assist in bringing many solutions to light at the local community level is a 161 page proposal by this writer titled “1000Communities²”. “1000Communities²” (“1000CommunitiesSquared”) advocates for Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” with ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships, as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times.

Much of the discussion relating to the economic crises has focused on the concept of “confidence”. From this writers’ point of view “... true confidence is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing.” (from “A Greater Force than the Challenges We Are Now Facing” by this writer, see below). The “1000Communities²” proposal describes one way of generating this kind of “true confidence”.

For readers who would like to explore these ideas further, this writer has created more than 5 different introductions to the “1000Communities²” approach. Three of these “introductions” are included in the Fall, 2008 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter (<http://ipcri.net/images/The-IPCR-Journal-Newsletter-Fall-2008-B.pdf>). One of those introductions is titled “A Greater Force than the Challenges We Are Now Facing” (<http://ipcri.net/images/A-Greater-Force-than-the-Challenges-We-Are-Now-Fac.pdf>). Another one of those three “introductions” is titled “The ‘1000Communities²’ Proposal: Creating a Multiplier

Effect of a Positive Nature”. This “introduction” is also part of an “Educational Materials Outreach Package”, which is accessible for free, and which is located at the bottom of the homepage of The IPCR Initiative (at www.ipcri.net). The most comprehensive introduction to the “1000Communities²” proposal was written in December, 2008 and is titled “Transitioning from Less Solution-Oriented Employment to More Solution-Oriented Employment” (<http://ipcri.net/images/Transitioning-from-Less-Solution-Oriented-Employment.pdf>).

We are in need of innovative and imaginative solutions.

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars. (for source references, see p. 9 of the “1000Communities²” proposal, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

If even a few of the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives described in the “1000Communities²” proposal generated results similar to those achieved by the Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA) Visioning Initiative, people in all parts of the world—keenly attuned when it comes to resolving challenges which require urgent solutions at all levels of society— *could be* inspired to carry out similar Community Visioning Initiatives. And if many communities carried out similar initiatives, and also achieved significant results, our collective capacity to resolve the challenges of our times *would surely* begin to accumulate at an accelerating rate.

There is much which leaders *could be* asking from the people who respect their leadership, both as a matter of civic duty, and as a matter of necessity; and there are many people who will be very appreciative when they find that they have an important role to play in the work ahead. Leaders should guide citizens so that they can discover how they can do their part to contribute to the greater good of the whole.

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” and “sister community” relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of “close-knit” communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

[Note: In light of the urgent need to increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, anyone may access all IPCR documents (including the above mentioned 161 page “1000Communities²” proposal) for free, at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (at www.ipcri.net)].

Section 8

A 15 Step Outline for a Community Visioning Initiative

[from Section 6 of the “1000Communities2” document, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>]

A 15 Step Outline for a “1000Communities²” Version of a Community Visioning Initiative

Approximate Time Required: 1 year and 6 months (18 months)

Approximate Cost: 3 million dollars (per initiative)

The 15 Steps:

Step 1	<u>Steering Committee Selection, Administrative Assistant Selection (and Securing Volunteers for Advisory Board).....</u>	23
Step 2	<u>Initial Preparation.....</u>	24
Step 3	<u>Preliminary Surveys.....</u>	26
Step 4	<u>Secondary Preparation.....</u>	27
Step 5	<u>Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” associated with the question: What are the challenges which require our most immediate attention? (Or... What are the challenges with the greatest potential to de-stabilize economic systems, community life, and basic survival in community, regional, national, and international settings?)..</u>	28
Step 6	<u>Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Prioritizing the List of Challenges Identified created in Step.....</u>	29
Step 7	<u>A Two Week Interval from the Publication of the Challenges Prioritized Summary List to the Beginning of Step 8.....</u>	31
Step 8	<u>Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” to Brainstorm Solutions to the Challenges Prioritized Summary List.....</u>	32
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Step 10	<u>Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Developing Action Plans to Implement Prioritizing Solutions.....</u>	36
Step 11	<u>A Six Week Interval for Completion of Lists to be Published and Completion of Summary Reports for Upcoming Presentations in Step 12.</u>	38
Step 12	<u>Summary Presentations and Job Fairs.....</u>	38
Step 13	<u>Evaluating the Process.....</u>	40
Step 14	<u>An Eight Week interval for Compiling and Summarizing the Evaluation Surveys—and for Printing the Final CVI Summary Reports</u>	40
Step 15	<u>Sharing the Lessons, Carrying the Lessons into the Future.....</u>	41

The 15 Step Outline:

Step 1 Steering Committee Selection, Administrative Assistant Selection (and Securing Volunteers for Advisory Board)

(Approximate Time Required: 8 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Contracts with 5 people for steering committee at salary \$80,000 for duration of CVI process
- 2) Contracts with 5 people for administrative assistants at salary \$40,000 for duration of CVI process
- 3) Development of Advisory Board (50+ volunteers)

B. Suggestions

1. Identify 150 key leaders from a significant variety of fields of activity in the community
2. Prepare Executive Summary of approach to Community Visioning Initiative (CVI), and importance of CVI
3. Prepare “Steering Committee Selection” Questionnaire, which may include Questions #1--#5 from the “Preliminary Survey” examples (see Section 9)

4. Send Executive Summary and “Steering Committee Selection” Questionnaire to 150 key leaders
 - a) to increase awareness of intention to carry out CVI
 - b) as way of identifying leaders with interest, understanding, and experience for Steering Committee
 - c) as way of identifying possible volunteer Advisory Board members
 - d) as way of gathering input and leading into Step 2 and Step 3

[Note: Recipients of the above package should be encouraged to save a copy of their responses, as many of these leaders may be asked to participate in the “Preliminary Survey” (see Step 3)]

5. People selected for the Steering Committee will carry out their own selection process for an administrative assistant

Step 2 Initial Preparation

(Approximate Time Required: 6 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Identifying Volunteer Resources
- 2) Establishing “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLC’s)
- 3) Outreach
- 4) Consulting
- 5) Etc.

Very Important Note: On Establishing a Sufficient Number of CTLC’s

Establishing a sufficient number of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) is a critical prerequisite to going forward with Community Visioning Initiatives of the nature described in this proposal. Identifying and securing somewhere near 20 public access buildings (per community area with a population of 50,000) which can function as described in the beginning of this section—and which can (thus) accommodate as many as 300 people per day (for more discussion of logistics, see Section 10, Part B. “Concerns relating to actual logistics”) coming in and out at different times for an extended period of time (possibly a year, or more) (with associated parking considerations) (and with, hopefully, no rent associated with it) narrows the possibilities to a point that probable requires a sense of shared urgency among many members of the community. Unfortunately/fortunately, such a sense of shared urgency may be approaching. In the time period preceding such urgency, word may get around about Community Visioning Initiative approaches (such as the one described in this proposal) through the efforts of people who believe that we can overcome the challenges ahead, and are ready to go forward with constructive and practical solutions. Such people may, by their efforts in advance, prepare the way for a sufficient number of CTLCs to be established on short notice. The importance of CTLCs is so critical that without a sufficient number of assurances relating to CTLCs as a prerequisite, there will be no advantage to initiating the 15 step Community Visioning Initiative process described in Section 6.

B. Suggestions

1. Partnership formation with volunteer service organizations, places of worship, educational institutions, etc.

- a) seeking volunteers for an extended amount of time for a variety of support positions
 - i) specifically seeking volunteer secretaries and journalists to transcribe, report, and create “actions taken” logs, and overviews of the CVI process for the “Sharing the Lessons” element of the process (see Step 15)
 - ii) specifically seeking volunteer journalists to document and verify the “voting” process (see Steps 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10)
 - iii) specifically seeking volunteers for compiling and summarizing “voting” (responses) during Steps 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10)
 - iv) specifically seeking volunteer website design for official CVI website

2. Establishing a sufficient number of CTLC’s as local community points of entry

which are donated building space (with sufficient parking) for the duration of the CVI process

which are accessible to the public 7 days a week

and which can function as

- a) information centers, clearinghouses (on how residents can focus their time, energy, and money) and central locations for listings of employment opportunities)
- b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” (see Step 3), and as determined by the CTLC Coordinators
- c) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal
- d) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input—which may be contributed or accessed at all times) (Note: each CTLC may need to have 5 copies of these “Community Journals”)
- e) locations for “Final Version Document” Notebooks associated with Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 (Note: early submissions to these notebooks will help others with format and provide ideas for topics they might explore....)
- f) locations for “Summary of the CVI Process to Date” Notebooks, for latecomers, and as assistance to the media

3. Revised and updated “Executive Summary” of approach to CVI and importance of CVI offered to public through CTLC’s and media, so residents can prepare and begin to participate—and so that more residents will be encouraged to “step up” and provide volunteer support

4. Neutral parties with sufficient experience and recognized authority (ombudpersons, etc.) identified to oversee integrity of CVI process

5. Contacts—and lines of communication for community service announcements—established with local information services providers (newspapers, television, radio, service-oriented websites, etc.)

- a) CVI spokespersons identified as authorities to approach for critical information

6. With (hopefully) assistance from the organization “Teachers Without Borders”, the development of “teacher-leaders” is initiated. (The training and apprenticeships of “teacher-leaders” will be ongoing.)

The development of “teacher-leaders” will be critical, as it anticipates a time when

- a) additional teachers will be required to meet the needs for increasing the community’s knowledge base, and for the introduction of new skill sets (see Appendix 4, subsection F—and Appendices 5-7)
- b) “ways of earning a living” will be created for these new teachers, so that they become a permanent addition to the community workforce

7. Consulting with questionnaire development experts

- a) for assistance with creating a “Preliminary Survey” (see Step 3)
- b) for assistance with creating an “Evaluation Survey” (see Step 13)

8. Preparation of a brochures titled “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7 for one example)

Step 3 Preliminary Surveys

(Approximate Time Required: 6 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Summary of responses to Preliminary Survey, to be published in newspapers, posted on official CVI website, and made accessible in CTLC’s

B. Suggestions

1. Note: See Section 9 for some example questions for a Preliminary Survey

2. Send Preliminary Surveys to 150—or more—key leaders from a significant variety of fields of activity in the community

- a) selection of recipients will be decided by Steering Committee with input from Advisory Board Members and Partnerships established in Step 2

3. Responses and Summarized of Results from Preliminary Survey will provide

- a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities
- b) examples of local leaders stepping up in support of CVI
- c) starting points for public discourse about the importance of the CVI
- d) starting points for CTLC workshop content
- e) starting points for some participants as they develop “Final Version” decisions (“votes”) on challenges, solutions, and action plans
- f) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the CVI, and a high level of citizen participation
- g) an initial sense of support or non-support for the “sister community” element (an action plan which is advocated by this proposal—see Section 5)

Step 4 Secondary Preparation

(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Additional CTLC’s opened
- 2) Announcements for workshops already scheduled
- 3) Announcements for “voting” times already scheduled

B. Suggestions

- 1. Training and apprenticeships of “teacher-leaders” is ongoing (they continue to facilitate workshops and meetings....)
- 2. As awareness of the value of the CVI process increases, additional donations of appropriate building space will result in additional CTLC’s in the community
- 3. Publications (available at CTLC’s) and press releases announce workshops already scheduled (workshops which derive their content mostly from the results of the Preliminary Surveys) (Note: Additional workshops will result from input received by local CTLC Coordinators, and will vary according to specific needs perceived).
- 4. Publications (available at CTLC’s) and press releases announce the “voting” times already scheduled (for Steps 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10)

Step 5 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” associated with the question:

What are the challenges which require our most immediate attention? (Or... What are the challenges with the greatest potential to de-stabilize economic systems, community life, and basic survival in community, regional, national, and international settings?)

(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) A List (compiled and summarized through a transparent, well-documented, and fair process) of all Challenges mentioned by participating residents, will be published in local newspapers, posted on the official CVI website, and many copies will be made available in CTLC’s
 - a) Challenges categories mentioned most often will include some examples of the different ways that challenge was described
 - b) The summary list will begin with the challenges identified most often, and list the challenges in order from most often identified to least often identified

B. Suggestions

Note: For more information about “Verifying the Integrity of the Voting Process”, see Section 8

1. Residents are encouraged to follow the “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7)
2. Workshops, resources, informal meetings, etc. will be offered in the CTLC’s to help residents sort through what could seem like an overwhelming and complex assessment process
3. Residents are encouraged to submit one (1) “Final Version” document for this step. The document for this step should include a list of 10-20 items, and must be limited to 4 well-organized and easily read pages (to help with the compilation and summary process). Examples will be provided, and copies of documents submitted during the early part of this step will be available for participants to consider as they prepare their “vote”. Some evidence supporting the items mentioned, or some clarifying comments, may be included to help identify the challenges listed, but citing extensive evidence is unnecessary and discouraged. References to resources of any length can be suggested to local CTLC Coordinators—and entered into the CTLC “Community Journal”.
4. Submitting “Final Version” Documents
 - a) Such “Final Version” documents should be submitted to the local CTLC Coordinator during the days and hours designated for this part of the process.

b) When submitting “Final Version” documents, residents will be required to provide some proof of residency.

5. The compilation and summarizing of all “challenges identified” “Final Version” documents will be carried out by thoroughly screened volunteers, supervised by local CTLC Coordinators, and independently reported on by volunteer journalists and neutral parties such as ombudpersons (who will also observe the process to evaluate transparency, thoroughness of documentation, and fairness).

6. A Summary List of the Challenges Identified will then be published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website, and many copies will be made accessible in the CTLC’s.

a) The summary list will begin with the challenges identified most often, and list the challenges in order from most often identified to least often identified

Important Note: This summary list will not be considered a list of challenges prioritized however, for the reason that there may be many participants who have not given much importance to a number of very important challenges, and who may change their mind once they see the content and order of the summary list from this step.

Step 6 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Prioritizing the List of Challenges Identified created in Step 5

(Approximate Time Required: 3 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) The List of Challenges Identified (created in Step 5) is prioritized by participating residents
- 2) Prioritized lists properly submitted by residents are compiled and summarized through a transparent, well-documented, and fair process; and the summary is published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website—and many copies are made available in CTLC’s.

- a) A “scoring system” common to this kind of “voting” will be applied, so that challenges which are prioritized as most important (first on the list) by some, and which are chosen by many residents as significant in some way, will receive more points than a challenge which is prioritized as most important by some, but not recognized at all by most residents

B. Suggestions

Note: For more information about “Verifying the Integrity of the Voting Process”, see Section 8

1. Residents are encouraged to follow the “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7)
2. Workshops, resources, informal meetings, etc. will be offered in the CTLC’s to help residents discover tools and resources useful in prioritizing the list of identified challenges
3. Residents are encouraged to submit one (1) “Final Version” document for this step. The document for this step should include a list of 10-20 items, and must be limited to 4 well-organized and easily read pages (to help with the compilation and summary process). Examples will be provided, and copies of documents submitted during the early part of this step will be available for participants to consider as they prepare their “vote”. Some evidence supporting the items mentioned, or some clarifying comments, may be included to help identify the challenges listed, but citing extensive evidence is unnecessary and discouraged. References to resources of any length can be suggested to local CTLC Coordinators—and entered into the CTLC “Community Journal”.
4. Submitting “Final Version” Documents
 - a) Such “Final Version” documents should be submitted to the local CTLC Coordinator during the days and hours designated for this part of the process.
 - b) When submitting “Final Version” documents, residents will be required to provide some proof of residency.
5. A “scoring system” common to this kind of “voting” will be applied, so that challenges which are prioritized as most important (first on the list) by some, and which are chosen by many residents as significant in some way, will receive more points than a challenge which is prioritized as most important by some, but not recognized at all by most residents

Special Commentary: Some residents may feel uneasy concerning the problem of residents who are less educated and less informed having as much of a say in the process as those who have spent years working on these issues. This is a fundamental problem, which is not confined to Community Visioning Initiative processes like this; as people who are not sufficiently informed about critical issues are everywhere, and they are investing their time, energy, and money—voting—all the time. If we are honest with ourselves about this issue, we must admit that there are very few people who have successfully aligned all of their investments of time, energy, and money with all of the values of the religious, spiritual, or moral tradition they feel closest to. This writer believes that there are many serious challenges before us now, and that we will need to invest our time, energy, and money very wisely to overcome these challenges. How can we do it? We must help each other. The Community Visioning Initiative outlined in this proposal is time-intensive so that we will have time to learn much more than we know now about how to help each other.

6. The compilation and summarizing of all “challenges identified” “Final Version” documents will be carried out by thoroughly screened volunteers, supervised by local CTLC Coordinators, and independently reported on by volunteer journalists and neutral parties such as ombudpersons (who will also observe the process to evaluate transparency, thoroughness of documentation, and fairness).

7. A Summary List of the Challenges Identified will then be published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website, and many copies will be made accessible in the CTLC’s.

Step 7 A Two Week Interval from the Publication of the Challenges Prioritized Summary List to the Beginning of Step 8

(Approximate Time Required: 2 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) To allow a time of public comment (in local newspapers, on websites, etc.) on the content of the Challenges Prioritized Summary List

Step 8 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” to brainstorm solutions to the Challenges Prioritized Summary List

(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) A List (compiled and summarized through a transparent, well-documented, and fair process) of all the Solutions mentioned by participating residents (in response to the “Challenges Prioritized Summary List”) will be published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website—and many copies will be made available in local CTLC’s
 - a) Solutions categories mentioned most often will include some examples of the different ways that solution was described
 - b) The summary list will begin with the solutions identified most often, and list the challenges in order from most often identified to least often identified
 - c) The listings will include, in the first line, a reference to the challenge, or challenges, targeted

B. Suggestions

Note: For more information about “Verifying the Integrity of the Voting Process”, see Section 8

1. Residents are encouraged to follow the “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7)
2. Workshops, resources, informal meetings, etc. will be offered in the CTLC’s to help residents sort through what could seem like an overwhelming and complex assessment process
3. Residents are encouraged to submit one (1) “Final Version” document for this step. The document for this step should include a list of 10-20 items, and must be limited to 4 well-organized and easily read pages (to help with the compilation and summary process). Examples will be provided, and copies of documents submitted during the early part of this step will be available for participants to consider as they prepare their “vote”. Some evidence supporting the items mentioned, or some clarifying comments, may be included to help identify the solutions listed, but citing extensive evidence is unnecessary and discouraged. References to resources of any length can be suggested to local CTLC Coordinators—and entered into the CTLC “Community Journal”.

Important Note: If the “sister community” idea is being identified as a possible solution, it will enter into formal consideration if it is submitted by even one (1) resident during this step of the process. Naturally, if the “sister community” idea, or any other idea proposed as a solution to one or more challenges, is among the top five or ten solutions mentioned by many residents, it will receive more attention in workshops, formal and informal meetings, resources available through the CTLC’s—and in public discourse in local newspapers, in websites, etc.

4. Submitting “Final Version” Documents

- a) Such “Final Version” documents should be submitted to the local CTLC Coordinator during the days and hours designated for this part of the process.
 - b) When submitting “Final Version” documents, residents will be required to provide some proof of residency.
5. The compilation and summarizing of all “solutions identified” “Final Version” documents will be carried out by thoroughly screened volunteers, supervised by local CTLC Coordinators, and independently reported on by volunteer journalists and neutral parties such as ombudpersons, who will also observe the process to evaluate transparency, thoroughness of documentation, and fairness.
 6. A Summary List of the Solutions Identified will then be published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website, and many copies will be made accessible in the CTLC’s.

- a) The summary list will begin with the solutions identified most often, and list the solutions in order from most often identified to least often identified
- b) The listings will include, in the first line, a reference to the challenge, or challenges, targeted.

Important Note: This summary list will not be considered a list of solutions prioritized however, for the reason that there may be many participants who have not given much importance to a number of very important solutions, and who may change their mind once they see the content and order of the summary list from this step.

Step 9 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Prioritizing the List of Solutions Identified created in Step 8

(Approximate Time Required: 3 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) The List of Solutions Identified (created in Step 8) is prioritized by participating residents
- 2) Prioritized lists properly submitted by residents are compiled and summarized through a transparent, well-documented, and fair process; and the summary is published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website—and many copies are made available in CTLC’s.
 - a) A “scoring system” common to this kind of “voting” will be applied, so that solutions which are prioritized as most important (first on the list) by some, and which are chosen by many residents as significant in some way, will receive more points than a solution which is prioritized as most important by some, but not recognized at all by most residents

B. Suggestions

Note: For more information about “Verifying the Integrity of the Voting Process”, see Section 8

1. Residents are encouraged to follow the “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7)
2. Workshops, resources, informal meetings, etc. will be offered in the CTLC’s to help residents discover tools and resources useful in prioritizing the list of identified solutions
3. Residents are encouraged to submit one (1) “Final Version” document for this step. The document for this step should include a list of 10-20 items, and must be limited to 4 well-organized and easily read pages (to help with the compilation and summary process). Examples will be provided, and copies of documents submitted during the early part of this step will be available for participants to consider as they prepare their “vote”. Some evidence supporting the items mentioned, or some clarifying comments, may be included to help identify the solutions listed, but citing extensive evidence is unnecessary and discouraged. References to resources of any length can be suggested to local CTLC Coordinators—and entered into the CTLC “Community Journal”.
4. Submitting “Final Version” Documents
 - a) Such “Final Version” documents should be submitted to the local CTLC Coordinator during the days and hours designated for this part of the process.
 - b) When submitting “Final Version” documents, residents will be required to provide some proof of residency.
5. A “scoring system” common to this kind of “voting” will be applied, so that solutions which are prioritized as most important (first on the list) by some, and which are chosen by many residents as significant in some way, will receive more points than a solution which is prioritized as most important by some, but not recognized at all by most residents

(Note: The following Special Commentary is repeated, in other parts of this proposal, for emphasis)

Special Commentary: Some residents may feel uneasy concerning the problem of residents who are less educated and less informed having as much of a say in the process as those who have spent years working on these issues. This is a fundamental problem, which is not confined to Community Visioning Initiative processes like this; as people who are not sufficiently informed about critical issues are everywhere, and they are investing their time, energy, and money—voting—all the time. If we are honest with ourselves about this issue, we must admit that there are very few people who have successfully aligned all of their investments of time, energy, and money with all of the values of the religious, spiritual, or moral tradition they feel closest to. This writer believes that there are many serious challenges before us now, and that we will need to invest our time, energy, and money very wisely to overcome these challenges. How can we do it? We must help each other. The Community Visioning Initiative outlined in this proposal is time-intensive so that we will have time to learn much more than we know now about how to help each other.

6. The compilation and summarizing of all “solutions identified” “Final Version” documents will be carried out by thoroughly screened volunteers, supervised by local CTLC Coordinators, and independently reported on by volunteer journalists and neutral parties such as ombudpersons, who will also observe the process to evaluate transparency, thoroughness of documentation, and fairness.

7. A Summary List of the Solutions Identified will then be published in local newspapers, posted on the CVI website, and many copies will be made accessible in the CTLC’s.

Step 10 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Developing Action Plans to Implement Prioritizing Solutions

(Approximate Time Required: 6 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) Specific outlines of relevant, practical and doable steps for implementing prioritized solutions, so that as many residents as possible can understand how to use their time, energy, and money in ways that will resolve the challenges of our times

B. Suggestions

1. Residents are encouraged to follow “Suggestions for Making Best Use of the CVI Process” (see Section 7)

2. Residents are encouraged to work at home, or in informal groups, or through meetings/workshops etc. at the CTLCs, to arrive at point by point answers to the following questions

- a) Who would they like to see as the lead organization, agency, institution,, etc. for implementing which solutions?
- b) How would they like that organization, etc. to proceed?
- c) What are the most practical and doable steps in such an action plan, and how can they be clearly stated so that they can be understood by as many people as possible?
- d) How will the general public know if the desired results are being achieved?

Important Note: This is where “accountability indicators” will be identified. They are an important part of the evaluation process—but are only a part of that process. (For more on “Evaluating the Process”, see Section 14)

3. Workshops, resources, informal meetings, etc. will be offered in the CTLC’s to help residents discover tools and resources useful to developing these kind of action plans

4. Residents are encouraged to submit one (1) “Final Version” document for this step. The document for this step should include a list of 10-20 items, and must be limited to 8 well-organized and easily read pages (to help with the compilation and summary process). Examples will be provided, and copies of documents submitted during the early part of this step will be available for participants to consider as they prepare their “vote”. Some evidence supporting the items mentioned, or some clarifying comments, may be included to help identify the action plans listed, but citing extensive evidence is unnecessary and discouraged. References to resources of any length can be suggested to local CTLC Coordinators—and entered into the CTLC “Community Journal”.

5. Submitting “Final Version” Documents

- a) Such “Final Version” documents should be submitted to the local CTLC Coordinator during the days and hours designated for this part of the process.
- b) When submitting “Final Version” documents, residents will be required to provide some proof of residency.

6. The compilation and summarizing of all “action plans” “Final Version” documents will be carried out by thoroughly screened volunteers, supervised by local CTLC Coordinators, and independently reported on by volunteer journalists and neutral parties such as ombudpersons, who will also observe the process to evaluate transparency, thoroughness of documentation, and fairness.

Special Commentary

1. While there may be much in the way of action plans suggestions which relate to supplementing work already in progress by existing organizations, agencies, etc.—there will also be a significant amount of suggestions which require the creation of new organizations and partnerships.

2. It is inevitable that some or many of the action plans will require involvement from organizations, agencies, etc. which are outside the community. Actions plans will need to be creative to avoid being stagnated by overdependence on complex global interdependencies. There can be no doubt that steady, consistent efforts over a long period of time will be necessary to bring about solutions to some of the more difficult challenges. This is exactly why it is so important to emphasize that efforts are needed from as many communities of people as possible. (“1000Communities²”)

C. An Important Note About Community Building

This kind of time-intensive Community Visioning Initiative is community building in a most comprehensive and deliberate form. Many of us will have experienced community building in a comprehensive and deliberate form in the past. Ideas about what would assist us in realizing our visions about quality of life were brought forward—and some attracted the time, energy, and money of many people, and some not.

What is different here is that although the “developed” countries in the world are very complex, it is possible for participants in these kind of intensive Community Visioning Initiatives to become keenly aware of how each and every one of the residents in their community has—by their “investments” of time, energy, and money—funded what has come before... and how each resident is a fundamental and critical part of the funding for the action plans and doable steps which will determine what will come next.

Participants will surely wish to increase their awareness of

- a) what patterns of investment they would like to move away from
- b) what patterns of investment they would like to affirm or continue to affirm and
- c) how cooperation with other residents in their community will help them do both.

Step 11 A Six Week Interval for Completion of Lists to be Published and Completion of Summary Reports for Upcoming Presentations in Step 12

(Approximate Time Required: 6 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) This extra time may be needed for the process of compiling and summarizing the action plans.
- 2) This extra time will also allow those people chosen to make presentations in Step 12 to complete their summary reports.

Step 12 Summary Presentations and Job Fairs

(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Steering Committee members (with help from volunteer Advisory Board members, etc.) will summarize the Community Visioning Initiative process
- 2) Steering Committee members-- and key community leaders who were very much involved in the CVI process—will make presentations based on the summaries

- 3) Specifically, information will be provided on how residents can deliberately focus their time, energy, and money so that their actions
 - a) can have positive repercussions on many fields of activity relating to solutions
 - b) can result in an increase in the “ways of earning a living” which are related to solutions and action plans

- 4) Job Fairs will provide a forum for organizations and businesses working in solution oriented fields of activity to describe employment opportunities and future prospects, to discover local talent, to hire qualified prospects, and to build knowledge bases and skill sets for the future

B. Suggestions

1. Although a final published summary of the CVI process (with overall statistics and evaluation survey results) will not yet be available, input on challenges priorities, solution priorities, and action plan summaries will be sufficient for
 - a) Steering Committee members-- and key community leaders who were very much involved in the CVI process—to make presentations based on the preliminary summaries
 - b) Booths in local auditoriums to be allocated to businesses and organizations for very practical and informative job fairs

Special Commentary: By now, there will have been sufficient public discourse for those people with understanding about high level shifts in investment portfolios to have learned something about what directions future shifts will be leaning towards. The job fairs which come at the end of the CVI process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which in many ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

Note: As mentioned on p. 125, one aspect of this just transition can be that people who do deliberately focus their investments of time, energy, and money towards solutions identified by the Community Visioning Initiative being carried out in their community may receive, as encouragement, local currency. *And then such local currency can, in its turn, be redeemed in ways which will be particularly helpful to people transitioning from less solution-oriented employment to more solution-oriented employment.*

2. People who want CVI processes of this nature to truthfully reflect the challenges before us-- and the solutions which will help us overcome those challenges—will provide resources and supporting evidence at the appropriate steps in the process which is worthy of that kind of conclusion.

Step 13 Evaluating the Process

(Approximate Time Required: 3 weeks)

A. Goal

- 1) Provide evaluation surveys for as many residents as possible and encourage residents to answer as many questions in the survey as possible, with as much careful attention to detail as possible

B. Suggestions

[Special Note: See Section 14 for notes and suggestions for an actual evaluation process]

[Here, suggestions will related to the actual administration of the evaluation surveys]

1. Developing a well-designed evaluation survey will be most helpful to the process of sharing the lessons learned with other communities. Therefore, careful attention should be given to compensating the specialists and consultants who will help create the evaluation surveys. (See Step 2 “Initial Preparation”)
2. Announcements will be made in advance detailing designated days and hours when Evaluation Survey Workshops will be scheduled—workshops which will provide assistance for residents filling out the surveys, and which will encourage fellowship and mutual support in the process.
3. Residents can also come to a CTLC, pick up an evaluation survey, fill it out at their convenience, and return it to a local CTLC Coordinator before the deadline.

Step 14 An 8 week interval for compiling and summarizing the evaluation surveys—and for printing the Final CVI Summary Reports

(Approximate Time Required: 8 weeks)

Step 15 Sharing the Lessons, Carrying the Lessons into the Future

A. Goals

- 1) Final CVI Summary Reports are made available to residents through CTLC's—and made accessible to other communities through pdf's on the CVI website, and other CVI clearinghouse websites

Note: There will be a section in the Summary Report which will identify the Action Plans most relevant to carrying the lessons into the future

B. Suggestions

1. Final CVI Summary Reports will include (and incorporate)

- a) notes and reporting which make up an "actions taken" log summary
- b) Steering Committee Selection questionnaire
- c) Progress Reports Summary
- d) Preliminary Surveys (and summary of responses)
- e) Examples of "Final Version" documents (residents "votes") from each step which requested a vote
- f) A Description of the process used to verify the integrity of the "Voting" process (including summaries from volunteer journalists who reported on the process, ombudpersons who observed and reported on the process, local CTLC Coordinators, and Steering Committee members)
- g) Summaries of Challenges Identified, Challenges Prioritized, Solutions Identified, Solutions Prioritized, and Summaries of Priority Action Plans (including preferred lead organizations and doable steps)
- h) Impact Analysis including relevant statistics from mob fairs, accountability indicators, employment statistics, investment statistics, etc.
- i) Steering Committee Summaries
- j) Evaluation Summaries [which will include excerpts from "Community Journals" (see Section 14 "Evaluating the Process")]

2. Copies of these Final CVI Summary Reports will be accessible at CTLC's, and pdf's accessible by way of the CVI website

Important Note: Special emphasis will be given to making copies of this Final CVI Summary Report accessible to other communities through pdf's on the CVI website, and on other CVI clearinghouse websites

3. Action Plans associated with

- a) CTLC's
- b) ongoing CTLC workshops
- c) re-evaluation of knowledge base and skill set needs
- d) re-evaluation of nature of educational institutions (see questions in Preliminary Survey and Evaluation Survey)
- e) possible "sister community" relationships
- f) other and etc.

will provide some of the many building blocks for carrying the lessons into the future

4. This kind of CVI process may be repeated at intervals into the future until new patterns of responding to the challenges of our times become such a natural part of everyday community life that the transition to an economically stable, environmentally sustainable and peaceful way of life featuring widespread compassion for our fellow human beings seems to be near completion...

or until the transition to "the kind of future a majority of the residents in any particular community prefers" seems to be near completion

Section 9

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers”

This section contains 4 subsections which provide information and commentary on the importance of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”. The four subsections are:

Part A: “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”: A Special Form of Community Education (p. 99)

Excerpted from the paper “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” (see Section titled “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”— A Special Form of Community Education”). The whole “...Twilight...” paper is included in this “Workshop Primer” (see Section 7, subsection c), beginning on p. __)

Part B: On Establishing a Sufficient Number of CTLC’s for a successful Community Visioning Initiative (p. 100)

Excerpt from “1000Communities2” document; see Section 6 “A 15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities2’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative (see p. 24) (“1000Communities2” document accessible at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

Part C: A Just Transition to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.” (p. 101)

Excerpted from the paper “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” (see Section titled “Community Visioning Initiatives, Job Fairs, and a “Just Transition” to More Solution-Oriented Employment”. The whole “...Twilight...” paper is included in this “workshop Primer” (see Section 7, subsection c), beginning on p. __)

Part D: The key role which can be played by philanthropy (p. 102)

Excerpted from the paper “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” (see Section titled “Community Visioning Initiatives, Job Fairs, and a “Just Transition” to More Solution-Oriented Employment”. The whole “...Twilight...” paper is included in this “Workshop Primer” (see Appendix 2—Part B). For this excerpt, see p. 12.

Part E: Accessibility and Affordability (p. 103)

Excerpt from the “1000Communities2” proposal, see p. 14 of that document at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>

Part A

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers”: A Special Form of Community Education

The concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) was created by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see www.teacherswithoutborders.org).

“Teachers Without Borders” defines CTLCs as follows:

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers (CTLCs) are local, practical education centers designed to be embraced by and emerge from the community itself. CTLCs use existing facilities and are often outfitted with libraries (such as dictionaries, references, educational material of general interest) and computers, face-to-face classrooms, and break-out spaces, used primarily to serve several essential functions for community sustainability.” [From a “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website before it was revised to the current website content (At current TWB website, see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)

One of the primary goals of the “Teachers Without Borders” organization is to develop “teacher-leaders”. “Teachers Without Borders” helps create “teacher-leaders” in two ways:

“We help to grow teachers.... We identify talent and find a way of attracting, retaining, and supporting cohorts of teachers from all sectors of local communities. We find mentors for teachers to ensure subject-matter mastery and teaching technique, and then provide opportunities at our community teaching and learning centers for emerging teachers to practice. Our plan is to start from the ground up - incorporating local mentorship, distance learning, and community college offerings, then assist local talent in completion, at a high level, of course work at four-year schools. Most importantly, we provide a means of steady communication and feedback amongst cohorts of teaching talent.” [From a “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website before it was revised to the current website content] (At current TWB website, see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/who-we-are>)

In the “1000Communities²” proposal (see p. 2 above), the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization is expanded so that such local community points of entry function as

- a) information centers, resource centers, and clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges)
- b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” (for more about “Preliminary Surveys” see Section __, and Section 9 in the “1000Communities²” proposal), and as determined by the “Community Teaching and Learning Center” Coordinator
- c) practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”
- d) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal

- e) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)
- f) locations for “Final Version” Document submission (“voting”) as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Community Visioning Initiative (for details on the 15 Steps, see Section 6, p. 22-42, in the “1000Communities²” proposal at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)
- g) locations for “Summary of Community Visioning Initiative Process to Date” Notebooks (for latecomers, and as an information resource for media)
- h) central locations for listings of employment opportunities
- i) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

Part B

On Establishing a Sufficient Number of CTLC’s for a successful Community Visioning Initiative

Establishing a sufficient number of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) is a critical prerequisite to going forward with Community Visioning Initiatives of the nature described in this proposal.

Identifying and securing somewhere near 20 public access buildings (per community area with a population of 50,000) which can function as described in the beginning of this section—and which can (thus) accommodate as many as 300 people per day (for more discussion of logistics, see Section 10, Part B. “Concerns relating to actual logistics” in the “1000Communities²” proposal, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) coming in and out at different times for an extended period of time (possibly a year, or more) (with associated parking considerations) (and with, hopefully, no rent associated with it)—narrows the possibilities to a point that probable requires a sense of shared urgency among many members of the community.

Unfortunately/fortunately, such a sense of shared urgency may be approaching. In the time period preceding such urgency, word may get around about Community Visioning Initiative approaches (such as the one described in this proposal) through the efforts of people who believe that we can overcome the challenges ahead, and are ready to go forward with constructive and practical solutions. Such people may, by their efforts in advance, prepare the way for a sufficient number of CTLCs to be established on short notice.

The importance of CTLCs is so critical that without a sufficient number of assurances relating to CTLCs as a prerequisite, there will be no advantage to initiating the 15 step Community Visioning Initiative process described in Section 6.

Part C

A Just Transition to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.”

The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.”

Such a “just transition”—from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to critical challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to critical challenges—has achieved some significant momentum in the fields of renewable energy and “greening the economy”. The excerpts below (source: an open letter from Worldwatch Institute to newly appointed U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan) suggest there is much momentum, and also much unrealized potential, in such a “just transition”.

“OPINION: Letter to the New Education Secretary¹
by Worldwatch Institute on December 19, 2008

Worldwatch is pleased to publish this open letter from prominent education and environment leaders urging the newly nominated U.S. education secretary, Arne Duncan, to consider the importance of education in carrying out President-elect Barack Obama's environmental agenda.

Dear Mr. Duncan:

Congratulations on your nomination. As you jump into the daunting challenge of bolstering our sagging education system, you have a powerful opportunity presented by the need to create a carbon-free economy.

President-elect Obama has astutely perceived the linkages between climate change, economic stimulus, energy security, and job training by declaring that the transition to a green economy is his "top priority." The missing link in this system is the critical role that education can play in quickly making the green economy a reality....

Transforming our nation's economic, energy, and environmental systems to move toward a green economy will require a level of expertise, innovation, and cooperative effort unseen since the 1940s to meet the challenges involved.

Creating millions of new green jobs through targeted investment and spending is one thing; filling those jobs with qualified candidates is quite another thing. This transition will require a massive job training (and retraining) effort on the part of business, government, and education if it is to scale up quickly.

But green manufacturing workforce development programs are just one piece of what is needed; the green economy will not be driven by manufacturing workers alone. Architects, engineers, planners, scientists, business managers, financial experts, lawyers, entrepreneurs, political leaders, resource managers, and many others, as well as workers - not to mention environmentally literate consumers - will all be needed to drive the green economy.

American workers, managers, and professionals at all levels and in all sectors must understand the foundations of a green economy as represented in leading environmental and sustainability education programs. These foundations call for redesigning the human economy to emulate nature: operating on renewable energy, creating a circular production economy in which the concept of "waste" is eliminated because all waste products are raw materials or nutrients for the industrial economy, and managing human activities in a way that uses natural resources only at the rate that they can self-regenerate (the ideas embodied in sustainable forestry, fishing, and agriculture).

To produce such a literate workforce and citizenry, America will need to make major new investments in our educational systems to implement the green economy...." (end of quote from Worldwatch Institute letter)

Part D

The key role which can be played by philanthropy

Here also, it will be most appropriate to provide some inspiration relating to the key role which can be played by philanthropy, in both creating education systems, and in the "just transition" to more solution-oriented employment: (Note: Specifically, this writer believes that if there was anything resembling the kind of philanthropy described below directed to the support of Community Visioning Initiatives, there could be much momentum generated towards resolving the challenges of our times.) Again, the work of Booker T. Washington (and of the philanthropists who recognized the value of the work he was doing) is most inspirational:¹

"Washington's philosophy and tireless work on education issues helped him enlist both the moral and substantial financial support of many major white philanthropists. He became friends with such self-made men as Standard Oil magnate Henry Huttleston Rogers; Sears, Roebuck and Company President Julius Rosenwald; and George Eastman, inventor and founder of Kodak. These individuals and many other wealthy men and women funded his causes, such as supporting Hampton and Tuskegee institutes. Each school was originally founded to produce teachers. However, graduates had often gone back to their local communities only to find precious few schools and educational resources to work with in the largely impoverished South.

"In 1912, Rosenwald provided funds for a pilot program involving six new small schools in rural Alabama, which were designed, constructed and opened in 1913 and 1914 and overseen by Tuskegee; the model proved successful. Rosenwald (then) established The Rosenwald Fund. The school building program was one of its largest programs. Using state-of-the-art architectural plans initially drawn by professors at Tuskegee Institute, the Rosenwald Fund spent over four million dollars to help build 4,977 schools, 217 teachers' homes, and 163 shop buildings in 883 counties in 15 states, from Maryland to Texas. The Rosenwald Fund used a system of matching grants, and black communities raised more than \$4.7 million to aid the construction. These schools became known as Rosenwald Schools. The local schools were a

source of much community pride and were of priceless value to African-American families when poverty and segregation limited their children's chances. By 1932, the facilities could accommodate one third of all African American children in Southern U.S. schools.”

Part E—Accessibility and Affordability

This writer does understand that—initially—many of the “teacher-leaders” which are created by this approach will not be experts in the emerging knowledge areas and skill sets needed to respond to the challenges of our times. However, what they will be is very important: they will be links to expert resources, and will function as facilitators for integrating just such knowledge into the local community as quickly, and in as affordable a process, as possible.

a) As an illustration of the points “integrating knowledge quickly” and “affordable”, consider the following example. It is possible to imagine workshops being offered at a rate of \$100 for a 2 hour workshop (Note: This example is scaled for readers in the United States—cost and currency would vary according to the country participating), with the number of teachers and participants varying. An important part of cost accessibility is that as the number of participants goes up (towards a reasonable limit) the cost per participant would go down. Thus, if there were two teachers and 25 participants for a two hour workshop, the participants would only pay \$4 each, and the teachers would earn \$50 each. (And even the \$4 cost to the participants could be paid in “local currency”, if there was a process by which residents could earn “local currency” by making “solution-appropriate” investments of time, energy, and money in their local community.) (For more discussion of this “local currency” idea, see p. 54 and p. 113).

Notes and Source References

Part B

1. From the website of the Worldwatch Institute (see <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5971>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

Part C

1. From Booker T. Washington Wikipedia entry, see paragraphs 5 and 6 in “Career Overview” at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Booker T. Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Booker_T._Washington)) (confirmed October 21, 2009)

Section 10

39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions as Preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives

(and a beginning database for “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”)

[Note: This section is an expansion of Section 9 in the IPCR document “1000Communities²” (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf> .)]

Introduction

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as it encourages and facilitates a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples’ time, energy, and money.

One of The Eight IPCR Concepts—and thus part of the “constellation” of initiatives referred to above—is “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”. The description of that concept offered in the document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts” begins as follows: “Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action. Here are some example questions which are designed to be helpful in building caring communities. Hopefully, providing a few examples here will bring forth many more examples, and thus assist in building a resource base for future questionnaires that help build caring communities....”.

The questions listed in this section (of a larger “work-in-progress”) are, hopefully, the beginnings of a database of questions that can help build caring communities. In addition, this elemental part of community building can be also understood as one facet of a multi-faceted approach to peacebuilding and community revitalization—which is summed up by the section “Contributions The IPCR Initiatives Hopes to Make” (see subsection D, in “Additional Notes” at the end of this section).

However, the most significant role for these questions, from this writer’s point of view, is that they are a starting point for creating preliminary surveys, as preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives. The IPCR Initiative document “1000Communities²” is a 161 page proposal which advocates for Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, and “sister community” relationships as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times. Here is an excerpt from the “1000Communities²” document (from p. 47) which highlights the importance of preliminary surveys:

“This “1000Communities²” proposal includes a “15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community” (see Section 6). Step 3 of that 15 step outline suggests creating a “Preliminary Survey”,

and sending such a survey to 150 key leaders who represent a variety of fields of activity in the community. Responses and summarized results from “Preliminary Surveys” will provide:

- a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities
- b) examples of local leaders stepping up in support of CVI
- c) starting points for public discourse about the importance of the CVI
- d) starting points for CTLC workshop content
- e) starting points for some participants as they develop “Final Version” decisions (“votes”) on challenges, solutions, and action plans
- f) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the CVI, and a high level of citizen participation
- g) an initial sense of support or non-support for the “sister community” element (an action plan which is advocated by the “1000Communities²” proposal at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf> , see Section 5)”

This writer recognizes that many of the questions offered here as suggestions are not easily answered in one sitting. He also recognizes that although most of the key leaders (referred to above) could contribute something as a response to most of the questions, many residents of a given community may not contribute responses—either because it would take too much time, or because the questions explore complex subjects they are not familiar with. It is very important for communities of people to become aware that there are very difficult challenges ahead, and these difficult challenges will require some very significant learning experiences before we are able to resolve them. Refined questionnaires, with questions which most of the residents can quickly respond to, can be developed from responses to preliminary surveys like this one; and the refined questionnaires can do much to maximize citizen interest and participation in integrating new knowledge and new skill sets into the community.

People who explore the questions offered here carefully will also discover that there are many questions which touch on the subject of compassion for our fellow human beings. Many questionnaires are noteworthy for what they do not ask. This writer understands that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all religious, spiritual, and moral “world views”. A significant number of the questions that follow have been created to assess whether other people see such a critical need, and how such a goal might be accomplished.

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

Questionnaires can be created which will accumulate information, suggestions, etc. that can be of critical importance in resolving the above mentioned “irony”—and which can provide the above mentioned assistance to the process of organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives.

[Additional Note: The concept of “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”—one of The Eight IPCR Concepts—developed from this writer’s exploration of “Quaker Queries”. It is worth including in this section (in the “Additional Notes” part of this section—at the end of this section) a description of the IPCR Concept “Community Queries” (which eventually became “Questionnaires That Can...”), and some commentary on the subject of “Quaker Queries”. I highly recommend an exploration of “Quaker Queries”, especially for people who are interested in the use of questionnaires as a way of building consensus on difficult issues.]

39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions

1. General Information About the Respondent

Please, if you are willing, and in a way that does not identify you, so that you can remain anonymous—

- a) state your age
- b) describe where you live (rural area, town, suburb, city), the region you live in (Greater Metropolitan Washington D.C.; southwestern part of Virginia; the mountains of North Carolina; etc.), and include the country you live in
(**Example:** I live in a suburban section of a small town on the outer edge of development associated with the Greater Washington D.C. Metropolitan area, in the United States)
- c) describe your occupation, your “way of earning a living”, or what you do during the course of any given month which requires the majority of your time
- d) describe what you do during the course of any given month which you feel is the most important or most fulfilling work you do
- e) share your reasons for responding to this questionnaire

Special Note to Respondents: If you need additional space to fully respond to a question, please use additional sheets of paper. (Additional Note: If you do use additional sheets of paper, please remember to write on the top of the additional sheets of paper “Additional Response to Question # __, so the people compiling the results of the survey will be able to document your input.)

2. Home Territory

Please name one—or two—communities/towns/cities/regional areas which you would identify as your “home territory” [i.e. where you have the most significant personal reasons for making your home, and living many years of your life... (even if you are not currently living there)]. Please list your 5 most significant personal reasons for identifying your “home territory”—and rank them as most significant, next most significant, etc., using 1 as most significant, 2 as next most significant, and so on.

3. An Initial Assessment

For the questions below, please check the box which best corresponds to the way you view the following statements:

- a) “As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives relevant to peace, prosperity, and happiness for all humanity.”¹

I believe it-- and
there is much evidence
to support it

I believe it-- and
there is sufficient
evidence to
support it

I would like to
believe it, but there
isn't enough evidence
to support it

It is difficult to
believe it, with the
way things are
going now

I don't believe it—
there is no evidence
to support it

b) “There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.”²

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it | I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it | I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it | It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now | I don't believe it—there is no evidence to support it |

c) “Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.”³

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it | I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it | I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it | It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now | I don't believe it—there is no evidence to support it |

4. Definition of “the good life”

What is your definition of “the good life?” Please describe your definition of “the good life”—including both those parts of “the good life” which you already have, and those parts of “the good life” which you still hope to attain. (Note: Please clearly indicate which parts of “the good life” you already have, and which parts you still hope to attain.)

5. Preferred Providers of Goods, Services, etc.

Who would you identify as your “preferred provider” in the following areas of life in your community? [Note: To realize the benefits of this question, it will be sufficient to answer with what first comes to mind for as many categories as you can.]

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Building Construction | Health Care |
| Building Supplies | Home Furnishings |
| Clothes Manufacturer | Home Repair |
| Communication Services | Information Services |
| Disaster Relief | Recycling |
| Education System Development | Religious, Spiritual, and Moral Instruction |

Emergency Health Care
Energy Production and Distribution
Food Distribution
Food Processing
Food Production
Government

Road Building, Maintenance, and Repair
Shoemaker
Teachers/Educators
Transportation
Waste Treatment and Disposal
Water Purification and Distribution

a) Considering this group of people as a whole, how well do you know the people who you think of as your “preferred providers” in these areas of your community life? (Please check the appropriate box below to indicate your answer).

closely connected-- many personal relationships closely connected in some ways only slightly connected-- very few personal relationships solely as service providers

b) Is the way your “preferred providers” (as a whole) carry out their responsibilities consistent with your idea of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts in your community and region—and in other parts of the world?” (Please check the appropriate box below to indicate your answer).

most of the time in some ways almost never I don’t know

6. Most Difficult Challenges, Most Valuable Resources

Included in the “Additional Notes” (at the end of this section, see subsection A) is a “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”. Consider that “Ten Point...” list provided as one example of a response to part a) of this question. Then, following your own independent thinking on this important subject, please respond as best you can to the following questions.

- a) From your point of view, what are the most difficult challenges of our times?
- b) Do you believe that we—collectively—have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges you have identified as the most difficult challenges of our times?
- c) If your answer to Question #2 is yes, please describe the resources you believe will contribute the most to helping us—collectively—overcome the challenges you identified.
- d) If your answer to Question #2 is no, please offer any and all sincere, constructive, relevant, and practical suggestions for what we— collectively—can do to inspire, encourage, and/or create the resources you believe *would be necessary* to overcome the challenges you identified.

7. Engines of Economic Stability

Many people seem to be worried that “the economy” will collapse if there is widespread movement from “consuming material goods and ecological resources indiscriminately” to “discriminating carefully about use of material goods and ecological resources”... and yet many of the challenges of our times are very deeply rooted in cultural traditions, which suggest that it may require decades, generations, or even centuries to resolve such challenges. Surely, there will be work to do....

Please carefully consider the above introduction to this question, and then respond to the following questions.

a) Please name as many engines of economic stability and methods of economic conversion as you can which you believe would result in communities that

minimize resource requirements
maintain ecological sustainability
maintain a high level of compassion for fellow human beings

and which represent what a significant majority of community residents surveyed would describe as a high quality of life.

b) Please check the box below which best corresponds to your view of the following statement:

“It is possible to create, support, and sustain communities which can minimize resource requirements, maintain ecological sustainability, maintain a high level of compassion for fellow human beings— and which represent what a significant majority of community residents surveyed would describe as a high quality of life.”⁴

I believe it-- and
there is much evidence
to support it

I believe it-- and
there is sufficient
evidence to
support it

I would like to
believe it, but there
isn't enough evidence
to support it

It is difficult to
believe it, with the
way things are
going now

I don't believe it—
there is no evidence
to support it

8. Arriving at Working Definitions of “Right Livelihood”

Consider what ways of earning a living you would identify as “right livelihood.”

Now imagine a local community resource guide relating to employment, apprenticeships, training, and volunteer opportunities associated with “right livelihood.”

And further: imagine a committee commissioned to produce such a “right livelihood” resource guide....
And the individuals who make up the committee commissioned to produce such a resource guide....

- a) What background (qualifications, experiences, etc.) would you like such individuals to have?
- b) What local institutions would you consider most appropriate to commission such a resource guide, and oversee its production?

9. Identifying Experienced Practitioners, Stakeholders, and People Needing Assistance

Consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which you created as a response to question #6 part a).

- a) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the ten challenges you identified?

(Special Notes: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community. Also, please be straightforward and honest: if you do not know who would be most qualified to respond, please respond accordingly.)

- b) Who are the Stakeholders (the people who will be affected by the education provided and guidance given by the Experienced Practitioners)?

- c) Who are the People Needing Assistance (the people who do not know how to respond to the challenges you identified)?

10. Fields of Activity Most Needed to Overcome the Challenges of Our Times

Continue to consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which you created as a response to question #6 part a). At this time, please also consider the list of 117 related fields of activity which is provided in the Appendix (see Section A). For this question, please circle 20 fields of activity out of the 117 listed which you believe are the fields of activity most needed to overcome the challenges you identified in question #6 part a).

(Special Note: The 117 fields of activity listed may not include fields of activity which are relevant to overcoming the challenges you identified in question #6 part a). In every way, please feel assured that the best responses are the ones you choose to make... so if you need to identify 20 fields of activity which are not in the list of 117 fields of activity provided, please do so. Only circle fields of activity in the list provided if they express the fields of activity you feel are most needed to overcome the challenges you identified in question #6 part a).)

11. Curriculum Changes in Local Educational Institutions?

Continue to consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which you created as a response to question #6 part a). For this question, please also consider the 20 fields of activity you identified in question #10. With these considerations in mind, please respond to parts a) and b) below.

a) Please check the appropriate box—and also offer comments if you wish—to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement:

The curriculum in our local and regional educational institutions will _____ for our community to build the knowledge base and skill sets necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| need to
be transformed | need to
be modified often | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | need to
be modified some | be sufficient
as it is |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances: _____

b) Please use the scale below and, for each section below, indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Scale:

- (3) = high level of agreement
- (2) = moderate level of agreement
- (1) = low level of agreement
- (0) = do not agree with the statement

Creating the knowledge base, skill sets, and the compassion for our fellow human beings necessary to resolve the challenges of our times will require

- ___ i) recognizing deficiencies in the knowledge base and skill sets of our communities as they are now
- ___ ii) recognizing deficiencies in compassion for our fellow human beings

- ___ iii) curriculum development “on the fly”
- ___ iv) teacher training “on the fly”
- ___ v) community centers which are neighborhood-friendly, and which provide ongoing workshops which are deliberately affordable
- ___ vi) encouraging as much formal and informal meetings with other people in the local neighborhoods for discussion, information sharing, mutual support and encouragement, fellowship and friendship—so that the result will include the building of a close-knit community of people with a healthy appreciation for each others strengths, and a well-developed capacity to resolve even the most difficult challenges.

Please use the space below for ways of completing the above statement “Creating the knowledge base....” which are not listed above, and which you would have the highest level of agreement with.

12. A Visioning Exercise on the Subject of Educational Institutions

For this question, please consider again the 20 fields of activity you identified in question #10.

a) Please describe the kind of educational institution which you believe is most appropriate for creating the knowledge base and skill sets in the 20 fields of activity you identified. (Note: You may describe an educational institution similar to one in your community or region, or create a description of an educational institution which does not currently exist. Either way, please try to include, in your description, answers to the following questions.... What would it look like? What would it be called? Where might it be located? What would be essential as “structures” and “departments” of such an educational institution? What would be an appropriate “land use layout” for such an institution?)

b) What kind of certification or experience would be required to become an instructor at such an educational institution?

c) What kind of appropriate technology would be in use to reduce the ecological footprint and the carbon footprint of building construction, food production, and special materials acquisition?

d) How would such an institution be funded?

13. Making a Community Visioning Initiative Happen in Your Community

For this question, please consider the list A (below) , which offers a brief description of Community Visioning Initiatives, and list B (below), which offers a more specific description of a Community Visioning Initiative, by providing a 15 Step Outline for a comprehensive 18 month long Community Visioning Initiative.

List A

1. Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world.
2. In its most basic format, a Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) is simply a more comprehensive variation of the above mentioned approach to problem solving.
3. Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) can be described as a series of community meetings designed to facilitate the process of brainstorming ideas, organizing the ideas into goals, prioritizing the goals, and identifying doable steps.
4. Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) are especially useful as a means of increasing or maximizing citizen participation in the planning phase of community revitalization efforts.
5. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.⁵

List B

A 15 Step Outline for a Comprehensive 18 month long Community Visioning Initiative

Step 1 Steering Committee Selection, Administrative Assistant Selection
(and Securing Volunteers for Advisory Board)

Step 2 Initial Preparation

Step 3 Preliminary Surveys

Step 4 Secondary Preparation

Step 5 Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” associated with the question:

What are the challenges which require our most immediate attention? (Or... What are the challenges with the greatest potential to de-stabilize economic systems, community life, and basic survival in community, regional, national, and international settings?)

- Step 6** Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Prioritizing the List of Challenges Identified created in Step
- Step 7** A Two Week Interval from the Publication of the Challenges Prioritized Summary List to the Beginning of Step 8
- Step 8** Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” to Brainstorm Solutions to the Challenges Prioritized Summary List
- Step 9** Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Prioritizing the List of Solutions Identified created in Step 8
- Step 10** Workshops, Meetings, and “Voting” Associated with Developing Action Plans to Implement Prioritizing Solutions
- Step 11** A Six Week Interval for Completion of Lists to be Published and Completion of Summary Reports for Upcoming Presentations in Step 12
- Step 12** Summary Presentations and Job Fairs
- Step 13** Evaluating the Process
- Step 14** An Eight Week interval for Compiling and Summarizing the Evaluation Surveys—and for Printing the Final CVI Summary Reports
- Step 15** Sharing the Lessons, Carrying the Lessons into the Future

This question—question #13—is about how to make a Community Visioning Initiative happen in your community.

Here is the two part question:

Consider the elements of preparation, education, funding, and organization necessary for a successful Community Visioning Initiative in your local community or region.

- a) Describe 3 steps which are practical and doable and which would help make a Community Visioning Initiative more likely to happen in your local community or region.
- b) Describe 3 obstacles or difficulties which would make a Community Visioning Initiative less likely to happen in your local community or region.

14. Proactive Measures to Encourage Constructive Activity during Community Visioning Initiatives

Consider the following commentary on preparation for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative....

People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention on trying to make money by preying on people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community.

The question: please list at least 5 preventative measures which you believe would proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during the carrying out of a Community Visioning Initiative in your community.

15. Identifying Peacebuilders in Your Community

Who are the most valuable peacebuilders in your local community? Please name 5-10 people you would identify to others as the most valuable peacebuilders.

a) Please describe 5 qualities, skills, experiences, knowledge, etc. which you believe are essential to identifying someone as a most valuable peacebuilder?

16. People, Institutions, etc. Which You Personally Place Your Faith In

During the course of any given day, each of us consciously or unconsciously places our faith in a variety of people, institutions, organizations, businesses, beliefs, principles, practices, commonly agreed upon codes of conduct, etc. Consider carefully the ‘things you do in the everyday circumstances of your life’—and then list 10 people, institutions, etc. which you personally place your faith in. Then, please mark or arrange the list so that #1 is the most significant person, institution, etc. which you personally place your faith in, #2 is the second most significant, and so on.

17. Difficult World Conflicts, Difficult Personal Conflicts, and Living Harmoniously

Consider what you believe are the 5 most difficult conflicts in the world today... and then consider the 5 most difficult personal relationships you have (relationships which are ongoing, relationships which somehow require your involvement on a regular basis, etc.)....

The question: How could the parties associated with the conflicts ultimately be helped so that they could live harmoniously with each other?

Please offer any and all responses to this question which you believe might be helpful to other people who might read what you have written.

18. Cultivating Sympathy and Compassion

Please name 5 people—who you know personally, and/or who you have been influenced by—who have inspired in you the qualities of sympathy for the suffering of others, and willingness to express compassion in ways which might alleviate some of such suffering.

a) What does your local community do—specifically, as a community—to nurture, encourage, support, and inspire-- to cultivate-- such persons, and thus to attract other such people to move into your local community?

19. On the Many Facets of Liberation

Consider the following excerpt from hexagram #40 (Liberation) in “The I Ching Workbook” by R. L. Wing:

You have been liberated from a significant internal problem. Whether it was an unhealthy habit, misguided pattern of behavior, or shortsighted opinion that stifled your growth; or whether it was an unrealistic obsession that consumed your energies, its passing is a permanent improvement in your character.⁶

The question: What have you been liberated from?

[**Special Note:** Since there is significant emphasis on responses to this questionnaire being anonymous, there is much to be gained if respondents are willing to reveal what might be the most difficult internal problem they have. Many people may have similar internal problems, making it possible for this question to provide useful information about what are common internal problems... or many people may have internal problems which have gone unnoticed for a long time by people whose responsibility it is to assess and report on the well being of the community.]

20. On the Subject of Being Grateful for Opportunities

Please consider the following excerpt, from the autobiography of a well-known educator who at the age of 25 founded a university in the United States (a university which is still thriving 128 years later.....)

“The weather during the second winter of our work was very cold. We were not able to provide enough bed-clothes to keep the students warm. In fact, for some time we were not able to provide, except in a

few cases, bedsteads and mattresses of any kind. During the coldest nights I was so troubled about the discomfort of the students that I could not sleep myself. I recall that on several occasions I went in the middle of the night to the shanties occupied by the young men, for the purpose of confronting them. Often I found some of them sitting huddled around a fire, with the one blanket which we had been able to provide wrapped around them, trying in this way to keep warm. During the whole night some of them did not attempt to lie down. One morning, when the night previous had been unusually cold, I asked those of the students in the chapel who thought that they had been frostbitten during the night to raise their hands. Three hands went up. Notwithstanding these experiences, there was almost no complaining on the part of the students. They knew that we were doing the best that we could for them. They were happy in the privilege of being permitted to enjoy any kind of opportunity that would enable them to improve their condition.”⁷

The questions:

- a) Who was the educator? What was the title of his autobiography?
- b) Why do you think the students referred to in this excerpt were “happy in the privilege of being permitted to enjoy any kind of opportunity that would enable them to improve their condition”?

21. Different Degrees of Self-Knowledge and Self-Discipline

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements below, by checking the box which best represents your view.

- a) “... the instincts are not vague and indefinite by nature, but are specifically formed motive forces which, long before there is any consciousness, and in spite of any degree of consciousness later on, pursue their inherent goals.”⁸

agree agree in some ways disagree in some ways disagree

- b) “... a person is capable of cultivating a certain type of personality by choice and design.”⁹

agree agree in some ways disagree in some ways disagree

22. Putting Truth to “the Ultimate Test of the Conduct it Dictates or Inspires”¹⁰

Consider the following excerpt from a speech given by a Native American named Red Jacket:

“Brother! You say you have not come to get our land or our money, but to enlighten our minds. I will now tell you that I have been at your meetings and saw you collecting money from the meeting. I cannot tell what this money was intended for, but suppose it was for your minister; and if we should conform to your way of thinking, perhaps you may want some from us.... Brother! We are told that you have been preaching to the white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We will wait a little while, and see what effect your preaching has on them. If we find it does them good and makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you have said...”¹¹

- a) Consider first the people who you feel are religious, spiritual, or moral leaders associated with the values you identify most closely with in your local community.... What subjects would you hope they choose as subjects for sermons and discussion? What results would you hope for from such sermons and discussions?
- b) Now consider the people who you feel are religious, spiritual, or moral leaders associated with the values you feel are most threatening to you? What subjects would you hope they choose as subjects for sermons and discussion? What results would you hope for from such sermons and discussions?

23. Seeking Information About Our Moral Compasses

For the questions below, please check the box (or boxes) which best correspond(s) to the way you view the following statements:

- a) “There’s a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will.”¹²

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it	I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it	I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it	It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now	I don't believe it-- there is no evidence to support it
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
agree	agree in some ways	have different view-- or different way of understanding our present circumstances	disagree in some ways	disagree

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

b) "We are at a critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding."¹³

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

c) "There is a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to be exercising as much love, understanding, and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible."¹⁴

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

d) "Most people making efforts to realize their spiritual potential need to live in caring communities, so that they can find support from association with kindred spirits."¹⁵

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

e) "The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a Society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline."¹⁶

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

f) "A certain degree of physical comfort is necessary, but... the satisfaction of one's physical needs must come at a certain point to a dead stop before it degenerates into physical decadence."¹⁷

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

g) "The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life."¹⁸

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and
there is much evidence
to support it | I believe it-- and
there is sufficient
evidence to
support it | I would like to
believe it, but there
isn't enough evidence
to support it | It is difficult to
believe it, with the
way things are
going now | I don't believe it--
there is no evidence
to support it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

24. Global Drugs Trade, Global Arms Trade—and Solutions?

Consider the following excerpt from the “World Report of Violence and Health: Summary (Recommendations for Action)” (by the World Health Organization, 2002):

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”¹⁹

a) Do you believe there are “solutions in sight” for the above mentioned problems, or do you agree with the authors at the World Health Organization? If you believe there are “solutions in sight”, please be specific and describe such solutions. Or, if you agree that “no solutions seem to be in sight”, offer your view on as to why we seem to be at a point where “no solutions seem to be in sight” for those problems.

b) Please check the box (or boxes) which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement.

How much daily contact with the treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions do you feel people in general would need before we would see noticeable progress on the above mentioned problems (the global drugs trade and the global arms trade)?

				X	Y
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
more than is likely to happen	a profound increase from current levels	a lot more	a little more	additional solutions will be essential to make noticeable progress	have different view—or different understanding of our present circumstances

c) If you checked boxes X and/or Y, please describe below any solutions to the above two problems (drugs trade and arms trade) which you feel would be helpful contributions to making noticeable progress on resolving these problems.

25. On Spiritual Friendships and Spiritual Discipline

Consider the following description of “Spiritual Friendships” (one of The Eight IPCR Concepts):

“Spiritual Friendships”-- Currently, the “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment,” mentioned in connection with the “faith mentor” definition, is most often achieved within the context of specific faith communities, and faith-oriented family environments. This “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment” can be deliberately accelerated by the cultivation of “Spiritual Friendships.” One way of developing “Spiritual Friendships” is as follows... Within a particular faith community—or among people from different religious, spiritual, or moral traditions—small groups are formed which would include the following three elements: 1) Participants (at least most participants) declare an intention to take a specific step towards achieving a goal associated with their personal spiritual growth (By making such a declaration, participants will thereby be motivated to “do their homework” before the next meeting... that is, they will, by their desire to be true to their word—and by their desire to encourage the integrity of the process as a whole—feel some sense of urgency and responsibility about making an honest effort related to their declaration.) 2) All participants are provided with an opportunity, in a respectful and considerate small group environment, to speak about their efforts they made in the interval between meetings 3) Participants have the right to choose how they will benefit from the small group process (they can choose to speak about their efforts, or choose not to speak about them; they can seek feedback or encouragement, or prefer no response; they can remain silent and listen, etc.)

“Spiritual Friendships” are relationships based on a sense of responsibility and accountability in association with the process of individual spiritual formation—and thus inspire, encourage, and support honest efforts associated with specific spiritual goals.

The questions:

a) If you were participating in a “Spiritual Friendship” program similar to the one described above, what efforts associated with your personal spiritual growth would you speak about in such a group setting? Please name 5 specific goals associated with your personal spiritual growth, and 1 specific step for each of the 5 goals. [Note: This naming of specific goals and steps may be helpful to respondents, as it may bring to the front of their awareness aspects of their spiritual self which they would most like to improve... however, it is also worth noting that such a compilation (from various responses) would also give ideas to people who have not given much thought to this subject before....]

b) Would you be interested in participating in a “Spiritual Friendships” program like this, if it was offered at [please check the box—or boxes—that correspond(s) most closely to your view]

Your particular place of worship?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be willing to help create such a program	Definitely Yes	Maybe	Probably Not	Definitely Not

A Neighborhood “Community Teaching and Learning Center”?

I would be willing to help create such a program

Definitely Yes

Maybe

Probably Not

Definitely Not

the “Lifelong Learning” Division of a Community College?

I would be willing to help create such a program

Definitely Yes

Maybe

Probably Not

Definitely Not

26. Accountability Indicators

The IPCR Mission Statement (see Section __) contains goals which can be understood as “accountability indicators”. In other words, one of the basic propositions of The IPCR Initiative is that when groups of people carry out practical applications of The Eight IPCR Concepts, the results will have a positive effect on the goals listed in the Mission Statement (i.e. “increase our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation,” reduce the incidence of violence,” etc.).

Please “brainstorm” on the subject of what goals you would like your “ideal community” to have, choose the most important 5-10 goals, and then create an “accountability indicator” for each goal (i.e. something which is measurable-- *or can somehow be substantiated by the observations and experiences of a significant number of people*).

27. Accountability Indicators—Part 2

This question focuses on the creation of “accountability indicators”, or ways of evaluating whether our efforts to resolve the challenges before us are on the right track or not. This question has two parts. The first part is preceded by a list of goal areas which are offered as appropriate for villages, with some thought to being specifically relevant for villages in “less developed” areas. The second part of this question is preceded by a list of goal areas which are offered as appropriate for towns and cities, with some thought to being specifically relevant for towns and cities in “more developed” areas.

Part 1

Below is a list of 10 goal areas which are offered as appropriate for villages which might be thought of as located in “less developed” areas.²⁰

- a) A clean and beautiful environment
- b) Adequate provision of clean drinking water
- c) Minimal supplies of clothing
- d) Adequate and balanced nutrition
- e) Simple housing
- f) Basic health care
- g) Basic communication facilities
- h) A minimal supply of energy
- i) Holistic education
- j) Satisfaction of intellectual and cultural needs

Question: Please brainstorm on the subject of what quantifiable benchmark goals or qualitative progress indicators might be used to confirm that efforts being made are on the right track (or signal that efforts being made are on the wrong track).

Part 2

Below is a list of 10 goal areas which are offered as appropriate for towns and cities which might be thought of as located in “more developed” areas.²¹

- a) Poverty Alleviation
 - job creation/retention
 - job training
- b) Economic Development
 - enterprise development
 - producer responsibility
- c) Social Infrastructure and Services
 - education and literacy
 - health
 - food and nutrition
 - public safety
 - crime reduction and prevention
- d) Environmental Regeneration
 - appropriate technology
 - waste reuse and recycling
 - solid waste management and treatment
 - environmental education/consumer awareness
 - resource conservation
- e) Physical Infrastructure and Services
 - energy use and production

- water
- transportation/access
- communication
- sewage and sanitation
- f) Natural Hazard Management
 - reconstruction capacity
 - contingency planning
- g) Housing
 - affordable housing and shelter
 - homelessness
- h) Land Use and Urban Planning
 - land use regulations
 - land tenure (protection from eminent domain)
 - community based design and planning
- i) Urban Governance
 - legislation
 - information access
- j) Social and Cultural Vitality
 - community cooperation
 - social integration
 - cultural expression
 - conflict resolution

Question: Please brainstorm on the subject of what quantifiable benchmark goals or qualitative progress indicators might be used to confirm that efforts being made are on the right track (or signal that efforts being made are on the wrong track).

28. Most Difficult Obstacles, Most Valuable Resources

While this question is similar to question #6, it is possible that participants in this questionnaire may have changed some of their thinking in the course of responding to this questionnaire. So this is a variation of question #6, asked here to see if the respondent (you) have clear and consistent ideas on this subject, or if your ideas about challenges and resources are not yet clearly formed. (Note: Again, the best responses are the ones that help you better understand yourself—and the ones which help us better understand ourselves as a whole.

The questions:

- a) What are the most valuable resources in your community?
- b) What are the most difficult obstacles to realizing the potential of those resources?

29. How Difficult Are the Challenges Ahead?

“Overcoming the challenges of our times will require fully utilizing all the knowledge, tools, and resources accessible to us for the highest good possible in every area of capacity building (physical, ecological, medical, spiritual, educational, social, economic, technical, political, etc).”²²

Please check the box (or boxes) which best correspond(s) to the way you view the above statement:

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

30. Who is Involved When It Comes to Determining the Markets that Supply the “Ways of Earning a Living”?

“Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the ‘ways of making a living.’”²³

Please check the box (or boxes) which best correspond (s) to the way you view the above statement:

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and
there is much evidence
to support it | I believe it-- and
there is sufficient
evidence to
support it | I would like to
believe it, but there
isn't enough evidence
to support it | It is difficult to
believe it, with the
way things are
going now | I don't believe it--
there is no evidence
to support it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| agree | agree in some ways | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | disagree in
some ways | disagree |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances:

31. What are the Most Profound Influences in Life Changing Experiences?

Please describe one of the most meaningful decisions in your life.

- a) In what ways were you inspired or influenced at the time you made the decision?
- b) What are the most important factors you consider when making important decisions now, at this particular point in time?

32. Identifying the Most Important Elements of Community Life and Cultural Traditions

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

Please “brainstorm” on the subject of what would best fill in the blank in the above statement. Then choose 5-10 items from the “brainstormed list”, and rank them according to most important, and next most important, using 1 as most important, 2 as next most important, and so on.

33. Fields of Activity Most Needed to Overcome the Challenges of Our Times

Please consider the list of 117 related fields of activity which is provided in the “Additional Notes” part of this section (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C). For this question, please **list** 20 fields of activity out of the 117 listed which you believe are the fields of activity most needed to overcome the challenges you identified in question #6 part a).

(Special Note: The 117 fields of activity listed may not include fields of activity which are relevant to overcoming the challenges you identified in question #6 part a). In every way, please feel assured that the best responses are the ones you choose to make... so if you need to identify 20 fields of activity which are not in the list of 117 fields of activity provided here, please do so. Only **list** fields of activity if they express the fields of activity you feel are most needed to overcome the challenges you identified in question #6 part a).)

[Additional Special Note: This question is exactly the same as question #10 (except you are asked to list the fields of activity instead of circling them)... however, as a result of responding to this questionnaire, you (and other respondents) may now have different ideas about what the most difficult challenges of our times are, and what fields of activity are most needed to overcome those challenges.]

The questions:

- a) So... if it is at all possible, please consider again how you would respond to question #6 part a). And then list your responses here....

b) And then consider the list of 117 related fields activity which is provided in the “Additional Notes” part of this section (see subsection C). Then, please **list here** 20 fields of activity out of the 117 listed which you believe are the fields of activity most needed to overcome the challenges you identified in question #6 part a)—or, as noted above, also include other fields of activity which are not listed. Then, put your “out of the 117” list, and your personal list, in the space below (remembering to only list a total of 20). (I apologize for the awkwardness of this question... I hope to improve it as this “work-in-progress” goes forward).

34. If Only There Was a Way....

Please complete the following sentence in as many ways as you believe may help others who will read your responses:

If only there was a way to _____.

35. The Person Who Will Help Me the Most....

Please complete the following sentence in as many ways as you believe may help others who will read your responses:

The person who will help me the most is the person who will _____.

36. Suggestions for How to Improve This Questionnaire?

Please suggest any questions which you believe would help this questionnaire achieve the goals mentioned in the introduction—1) to be a starting point for the creation of a database of questionnaires that can help build caring communities 2) to be most useful as preparation for carrying out Community Visioning Initiatives.

37. What Questions Were Most Helpful, Most Inspiring, etc.

Please identify which questions were most helpful to you, most inspiring, or which in some way suggested that responses to this questionnaire would be very useful to the process of building caring communities. If possible, explain why or how the question affected you in a positive way....

38. Could This Questionnaire Be Useful As It Is?

Would you recommend this questionnaire as it is, as a preliminary survey, for organizations planning to follow up after the questionnaire with carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative? Why or why not? If your answer is yes, please explain why (why does it work for you?) If your answer is no, what's missing... what is needed so that it could put into use?)

39. Additional Comments, Questions, Suggestions, Recommendations?

Please use this space for any comments, questions, suggestions, recommendations, and/or anything else which has been "brought forward" by participating in this questionnaire.

Notes and Source References

1.-4. By this writer

5. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

The statistical information associated with the “Chattanooga Vision 2000” process was also cited in the following source: a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts in the Boundary Crossers Case Study titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”; however, this overview is no longer accessible via the Internet (it was accessible for some time at the website of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, at the University of Maryland, College Park). Here is a list of other, shorter overviews of the “Vision 2000” process: a) Sustainable Communities Network Case Study “Chattanooga: A City Worth Watching” at http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/tennessee/TN_af_chattanooga.html) b) Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence “Best Practice: Chattanooga Venture/Community Vision” at http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chatt/chatt_8.html) c) Project for Public Spaces “The Chattanooga Riverpark: Transforming a City and its Economy” at http://www.pps.org/topics/success/success_chattanooga) d) the University of Michigan’s Community Economic Adjustment Program “A Civic Vignette: The Chattanooga Story” at <http://www.irlee.umich.edu/ceap/chattanooga.html>) (All confirmed December 25, 2009)

There are additional publications which briefly cite the above mentioned statistics, and which are accessible via the Internet. One example is “The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance... and why politics will never be the same” by Matt Leighninger Vanderbilt University Press 2006 p. 16 (accessible through google books at http://books.google.com/books?id=m_ZF8JZydPQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+next+form+of+democracy&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

Special Note: In the above mentioned book “The Next Form of Democracy...”, author Matt Leighninger offers perspective on the astounding success of the Chattanooga “Vision 2000” process by including the following commentary: “Many other communities followed Chattanooga’s example, but many of them stumbled because they failed to keep citizen and community organizations involved in implementing the visions. If a vision did not include measurable benchmarks, and specific commitments by people and organizations, it stood little chance of becoming reality.” (p. 16) (And *this commentary was footnoted*, as a general reference to the book “Results That Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done” by Paul D. Epstein, et al. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006)

6. Paraphrase of the section at the bottom of “introduction” to Hexagram #40 “Liberation”, in “The I Ching Workbook”—interpretation by R.L. Wing Main Street Books 1978

7. From a free access online version of “Up from Slavery” by Booker T. Washington (at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WASHINGTON/ch11.html>) In Chapter XI “Making Their Beds Before They Could Lie In Them” (see paragraph 8). For more about Booker T. Washington, see section “Community Visioning, Job Fairs, and a “Just Transition” to More Solution-Oriented Employment” in “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” in Section __ of this IPCR Workshop Primer).
8. Carl Jung in “The Portable Jung” Edited by Joseph Campbell (translation by R.F.C. Hull) Penguin Books 1976 In section “The Concept of the Collective Unconscious” (p. 61)
9. Pandit Usharbudh Arya in “Mantra and Meditation” Himalayan Institute Press 1981 (p. 25)
10. The complete quote is “The ultimate test for us of what a truth means is indeed the conduct it dictates or inspires.” My first encounter with the partial quote was in “Twenty Years at Hull House” by Jane Addams (in Chapter 4, “The Snare of Preparation”); but there it was unattributed. By searching in “Google Books”, I discovered that it was also quoted by John Dewey in some of his works, and Mr. Dewey attributed it to William James. An accessible source reference then, is William James, in “Collected Essays and Reviews” Longman’s, Green and Company New York 1920 (in “Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results”, and address given in 1898) (see p. 412 in version accessible through “Google Books”).
11. Red Jacket (1752-1830), a Chief of the Seneca Tribe, New York State. In “Indian Oratory: Famous Speeches by Noted Indian Chieftains” by W.C. Vanderwerth University of Oklahoma Press Norman, Oklahoma (see “Brother, The Great Spirit Has Made Us All”) (accessible through “Google Books”, see p. 46 for quote)
12. William Shakespeare in the play “Hamlet, Prince of Denmark” From Act V, Scene II; the lines are spoken by Hamlet.
- 13-15. By this writer
16. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 8, Chpt. 21, p. 108 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 8 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1968)
17. Mahatma Gandhi from “Gandhi’s Swadeshi: The Economics of Permanence” by Satish Kumar at <http://squat.net/caravan/ICC-en/Krrs-en/ghandi-econ-en.htm> (see Paragraph 13 in section “Principles of Swadeshi”) (Confirmed June 11, 2008)
18. By this writer
19. From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed June 11, 2008)
20. From a document at the website for the Sarvodaya Sharamadana Movement (record of document not retained).

21. “In June 1996 the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements—Habitat II—convened in Istanbul, Turkey. Known as the City Summit, this conference was a forum for over 25,000 political and social leaders to explore urban problems and investigate policies to ameliorate these problems.”

From article titled “Cisneros Announces Winners of National Excellence Awards for Habitat II” (at <http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/rrr/winners.html>) (confirmed February 14, 2010)

“In support of this conference and to focus attention of the inherent strengths in our communities, the United States National Preparatory Committee (NPC) for Habitat II sponsored the National Excellence Awards for the City Summit.”

From U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development archive document “Communities at Work: Addressing the Urban Challenge” (at <http://www.huduser.org/publications/txt/bstprctc.txt>) (Confirmed February 14, 2010) --In letter of introduction from Henry G. Cisneros (then Secretary of U.S. Department of Health and Urban Affairs (see paragraph 2)

The actual indicators associated with this footnote were selected from the written materials supplied to people who wished to submit a description of a project and nominate that project for an award. (Note: This writer does not know where those particular written materials are now; however, most of the indicator criteria is included in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development archive document “Communities at Work: Addressing the Urban Challenge” (at <http://www.huduser.org/publications/txt/bstprctc.txt>) The following quote is also from this source. (Confirmed February 20, 2010)

Issue Areas

“Because one of the barriers to urban problems solving has been the fragmentation and isolation of issue areas, the NPC encourages the submission of innovations that integrate areas of basic community concerns.”

22-23. By this writer

Additional Notes

On the Subject of Quaker Queries

1) Below is a description of the community building concept “Community Queries”, a concept which eventually became “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities” (this description is also in the Spring, 2005 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter)

“Community Queries”— The concept of "Community Queries" introduced here is simply an expansion of the use of "Queries" by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), so that the concept applies to the geographical area sense— and the most inclusive sense— of the word "community." Here are 13

specific examples of "Queries" (from sets of queries used by three different Quaker meetings): 1) "Does our Meeting prepare all its members and children for worship, and for a life consistent with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends?" 2) "Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs, and in service to society?" 3) "Do you weigh your day-to-day activities for their effect on peace-keeping, conflict resolution and the elimination of violence?" 4) "Are you concerned for responsible use of natural resources and their nurture for future generations?" 5) "Do you try to avoid wasteful consumption and pollution?" 6) "Are you working towards the removal of social injustices? Have you attempted to examine their causes objectively, and are you ready to abandon old prejudices and think again?" 7) "Do any of your interests, important though they may appear to you, unduly absorb your time and energy to the hindrance of your growth in grace and of your service to God?" 8) "Are you loyal to the truth?" 9) "When pressure is brought to bear upon you to lower your standards, are you prepared to resist it?" 10) "Do all adults and children in our Meeting receive our loving care and encouragement to share in the life of our Meeting, and to live as Friends?" 11) "When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?" 12) "Are you sufficiently conversant with our Christian Discipline to be able, when difficult questions arise, to consider them with an informed mind as well as a loving and tender spirit?" 13) "Do you live in accordance with your spiritual convictions?" Surely, it would be a valuable exercise for any local community, faith community, non-profit human service organization, etc. to invite all residents, members, employees, participants, etc. (as appropriate to the nature of the "community") to become involved in the process of creating a set of "Queries" for that particular community of people.

Special Note on Sources: The Sources for the 13 examples of "Queries" listed above are provided at the end of this section, see p. 134-135

2) Commentary on Quaker Queries from The Co-Intelligence Institute (see <http://www.co-intelligence.org/QuakerQueries.html>)

“Quaker's often use what they call "queries" as a focus for individual and collective meditation, consideration and prayer, guiding Quaker seekers in their search for greater love, truth, and insight into how to serve humanity and live lives that are consistent with their core values. Queries can be self-created, group-created, or drawn up by higher Quaker authorities as official mandates for exploration. They are intended as questions to live with and into.

“At a personal level, queries can be used to probe-in-depth into some issue or concern, seeking the truth of one's deepest responses to it. One writer suggests: ‘The object is to stir the conscience in a gentle but firm way, and, through self-examination, to bring about a change or reaffirmation of attitude or behavior.’ Others describe a query as a way of opening themselves to divine guidance and transformation which, as in other forms of earnest prayer, can happen instantly.

“In some Quaker traditions, the queries are used collectively to derive a ‘sense of the meeting’, an explicit, shared awareness of where they are at as a spiritual community of seekers, how they are doing, where they have fallen short, or where they want to go. Sometimes Quaker meetings (which are organizationally analogous to churches or temples) will share with each other their communal responses to the same queries, seeking support from each other in living more Quakerly lives.

“Queries, suggests Quaker lecturer Martin Grundy, can provide an occasion ‘to take a piece of the spiritual life of the meeting and examine -- wrestle with -- our understanding of how we are called to live as Friends,.... an opportunity for a corporate discipline of paying attention to what God might have to teach us.... Careful and prayerful consideration of the queries can be the outward structure that melds the individuals and the faith community.... [providing] a checklist of how faithful we are as we trudge along on our journey, together.’”

Source References for above cited “Queries”

- 1) From the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” In Section “Queries”, subsection 3 “Spiritual, Nurture, Ministry and Religious Education” (see paragraph 3) (at http://www.pym.org/publish/fnp/10_queries.php) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)
- 2) From the Baltimore Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” in Part II “The Queries”, refer to the “1988 Faith and Practice Queries”, Section 5 “Personal Way of Life” (in paragraph 3) (at <http://www.bym-rsf.org/quakers/pubs/FaithNPractice/fnp4.html#IIB5>) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)
- 3) From the Baltimore Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” in Part II “The Queries”, refer to the “1988 Faith and Practice Queries”, Section 10 “The Peace Testimony” (in paragraph 1) <http://www.bym-rsf.org/quakers/pubs/FaithNPractice/fnp4.html#IIB10>)
- 4) and 5) From the Baltimore Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” in Part II “The Queries”, refer to the “1988 Faith and Practice Queries”, Section 12 “The Environment” (in paragraph 1 <http://www.bym-rsf.org/quakers/pubs/FaithNPractice/fnp4.html#IIB12>
- 6) From Quakers Australia “Handbook of Practices and Procedures” (Current Edition; 5th Edition, 2005) In Section 12.3 “Advices and Queries”; see Subsection 12.3.2 “Queries” (#20 on p. 76) http://quakers.org.au/associations/7464/files/Handbook_5th_ed.pdf
- 7) From Quakers Australia “Handbook of Practices and Procedures” (Current Edition; 5th Edition, 2005) In Section 12.3 “Advices and Queries”; see Subsection 12.3.2 “Queries” (#18 on p. 76) http://quakers.org.au/associations/7464/files/Handbook_5th_ed.pdf
- 8) From Quakers Australia “Handbook of Practices and Procedures” (Current Edition; 5th Edition, 2005) In Section 12.3 “Advices and Queries”; see Subsection 12.3.2 “Queries” (#12 on p. 75) http://quakers.org.au/associations/7464/files/Handbook_5th_ed.pdf
- 9) From Quakers Australia “Handbook of Practices and Procedures” (Current Edition; 5th Edition, 2005) In Section 12.3 “Advices and Queries”; see Subsection 12.3.2 “Queries” (#17 on p. 76) http://quakers.org.au/associations/7464/files/Handbook_5th_ed.pdf
- 10) and 11) From the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” In Section “Queries”, subsection 4 “Care for the Meeting Community”, part A “Care for One Another” (see paragraphs 3 and 4) (at http://www.pym.org/publish/fnp/10_queries.php) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)

12) From Quakers Australia "Handbook of Practices and Procedures" (Current Edition; 5th Edition, 2005) In Section 12.3 "Advices and Queries"; see Subsection 12.3.2 "Queries" (#8 on p. 75)
http://quakers.org.au/associations/7464/files/Handbook_5th_ed.pdf

13) From the Baltimore Yearly Meeting "Faith and Practice" in Part II "The Queries", refer to the "1988 Faith and Practice Queries", Section 5 "Personal Way of Life" (in paragraph 1) (at <http://www.bym-rsf.org/quakers/pubs/FaithNPractice/fnp4.html#IIB5>) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)

Section 11

36 Problems That May Arise (in Preparing for, and Implementing, Community Visioning Initiatives)

A. Introduction

1. This section is a brief overview of problems participants of a “1000Communities²” Community Visioning Initiative process may encounter.
2. The problems described in this section are more local and regional, and more process-specific, than most of the challenges listed in the “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” (also an IPCR document) (two of those challenges are included here). The “Ten Point Assessment...” (see <http://ipcri.net/images/Ten-Point-Assessment.pdf>) is still very relevant in this context, as it summarizes the indicators which suggest there is a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. And The IPCR Initiative—and specifically Community Visioning Initiatives of the kind advocated by the “1000Communities²” proposal (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)—are efforts to advocate for, and establish, “constellations” of initiatives relevant to the kind of problem solving needed in the years ahead. This “Problems That May Arise” section is an effort to be specific about obstacles to the problem solving, so organizers of Community Visioning Initiatives can do their best to minimize obstacles, and maximize solution-oriented activity.

Special Commentary:

Could problems overwhelm a Community Visioning Initiative
of the nature described in this proposal?

Yes, that possibility does exist. Even though there may be a sense of shared urgency among a majority of the residents in a given community, there are problems, issues, and challenges which can turn the whole Community Visioning Initiative process into an unfortunate experience with few positive outcomes. And yet—given circumstances which require problem solving unlike anything most of us have experienced before—experiments must be tried, and risks must be taken. However, every precaution should also be taken to avoid costly efforts which result in experiences that could be demoralizing, and impair the effectiveness of other constructive efforts in the future.

Thus, organizers and participants would be well advised to err on the side of working carefully and consolidating gains rather than moving too quickly, creating a series of unfortunate experiences, and having a demoralizing effect on the willingness of people to participate and contribute. From this point of view, it may be necessary for a community to carry out two small Community Visioning Initiatives, before they can manage one Community Visioning Initiative with a large number of participants.

2. With this introduction as a word of general caution, what follows is an overview of some of the problems that may arise during a Community Visioning Initiative of the nature described in the “1000Communities²” proposal. Organizers alerted to these problems—and others that may arise—may choose to provide workshops early in the process which can prepare participants so they can minimize such problems. Participants, for their part, can look closely at themselves, as they participate, and ask themselves at regular intervals: “Am I participating in a way that adds to the greater good of the whole, or subtracts from the greater good of the whole? Am I part of the problem—or part of the solution?”

Additional Special Commentary: This writer offers the following proposition as encouragement to organizers hoping to “get ahead” of problems before they occur, and take steps to minimize such problems:

The more we integrate the treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions into the everyday circumstances of community life—and the more we demonstrate that cultures of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence need not be considered an inevitable part of our community experience—the more we will see that problems like those described in this section can be reduced in frequency and repercussions until they are only insignificant and occasional parts of a much improved whole.

B. An Overview of Problems That May Arise

1. Honesty is the best policy

“Oh! What a tangled web we weave
when first we practice to deceive.”¹

2. There is no substitute for a healthy relationship with the local and regional ecosystem—and with the earth as a whole.

People who spend much of their lives amidst concrete, metal, plastic, and glass can easily forget how fundamentally our well being is linked to the land around us, and to the earth as a whole.

3. Widespread acceptance of a cynical view of human nature.

“Cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable.

Brief References to Evidence of This Concern:

a) Global Drugs Trade and Global Arms Trade

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”

From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254
(at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Accessed June 16, 2007)

b) From the website of UN Habitat—United Nations Human Settlements Programme—
at <http://www.unhabitat.org> (from “Media Centre/Press Kits” section)

Specifically: from “State of the World’s Cities 2004-5” (foreword by Kofi Annan, UN Sec. Gen.)
(at http://www.unhabitat.org/documents/media_centre/sowc/sgforeword.pdf) (see paragraph 1)
(Confirmed June 8, 2008)

“Many cities face pervasive and persistent problems, including growing poverty, deepening inequality and polarization, widespread corruption at the local level, high rates of urban crime and violence, and deteriorating living conditions.”

c) The increasing world population and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion (with special focus on *the increasing number of people* who are consuming material goods and ecological resources *indiscriminately*).

4. Most people would consider it unusual for a person to request to be excused from military service based on their religious, spiritual, or moral convictions.

Consider the following excerpts from the Wikipedia entry for “Conscientious Objector”.² How many of us would qualify as someone who could legitimately be excused from a military service requirement based on our religious, spiritual, or moral convictions?

“During World War II, all registrants (in the United States; see section “United States”) were sent a questionnaire covering basic facts about their identification, physical condition, history and also provided a checkoff to indicate opposition to military service because of religious training or belief. Men marking the latter option received a [DSS 47](#) form with ten questions:

- a) Describe the nature of your belief which is the basis of your claim.
- b) Explain how, when, and from whom or from what source you received the training and acquired the belief which is the basis of your claim.
- c) Give the name and present address of the individual upon whom you rely most for religious guidance.
- d) Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe in the use of force?

- e) Describe the actions and behavior in your life which in your opinion most conspicuously demonstrate the consistency and depth of your religious convictions.
- f) Have you ever given public expression, written or oral, to the views herein expressed as the basis for your claim made above? If so, specify when and where.
- g) Have you ever been a member of any military organization or establishment? If so, state the name and address of same and give reasons why you became a member.
- h) Are you a member of a religious sect or organization?
- i) Describe carefully the creed or official statements of said religious sect or organization as it relates to participation in war.
- j) Describe your relationships with and activities in all organizations with which you are or have been affiliated other than religious or military."

5. There is a need for forgiveness and reconciliation between many people, communities of people, and even nations, in the world today—and yet it would be difficult for most of us to think of anything our “community, as a whole” does to cultivate forgiveness and reconciliation....

Consider the following passage:

“Just as a thunderstorm releases tensions in the atmosphere, it is time to clear the air of mistakes and resentments.... When it is possible to overlook past errors and forgive transgressions, do so, for the sooner the tensions are relieved, the better for all concerned.”³

(from “The I Ching Workbook” by R. L. Wing, see Hexagram #40 “Liberation”)

a) And yet... if the following question is brought forward (from the document “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions”), it would be difficult for most of us to think of anything our “community, as a whole” does to cultivate forgiveness and reconciliation....

“(Question #18) Please name 5 people—who you know personally, and/or who you have been influenced by—who have inspired in you the qualities of sympathy for the suffering of others, and willingness to express compassion in ways which might alleviate some of such suffering.

What does your local community do—specifically, as a community—to nurture, encourage, support, and inspire-- to cultivate-- such persons, and thus to attract other such people to move into your local community?”

b) “Quaker's often use what they call ‘queries’ as a focus for individual and collective meditation, consideration and prayer, guiding Quaker seekers in their search for greater love, truth, and insight into how to serve humanity and live lives that are consistent with their core values.”

Consider the following example of a Quaker Query: “When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?”⁴

Are our collective responses to the need for forgiveness and reconciliation sufficient, given the nature of our current circumstances?

6. “The tendency of untrained minds is to adapt to their environment at the expense of their spiritual aspirations”⁵—and “An undisciplined person is a danger to society; any moment he may run amuck.”⁶

With regard to the above concerns: There may be many people who regard their faith community, spiritual fellowship community, etc. as fully represented by the quotations a) and b) (below); but it is possible that for the majority of people, the kind of in-depth training suggested by the quotations below is something they have not experienced.

a) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind, so that he may suppress or destroy or by-pass or obey. He must learn, from parents, elders, teachers, friends, and the leaders of the land—(and from) the books written by wise men of his own as well as other countries—the standards by which he can test his desires.”⁷ (“Sathya Sai Speaks” 12.44 p242)

b) “The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a Society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline.”⁸ (“Sathya Sai Speaks” 8.21 p108)

7. There are now, in this complex world, many radically different ideas about how to live. And there are many ways in which these different ideas about how to live come into contact, and develop into conflict.

Even if we consider only--

The 2001 Edition of “The World Christian Encyclopedia” (editors David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson: Oxford University Press)—the result of “40 years of systematizing membership statistics and other information on world religions”—includes a “best estimated count of believers of all religions in each of 238 nations and territories” in the world, and in summary “identifies 10,000 distinct religions, of which 150 have 1 million or more followers.”

[Sources: “An Accounting of World’s Souls” in The Washington Post (Richard N. Ostling, 3/17/01) (original article not currently accessible) Accessible sources for above quotes: “New Edition of ‘World Christian Encyclopedia’ published” at www.adherants.com (see <http://www.adherants.com/misc/WCE.html>] (see paragraphs 4, 5, and 9)

-- we still have, among people with a religious, spiritual, or moral foundation, the following difficulties....

“Because systems of meaning and ways of thinking differ from one culture to another, people from different cultures typically develop different ideas about morality and the best way to live.... These cultural differences become even more problematic when groups have radically different expectations about what is virtuous, what is right, and how to deal with moral conflicts.”

[Note: Source reference for this passage, and source references for a)-f) below, are provided in Notes and Source References #9, at the end of this section].

Some of the problems:

- a) "Because identity describes who we are as a person, we tend to protect those things (beliefs, values, group affiliations) that help create our sense of self."
- b) "Each party may believe that its ways of doing things and thinking about things is the best way and come to regard other ways of thinking and acting as inferior, strange, or morally wrong."
- c) "They may form negative stereotypes and attribute moral depravity or other negative characteristics to those who violate their cultural expectations, while they ignore their own vices and foibles, perceiving their own group to be entirely virtuous."
- d) "They may view any compromise about their most cherished values as a threat to their very identity and a grave evil."
- e) "In some cases, one group may come to view the beliefs and actions of another group as fundamentally evil and morally intolerable. This often results in hostility and violence and severely damages the relationship between the two groups. For this reason, moral conflicts tend to be quite harmful and intractable."
- f) "Since resolving conflict necessarily involves some kind of change, it is essential to understand the operation of worldviews. When people are asked to change their identity or things they find meaningful, they will resist, sometimes even when the alternative is death."

[All of the above quotes are from articles at www.beyondintractability.org ; most of the quotes are from the article "Moral and Value Conflicts" by Michelle Maiese (July, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

8. "... unhappy wrangles to which there seems to be no end...."

"The subject of religious education is one on which it is difficult to say anything at present without appearing to take sides in those unhappy wrangles to which there seems to be no end...."

Excerpt from document titled "Papers on Moral Education—Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress" (Held at the University of London, **September 25-29, 1908**) Edited by Gustave Spiller (Hon. General Secretary of the Congress) (accessible through Google Book Search)

[Specific excerpt from the Sixth Session, in presentation titled "Systematic Moral Education" by Prof. J. S. Mackenzie, see paragraph 3]

9. "Many writers (Brown 2006a; Hirsch et.al. 2005), argue that the only effective response to peak oil is a concerted response on the scale of a 'wartime mobilization'. However, how this might be motivated has yet to be fully explored in the literature."

[From "Energy Descent Pathways: Evaluating Potential Responses to Peak Oil" by Rob Hopkins Published by www.transitionculture.org September, 2006 (see p. 6 at <http://www.transitionculture.org/wp-content/uploads/msc-dissertation-publishable-copy.pdf>)]

10. You can't make people care.

No matter how inspiring, well-established, and highly recommended a system of education is for the purpose of cultivating compassion, understanding, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness, wisdom, love, peace, etc.—if it is imposed as an obligation, and thus forced upon individuals, there will be resentment, opposition, and rebellion. It would be much better if individuals—without any coercion or subtle influence—decided for themselves that they have a need, or a desire, for the education offered.

11. Reform begins at home....

“Don't worry about bringing people 'in line', but rather concern yourself with making sure your own practices are becoming a means for attaining inner peace.... If your practice brings you inner peace and wisdom others will emulate those practices voluntarily.”

[From Shaykh Nazim Adil Al Haqqani in “In the Mystic Footsteps of Saints” Vol. 1 (Sufi Wisdom Series) Naqshbandi-Haqqani Sufi Order (2002) p. 5-6]

12. “Youth always imitates the elders....”, and “Little pitchers have big ears.”

“How can local communities arrive at practical definitions of 'right livelihood'? What local institutions would be most appropriate as commissioners and overseers of a resource guide to 'right livelihood'? How can leaders at the regional and local community level assure residents that they understand the challenges of our times, if they themselves do not participate in the very activities they advocate for overcoming the challenges of our times? How can our communities change 'the way things get done' so that more people can live in accordance with their moral convictions?”

[Excerpt from document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” by this writer (see “All IPCR Documents” section of IPCR website homepage, at www.ipcri.net)]

For further consideration: [Question #8 from the document “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions”]

“(Question #8) Arriving at Working Definitions of 'Right Livelihood’

Consider what ways of earning a living you would identify as 'right livelihood.’

Now imagine a local community resource guide relating to employment, apprenticeships, training, and volunteer opportunities associated with 'right livelihood.’

And further: imagine a committee commissioned to produce such a 'right livelihood' resource guide.... And the individuals who make up the committee commissioned to produce such a resource guide....

a) What background (qualifications, experiences, etc.) would you like such individuals to have?

b) What local institutions would you consider most appropriate to commission such a resource guide, and oversee its production?”

13. Communities are not facing the challenges....

People cannot serve their communities as well as they would like when their communities are not facing the challenges of our times as much as they need to be. In such circumstances, people can easily get distracted from the pathways that lead to wisdom and solutions.

14. Trust vs. “Quid Pro Quo”

“Quid Pro Quo” (“something for something”... thus making an action dependent on assurance that a corresponding action will follow) is appropriate in many circumstances; but there will also be times when individuals and communities of people will have to do their part—and simply trust that the others involved will do their part.

15. Unrealistic expectations sometimes sabotage what could be critical educational contributions.

Over the years there have been many initiatives and organizations which had the potential to provide much needed solution-oriented education. Unfortunately, a significant number of such efforts have only provided a small percentage of the assistance they could have supplied. There are many possible causes for these efforts not realizing their potential; the possible cause highlighted here is sometimes “teacher-leaders” promote living in 100% accordance with their solution-oriented way of life as the only way challenges will be resolved. Thus, many people who could possibly do 25% after two years, 65% after five years, and maybe 85% after ten years, end up disengaging altogether.

I believe there must be some time during the unprecedented transition we are very likely going to experience in the coming years, when “teacher-leaders” (like those mentioned above) who have critical experience they could share with others soften their expectations about people’s capacity to “master the curriculum” right away, or even in the near future—and focus more on helping people to move, by such degrees as they can, in a positive and solution-oriented direction. There are going to be many opportunities for communities of people to help and support each other; these opportunities should not be sabotaged by expectations which are unrealistic or unreasonable.

16. Everyone’s opinion matters

While some people may believe that their opinion does not matter, organizers of the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives advocated by The IPCR Initiative will encourage (only encourage) everyone to respectfully and courteously contribute their thoughts, suggestions, comments, recommendations, etc. to meetings, workshop discussions—and as formal responses to steps in the process. Encouraging a wide range of contributions will help the best ideas “bubble up to the surface”. At any time during the process, an idea or comment may be brought forward, and many others may immediately recognize its validity. By this process, challenges, solutions, and action plans can be raised to a high priority, and get resolved much sooner than they would have—because now there is an ongoing system for actively seeking, and actively doing something with, all possible constructive ideas.

17. We must help each other.

Some residents may feel uneasy concerning the problem of residents who are less educated and less informed having as much of a say in Community Visioning Initiatives “process-voting” (votes which prioritize challenges identified, solutions identified, and steps in action plans) as those who have spent years working on these issues. This is a fundamental problem, which is not confined to Community Visioning Initiative processes; *as people who are not sufficiently informed about critical issues are everywhere, and they are investing their time, energy, and money—voting—all the time.* If we are honest with ourselves about this issue, we must admit that there are very few people who have successfully aligned all of their investments of time, energy, and money with all of the principles, practices and codes of conduct associated with the religious, spiritual, or moral tradition they feel closest to. This writer believes that there are many serious challenges before us now, and that we will need to invest our time, energy, and money very wisely to overcome these challenges. How can we do it? We must help each other. The Community Visioning Initiative outlined in the proposal associated with this document (“1000Communities²” at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) is time-intensive so that we will have time to learn much more than we know now about how to help each other.

18. How will we know if we’re on the right track?

On many occasions it will be clear that there are conflicting opinions being expressed by participants in workshops and in meetings (associated with Community Visioning Initiatives). It is also very likely that some of the solutions identified and some of the action plans created will include elements which may work against elements of other solutions or action plans. Included here is one possible overriding principle (different ones will develop from within different communities):

If the Community Visioning Initiative is on the right track, there will be more and more participants/community residents who believe that everyone has some potential for good inside of them. In other words, as the process moves forward, the capacity of each resident to contribute something to the greater good of the whole should become more appreciated, more easily recognized, and more visible in the everyday circumstances of community life.

19. Many people expect to be entertained (by scripted performances, special graphic effects, “star-power”, etc.) no matter what the subject matter is.

Many forms of mass media, though they have a responsibility to community service, have evolved in the direction of “entertainment” as their way of competing for people’s attention—and many mass media consumers have (thus) become accustomed to choosing their sources of information based on criteria that might be totally irrelevant to the content they are looking for.

20. Many people expect immediate results—immediate gratification—as much of popular culture mass media programming tries to persuade consumers that they can “have it all now”.

21. On the Cultural Institution of Advertising

a) (“...advertising has in its dynamics no motivation to seek the improvement of the individual...”)

The following passages are excerpts from “People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character” by David M. Potter (first edition 1954) University of Chicago Press 1958 (p. 176-177) (partially accessible at Google Books)

“... we must realize at once that we are dealing with... one of the very limited group of institutions which... guide the life of the individual by conceiving of him in a distinctive way and encouraging him to conform as far as possible to the concept. For instance, the church, representing the force of religion, conceives of man as an immortal soul; our schools and colleges, representing the force of learning, conceive of him as a being whose behavior is guided by reason; our business and industry, representing the force of the economic free-enterprise system, conceive of him as a productive agent who can create goods or render services that are useful to mankind. Advertising, of course, is committed to none of these views and entertains them only incidentally. Representing as it does the force of a vast productive mechanism seeking outlets for an overwhelming flow of goods, it conceives of man as a consumer. Each institution is distinctive, again, in the qualities to which it appeals and in the character of the reward which it offers: the church appeals to the spirit of conscience of the individual and offers the rewards of salvation and peace of mind; learning appeals to the reason of man and offers the hope of a perfected society from which evils have been eliminated by the application of wisdom; free enterprise appeals to the energies and the capacities of man and offers the rewards of property, personal attainment, and satisfaction in the job. Advertising appeals primarily to the desires, the wants—cultivated or natural—of the individual, and it sometimes offers as its goal a power to command the envy of others by outstripping them in the consumption of goods and services.

“To pursue this parallel a step further, one may add that the traditional institutions have tried to improve man and to develop in him qualities of social value, though, of course, these values have not always been broadly conceived. The church has sought to inculcate virtue and consideration of others—the golden rule; the schools have made it their business to stimulate ability and to impart skills; the free-enterprise system has constantly stressed the importance of hard work and the sinfulness of unproductive occupations. And at least two of these institutions, the church and the school, have been very self-conscious about their roles as guardians of the social values and have conducted themselves with a considerable degree of social responsibility.

“In contrast with these, advertising has in its dynamics no motivation to seek the improvement of the individual or to impart qualities of social usefulness, unless conformity to material values may be so characterized. And though it wields an immense social influence, comparable to the influence of religion and learning, it has no social goals and no social responsibility for what it does with its influence, so long as it refrains from palpable violations of truth and decency. It is this lack of institutional responsibility, this lack of inherent social purpose to balance social power, which, I would argue, is a basic cause for concern about the role of advertising. Occasional deceptions, breaches of taste, and deviations from sound ethical conduct are in a sense superficial and are not necessarily intrinsic. Equally, high-minded types of advertising which we see more regularly than we sometimes realize are also extraneous to an analysis of the basic nature of advertising. What is basic is that advertising, as such, with all its vast power to influence values and conduct, cannot ever lose sight of the fact that it ultimately regards man as a consumer and defines its own mission as one of stimulating him to consume or to desire to consume.

“If one can justifiably say that advertising has joined the charmed circle of institutions which fix the values and standards of society and that it has done this without being linked to any of the socially defined objectives which usually guide such institutions in the use of their power, then it becomes necessary to consider with special care the extent and nature of its influence—how far it extends and in what way it makes itself felt.”

b) (“The educational system of a country plays a significant role in an individual’s selection and use of the media....”)

[The following passages are excerpts from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach” by Art Silverblatt and Nikolai Zlobin M.E. Sharpe July, 2004] (most content accessible at Google Books)

“Media literate individuals have learned to develop a critical distance from the information they receive through the media, so that they are in a position to make independent judgments about 1) what programming they choose to watch, read, or hear 2) how to interpret the information that they receive through the channels of communication.” p7

“The educational system of a country plays a significant role in an individual’s selection and use of the media. A country’s educational curriculum—what subjects students are exposed to—affects their ability to interpret the information being conveyed through the channels of mass media.” p. 157

“Popular programming reflects a level of acceptance and shared values among large numbers of people. People tend to watch programs that meet their approval. If they are truly offended by violent programs, they would not watch them. In that sense, media programming can be regarded as a text that reflects the attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths that define a culture.” p66

“At the same time, media programming reinforces cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths. Media messages are communicated through the countless hours of media programming that repeat, directly or indirectly, the cultural script.” p68

“Finally, the media do not merely reflect or reinforce culture, but in fact shape attitudes, values, behavior, preoccupations, and myths.” p68

“The ability to identify and evaluate propaganda messages undermines the central persuasive function of propaganda by empowering individuals to develop independent judgments about the messages they receive through the media. However, developing an awareness of propaganda is not an easy task....” p50

c) (“The United States is the home of the world’s largest and most influential advertising industry.”)

“The United States is the home of the world’s largest and most influential advertising industry. As of 2001, 43% of the advertising produced in the world originated in the United States. Indeed, half of the top 100 global marketers—and six of the top ten—are U.S. companies.” p. 228

“The international market is saturated with American entertainment programming. Hollywood films account for approximately 85% of movie audiences worldwide. Further, American programming makes up approximately 65% of global prime-time TV viewing.” p. 69

22. "... a sort of tolerance within the culture for this sort of irregular kind of self-enrichment...."

The following interview excerpt is from the transcript of a segment on the November 26, 2008 Morning Edition Show on National Public Radio. The title of the segment is "Joseph O'Neill, The New Immigrant Experience", and in this segment NPR Morning Edition Host Steve Inskeep is interviewing Joseph O'Neill on the subject of his new book "Netherland"....

November 26, 2008 from Morning Edition

"STEVE INSKEEP, host: We're talking this Thanksgiving week about what it means to become American....

.... Steve Inskeep: You began writing about this guy from the West Indies.

Mr. O'NEILL: Yeah.

INSKEEP: Chuck Ramkissoon?

Mr. O'NEILL: Correct, yeah.

INSKEEP: Is it fair to say that Chuck is trying to redefine what it means to be American?

Mr. O'NEILL: Well, I think Chuck, as a Trinidad immigrant, is invoking a pre-existing tradition of what it means to be American. He's trying to plug into the rags-to-riches narrative, which is part of the legend of America and of New York especially. And so I don't think he's trying to reinvent the wheel, but merely trying to find himself a place on the wheel....

.... INSKEEP: You mentioned that at one point that this character you write about, this West Indian immigrant, is involved in the classic American story, rags to riches.

Mr. O'NEILL: Yeah.

INSKEEP: Of course, the classic American version is a very specific kind of rags to riches. It's not that somebody suddenly makes you a prince. It's that you strive and dig and find some scheme and do whatever you have to do to make a little bit of money. And that's what...

Mr. O'NEILL: Yeah.

INSKEEP: And that's what he's doing. He's got different businesses. He's got different sidelines.

Mr. O'NEILL: Yeah.

INSKEEP: And when I read about that, I think about, well, so many American novels that - you go back to Mark Twain who wrote about a kind of striver and schemer in the Gilded Age and was kind of a striver and a schemer himself. He always had some idea to strike it rich. Were you thinking about - "The Great Gatsby" is another - I mean, were you thinking about so many American characters that had come before Chuck Ramkissoon when you presented this West Indian immigrant to a reader like me?

Mr. O'NEILL: Well, I think so. But I think, more specifically, Chuck Ramkissoon himself, the character, is thinking about it. He lives in the United States for a number of years. And he becomes aware of this very specific kind of narrative in American life which essentially authorizes people to do whatever it takes to climb up by their boot straps and to make something of themselves, even if that means cutting corners from time to time - which is what Chuck ends up doing - and even if it means being a bit of a rogue, because I think there's a sort of tolerance within the culture for this sort of irregular kind of self-enrichment, because it's not a perfect society, the United States. It doesn't provide everyone with the same start in life. And therefore if someone wants to do better for themselves, people kind of turn a blind eye and in fact have a smile, even if they've broken a few rules along the way. And this guy, Chuck Ramkissoon, is aware of that and tries to plug into it.

INSKEEP: Well, Joseph O'Neill, I've enjoyed speaking with you.

Mr. O'NEILL: Thank you very much.

INSKEEP: And happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. O'NEILL: Happy Thanksgiving to you as well.

INSKEEP: You can read an excerpt from Joseph O'Neill's novel "Netherland" at npr.org. Our conversations on becoming American continue into the holiday. Tomorrow our three immigrant writers describe Thanksgiving as they have experienced it. This is NPR News."

23. "Economics is one thing; morality is, quite clearly, another."

The following passages are excerpts from the article "Moral Disagreement, Moral Education, Common Ground" by Warren A. Nord in "Making Good Citizens: Education and Civil Society" Edited by Diane Ravitch and Joseph P. Viteritti Yale University Press 2003 (only the first five lines accessible at Google Books)

"It is a little surprising that there has been no controversy over economics education, because economics is, in our culture, deeply controversial, often on moral and religious grounds..... A part of the problem is what the texts and the new national standards leave out. They say little about poverty, especially as a moral or spiritual problem. They are usually silent about the moral relation of the First and Third Worlds. They typically ignore the effects of economics and technology on the environment. They are oblivious to the moral and spiritual problems of consumer culture. They ask no questions about dehumanizing work. They emphasize the importance of the profit motive and competition, but say nothing about the possibility of excess profits or the possible costs of competition...."

"(Furthermore)... the economics world (is) defined in terms of competition of self-interested individuals with unlimited wants for scarce resources.... (and) decisions should be made according to cost-benefit analyses that maximize whatever it is that we value and leave no room in the equation for duties, the sacred, or those dimensions of life that aren't quantifiable. Economics is one thing; morality is, quite clearly, another." (p159-160)

"The texts and the standards approach economics not as a subject, open to various moral, political, and religious interpretations; but as a discipline, as a 'hard' social science. In the process, they convey uncritically to students a particular way of thinking about values, human nature, and social institutions that is deeply controversial." (p161)

24. The "Triple Crises"

The following passages (with additional corroborating quotes) are excerpts from pre-conference (September, 2007) information (see http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf) (Confirmed January 24, 2010) for a "Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction" (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies

"The planet's ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the "Triple Crisis," the convergence of three advancing conditions:

a) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming (“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.”¹⁰)

b) The end of the era of cheap energy (‘peak oil’) (“The human community’s central task for the coming decades must be the undoing of its dependence on oil, coal, and natural gas in order to deal with the twin crises of resource depletion and climate chaos.”¹¹)

c) The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.”

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”

25. “Morality is now second to the economy as the number one concern of voters.”

Surveys which provide results like this are contributing to an oversimplified view of our complex world.

26. An oversimplified view of education

“For some... any discussion of moral education must start from the question ‘Should schools be involved in the moral education of their students?’ To me, this is a deeply mistaken question. Schools cannot avoid influencing the moral development of their students, though they can certainly avoid thinking through what they actually do and the impact that they have.” (in Introduction to “Philosophical Discussion in Moral Education” by Tim Sprod Taylor and Francis 2007 (see p. 1) (accessible through Google Books)

27. The increasing world population and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion (with special focus on *the increasing number of people who are consuming material goods and ecological resources indiscriminately*)

28. “... humanitarian aid is not a solution to the world's crises.”

a) From a United Nations press release dated November 18, 2003 (at ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/global%20Press%20Release%202004.doc) (confirmed January 24, 2010)

“(New York: 18 November 2003): The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, launched the annual global appeal for humanitarian aid today at United Nations headquarters in New York. He requested US\$ 3 billion for aid in 2004 to help save the lives of 45 million people in 21 of the world's most serious crises, many of which are in Africa.”

b) And from the introduction to the document titled "Humanitarian Appeal 2004":
(document accessible at <http://ochaonline.un.org/cap2005/appeals.html>) (confirmed January 24, 2010)

"More than 45 million people are struggling to survive the painful consequences of conflicts and natural disasters. They are victims and survivors, sometimes of several crises at once: war, drought, poverty, and HIV/AIDS.

"As this Appeal shows, these people live amidst 21 crises across the world, the majority of them in Africa. At the same time, this Appeal calls attention to the plight of millions more people in need in other crises, such as Afghanistan and Colombia.

"Behind the statistics are ordinary people, each with their lives, hopes and dreams. They are people living in extraordinary situations. Many have been displaced from their homes, had their lives severely disrupted, and lost their livelihoods and belongings.... Savings and possessions disappear. People need food, and much more, to survive.... they need our practical support to help them to respond, recover and get their normal lives back."

Agency plans

"For 2004, the humanitarian community has worked together to identify needs by sector, for example food, health, shelter, and education. They have prepared plans to work with national governments and local organizations: 136 agencies are proposing 1,086 projects to meet the needs of people facing acute risks to their lives.

"The plans reflect a commitment to coordinated aid work and agreement on a core agenda to protect life, uphold rights, and ensure health and basic subsistence.

"Specialization aside, all humanitarian agencies are concerned with alleviating human suffering, and saving and sustaining lives. Agencies are aware that, ultimately, they share the same goals and that the best way to proceed is in partnership.

"Few would disagree with the definition of the humanitarian goal stated at the June 2003 International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship in Stockholm: 'To save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters,' and 'to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations.'

"But the task of 'saving lives' inevitably involves more than this. It also means rebuilding destroyed societies, restoring basic services and strengthening systems that protect people. The humanitarian agenda, therefore, often extends to reconstruction, recovery, transition and peace building.

"Humanitarian aid therefore also helps governments to work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals agreed in 2000.

“In 2004, agencies expect to build on their successes. Among more visible achievements in 2003, humanitarian organizations carried out large-scale polio eradication campaigns in several African countries, fed people as war raged in Liberia, resettled people in Angola and Indonesia, helped avert famine in Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Southern Africa, and provided potable water to people in Chechnya (Russian Federation).

“In each of the world’s crises, aid agencies providing food, shelter, and medicine helped to save and sustain countless lives. And while aid workers faced growing risks to their personal safety, they continued to provide aid to people in need.

“Nonetheless, humanitarian aid is not a solution to the world’s crises. Aid workers can address humanitarian needs; but they cannot solve underlying political, economic and social problems that cause and perpetuate these crises.” (this writers’ emphasis)

29. Practice will be necessary

It may take 3-5 years and 2 or 3 Community Visioning Initiatives before residents can understand how many ways they can contribute to the process of Community Visioning, and how many ways they can benefit from it. But once they know, they will never forget.

30. Can we make the difficult decisions?

“At present, educated people are wanting in the grit necessary to act according to their convictions; they know a thing is right, but lack the will to carry it through.”¹²

31. There are Many Factions....

The following is an excerpt from the website of “Earth and Religions: Crisis, Opportunity, Convergence” (subtitled: “An Interfaith/Environmental Conference/Engaging All People in the Quest for a Sustainable World”) (held June 9-12, 2005) Excerpt from website section titled “Letter from Satish” (Satish Kumar) (website no longer accessible)

“Leaders and activists in the environmental and social justice movement often consider spiritual and religious organizations irrelevant. They see religious pursuit and practice as being too self-centered and not engaged with the real world. In the same manner, religious leaders and organizations look upon the environmental and social justice movements as a waste of time. They believe that the only real change is personal change, and if all human beings behaved well and lived religiously then the world’s problems will sort themselves out.”

32. "... a need for approximately 58 million more farmers in the United States...."

a) Excerpt from article "50 Million Farmers" by Richard Heinberg, published at the Energy Bulletin website on November 17, 2006 (see <http://www.energybulletin.net/node/22584#>) (confirmed January 24, 2010)

"One way or another, re-ruralization will be the dominant social trend of the 21st century. Thirty or forty years from now—again, one way or another—we will see a more historically normal ratio of rural to urban population, with the majority once again living in small, farming communities. More food will be produced in cities than is the case today, but cities will be smaller. Millions more people than today will be in the countryside growing food.

"They won't be doing so the way farmers do it today, and perhaps not the way farmers did it in 1900. Indeed, we need perhaps to redefine the term *farmer*.... We should perhaps start thinking of a farmer as someone with 3 to 50 acres, who uses mostly hand labor and twice a year borrows a small tractor that she or he fuels with ethanol or biodiesel produced on-site.

"How many more farmers are we talking about? Currently the U.S. has three or four million of them, depending on how we define the term. Let's again consider Cuba's experience: in its transition away from fossil-fueled agriculture, that nation found that it required 15 to 25 percent of its population to become involved in food production. In America in 1900, nearly 40 percent of the population farmed; the current proportion is close to one percent. (The current population of the United States is estimated at 306,670,896. 1% of that number is 3,066,708, an approximation of how many farmers there are now in the U.S. 20% of the total U.S. population is 61,334,179. According to this math, there would be a need for approximately 58 million more farmers in the United States, in the future, than there are now.)....

"How soon will the need arise? Assuming that the peak of global oil production occurs within the next five years, and that North American natural gas is already in decline, we are looking at a transition that must occur over the next 20 to 30 years, and that must begin approximately now."

b) From the website of UN Habitat—United Nations Human Settlements Programme—at <http://www.unhabitat.org> (from "Media Centre/Press Kits" section)

Specifically: from "State of the World's Cities 2004-5" (foreword by Kofi Annan, UN Sec. Gen.) (at http://www.unhabitat.org/documents/media_centre/sowc/sgforeword.pdf) (see paragraph 1) (Confirmed January 24, 2010))

"Many cities face pervasive and persistent problems, including growing poverty, deepening inequality and polarization, widespread corruption at the local level, high rates of urban crime and violence, and deteriorating living conditions."

c) Excerpt from the FAO Newsroom section of The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website. In the "Focus on the Issues" subsection, see "High-level conference on world food security...", and then see "Conference News" (6/6/2008). Specific article "Food Summit Calls for More Investment in Agriculture" (paragraphs 1, 2, and 9) (at <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2008/1000856/index.html>) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)

...“On climate change, the Declaration said: ‘It is essential to address (the) question of how to increase the resilience of present food production systems to challenges posed by climate change... We urge governments to assign appropriate priority to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, in order to create opportunities to enable the world’s smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people, in particular vulnerable areas, to participate in, and benefit from financial mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, mitigation and technology development, transfer and dissemination. We support the establishment of agricultural systems and sustainable management practices that positively contribute to the mitigation of climate change and ecological balance.’”

33. “The Great Way is very level....”

- a) “Were I to have the least bit of knowledge, in walking on a Great Road, it’s only going astray that I would fear.
The Great Way is very level;
but people greatly delight in tortuous paths.”

[From Chapter 53 of “Te-Tao Ching” (by Lao Tzu) (possibly written in 6th Century B.C.E., sufficient evidence unavailable) (translation by Robert G. Hendricks) Ballantine Books, New York 1989]

- b) “If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked....”

[By this writer, from document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” by this writer (see the section “All IPCR Documents” at the website of The IPCR Initiative, at www.ipcri.net)

34. Proactive Measures Will Be Necessary to Encourage Constructive Activity during Community Visioning Initiatives

- a) Consider the following commentary on preparation for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative....

People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community.

- b) Question #14 (from the document “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions”, included in this “Workshop Primer” as Section __) is as follows:

Please list at least 5 preventative measures which you believe would proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during the carrying out of a Community Visioning Initiative in your community.

35. One of the most persistent ironies in life....

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

36. Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

C. Concluding Comments

1. While there may be many people—some of whom are authorities in their fields of activity—who may already have clear ideas about what the challenges ahead are, and what solutions will be most effective

and

while there may also be many people who feel that they do not—because of lack of experience or education, or for other reasons—have the “appropriate skills” to fit into this kind of community activity....

it is critical, and cannot be emphasized enough, that this kind of Community Visioning Initiative process (the kind advocated by The IPCR Initiative in the “1000Communities2” proposal, see <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) gives as much importance to developing a close-knit community (and thus to increasing compassion for our fellow human beings, and helping each other) as it does to

a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges

b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges

c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations and businesses

d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, and organizations with significant resources

2. Therefore, residents are encouraged to participate in as many ways, and in as many steps as possible.

Notes and Source References

1. Sir Walter Scott [Scottish author & novelist (1771 - 1832)] in “Marmion” Canto vi. Stanza 17. From www.quotationspage.com (see <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/27150.html>)
 2. From Wikipedia article on “Conscientious Objector” at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscientious_objector In Section “Alternatives for Objectors”, see subsection “United States” (paragraph 5). (Confirmed January 22, 2010)
 3. Paraphrase of the section at the bottom of “introduction” to Hexagram #40 “Liberation”, in “The I Ching Workbook”—interpretation by R.L. Wing Main Street Books 1978
 4. From the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting “Faith and Practice” In Section “Queries”, subsection 4 “Care for the Meeting Community”, part A “Care for One Another” (see paragraph 4) (at http://www.pym.org/publish/fnp/10_queries.php) (Confirmed January 24, 2010)
 5. Jonathan Roof in “Pathways to God: A Study Guide to the Teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba” Leela Press 1992 (page number not retrieved)
 6. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 14, Chpt. 11, p. 71 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 8 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1978-1980)
 7. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 12, Chpt. 44, p. 272 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 8 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1973-1974)
 8. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 8, Chpt. 21, p. 108 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 8 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1968)
 9. Most of the quotes are from the article “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (July, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences) (See specific source references below) The Beyond Intractability Knowledge Base Project is “A Free Knowledge Base on More Constructive Approaches to Destructive Conflict”, and is affiliated with the University of Colorado, Colorado (USA) Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Co-Directors and Editors c/o Conflict Information Consortium (Formerly Conflict Research Consortium) (All links confirmed October 21, 2009)
- First quote: from paragraph 7 in section “What is Moral Conflict?”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)
- a) From paragraph 1 in section “The Importance of Identify Frames”, in “Identify Frames” by Robert Gardner (June, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/identity_frames/)
 - b) From paragraph 7 in section “What is Moral Conflict?”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)
 - c) From first paragraph in section “Negative Stereotyping”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle

Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

d) From paragraph five in section “Why Moral Conflict is Intractable”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

e) From last paragraph in section “What is Moral Conflict?”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

f) From paragraph 1 in section “Summary”, in “Cultural and Worldview Frames” by Michelle LeBaron (August, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/cultural_frames/)

10. From TimesOnline article “Global warming must stay below 2C or world faces ruin, scientists declare” on May 28, 2009 (see <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6380709.ece>) (confirmed October 21, 2009) [references document “The St James Palace Memorandum” from Symposium “Action for a Low Carbon and Equitable Future” London, UK, 26 – 28 May 2009) (for that document, see http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/pdfs/sjp_memorandum_290509.pdf) (confirmed October 21, 2009)]

11. From Richard Heinberg’s Museletter #184 titled “A View from Oil’s Peak” (at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/museletter/184>) (from Richard Heinberg’s website at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/> [Note: Richard Heinberg is widely acknowledged as one of the world’s foremost Peak Oil educators. He is a journalist, educator, editor, lecturer, and a Core Faculty member of New College of California, where collaborative efforts between faculty, students, and a variety of other “stakeholders” are creating models for “Powerdown” efforts at the regional and community level. Some of the books he has written: *The Party’s Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies*; *Powerdown*; *The Oil Depletion Protocol: A Plan to Avert Wars, Terrorism, and Economic Collapse*; and *Peak Everything: Waking Up to a Century of Declines*”]

12. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 12, Chpt. 44, p. 241 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 8 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1973-74)

Section 12

Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life

[Note: This section is Parts B-G of Appendix 6, from the document “1000Communities2” (accessible at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)]

B. “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden...”

1. The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

2. Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

3. *And yet...* much of the real treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions now seems to be hidden—and thus in need of being re-discovered. These “hidden” resources include teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) place a high priority on the development of truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which ‘... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.’”

What can we do—at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives, to bring the best ideas *from* the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us and “*through the mist*”, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

C. The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative

1. This writer is the founder and outreach coordinator for The IPCR Initiative.
2. The IPCR 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.
3. The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.
4. The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.
5. Assessments of the challenges of our times such as the one offered in Appendix 1 provide evidence that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—to be
 - a) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
 - b) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
 - c) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy” which are now accessible to us.
6. Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make along the lines described by the three goals listed above are as follows:
 - a) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of this “1000Communities²” proposal—so that the Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
 - b) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts through workshops offered at the local community level

- c) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- d) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- e) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 105 fields of activity and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional good news, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)
- f) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in “A List of Related Fields of Activity” (see Appendix 7)—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

7. The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

D. Filling in the Blank

1. This writer believes that the “multiplier effect” of a positive nature referred to above will contribute to
 - a) re-affirming the real treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions
 - b) demonstrating the truth of the following propositions
 - i) There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.
 - ii) People can, one by one, decide to deliberately focus the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on many or all of the action plans which emerge from Community Visioning Initiatives.

iii) The result can be that there are countless ‘ways to earn a living’ which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

and thus create many meaningful answers to the challenge of filling in the blank in the following statement:

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

E. Ongoing Revitalization of a Communities’ “Moral Compass”

How can local communities arrive at practical definitions of “right livelihood”? What local institutions would be most appropriate as commissioners and overseers of a resource guide to “right livelihood”? How can leaders at the regional and local community level assure residents that they understand the challenges of our times, if they themselves do not participate in the very activities they advocate for overcoming the challenges of our times? How can our communities change “the way things get done” so that more people can live in accordance with their moral convictions? Workshops associated with The IPCR Initiative can identify, discover, create, support, and sustain comprehensive and practical answers to these very relevant questions— and provide a system by which the answers can be re-evaluated and re-stated on an ongoing basis. *Therefore, it may be said that by its very nature The IPCR Initiative includes a built-in and ongoing process for re-evaluating and re-stating the “moral compass” of a community or region.* And it may also be said that such a “moral compass” would incorporate any genuine and sincere contributions from participants associated with any religious, spiritual, or moral tradition without any damage to the genuine and sincere parts of the “framework” which gives meaning to their lives.

F. Our Particular Moment in Time on This Planet Earth *Could Be* the Best of Times

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” The IPCR Initiative can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as it encourages and facilitates a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples’ time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see Appendix 7). As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance. The IPCR Initiative can help to remedy such an unfortunate irony by helping to create “caring communities”, which are defined here as follows:

“Caring communities” are communities with residents who are aware of the depth and range of the challenges of our times, and therefore do their best to take actions which will have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals (see Section 4), and on other related fields of activity (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C).

The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

Our particular moment in time on this Planet Earth *could be* the best of times.

G. Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

Section 13

Some Thoughts on Evaluation

Introduction

More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving the challenges ahead will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. At this particular point in time, however, there is little consensus as to what the most difficult challenges are. In this kind of environment, much time, energy, and money may be expended without actually moving large segments of the world population closer to any significant resolutions.

In Section 3 “Assessment”, some of the evidence which has formed this writer’s views about the challenges of our times will be brought forward. This evidence is associated with issues that require some sifting of very complex information, which by its nature must be considered incomplete at best. This writer recognizes that a significant degree of consensus may be needed to resolve the most complex challenges. To be more specific, this writer believes there has never been a time in the course of history when both the capacity to cultivate practical wisdom and the capacity to build a positive and constructive consensus were as important as they are now. Are we up to the challenge?

This writer hopes that more and more people are also coming to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else. Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

This writer believes there will be a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times. While it is difficult to know what such a positive outcome might look like, this writer feels that one way of describing such an outcome would be “sufficient resolution to all of the challenges identified in Section 3 of this “IPCR Workshop Primer”, so that each and every one of them are no longer an ongoing threat to economic and social stability in any part of the world”. In addition, for such a positive outcome to occur, this writer feels that the following conditions must have occurred:

- a) more and more people must have come to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else
- b) many people must have personally experienced the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that they deliberately increased the “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to overcoming the challenges identified by residents as priority challenges

Identifying the initiatives which were most effective in bringing about such positive change would seem like a significant goal for people associated with evaluation methodology. While this writer does not have the training or experience in evaluation methodology, he feels that he can provide some thoughts and suggestions which may be helpful to people hoping to identify which initiatives might be most effective in bringing about such positive change—and, ultimately, which initiatives actually did do much to bring about such positive change. This section of the “IPCR Workshop Primer” will be an informal sharing of such thoughts and suggestions.

This “Evaluation” section is organized into the following subsections:

- A. Evaluation indicators associated with The IPCR Initiative (p. 164)
- B. Two Approaches to Evaluation Criteria (p. 169)
- C. Multiple Procedures for Identifying and Interpreting Relevant Observations (p. 174)
(Questionnaires, Community Journals, Indicators, and Media Tracking)
- D. Detailed Suggestions for the Evaluation of Community Visioning Initiatives (p. 178)
(Section 14 “Evaluating the Process”, from the “1000Communities²” proposal)
- E. Thoughts and Suggestions for Further Exploration (p. 185)
- F. Some Examples of Indicators (p. 187)

Part A

Evaluation Indicators associated with The IPCR Initiative

It is of critical importance that efforts to evaluate initiatives in general—or The IPCR Initiative in particular—do not lose sight of common sense. There are very difficult challenges ahead. If such challenges are not overcome, it may not matter what other valuable assets we have created, or what other minor problems have been remedied.

The IPCR Initiative offers a “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” (see Section 3 and Appendix 1—Part A). This writer has also included a 7 point list of difficult challenges in many of the introductions to the “1000Communities²” proposal (there are three of those introductions in Section 7)(the 7 point list is also included in the “Notes and Source References” part of this section—see Note #1). This writer believes these challenges are serious obstacles to a peaceful and sustainable future which must be addressed in a substantial way, and The IPCR Initiative is an effort in this direction.

Even so, this writer acknowledges that the evidence suggesting the urgency of resolving these challenges is complex, and by its very nature, incomplete. However incomplete such evidence might be, this writer also understands that using appropriate pathways for responding to these challenges can result in win-win peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts in every part of the world. This “IPCR Workshop Primer” is an effort to provide evidence supporting the existence and the potential of such win-win solutions.

This “Workshop Primer”, therefore, hopes to demonstrate that common sense win-win solution-oriented activity can move us away from the negative outcomes associated with a variety of difficult challenges, and towards positive outcomes associated with a variety of fields of activity.

In the context of The IPCR Initiative, this kind of movement can be observed and confirmed (or questioned), through the movement of many different indicators—both quantitative and qualitative. Here are some examples of such indicators:

- 1) A decrease in the level of difficulty associated with overcoming the challenges listed in the “Ten Point Assessment...”, and the “Seven Point List”.

Example: If there was an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings, there is no doubt such a phenomena would go far towards a re-organization of wealth, with an emphasis on the

greater good of the whole. Through The IPCR Initiative, this writer has done as much as he possibly can (at this point in time) to encourage and support such an increase in compassion, as he believes that such an increase would have a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on the other complex and difficult challenges in need of urgent resolution.

2) Movement in the direction of achieving the goals in The IPCR Mission Statement

3) More IPCR Workshops = more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other as we work to overcome the challenges ahead

Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. This writer is confident that applying these concepts—at the local community and regional level—will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute—and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

4) More and more comprehensive and time-intensive Community Visioning Initiatives

This writer believes that Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

Unfortunately, sorting out what our responsibilities are—or sorting out what the real challenges are, and what are sound and practical solutions—is becoming more and more difficult, as there is now, in many parts of the world, a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time. *Somehow or other, we need to sort through all this, and we need to do so in a way that helps us to realize how much we need to be learning so that we can be part of the solutions... and how much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other.*

Towards that end result, this writer has given much attention to advocating for Community Visioning Initiatives; specifically, comprehensive and time-intensive Community Visioning Initiatives, which give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as they do to

- a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
- b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for

a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies

d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources

5) Increasing our awareness of how much we need to be learning so that we can be a part of the solutions

From this writer's point of view, a critical part of an effective Community Visioning Initiative is the establishment of many "Community Teaching and Learning Centers". There is a critical need to develop "teacher-leaders"—not just in places where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs, but in communities in every part of the world. There is also a critical need to create accessible and affordable Community Education systems. As proposed in Section __, "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" can function as

a) information centers, resource centers, and clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of "ways of earning a living" which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges)

b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the "Preliminary Survey" (for more about "Preliminary Surveys" see Section 10 of this "IPCR Workshop Primer", and Section 9 in the "1000Communities²" proposal), and as determined by the "Community Teaching and Learning Center" Coordinator

c) practice sites for the development of "teacher-leaders"

d) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal

e) locations for "Community Journals" (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)

f) locations for "Final Version" Document submission ("voting") as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Community Visioning Initiative (for details on the 15 Steps, see Section 6, p. 22-42, in the "1000Communities²" proposal at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

g) locations for "Summary of Community Visioning Initiative Process to Date" Notebooks (for latecomers, and as an information resource for media)

h) central locations for listings of employment opportunities

i) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

6) An expanded use of the concept “Job Fairs”

Underemployment cannot be considered an example of common sense in times of great challenges. There is much that needs to be done to overcome the challenges of our times, and we need to provide opportunities for as many people as possible to participate in solution-oriented activity. In addition—and in connection with an emphasis on an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—The IPCR Initiative recognizes that

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

This writer believes that there are countless number of “things” people—in all parts of the world—can do to remedy that deficiency. The IPCR Initiative represents a positive, constructive, systematic, practical, and doable way to remedy that deficiency.

Here is an excerpt from the “1000Communities²” proposal (accessible at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>), which provides some key points on the subject of how job fairs could be an important part of a “just transition” to more solution-oriented employment. (See “Step 12: Summary Presentations and Job Fairs”, on p. 38-39 in the “1000Communities²” document)

“Special Commentary: By now, there will have been sufficient public discourse for those people with understanding about high level shifts in investment portfolios to have learned something about what directions future shifts will be leaning towards. The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.”

7) Building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the belief that using a system as comprehensive as the Community Visioning Initiative process described in detail in the 161 page proposal titled “1000Communities²” (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)-- to maximize citizen participation in identify challenges, resources, solutions, and action plans—will eventually, over the years, result in communities of people approximating “a highest synthesis of truth and community” *from their point of view... and* that what they discover as “a highest synthesis” will be of such a similar spiritual essence to other communities (which have also carried out Community Visioning Initiatives of a similar nature) as to *significantly increase the likelihood of spiritual cohesion between many diverse communities of people.*

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports efforts to increase the likelihood of spiritual cohesion between many diverse communities of people.

8) Increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil

a) The way we “invest” our time, energy, and money has a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

As J.C. Kumarappa expresses it in his book “Why the Village Movement?”: “A buyer hardly realizes he owes any duties at all in his everyday transactions.”² (And yet), “... every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it.... Hence it behooves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy.”³

--“The energy invested in a particular thing, during its life from cradle to grave, is called the ‘embodied energy’ of that object. The amount of embodied energy that an item contains depends on the technology used to create it (the origin of materials inputs, how they were created and transported, etc.), the nature of the production system, and the distance the item travels from inception to purchase.”⁴

--“By supporting items and processes that have lower embodied energy, as well as the companies that produce them, consumers can significantly reduce society’s energy use.”⁵

--“If we feel it is beyond us to guarantee the concomitant results of all our transactions, it necessarily follows that we must limit our transactions to a circle well within our control. This is the bed rock of swadeshi. The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions, and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfill our obligations as trustees.”⁶

b) Making Best Use of the Embodied Energy inherited from industrial culture

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil-fuel based economy back to a solar based economy (agriculture and forestry) will (require making best use of) the embodied energy we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes, and ideas.... It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”⁷

c) Permaculture Summary⁸

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (in that order)
Grow a garden and eat what it produces
Avoid imported resources where possible
Use labor and skill in preference to materials and technology
Design, build, and purchase for durability and repairability
Use resources for their greatest potential use

Use renewable resources wherever possible even if local environmental costs appear higher
Use non-renewable and embodied energies primarily to establish sustainable systems
When using high technology avoid using state of the art equipment
Avoid debt and long-distance commuting
Reduce taxation by earning less
Develop a home-based lifestyle, be domestically responsible

Part B

Two Approaches to Evaluation Criteria

Efforts to define, identify, and achieve goals associated with the above mentioned fields of activity will require a “constellation” of initiatives, such as proposed by The IPCR Initiative. However, regardless of whether the model The IPCR Initiative represents is utilized, there can be no doubt that there is a shortage of “constellations” of initiatives which are multi-faceted, participation-friendly, and relevant to overcoming the challenges of our times—many more such initiatives will be needed. Communities around the world are far from being saturated with solution-oriented initiatives.

With this in mind, the following subsection provides criteria from two different sources which may be helpful in identifying, creating, and developing solution-oriented initiatives relevant to overcoming the challenges of our times.

1) Selection Criteria developed by the U.S. National Preparatory Committee (NPC) for Habitat II

--“In 1996, the United Nations held a second conference on cities, *Habitat II*, in Istanbul, Turkey to assess two decades of progress since Vancouver and set fresh goals for the new millennium. Adopted by 171 countries, the political document that came out of this “City Summit” is known as the *Habitat Agenda* and contains over 100 commitments and 600 recommendations.”

From the “History” section of the UN-Habitat website (at www.unhabitat.org) (see <http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=10&cid=927> ; paragraph 2) (confirmed February 14, 2010)

--“In June 1996 the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements—Habitat II—convened in Istanbul, Turkey. Known as the City Summit, this conference was a forum for over 25,000 political and social leaders to explore urban problems and investigate policies to ameliorate these problems.”

From article titled “Cisneros Announces Winners of National Excellence Awards for Habitat II” (at <http://www.huduser.org/periodicals/rrr/winners.html>) (confirmed February 14, 2010)

Below: Information from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development archive document “Communities at Work: Addressing the Urban Challenge” (at <http://www.huduser.org/publications/txt/bstprctc.txt>) (Confirmed February 14, 2010)

--In letter of introduction from Henry G. Cisneros (then Secretary of U.S. Department of Health and Urban Affairs (see paragraph 2)

“As part of the U.S. preparations for Habitat II: The Second Global Conference on Human Settlements, the Department of Housing and Urban Development sponsored the National Excellence Awards for The City Summit to identify and share the best of the American community-building experience.”

--In section “About the National Excellence Awards”:

“The National Excellence Awards are a key component of U.S. preparations for Habitat II: The City Summit, a global conference convened by the United Nations (U.N.). The conference, being held in Istanbul in June 1996, focuses on the critical urban situation and the initiative needed for worldwide action to improve shelter and living arrangements. At this important world summit, government representatives, political and social leaders, experts in housing and construction, and community development organizations from the U.N.'s 180 member nations have an unprecedented opportunity to explore new approaches to the management, financing, design, and guidance of housing and urban growth. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Henry G. Cisneros named a U.S. National Preparatory Committee (NPC) for Habitat II from among private sector, nonprofit, and government leaders to guide U.S. conference preparations, including the National Excellence Awards process.”

In section “Application Process”:

“The NPC designed an open, objective, and highly structured submission and evaluation process for the National Excellence Awards. The competition was open to all government, nonprofit, and private organizations. Programs had to have been in operation for at least 2 years prior to the submission deadline of October 16, 1995. They had to address one or more of several issue areas: poverty alleviation; economic development; social infrastructure and services; environmental regeneration; physical infrastructure and services; natural hazard management/mitigation; housing, land use, and urban planning; urban governance; or social and cultural viability. Programs also had to demonstrate a practical course of action. Nominated programs could range in scale from the neighborhood to an entire metropolitan area. And, because rural areas are often an important factor in the urbanizing world, NPC encouraged nominations from rural communities.”

Note: The following evaluation standards were selected from the written materials supplied to people who wished to submit a description of a project and nominate that project for an award. (This writer does not know where those particular written materials are now; however, most of the following criteria is included in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development archive document “Communities at Work: Addressing the Urban Challenge” (at <http://www.huduser.org/publications/txt/bstprctc.txt>)

Issue Areas

“Because one of the barriers to urban problems solving has been the fragmentation and isolation of issue areas, the NPC encourages the submission of innovations that integrate areas of basic community concerns.”

Areas of Basic Community Concern

- a) Poverty Alleviation
 - income generation
 - job creation/retention
 - job training

- b) Economic Development
 - investment promotion
 - enterprise development
 - capital formation/retention
 - entrepreneurship
 - producer responsibility

- c) Social Infrastructure and Services
 - education and literacy
 - health
 - food and nutrition
 - recreation
 - public safety
 - crime reduction and prevention

- d) Environmental Regeneration
 - pollution reduction
 - greening and open space
 - appropriate technology
 - waste reuse and recycling
 - solid waste management and treatment
 - environmental education/consumer awareness
 - resource conservation

- e) Physical Infrastructure and Services
 - transportation/access
 - communication
 - energy use and production
 - water
 - sewage and sanitation

- f) Natural Hazard Management/Mitigate
 - reconstruction capacity
 - contingency planning

- g) Housing
 - affordable housing and shelter
 - housing finance
 - fair housing
 - homelessness

h) Land Use and Urban Planning
land use regulations
land tenure (protection from eminent domain)
cultural and historic preservation
community based design and planning

i) Urban Governance
legislation
revenue generation
information access

j) Social and Cultural Vitality
conflict resolution
generation of civic spirit
cultural expression
community cooperation
social integration

2) Types of Innovations

- a) Social: the innovation may experiment with new forms of social architecture or group behavior at the level of the family, neighborhood, city, or society
- b) Cultural: the innovation may modify or shift an entrenched cultural belief or norm
- c) Economic or Financial: the innovation may test new ways of mobilizing and allocating resources
- d) Political: the innovation may represent a creative process for empowerment or participation in democratic decision-making

3) Selection Criteria

a) Impact

significance—the program addresses a fundamental urban/community problem

creativity—the new program or process reflects a change in “business as usual”

b) Operation

cost effective—the approach or project is operationally cost effective

practical—the innovation does not require inaccessible technology unattainable skills, or excessive capital to implement

collaborative—the innovation involves partnerships among at least two of these sectors: government, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, the private sector, academia, and the media

c) Objectives

socially equitable—the program or policy promotes social and economic self sufficiency among those in need

economically viable—the costs are low enough for the innovation to become viable on a wide scale

politically participatory: the decision-making process is democratic and includes the people whose lives are most directly affected

ecologically sustainable: the initiative protects or regenerates the urban environment

culturally adaptable: the innovation is culturally sensitive and flexible enough to be applicable in other national contexts

d) National/Global Impact

special consideration will be given to those innovations that have the potential to make a difference on a national or even an international scale

2) From the section “What constitutes success?” in the knowledge based essay “Evaluation as a Tool for Reflection” at the website of Beyond Intractability (see http://crinfo.beyondintractability.org/essay/Evaluation_Reflection/?nid=1268)

“What can an evaluation tell us about the success (or lack thereof) of an intervention? Since evaluations measure outcomes against goals, criteria for success must grow from the goals of the processes being evaluated. While many outside observers often focus on whether or not an agreement is reached, agreement is only one indicator of a successful process. Particularly in intractable conflicts, the absence of agreements may be counterbalanced by general improvements in the conflict dynamics. Multiple criteria can be applied to measure success.

“In reviews of environmental and public policy disputes, inter-communal conflict resolution and consensus-building processes, d'Estree, Beck, and Colby (2003), d'Estree, et al. (2001) and Innes and Booher (1999) identified criteria such as:

“Achievement of an outcome: agreements or ruling that are consensual, ratified, and verifiable;
The quality of the conflict resolution process: processes that are procedurally just, fair, reasonable in cost;

The quality of the outcome: agreement that are cost-effective, clear, financially viable, culturally and environmentally sustainable, legal, politically and scientific/technically feasible and acceptable to the larger public;

Satisfaction with outcomes: whether participants and stakeholders in a dispute resolution process are satisfied, think the agreement is fair and agree to comply with it;

The quality of the parties' relationships: new relationships resulting in increased trust and an improved emotional climate, reductions in hostility, an increased ability to resolve future disputes, new conceptualizations of the relationship and increased empathy between the parties;

Improved decision-making ability: new learning, changed perceptions and attitudes, integrative framing, problem-solving, better communication and new vocabulary;

and

Increased social capital: increased capacity to draw on collective resources, empowerment, new leadership, problem-solving and influential participation, new partnerships, organizations and processes that transform the social system within which the conflict occurs.”

Part C

Multiple Procedures for Identifying and Interpreting Relevant Observations (Indicators, Questionnaires, Community Journals, Media Tracking)

There are many indicators which will be helpful in evaluating progress towards peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability goals, and there are many sources to explore to learn more about such indicators. (Some are listed in the “117 Related Fields of Activity” document in Appendix 1—Part B). New and more relevant indicators will also be created and applied. The use of indicators is one very significant approach to evaluating progress, and The IPCR Initiative hopes to assist with establishing local community and regional clearinghouses which will help define and develop local community specific indicators.

In this subsection, three other approaches to gathering and identifying reliable evidence to used as tools for evaluation will be explored: questionnaires, community journals, and media tracking.

1. Questionnaires

[Note: The following text is also the brief description for the IPCR Concept “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”, which is included as part of Section ___ “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”]

Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action.

Questionnaires and surveys as a community building tool can provide:

- 1) the beginnings of a database of questions that can help build caring communities
- 2) a starting point for creating preliminary surveys, as preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives (Example: Responses and summarized results from sending preliminary surveys to 150 key community leaders can provide a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities b) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the planned Community Visioning Initiative c) starting points for workshop topics at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”)
- 3) a focal point for community and individual self-examination [Example: “Quaker's often use what they call ‘queries’ as a focus for individual and collective meditation, consideration and prayer—(and

for) guiding Quaker seekers in their search for greater love, truth, and insight into how to serve humanity and live lives that are consistent with their core values.”² (Two Quaker queries: "Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs, and in service to society?"³ "When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?"⁴)]

4) a way to evaluate a Community Visioning process, so that the most valuable learning experiences can be shared with other communities.

Here are some example questions which are designed to be helpful in building caring communities:

a) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

[___ I believe it and there is much evidence to support it; ___ I believe it, and there is sufficient evidence to support it; ___ I would like to believe it, but there isn’t enough evidence to support it; ___ It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now; ___ I don’t believe it, there is no evidence to support it]

b) From your point of view, what are the most difficult challenges of our times? Do you believe that we—collectively—have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges you have identified as the most difficult challenges of our times?

c) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the challenges you perceive as most threatening to peace and well-being around the world? (Note: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community).

d) Consider the following commentary on preparation for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative.... People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community. The question: please list at least 5 preventative measures which you believe would proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during the carrying out of a Community Visioning Initiative in your community.

e) The person who will help me the most is the person who will _____ .

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

Questionnaires can be created which will accumulate information, suggestions, etc. that can be of critical importance in resolving the above mentioned “irony”—and which can provide the above mentioned assistance to the process of organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives.

2. Community Journals

The IPCR Community Journal discussed in Section 17 is a web-based clearinghouse for comments, suggestions, resource recommendations, etc. which are offered in support of IPCR Initiative activity—or in support of the many fields of activity related to the efforts of The IPCR Initiative. While this is a useful networking concept, the Community Journals which would be most appropriate for gathering evidence to be used in evaluation procedures are more of a neighborhood based community journal.

One example which may help readers visualize a “neighborhood based community journal” are the notebooks provided in youth hostels [for example, along the Appalachian Trail (USA), for hikers and visitors to comment in or read]. Another example is a “household” community journal. (Note: this writer once lived in a nine bedroom house with people associated with a local community theater group. The household journal, which had been active for three years, contained many interesting and educational entries....) Such journals may not be a common experience for many people, and this writer does not know of any such journals for specific communities. However, given the unprecedented challenges ahead, having some kind of journals in “local community points of entry” such as “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” could be a useful contribution to building community cohesion, a unique contribution to community education, neighborhood communication, and quality of life—and, over time, a “gold mine” of anecdotal evidence on how various initiatives and projects are impacting the the everyday circumstances of community life.

3. Media Tracking

[Note: The following text is taken from the brief description of the IPCR Concept “IPCR Journal/Newsletter” (which is included in Section 16 “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”)]

A collective effort by even a small community, to apply the seven previously mentioned IPCR concepts, would easily identify, develop, and create enough—

“good news makers;” descriptions of inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers;” examples of questionnaires that help build caring communities; results at various stages of community visioning initiatives; examples of carefully channeling our “investments” of time, energy, and money; examples of how we determine the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; statistics associated with ecological footprint analysis; successful practices associated with building ecovillages; practical ways of applying the principles of permaculture; examples and descriptions associated with: energy descent pathways, relocalization projects; village support centers; village industries, cottage industries, and home industries; community supported agriculture and community supported manufacturing; community land trusts and co-housing projects; community revolving loans; ecological tipping points; fair trade practices; extended producer responsibility; barter networks and local currencies; energy farms; achieving zero waste; building civic skills and building community; inspiring role models; service-oriented initiatives; right livelihood employment listings; accountability indicators and statistics; model project case studies; apprenticeship programs; workshop and conference

information; volunteer work; commentary; essays; letters to the editor; “community journal entries”; resource reviews; and, in general, “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....”

-- and links to other service-oriented organizations, initiatives, and projects—

to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter... and, by its very nature, such a publication would be an ongoing contribution to the goals of

- a) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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”
- b) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individuals spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc.
- c) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- d) increasing our capacity to be responsible “stewards” of our time, energy, and money
- e) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of ecological footprint analysis, global warming, and the “peaking” of oil production
- f) increasing our awareness of the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- g) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- h) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- i) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence.

Wouldn't you like the opportunity to discuss the contents of such a publication with your family, friends, neighbors, etc.?

This writer's commentary, with regard to the evaluation tool of “media tracking”:

There may be few communities that now have something similar to an “IPCR Journal/Newsletter” serving the community, and contributing to community cohesion. And yet... it may be that such “journal/newsletters” will become more and more appreciated, and more and more representative of the concept “local newspapers” than what most of us are now familiar with. Concurrent with the development of an IPCR Initiative, or the planning and implementation of a Community Visioning Initiative, a community can designate 5 or 6 residents to follow the content of “local newspapers”, and clip out representative samples of focus areas and content. This writer has no doubt that there will be changes in the near future with regard to the focus areas and content of community based newspapers. Residents who do this kind of media tracking can provide evidence of the changes in focus area and content over five and ten year periods of time, and, in the process, create primary source archival material for writers and historians to use in developing their interpretations and analysis. We have the resources to overcome the challenges of our times, and the story of how local communities and regions manage this transition could provide some very interesting and instructive narratives for future generations. We should be plan to provide future generations with the means to learn from our efforts.

Part D

Detailed Suggestions for the Evaluation of Community Visioning Initiatives

[Note: The following subsection is a reproduction of Section 14 (titled “Evaluating the Process”) from the IPCR document “1000Communities2” (pages

Section 14

Evaluating the Process

A. Introduction

1. This writer feels that it will be valuable to seek input from a variety of sources to arrive at a comprehensive evaluation of a Community Visioning Initiative as described in this proposal. Specifically, it will be most important to establish some of the evaluation procedures at the very beginning of the process, so that relevant information can be accumulated, systematically organized, and summarized as the process goes along. However, since there has not yet been a Community Visioning Initiative of this nature carried out in conditions similar to the urgent circumstances we are now in, new approaches to evaluation will need to be explored.

2. The purpose of this section is to provide enough ideas for possible approaches to evaluation to emphasize how important it will be for the steering committee to decide on evaluation procedures early in the process. By giving much importance to developing evaluation procedures, organizers of these Community Visioning Initiatives will have the tools necessary to maximize the lessons which can be learned from the experience.

B. Some suggestions for evaluating Community Visioning Initiatives associated with this “1000Communities2” proposal

In the Final Summary Report on the Community Visioning Initiative, readers will be hoping to learn the most valuable lessons there are to learn about the experience. The “Evaluation” section of the Final Summary Report will be developed using input from people involved in other Community Visioning Initiatives that have already been carried out, from experts in questionnaire/survey construction, from the Preliminary Survey to 150 key leaders in the community, from suggestions received from community members, and from other sources. The following is a list of suggestions from this writer.

1. The Community Visioning Initiative organizers initial presentation would have provided some idea of the “community of people” or segment of population who would be asked to participate in the initiative.

- a) How did they define this “community of people?”
- b) Did this “community of people” change during the process?
- c) How did a representative sample of residents describe what they thought of as their community before the Community Visioning Initiative began?

d) How did those same people—or another representative sample of residents—describe what they thought of as their community after the Community Visioning Initiative was completed?

2. Documented evidence relating to the following:

- a) population of area encompassed by the Community Visioning Initiative
- b) number and percentage of residents involved
 [(including composition of residents: age, gender, first language (and proficiency in language of country of residence)]
- c) how participants described their involvement
- d) final summaries: lists of challenges identified and challenges prioritized
- e) final summaries: lists of solutions identified and solutions prioritized
- f) action plan summaries (including accountability indicators)
- g) number of projects created
- h) number of jobs created
- i) financial investment created
- j) total cost of community visioning initiative

3. Documented evidence from newspaper, television, and radio coverage; from published articles in magazines and journals, and information, news stories, and commentary from websites and blogs

4. Documented evidence from the informal comments in the “Community Journal”

5. Summary of Responses to evaluation questions (see Section C below for possible evaluation questions)

C. Suggestions for Evaluation Questions

1, *General Information About the Respondent*

Please, if you are willing, and in a way that does not identify you, so that you can remain anonymous—

--state your age

--describe where you live (rural area, town, suburb, city), the region you live in (Greater Metropolitan Washington D.C.; southwestern part of Virginia; the mountains of North Carolina; etc.), and include the country you live in

(Example: I live in a suburban section of a small town on the outer edge of development associated with the Greater Washington D.C. Metropolitan area, in the United States)

--how long have you lived at your current residence

--describe your occupation, your “way of earning a living”, or what you do during the course of any given month which requires the majority of your time

--describe what you do during the course of any given month which you feel is the most important or most fulfilling work you do

--share your reasons for participating in this Community Visioning Initiative

2. Rating Each Part of the Community Visioning Initiative Process

Please rate each part of the Community Visioning Initiative process according to the scale provided (and provide specific examples, if possible, to support your choice)

essential most helpful somewhat helpful not helpful created more problems than it resolved

local community points of entry
community journals
community teaching and learning center workshops
volunteer services
meeting spaces
progress reports
media commentary and analysis
preliminary survey
instructors/facilitators
advance notice of steps in process
brainstorming challenges
prioritizing challenges
brainstorming solutions
prioritizing solutions
developing action plans to prioritized solutions

3. Evaluating the Action Plans

Evaluation of action plans developed in response to the 20 most frequently identified challenges

[Important Note: Please answer in as much detail as you wish to the first two questions, and then circle the appropriate statement in each of the three categories (see p. 83) for the third question.]

a) How would you describe the response of (your community) as a whole to the specific challenge of _____?

b) Do you feel that your community significantly closer to resolving this challenge as a result of carrying out this Community Visioning Initiative?

c) Please check the box in the following three categories which most closely represents your view of the community's plans to resolve this particular challenge

Resources

- I believe we have more than enough resources to resolve this challenge.
- I believe we have sufficient resources to resolve this challenge.
- I am not sure if we have enough resources to resolve this challenge.
- I am sure we do not have enough resources to resolve this challenge.

Plans

- I believe we have a relevant, practical, and doable action plan for resolving this challenge.
- I believe we are taking the steps necessary to develop a relevant, practical, and doable action plans for resolving this challenge.
- I am not sure if we know how to resolve this challenge.
- I do not believe we know how to resolve this challenge.

Confidence of Success

- I am confident we can resolve this challenge
- I believe we are moving in the right direction to resolve this challenge.
- I am not sure if we will be able to resolve this challenge.
- I have no confidence in our ability to resolve this challenge.

4. *Most Valuable Lessons Learned*

What are the most valuable lessons you have learned? Please comment in response to as many of these topics as you can. Please give the most time and attention to the areas where you learned the most valuable lessons.

About:

Community visioning initiatives
American culture
Stepping up to face challenges
Your neighbors
Constructive dialogue
Yourself
The value of education
The capacity of media for community service
Community leadership
About sorting out what is valuable and what is less important
About the virtue of honesty
About the virtue of hard work
About the value of compassion

5. *Most Valuable Resources, Greatest Obstacles*

a) What contributed most to

- identifying essential actions needed
- consensus building necessary to implement actions needed
- knowledge base and skill sets necessary to wisely use time, energy, and money
- financial support necessary to implement actions needed

b) What were the greatest obstacles to

- identifying essential actions needed
- consensus building necessary to implement actions needed
- knowledge base and skill sets necessary to wisely use time, energy, and money
- financial support necessary to implement actions needed

6. *Effect of Community Visioning Initiative on Building a Close-Knit Community*

a) What are your feelings about the effect of this Community Visioning Initiative on helping to build close-knit communities, where people know each other well, cooperate towards well-defined goals, and believe that they are living in a community which cares about the people in it, and people in other parts of the world?

b) Before there was any notice about planning for a Community Visioning Initiative, how many people did you know—within the geographical boundaries you understand as your community—as more than acquaintances (as people with whom you have a personal relationship with “defined guidelines, reasonable expectations, reciprocal considerations, and clear plans for the future”)?

c) Now, after a year of having an ongoing Community Visioning Initiative, how many people—within the geographical boundaries you understand as your community—do you know as more than acquaintances?

7. *Has the Community Visioning Initiative Changed Your Life In Any Way?*

Are you going to do anything differently in your life as a result of participating in this Community Visioning Initiative?

If yes, please describe _____

8. *On the Idea of "Sister Community" Relationships*

- a) Did your community give a high priority to the solution of creating a "sister community" relationship with a community in another country which has made well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs?
 - b) If yes, are you going to participate in any way in the action plan to help develop the "sister community" relationship?
 - c) If yes, please describe what you would like to do:
-
-

9. *Feelings About Community Visioning Initiatives*

- a) Would you participate in another Community Visioning Initiative?
- b) Would you recommend the kind of Community Visioning Initiative your community carried out to others?

10. *About this "1000Communities²" proposal and Community Visioning Initiatives*

Was this proposal "1000Communities²" helpful to your understanding of how useful a Community Visioning Initiative could be? (to your idea of the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives?) If yes, how was it most helpful? If no, why do you feel it was not helpful? Any suggestions, comments, recommendations on how to make proposals like this more helpful, and thus more useful?

11. *About Leadership in Your Community*

- a) What are your feelings about leadership in your community?
- b) Was leadership in your community helpful during the Community Visioning Initiative process?
- c) Would you like to see leadership improve?
- d) If yes, what solutions or action plans would you recommend to improve community leadership?

12. *About the "Community Journal" Concept*

- a) How often did you visit the CTLC nearest your home?
- b) How many times did you look into the "Community Journal"?
- c) How many times did you submit entries to the "Community Journal"?
- d) Do you feel that having a "Community Journal" is a good idea? Why or why not?
- e) Any additional comments on the "Community Journal" concept?

13. *Media Coverage of the Community Visioning Initiative*

- a) Do you feel that the coverage, in general, by newspapers, television stations, and radio stations, of this Community Visioning Initiative, was a positive and constructive service to your community? Why or why not? (Please provide specific examples if you can.)
- b) Please share any comments, suggestions, recommendations, etc. which may help newspapers, television stations, and radio stations provide more positive and constructive services to the community.

14. *Curriculum in Educational Institutions Sufficient?
Community Support of Teachers Sufficient?*

- a) Do you feel that the curriculum in the local (or regional) educational institutions (both public and private, and from elementary through college level) is sufficient to give students the knowledge base and skill sets necessary to carry out the actions plans which emerged from the Community Visioning Initiative? Why or why not?

- b) Please check the box below which most closely reflects your view of the following statement:

“Teachers in the educational institutions in your community are given enough support (financial, resource access, community partnerships, parent involvement, etc.) to fulfill their role in these challenges times.”

100% of the time Most of the time Some of the time Rarely Never

- c) How can your community be more supportive of the teachers in educational institutions? Please be specific.
- d) Please share any comments, suggestions, recommendations, etc. which may help educational institutions understand how they can be more of a positive and constructive force in your community.

15. *Most Memorable Experience, Most Difficult Experience*

- a) What was your most memorable experience or experiences during the Community Visioning Initiative—the one or ones which you are most likely to tell others about as an example of the good that can come from participating in Community Visioning Initiatives?
- b) What was the most difficult experience or experiences for you during the Community Visioning Initiative—the one or ones which you are most likely to tell others about as an example of the difficulties of participating in a Community Visioning Initiative?

Part E

Thoughts and Suggestions for Future Exploration

This writer understands that there are many people who have valuable experience in the field of evaluation methodology, and who will have some specific ideas about how to approach evaluation of efforts like The IPCR Initiative. He gladly invites such people to share their knowledge, and offer suggestions and recommendations which may help to identify which initiatives are contributing the most effective efforts to overcoming the challenges of our times.

In this last subsection, this writer will also invite readers to consider some thoughts he has which might lead to new approaches to evaluation. Specifically, this subsection will be a list of ideas, topics, etc. which are related in a significant way to the efforts of The IPCR Initiative, and which may provide additional ways of gathering or identifying useful data for evaluation. Readers who have ideas about how to translate these ideas into tools for evaluation are encouraged to contact this writer at stefanpasti@ipcri.net

1) One of the main goals of The IPCR Initiative is to discover what residents of specific communities and regions feel are the most appropriate ideas for filling in the blank in the following statement:

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

2) From “Essays in Zen Buddhism” by D.T. Suzuki:

“For the soundness of ideas must be tested finally by their practical application. When they fail in this—that is, when they cannot be carried out in everyday life producing lasting harmony and satisfaction and giving real benefit to all concerned—to oneself as well as to others—no ideas can be said to be sound and practical.”⁹

3) Two of the questions suggested in Section 10 “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions...” are included below. Over time, researchers could track a significant number of residents in a community, and measure whether or not they are getting closer to investing their time, energy, and money in ways which truly represent their definitions of “the good life”.

Definition of “the good life” (Question #4 in Section 10)

What is your definition of “the good life?” Please describe your definition of “the good life”—including both those parts of “the good life” which you already have, and those parts of “the good life” which you still hope to attain. (Note: Please clearly indicate which parts of “the good life” you already have, and which parts you still hope to attain.)

People, Institutions, etc. Which You Personally Place Your Faith In (Question #16 in Section 10)

During the course of any given day, each of us consciously or unconsciously places our faith in a variety of people, institutions, organizations, businesses, beliefs, principles, practices, commonly agreed upon codes of conduct, etc. Consider carefully the ‘things you do in the everyday circumstances of your life’—and then list 10 people, institutions, etc. which you personally place your faith in. Then, please mark or arrange the list so that #1 is the most significant person, institution, etc which you personally place your faith in, #2 is the second most significant, and so on.

4) “... in a highly developed civilization... every person of good will can in some way or other succeed.”¹⁰

5) “Long before the birth of this generation a beneficent code of morals and a precious collection of guidelines for the realm of the spirit had been preserved and handed down as heritage through the efforts of selfless seers and sages.

“Each generation draws inspiration and knowledge from the previous ones, especially from the pathfinders, the pioneers, and bridge-builders in the regions of ethics, law, mysticism, sociology, and religion. These person promote concord and progress and remove social conflict; their footprints mark out the lines of individual and social development.... They have handed down a precious quantity of knowledge about nature, about consciousness, and also about the means and methods of testing and enlarging that knowledge. But today man is neglecting this heritage and even discarding it as invalid and superfluous.... Man has to preserve this knowledge and foster it, revere it, and use it.”¹¹ 13.31 p.181

6) Such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

7) How to measure the following indicator?

“Habitually responds appropriately in unstructured or spontaneous situations that require application of moral, ethical, and spiritual values.”¹²

8) The most advanced societies are the ones which have been successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

Part F

Some Examples of Indicators

1. World Population Milestones
 - In 1804
2. In 1927
3. In 1960
4. In 1974
5. In 1987
6. In 1999
7. Current World Population
8. % of World Population in Developing Countries and Least Developed Countries (LDC's), in 1950
9. % of World Population in Developing Countries and LDC's by 2030 (projection)
10. % of World Population in Urban Areas
 - In 1800
11. In 1900
12. In 1950
13. In 2000
14. % of World Population—in Developed Countries—in Urban Areas, by 2030 (projection)
15. % of World Population—in Developing Countries—in Urban Areas, by 2020 (projection)
16. Circumstances of Significant Number of Current City Slum-Dwellers
17. Number of Persons Older than 60, by 2050 (projection)
18. Number of Persons Older than 80, by 2050 (projection)
19. Statistics associated with the 4.4 billion people who live in developing countries, from 1998
20. Deaths, Children Younger than Five, every year, Worldwide
21. Number of Deaths Attributed to Hunger and Poor Sanitation, during the years 1950—2000 (estimate)
22. % of World's Population with Access to Improved Water Sources and Improved Sanitation (from March, 2005 newspaper article)
23. Total Motor Vehicles, Worldwide
 - In 1900
24. In 1968
25. In 1996
26. Average Time Behind Wheel, U.S., per day, 2004
27. Total Time in Cars, all U.S. Drivers, per year, 2004
28. Total Motor Vehicles in China, by 2015 (projection)
29. Traffic Fatalities and Related Injuries per year, U.S., 2006
30. Worldwide Road Traffic Fatalities, 1998
31. Projected Changes in Ranking of 15 Leading Causes of Death and Disease, from 1990-2020 (projection)

32. Deaths by Violent Conflict, 20th Century
33. Deaths by Murder or Non-Negligent Manslaughter, U.S., 1993-2002
34. Small Arms in Circulation, 2005 (estimate)
35. World Military Expenditures, 1995-2004
36. Deaths by Natural Disasters, annually, 1994-2003
37. Deaths by Natural Disasters, during the years 1973-2003
38. % of World Total Private Consumption Spending by People in North America
And Western Europe, 2004
39. Definition of Consumer Class
 - Number of People in Consumer Class, Worldwide
40. Number of People in Consumer Class, U.S. and Canada
41. Number of People in Consumer Class, Western Europe
42. Number of People in Consumer Class, China
43. Number of People in Consumer Class, India
44. Number of People in Consumer Class, Japan
45. World Population Ecological Footprint, for 1994 population of 5.8 billion people,
at North American Ecological Footprint Standard of 4.5 ha/person
46. World Population Ecological Footprint, for projected 10 billion people,
At North American Ecological Footprint Standard of 4.5 ha/person
47. Ecological Footprint for Average Person in London, England, 200
48. What Average Person in London, England Consumed, Annually, 2000
 - Consumption of Gas and Electricity; % from Renewable Resources
49. Tonnes of Materials Consumed
50. Tonnes of Household Waste; % of which was Recycled
51. Amount of Food by Weight; % Imported from Outside UK
52. Distance Travelled (2/3 of which was by car)
53. Amount of TV the Average American watches, per day
54. Number of Commercials Viewed on TV by American Children, per year
55. Number of Commercials Seen on TV by the Average American, by age 65
56. Number of Violent Acts Seen on TV by the Average American, by age 18
57. Number of Murders Seen on TV by Children, by age 18
58. Number of Households Owning one TV, Worldwide, 2006
59. % of World Population Owning one TV, 2006
60. Global Spending on Advertising, 2002
61. % of Global Spending on Advertising, 2002, in U.S.
62. Average Balance for 61% of American Credit Card Users, in 2002
(at an interest rate of \$12,000 annually)
63. Amount of Caffeine in a Can of Pepsi
(Caffeine Physiologically Addictive at 100 mg per day)
64. % of Worldwide Deaths Smoking Contributes to, annually
65. Definition of Municipal Waste
 - In 1997, Tons of Municipal Waste, U.S.
66. Average Per Person
67. Recycling Rate
68. Net Total Amount
69. Net Per Person
70. In 1990, Tons of Municipal Waste, U.S.
71. Average Per Person

72. Recycling Rate
73. Net Total Amount
74. Net Per Person
75. Number of Toxic Waste Sites Designated for "Superfund" Cleanup, 2005
76. Additional Sites Which Could Eventually be Designated for "Superfund" Cleanup, 2005
77. Tons of Electronic Products Disposed, per year, U.S, 2006
78. Tons of Electronic Products Disposed, by 2010 (projected)
79. % of Heavy Metals in U.S. Landfills Coming from Electronic Waste
80. Amount of Pesticides in U.S.\$, used by Farmers on Cotton, annually, Worldwide
81. Investment Required Over Next 20 Years to Replace Existing Wastewater Systems and Build New Ones, U.S., (EPA Estimate), 2005
82. Number of Water Bottles Sold in U.S., 2002
83. % of Those Water Bottles Recycled
84. Number of Tons of Aluminum Which Would've Been Saved if Americans had Recycled the 32 Billion Soda Cans They Discarded in 2002
85. % of Forested Area World has lost in past 8,000 years
86. % of World Total Amount of Paper Used by People in U.S.
87. Ranking of Pulp and Paper Industry as Industrial Consumers of Energy
88. Ranking of Pulp and Paper Industry as Industrial User of Water
89. % of World's 15 Most Important Fisheries now Fully Exploited or Overexploited
90. % of Commercial Fish Species now Fully Exploited or Overexploited
91. Pairs of Cities which have more than 1 million annual passenger traffic between them, per year, 1999
92. % of Total Land Area on Earth which Presents No Serious Limitations to Agriculture, 1994
93. Hectares of Land in U.S. lost under concrete and asphalt, between 1945 and 1975 (Note: 1 hectare = 2.471 acres)
94. % of Work Force which were Farmers, in U.S., 1900
95. % of Work Force which were Farmers, in U.S., 1990
96. Number of Days Required for 2.6 billion people age 15-64 to till World's Cultivable Land, (1994, estimate)

Notes and Source References

1. We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. These challenges include, but are not limited to:

- a) global warming and reducing carbon emissions²
- b) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products³
- c) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death⁴
- d) an increasing world population⁵ requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce⁷ (*with a special emphasis* on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services *indiscriminately*⁶)
- e) the trend towards urbanization⁷ (half the world's population now live in cities, and there are now more than 400 cities with a population of 1 million or more) is creating human settlements which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures just when there is a need to minimize our impact on ecosystems due to global warming and widespread resource depletion⁸
- f) "cultures" of greed, corruption, and overindulgence have become so common that many people accept such as inevitable⁹
- g) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.¹⁰

[Footnotes in the above "Note" correspond to "Notes" in the "Notes and Source References" part of Section 3]

2. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 72 (Note: The edition this writer has includes the 1939 edition foreword by Mahatma Gandhi, and was printed on handmade paper in Rajchat, Kashi (India) in 1960).

Here also is some biographical information about J.C. Kumarappa:

"In 1935, the India National Congress formed the All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA) for the development of (the) rural economy (in India), with Gandhiji as President and Kumarappa as Secretary and Organiser. Between 1935-1939, Kumarappa established the AIVIA headquarters at Maganwadi, developed various experiments of rural technologies, and helped others to reorganize village industries all over the country. (At Maganwadi), he edited a monthly journal, 'Gram Udyog Patrika,' and wrote a book, 'Why the Village Movement?' for AIVIA." [Note excerpted from "Brief Life Sketch of J.C. Kumarappa (1892-1960) at the website of the Kumarappa Institute of Gram Swaraj (KIGS) www.kigs.org (click on picture, and see paragraph 8)] (confirmed December 25, 2009)

3. J.C. Kumarappa in *Why the Village Movement?* Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 72

4. Worldwatch Institute "*State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society*" W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37

5. Worldwatch Institute “*State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society*” W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37

6. J.C. Kumarappa in “*Why the Village Movement?*” Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 79

7. From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see subsection titled “Mollison”) (at <http://www.permacultureactivist.net/articles/holmgren.htm>) (Confirmed February 20, 2010)

8. From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see “Conclusion”)(at <http://www.permacultureactivist.net/articles/holmgren.htm>) (Confirmed February 20, 2010)

9. D.T. Suzuki in “*Essays in Zen Buddhism*” (1st Series) Grove Press New York 1961 p. 317 (Originally published in 1949)

10. From “*I Ching*” translation Richard Wilhelm Online version accessible at http://www2.unipr.it/~deyoung/I_Ching_Wilhelm_Translation.html#50 (see Hexagram #50, in the section “Lines”) (Bolligen Foundation, Inc. New York 1950)

11. . Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 13, Chpt. 31, p. 181 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 13 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1970)

12. Idella J. Moss quoted in “Needs Assessment: A Focus for Curriculum Development” by Fenwick W. English Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development 1975 From a list of performance indicators on p. 27. Footnote on p. 27 identifies a Xeroxed document titled “Working Papers of the Sarasota Needs Assessment” (Idella J. Moss) Sarasota, Florida 1974 as the original source for the list of performance indicators on p. 27 of the “Needs Assessment....” document.

Section 14

About IPCR Workshops

On the Content and Focus of IPCR Workshops

In general, IPCR workshops will provide an overview of evidence supporting the need for an IPCR Initiative [see Section 3, and many other parts of this “IPCR Workshop Primer” (“48 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative”, “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”, etc)], and provide an introduction to some or all of The Eight IPCR Concepts.

The Eight IPCR Concepts are:

“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

Specifically, IPCR workshop discussion can “branch out” using—as starting points—content from “The IPCR Workshop Primer”. Here are some examples of content from “The IPCR Workshop Primer” which can be used as starting points for workshop discussion:

- 1) the “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”
- 2) the 10 goals in “The IPCR Mission Statement”
- 3) The Eight IPCR Concepts
- 4) the 15 Step Outline for Carrying Out a Comprehensive and Time-Intensive Community Visioning Initiative
- 5) the 39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions (as Preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives
- 6) the 36 Problems That May Arise (in preparing for, and implementing, Community Visioning Initiatives
- 7) the 4 Step Approach to Project Development
- 8) the 117 Fields of Activity Which Are related to Peacebuilding, Community Revitalization, and Ecological Sustainability
- 9) the 10 Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can Be Explored Through “Sister Community” Relationships
- 10) the 48 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative

In addition to focusing on material provided by the “The IPCR Workshop Primer”, IPCR workshop discussions can also be supplemented by other material at this IPCR website (at www.ipcri.net), by comments contributed to the IPCR Community Journal (at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>), by material associated with the 117 Related Fields of Activity (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C), and by other related material accessible through the Internet, or by personal experience. There is much that can be done to generate goodwill and promote peace that has not yet been done. There is much potential which can be explored in the context of IPCR Workshop discussion.

Encouraging and Facilitating a “Constellation” of Initiatives

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” The IPCR Initiative can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as The Eight IPCR Concepts encourage and facilitate a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on the goals listed in the IPCR Mission Statement, and on many or all of the “117 related fields of activity”. As the ancient Chinese proverb states: “Many hands make much work light.”

Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. I am confident that applying these concepts—at the local community and regional level—will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute—and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

Location, Cost, Facilitators

Workshops providing an introduction to The IPCR Initiative—and to some or all of The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—are now being offered in the Leesburg, Virginia area.

Facilitation services for IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops are currently offered at a rate of \$75 for a 1 hour workshop, \$100 for a 2 hour workshop, \$150 for a 3 hour workshop, and \$200 for a 4 hour workshop. (Longer workshops will have greater variety in the approach, structure, and content of the workshop experience.) The recommended number of participants for workshops is 5-15 people. [i.e. If

there are 5 participants for a 2 hour workshop, the cost would be \$20 for each participant; if there are 15 participants for a 3 hour workshop, the cost would be \$10 for each participant.] Currently, the only person facilitating IPCR Workshops is the founder of the IPCR Initiative, Stefan Pasti. (For more information about Stefan Pasti, see “IPCR Staff” in “About the IPCR Initiative”)

The cost, suggested by The IPCR Initiative, of attending such workshops is deliberately affordable, to emphasize and encourage frequent participation. Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences relating not only to the IPCR concepts, but to many other efforts associated with peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability.

The location of IPCR Workshops will be determined according to demand-- and according to availability of public access community use buildings.

For more information, please contact:

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IPCR Copyright Policy

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between communities of people, all of the documents, information, resources, etc. created by The IPCR Initiative are viewed as resources which ought to be made as accessible as possible to people who can make good use of them. Therefore, all such documents and information (including this document) may be reproduced without permission, and distributed in any way the user believes will be consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. [Please note: Quotes, statistics, and other copyrighted material used in IPCR documents have been appropriately attributed to their copyrighted sources. Readers may thus be assured that The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the proper referencing of copyrighted material to their copyrighted sources.]

Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

Section 15

A Four Step Approach to Project Development

For communities of people who would like a step-by-step approach to community building along the lines of The IPCR Initiative, here is a list of four steps which provide a basic outline for how to move from the suggestions in this “IPCR Workshop Primer” (and the resources of The IPCR Initiative) to project development—at the local community and regional levels—which can be critical to overcoming the challenges of our times.

1. Discussion Groups-- As is emphasized by this IPCR Initiative, there are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world. Forming a discussion group can assist participants in deciding how to further their efforts along the lines of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability. Brainstorming sessions can take place in such discussion groups and provide a starting point for a “clearinghouse” of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....”

2. Local Community Points of Entry-- The development of a “clearinghouse” will be accelerated by establishing a local community point of entry (or points of entry); an inclusive and accessible location where local community residents (and others) can “find out more” about local community and regional peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives. With countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives...”, local community residents who wish to become involved—or increase their participation—in local and regional peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives, should be able to visit a local community point of entry, identify a starting point, and begin developing—or furthering—their involvement within two weeks of the beginning of their search.

3. Concept Introduction Workshops-- Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in the IPCR Mission Statement. The cost, suggested by this IPCR Initiative, of attending such workshops is deliberately affordable, to emphasize and encourage frequent participation. Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences relating not only to the IPCR concepts—but to many other peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives as well.

4. Project Development-- A collective effort by even a small community—to apply the first Seven IPCR Concepts—would easily identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of

“good news makers”; community visioning initiatives; ecovillages; permaculture; ecological tipping points; relocalization efforts; powerdown projects; village industries; community supported manufacturing; community supported agriculture; community land trusts; co-housing projects; barter network and local currencies; apprenticeship programs; village support centers; right livelihood employment listings; accountability indicators and statistics and “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world

and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as workshops and conferences, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “discussion board” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify a monthly publication of an *IPCR Journal/Newsletter* (the Eighth IPCR Concept). Such an IPCR Journal/Newsletter and/or a local community point of entry (acting as a “clearinghouse”) can provide a way of linking many associated efforts, such as those in Appendix 1—Parts B and C (“117 Related Fields of Activity”), and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

Section 16

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

Introduction

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter is a quarterly publication with the goal of encouraging, supporting, and sustaining any efforts which contribute to building caring communities. The IPCR Initiative defines caring communities as follows:

“Communities with residents who are aware of the depth and range of the challenges of our times, and therefore do their best to take actions which will have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C “117 Related Fields of Activity”).

Note: For a list of all issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter*, see the end of this document

The Difference between The IPCR Journal/Newsletter and The IPCR Community Journal

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter is a quarterly publication with special feature articles and regular “departments”, which appear in each issue. “The IPCR Community Journal” is intended as an ongoing collection of contributions, which is initiated by posts made at “The IPCR Community Journal” located at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>. Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal at that address <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/> will be posted in “The IPCR Community Journal” section of the IPCR website, at www.ipcri.net, and that section of The IPCR website will be updated on an ongoing basis.

Submitting Material for Future Issues of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

The IPCR Initiative welcomes suggestions regarding subjects to explore in issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter*—and will consider any information, documents, etc. which are sent as submissions. People who would like to assist the efforts of The IPCR Initiative are encouraged to contribute constructive comments, resource recommendations and links, relevant news, suggestions—and to relate relevant personal experiences which will be helpful to others working along similar lines. The description of “IPCR Journal/Newsletters” below, and Appendix 1—Parts B and C (“117 Related Fields of Activity”) should be sufficient to suggest that there is a wide range of activity which can be considered “working along similar lines”.

[Note to Contributors: The IPCR Initiative may not be able to acknowledge that it has received your submission; however, if any material you sent may be used in an issue of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter*, you will be contacted regarding permission, and any editorial concerns. Please include a SASE if sending any materials which you would like to be returned.]

Contact Information

To request a copy of previous issues; to submit material for future issues; to send a letter to the editor; or to send any comments, suggestions, etc. — please use the following contact information: Stefan Pasti, Editor The IPCR Journal/Newsletter P.O. Box 163 Leesburg, VA 20178 USA (703) 209-2093 stefanpasti@ipcri.net

The Eighth IPCR Concept

The “IPCR Journal/Newsletter” is one of The Eight IPCR Concepts, and a description of this concept is part of the document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”. That description is included below.

“IPCR Journal/Newsletters”-- A collective effort by even a small community, to apply the seven previously mentioned IPCR concepts, would easily identify, develop, and create enough-- “good news makers;” descriptions of inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers;” examples of questionnaires that help build caring communities; results at various stages of community visioning initiatives; examples of carefully channeling our “investments” of time, energy, and money; examples of how we determine the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; statistics associated with ecological footprint analysis; successful practices associated with building ecovillages; practical ways of applying the principles of permaculture; examples and descriptions associated with: energy descent pathways, relocalization efforts and powerdown projects; village support centers; village industries, cottage industries, and home industries; community supported agriculture and community supported manufacturing; community land trusts and co-housing projects; community revolving loans; ecological tipping points; fair trade practices; extended producer responsibility; barter networks and local currencies; energy farms; achieving zero waste; building civic skills and building community; inspiring role models; service-oriented initiatives; right livelihood employment listings; accountability indicators and statistics; model project case studies; apprenticeship programs; workshop and conference information; volunteer work; commentary; essays; letters to the editor; “community journal entries”; resource reviews; and, in general, “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....” - and links to useful information and organizations-- to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter... and, by its very nature, such a publication would be an ongoing contribution to the goals of 1) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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” 2) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individuals spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc. 3) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions 4) increasing our capacity to be responsible “stewards” of our time, energy, and money 5) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of ecological footprint analysis, global warming, and the “peaking” of oil production 6) increasing our awareness of the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own

communities and regions—and in other parts of the world 7) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war 8) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs and 9) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence. *Wouldn't you like the opportunity to discuss the contents of such a publication with your family, friends, neighbors, etc.?*

Each person must do his or her part, and trust that the others involved will do their part.

The Writer and Editor of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

At this point in time, The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative exists only as the efforts of the founder and outreach coordinator of The IPCR Initiative, and the writer and editor of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter, Stefan Pasti. [This writer gladly and willingly contributes time, energy, and money to make issues of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter (and the IPCR Website at www.ipcri.net) accessible to those people who might benefit from them.]

Accessing or Requesting Issues

Current issues and back issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter* will be posted in this section of The IPCR website, and issues are offered at no cost (free) for download or as an attachment to an e-mail. (Note: The first two issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter* are only available in hard copy). As mentioned in connection with the “All IPCR Resources and Documents” section-- for people with special circumstances, it is also possible that hard copies can be post mailed to any address provided. The IPCR Initiative, however, is currently very limited in its capacity to create hardcopies, and to postmail hardcopies. At this particular point in time, The IPCR Initiative can only respond to a very limited number of requests for hardcopies of documents.]

IPCR Copyright Policy

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, all of the documents, information, resources, etc. created by The IPCR Initiative are viewed as resources which ought to be made as accessible as possible to people who can make good use of them. Therefore, all such documents and information (including this document) may be reproduced without permission, and distributed in any way the user believes will be consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. [Please note: Quotes, statistics, and other copyrighted material used in IPCR documents have been appropriately attributed to their copyrighted sources. Readers may thus be assured that The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the proper referencing of copyrighted material to their copyrighted sources.]

Most Recent Issue

Vol. 3, No. 2 Fall, 2008 (available in pdf) (see IPCR website homepage)

Re-introduces the “1000Communities2” proposal in light of implications of economic crises (includes 3 different introductions to the “1000Communities2” document)

Back Issues

Vol. 3, No. 1 Summer, 2008 (available in pdf) (see IPCR website homepage)
Introduces the “1000Communities²” proposal

Vol. 2, No. 2 Spring 2007 (available in pdf) (see IPCR website homepage)
Features The IPCR Spring 2007 “Building Caring Communities” Questionnaire
(60 Questions)

Vol. 2, No. 1 Winter 2006-2007 (available in pdf) (see IPCR website homepage)

Vol. 1, No. 3 Spring 2005 (available in pdf) (see IPCR website homepage)
[Note: The Spring 2005 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter contains all the
information provided by the IPCR website from May 2005 thru September 2007]

Vol. 1, No. 2 Spring 2004 (only available in hard copy)

Vol. 1, No. 1 Winter 2003-2004 (only available in hard copy)

Section 17

The IPCR Community Journal

Highlights from “The IPCR Community Journal” at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/> will be posted in this section of the IPCR website, at www.ipcri.net. People who would like to assist the efforts of The IPCR Initiative are encouraged to contribute constructive comments, resource recommendations and links, relevant news, suggestions—and to relate relevant personal experiences which will be helpful to others working along similar lines. To contribute to “The IPCR Community Journal”, simply post a message at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>

Here are some guidelines which may help potential contributors to offer their contributions in a most constructive light:

- a) “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”
- b) “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- c) sincerely reflect the qualities of kindness and courtesy
- d) demonstrate communication skills which are conducive to deepening mutual understanding and mutual respect
- e) assist in developing higher common ground
- f) emphasize the positive and constructive steps which are being taken, while also recognizing that we all sometimes fall short of the best we can do
- g) assist in building the trust necessary for non-violent conflict resolution, healing, and reconciliation
- h) illustrate the transforming power of love, understanding, and forgiveness
- i) reflect an understanding of the value of silence

Potential contributors to “The IPCR Community Journal” are especially encouraged to consider the following: there are many sections of the IPCR website (and the associated documents and publications) which—with assistance—can be expanded to become more comprehensive and more useful. For example, consider the following documents made accessible through this IPCR website: “An Assessment of The Most Difficult Challenges of Our Time,” “The IPCR Spring 2007 ‘Building Caring Communities’ Questionnaire,” “A Selection of Valuable Resources,” “A List of 105 Related Fields of Activity,” “Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives,” —all of these documents can be expanded by sincere, constructive, relevant, and practical suggestions.

Changes and additions will be made to the sections of the IPCR website (and to documents and publications) on a periodic basis, and such improvements will incorporate as much input as possible which is consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement.

(more)

**Regarding Permission to Use Material Posted at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>**

The following is a list of “terms and conditions” regarding possible use by The IPCR Initiative of material posted at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>.

- 1) Any commentary, suggestions, recommendations, etc. posted at the above Internet address *may be* re-posted on the IPCR website, in the section “The IPCR Community Journal”.
- 2) People who do post commentary, suggestions, recommendations, etc at the above address are giving the IPCR Initiative permission to use the “post” in the section of the IPCR website titled “The IPCR Community Journal”.
- 3) Due to editorial considerations of space, a need to “get to the point”, etc. the IPCR Initiative may choose to use excerpts from messages posted at the above address. If there is any possibility that misunderstandings might result from “taking a quote out of context”, the IPCR Initiative will error on the side of being responsible and courteous, and efforts will be made to seek permission from the author of the post before using such excerpts on the IPCR website.
- 4) All posts, or excerpts of posts, used on the IPCR website will be properly attributed to their source, unless the IPCR Initiative has been notified to do otherwise.
- 5) Posts to this “IPCR Community Journal” which are intended as contributions to specific IPCR documents (such as “An Assessment of The Most Difficult Challenges of Our Time,” “The IPCR Spring 2007 ‘Building Caring Communities’ Questionnaire,” “A Selection of Valuable Resources,” “A List of 105 Related Fields of Activity,” “Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives,” etc.) will be given special attention. If such contributions might be used by The IPCR Initiative, the contributors will be contacted, and further discussion will take place regarding permission and source referencing.
- 6) **Special Note:** Material posted here may also be used in the quarterly issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter*. Again: if such contributions might be used by The IPCR Initiative, the contributors will be contacted, and further discussion will take place regarding permission and source referencing. People who would like to submit material specifically intended for the quarterly issues of *The IPCR Journal/Newsletter* are encouraged to visit that section of the IPCR website.

Section 18

The IPCR Community Journal #2

An Introduction to The IPCR Community Journal #2

The IPCR Community Journal #2 is a blog with postings from this writer (Stefan Pasti, the founder and outreach coordinator for The IPCR Initiative). The IPCR Community Journal #2 is located at <http://ipcri.blogspot.com/>

People who would like to assist the efforts of The IPCR Initiative (and people working along similar lines) are encouraged to contribute constructive comments, resource recommendations and links, relevant news, and suggestions—and to relate relevant personal experiences—by responding in the comment section of specific posts, or by responding in the comment section of a “Comments and Suggestions” post—which will be posted regularly so that it is easily accessible.

I also invite people who would like to assist the efforts of The IPCR Initiative to visit The IPCR Community Journal, at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>

There are two main differences between this "Community Journal #2" and the yahoo group "Community Journal":

- 1) This "Community Journal #2" is more informal—comments posted in "Community Journal #2" are not going to be quoted or excerpted for use in the "Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal" section of the IPCR website, whereas posts in the yahoo group "IPCR Community Journal" may be quoted or excerpted.
- 2) The "blog" formatting here allows for extensive links, which will be provided in accordance with recommendations from visitors, and included to encourage a wide range of discussion.

This writer will be posting commentary, references to resources, and other information relating to The IPCR Initiative in the “Community Journal #2”. However, he encourages readers to think of this "Community Journal" as a kind of open forum, where they may respond with comments related to the post he has made, or simply make their own constructive, responsible, and courteous comments. He hopes this approach is useful to the efforts of the visitors to this site.

Section 19

Brief Descriptions of All IPCR Documents

Introduction

This section of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative website is where visitors can access a brief description of all the documents The IPCR has to offer (see list below).

All IPCR documents can be downloaded for free

All IPCR documents can be downloaded for free, or requested as an attachment to an email (see “The IPCR Copyright Policy” below for further clarification). People who would like to request a document as an attachment to an e-mail may do so by contacting the founder of The IPCR Initiative, Stefan Pasti—by e-mail (stefanpasti@ipcri.net) or using the contact information in the “contact” section of the website.

The IPCR Copyright Policy

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between communities of people, all of the documents, information, resources, etc. created by The IPCR Initiative are viewed as resources which ought to be made as accessible as possible to people who can make good use of them. Therefore, all such documents and information (including this document) may be reproduced without permission, and distributed in any way the user believes will be consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. [Please note: Quotes, statistics, and other copyrighted material used in IPCR documents have been appropriately attributed to their copyrighted sources. Readers may thus be assured that The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the proper referencing of copyrighted material to their copyrighted sources.]

In Special Cases, A Few Hardcopies Can Be Postmailed

For people with special circumstances, it is also possible that hardcopies can be post mailed to any address provided. The IPCR Initiative, however, is currently very limited in its capacity to create hardcopies and send them by postmail. At this particular point in time, The IPCR Initiative can only respond to a very limited number of requests for hardcopies of documents. [Brief descriptions of documents begins on p. 2]

Brief Descriptions of All IPCR Documents

(all of these documents are written or compiled by Stefan Pasti
Founder and Outreach Coordinator of The IPCR Initiative)
(all are accessible for free at the IPCR Initiative website www.ipcri.net)

1. The IPCR Workshop Primer (427 pages) (compiled in early 2010; includes research and documents created during the period January, 2009—February, 2010)

This IPCR Workshop Primer provides an introduction to The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. “The IPCR Workshop Primer” includes much of the material considered to be the “basic building blocks” of The IPCR Initiative, and is organized specifically to be a primary resource for people facilitating IPCR workshops—and people participating in IPCR workshops.

There is much that can be done to generate goodwill and promote peace that has not yet been done. There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding and community revitalization efforts, in their own communities and regions— and in other parts of the world. Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. This writer understands that many people may like the concept of Community Visioning Initiatives—which is a key concept of The IPCR Initiative, and which is brought forward in many ways in this “IPCR Workshop Primer”—but who find it difficult to imagine how such a concept could be translated into an actual community building process. “The IPCR Workshop Primer” is an effort to provide many pieces of a “big picture” view in one place, so that there is both understanding of why there is a need for Community Visioning Initiatives, Community Teaching and Learning Centers, and a variety of affordable workshops at the local community and neighborhood level—and understanding of the kind of tools and resources which can help make such community building processes most effective, and relevant to the greater good of the whole.

2. “48 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative” (31 pages) (compiled February, 2010)

“48 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative” is an effort to summarize the contents of “The IPCR Workshop Primer”, and an effort to “connect the dots” created by the many documents and resources of The IPCR Initiative.

3. “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” (35 pages) (September-October, 2009)

Even if much disagreement remains about the nature of the challenges ahead, the potential described in this paper—associated with Community Visioning Initiatives, and The IPCR Initiative—can be actualized to such a degree that significant gains can be made in many fields of activity. Thus, while we—collectively—may not know for sure what era is coming to an end, and what era is dawning, for some time yet to come, this writer believes that there are ideas and resources enough for such a dawning to occur—and this paper is an effort to provide evidence in support of that belief.

This paper provides the most concise overview of the potential of The IPCR Initiative, and includes citations and commentary associated with many very recently published source references.

4. “1000Communities²” (161 pages) (February-June, 2008)

“1000Communities²” is a proposal advocating Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” with ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships, as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times. This proposal includes over 150 excerpts and quotes from relevant sources, which are provided to demonstrate the need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. A special feature of this proposal is a 15 step outline (see p. 22-42) for a Community Visioning Initiative. The goal of this proposal is to encourage others to create similar community specific proposals for their communities, and to highlight the potential of this approach.

5. “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts” (26 pages) [Developed during the years 2001-2007 (with the exception of “Ecological Sustainability”, which was already a widely accepted concept)]

[Updated December, 2009 and includes 12 page “Notes and Source References” section]

Also recommended as a starting point for people who would like to learn more about The IPCR Initiative, and what it has to offer.

The Eight IPCR Concepts are:

- “Community Good News Networks”
- “Community Faith Mentoring Networks”
- “Spiritual Friendships”
- “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”
- “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace”
- “Spiritually Responsible Investing”
- “Ecological Sustainability”
- “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

Three related fields of activity (from the “117 Related Fields of Activity” list in Appendix 1—Part B), and one sample question each (from “The IPCR ‘Building Caring Communities’ Questionnaire”) (see list of “All IPCR Documents” on IPCR homepage) are included with each IPCR Concept, as examples of starting points for workshop discussion.

6. “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (41 pages) (August-November 2007)

The IPCR 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. Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” provides comprehensive supporting evidence for the above statement, and is similar to “The Twilight of One Era...” document in that it is an effort to provide a concise overview of the potential of The IPCR Initiative. Includes detailed Table of Contents.

7. “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” (31 pages)

(Compiled during the years 2006-2007, with significant revisions in August-September 2007)

This document includes a ten point assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times—and 43 excerpts (observations, commentary, analysis, and statistics) from relevant sources as supporting evidence.

8. “The IPCR ‘Building Caring Communities’ Questionnaire” (19 pages) (October 2006, with minor revisions in Spring and Fall, 2007)

Sixty questions are offered as a) an example of what could be created with contributions from many people b) a way of sharing understanding and inspiration and c) a real questionnaire, which can be administered to seek out—and thus create—useful information for building caring communities. This questionnaire has been superseded in some ways by the “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions” piece (included in this “IPCR Workshop Primer”), but is still included to emphasize that there is much potential to be realized by the use of questionnaires, even if they are done without any plan for a subsequent Community Visioning Initiative.

9. “Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives” (26 pages) (Compiled during 2006-2007)

There are a number of core beliefs which have contributed to the development of The IPCR Initiative. Here are three examples:

a) As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives.

b) Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

c) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

This document, “Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives” — considered together with the many other resources accessible at the IPCR website (at www.ipcri.net -- provides evidence in support of the three above mentioned core beliefs of The IPCR Initiative...and this writer believes that such evidence is sufficient for the conclusion that we have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

10. “Spiritually Responsible Investing” (12 pages) (March-April 2007)

This paper is an attempt to define “spiritually responsible investing”, and was presented (in absentia—by a graduate student there) at the “Faith, Spirituality, and Social Change” (FSSC) Conference held at the University of Winchester, Winchester, United Kingdom, April 14-15, 2007.

11. “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” (12 pages) (August 2007)

This document is an attempt to define “spiritual peacebuilding”. This writer specifically recommends a close and careful reading of the section titled “The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions”.

12. “An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)” (313 pages) (Fall and Winter, 1997)

“An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)” is an unpublished collection of quotations, which includes sections on Sadhana, Satsang, Education, Guru, Namasmarana, What to Avoid, More About Difficulties, Baba Himself, Seva, and Prayers. This resource is made available for people who wish to explore the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba; however, as clearly stated in the essay “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (see the section “Three Most Important Points”), it is not necessary for anyone who would like to become involved in The IPCR Initiative to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba (or to want to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba). [Note: “Sathya Sai Speaks” are compilations of discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, which are published by the Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publication Trust (Prasanthi Nilayam, India) (Vol. 1-15 are compilations of discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during the years 1953-1982).

13. “Divine Intervention: A Collection of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)”
(compiled June, 2009)

This collection of quotations titled “Divine Intervention” was created to be a part of a larger work-in-progress which became the “IPCR Workshop Primer”. This “Divine Intervention...” document includes sections on “The Avathara of Sri Sathya Sai Baba”, “The Critical Need to Utilize the Wisdom of the Ages”, “How Sages, Elders, Teachers, Parents and Students Can Contribute”, and “Responding to Personal Difficulties”—and has been linked by this writer with “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” paper to create a “Call for Papers”: Requesting Assistance with Creating an “Introduction Section” for a Document titled “Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’: How Community Visioning Initiatives and Spiritual Wisdom Can Increase the Likelihood of Solution Oriented Activity in a Time of Great Challenges”

14. “The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop” (short story) (10 pages) (First version in Fall 1984; first revision in Spring 2004; second revision in Spring 2006)

Many years ago there was a tribe of people who were experiencing challenges that were threatening their very existence. During this “time of fear”, a young woman experienced a vision—of a bird, which said to her:

“You must all leave where you are, and travel to a place far away.... You must look for the tree at the center of the sacred hoop. You will know when you have found this tree when you hear birds singing from the branches of a tree and you understand their song.”

The tribe of people eventually begin this “great journey”. Do they find the tree at the center of the sacred hoop?

“The Spirit of Sacred Hoop” is a 9 page short story which describes significant events in the history of a tribe of people in ways that recognize intuition and spiritual wisdom as important elements of community and cultural sustainability.

Section 20

The IPCR Copyright Policy

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Section 21

About the Writer for this “Workshop Primer” An Autobiographical Sketch

An Autobiographical Sketch (written in August, 2009)

My father's parents immigrated to the United States from Romania in 1920, and my father was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1922. My father earned a Bachelor's Degree from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois in 1948, and earned a master's degree in mathematics education from Northwestern University in 1953. He began working with IBM (International Business Machines) in 1957 as an Applied Sciences Representative, and from 1968 to 1985 was a National Accounts Marketing Representative, based in Bethesda, Maryland. My father also contributed career service in the United States Air Force; first in World War II, in China, as an Air Force Communications Officer, and then in the Air Force Reserve, where he became a Colonel involved with Air Force Intelligence Service (AFIS). My mother's grandparents on her father's side immigrated to the United States from Norway. She was born in Paw Paw, Michigan. She graduated from Western Michigan University (then Western Michigan College of Education), and met my father when they were both doing graduate coursework at Northwestern University. They were married on December 20, 1952. I was born on September 18, 1955, in Chicago, Illinois, the second of four children.

As an glimpse of what our family life was like up to the year 1965, here is the complete text of the Christmas letter my parents sent to family and friends (dated December, 1965)....

[“We have become a traveling family since Nick's transfer to Poughkeepsie (NY) last May. During the summer we packed the picnic basket at every opportunity and chose a new spot on the map to visit. The most memorable places we recall are the World's Fair, the boat ride around Manhattan, the Boston Symphony at Lenox, Massachusetts, and our five day campout on Cape Cod.

“Our home is located south of the city and the children ride the bus to school—another new experience for them. It's a special treat for David who has now started kindergarten. He's a little fellow with a hearty laugh, and he like to help Hilda with the housework and shopping whenever he and his buddies aren't chasing bad guys. Little Carolyn, almost 3 years old, is the real family helper. We keep rescuing the kitten from the desk drawer where she has been put for safe keeping by our “little Miss Muff-it”. Stefan is a very active, sportsminded fifth grader. He enjoys baseball, bowling, and listening to his short wave radio which he and Nick assembled this fall. Sara is now in her first year of Junior High. Her interests are horseback riding and piano which she enjoys as a change of pace from her schoolwork. We have some homework ourselves for our weekly Senior High Sunday School class at the Methodist Church, and we find this quite challenging.

“We hope this Christmas finds you in good health, and we extend our yuletide greetings with the very best wishes for a Happy New Year.”

Sincerely,
Hilda and Nick]

From the time I was twelve years old on, tragedy was a real and persistent shadow in our family's world, as my mother was found to be suffering from incurable Multiple Sclerosis. There were unpredictable and sometimes severe relapses associated with this disease, and the disease slowly but inevitably changed my mother's personality, her ability to think clearly, and her general physical capacities.

The difficulties my mother experienced, and the difficulties the rest of us in the family experienced, were not often eased or softened by outside support; and for most of us who were young of age during the years of my mother's illness, there were emotional issues which persisted well into our adult years. I was assisted (at various times) by therapists, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, meetings of the Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families (ACA), and the spiritual teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba—and I am very grateful for all the assistance I received.

Although my parents were determined to assist their four children so that they could have college level education, I never did complete coursework sufficient to earn a degree. I did attend Northwestern University from 1973-1976, where I did in depth coursework in economics and psychology, and I feel that many of my professors there were excellent. In addition to my experiences at Northwestern, there were four other very inspiring educational experiences which I will mention here:

1) In 1981, I did an internship with Taylor Morris—an English professor then on leave from Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, New Hampshire—who had been circulating a proposal titled "Soldiers for Peace". The proposal called for an exchange of 100,000 students between the former Soviet Union and the United States, as a deterrent to nuclear war. As an intern, I read all the responses to the proposal that Mr. Morris had received, and I was deeply influenced with a new appreciation for the responsibilities and possible outcomes associated with being a writer.

2) In 1982, I worked as a door-to-door canvasser in southern New Hampshire for the New Hampshire People's Alliance. At that time, NHPA canvassers were gathering signatures and donations, and were working to raise community awareness and mobilize community action in response to electric rate hikes (rate hikes which were initiated to pay for nuclear power plant construction). The door-to-door canvassing I did then was an excellent experience in grassroots democracy, as the process constantly raised the following questions:

- a) Did the local community decision-making process involve a majority of the local community residents?
- b) Did a majority of local community residents care whether they were involved or not?
- c) What sources of information are most respected?
- d) How often are people's day-to-day decisions based on a thorough understanding of the consequences of their actions?

3) In 1984, I wrote the first version of the short story "The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop", a story which has influenced my thinking in many ways over the years. (The story was revised in 2004 and 2006, and is a 9 page short story now accessible at the IPCR Initiative website, at www.ipcri.net). At the time I wrote the first version, I was inspired to begin exploring ways to become involved with, and advocate for, ecologically sustainable communities—and I moved to the mountains of North Carolina, which was a very special place for me in many ways... [There I wrote a short novel, visited a old time storyteller, learned what living in the country was like (people seem to have more time to *just talk* there...)]... it was the only place I've lived where it was not necessary to lock the door when you went out].

4) In 1991, I put together an outreach package which included a three page description of “How Modern Agriculture-Based Villages Can Contribute to the Continuity of Peaceful Human Settlements”, a flyer describing a concept called “Durham Village” (Durham, NH), and long letter to the editor titled “A ‘Branching’ of American Culture” which had been printed as commentary in a local newspaper. (Replications of these pieces plus excerpts from earlier writings, and reflections on rare family keepsakes, are posted on my Facebook webpage). I sent this outreach package to environmental organizations, environmental magazines, peace organizations, sustainable agriculture organizations, individual organic farmers, etc. I enclosed a self-addressed stamped envelope to encourage responses. I received many responses to this outreach, which I compiled into a document, and mailed to those who responded. (Also at my Facebook page is a note titled “Some Responses to Outreach Done with ‘Durham Village’ Concept, etc”). One of the responses I received was from Martha Shaw, an artist living in Massachusetts. (Martha Shaw had done some art work for a “local currency” they were developing....) I still have the long handwritten note that Martha Shaw sent me. At the end of her letter, she added, as a postscript: (“P.S. You might be interested in (a) most penetrating and insightful book: “Why the Village Movement?” by J.C. Kumarappa—who worked with Gandhi. Available from Greenleaf Books; Canton, MA.). I did get a copy of “Why the Village Movement?” and I still have that copy. Some of the writing in that book changed my thinking in a fundamental way about the value of being conscious about the way we use our time, energy, and money—and how this is the most effective way for people to live what they believe. So much attention in contemporary culture is given to “voting”, and so little to the fact that “Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the ‘ways of earning a living’”—by the way they channel their time, energy, and money. I had already been thinking along these lines before I read “Why the Village Movement?”, but that book is the only book I’ve ever read that gave a deep, spiritual feeling to this kind of thinking. One of the “Eight IPCR Concepts”—“Spiritually Responsible Investing”—was inspired by J.C. Kumarappa’s writing. Here is one representative excerpt, from p. 79 of “Why the Village Movement?”

“If we feel it is beyond us to guarantee the concomitant results of all our transactions, it necessarily follows that we must limit our transactions to a circle well within our control. This is the bed rock of swadeshi. The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions, and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfill our obligations as trustees.”

I hope, by my work, to convey a message similar to the message of that book (and of Mr. Kumarappa’s life): that is, to encourage the integration of spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

However much I have benefitted from formal education, I believe it is true that the most valuable education I have received has been from self-motivated learning of the “experimenting”, hands on, on-the-job, and personal research varieties. Many, many times, when I was interested in something, I explored on my own for answers—and when I had questions, I found someone to ask... or went inward for answers. Thus, I have come to believe that “informal learning” is at least as valuable as “formal education”—if not more. (And thus, I believe there are many alternatives to the rising cost of “formal education”).

At different times in my life, I have become aware of old patterns of thinking which originated from dysfunctional family experiences. When these times coincided with an awareness of resources which might be especially helpful in that regard, I gave special attention to reforming what remained of those old patterns of thinking. In the years 1991-92, I went to many Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families (ACA) meetings, and it was through someone I met at one of those meetings that I learned about Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

From that point, I have tried to make a sincere effort to be more service-oriented. For many of the years between 1992-2001, I was an activity specialist for elders with special needs (specifically elders with Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia) (During that time I compiled a 35 page "Activity Resource Notebook" and a collection of sing-along songs titled "173 Songs We Love to Sing"). Also, during 1992-1996, I read and re-read Vo. 1-11 (first U.S. Editions) of "Sathya Sai Speaks" (discourses from the years 1953-1982). When my father passed away in December, 1996 (from a heart attack, though he also had deteriorating health due to a disease known as amelioidosis), I inherited some money, and spent some time "not working". One of the documents I created during this time of "not working" was "An Arrangement of Quotations from 'Sathya Sai Speaks'" (301 pages).

In February, 1997, I went to India with the completed manuscript. Not long after my arrival, I got a front and center seat for the darshan (a time when Baba walks among the people who are quietly seated awaiting an opportunity to see Him, give Him a letter, be chosen for an interview, have some object be blessed by Him, etc.—and/or a time when He sits in a chair in front of the people assembled and leads devotional singing). On that occasion, I had the manuscript with me, but Baba walked by without noticing me in any way. Later, near the end of my time visiting His Residence in Puttaparthi, I wrote a letter, and took that with me to darshan. On that occasion, He came to where I was (nowhere near front center), and accepted the letter from me. The contents of that letter are highly personal, but his acceptance of the letter represented, in my mind, an affirmation of a goal.

The path to that goal has been difficult for me. Eventually, my self-employed business assisting elders with special needs failed as a business. So, in the last 8 years, I have returned to delivery driver work as my way of earning a living. During the years 2000-2006, I was a delivery driver, courier, and assistant bindery personal at a print shop. I am currently a delivery driver and stock person for an auto parts store. [Note: To make the contributions I believe are mine to make, I have, over the years, had to find other work as a way of earning a living; and I have been employed in many different settings, including retail bookstore clerk, mail clerk, door-to-door canvasser for citizen action groups, cook, stone mason helper, field worker/truck driver on an organic farm, driver/warehouse, bus driver/program assistant, and activities director for elders with special needs. While it may be a stretch for some people, I believe that saying I have some understanding of the following quote (from article "Open Source Social Solutions" by Charlie Brown) may be helpful here (both in the context of my circumstances—and that some of my work could help others in similar circumstances): "... the most promising innovations are often lost to view and lacking the resources to take effect; these innovators are working away quietly at a small-scale, local level, unknown to the much broader community that could benefit from them. They are "needles" lost in the societal haystack. This isolation, often a major stumbling block for social innovators, is no coincidence: innovators often deliberately isolate themselves in order to realize a vision that may be at odds with existing norms or received wisdom."]

Since 2001, I have been building an initiative called The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. I hereby attribute the inspiration for the approach and substance of The IPCR Initiative, my personal capacity to see good in the efforts of people from many different faith communities and cultural traditions, and my personal faith in a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times to close contact, over many years, with the wisdom and compassion in the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I still have a long ways to go to come near putting into practice the spiritual wisdom represented by the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. And yet however much I may fall short as a student of Baba's

teachings, I do believe there is something profoundly significant about Baba's Presence at this particular time, and something profoundly relevant about His Teachings.

We live in very complex and challenging times. These challenges include, but are not limited to: global warming; peak oil; wide-ranging resource depletion; an ever increasing world population; global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death; cultures of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence; a marginalization of the wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions; insufficient understandings of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to enduring peace and which do not—and a urgent need to restructure our economic and education systems to respond to these challenges. (For a more detailed assessment by this writer, see “A Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” in Section 3 of this “IPCR Workshop Primer”). More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

There may be many people who do not understand why I believe that giving so much time and effort to building The IPCR Initiative is a sincere and genuine way of expressing compassion for fellow human beings. And there may be many people who do not understand what I mean by “staying at my post”. But I understand... and I know I understand.

I believe that there are essential and critical pieces to a comprehensive community response to the challenges of our times that are missing from the approaches now at the forefront—and I believe I have some of the pieces. And I want to contribute those pieces. I can see the potential energy which would be actualized if those pieces were in place, and *I believe it is more “in my best interests” to play out my role in the actualization of that energy than it would be for me to do any other thing. And because of the nature of this particular potential energy, the very act of trying to actualize it does actualize it, (in me, at least)... it energizes me... it connects me with the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”;* it strengthens my belief that it is possible for representatives of the highest spiritual ideals (irrespective of the traditions they are derived from) to become better appreciated, more easily recognized—and more numerous—in the everyday circumstances of community life; and it gives me hope that whole communities in the future will understand that there are currents of good will just as real as currents of electricity.... And if this kind of work (actualizing such potential energy) does not, at this particular time, lead directly to financial security and social connectedness for me; such circumstances are not going to deter me from doing everything I possibly can—in my lifetime—so that such work *does lead that way* for more and more people in the future.

I believe that the most advanced societies are the ones which have been successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

My work building The IPCR Initiative is an effort to contribute to the process of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

I gladly and willingly contribute time, energy, and money to make the resources and documents of The IPCR Initiative accessible to those people who might benefit from them.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1—Part A

A Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times

[The footnotes in this section correspond to the footnotes associated with this “Ten Point Assessment...” in Section 3 of this “IPCR Workshop Primer”. Readers are encouraged to refer to the “Notes and Source References” part of Section 3 (at the end of the section) to find the related notes.]

Special Note: The IPCR Initiative is aware that there are many very difficult issues which could be defined as “the most difficult challenges of our times”. By even making a list at all, The IPCR Initiative is not suggesting it can offer a definitive assessment.

The purpose of the designations made in the following ten point summary is

- a) to help other people appreciate how becoming involved in a comprehensive assessment of the challenges of our times can be useful for re-framing public discourse
- b) to help other people appreciate that these issues “pervade our globe; ... are complex due to the interdependent nature of all modern nation-states; (and) are all interwoven, making it difficult, if not impossible, to deal with one in isolation from the others...”²
- c) to illustrate how The IPCR Initiative can contribute to the resolution of even the most profound challenges of our times.

The ten point assessment:

1. Community building associated with energy descent (see Challenges #4, 5, and 6) (as a result of either wise decisions, key supply shortages, or lack of other options) may or may not be accompanied by an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings. *Without such an exponential increase*, an increase in the need for emergency assistance to people with basic human needs [as a result of migrations from areas where carrying capacity has been exceeded (areas such as mega-cities), for example (see Challenge #8)] may coincide with a decrease in our capacity to respond to such emergencies

2. “Cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence which have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable³

3. The source of threats—whether perceived or real—to the identities and/or cherished meanings of many communities of people is too often linked to religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions; and such threats too often result in conflicts which cast a shadow of negative associations onto such traditions. These negative associations have caused many people to disassociate from the religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions linked to such threats; and have accumulated to such a degree that the real treasured wisdom of many such traditions now seems as if it is hidden—or remains undiscovered. This is unfortunate—as such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services

- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

[**Very Important:** Footnote #12 has further commentary on this “difficult challenge”.]

4. 5. and 6. Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming, the end of the era of cheap oil (“peak oil”), and widespread resource depletion and extinction (the “Triple Crises”)

Consider the following references (with additional corroborating quotes) to preconference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the “Triple Crisis,” the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- a) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming (“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.”⁵)
- b) The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”) (“The human community’s central task for the coming decades must be the undoing of its dependence on oil, coal, and natural gas in order to deal with the twin crises of resource depletion and climate chaos.”⁶)
- c) The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.⁷

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”⁸

7. The increasing world population⁹ and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion⁷ (with special focus on *the increasing number of people* who are consuming material goods and ecological resources *indiscriminately*¹⁰)

8. Current trends indicate that we are creating more and more “urban agglomerations” (cities with a population of more than 1 million people)¹¹, which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures, where it is more and more difficult to trace the consequences of our individuals investments of time, energy, and money—and which are the least appropriate models when it comes to implementing resolutions to many of the other challenges included in this list. (Note:

“Response nodes” for emergency assistance, and centers for regional and international exchange of “weak link” materials do not require a mega-city infrastructure base)

9. Any shortages of goodwill in times of unprecedented transition could tilt already precarious systems into further disarray—and thus erode established systems in even the most stable communities and regions

10. Sorting out what are real challenges and what are sound and practical solutions is becoming more and more difficult, as there is now, in many parts of the world, a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time.

Additional Note: Section 5 (“Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”) and Appendix 2—Part A (“The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”) are “stand by themselves” documents which include the most recent evidence (also cited here) relating to what the IPCR Initiative identifies as the most difficult challenges of our times. Another IPCR document, not included in this 2010 version of the “IPCR Workshop Primer” because it was last updated in 2007, does include some commentary worth exploring. That document is titled “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”, and is accessible on the IPCR website homepage (at www.ipcri.net).

Appendix 1—Part B

A List of 117 Fields of Activity Related to Peacebuilding, Community Revitalization, and Ecological Sustainability

Important Notes:

- 1) This list is, and will always be, an incomplete list—because it reflects this writers’ preferences, and because of its very nature (i.e. it represents only a fraction of the countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world).
- 2) The “Links” section of this website (the IPCR Initiative website, at www.ipcri.net), provides starting point links associated with each of these “fields of activity” (In addition, some “fields of activity” have text, excerpts, or commentary from referenced sources).

1. alleviating hunger
2. alternative gifts
3. appropriate technology
4. barter networks
5. capacity building
6. car sharings
7. car-free zones
8. carbon footprint
9. charitable foundations
10. child sponsorship
11. citizen participation
12. citizen peacebuilding
13. co-housing
14. community banks
15. community development
16. community economics
17. community education
18. community gardens
19. community good news networks
20. community journals
21. community land trusts
22. community membership agreements
23. community organizing
24. community revitalization
25. community revolving loans
26. community service work
27. community supported agriculture
28. community supported manufacturing
61. indicators/sustainability indicators
62. individual spiritual formation
63. inspiring role models
64. interfaith dialogue
65. interfaith peacebuilding
66. intergenerational projects
67. life cycle assessment
68. local community points of entry
69. local currency
70. locally based food processing
71. locally grown food
72. low impact transport systems
73. meditation
74. mentoring
75. microgeneration
76. neighborhood revitalization
77. oil depletion protocol
78. open courseware
79. open source social solutions
80. open space technology
81. organic farming
82. peace studies programs
83. peacebuilding
84. peak oil
85. permaculture
86. positive news
87. preventative health care
88. questionnaires/surveys

29. community visioning initiatives
30. composting toilets
31. conflict resolution
32. consensus decision making
33. cradle to cradle
34. cultural diversity
35. development assistance
36. disease control
37. ecological footprint analysis
38. ecological tipping points
39. economic conversion
40. ecovillages
41. edible schoolyards
42. education—spiritual, moral, religious, interfaith
43. emergency humanitarian aid
44. emergency medical assistance
45. employment training/green job training
46. energy conservation
47. energy descent pathways
48. energy return on energy invested (EROEI)
49. evaluation strategies
50. fair trade
51. faith mentoring
52. farmers markets
53. food co-ops
54. green living
55. green politics
56. green purchasing
57. green retrofitting
58. holistic education
59. holistic health care
60. homesteading
89. recycling
90. renewable energy
91. renewable resources
92. right livelihood
93. right livelihood employment listings
94. school business partnerships
95. service learning
96. sister community relationships
97. slow money
98. socially engaged spirituality
99. socially responsible investing
100. spiritual discipline/spiritual practice
101. spiritual diversity (religious pluralism)
102. spiritual friendships
103. spiritually responsible investing
104. sustainable design/natural building
105. sustainable health care
106. urban agriculture
107. vegetarianism
108. village design
109. village industries/cottage industries
110. violence prevention
111. voluntary simplicity
112. waste water treatment
113. water conservation
114. water purification
115. world population awareness
116. yoga
117. zero waste

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets
that supply the “ways of earning a living”. (SP)

Appendix 1—Part C

Starting Point Links for Learning More About the “117 Related Fields of Activity”

(117 Fields of Activity Related to Peacebuilding,
Community Revitalization, and Ecological Sustainability)

[For quick reference to a list of the 117 fields of activity, see Appendix 1—Part B]

Introduction

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. These challenges include, but are not limited to: global warming, peak oil, resource depletion, an ever increasing world population, global inequities, cultures of greed, corruption, and overindulgence, a marginalization of the wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions, and insufficient understandings of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to enduring peace and which do not. More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before—and that there is an urgent need to restructure our economic systems and our education systems to respond to these challenges.

At the same time, more and more people, in more and more parts of the world, are seeing sufficient evidence for affirming the following four beliefs

- a) As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives.
- b) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.
- c) Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.
- d) We have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

The IPCR Initiative is an accumulation of documents, resources, and observations brought together to support the propositions that we-- collectively-- have both the need, and the potential, to be

- a) much more organized and deliberate about "... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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."

- b) much more multi-faceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- c) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and "embodied energy" which are now accessible to us

This "Links" section of The IPCR Initiative website (at www.ipcri.net) provides comprehensive, detailed, and practical starting points for becoming involved—or increasing involvement—in many fields of activity which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times.

[Note: This writer believes that there are some very important connections between spiritual wisdom and right livelihood... which many people illustrate by their lives *even if they do not associate with specific teachings or traditions*. When people really care about the welfare of our home, the Earth, and their fellow human beings, the above mentioned "connections" become more visible to others, and to them.]

Additional Notes:

- 1) This document is a work-in-progress, so there will be some sections which are more developed, with text and excerpts from various sources.
- 2) This list is, and will always be, an incomplete list—because it reflects this writers' preferences, and because of its very nature (i.e. it represents only a fraction of the countless numbers of "things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives" which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world).

Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator
The IPCR Initiative
December 27, 2009

1. Alleviating Hunger

World Food Program

<http://www.wfp.org/about>

Heifer International

http://www.heifer.org/site/c.edJRKQNiFiG/b.3538797/?msource=kw4861&gclid=CLHm_9KR95sCFdZM5QodVA1Y_Q

The Hunger Project

http://www.thp.org/what_we_do/mission

Food Banks—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_bank

Capital Area Food Bank
<http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/>

2. Alternative Gifts

Seva Foundation Gifts of Service
http://seva.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=gos2008_home&gclid=CK_Bgaqc-JsCFVRM5QodagoX_w

Alternative Gifts International
<http://www.alternativegifts.org/pages/gift-markets/host-market/>

World Vision Must Have Gifts
<http://www.musthavegifts.org/>

3. Appropriate Technology

Appropriate Technology Sourcebook
http://www.villageearth.org/pages/Appropriate_Technology/ATSourcebook/Introduction.php

Engineering for Developing Countries
<http://ceae.colorado.edu/mc-edc/>

Small Scale Sustainable Infrastructure Development Fund (S³IDF)
“Our Mission: To Foster pro-poor, pro-environment small scale infrastructure services with financing and technical assistance for electricity, water, sanitation and other infrastructure (eg. transport and telecommunications) - necessary for poverty alleviation.”
<http://www.s3idf.org/index.asp>

Wikipedia Appropriate Technology
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appropriate_technology

4. Barter Networks

The Gigafree Network—Barter Exchanges
<http://www.gigafree.com/barter.html>

Grassroots Economic Organizing—Community Currencies and Barter Networks
<http://www.geonewsletter.org/taxonomy/term/144>

LETS—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Exchange_Trading_Systems

5. Capacity Building

From Catholic Relief Services website

<http://crs.org/capacity-building/>

Agenda 21: Chapter 37 on Capacity Building

<http://www.gdrc.org/uem/capacity-building.html>

Capacity Building—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capacity_building

The “1000Communities2” Proposal

<http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>

6. Car Sharing

The Car Sharing Network—the definitive resource for North American car sharing info and links

<http://www.carsharing.net/>

Car Sharing—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carsharing>

7. Car-Free Zones

List of Car-free places—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_car-free_places

World Car Free Network

<http://www.worldcarfree.net/contact/>

8. Carbon Footprint

Carbon Footprint—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_footprint

9. Charitable Foundations

List of Charitable Foundations—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_charitable_foundations

List of Wealthiest Foundations—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_wealthiest_foundations

10. Child Sponsorship

From Children International website

(see <http://www.children.org/vision.asp?sid=4161D692-4040-4246-BF7C-05EE61B81E81>)

“Children International is a nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to bettering the lives of impoverished children, their families and communities.”

“Our mission is to help children living in dire poverty. This is accomplished through the generosity of our contributors, by providing children with program benefits and services that meet basic needs, enhance their self-esteem and raise their physical and educational levels in a meaningful, lasting way.”

11. Citizen Participation

City of Ashland, OR—citizen participation plan

<http://www.ashland.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=116>

see also community visioning

12. Citizen Peacebuilding

The Center for Citizen Peacebuilding (at University of California, Irvine)

<http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~cpb/>

“Research, education, and action inform one another. Therefore, the Center serves as a conduit to foster these three primary goals:

- 1) to study citizen peacebuilding initiatives at home and around the world to determine the best practices currently in place and to share these findings with all interested organizations and individuals.
- 2) to offer educational programs and training in successful conflict resolution skills and strategies.
- 3) to encourage and support citizen peacebuilding initiatives in conflict zones around the world.”

13. Co-Housing

Cohousing Association of the United States

<http://www.cohousing.org/>

Cohousing—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cohousing>

Sunward Cohousing

<http://www.sunward.org/>

14. Community Banks

Grameen Bank—Wikipedia

http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grameen_Bank

15. Community Development

Development, Education, and Conflict (from Beyond Intractability)

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/development_education_conflict/?nid=1162

Development, Poverty, and Conflict

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/poverty_and_conflict/?nid=1161

Community Development—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_development

16. Community Economics

Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE)

<http://www.livingeconomies.org/>

New economics foundation—local alchemy

http://pluggingtheleaks.org/communities_taking_action/uk_la_content.htm

New economics foundation—plugging the leaks

<http://www.pluggingtheleaks.org/>

E.F. Schumacher Society

<http://www.smallisbeautiful.org/>

17. Community Education

Defining Community Education—from the National Community Education Association

http://www.ncea.com/defining_community_education.aspx

Schools as centers of community

<http://www.archfoundation.org/aaf/gsbv/Video.Johnson.Intro.htm>

Schools as centers of community (Richard Riley Award)

<http://www.richardrileyaward.org/en/Index.html>

Partners of Richard Riley Award

<http://www.richardrileyaward.org/en/About.Other.html>

Schools of the 21st century (21C)
<http://www.yale.edu/21c/history.html>

Community Schools—article from Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/infobrief/jan04/num36/toc.aspx>

18. Community Gardens

American Community Gardening Association
<http://communitygarden.org/about-acga/>

Community Gardening—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_gardening

19. Community Good News Networks

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Community Good News Networks”
From IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”
<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Community Good News Networks”

“Community Good News Networks” is a name for participation by local community residents in an ongoing process of actively discovering, sharing, encouraging, and creating good news, for the purpose of “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

One way to begin creating “Community Good News Networks” is as follows: ongoing intergenerational programs—programs that bring together elders of the community with young people (ages 5-18) of the community—are created at appropriate meeting places such as local places of worship. Such intergenerational programs would include the following activities: 1) collecting and sharing good news articles, stories, etc., and making contributions to “Good News Reference Resources,” specific to local communities and regions 2) sending notecards of gratitude and encouragement—and invitations to visit—to people who are making good news in the local community or region 3) inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers” from the local community or region.

As more and more good news is discovered, shared, and created, participants can give special attention to identifying the “good news makers” who are associated with a religious or spiritual worldview, and who live near their specific meeting place. A local “Community Faith Mentoring Network” could then be established to facilitate matching people of all ages with “faith mentors” in their local community.

Summary Statement: Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances— by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

20. Community Journals

One example of “Community Journals” are the notebooks provided in youth hostels (for example, along the Appalachian Trail (USA), for hikers and visitors to comment in or read. Another example is a “household” community journal. (Note: this writer once lived in a nine bedroom house with people associated with a local community theater group. The household journal, which had been active for three years, contained many interesting and educational entries....) Such journals may not be a common experience for many people, and this writer does not know of any such journals for specific communities. However, given the unprecedented challenges ahead, having some kind of journals in “local community points of entry” such as “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” could be a useful contribution to building community cohesion, and a unique contribution to community education, neighborhood communication, and quality of life.

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

From IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“IPCR Journal/Newsletters”

A collective effort by even a small community, to apply the seven previously mentioned IPCR concepts, would easily identify, develop, and create enough—

“good news makers;” descriptions of inspirational sharing meetings featuring “good news makers;” examples of questionnaires that help build caring communities; results at various stages of community visioning initiatives; examples of carefully channeling our “investments” of time, energy, and money; examples of how we determine the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; statistics associated with ecological footprint analysis; successful practices associated with building ecovillages; practical ways of applying the principles of permaculture; examples and descriptions associated with: energy descent pathways, relocalization efforts and powerdown projects; village support centers; village industries, cottage industries, and home industries; community supported agriculture and community supported manufacturing; community land trusts and co-housing projects; community revolving loans; ecological tipping points; fair trade practices; extended producer responsibility; barter networks and local currencies; energy farms; achieving zero waste; building civic skills and building community; inspiring role models; service-oriented initiatives; right livelihood employment listings; accountability indicators and statistics; model project case studies; apprenticeship programs; workshop and conference information; volunteer work; commentary; essays; letters to the editor; “community journal entries”; resource reviews; and, in general, “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....”

-- and links to useful information and organizations—

to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter... and, by its very nature, such a publication would be an ongoing contribution to the goals of 1) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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” 2) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individuals spiritual formation—with all the beneficial

consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc. 3) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions 4) increasing our capacity to be responsible “stewards” of our time, energy, and money 5) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of ecological footprint analysis, global warming, and the “peaking” of oil production 6) increasing our awareness of the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world 7) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war 8) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs and 9) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence. *Wouldn't you like the opportunity to discuss the contents of such a publication with your family, friends, neighbors, etc.?*

Summary Statement: Each person must do his or her part, and trust that the others involved will do their part.

21. Community Land Trusts

National Community Land Trust Network—Overview

<http://www.cltnetwork.org/index.php?fuseaction=Blog.dspBlogPost&postID=27>

E.F. Schumacher—Overview

<http://www.smallisbeautiful.org/clts.html>

Community Land Trusts—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_trust

22. Community Membership Agreements

Dancing Rabbit (intentional community) membership agreement

http://wiki.ic.org/wiki/Dancing_Rabbit_membership_agreement

23. Community Organizing

Building social capital “Community Organizing: Building Social Capital as a Development Strategy

http://books.google.com/books?id=ihfnBr4cMQC&printsec=frontcover&source=gb_s#v=onepage&q=&f=false

Community Organizing—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_organizing

Faith Based Community Development in America (historical overview)

http://faculty.smu.edu/rkemper/Faith-based_community_development.htm

24. Community Revitalization

Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization (partnering with universities)

<http://www.npcr.org/>

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

<http://www.lisc.org/section/aboutus/>

The "1000Communities2" Proposal-- a 161 page proposal advocating Community Visioning Initiatives, "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" with ongoing workshops, and "sister community" relationships as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times (<http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

25. Community Revolving Loans

Institute for Community Economics

<http://www.iceclt.org/loanfund/>

Community Revolving Loan Fund—4 page overview

<http://www.cedworks.com/files/pdf/free/P203AFG04.pdf>

26. Community Service Work

community service—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_service

Corporation for National and Community Service

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

366 Community Service Ideas

<http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/serviceideas.shtml>

Community Service Examples

http://www.pafbla.org/downloads/Big%2033--2008-10/08-10_Community_Service_Examples.pdf

27. Community Supported Agriculture

Overview

<http://www.localharvest.org/csa/>

CSA—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community-supported_agriculture

Robyn Van En Center

<http://www.wilson.edu/wilson/asp/content.asp?id=804>

28. Community Supported Manufacturing

Post Carbon Institute

<http://www.postcarbon.org/relocalize/manufacturing>

29. Community Visioning Initiatives

“Community Visioning Initiatives for the Duration of the Emergency”

<http://ipcri.net/images/Community-Visioning-Initiatives-for-the-Duration-of-the-Emergency.pdf>

“Transitioning from Less Solution Oriented Employment to More Solution Oriented Employment”

<http://ipcri.net/images/Transitioning-from-Less-Solution-Oriented-Employment.pdf>

“1000Communities2”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace”

From IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace”

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving the challenges ahead will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

This writer also hopes that more and more people are also coming to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else. Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

We are in need of innovative and imaginative solutions.

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.⁵

Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. The more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives (the “Vision 2000” initiative mentioned above took 5 months) carry out a series of meetings which focus on

five particular areas: identifying challenges, prioritizing challenges, identifying solutions, prioritizing solutions, and creating action plans. Combined with ongoing workshops and much formal and informal educational activity, these meetings, though only a part of the Visioning Initiative, may last 4-6 months. These more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

One of the main goals of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives is to maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.

In addition, the job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process (as it is described in the IPCR document “1000Communities²”) 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

Using a system as comprehensive as the Community Visioning process outlined in the “1000Communities²” document (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) to identify challenges, resources, solutions, and action plans will eventually, over the years, result in people approximating “a highest synthesis of truth and community”, *from their point of view. It is also highly likely that, because the stakes are high—and because for those communities of people who are sincere enough to carry out comprehensive and time-intensive Community Visioning Initiatives will gravitate towards outcomes which are honest, responsible, compassionate, and service-oriented—what they will discover as a highest synthesis will be of such a similar spiritual essence to other communities (which have carried out Community Visioning Initiatives of a similar nature) as to significantly increase the likelihood of kinship experiences between many diverse communities of people.* Even if much disagreement remains about the nature of the challenges ahead, the potential associated with Community Visioning Initiatives can be actualized to such a degree that significant gains can be made in many fields of activity.

Summary Statement: Community Visioning Initiatives can help sort through information and commentary to identify local community specific priorities, and do so in a way that will help residents to realize how much they need to be learning so that they can be part of the solutions... and how much they really need to be on the same side, helping each other.

30. Composting Toilets

Composting Toilet World

<http://www.compostingtoilet.org/>

Composting Toilet—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composting_toilet

31. Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict_resolution

Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution—Dudley Weeks

32. Consensus Decision Making

Consensus Decision Making—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consensus_decision-making

Formal Consensus—From Intentional Communities webpage

<http://www.ic.org/pnp/ocac/>

33. Cradle to Cradle

Cradle to Cradle—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cradle_to_Cradle

Cradle to Cradle Certification

<http://www.c2ccertified.com/>

34. Cultural Diversity

The Challenge of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity

<http://www.un.org/rights/dpi1627e.htm>

The Millenium Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders document “Global Commitment to Peace”

<http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.com/resources/mwps/Commitment%20to%20Global%20Peace.pdf>

35. Development Assistance

Development Aid—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Development_aid

Humanitarian Aid and Development Assistance—Beyond Intractability

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/humanitarian_aid/

36. Disease Control

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/en/>

Doctors Without Borders

http://doctorswithoutborders.org/index_alt.cfm

37. Ecological Footprint Analysis

Revisiting Carrying Capacity: Area Based Indicators of Sustainability (Rees)

<http://dieoff.org/page110.htm>

Ecological Footprint-- Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_footprint

38. Ecological Tipping Points

article "Environmental Tipping Points: A New Paradigm for Ecological Security"

http://www.ecotippingpoints.org/resources/ETP_Ecological-Security.pdf

EcoTipping Points Stories

<http://www.ecotippingpoints.org/>

39. Economic Conversion

Economic Conversion—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_conversion

40. Ecovillages

The Ecovillage Movement Today

http://www.ecovillagenews.org/wiki/index.php/The_Ecovillage_Movement_Today

Ecovillages: New Frontiers of Sustainability (Schumacher Briefing) by Jonathan Dawson

Table of Contents and Chpt 1 (history of ecovillages) accessible without purchase

http://www.schumacher.org.uk/schumacher_briefing.php?briefing_id=12

Ecovillage Education Workshops—Findhorn Foundation, GEN, Gaia Education

<http://www.findhorn.org/programmes/programme353.php>

41. Edible Schoolyards

History and How-to

<http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/mission-goals>

Edible Schoolyard—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edible_schoolyard

42. Education—Spiritual, Moral, Religious (interfaith)

Interfaith Education Project—Report Summary

<http://www.hartsem.edu/events/wccreport.html>

A Brief History of Moral Education (in the U.S.)

<http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2246/Moral-Education.html>

Spiritual Heritage Education Network

<http://www.spiritualeducation.org/HomeFiles/concept.htm>

The Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education

<http://www.csee.org/programs/spiritual-development.html>

43. Emergency Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian Aid and Development Assistance

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/humanitarian_aid/?nid=1388

World Food Programme

[From the “What We Do”/“Introduction” section of the “World Food Programme website (see http://www.wfp.org/operations/introduction/index.asp?section=5&sub_section=1)] (See paragraph 1)

“WFP is the United Nations frontline agency in the fight against global hunger.”

“Operations aim to:

Save lives in refugee crises and other emergencies

Improve nutrition and quality of life of world's most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives

Enable development by (a) helping people build assets that benefit them directly;
(b) promoting the self-reliance of poor people and communities”

[From the “What We Do”/“Introduction” section of the “World Food Programme website (see http://www.wfp.org/operations/introduction/index.asp?section=5&sub_section=1)] (See paragraph 1)

“WFP by Numbers

Food distributed to 87.8 million of the poorest people in the world, including 58.8 children
24.3 million people in development programmes
63.4 million beneficiaries in emergency and protracted relief and recovery operations

Operations in 78 countries around the world

90 relief operations
22 development projects and 34 country programmes in 48 countries

Total food distributed: 4 million tonnes¹

26 percent for emergency operations
18 percent for development projects
2 million tons contributed in kind
2 million tons purchased with cash - valued at US\$600 million, of which 77 percent was
procured in developing countries

Direct expenditure: US\$ 2.9 billion

Total number of employees: 10,587

92 percent of WFP staff serve in the field”

44. Emergency Medical Assistance (especially serving the underserved overseas and in local communities)

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

From the “What We Do” section of the International Federation of The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies website, see the subsection “Introduction” and then “Principles and Values” (at <http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

There are many circumstances in communities around the world where the activity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is essential for communities of people to survive natural—or human-created—disasters, and progress to a recovery and rebuilding phase. Here, this writer offers a glimpse into the Seven Fundamental Principles of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, so that readers can appreciate some of the lessons these organizations have learned from many experiences in the field of humanitarian aid.

The Seven Fundamental Principles--“Proclaimed in Vienna in 1965, the seven Fundamental Principles bond together the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They guarantee the continuity of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its humanitarian work.

“[The Seven Fundamental Principles (of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)]:

- a) Humanity-- “... endeavours... to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.”

- b) Impartiality—“It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.”
- c) Neutrality—“... the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.”
- d) Independence—“... must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.”
- e) Voluntary Service—“... not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.”
- f) Unity—“There can only be one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country.”
- g) Universality—“... all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other....”

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

World Health Organization

<http://www.who.int/en/>

Doctors Without Borders

http://doctorswithoutborders.org/index_alt.cfm

Community Health Center—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_Health_Center

From “Humanitarian Appeal 2004”

<http://www.un.org/depts/ocha/cap/appeals.html>

“In each of the world's crises, aid agencies providing food, shelter, and medicine helped to save and sustain countless lives. And while aid workers faced growing risks to their personal safety, they continued to provide aid to people in need.

“Nonetheless, humanitarian aid is not a solution to the world's crises. Aid workers can address humanitarian needs; but they cannot solve underlying political, economic and social problems that cause and perpetuate these crises.”

45. Employment Training/Green Job Training

Green Job and Green Job Training (Links)

<http://www.californiagreensolutions.com/cgi-bin/gt/tpl.h,content=2076>

Sample Nationwide Green Workforce Programs and Resources

<http://www.californiagreensolutions.com/cgi-bin/gt/tpl.h,content=2077>

46. Energy Conservation

Efficient Energy Use—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Efficient_energy_use

Re-orienting Priorities (from UNEP)

<http://earthwatch.unep.net/emergingissues/consumption/reduconsump.php>

47. Energy Descent Pathways

Unleashing Abundance as a Community Response to Peak Oil: Designing Energy Descent Pathways

<http://permacultureactivist.net/articles/EnergyDescent.htm>

The Transition Timeline: For a local, resilient future

http://books.google.com/books?id=rgrfo0XsOksC&pg=PA95&lpg=PA95&dq=energy+descent+pathways&source=bl&ots=0Nb_XYg_Lc&sig=J4Ax8rBWYQDubuMbQIN5MJRHJkk&hl=en&ei=bBaISuDeNsKHtgf0o9nnDA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=5#v=onepage&q=energy%20descent%20pathways&f=false

48. EROEI (Energy Returned on Energy Invested)

Energy Returned on Energy Invested—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EROEI>

“Why EROI matters” by Charles Hall (Part 1 of 6)

State University of New York

College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Syracuse New York

Posted at www.theoildrum.com website on April 1, 2008

<http://www.theoildrum.com/node/3786>

49. Evaluation Strategies

article “Evaluation as a Tool for Reflection” (from Beyond Intractability)

http://crinfo.beyondintractability.org/essay/Evaluation_Reflection/?nid=1268

50. Fair Trade

Fair Trade—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_trade

51. Faith Mentoring

Living Spiritual Teachers Project

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/teachers/>

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Community Faith Mentoring Networks”

Excerpt from “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Community Faith Mentoring Networks”

A “Faith Mentor” can be defined as “a person, who by word, action, and presence, models a meaningful lifestyle, clarifies important life issues, and provides guidance for deepening spirituality in a caring and accepting environment.”¹

Do most of us believe that we already have a “faith mentor” in our lives, and are progressing, consciously and deliberately, towards the full realization of our spiritual potential? Those of us who have had a “faith mentor” in our lives, or have one now, know how much of a difference such a person has made in our lives... surely, we can then sympathize with others who would like to have such a person in their lives, but do not.

While the development of a faith mentoring relationship often takes place within a particular faith community, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks” would be a partnership among many different places of worship and faith traditions, for the purpose of 1) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc. and 2) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions.

Applied at the local community and regional level, “Community Good News Networks” and “Community Faith Mentoring Networks” can create ongoing opportunities for people of one particular faith community or cultural tradition to experience the highest ideals of all local community specific and regional specific faith communities and cultural traditions, as representatives of such ideals are better appreciated, more easily recognized—and more numerous—in the everyday circumstances of community life.

Summary Statement: We reap what we sow.

Related Fields of Activity—individual spiritual formation, inspiring role models, right livelihood

Example Question for Discussion:

Please complete the following sentence (in as many ways as you believe might be helpful to people who might read what you have written).

“If only there was a way to _____.”

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Spiritual Friendships”

Excerpt from “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Spiritual Friendships”

Currently, the “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment,” mentioned in connection with the “faith mentor” definition, is most often achieved within the context of specific faith

communities, and faith-oriented family environments. This “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment” can be deliberately accelerated by the cultivation of “Spiritual Friendships.”

One way of developing “Spiritual Friendships” is as follows... Within a particular faith community—or among people from different religious, spiritual, or moral traditions— small groups are formed which would include the following three elements: 1) Participants (at least most participants) declare an intention to take a specific step towards achieving a goal associated with their personal spiritual growth (By making such a declaration, participants will thereby be motivated to “do their homework” before the next meeting... that is, they will, by their desire to be true to their word—and by their desire to encourage the integrity of the process as a whole—feel some sense of urgency and responsibility about making an honest effort related to their declaration.) 2) All participants are provided with an opportunity, in a respectful and considerate small group environment, to speak about their efforts they made in the interval between meetings 3) Participants have the right to choose how they will benefit from the small group process (they can choose to speak about their efforts, or choose not to speak about them; they can seek feedback or encouragement, or prefer no response; they can remain silent and listen, etc.)

Summary Statement: “Spiritual Friendships” are relationships based on a sense of responsibility and accountability in association with the process of individual spiritual formation—and thus inspire, encourage, and support honest efforts associated with specific spiritual goals.

52. Farmers Markets

Why Buy Local?

<http://www.localharvest.org/buylocal.jsp>

Use Directory to find one near you

<http://www.localharvest.org/farmers-markets/>

Farmer’s Markets—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farmers'_market

53. Food Co-ops

About Food Coops, and Directory for one near you

<http://www.localharvest.org/food-coops/>

Example of a Food Co-op

<http://tpss.coop/>

Helpful graphic on types of cooperatives

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_cooperative

54. Green Living

Tips for Living Earth Friendly—reducing impact on the environment (3 links)

<http://www.greenlivingtips.com/>

<http://greenliving.lifetips.com/>

<http://www.coopamerica.org/programs/livinggreen/>

Green Business Network

<http://www.coopamerica.org/greenbusiness/network.cfm>

55. Green Politics

Green Politics—Wikipedia (includes “statement of principles”)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_politics

Global Greens—Wikipedia (extensive links)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Greens

56. Green Purchasing

Major Green Purchasing Guidelines and Criteria

<http://www.igpn.org/guideline/organizations.html#ICLEI>

Japan’s Green Purchasing Network—Example

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/consumption/HiroakiKoshibu.pdf>

57. Green Retrofitting

Green Retrofit Checklist

http://www.greenhomeguide.org/guide_for_green_renovation/green_retrofit_checklist.html

58. Holistic Education (Schools/Universities Moving Towards Sustainable Infrastructure/livelihoods)

Holistic Education—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holistic_education

12 of the Greenest Colleges in American

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/green-homes/eco-friendly/greenest-colleges-460429>

Campus Sustainability Resource Center—Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education

http://www.aashe.org/resources/resource_center.php

The College Sustainability Report Card

<http://www.greenreportcard.org/>

Association of Waldorf Schools of North American

<http://www.whywaldorfworks.org/>

Maharishi University of Management

<http://www.mum.edu/about/>

Ananda Marga Gurukul—An Emerging Self Reliant Community

<http://www.gurukul.edu/instit.php>

Knowledge and Training for Village Industries—the Booker T. Washington--Tuskegee Model

Excerpts from Online Text book “Up from Slavery” by Booker T. Washington

<http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/WasSlav.html>

“Nearly all the work of getting the new location ready for school purposes was done by the students after school was over in the afternoon. As soon as we got the cabins in condition to be used, I determined to clear up some land so that we could plant a crop. When I explained my plan to the young men, I noticed that they did not seem to take to it very kindly. It was hard for them to see the connection between clearing land and an education. Besides, many of them had been school-teachers, and they questioned whether or not clearing land would be in keeping with their dignity. In order to relieve them from any embarrassment, each afternoon after school I took my axe and led the way to the woods. When they saw that I was not afraid or ashamed to work, they began to assist with more enthusiasm. We kept at the work each afternoon, until we had cleared about twenty acres and had planted a crop.” (From Chapter VIII “Teaching School in a Stable and a Hen House”)

“From the very beginning, at Tuskegee, I was determined to have the students do not only the agricultural and domestic work, but to have them erect their own buildings. My plan was to have them, while performing this service, taught the latest and best methods of labour, so that the school would not only get the benefit of their efforts, but the students themselves would be taught to see not only utility in labour, but beauty and dignity; would be taught, in fact, how to lift labour up from mere drudgery and toil, and would learn to love work for its own sake. My plan was not to teach them to work in the old way, but to show them how to make the forces of nature--air, water, steam, electricity, horse-power--assist them in their labour.” (From Chapter X “A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw”)

“At first many advised against the experiment of having the buildings erected by the labour of the students, but I was determined to stick to it. I told those who doubted the wisdom of the plan that I knew that our first buildings would not be so comfortable or so complete in their finish as buildings erected by the experienced hands of outside workmen, but that in the teaching of civilization, self-help, and self-reliance, the erection of buildings by the students themselves would more than compensate for any lack of comfort or fine finish.” (From Chapter X “A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw”)

“I further told those who doubted the wisdom of this plan, that the majority of our students came to us in poverty, from the cabins of the cotton, sugar, and rice plantations of the South, and that while I knew it would please the students very much to place them at once in finely constructed buildings, I felt that it would be following out a more natural process of development to teach them how to construct their own buildings. Mistakes I knew would be made, but these mistakes would teach us valuable lessons for the future.” (From Chapter X “A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw”)

“During the now nineteen years' existence of the Tuskegee school, the plan of having the buildings erected by student labour has been adhered to. In this time forty buildings, counting small and large, have been built, and all except four are almost wholly the product of student labour. As an additional result, hundreds of men are now scattered throughout the South who received their knowledge of mechanics while being taught how to erect these buildings. Skill and knowledge are now handed down from one set of students to another in this way, until at the present time a building of any description or size can be constructed wholly by our instructors and students, from the drawing of the plans to the putting in of the electric fixtures, without going off the grounds for a single workman.” (From Chapter X “A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw”)

“The same principle of industrial education has been carried out in the building of our own wagons, carts, and buggies, from the first. We now own and use on our farm and about the school dozens of these vehicles, and every one of them has been built by the hands of the students. Aside from this, we help supply the local market with these vehicles. The supplying of them to the people in the community has had the same effect as the supplying of bricks, and the man who learns at Tuskegee to build and repair wagons and carts is regarded as a benefactor by both races in the community where he goes. The people with whom he lives and works are going to think twice before they part with such a man.” (From Chapter X “A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw”)

59. Holistic Health Care

Holistic Health—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holistic_health

60. Homesteading

Countryside—the magazine of modern homesteading

<http://www.countrysidemag.com/aboutus.html>

61. Indicators/Accountability Indicators

Everything you want to know about indicators

<http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/Indicators/index.html>

The Community Indicators Handbook

http://www.rprogress.org/sustainability_indicators/community_indicators.htm

Sustainable Development Indicators Book

http://www.iisd.org/measure/principles/progress/way_forward.asp

Five Milestones for Sustainability—Measuring Progress on Global Warming and Sustainability

<http://www.icleiusa.org/programs/sustainability/five-milestones-for-sustainability/?searchterm=sustainability%20indicators>

62. Individual Spiritual Formation

1) “Spiritual Formation, without regard to any specifically religious context or tradition, is the process by which the inner God-given divinity in human beings is given a definite form or character.”

2) “Spiritual Discipline is the cultivation of love.”

3) “For the soundness of ideas must be tested finally by their practical application.

When they fail in this—that is, when they cannot be carried out in everyday life producing lasting harmony and satisfaction and giving real benefit to all concerned—to oneself as well as to others—no ideas can be said to be sound and practical.”

Source References (for above quotes)

1. [Variation (by this writer) of a definition by Dallas Willard (see “Idaho Springs Inquiries Into Spiritual Formation” at <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/artview.asp?artID=36>)] (see section titled “What is Spiritual Formation? How is it to be described in the language of contemporary life?”, paragraph 4)

2. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 13, Chpt. 24, p. 142 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 13 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1970)

3. D.T. Suzuki *Essays in Zen Buddhism* 1st Series Grove Press New York 1961 p. 317 (Originally published in 1949)

63. Inspiring Role Models

From introduction to IPCR document (“Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives”)

<http://ipcri.net/images/2-Inspiring-Role-Models-and-Service-Oriented-Initi.pdf>

Introduction

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be”. Arriving at the belief that a positive outcome is possible is an important step towards actually achieving a positive outcome, and a step which needs to be attended to with much care, to encourage practical and constructive public discourse. One way of attending to this step in our current circumstances would be to “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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”... or, in other words, increase our collective awareness of the significant numbers of people who are currently accumulating valuable experience and establishing constructive understandings relevant to overcoming the challenges of our times.

There are a number of core beliefs which have contributed to the development of The IPCR Initiative. Here are three examples:

- 1) As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives.
- 2) Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.
- 3) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

This document, “Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives”—considered together with the document “A Selection of Most Valuable Resources”, and the many other resources accessible at the IPCR website (www.ipcri.net) provides evidence in support of the three above mentioned core beliefs of The IPCR Initiative... and this writer believes that such evidence is sufficient for the conclusion that “we have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges of our times”.

See also “100’s: Books and Lists Ranking People in Various Categories (usually 100 per book)”
http://www.adherents.com/people/100_lists.html

64. Interfaith Dialogue

“Interfaith” entry at Wikipedia
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interfaith>

Article “The Interfaith Movement of the 20th Century” by Marcus Braybrooke
<http://www.interfaithdialoguebasics.be/the%20interfaith%20movement%20in%20the%2020th%20century.htm>

Archives of NAINConnect 2009 (North American Interfaith Network)
Experiencing the Spirit in Education - The Challenge of Religious Pluralism
<http://www.nain.org/wkshp09/summary09.htm>

United Religions Initiative
http://www.uri.org/About_URI.html

65. Interfaith Peacebuilding

On the homepage of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative, there is a link to a ten point assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times <http://ipcri.net/images/Ten-Point-Assessment.pdf> . Such an assessment of the challenges of our times has compelled this writer to the conclusion that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—to be

- 1) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- 2) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy”³ which are now accessible to us.

There are a number of core beliefs which have contributed to the development of The IPCR Initiative. Here are three examples:

- 1) As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives.
- 2) Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.
- 3) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

Special Note as Commentary to the above: This document “Starting Point Links...” is a section of a this writer current “work-in-progress” – and is evidence supporting the above goals and propositions.

Consider also the following from a footnote in IPCR document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (at <http://ipcri.net/images/2-Peacebuilding-in-its-Most-Compassionate-Form.pdf>)

“During the course of any given day—and in ways we may not even be aware of—acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Hindu faith inspire Muslims to become better Muslims; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Islamic faith inspire Christians to become better Christians; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Christian faith inspire Buddhists to become better Buddhists; and so on.

“And consider further: that during the course of our lives, we all require the benefit of experiences, goods, and services from countless numbers of other people.

“To be more specific, this writer now asks you (kind reader) to consider tracing the materials and “human energy input” associated with the water you use (and drink); the food you eat; the building

structure which you call home; the clothes you wear; the mode of transportation you use; the fuel for that mode of transportation—and the centuries of cultural experiences which make up the knowledge and wisdom now accessible via the Internet....

“Even if we use only the implications of this very limited exercise, by the end of any given day countless numbers of people in this world will have had the opportunity—whether they were aware of it or not—to be a positive influence in the lives of countless numbers of other people who are practitioners of a faith tradition different than themselves....”

66. Intergenerational Projects

Good Resource Page—Penn. State Univ.

<http://intergenerational.cas.psu.edu/>

At Virginia Tech Univ.

http://www.vt.edu/spotlight/achievement/2007-04-16_intergenerational/2007-04-16-intergenerational.html

Examples

<http://www.epa.gov/aging/ia/examples.htm>

67. Life Cycle Assessment

Life cycle assessment—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_cycle_assessment

Walmart announces a Sustainable Product Index

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/walmart-sustainable-product-index-50071609>

GreenAmerica’s (formerly CoopAmerica) Unshopping Guide

<http://www.coopamerica.org/programs/shopunshop/unshopping/index.cfm>

What’s a Green Business? From GreenAmerica (formerly CoopAmerica)

<http://www.coopamerica.org/greenbusiness/whatis.cfm>

68. Local Community Points of Entry

Community Centers for Meeting Basic Needs—The Hunger Project’s Epicenter Strategy

http://www.thp.org/what_we_do/key_initiatives/community_centers/overview

From the “1000Communities²” proposal (at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

A. Local Community Points of Entry “Community Centers” (see p. 10)

1. The concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) was created by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see www.teacherswithoutborders.org).

The website of “Teachers Without Borders” includes the following description of CTLCs:

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers (CTLCs) are local, practical education centers designed to be embraced by and emerge from the community itself.... CTLCs use existing facilities and are often outfitted with libraries [(which include) dictionaries, references, educational material of general interest] ... computers, face-to-face classrooms, and break-out spaces, used primarily to serve several essential functions for community sustainability.”¹ [From the “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of “Teachers Without Borders” (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>)]

2. In this “1000Communities²” proposal, the concept of CTLCs is expanded so that such local community points of entry function as

- a) information centers, resource centers, clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” [see Step 3 of the 15 Step Outline (Section 6)], and as determined by the CTLC Coordinator
- c) practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”
- d) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal
- e) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)
- f) locations for “Final Version” Document submission (“voting”) as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Outline (see Section 6)
- g) locations for “Summary of CVI Process to Date” Notebooks, for latecomers, and as an information resource for media
- h) central locations for listings of employment opportunities
- i) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

[And from Concluding Comments to Section 4 (see p. 15)]

1. This “1000Communities²” proposal recognizes that creating the knowledge base, skill sets, and the compassion for our fellow human beings necessary to resolve the challenges of our times will require

- a) recognizing deficiencies in the knowledge base and skill sets of our communities as they are now (which can be brought to the forefront by Community Visioning Initiatives)

- b) recognizing deficiencies in compassion for our fellow human beings (which can also be brought to the forefront by Community Visioning Initiatives)
- c) linking together the concepts of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, “teacher-leaders”, ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships
- d) curriculum development “on the fly”
- e) teacher training “on the fly”
- f) community centers which are neighborhood-friendly, and which provide ongoing workshops that are deliberately affordable
- g) encouraging as much formal and informal meetings with other people in the local neighborhoods for discussion, information sharing, mutual support and encouragement, fellowship and friendship—so that the result will include the building of a close-knit community of people with a healthy appreciation for each others strengths, and a well-developed capacity to resolve even the most difficult challenges.

2. This “1000Communities2” proposal also advocates three propositions which are especially relevant when considering the value of local community points of entry information clearinghouses, and ongoing workshops....

- a) There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.
- b) People can, one by one, decide to deliberately focus the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on many or all of the action plans which emerge from Community Visioning Initiatives.
- c) The result can be that there are countless ‘ways to earn a living’ which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

69. Local Currency

BerkShares—“BerkShares are a local currency designed for use in the Southern Berkshire region of Massachusetts (USA) with issue by BerkShares, Inc., a non-profit organization working in collaboration with the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, participating local banks, local businesses, and local non-profit organizations.

“The purpose of a local currency is to function on a local scale the same way that national currencies have functioned on a national scale—building the local economy by maximizing circulation of trade within a defined region. Widely used in the early 1900s, local currencies are again being recognized as a

tool for sustainable economic development. The currency distinguishes the local businesses that accept the currency from those that do not, building stronger relationships and a greater affinity between the business community and the citizens of a particular place.” [From the “BerkShares: Local Currency for the Berkshire Region” section of www.berkshares.org]

Ithaca Hours—“Ithaca Hours is a local currency system that promotes local economic strength and community self-reliance in ways which will support economic and social justice, ecology, community participation and human aspirations in and around Ithaca, New York. Ithaca Hours help to keep money local, building the Ithaca economy. It also builds community pride and connections. Over 900 participants publicly accept Ithaca HOURS for goods and services.” [From the homepage of “Ithaca Hours” (Ithaca, New York, USA) at <http://www.ithacahours.org/>].

LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems)— An alternative to national currency based economic transactions which can provide more flexibility and stability in times of transition. There is good introductory information to the LETS theory and applications at <http://www.transaction.net/money/lets/> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_Exchange_Trading_Systems

Time Banks

<http://www.timebanks.org/how-it-works.htm>

70. Locally Based Food Processing

from California Green Solutions

<http://www.californiagreensolutions.com/cgi-bin/gt/tpl.h,content=2311>

Local Food—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Local_food

article—“The Process of Rebuilding a Local Food Economy”

http://www.newwest.net/city/article/the_process_of_rebuilding_a_local_food_economy/C8/L8/

71. Locally Grown Food

Local Harvest website

<http://www.localharvest.org/about.jsp>

article “On Tiny Plots, a New Generation of Farmers Emerges”

<http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2009/07/14-4>

post at worldpulse.com “Why There Will Be More Locally Produced Food in the Future

<http://www.worldpulse.com/node/5146>

72. Low Impact Transport Systems

Links from Low Impact Living Initiative

<http://www.lowimpact.org/linkstransport.htm>

73. Meditation

Meditation—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditation>

“When the object of contemplation shines forth without the intervention of one’s own consciousness, dhyana flows into Samadhi.” (interpretation of Patanjali text)

(from “Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali” by B.K.S. Iyengar)

“In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite.”

(from “Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 7, Chapter 48, p. 240)

74. Mentoring

Big Brother, Big Sister

<http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.djKKYPLJvH/b.1539751/k.BDB6/Home.htm>

Mentorship—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentorship>

Coaching (Life Coaching)—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coaching>

75. Microgeneration (Energy)

Strengths and Weaknesses of Microgeneration Technologies

<http://www.energybusinessreports.com/shop/item.asp?itemid=2296>

Microgeneration—Wikipedia (with micro and large-scale comparison table)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microgeneration>

76. Neighborhood Revitalization

NeighborWorks Training Institute

<http://www.nw.org/network/training/programs/nr.asp>

77. Oil Depletion Protocol

As drafted by Dr. Colin J. Campbell

<http://www.oildepletionprotocol.org/theprotocol>

“The Oil Depletion Protocol” (book) by Richard Heinberg (see endorsements)

<http://www.oildepletionprotocol.org/thebook>

78. Open Courseware

OpenCourseware—Wikipedia

(Many links provided, including a link to “Open Educational Resources—Wikipedia”)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenCourseWare>

79. Open Source Social Solutions

Article “Open Source Social Solutions: “Building Communities of Change” by Charlie Brown, executive director of Ashoka’s Changemakers program

<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/itgg.2007.2.3.125>

80. Open Space Technology

Overview From OpenSpaceWorld website

<http://www.openspaceworld.org/cgi/wiki.cgi?AboutOpenSpace>

Overview from The Co-Intelligence Institute

<http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-Openspace.html>

Open Space Technology—Wikipedia

<http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-Openspace.html>

81. Organic Farming

From Small Farm Permaculture and Sustainable Living website (Advantages and Disadvantages)

<http://www.co-intelligence.org/P-Openspace.html>

Organic Farming—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organic_farming

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Federation_of_Organic_Agriculture_Movements

82. Peace Studies Programs

Peacemakers Trust-- Directory of Resources and Programs for Education and Training in dispute resolution, conflict transformation, peacework, or humanitarian practice

<http://www.peacemakers.ca/education/educationlinks.html>

Introduction to “Global Directory of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Programs”

Introduction titled “Peace Studies at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century”

<http://www.peacejusticestudies.org/globaldirectory/GD7intro.pdf>

PAWSS (Peace and World Security Studies) curriculum example

<http://74.125.93.132/search?q=cache:e8faVdOy77sJ:pawss.hampshire.edu/faculty/curriculum/index.html+peace+studies+curriculum&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

Peace and Conflict Studies—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_and_conflict_studies

University of Peace: Media, Peace, and Conflict Studies—required courses

<http://www.upeace.org/academic/masters/MCPS.cfm>

PAWSS (Peace and World Security Studies) graduate education guide—Peace and Conflict Studies

<http://pawss.hampshire.edu/students/grad/index.html#1>

Summer Peacebuilding Institute—Eastern Mennonite University

<http://www.emu.edu/ctp/spi/>

83. Peacebuilding

From Kroc Institute for International Peacebuilding (at Univ. of Notre Dame)

free handbook: “Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit” (2007)

http://kroc.nd.edu/sites/default/files/reflective_peacebuilding.pdf

“Peacebuilding: What it Means to Build a Lasting Peace” from Beyond Intractability website

<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/peacebuilding/>

“Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” (IPCR Initiative document)

<http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>

From “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (IPCR Initiative document)

“What can we do—at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives—to bring the best ideas from the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us and ‘through the mist’, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?”

“In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

“This essay, “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”, is an effort to assist fellow human beings in identifying what—from the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us—would best answer the above question “What can we do...”—and what—from the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us—would best fill in the blank in the above statement.”

From the IPCR Initiative Homepage

<http://ipcri.net/>

The three most important documents of The IPCR Initiative are:

1) “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” [34 page paper (12 page “Notes and References” section)]-- an introduction to Community Visioning Initiatives (and the “1000Communities2” proposal), which highlights the role of education and the need for “teacher-leaders”, and which can do much to re-energize constructive, practical, and solution-oriented discussion, and promote new approaches to partnership formation and coalition building.

2) “1000Communities2”, a 161 page proposal advocating Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” with ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times

3) “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”: (Community Good News Networks, Community Faith Mentoring Networks, Spiritual Friendships, Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities, Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace, Spiritually Responsible Investing, Ecological Sustainability, and IPCR Journal/Newsletters). (revised and updated, December 2009)

84. Peak Oil

Especially recommended as starting points towards peak oil awareness

Footnotes on Peak Oil in recently completed update to IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts” (See Footnote #14)

(see <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>)

“**Peak Oil Primer**” section of the Energy Bulletin website

www.energybulletin.net

Richard Heinberg’s Museletter #184 titled “A View from Oil’s Peak”

<http://www.richardheinberg.com/museletter/184>)

Note: Richard Heinberg— (see above recommended article “A View from Oil’s Peak”) is widely acknowledged as one of the world's foremost Peak Oil educators. He is a journalist, educator, editor,

lecturer, and a Core Faculty member of New College of California, where collaborative efforts between faculty, students, and a variety of other “stakeholders” are creating models for “Powerdown” efforts at the regional and community level. Some of the books he has written: *The Party's Over: Oil, War, and the Fate of Industrial Societies*; *Powerdown*; *The Oil Depletion Protocol: A Plan to Avert Wars, Terrorism, and Economic Collapse*; and *Peak Everything: Waking Up to a Century of Declines*” His website is at <http://www.richardheinberg.com/>

Article “Unleashing Abundance as a Community Response to Peak Oil: Designing Energy Descent Pathways” by Rob Hopkins

<http://permacultureactivist.net/articles/EnergyDescent.htm>]

Pre-Conference Information for “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007) at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf

The “Hirsch Report” [“The Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation and Risk Management”—Project Leader: Robert L. Hirsch (SAIC) Commissioned by the Department of Energy, and dated February, 2005] [Accessible at the website of Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)(USA) at <http://www.bartlett.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hirschreport.pdf>]

“The Oil Crash and You” by Bruce Thomson (at http://www.greatchange.org/ov-thomson_convince_sheet-pdf.pdf) (Note: Bruce Thomson is a technical writer in New Zealand, and moderator of the RunningonEmpty2 Internet Discussion Forum, which assisted in creating the document.)

Peak Oil—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peak_oil

85. Permaculture

An Introduction to Permaculture from Permaculture Activist magazine

<http://www.permacultureactivist.net/intro/PcIntro.htm>

Planetary Permaculture Directory from Permaculture Activist magazine

<http://www.permacultureactivist.net/pcresources/PcResources2.htm>

From section “Conclusion” in “Permaculture and Energy” article by David Holmgren, at

www.permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm

“To summarize:

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (in that order)
- Grow a garden and eat what it produces
- Avoid imported resources where possible
- Use labor and skill in preference to materials and technology
- Design, build, and purchase for durability and repairability
- Use resources for their greatest potential use

Use renewable resources wherever possible even if local environmental costs appear higher
Use non-renewable and embodied energies primarily to establish sustainable systems
When using high technology avoid using state of the art equipment
Avoid dept and long-distance commuting
Reduce taxation by earning less
Develop a home-based lifestyle, be domestically responsible”

From “Permaculture and Energy” article by David Holmgren, at
www.permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm

“If there is a single most important insight from Odum’s work, it is that solar energy and its derivatives are our only sustainable source of life. Forestry and agriculture are the primary (and potentially self supporting) systems of solar energy harvesting available. It should be possible to design land use systems which approach the solar energy harvesting capacities of natural systems while providing humanity with its needs. *This was the original premise of the permaculture concept.*”

From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see subsection titled “Mollison”)
(<http://permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm>)

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy back to a solar-based (agriculture and forestry) economy will involve the application of the embodied energy that we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes and ideas, mostly inappropriately configured for the “solar” economy. It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”

86. Positive News

blog entry by founder of “Good News Network” website “25 Random Things about the Good News Network”
<https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/editors-blog/general/25-things-about-gnn.html>

Great News Network
<http://www.greatnewsnetwork.org/>

87. Preventative Health Care

article “Integrating Prevention into Health Care” at World Health Organization website
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs172/en/index.html>

List of Preventable Causes of Death—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preventable_causes_of_death

88. Questionnaires/Surveys

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”

From IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities”

Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action.

Questionnaires and surveys as a community building tool can provide:

- 1) the beginnings of a database of questions that can help build caring communities
- 2) a starting point for creating preliminary surveys, as preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives (Example: Responses and summarized results from sending preliminary surveys to 150 key community leaders can provide a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities b) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the planned Community Visioning Initiative c) starting points for workshop topics at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”)
- 3) a focal point for community and individual self-examination [Example: “Quaker's often use what they call ‘queries’ as a focus for individual and collective meditation, consideration and prayer—(and for) guiding Quaker seekers in their search for greater love, truth, and insight into how to serve humanity and live lives that are consistent with their core values.”² (Two Quaker queries: "Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs, and in service to society?"³ "When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?"⁴)]
- 4) a way to evaluate a Community Visioning process, so that the most valuable learning experiences can be shared with other communities.

Here are some example questions which are designed to be helpful in building caring communities:

a) There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

[I believe it and there is much evidence to support it; I believe it, and there is sufficient evidence to support it; I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it; It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now; I don't believe it, there is no evidence to support it]

b) From your point of view, what are the most difficult challenges of our times? Do you believe that we—collectively—have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges you have identified as the most difficult challenges of our times?

c) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the challenges you perceive as most threatening to peace and well-being around the world? (Note: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community).

d) Consider the following commentary on preparation for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative.... People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community. The question: please list at least 5 preventative measures which you believe would proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during the carrying out of a Community Visioning Initiative in your community.

e) The person who will help me the most is the person who will _____ .

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

Questionnaires can be created which will accumulate information, suggestions, etc. that can be of critical importance in resolving the above mentioned “irony”—and which can provide the above mentioned assistance to the process of organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives.

Summary Statement: Ongoing community and individual self-examination can encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action during Community Visioning Initiatives—and help communities of people deliberately focus how they spend their time, energy and money so that these “investments” are consistent with their core values.

Related Fields of Activity—identifying problems and solutions, community self-awareness, building consensus

Example Question for Discussion:

Please check the box which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement:

There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it | I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it | I would like to believe it, but there isn’t enough evidence to support it | It is difficult to believe it, with way things are going now | I don’t believe it-- there is no evidence to support it |

From Introduction to “The IPCR Initiative ‘Building Caring Communities’ Questionnaire”

The IPCR “Building Caring Communities” Questionnaire (includes 60 Questions)

<http://ipcri.net/images/The%20IPCR%20Spring%202007%20Building%20Caring%20Communities%20Q.pdf>

“Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and resources, and to build consensus for collective action. Here are four ways questions like those included in this section can help build caring communities:

- a) A local community or regional information services provider could publish the questions, receive and organize the responses, and then publish a compilation of the responses
- b) Residents of a local community could discuss the compilation of responses in small group settings
- c) If there was a “Community Journal” at a central location in the community, attributed (or anonymous) responses to the questionnaire could be accumulated in the “journal”, providing a constructive framework for public discourse
- d) Annual questionnaires can become part of a traditional community event which includes evaluating, summarizing, and celebrating successful initiatives in the areas of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability—and contributions to a “community yearbook”
- e) The use of questionnaires for the specific purpose of helping to build caring communities will surely bring forth comments and suggestions on how to improve such questionnaires, and will thus assist in building a resource base of “most helpful questions” for future use....”

Special Note: The IPCR Initiative defines “caring communities” as follows: “Caring communities” are communities with residents who are aware of the depth and range of the challenges of our times, and therefore do their best to take actions which will have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see “105 Related Fields of Activity” at IPCR website).

Everything you ever wanted to know about surveys—free tutorial

<http://www.statpac.com/surveys/>

Questionnaire Construction—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Questionnaire_construction

89. Recycling

Recycling—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recycling>

Recycling Facts

<http://www.recycling-revolution.com/recycling-facts.html>

Recycling Facts—from Oberlin College

<http://www.oberlin.edu/recycle/facts.html>

Remarkable Recycling Facts

http://www.clearwater-fl.com/gov/depts/solid_waste/docs_pub/facts.asp

90. Renewable Energy

Renewable Energy—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renewable_energy

91. Renewable Resources

Renewable Resource—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renewable_resource

92. Right Livelihood

The Right Livelihood Award—for outstanding vision and work on behalf of planet and its people

<http://www.rightlivelihood.org/>

from yogalifestylecoach.com

<http://www.yogalifestylecoach.com/rightlivelihood.html>

from The IPCR Initiative

Assessments of the challenges of our times such as the “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” (see Appendix 1 of the document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form,” p. 4 of “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times,” or <http://ipcri.net/images/Ten-Point-Assessment.pdf>) provide evidence that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—to be

- 1) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- 2) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy” which are now accessible to us.

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make along the lines described by the three goals listed above are as follows:

- 1) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of this “1000Communities2” proposal—so that the Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
- 2) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts through workshops offered at the local community level
- 3) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- 4) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- 5) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 105 fields of activity and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional good news, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)

- 6) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in “A List of Related Fields of Activity” (see section of the IPCR website homepage “105 Related Fields of Activity”)—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

Ongoing Revitalization of a Communities’ “Moral Compass”
(from IPCR Initiative document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”)

“How can local communities arrive at practical definitions of “right livelihood”? What local institutions would be most appropriate as commissioners and overseers of a resource guide to “right livelihood”? How can leaders at the regional and local community level assure residents that they understand the challenges of our times, if they themselves do not participate in the very activities they advocate for overcoming the challenges of our times? How can our communities change “the way things get done” so

that more people can live in accordance with their moral convictions? Workshops associated with The IPCR Initiative can identify, discover, create, support, and sustain comprehensive and practical answers to these very relevant questions— and provide a system by which the answers can be re-evaluated and re-stated on an ongoing basis. *Therefore, it may be said that by its very nature The IPCR Initiative includes a built-in and ongoing process for re-evaluating and re-stating the “moral compass” of a community or region.* And it may also be said that such a “moral compass” would incorporate any genuine and sincere contributions from participants associated with any religious, spiritual, or moral tradition without any damage to the genuine and sincere parts of the “framework” which gives meaning to their lives.”

93. Right Livelihood Employment Listings

Earth Renaissance—“Our long term goal is to provide job listings and services to help people find their own "Right Livelihood".

<http://www.earthrenaissance.org/livelihood.html>

94. School Business Partnerships

“A How-to Guide for School-Business Partnerships”

http://www.corpschoolpartners.org/pdf/coke_how_to_guide.pdf

School Business Partnerships—Seven Strategies for Success

<http://www.danielsfund.org/sevenstrategies/Strategies/>

Successful School and Business Partnerships

<http://www.successfulschoolbusiness.com/>

95. Service Learning

America’s most comprehensive service learning resource

<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

Service Learning—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service-learning>

Article: “Service Learning: Bringing together students, parents, and community”

http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/service_learning/schoenfeld.htm

National Service Learning Partnership

<http://www.service-learningpartnership.org/site/PageServer>

96. Sister Community Relationships

Excerpt from IPCR document “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”

<http://ipcri.net/images/The-Twilight-of-One-Era-and-the-Dawning-of-Another.pdf>

If we are to “fully realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours”¹² – and on people in others parts of the world—it seems that it would be most helpful for whole communities of people to have direct contact with whole communities of people in other parts of the world, for an extended period of time. In the context of this “1000Communities²” proposal, the “sister community” relationship would provide a way for residents of a community with sufficient resources to do so to be in direct contact with residents of a community where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

There are many communities in the world who *already have* “sister community” relationships with communities in other parts of the world. The organization most responsible for developing the idea of “sister communities”, and the organization most experienced in facilitating and monitoring such relationships, is “Sister Cities International”.

About “Sister Cities International”¹³

<http://www.sister-cities.org/>

a) “Our mission is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.”

b) “Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. As an international membership organization, we officially certify, represent and support partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states and similar jurisdictions in other countries.”

c) “Sister Cities International” represents more than 2,500 communities in 134 countries around the world.”

d) Key program areas include:

Sustainable Development, Youth and Education, Humanitarian Assistance, Arts and Culture

e) Services provided to communities joining “Sister Cities International” include:

eligibility to apply for seed grants to support sister city projects

access to information and how-to guides

mentoring and staff consultation

Developing a “sister community” relationship could be a way for diverse people in any particular community to find common ground. And *common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings would be a very special kind of common ground.* Exploring these possibilities could make it possible for many people to have first hand experience with “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

97. Slow Money

Slow Money Principles

<http://www.slowmoneyalliance.org/principles.html>

Slow Money Executive Summary

http://www.slowmoneyvermont.com/img/slowmoney_exec_summary.pdf

Article (New Age Journal)—“Slow Money: Encouraging Ethical and Sustainable Investing”

<http://www.newagejournal.com/slowmoney.shtml>

98. Socially Engaged Spirituality

Article—“Havens of Engaged Spirituality”

http://www.lifepositive.com/Spirit/Compassion/Havens_of_Engaged_Spirituality102005.asp

International Network of Engaged Buddhists

<http://www.inebnetwork.org/web/>

Resources on Socially Engaged Buddhism—from Buddhist Peace Fellowship

http://www.bpf.org/html/resources_and_links/bibliography/bibliography.html

Book: “Engaged Buddhist Reader”

<http://www.amazon.com/Engaged-Buddhist-Reader-Arnold-Kotler/dp/0938077988#>

99. Socially Responsible Investing

Socially Responsible Investing Facts—from Social Investment Forum

<http://www.socialinvest.org/resources/sriguide/srifacts.cfm>

Overview from First Affirmative Financial Network

<http://www.firstaffirmative.com/consumer.jsp#Believe>

On sustainable and responsible investing—from Calvert Investments

<http://www.calvert.com/sri.html>

From GreenAmerica (formerly CoopAmerica)—“Social Investing: Strategies for Socially and Environmentally Responsible Investing”

<http://www.coopamerica.org/socialinvesting/>

100. Spiritual Discipline/Spiritual Practice

“A spiritual discipline is a broad understanding of life choices that a person makes for the purpose of entering into deeper awareness and relationship with God. **Practices** are specific exercises or techniques one might employ in keeping with a more general discipline.”

<http://www.pcusa.org/spiritualformation/disciplines.htm>

Spiritual Practice—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritual_practice

Sadhana—32 Suggestions from Swami Sivananda

http://www.sivananda.org/teachings/philosophy/sadhana_tattwa.html

First section of unpublished manuscript: “An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ Vol. 1-11” (from Table of Contents)(at <http://ipcri.net/images/2-Quotations-from-Sathya-Sai-Speaks-Vol.pdf>)

I. Sadhana (“Spiritual Discipline is the cultivation of love....”)	1
A. Introduction (“A disciplined life is the best offering you can make”)	2
B. Initial Considerations (“Begin....”)	3
C. The Mind (“Once it discovers the nectar, it will not flutter anymore”)	3
D. Physical Health (“Purity of motive is the best guarantee....”)	4
E. Bhajan (“... establish the feeling of the constant presence of God....”)	7
F. Study of Scriptures (“... Love... the essential teaching of all scriptures....”)	10
G. Meditation (“... witnessing Light, being Light, everywhere, for all”)	13
H. Speech (“The object is to utter holy words”)	19
I. Duty (“... pay attention to the task for which you have come....”)	21
J. Concluding Comments—Sadhana (“... become Love....”)	24

101. Spiritual Diversity (Religious Pluralism)

United Religions Initiative

<http://www.uri.org/>

Religious Pluralism—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_pluralism

From the “Global Commitment to Peace” adopted at the Millennium world Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders (see

<http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.com/resources/mwps/Commitment%20to%20Global%20Peace.pdf>)

“Whereas there can be no real peace until all groups and communities acknowledge the cultural and religious diversity of the human family in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding....”

“What is Pluralism?” from the Pluralism Project at Harvard University

http://pluralism.org/pluralism/what_is_pluralism.php

102. Spiritual Friendships

Program at Friends Meeting of Washington DC

<http://www.quaker.org/fmw/fmwspirit.html>

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Spiritual Friendships”

From document: “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Spiritual Friendships”

Currently, the “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment,” mentioned in connection with the “faith mentor” definition, is most often achieved within the context of specific faith communities, and faith-oriented family environments. This “deepening of spirituality in a caring, accepting environment” can be deliberately accelerated by the cultivation of “Spiritual Friendships.”

One way of developing “Spiritual Friendships” is as follows... Within a particular faith community—or among people from different religious, spiritual, or moral traditions— small groups are formed which would include the following three elements: 1) Participants (at least most participants) declare an intention to take a specific step towards achieving a goal associated with their personal spiritual growth (By making such a declaration, participants will thereby be motivated to “do their homework” before the next meeting... that is, they will, by their desire to be true to their word—and by their desire to encourage the integrity of the process as a whole—feel some sense of urgency and responsibility about making an honest effort related to their declaration.) 2) All participants are provided with an opportunity, in a respectful and considerate small group environment, to speak about their efforts they made in the interval between meetings 3) Participants have the right to choose how they will benefit from the small group process (they can choose to speak about their efforts, or choose not to speak about them; they can seek feedback or encouragement, or prefer no response; they can remain silent and listen, etc.)

“Spiritual Friendships” are relationships based on a sense of responsibility and accountability in association with the process of individual spiritual formation—and thus inspire, encourage, and support honest efforts associated with specific spiritual goals

103. Spiritually Responsible Investing

One of the Eight IPCR Concepts: “Spiritually Responsible Investing”

From IPCR document: “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”

<http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>

“Spiritually Responsible Investing”

The way we “invest” our time, energy, and money has a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

As J.C. Kumarappa expresses it in his book “Why the Village Movement?”: “A buyer hardly realizes he owes any duties at all in his everyday transactions.”⁶ (And yet), “... every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it.... Hence it behooves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy.”⁷ But, as we ourselves well know, the task of inquiring into the moral or spiritual history of every article we buy (and, similarly, the task of inquiring into the consequences of our “investments” of time and energy) is becoming increasingly complex... and is, for most of us, simply beyond our capacity to accomplish.

This level of complexity in our everyday circumstances should not discourage us to the point of abdicating our roles as responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money—for that would only increase the distrust and violence we are, hopefully, trying to minimize. Instead, we can make it a priority to carefully channel our “investments” of time, energy, and money into activities which are in accordance with our spiritual convictions or core values (as indicated by a full disclosure of information, which is readily available)—and which are in accordance with circles of activity which are closer to the community we live in [“The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfil our obligations as trustees.”⁸]

As a way of encouraging new exploration into the concept of “Spiritually Responsible Investing”, here are three propositions, and one definition. [Note: The following propositions and definition were first offered in the IPCR document “Spiritually Responsible Investing: Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life” (March-April, 2007) (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Spiritually-Responsible-Investing-paper-for-FSSC.pdf>)]

The first proposition is: There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

The second proposition is: The ways we “invest” our time, energy, and money have a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

The third proposition is: The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

And the one definition: Spiritually Responsible Investing can be defined as investments of time, energy, and money which increase our capacity to integrate spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.”

An IPCR Journal/Newsletter can contribute to the careful channeling of our “investments” of time, energy, and money by serving as a “clearinghouse” for “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.”

“If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked...”⁹

“... (The) more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.”¹⁰

Summary Statement: Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living.”

Related Fields of Activity—village industries, alternative gifts, emergency humanitarian aid

Example Question for Discussion:

Consider keeping a record of all of your “investments” of time, energy, and money for one month. And then, after one month, make a list of what goals receive the most significant “investments” of time, energy, and money—and rank each most significant, next most significant, etc., using 1 as most significant, 2 as next most significant, and so on.

104. Sustainable Design/Natural Building

Sustainable Design—Wikipedia (including Principles of Sustainable Design and Hannover Principles)
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_design

Natural Building Network
<http://nbnetwork.org/>

Natural Building—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_building

Film: First Earth: Uncompromising Ecological Architecture (review)
http://www.ecovillagenews.org/wiki/index.php/First_Earth:_Uncompromising_Ecological_Architecture
(combine with Green Building)

Builders Without Borders (networking natural builders worldwide)
<http://www.builderswithoutborders.org/>

105. Sustainable Health Care

From Alliance for Natural Health website
<http://www.anhcampaign.org/campaigns/sustainable-healthcare>

From answers.com
<http://www.answers.com/topic/sustainable-health>

106. Urban Agriculture

Urban Agriculture—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_agriculture

Document: “Urban Agriculture and Community Food Security...”
<http://www.foodsecurity.org/PrimerCFSCUAC.pdf>

Urban Farming
<http://www.urbanfarming.org/>

107. Vegetarianism

Vegetarianism—Wikipedia
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vegetarianism>

International Vegetarian Union—with very wide ranging searchable database of resources
<http://www.ivu.org/>

Vegetarian Times—(with the world’s largest collection of vegetarian recipes)
<http://www.vegetariantimes.com/>

108. Village Design

Village Design Institute
<http://www.villagedesign.org/index.html>

109. Village Industries/Cottage Industries

Excerpts from “Why the Village Movement?” (the edition I have included the 1939 edition foreward by Mahatma Gandhi, and was printed on handmade paper in Rajchat, Kashi in 1960):

“In India, the system of education followed in the past was a training ground for life. A student chose his master and lived his everyday life under his masters watchful eye and imbibed the spirit of his guru. This was the case, not merely with spiritual training, but in every walk of life.” (p. 177)

“Work absorbs most of our waking hours, and many of the problems connected with work and our dealings with our fellow man are what determine the nature of our life. Therefore, it behooves us to sit up and take note of what our work makes of us.... The Village Industries Association, which seeks to restore work to its proper place in the life of the nation... (thus) has not only to change the present day ideology in regard to work—a matter which cannot be done in a day—but it also has to provide new methods of work.” (p. 65)

“The function of work should be to practice our ideal of life.” (p. 183)

“Duties of consumer: when buying an article of everyday use, one has to take into account the full repercussions of one’s transaction

- a) one should know where the article comes from

- b) who makes the article
 - c) from what material
 - d) under what conditions do the workers live and work
 - e) what proportion of the final price do they get as wages
 - f) how is the rest of the money distributed
 - g) how is the article produced
 - h) how does the industry fit into the national economy”
- (p. 77)

“Village Industries:

- a) those that manufacture indispensable articles needed in villages and for villagers
- b) using processes within the easy reach of villagers
- c) with the help of tools and implements falling within the financial capacity of the villagers carrying on the industry
- d) utilizing local raw materials
- e) with the aid of human or animal power
- f) meeting the demand of local or nearby markets
- g) not causing displacement of labor or unemployment among wage earners

Cottage Industries:

- a) whole time occupations that do not require factory buildings with elaborate or special equipment (Ex: shoemaking, tailoring, etc.)

Home Industries:

- a) carried on by members of family (Ex: spinning, fruit preserving, canning, beekeeping, candlemaking, etc.)”

“... every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it... hence it behooves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy.... (Yet this) is an arduous task, and it becomes almost impossible for ordinary persons to undertake it when the article comes from far off countries. Therefore, it is that we have to restrict our purchase to articles made within our cognizance. This is the moral basis of Swadeshi.” (p. 72-73)

“If the goods come from a source which may be tainted with exploitation (either of sweat labor or of the political, financial, or economic hold over other nations, or classes, or races) then the buyer of such goods will be party to such exploitation, just as the person who buys stolen articles... creates a market for stolen goods.... Therefore, anyone who buys good indiscriminately is not discharging his/her full responsibility.... We cannot absolve ourselves of all blame by merely pleading ignorance in regard to the source.” (p.78)

“Are we prepared to shoulder this grave responsibility and pander to our palate or shall we content ourselves with a cup of nutritious milk drawn from a well kept cow at our door? These considerations are not far-fetched but actual. Anyone who looks on life seriously and as a trustee cannot afford to ignore these far-reaching consequences of his/her actions.” (p. 78-79)

“If we feel it is beyond us to guarantee the concomitant results of all our transactions, it necessarily follows that we must limit our transactions to a circle well within our control. This is the bed rock of swadeshi... The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions, and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfill our obligations as trustees.” (p.79)

“A business transaction does not begin and end with the transfer of goods and payment of money; in addition, it involves the consideration of one’s duties to one’s fellow men.” (p.155)

“We do not live unto ourselves, and the more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbors and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.” (p.73)

110. Violence Prevention

Best Practices for Youth Violence Prevention (from Center for Disease Control and Prevention)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/bestpractices.htm>

Violence Prevention Alliance

<http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/en/>

Violence Prevention Institute—(with many links and statistics)

<http://www.violencepreventioninstitute.org/gangs.html>

111. Voluntary Simplicity

The Simple Living Network

<http://www.simpleliving.net/main/>

Simple Living—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simple_living

Voluntary Simplicity course—from NW Earth Institute

http://www.nwei.org/discussion_courses/course-offerings/voluntary-simplicity

Many Simple Living Links and Resources

<http://www.gallagherpress.com/pierce/index.htm>

112. Waste Water Treatment

Sewage Treatment—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewage_treatment

List of Wastewater Treatment Technologies—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_waste_water_treatment_technologies

Sustainable Waste Water Treatment and Reuse—UNESCO course offering
<http://www.unesco-ihe.org/Education/Short-courses/Regular-short-courses/Sustainable-Wastewater-Treatment-and-Reuse>

New Approaches in Decentralized Water Infrastructure—from Sustainable Water Forum
<http://sustainablewaterforum.org/new.html>

113. Water Conservation

From wateruseitwisely.com
<http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/>

25 Ways to Conserve Water in Home and Yard
http://www.eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm

100 Ways to Conserve Water
<http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/index.php>

114. Water Purification

Water Purification—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_purification

Why use home water filtration systems?
<http://www.thebestwaterfilters.com/>

115. World Population Awareness

World Population—Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population

Human Population—Urbanization (from Population Reference Bureau)
<http://www.prb.org/Educators/TeachersGuides/HumanPopulation/Urbanization.aspx>

Revisiting Carrying Capacity: Area Based Indicators of Sustainability (Rees)
<http://dieoff.org/page110.htm>

Ecological Footprint-- Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ecological_footprint

116. Yoga

Yoga—Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoga>

117. Zero Waste

Zero Waste Alliance

<http://www.zerowaste.org/>

Zero Waste—Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zero_waste

Appendix 1—Part D

[Note: This Appendix 1—Part D is a re-presentation of Appendix 5 from the “1000Communities2” proposal, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>]

Appendix 5

Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can be Explored Through “Sister Community” Relationships

A. Introduction

Section 5 (“About ‘Sister Community’ Relationships”) explains why this proposal encourages communities with the resources to do so to create “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well-documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

Here in Appendix 5, this writer offers 10 examples of organizations which provide humanitarian aid to people with basic human needs. These examples are offered as a starting point for discussion on the subject of what a community of people with surplus resources could do if even 20% of the community’s population focused their efforts on providing assistance. Most readers will understand that these examples only represent a small fraction of the many forms of assistance which might be considered by the residents of any diverse community or regional area.

[**Special Note:** The inclusion of these initiatives, in the context of this proposal, does not suggest or imply any endorsement or support by these initiatives for this “1000Communities2” proposal.]

B. Ten Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can be Explored Through “Sister Community” Relationships

1. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

There are many circumstances in communities around the world where the activity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is essential for communities of people to survive natural—or human-created—disasters, and progress to a recovery and rebuilding phase. Here, this writer offers a glimpse into the Seven Fundamental Principles of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, so that readers can appreciate some of the lessons these organizations have learned from many experiences in the field of humanitarian aid.

The Seven Fundamental Principles--“Proclaimed in Vienna in 1965, the seven Fundamental Principles bond together the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, The International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They guarantee the continuity of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its humanitarian work.

“[The Seven Fundamental Principles (of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)]:

- a) Humanity-- “... endeavours... to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found.”
- b) Impartiality—“It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.”
- c) Neutrality—“... the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.”
- d) Independence—“... must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.”
- e) Voluntary Service—“... not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.”
- f) Unity—“There can only be one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country.”
- g) Universality—“... all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other....”

From the “What We Do” section of the International Federation of The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies website, see the subsection “Introduction” and then “Principles and Values” (at <http://www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

2. World Food Programme

“WFP is the United Nations frontline agency in the fight against global hunger.”

“Operations aim to:

- Save lives in refugee crises and other emergencies
- Improve nutrition and quality of life of world's most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives
- Enable development by (a) helping people build assets that benefit them directly;
(b) promoting the self-reliance of poor people and communities”

[From the “What We Do”/“Introduction” section of the “World Food Programme website (see http://www.wfp.org/operations/introduction/index.asp?section=5&sub_section=1)] (See paragraph 1) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

“WFP by Numbers

Food distributed to 87.8 million of the poorest people in the world, including 58.8 children
24.3 million people in development programmes
63.4 million beneficiaries in emergency and protracted relief and recovery operations

Operations in 78 countries around the world

90 relief operations

22 development projects and 34 country programmes in 48 countries

Total food distributed: 4 million tonnes¹

26 percent for emergency operations

18 percent for development projects

2 million tons contributed in kind

2 million tons purchased with cash - valued at US\$600 million, of which 77 percent was procured in developing countries

Direct expenditure: US\$ 2.9 billion

Total number of employees: 10,587

92 percent of WFP staff serve in the field”

[From the “Who We Are”/“Facts and Figures”/“WFP by Numbers” section of the World Food Programme” website (see http://www.wfp.org/aboutwfp/facts/2006/index.asp?section=1&sub_section=5)] (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

3. Doctors Without Borders

“Every year, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) provides emergency medical care to millions of people caught in crises in nearly 60 countries around the world. MSF provides assistance when catastrophic events — such as armed conflict, epidemics, malnutrition, or natural disasters — overwhelm local health systems. MSF also assists people who face discrimination or neglect from their local health systems or when populations are otherwise excluded from health care.... (MSF provides independent, impartial assistance to those most in need. MSF reserves the right to speak out to bring attention to neglected crises, to challenge inadequacies or abuse of the aid system, and to advocate for improved medical treatments and protocols.)

“On any given day, close to 27,000 doctors, nurses, logisticians, water-and-sanitation experts, administrators, and other qualified professionals can be found providing medical care in international teams made up of local MSF aid workers and their colleagues from around the world.

“In 2006, MSF medical teams gave more than 9 million outpatient consultations; hospitalized almost half a million patients; delivered 99,000 babies; treated 1.8 million people for malaria; treated 150,000 malnourished children; provided 100,000 people living with HIV/AIDS with antiretroviral therapy; vaccinated 1.8 million people against meningitis; and conducted 64,000 surgeries.”

From the website of “Doctors Without Borders”. In the “About Us” section, see the “Activities” subsection (at <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/aboutus/activities.cfm>) (paragraphs 1, 2 and 3) (Confirmed June 12, 2008) (Note: Text in parenthesis in paragraph 1 above is from the “About Us” section, “History and Principles” subsection (at <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/aboutus/>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

In 1999, Doctors Without Borders received the Nobel Peace Prize.

[Below is an excerpt from the “Presentation Speech” for the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize]

“Few aims can be more praiseworthy than to combat suffering: to help those in the most desperate situations, whatever their race and wherever they may be, to return to a dignified life. Some persons even have the necessary strength and drive to live up to this ideal. We welcome a few of them today. We do so humbly, recognising that they are representatives of a much greater number of self-sacrificing men and women all over the world. Our thoughts go not least to those who, at this very moment, are working under the most difficult conditions, often putting their own lives at risk, in scenes of the profoundest suffering and degradation.

“Every year, Médecins Sans Frontières send out over 2,500 doctors, nurses and other professional helpers to more than 80 countries, where they co-operate with a good 15,000 local personnel. They go where need, suffering and hopelessness are greatest, indeed often catastrophic in nature, regardless of whether the catastrophes are human or natural in origin. We find them in the world's countless refugee camps, as well as among Chinese peasants, Russian prisoners, or the western world's modern city slum-dwellers. They are present in large numbers in Africa – the forgotten continent.”

From the website of www.nobelprize.org Located by a search using the search terms “Nobel Peace Prize 1999—Presentation Speech”. (at <http://search.nobelprize.org/search/nobel/?q=Nobel+Peace+Prize+1999&i=en&x=8&y=10>) (paragraphs 1 and 2) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

4. Teachers Without Borders

a) “... a huge shortage of qualified teachers....”

“The United Nations reports a huge shortage of qualified teachers, as well as a demonstrated need for accelerated, practical, local, contemporary, and flexible teacher education.”

From the “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>)
In the subsection “A Compelling Need”, from Bullet #5. (Confirmed May 12, 2008)

“... evidence shows that those countries with the desire to "leapfrog" over the gaps they face in terms of skills, knowledge, and educational opportunities cannot grow through acquisition of equipment alone. They must have consistent and practical teacher training, along with the support of national education strategies.”

From the “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>)
In the subsection “A Compelling Need”, from Bullet #4. (Confirmed May 12, 2008)

b) "... the building of teacher leaders."

"Teachers Without Borders is a non-profit (501c3), non-denominational, international NGO founded in 2000, devoted to closing the education divide through teacher professional development and community education. Our organization focuses on the building of teacher leaders." [From the "Mission" section of "Teachers Without Borders"]

From the "About Us" section of the "Teachers Without Borders" website. (See http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/who_we_are.html#missiontwb) In the subsection "Mission", see paragraph 1 (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

"We help to grow teachers. Click on the link to read more about our [Certificate of Teaching Mastery](#) program. We identify talent and find a way of attracting, retaining, and supporting cohorts of teachers from all sectors of local communities. We find mentors for teachers to ensure subject-matter mastery and teaching technique, and then provide opportunities at our community teaching and learning centers for emerging teachers to practice. Our plan is to start from the ground up - incorporating local mentorship, distance learning, and community college offerings, then assist local talent in completion, at a high level, of course work at four-year schools. Most importantly, we provide a means of steady communication and feedback amongst cohorts of teaching talent."

From the "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" section of the "Teachers Without Borders" website (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>) In the subsection "Example Programs", see "Teachers Education", paragraphs 1 and 2 (Confirmed May 12, 2008)

c) One of the key resources "Teachers Without Borders" has created to assist with teacher development and community education is "Community Teaching and Learning Centers".

"Community Teaching and Learning Centers (CTLCs) are local, practical education centers designed to be embraced by and emerge from the community itself. CTLCs use existing facilities and are often outfitted with libraries (such as dictionaries, references, educational material of general interest) and computers, face-to-face classrooms, and break-out spaces, used primarily to serve several essential functions for community sustainability."

From the "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" section of the "Teachers Without Borders" website (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>) In "Definition" section, see paragraphs 1 and 3 (Confirmed May 12, 2008)

How can they be created?

"Teachers Without Borders provides the following value:

- Community organizing and readiness
- Approvals by government
- Site selection & development
- Coordination of building retrofitting

Mutual plan, with CTLC leaders, for Internet access (with local and international investors)
Computer acquisition, shipping
Support for In-country leadership & CTLC Local Advisory Council
Extensive programs (educational, health, IT)
Organization and design of service delivery
Community Outreach”

From the “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/html/ctlc.html>) In the subsection “Definition”, from paragraph 6. (Confirmed May 12, 2008)

5. Small Scale Sustainable Infrastructure Development Fund (S³IDF)

“Our Mission: To Foster pro-poor, pro-environment small scale infrastructure services with financing and technical assistance for electricity, water, sanitation and other infrastructure (eg. transport and telecommunications) - necessary for poverty alleviation.”

From the homepage of S³IDF at <http://www.s3idf.org/index.asp> (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

“Our Approach:

We term our framework as the “Social Merchant Bank” where technical, financial and business support are linked and integrated for infrastructure enterprise development.

S³IDF’s approach:

S³IDF produces a stream of fundable small scale for-profit utilities.

- The business must be explicitly pro-poor, cost-effective, environmentally responsible, and can demonstrate a high degree of replicability.
- Implements its mission by partnering with one or more other local entities, such as NGOs, technology suppliers, academic organizations, and financial institutions.
- Provides technology/know-how, financing and business development assistance to small/fledgling entrepreneurs and community NGOs seeking to sell infrastructural services (water, energy, sanitation, transport, information) to India’s urban and rural poor
- The poor benefit in multiple ways, either as infrastructure owner/operators/employees and as consumers of infrastructure services”

From the “About Us” section of the S³IDF website, see the subsection “Our Approach” (at <http://www.s3idf.org/dynamic/about-ourapproach.htm>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

6. International Development Enterprises (IDE)

“IDE is a unique international non-profit organization that has been helping poor farmers in developing countries escape poverty for more than 25 years. IDE has pioneered a market-based approach that has enabled millions to permanently escape poverty. IDE uses business principles to facilitate unsubsidized

market systems in which the rural poor can participate effectively as micro-entrepreneurs and earn income. In this way, our programs create an environment that helps small farmers progress from subsistence agriculture to commercial farming, beginning an upward spiral out of chronic deprivation and vulnerability.”

From the “About Us” section of the IDE website. (see <http://www.ideorg.org/aboutus/index.php>) (paragraph 1) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

“Our Method

Based on more than 25 years of experience, IDE has developed a unique market-oriented development model that benefits the rural poor. We call it **PRISM** (Poverty Reduction through Irrigation and Smallholder Markets). Using PRISM, IDE integrates small farm households into markets and develops sustainable businesses that reduce rural poverty worldwide.

PRISM is a set of tools that are used to develop an understanding of the unique situation of the rural poor and to create sustainable solutions to rural poverty. PRISM creates opportunities for increased income by:

- Creating networks of small enterprises to provide agricultural supplies needed by poor farmers
- Working with small farmers to improve productivity
- Linking small farm families to markets for their produce

The Prism Approach

PRISM develops enterprises that improve small farm productivity and integrate small farms into markets for effective and sustainable poverty reduction.

PRISM Principles

The goal of PRISM is to enable the rural poor to transform their knowledge and skills into sustainable income through effective market participation and improve the natural resource base upon which their livelihoods depend. PRISM projects are guided by the following principles:

Benefits reach the disadvantaged. PRISM is responsive to the unique opportunities and needs of the rural poor and emphasizes listening to, learning from and benefiting those who live in extreme poverty. Water control is key to income generation. Innovative low cost small scale irrigation technologies enable farmers to access, store and control water in order to increase farm income, improve water use efficiency, and reduce labor.

PRISM projects are entrepreneurial. Creative market driven, business oriented solutions to poverty enable the rural poor to participate fully in markets, creating efficient, sustainable income increases. PRISM emphasizes sustainable resource management. The PRISM approach preserves the soil, land and water resources upon which both the rural poor and the market depend.”

From the “About Us” section of the IDE website. See the subsection “Our Method” (at <http://www.ideorg.org/method/index.php>) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

7. Alternative Gifts International (AGI)

“AGI is a nonprofit, interfaith agency. AGI provides education for people of all ages about global needs and raises funds each year in its Alternative Gift Markets and from individual donors to respond to those needs. Designated grants then are sent to the established international projects of several reputable nonprofit agencies for relief and development.”

[From the “About AGI” section of the Alternative Gifts International website, see the subsection “Mission Statement” (paragraph 2) (at <http://www.alternativegifts.org/pages/about/mission-statement/>)] (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

The current catalog of humanitarian assistance projects which people can donate to is at <http://www.alternativegifts.org/projects/>

8. Peace Corps

“The Peace Corps traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then-Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. From that inspiration grew an agency of the federal government devoted to world peace and friendship.”

“Since that time, more than 190,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have been invited by 139 host countries to work... (in the following areas): Education (36%), Health & HIV/AIDS (21%), Business (15%), Environment (14%), Youth (6%), Agriculture (5%), Other (4%).”

From the website of The Peace Corps, see the section “What is the Peace Corps?” (at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatiscpc>) (paragraphs 1 and 2) [Note: Statistics from the “Fast Facts” subsection of “What is the Peace Corps?” (at <http://www.peacecorps.gov/index.cfm?shell=learn.whatiscpc.fastfacts>) (see “Volunteers by Work Area”)] (Both confirmed June 12, 2008)

9. Foreign Student Exchange

a) About foreign student exchange programs

“A student exchange program is a program in which a student, typically in secondary or higher education, chooses to live in a foreign country to learn, among other things, language and culture. These programs are sometimes called ‘exchanges’ because different countries participating in the program will trade off students in this fashion. The students live with a host family, who are usually unpaid volunteers and often have a child the same age who has also participated (or is going to participate) in a similar exchange program. Host families are usually vetted by the organization coordinating the program.

“Student exchanges became popular after World War II. And have the aim of helping to increase the participants’ understanding and tolerance of other cultures, as well as improving their language skills and broadening their social horizons.

“An exchange student typically stays in the host country for a relatively short period of time, often 6 to 10 months, in contrast to international students or those on study abroad programs which often last for several years.

“These programs are available from a number of service-oriented organizations, such as World Education Program (WEP) Australia, Rotary International’s Rotary Youth Exchange, EF Foundation for Foreign Study, AFS, AIFS’s Academic Year in America and Youth for Understanding, which offer some of the more popular programs. Other organizations such as the Kiwanis or Lions Clubs offer similar programs.”

From keyword “student exchange program” at Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student_exchange_program) (See paragraphs 1-4) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

b) About the “American Foreign Exchange” (AFS) program

AFS Statement of Purpose

“AFS is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world.”

The Core Values and Attributes of AFS

“AFS enables people to act as responsible global citizens working for peace and understanding in a diverse world. It acknowledges that peace is a dynamic concept threatened by injustice, inequity and intolerance.

“AFS seeks to affirm faith in the dignity and worth of every human being and of all nations and cultures. It encourages respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, or social status.

“AFS activities are based on our core values of dignity, respect for differences, harmony, sensitivity and tolerance.”

“Adopted at the 1993 World Congress.”

From the “What We Do” section of the AFS website (at http://www.afs.org/afs_or/view/what_we_do) (Confirmed June 12, 2008)

10. Sponsor a Child—Children International

a) What is Children International?

“Children International is a nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to bettering the lives of impoverished children, their families and communities.”

From the “Who We Are” section of the Children International website. (See <http://www.children.org/whoWeAre.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (paragraphs 1) Confirmed June 13, 2008)

“Our mission is to help children living in dire poverty. This is accomplished through the generosity of our contributors, by providing children with program benefits and services that meet basic needs, enhance their self-esteem and raise their physical and educational levels in a meaningful, lasting way.”

From the “Who We Are” section of the Children International website, in the subsection “Vision, Mission, Goal” (at <http://www.children.org/vision.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (see “Our Mission”) (Confirmed June 13, 2008)

b) What does Children International do?

“Our child sponsorship solution provides health, educational, material and emotional aid to impoverished children around the world. One-to-one sponsorship gives these children the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and realize their full potential.” (from the “How Help Children” section)

“Children International’s sponsorship program is designed to impact every aspect of a child’s life. Sponsored children receive life-changing assistance in areas such as:

- Health: access to a doctor, dentist, vaccines and medicine
- Education: uniforms and school supplies, tuition assistance, access to libraries and tutoring
- Nutrition: malnutrition screenings, feeding programs, supplements and educational programs
- Youth: peer education, leadership and vocational training, civic responsibility and scholarships
- Community: clean water incentives, sanitary latrines and micro-enterprise programs and grants
- Family: household items, income-generation programs, educational opportunities and housing and home-repair assistance”

From the “How We Help Children” section of the Children International website. (See <http://www.children.org/howHelpChildren.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (paragraphs 5 and 4) (Confirmed June 13, 2008)

“Our sponsorship program currently benefits more than 300,000 impoverished children and their families in 11 countries throughout the world, including Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Mexico, the Philippines, the United States and Zambia.”

From the “Who We Are” section of the Children International website. (See <http://www.children.org/whoWeAre.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (paragraphs 3) Confirmed June 13, 2008)

c) Realities of Poverty

“Poverty is reality for nearly half the world’s population... almost 3 billion people. And of those, more than 1 billion subsist on less than \$1 a day. For them, the smallest of necessities seem impossible— every step is another obstacle to overcome. The statistics tell a grim tale:

- Poverty is the number one killer in the world (British Medical Journal)
- Six-million children under the age of 5 die as a result of hunger and malnutrition every year (UNICEF)
- More than 1 billion people live without access to safe drinking water (UN)
- More than 78% of the developing world’s urban population now lives in slums (UN-Habitat)”

From the “How We Help Children” section of the Children International website. See the subsection “Realities of Poverty” (at <http://www.children.org/poverty.asp?sid=B8D60C04-224E-4707-8B70-778EC0637971>) (Confirmed June 13, 2008)

Notes and Source References (Appendix 5)

1. As noted in three different contexts in this proposal (Appendix 1, Note #5; Appendix 2, subsection E, #5; and Appendix 3, subsection D, #3), an estimate exists which suggests that the population of London, England throws away 560,000 tonnes of food per year.

Appendix 1—Part E

48 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative (compiled February, 2010)

1. An urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration

The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

2. A need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

3. Three key propositions of the IPCR Initiative

The IPCR Initiative is an accumulation of documents, resources, and observations brought together to support the propositions that we—collectively—have both the need, and the potential, to be

- a) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- b) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- c) much more resourceful in the use of the accumulated storehouse of wisdom and “embodied energy” which is now accessible to us.

4. The IPCR Mission Statement

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative is an effort to facilitate the practical application of the Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—at the community and regional level—as a way of contributing to the following goals:

- a) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

- b) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation— with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc.
- c) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- d) increasing our capacity to be responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money
- e) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil
- f) increasing our awareness of the countless number of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- g) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- h) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- i) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence
- j) creating local community and regional publications that provide a format for sharing the good news which would be identified, encouraged, supported, and sustained by contributions to the first 9 goals

5. The contributions the IPCR Initiative hopes to make

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make, are as follows:

- a) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of the “1000Communities²” proposal—so that Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
- b) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks”, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters) through workshops offered at the local community level
(For an overview of these concepts, see the Section 5 of this IPCR Workshop Primer, or the IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>)
- c) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)

- d) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- e) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 117 fields of related activity (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C) and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional model projects, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)
- f) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts, such as those in Appendix 1—Parts B and C (“Starting Point Links for Learning About 117 Related Fields of Activity”)

—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

6. More and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. This writer is confident that applying these concepts—at the local community and regional level—will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute—and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences relating not only to the IPCR concepts, but to many other peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives as well.

7. Growing a “Community Moral Compass”, not imposing one

“The meaning of life, therefore, of its purposes and values as understood by the educator, primarily determines the nature of his work. Education aims at an ideal, and this in turn depends on the view that is taken of man and his destiny, of his relations to God, to his fellowmen, and to the physical world. The content of education is furnished by the previous acquisition of mankind in literature, art, and science, in moral, social, and religious principles. The inheritance, however, contains elements that differ greatly in value, both as mental possessions and as means of culture; hence a selection is necessary, and this must be guided largely by the educational ideal.”¹

And yet, when we wish to discuss matters of religious, spiritual, or moral education, we often find ourselves in the same position as Prof. J. S. MacKenzie, as he expressed it in 1908:

“The subject of religious education is one on which it is difficult to say anything at present without appearing to take sides in those unhappy wrangles to which there seems to be no end....”²

And, as mentioned in the section “Problems That May Arise....” of “The Twilight...” document—see p. 14):

“In some cases, one group may come to view the beliefs and actions of another group as fundamentally evil and morally intolerable. This often results in hostility and violence and severely damages the relationship between the two groups. For this reason, moral conflicts tend to be quite harmful and intractable.”

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

This writer feels that *somehow* many people have—unfortunately—learned to mistakenly equate flaws in human nature with the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. This writer also feels that, with enough experiences of a positive and mutually beneficial nature, many people can come to learn more about the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions and less about the flaws in human nature.

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

The IPCR Initiative is a “constellation” of initiatives which provide a “trellis” for communities of people to “organically grow” towards their own collective definitions of “spiritual formation” and “right livelihood”.

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

8. Advocate for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives

The IPCR Initiative is an advocate for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives, which can assist in maximizing citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.

The IPCR Initiative offers free access to a 161 page proposal for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives (titled “1000Communities²”), which includes

- a) A Summary of the Potential of Community Visioning Initiatives
- b) 15 Step Outline for Community Visioning Initiatives (see also Section 8)
- c) 15 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions (see also expanded version in Section 10)
- d) Comprehensive Section on “Problems That May Arise” (see also expanded version in Section 11)
- e) Over 150 quotes and excerpts from relevant sources

The following description of the “1000Communities²” proposal is from Section 2, p. 6, of the “1000Communities²” at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>

A. The “1000Communities²” proposal may be summarized as follows:

“1000Communities²” advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

- 1) which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to
 - a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
 - b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
 - c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies
 - d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire

additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources

2. which establish a significant number of local community points of entry called “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” [if use of the particular description “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”

is permitted by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)] to act as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, classrooms for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and to provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

9. Maximizing citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity

Many of us will be familiar with the problem solving strategy of identifying problems and brainstorming solutions. Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. In its most basic format, a Community Visioning Initiative is simply a more comprehensive variation of the above mentioned approach to problem solving.

Structured brainstorming and prioritizing meetings, which are carried out in a number of central locations in a particular community, would be an integral part of the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives described in the “1000Communities²” proposal mentioned above. To be specific, there would be a series of meetings which focus on five particular areas: challenges, prioritizing challenges, solutions, prioritizing solutions, and creating action plans. Combined with ongoing workshops and much formal and informal educational activity, these meetings, though only a part of the Visioning Initiative, may last 4-6 months. These more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

One of the main goals of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives is to maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.

Many cities and towns in the United States have carried out visioning initiatives or strategic planning exercises; however, this writer does not know of any particular examples which are meant to be responses to most of the multiple challenges mentioned above—or which have been as time-intensive as the “1000Communities²” proposal suggests. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga

Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.³ (Note: “Vision 2000” was a five month long process.)

The IPCR Initiative is an advocate for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives which may require as much as 18 months to complete (see Section ___ for a description of the “1000Communities²” proposal). The IPCR Initiative hopes to provide sufficient information and inspiration so that

- a) more Community Visioning Initiatives are organized and implemented as a way of responding to the challenges of our times
- b) residents of communities where Community Visioning Initiatives are being organized and implemented are encouraged to participate in as many ways as possible—and *encouraged to help and support others who are making sincere efforts to contribute to the process.*

10. How much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other

Some residents may feel uneasy concerning the problem of residents who are less educated and less informed having as much of a say in Community Visioning Initiatives “process-voting” (votes which prioritize challenges identified, solutions identified, and steps in action plans) as those who have spent years working on these issues. This is a fundamental problem, which is not confined to Community Visioning Initiative processes; *as people who are not sufficiently informed about critical issues are everywhere, and they are investing their time, energy, and money—voting—all the time.* If we are honest with ourselves about this issue, we must admit that there are very few people who have successfully aligned all of their investments of time, energy, and money with all of the principles, practices and codes of conduct associated with the religious, spiritual, or moral tradition they feel closest to. This writer believes that there are many serious challenges before us now, and that we will need to invest our time, energy, and money very wisely to overcome these challenges. How can we do it? We must help each other.

The IPCR Initiative offers free access to a 161 page proposal for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives (“1000Communities²” at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) which are time-intensive, so that we will have time to learn much more than we know now about how to help each other.

The IPCR Initiative provides a “constellation” of initiatives which can help us sort out what the real challenges are, and what are sound and practical solutions—and does so in a way that helps us to realize how much we need to be learning so that we can be part of the solutions... and how much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other.

11. A just transition to patterns of investment which in many ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which in many ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

As mentioned on p. 125 of the “1000Communities²”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf> one aspect of this just transition can be that people who do deliberately focus their investments of time, energy, and money towards solutions identified by the Community Visioning Initiative being carried out in their community may receive, as encouragement, local currency. *And then such local currency can, in its turn, be redeemed in ways which will be particularly helpful to people transitioning from less solution-oriented employment to more solution-oriented employment.*”

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which in many ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

12. The accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom

This writer understands that some people may be skeptical that Community Visioning Initiatives of such a comprehensive nature can succeed. Such people may think it is naïve to imagine that people will come together in such a way, and not only encourage, but participate in, a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in response to the difficult challenges ahead. From this writer’s point of view, such skepticism and cynicism depend for their existence on doubts as to whether it is possible for people to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion through genuine instruction and sincere effort.

The IPCR Initiative believes that we are at a critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding.

The IPCR Initiative believes that there is a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to be exercising as much love, understanding, and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible.

The IPCR Initiative believes that a person is capable of cultivating a certain type of personality by choice and design.

The IPCR Initiative believes that the most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

The IPCR 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.

13. Helping people to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over many centuries

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

Such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

The IPCR Initiative believes that it is becoming more and more likely that an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings will need to become an essential and critical element of a truly comprehensive response to the challenges of our times. In such circumstances, we cannot afford to exclude from our “tool box” the time-tested sources which have helped people learn compassion over many centuries.

What we need to do instead is to learn how to cultivate the time-tested sources so that the sources yield the treasured wisdom.

The IPCR Initiative hopes to encourage people—whether they become associated with The IPCR Initiative or not—to contribute to the realization of the potential for peacebuilding in all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions.

14. Increasing our collective capacity to encourage and support individual spiritual formation

Applied at the local community and regional level, “Community Good News Networks” and “Community Faith Mentoring Networks” can create ongoing opportunities for people of one particular faith community or cultural tradition to experience the highest ideals of all local community specific and regional specific faith communities and cultural traditions, as representatives of such ideals are better appreciated, more easily recognized—and more numerous— in the everyday circumstances of

community life. In this way, The IPCR Initiative hopes to increase our collective capacity to encourage and support individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc.

15. We will also need the resources which people of faith believe exist as a result of inner experience.

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the belief that that if we are to overcome the challenges of our times we will need not only the resources which innovators can prove the existence of by scientific method; we will also need the resources which people of faith believe exist as a result of inner experience.

16. Encouraging and supporting the belief that such an “entity” *does actually count for something* in overcoming the difficult challenges ahead

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the belief that the likelihood for a positive outcome to the challenges of our times will be increased

--if there many people in same community who were “pulling for each other” to find spiritual strength by way of deepening their faith and belief that there *is* a more advanced and more benevolent spiritual entity than ourselves—and that such an entity *does actually count for something* in overcoming the difficult challenges ahead.

17. Two examples of IPCR core beliefs

There are a number of core beliefs which have contributed to the development of The IPCR Initiative in general, and The Eight IPCR Concepts, in particular. Two examples of such core beliefs are as follows:

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances— by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

18. The need to focus much time, energy, and money on the development of “teacher-leaders”

“How to find suitable teachers is, therefore, the really important question with which we are confronted. And I doubt whether they can *be found*—at least in sufficient numbers. They will have to be *made*; and how this is to be done is the real problem that faces those interested in moral education at the present time.”²

In the “1000Communities²” proposal (see Section __), the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization is expanded so that such local community points of entry function as

- a) information centers, resource centers, and clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges)
- b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” (for more about “Preliminary Surveys” see Section __), and as determined by the “Community Teaching and Learning Center” Coordinator
- c) practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”
- d) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal
- e) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)
- f) locations for “Final Version” Document submission (“voting”) as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Outline for a comprehensive Community Visioning Initiative, as described in the “1000Communities²” proposal (for details on the 15 Steps, see Section 8)
- g) locations for “Summary of Community Visioning Initiative Process to Date” Notebooks (for latecomers, and as an information resource for media)
- h) central locations for listings of employment opportunities
- i) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

Also relevant here are excerpts from a section titled “Community Visioning Initiatives, Job Fairs, and a “Just Transition” to More Solution-Oriented Employment” in the paper “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another” (included in this “Workshop Primer”; see Appendix 2—Part A) (see “Notes and Source References” section of “The Twilight...” paper, for source references)

“....These individuals and many other wealthy men and women funded his causes, such as supporting Hampton and Tuskegee institutes. Each school was originally founded to produce teachers. However, graduates had often gone back to their local communities only to find precious few schools and educational resources to work with in the largely impoverished South.

“In 1912, Rosenwald provided funds for a pilot program involving six new small schools in rural Alabama, which were designed, constructed and opened in 1913 and 1914 and overseen by Tuskegee; the model proved successful. Rosenwald (then) established The Rosenwald Fund. The school building program was one of its largest programs. Using state-of-the-art architectural plans initially drawn by professors at Tuskegee Institute, the Rosenwald Fund spent over four million dollars to help build 4,977 schools, 217 teachers' homes, and 163 shop buildings in 883 counties in 15 states, from Maryland to Texas. The Rosenwald Fund used a system of matching grants, and black communities raised more than \$4.7 million to aid the construction. These schools became known as Rosenwald Schools. The local schools were a

source of much community pride and were of priceless value to African-American families when poverty and segregation limited their children's chances. By 1932, the facilities could accommodate one third of all African American children in Southern U.S. schools.”

And an excerpt from a Government of India Working Group Report (1981):

“We want our teachers to be value-oriented because we want them to be rightly equipped as vehicles of values for the benefit of our children and youth. By his/her very nature, the teacher is a transmitter, a messenger, a carrier. Our determination of what he has to transmit will depend on what we determine to be valuable for our children and youth. Every society has a value system of some kind. Indian society is rich in it. But what is the use of such a bank balance of values if it is not useful in solving our current social problems?”⁴

The IPCR Initiative emphasizes the need for, and the importance of, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”—and the need to focus much time, energy, and money on the development of “teacher-leaders”.

19. Helping people to learn more about practical wisdom and less about flaws in human nature

This writer feels that *somehow* many people have—unfortunately—learned to mistakenly equate flaws in human nature with the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. This writer also feels that, with enough experiences of a positive and mutually beneficial nature, many people can come to learn more about the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions and less about the flaws in human nature.

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

20. Common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings is a very special kind of common ground

Developing a “sister community” relationship could be a way for diverse people in any particular community to find common ground. And *common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings would be a very special kind of common ground*. Exploring these possibilities could make it possible for many people to have first hand experience with “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

The IPCR Initiative recognizes that common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings is a very special kind of common ground. The IPCR Initiative hopes to identify, create, and sustain a significant variety of ways to create common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings.

21. Are we up to the challenge?

The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

The IPCR Initiative believes that the nature of the “Culture Change” necessary to overcome the challenges of our times will require fully utilizing all the knowledge, tools, and resources accessible to us for the highest good possible in every area of capacity building (physical, ecological, medical, spiritual, educational, social, economic, technical, political, etc.)

There has never been a time in the course of history when both the capacity to cultivate practical wisdom and the capacity to build a positive and constructive consensus were as important as they are now. Are we up to the challenge?

22. An effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

23. Identifying the appropriate questions to ask can be critical to encouraging a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action

The “1000Communities²” proposal (described in Section 6) includes a “15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative” (see Section 8). Step 3 of that 15 step outline suggests creating a “Preliminary Survey”, and sending such a survey to 150 key leaders who represent a variety of fields of activity in the community. Responses and summarized results from “Preliminary Surveys” can provide:

- a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities
- b) examples of local leaders stepping up in support of Community Visioning Initiatives
- c) starting points for public discourse about the importance of the Community Visioning Initiatives
- d) starting points for “Community Teaching and Learning Center” workshop content
- e) starting points for some participants as they develop “Final Version” decisions (“votes”) on challenges, solutions, and action plans
- f) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the Community Visioning Initiative, and a high level of citizen participation
- g) an initial sense of support or non-support for the “sister community” element

One of The Eight IPCR Concepts is “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”. The description of that concept (see Section 5 “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”) begins as follows: “Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action. Here are some example questions which are designed to be helpful in building caring communities. Hopefully, providing a few examples here will bring forth many more examples, and thus assist in building a resource base for future questionnaires that help build caring communities....”.

The IPCR Initiative recognizes that our collective capacity to identifying problems and solutions, and our collective ability to build consensus for collective action, are going to be critical to overcoming the challenges ahead. Here is one example question from Section 10 “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions”, which should be sufficient to suggest that identifying the appropriate questions to ask can be critical to encouraging a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in the years ahead.

Question: Global Drugs Trade, Global Arms Trade—and Solutions?

Consider the following excerpt from the “World Report of Violence and Health: Summary (Recommendations for Action)” (by the World Health Organization, 2002):

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”⁵

a) Do you believe there are “solutions in sight” for the above mentioned problems, or do you agree with the authors at the World Health Organization? If you believe there are “solutions in sight”, please be specific and describe such solutions. Or, if you agree that “no solutions seem to be in sight”, offer your view on as to why we seem to be at a point where “no solutions seem to be in sight” for those problems.

b) Please check the box (or boxes) which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement.

How much daily contact with the treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions do you feel people in general would need before we would see noticeable progress on the above mentioned problems (the global drugs trade and the global arms trade)?

				X	Y
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
more than is likely to happen	a profound increase from current levels	a lot more	a little more	additional solutions will be essential to make noticeable progress	have different view—or different understanding of our present circumstances

c) If you checked boxes X and/or Y, please describe below any solutions to the above two problems (drugs trade and arms trade) which you feel would be helpful contributions to making noticeable progress on resolving these problems.

24. Assisting fellow human beings on the subject of difficult questions which urgently need answers

What can we do—at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives, to bring the best ideas *from* the accumulated storehouse of wisdom now accessible to us and “*through the mist*”, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

“In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.”

The IPCR Initiative is an effort to assist fellow human beings in identifying what—from the accumulated storehouse of wisdom now accessible to us—would best answer the above question “What can we do...”—and what—from the accumulated storehouses of wisdom now accessible to us—would best fill in the blank in the above statement.

25. An ongoing process for re-evaluating and re-stating the “moral compass” of a community

How can local communities arrive at practical definitions of “right livelihood”? What local institutions would be most appropriate as commissioners and overseers of a resource guide to “right livelihood”? How can leaders at the regional and local community level assure residents that they understand the challenges of our times, if they themselves do not participate in the very activities they advocate for overcoming the challenges of our times? How can our communities change “the way things get done” so that more people can live in accordance with their moral convictions? Workshops associated with The IPCR Initiative can identify, discover, create, support, and sustain comprehensive and practical answers to these questions— and provide a system by which the answers could be re-evaluated and re-stated on an ongoing basis. Therefore, it may be said that by its very nature The IPCR Initiative represents a built-in and ongoing process for re-evaluating and re-stating the “moral compass” of a community or region.

26. Three propositions and one definition relating to the subject of Spiritually Responsible Investing

“The first proposition is:

There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

“The second proposition is:

The ways we “invest” our time, energy, and money have a direct impact on the “ways of earning a living” that are available.

“The third proposition is:

The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

“And the one definition:

Spiritually Responsible Investing can be defined as investments of time, energy, and money which increase our capacity to integrate spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.”

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which in many ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges.

27. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” The IPCR Initiative can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as it encourages and facilitates a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see “117 related fields of activity” in Appendix 1—Parts B and C). As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

28. “Constellations” of initiatives which can help us sort through all this

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets which supply the “ways of earning a living”. All of us have important responsibilities associated with resolving a significant number of very serious challenges in the months and years ahead. We need our public discourse to be as honest, responsible, and transparent as possible, so we can identify, nurture, support, and sustain ways to build a collective force greater than the challenges we are now facing. True confidence is never really built up by merely convincing a majority of the people involved that they *believe* the markets are based on sound and practical principles; true confidence is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing.

Unfortunately, sorting out what our responsibilities are—or sorting out what the real challenges are, and what are sound and practical solutions—is becoming more and more difficult, as there is now, in many parts of the world, a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative provides a “constellation” of initiatives which can help us sort out what the real challenges are, and what are sound and practical solutions—and does so in a way that helps us to realize how much we need to be learning so that we can be part of the solutions... and how much we really need to be on the same side, helping each other.

29. A positive, constructive, systematic, practical, and doable way to remedy one of the most persistent ironies in life

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance. This writer believes that there are countless number of “things” people—in all parts of the world—can do to remedy that deficiency.

The IPCR Initiative represents a positive, constructive, systematic, practical, and doable way to remedy that deficiency.

30. On the subject of finding contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services

[Note: The following 9 quotes are from Section F. of the IPCR document “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf> . The source references for these quotes are included in the “Notes and Source References” for this section.]⁶

- a) “A wise person notices that inner harmony is disturbed when the mind lets itself be lured into indiscriminately sampling the world of phenomena.”
- b) “The energy invested in a particular thing, during its life from cradle to grave, is called the ‘embodied energy’ of that object. The amount of embodied energy

that an item contains depends on the technology used to create it (the origin of materials inputs, how they were created and transported, etc.), the nature of the production system, and the distance the item travels from inception to purchase.”

- c) “... every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it... hence it behooves us to enquire into the antecedents of every article we buy.... (Yet this is an arduous task, and it becomes almost impossible for ordinary persons to undertake it when the article comes from far off countries.”
- d) “If we feel it is beyond us to guarantee the concomitant results of all our transactions, it necessarily follows that we must limit our transactions to a circle well within our control. This is the bed rock of swadeshi. The smaller the circumference, the more accurately can we gauge the results of our actions, and (the) more conscientiously shall we be able to fulfill our obligations as trustees.”
- e) “By supporting items and processes that have lower embodied energy, as well as the companies that produce them, consumers can significantly reduce society’s energy use.”
- f) The second law of thermodynamics efficiency is often defined as follows: ‘the efficiency is equal to the ratio of the least available work that could have done the job to the actual available work used to do the job.’”
- g) “Therefore the sage says:
I take no action and people are reformed.
I enjoy peace and people become honest.
I do nothing and people become rich.
I have no desires and people return to the good and simple life.”
- h) “Were I to have the least bit of knowledge, in walking on a Great Road, it’s only going astray that I would fear.
The Great Way is very level;
but people greatly delight in tortuous paths.”
- i) “If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked....”

The IPCR Initiative believes that the beneficial consequences of individual spiritual formation can include an increased capacity, and a greater willingness, to

- a) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- b) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- c) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance

The IPCR Initiative believes that a person is capable of cultivating a certain type of personality by choice and design.

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

The IPCR 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.

31. Learning how to sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole

One of the challenges in the IPCR Initiative list of the “ten most difficult challenges of our times” (see Appendix 1—Part A) is stated as follows: The increasing world population and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion (with special focus on the increasing number of people who are consuming material goods and ecological resources indiscriminately).

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

Such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- b) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- c) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance

The IPCR Initiative believes that what we need to do is to learn how to cultivate the time-tested sources so that the sources yield the treasured wisdom.

32. Spiritual attributes that will increase in importance

The IPCR Initiative hopes to increase our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions. etc. The IPCR Initiative believes that the beneficial consequences of individual spiritual formation can include an increased capacity, and a greater willingness, to

- a) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- b) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- c) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance

The IPCR Initiative believes that these spiritual attributes will increase in important as it becomes more necessary to us to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture (due to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil).

33. Creating, supporting, and sustaining communities which can minimize resource requirements

The IPCR Initiative believes that is possible to create, support, and sustain communities which can minimize resource requirements, maintain ecological sustainability, maintain a high level of compassion for fellow human beings— and which represent what a significant majority of community residents surveyed would describe as a high quality of life.

34. A “constellation” of initiatives which provide a “trellis”

The IPCR Initiative believes that we are at a critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding.

[This writer feels that *somehow* many people have—unfortunately—learned to mistakenly equate flaws in human nature with the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. This writer also feels that, with enough experiences of a positive and mutually beneficial nature, many people can come to learn more about the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions and less about the flaws in human nature.]

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

The IPCR Initiative believes that any initiative hoping to build bridges and increase collaboration along the lines of individual spiritual formation and interfaith peacebuilding must offer well-organized, peaceful, constructive, and ongoing community building processes, which result in the accumulation of more and more opportunities for people to practice spiritual wisdom in the everyday circumstances of community life.

The IPCR Initiative is a “constellation” of initiatives which provide a “trellis” for communities of people to “organically grow” towards their own collective definitions of “spiritual formation” and “right livelihood”.

35. Encouraging and supporting the belief that “such an entity *does actually count for something* in overcoming the difficult challenges ahead”

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the belief that the likelihood for a positive outcome to the challenges of our times will be increased if

there many people in communities around the world who are “pulling for each other” to find spiritual strength by way of deepening their faith and belief that

- a) there *is* a more advanced and more benevolent spiritual entity than ourselves
- and b) such an entity *does actually count for something* in overcoming the difficult challenges ahead.

36. Three Important Points

[Note: The following 5 paragraphs are also included in the “Tone of IPCR Initiative” section, “The Primary Inspiration for The IPCR Initiative” subsection in the “About the IPCR Initiative” section—and in the IPCR document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (see <http://ipcri.net/images/2-Peacebuilding-in-its-Most-Compassionate-Form.pdf>)

This writer (the founder and outreach coordinator of The IPCR Initiative) affirms that the most important influence in his life has been, and continues to be, Sri Sathya Sai Baba (age 81, with a main residence in Puttaparthi, India). In 1997, this writer completed a 301 page arrangement of selected quotations from “Sathya Sai Speaks” (Vol. 1-11, first U.S. editions) (discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-1982). That document is an unpublished manuscript which has only recently been made accessible to many people by its inclusion in the website of The IPCR Initiative (www.ipcri.net). This writer hereby attributes the inspiration for the approach and substance of The IPCR Initiative, his personal capacity to see good in the efforts of people from many different faith communities and cultural traditions, and his personal faith in a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times to close contact, over many years, with the wisdom and compassion in the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

And yet—and this is a most important point—in contrast to the outlook which claims a “right” to develop an initiative even though such efforts are felt by many as “a threat (perceived or real) to their identity, or cherished meanings, or both”; this writer would slow or discontinue the development of this initiative in such circumstances—until such time as communication leads to better understanding, and circumstances are more mutually beneficial.⁷

In addition—and this is also a most important point—it is not necessary for any of the readers of this document, or any of the participants in an IPCR Initiative, to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba (the most important influence in this writer’s life), or the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, to contribute to or benefit from the work of The IPCR Initiative.

And here, as the third important point of this paragraph, this writer would like to affirm with as clear a statement as he can possibly make, that The IPCR Initiative encourages people, whether they are going to participate in an IPCR Initiative sponsored activity or not, to use the resources provided by The IPCR Initiative to nurture, support, and sustain community life and cultural traditions associated with the particular “frameworks” *which give their lives meaning.*

This writer—the founder of The IPCR Initiative—believes in affirming the above three points for the following reasons:

- a) these points define an approach to interfaith peacebuilding and community revitalization which he can support with all his heart
- b) the challenges of our times are such that it is essential to “bring to the fore” the real treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions (i.e. there is a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to exercise as much love, understanding, and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible)
- c) this writer understands, by way of the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the existence of a “current”—which can be recognized according to the degree to which one has incorporated spiritual understanding into his or her everyday thoughts, words, and deeds... or by the grace of association with profound spiritual teachings.

Viewed in this light, The IPCR Initiative—and all related fields of activity—can be seen as efforts to contribute to religious, spiritual, and moral “tool boxes”... “tool boxes” which have been created from centuries of cultural experience, and which have been confirmed by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views” as *necessary to the process of utilizing that “current” to do good.*

37. “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden....”

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances— by countless numbers of people in communities around the world.

There are opportunities in every minute of every day for people to “catch a glimpse” of this “current” in the process of actively affirming the treasured wisdom from the teachings of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. Consider the following “awareness exercise”:

During the course of any given day—and in ways we may not even be aware of—acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Hindu faith inspire Muslims to become better Muslims; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Islamic faith inspire Christians to become better Christians; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Christian faith inspire Buddhists to become better Buddhists; and so on.

And consider further: that during the course of our lives, we all require the benefit of experiences, goods, and services from countless numbers of other people. To be more specific, this writer now asks you (kind reader) to consider tracing the materials and “human energy input” associated with the water you use (and drink); the food you eat; the building structure which you call home; the clothes you wear; the mode of transportation you use; the fuel for that mode of transportation—and the centuries of cultural experiences which make up the knowledge and wisdom now accessible via the Internet....

Even if we use only the implications of this very limited exercise, by the end of any given day countless numbers of people in this world will have had the opportunity—whether they were aware of it or not—to be a positive influence in the lives of countless numbers of other people who are practitioners of a faith tradition different than themselves.

The IPCR Initiative hopes to provide many ways for fellow human beings—in a variety of circumstances, in communities around the world—to “bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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”.

38. Increasing the likelihood of spiritual cohesion between many diverse communities of people

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the belief that using a system as comprehensive as the Community Visioning Initiative process described in detail in the 161 page proposal titled “1000Communities²” (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)-- to maximize citizen participation in identify challenges, resources, solutions, and action plans—will eventually, over the

years, result in communities of people approximating “a highest synthesis of truth and community” *from their point of view... and that what they discover as “a highest synthesis” will be of such a similar spiritual essence to other communities (which have also carried out Community Visioning Initiatives of a similar nature) as to significantly increase the likelihood of spiritual cohesion between many diverse communities of people.*

The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports efforts to increase the likelihood of spiritual cohesion between many diverse communities of people.

39. The IPCR Initiative is not formally affiliated with—or officially sanctioned by—the International Sai Organization.

The IPCR Initiative is not formally affiliated with—or officially sanctioned by—the International Sai Organization. Although this writer affirms that the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba are the most important influence in his life, the nature and growth of The IPCR Initiative has not yet inspired collaboration with any Sai Centers associated with the International Sai Organization—or with the International Sai Organization itself.

40. The capacity to absorb and assimilate the treasured wisdom of any and all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions

“Inasmuch as Buddhism is a living religion and not a historical mummy stuffed with dead and functionless materials, it must be able to absorb and assimilate all that is helpful to its growth. This is the most natural thing for any organism endowed with life.”⁸ (D.T. Suzuki, in “Essays in Zen Buddhism”)

The IPCR Initiative has the capacity to absorb and assimilate the treasured wisdom of any and all religious, spiritual, and moral traditions, as a way of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life—and as a way of generating practical responses to the challenges of our times.

41. Participants as bridge builders

It is possible to see participants in initiatives like the IPCR Initiative as bridge builders between people focusing on living lightly and building eco-villages and agriculture-based communities and people focusing on spiritual discipline and inner development through religious, spiritual, and moral traditions; as bridge builders between religious, spiritual, moral and cultural traditions; as bridge builders between “developed” countries and “developing” countries; as bridge builders between rich people and poor people; as bridge builders between good ideas and financial support; as bridge builders between right livelihood and marginalized people everywhere; and as bridge builders between ideals and their practical realization.

42. Identifying Experienced Practitioners, Stakeholders, and People Needing Assistance

[Note: The following question is Question #9, in Section 10 “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions”]

Consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which you created as a response to question #6 part a).

a) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the ten challenges you identified?

(Special Notes: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community. Also, please be straightforward and honest: if you do not know who would be most qualified to respond, please respond accordingly.)

b) Who are the Stakeholders (the people who will be affected by the education provided and guidance given by the Experienced Practitioners)?

c) Who are the People Needing Assistance (the people who do not know how to respond to the challenges you identified)?

The IPCR Initiative provides tools, resources, and initiatives which are sufficient to establish a majority consensus on the challenges facing a particular community, and which are sufficient to arriving at 100% citizen awareness of who in their community represent Experienced Practitioners, who represent Stakeholders, and who represent People Needing Assistance—with regards such challenges.

43. Many opportunities for local newspapers to contribute very valuable community services

[Note: The following is an excerpt from the paper “The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”]

The IPCR Initiative is an advocate for comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives (which may require as much as 18 months to complete (see Section ___ for a description of the “1000Communities2” proposal). The IPCR Initiative believes it is providing sufficient information and inspiration to suggest that there are many opportunities for local newspapers to contribute very valuable community services in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow up stages associated with Community Visioning Initiatives. Here is a list of some of the community services local newspapers could contribute:

- a) provide information about the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives
- b) advocate for the implementation of Community Visioning Initiatives

- c) be directly involved in making Preliminary Surveys accessible, provide in-depth coverage of the response compilation process to assure credibility, and provide a variety of summary and analysis of the responses.
- d) provide ongoing public access to details of each stage of the Community Visioning process
- e) provide ongoing public access to details of workshops and other educational experiences at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”

- f) provide in-depth coverage of the response compilation process to assure credibility
- g) provide a variety of summary and analysis of the responses at each stage of the process
- h) provide follow-up coverage of the projects and initiatives which spin-off from the action plans receiving significant community support
- i) encourage citizen input as a way of further evaluating the successes and failures of the process

44. Three key propositions of the IPCR Initiative

The IPCR Initiative is an accumulation of documents, resources, and observations brought together to support the propositions that we—collectively—have both the need, and the potential, to be

- a) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- b) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- c) much more resourceful in the use of the accumulated storehouse of wisdom and “embodied energy” which is now accessible to us.

45. The contributions the IPCR Initiative hopes to make

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make, are as follows:

- a) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of the “1000Communities²” proposal—so that Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
- b) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks”, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters) through workshops offered at the local community level
(For an overview of these concepts, see the Section 5 of this IPCR Workshop Primer, or the IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>)
- c) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- d) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world

e) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 117 fields of related activity (see Appendix 1—Parts B and C) and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional model projects, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)

f) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts, such as those in Appendix 1—Part B (“Starting Point Links for Learning About 117 Related Fields of Activity”)

—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

46. Are we up to the challenge?

The IPCR Initiative believes that the nature of the “Culture Change” necessary to overcome the challenges of our times will require fully utilizing all the knowledge, tools, and resources accessible to us for the highest good possible in every area of capacity building (physical, ecological, medical, spiritual, educational, social, economic, technical, political, etc.)

There has never been a time in the course of history when both the capacity to cultivate practical wisdom and the capacity to build a positive and constructive consensus were as important as they are now. Are we up to the challenge?

Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. This writer is confident that applying these concepts—at the local community and regional level—will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute—and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences

relating not only to the IPCR concepts, but to many other peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives as well.

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

47. The IPCR Mission Statement

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative is an effort to facilitate the practical application of the Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—at the community and regional level—as a way of contributing to the following goals:

- a) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”
- b) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions, etc.
- c) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- d) increasing our capacity to be responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money
- e) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil
- f) increasing our awareness of the countless number of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- g) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- h) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- i) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence
- j) creating local community and regional publications that provide a format for sharing the good news which would be identified, encouraged, supported, and sustained by contributions to the first 9 goals

48. In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people...

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, all of the documents, information, resources, etc. created by The IPCR Initiative are viewed as resources which ought to be made as accessible as possible to people who can make good use of them. Therefore, all such documents and information (including this document) may be reproduced without permission, and distributed in any way the user believes will be consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. [Please note: Quotes, statistics, and other copyrighted material used in IPCR documents have been appropriately attributed to their copyrighted sources. Readers may thus be assured that The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the proper referencing of copyrighted material to their copyrighted sources.]

Notes and Source References

1. From the Catholic Encyclopedia entry on Education (section at the beginning subtitled “Education: In General”) (at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05295b.htm>) (see paragraph 1). (Note: Could not identify which edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia this source represented; thus cannot identify editors or publisher.) (confirmed February 10, 2010)

2. Prof. J. S. Mackenzie (at the First International Moral Education Congress, University of London, 1908) Excerpt from document titled “Papers on Moral Education—Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress” (Held at the University of London, September 25-29, 1908) Edited by Gustave Spiller (Hon. General Secretary of the Congress) (accessible through Google Book Search) [Specific excerpts from the Sixth Session, in presentation titled “Systematic Moral Teaching” by Prof. J. S. Mackenzie [University College, Cardiff (UK)], see first and last paragraph (Note: Searching book for “MacKenzie” will locate presentation)] (Confirmed October 21, 2009)

3. From a 25 page brochure titled “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, received from Chattanooga Venture. This brochure also included a description of the 40 goals created by Chattanooga Vision 2000 (carried out in 1984), a detailed description of meetings and meeting schedules, and an overview “How You Can Make A Difference,” in a question and answer format. This writer also received from Chattanooga Venture a video, titled “A Community With a Vision,” which documents the 1984 visioning initiative “Vision 2000”—and a handbook titled “The Facilitator’s Manual,” subtitled “A Step-by-Step Guide for Groups to: Brainstorm Ideas, Create a Shared Vision, Develop Plans, Make Choices.”

The statistical information associated with the “Chattanooga Vision 2000” process was also cited in the following source: a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts in the Boundary Crossers Case Study titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”; however, this overview is no longer accessible via the Internet (it was accessible for some time at the website of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, at the University of Maryland, College Park). Here is a list of other, shorter overviews of the “Vision 2000” process: a) Sustainable Communities Network Case Study “Chattanooga: A City Worth Watching” at http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/tennessee/TN_af_chattanooga.html) b) Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence “Best Practice: Chattanooga Venture/Community Vision” at http://www.bmpcoe.org/bestpractices/internal/chatt/chatt_8.html) c) Project for Public Spaces “The Chattanooga Riverpark: Transforming a City and its Economy” at http://www.pps.org/topics/success/success_chatanooaga) d) the University of Michigan’s Community Economic Adjustment Program “A Civic Vignette: The Chattanooga Story” at <http://www.irlee.umich.edu/ceap/chattanooga.html>) (All confirmed December 25, 2009)

There are additional publications which briefly cite the above mentioned statistics, and which are accessible via the Internet. One example is “The Next Form of Democracy: How Expert Rule is Giving Way to Shared Governance... and why politics will never be the same” by Matt Leighninger Vanderbilt University Press 2006 p. 16 (accessible through google books at http://books.google.com/books?id=m_ZF8JZydPQC&printsec=frontcover&dq=the+next+form+of+democracy&cd=1#v=onepage&q=&f=false) (confirmed December 25, 2009)

Special Note: In the above mentioned book “The Next Form of Democracy...”, author Matt Leighninger offers perspective on the astounding success of the Chattanooga “Vision 2000” process by including the following commentary: “Many other communities followed Chattanooga’s example, but many of them stumbled because they failed to keep citizen and community organizations involved in implementing the visions. If a vision did not include measurable benchmarks, and specific commitments by people and organizations, it stood little chance of becoming reality.” (p. 16) (And *this commentary was footnoted*, as a general reference to the book “Results That Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done” by Paul D. Epstein, et al. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2006)

4. From a Chapter titled “An Outline Programmed of Value-Oriented Education and Relevant Pedagogical Suggestions”, (at <http://www.education.nic.in/cd50years/r/2Q/92/2Q920501.htm>) which is part of an Internet document titled “Report of the Working Group to Review Teachers’ Training Programme (in the light of the need for value-orientation)”.

“The main body of the report (was) compiled from a paper on “The Teacher and His Task” by Prof V. S. Jha and other papers written by Prof. Kireet Joshi which were presented to the Group and adopted unanimously for inclusion in the main body of the report.” (from “Introduction” to above mentioned ‘... Working Group...’ document, at <http://www.education.nic.in/cd50years/r/2Q/92/2Q920101.htm> , see last paragraph)

The Government of India, in their Order No. F. 13-4/80-Schools 3, dated 23rd May, 1981 (Appendix-A of the above report) constituted (the) Working Group to review the teacher training programmes with a view to promoting value-education, (from “Introduction” to above mentioned ‘... Working Group...’ document, at <http://www.education.nic.in/cd50years/r/2Q/92/2Q920101.htm> , see paragraph 5) (all source references mentioned in this Note #4 confirmed February 10, 2010)

5. From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

6. Source References for the 9 Quotes in #30

a) B.K.S. Iyengar in “*Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*” Thorsons San Francisco p. 124

b) Worldwatch Institute “*State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society*” W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37

c) J.C. Kumarappa in “*Why the Village Movement?*” Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 78

d) J.C. Kumarappa in “*Why the Village Movement?*” Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh Rajchat, Kashi 1960 p. 79

e) Worldwatch Institute “*State of the World 2004: Special Focus—The Consumer Society*” W.W. Norton and Company January, 2004 p. 36-37

f) This is one example of a definition of “Second Law” efficiency. One source which supports this definition is as follows: “Second Law efficiency: The ratio of First Law thermodynamic efficiency to its maximum theoretically possible value; equivalently, the ratio of the least available work that could have done the job to the actual available work used to do the job.” From Amory B. Lovins [A.B. Lovins, “Energy Efficiency, Taxonomic Overview,” *Encyclopedia of Energy* 2:383-401 (2004), 6 vols., San Diego and Oxford (UK)] Accessible on the Internet at http://www.rmi.org/images/PDFs/Energy/E04-02_EnergyEffTax.pdf (see p. 3) (Accessed August 23, 2007)

g) Lao Tzu from “*Tao Te Ching*” Chapter 57 Gia-fu Feng and Jane English, translators Vintage Books New York 1989

h) Lao Tzu from “*Te-Tao Ching*” Chapter 53 Robert G. Hendricks, translator Ballantine Books New York 1989

i) This writer

7. There is an element of faith and philosophy in this willingness (if necessary) to “slow or discontinue” development of The IPCC Initiative (if necessary), which is a reflection of this writer’s interpretation of the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba—and this writer’s interpretation of the following concept: “There is an estrangement present between elements that naturally belong together. Do not try to reunify the situation with force. Allow things to return to a state of accord naturally, as they will.” [Quote from Hexagram #38 (“Contradiction”) in *The I Ching Workbook* (An Interpretation with Commentary) by R.L. Wing Main Street Books (Spi Edition) 1978

8. D. T. Suzuki in “Essays in Zen Buddhism (1st Series)” Grove Press

Appendix 2

Appendix 2—Part A

The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another

by Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator
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September--October, 2009

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Brief Description

There are countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world. Unfortunately, many of these “things”—in the forms of actions and initiatives (solution-oriented activity)—are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be”. This paper—“The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”—provides both an introduction to the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives, and an introduction to the potential of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. These two approaches can inspire, support, and integrate many different initiatives at the same time, and thus create “constellations” of initiatives which can bring many of the countless numbers of “things” mentioned above “through the mist” and into the light.

This paper has been written, and is being shared, at a time when more and more people are coming to the conclusion that there is a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. Even if much disagreement remains about the nature of the challenges ahead, the potential described in this paper—associated with Community Visioning Initiatives, and The IPCR Initiative—can be actualized to such a degree that significant gains can be made in many fields of activity. Thus, while we—collectively—may not know for sure what era is coming to an end, and what era is dawning, for some time yet to come, this writer believes that there are ideas and resources enough for such a dawning to occur—and this paper is an effort to provide evidence in support of that belief.

Stefan Pasti
Leesburg, Virginia (USA)
October 25, 2009

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The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another

Introduction

“How to find suitable teachers is, therefore, the really important question with which we are confronted. And I doubt whether they can *be found*—at least in sufficient numbers. They will have to be *made*; and how this is to be done is the real problem that faces those interested in moral education at the present time.”¹

Prof. J. S. Mackenzie

(at the First International Moral Education Congress, University of London, 1908)

Needed: Problem Solving on a Scale Most of Us Have Never Known Before

We live in very complex world. There are very difficult challenges ahead. These challenges include, but are not limited to:

- 1) global warming and reducing carbon emissions²
- 2) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products³
- 3) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death⁴
- 4) an increasing world population⁵ requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce (*with a special emphasis* on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services *indiscriminately*)
- 5) the trend towards urbanization⁶ (half the world’s population now live in cities, and there are now more than 400 cities with a population of 1 million or more) is creating human settlements which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures just when there is a need to minimize our impact on ecosystems due to global warming and widespread resource depletion⁷
- 6) “cultures” of greed, corruption, and overindulgence have become so common that many people accept such as inevitable⁸
- 7) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding, well-grounded in personal experience, of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.⁹

Some evidence is provided—in the twelve pages of “Notes and Source References” which accompany this “call to action”—to indicate some of the sources this writer has used to arrive at these conclusions. However, this writer understands that many people will find this paper, and others like it, too complex to sort through—and will be waiting for the people whose opinion they trust to sort through it for them. Fortunately, many trustworthy people in positions of leadership are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before—and that there is an urgent need to restructure our economic systems and our education systems to respond to these challenges.

There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world. Unfortunately, many of these “things”—in the forms of actions and initiatives (solution-oriented activity)—are not quite “coming

through the mist as much as they should be". This paper provides both an introduction to the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives, and an introduction to the potential of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. These two approaches can inspire, support, and integrate many different initiatives at the same time, and thus create "constellations" of initiatives which can bring many of the countless numbers of "things" mentioned above "through the mist" and into the light.

The "1000Communities²" Proposal

One "thing" which could assist in bringing many solutions to light at the local community level is a 161 page proposal by this writer titled "1000Communities²".

(Note: The following description of the "1000Communities²" proposal is from Section 2, p. 6, of the "1000Communities²" at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)

A. The "1000Communities²" proposal may be summarized as follows:

"1000Communities²" advocates organizing and implementing Community Visioning Initiatives in 1000 communities (communities or segments of rural areas, towns, or cities with populations of 50,000 or less) around the world

1. which are time-intensive, lasting even as much as 1½ years (18 months), so as to give as much importance to developing a close-knit community as it does to
 - a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
 - b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of "ways of earning a living" which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
 - c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations, businesses, institutions, and government agencies
 - d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, organizations, institutions, and government agencies with significant resources
2. which establish a significant number of local community points of entry called "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" [if use of the particular description "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" is permitted by the organization "Teachers Without Borders" (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)] to act as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, classrooms for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing "teacher-leaders", a location for an ongoing "informal" "Community Journal", a location for listing employment opportunities—and to provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

3. and which suggest—as a way of emphasizing the need for an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings—that communities (with the resources to do so) enter into “sister community” relationships with communities in other countries where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

[Note: This writer has created more than five different introductions to the “1000Communities²” proposal. For links to some of those documents, see [#10](#) in the “Notes and Source References” section, at the end of this paper.]

The above description of the “1000Communities²” proposal identified three important components: Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”, and “Sister Community” relationships. The following three sections provide a more in-depth overview of those three components.

Community Visioning Initiatives—maximizing “citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.”

Many of us will be familiar with the problem solving strategy of identifying problems and brainstorming solutions. Well organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. In its most basic format, a Community Visioning Initiative is simply a more comprehensive variation of the above mentioned approach to problem solving.

Structured brainstorming and prioritizing meetings, which are carried out in a number of central locations in a particular community, would be an integral part of the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives described in the “1000Communities²” proposal mentioned above. To be specific, there would be a series of meetings which focus on five particular areas: identifying challenges, prioritizing challenges, identifying solutions, prioritizing solutions, and creating action plans. Combined with ongoing workshops and much formal and informal educational activity, these meetings, though only a part of the Visioning Initiative, may last 4-6 months. These more comprehensive Community Visioning Initiatives require steering committees, preliminary surveys or assessments, workshops, task forces, collaboration between many organizations, government agencies, businesses, and educational institutions—and seek to build up consensus in the community for specific goals and action plans by encouraging a high level of participation by all residents.

One of the main goals of these kind of Community Visioning Initiatives is to maximize citizen participation in identifying challenges, and in solution-oriented activity.

Many cities and towns in the United States have carried out visioning initiatives or strategic planning exercises; however, this writer does not know of any particular examples which are meant to be responses to most of the multiple challenges mentioned above—or which have been as time-intensive as the “1000Communities²” proposal suggests. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.¹¹ (Note: “Vision 2000” was a five month long process.)

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers” — A Special Form of Community Education

The concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” (CTLCs) was created by the organization “Teachers Without Borders” (see www.teacherswithoutborders.org).

“Teachers Without Borders” defines CTLCs as follows:

“Community Teaching and Learning Centers (CTLCs) are local, practical education centers designed to be embraced by and emerge from the community itself. CTLCs use existing facilities and are often outfitted with libraries (such as dictionaries, references, educational material of general interest) and computers, face-to-face classrooms, and break-out spaces, used primarily to serve several essential functions for community sustainability.” [From a “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website before it was revised to the current website content (At current TWB website, see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)

One of the primary goals of the “Teachers Without Borders” organization is to develop “teacher-leaders”. “Teachers Without Borders” helps create “teacher-leaders” in two ways:

“We help to grow teachers... We identify talent and find a way of attracting, retaining, and supporting cohorts of teachers from all sectors of local communities. We find mentors for teachers to ensure subject-matter mastery and teaching technique, and then provide opportunities at our community teaching and learning centers for emerging teachers to practice. Our plan is to start from the ground up - incorporating local mentorship, distance learning, and community college offerings, then assist local talent in completion, at a high level, of course work at four-year schools. Most importantly, we provide a means of steady communication and feedback amongst cohorts of teaching talent.” [From a “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” section of the “Teachers Without Borders” website before it was revised to the current website content] (At current TWB website, see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/who-we-are>)

In the “1000Communities²” proposal (see p. 2 above), the concept of “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” created by the “Teachers Without Borders” organization is expanded so that such local community points of entry function as

- a) information centers, resource centers, and clearinghouses (on how residents can deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges)
- b) locations for workshops on topics suggested by the “Preliminary Survey” (for more about “Preliminary Surveys” see p. 15-17 of this paper, and Section 9 in the “1000Communities²” proposal), and as determined by the “Community Teaching and Learning Center” Coordinator
- c) practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”
- d) community centers for meetings, both planned and informal
- e) locations for “Community Journals” (which are collections of formal and informal input which may be contributed to or accessed at all times)

- f) locations for “Final Version” Document submission (“voting”) as part of Steps 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the 15 Step Community Visioning Initiative (for details on the 15 Steps, see Section 6, p. 22-42, in the “1000Communities²” proposal at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>)
- g) locations for “Summary of Community Visioning Initiative Process to Date” Notebooks (for latecomers, and as an information resource for media)
- h) central locations for listings of employment opportunities
- i) as a special form of community education, which can respond quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise

Sister Community Relationships—“... common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings...”

If we are to “fully realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours”¹² – and on people in others parts of the world—it seems that it would be most helpful for whole communities of people to have direct contact with whole communities of people in other parts of the world, for an extended period of time. In the context of this “1000Communities²” proposal, the “sister community” relationship would provide a way for residents of a community with sufficient resources to do so to be in direct contact with residents of a community where there has been well documented calls for assistance with basic human needs.

There are many communities in the world who *already have* “sister community” relationships with communities in other parts of the world. The organization most responsible for developing the idea of “sister communities”, and the organization most experienced in facilitating and monitoring such relationships, is “Sister Cities International”.

About “Sister Cities International”¹³

- a) “Our mission is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time.”
- b) “Sister Cities International is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. As an international membership organization, we officially certify, represent and support partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, states and similar jurisdictions in other countries.”
- c) “Sister Cities International” represents more than 2,500 communities in 134 countries around the world.”
- d) Key program areas include:
Sustainable Development, Youth and Education, Humanitarian Assistance, Arts and Culture
- e) Services provided to communities joining “Sister Cities International” include:
eligibility to apply for seed grants to support sister city projects
access to information and how-to guides
mentoring and staff consultation

Developing a “sister community” relationship could be a way for diverse people in any particular community to find common ground. And *common ground associated with increasing compassion for our fellow human beings would be a very special kind of common ground*. Exploring these possibilities could make it possible for many people to have first hand experience with “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

Education Systems in Times of Crises

In times when people are trying to resolve multiple crises, it will be most helpful to make ongoing evaluations of education systems, to see if they are serving communities as well as they can. It will also be most helpful if a majority of the residents in a particular community or region understand how many different ways education occurs in our complex world—as once this is understood, efforts can be made to make better use of such pathways. Here, in the context of this paper, some definitions and sample evaluation questions are offered, and some references are made, which should be sufficient as starting points for discussions on the relationships between education, community visioning initiatives, and solution-oriented activity.

First, here are four approaches to defining what general goals might be appropriate for an educational system:

1) “... it is the business of the school environment to eliminate, so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment from influence on mental habitudes.... Every society gets encumbered with what is trivial, with dead wood from the past, and with what is positively perverse. The school has the duty of omitting such things from the environment which it supplies, and thereby doing what it can to counteract their influence in the ordinary social environment. By selecting the best for its exclusive use, it strives to reinforce the power of the best. As a society becomes more enlightened, it realizes that it is responsible not to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as to make for a better future society. The school is its chief agency for the accomplishment of this end.”¹⁴

(John Dewey, 1916)

2) Two excerpts from “General Education in a Free Society” (The Harvard Committee, 1945)¹⁵

a) “A supreme need of American education is for a unifying purpose and idea. As recently as a century ago, no doubt existed about such a purpose; it was to train the Christian citizen. Nor was there any doubt about how this training was to be accomplished.... We are (now) faced with a diversity of education which, if it has many virtues, nevertheless works against the good of society by helping to destroy the common ground of training and outlook on which any society depends.”

b) “... there are truths which none can be free to ignore, if one is to have that wisdom through which life can become useful. These are the truths concerning the structures of the good life and concerning the factual conditions by which it may be achieved....”

3) Education has to clarify the goal of life to the rising generation and indicate the ways and means of attaining it.”¹⁶

(Sri Sathya Sai Baba, 1978)

4) Two Excerpts from “Why the Village Movement?” by J.C. Kumarappa (first edition, 1939)¹⁷

a) “Work absorbs most of our waking hours, and many of the problems connected with work and our dealings with our fellow man are what determine the nature of our life. Therefore, it behooves us to sit up and take note of what our work makes of us....”

b) “The function of work should be to practice our ideal of life.”

Now, we have some ideas to begin a discussion on what would be worthy goals for education systems—and we also have the challenges described in the second section of this paper (see p. 1), which suggest a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. Are our education systems serving us as well as they can in these urgent circumstances?

Here are three questions [from a document by this writer titled “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions (as Preparation for Community Visioning Initiatives)”-- accessible as an attached pdf file at <http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com/node/13094>], which may help identify some of the specific areas where reevaluation and transformation might need to take place in our education systems, in the years ahead:

9. Identifying Experienced Practitioners, Stakeholders, and People Needing Assistance

Consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which is offered in the second section of this paper (see p. 1). (Note: For this question, readers may wish to construct their own list of the most difficult challenges of our times—but it is not necessary to do that to understand the point of the question.)

a) Who are the Experienced Practitioners, who are most qualified to be educating people on how to successfully overcome each of the challenges identified?

(Special Notes: Please be specific, as in times of emergency, it will be most important for leaders to understand which people are perceived as most qualified by the majority of the residents in a particular community. Also, please be straightforward and honest: if you do not know who would be most qualified to respond, please respond accordingly.)

b) Who are the Stakeholders (the people who will be affected by the education provided and guidance given by the Experienced Practitioners)?

c) Who are the People Needing Assistance (the people who do not know how to respond to the challenges you identified)?

8. Arriving at Working Definitions of “Right Livelihood”

Consider what ways of earning a living you would identify as “right livelihood.”

Now imagine a local community resource guide relating to employment, apprenticeships, training, and volunteer opportunities associated with “right livelihood.”

And further: imagine a committee commissioned to produce such a “right livelihood” resource guide....
And the individuals who make up the committee commissioned to produce such a resource guide....

- a) What background (qualifications, experiences, etc.) would you like such individuals to have?
- b) What local institutions would you consider most appropriate to commission such a resource guide, and oversee its production?

11. Curriculum Changes in Local and Regional Educational Institutions?

Consider the assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times which is offered in the second section of this paper (see p. 1). (Note: For this question, readers may also wish to construct their own list of the most difficult challenges of our times—but it is not necessary to do that to understand the point of the question.) (Also, readers may wish to consult the 113 fields of activity listed in the Appendix of the document “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions” (see <http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com/node/13094>)

With these considerations in mind, please respond to question below.

Please check the appropriate box (boxes)—and also offer comments if you wish—to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement:

The curriculum in our local and regional educational institutions will _____ for our community to build the knowledge base and skill sets necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| need to
be transformed | need to
be modified often | have different view--
or different way of
understanding our
present circumstances | need to
be modified some | be sufficient
as it is |

Your different view, or different way of understanding our present circumstances: _____

The “1000Communities²” proposal (described above on p. 2), and The IPCR Initiative (see brief overview on p. 18-19), can provide evidence in support of three propositions which are especially relevant in association with the above questions....

- a) There are countless numbers of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

b) People can, one by one, decide to deliberately focus the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on many or all of the action plans which emerge from Community Visioning Initiatives.

c) The result can be that there are countless ‘ways to earn a living’ which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

To summarize up to this point: *If the above propositions are true, there is much more potential to be realized through education systems than we are currently realizing.*

And further: *Community Visioning Initiatives have much to contribute to the realization of this potential.*

Community Visioning Initiatives, Job Fairs, and a “Just Transition” to More Solution-Oriented Employment

Though most readers may not be familiar with the details associated with the “1000Communities²” approach to Community Visioning; this writer believes that is not necessary for readers to understand how job fairs could be one result of a high level of citizen participation in generating solution oriented goals and solution-oriented action plans.

Here is an excerpt from the “1000Communities²” proposal (accessible at <http://ipcni.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>), which provides some key points on the subject of how job fairs could be an important part of a “just transition” to more solution-oriented employment. (See “Step 12: Summary Presentations and Job Fairs”, on p. 38-39 in the “1000Communities²” document)

“Step 12 Summary Presentations and Job Fairs
(Approximate Time Required: 4 weeks)

A. Goals

- 1) Steering Committee members (with help from volunteer Advisory Board members, etc.) will summarize the Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) process
- 2) Steering Committee members-- and key community leaders who were very much involved in the CVI process—will make presentations based on the summaries
- 3) Specifically, information will be provided on how residents can deliberately focus their time, energy, and money so that their actions

- a) can have positive repercussions on many fields of activity relating to solutions
- b) can result in an increase in the “ways of earning a living” which are related to solutions and action plans

- 4) Job Fairs will provide a forum for organizations and businesses working in solution oriented fields of activity to describe employment opportunities and future prospects, to discover local talent, to hire qualified prospects, and to build knowledge bases and skill sets for the future” (end of excerpt)

The following passage is also included as “Special Commentary” for Step 12:

“Special Commentary: By now, there will have been sufficient public discourse for those people with understanding about high level shifts in investment portfolios to have learned something about what directions future shifts will be leaning towards. The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.”

Such a “just transition”—from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to critical challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to critical challenges—has achieved some significant momentum in the fields of renewable energy and “greening the economy”. The excerpts below (source: an open letter from Worldwatch Institute to newly nominated U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan) suggest there is much momentum, and also much unrealized potential, in such a “just transition”.

“OPINION: Letter to the New Education Secretary¹⁸
by Worldwatch Institute on December 19, 2008

Worldwatch is pleased to publish this open letter from prominent education and environment leaders urging the newly nominated U.S. education secretary, Arne Duncan, to consider the importance of education in carrying out President-elect Barack Obama's environmental agenda.

Dear Mr. Duncan:

Congratulations on your nomination. As you jump into the daunting challenge of bolstering our sagging education system, you have a powerful opportunity presented by the need to create a carbon-free economy.

President-elect Obama has astutely perceived the linkages between climate change, economic stimulus, energy security, and job training by declaring that the transition to a green economy is his "top priority." The missing link in this system is the critical role that education can play in quickly making the green economy a reality....

Transforming our nation's economic, energy, and environmental systems to move toward a green economy will require a level of expertise, innovation, and cooperative effort unseen since the 1940s to meet the challenges involved.

Creating millions of new green jobs through targeted investment and spending is one thing; filling those jobs with qualified candidates is quite another thing. This transition will require a massive job training (and retraining) effort on the part of business, government, and education if it is to scale up quickly.

But green manufacturing workforce development programs are just one piece of what is needed; the green economy will not be driven by manufacturing workers alone. Architects, engineers, planners, scientists, business managers, financial experts, lawyers, entrepreneurs, political leaders, resource

managers, and many others, as well as workers - not to mention environmentally literate consumers - will all be needed to drive the green economy.

American workers, managers, and professionals at all levels and in all sectors must understand the foundations of a green economy as represented in leading environmental and sustainability education programs. These foundations call for redesigning the human economy to emulate nature: operating on renewable energy, creating a circular production economy in which the concept of "waste" is eliminated because all waste products are raw materials or nutrients for the industrial economy, and managing human activities in a way that uses natural resources only at the rate that they can self-regenerate (the ideas embodied in sustainable forestry, fishing, and agriculture).

To produce such a literate workforce and citizenry, America will need to make major new investments in our educational systems to implement the green economy...." (end of quote from Worldwatch Institute letter)

In addition to the above considerations, it is most appropriate, in this brief discussion of a *"just transition" to more solution-oriented employment*, to reference the inspirational work of Booker T. Washington (ca. 1881-1915). For those readers who do not know of Booker T. Washington, he was born into slavery, but by a *remarkable struggle to gain the benefits of an education*, he achieved such success at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (Hampton, Virginia), and in his post graduate work, that he was recommended by its founder and president (former Union General Samuel C. Armstrong) to be the founder of an educational institution in Tuskegee, Alabama (in 1881).

Here are some of excerpts from Booker T. Washington's autobiography "Up From Slavery" (first published in 1901). (Note: This writer believes that the industrial education model followed at the beginnings of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, can be "reconfigured" to apply to ecovillage and sustainable community development—and that there are already many well developed model projects along these lines. The most comprehensive model project that this writer can reference is the Findhorn Community Ecovillage, and its Ecovillage Training Program.¹⁹)

[Additional Note: Excerpts below are from an accessible for free online version of "Up From Slavery" (location of Table of Contents at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WASHINGTON/toc.html>) (Excerpts are paragraphs 1-3 in the Chapter 10 "A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw") Confirmed October 22, 2009)

"From the very beginning, at Tuskegee, I was determined to have the students do not only the agricultural and domestic work, but to have them erect their own buildings. My plan was to have them, while performing this service, taught the latest and best methods of labour, so that the school would not only get the benefit of their efforts, but the students themselves would be taught to see not only utility in labour, but beauty and dignity; would be taught, in fact, how to lift labour up from mere drudgery and toil, and would learn to love work for its own sake. My plan was not to teach them to work in the old way, but to show them how to make the forces of nature--air, water, steam, electricity, horse-power--assist them in their labour."

"At first many advised against the experiment of having the buildings erected by the labour of the students, but I was determined to stick to it. I told those who doubted the wisdom of the plan that I

knew that our first buildings would not be so comfortable or so complete in their finish as buildings erected by the experienced hands of outside workmen, but that in the teaching of civilization, self-help, and self-reliance, the erection of buildings by the students themselves would more than compensate for any lack of comfort or fine finish.”

“I further told those who doubted the wisdom of this plan, that the majority of our students came to us in poverty, from the cabins of the cotton, sugar, and rice plantations of the South, and that while I knew it would please the students very much to place them at once in finely constructed buildings, I felt that it would be following out a more natural process of development to teach them how to construct their own buildings. Mistakes I knew would be made, but these mistakes would teach us valuable lessons for the future.”

If there are modifications and transformations which are needed for our education systems to serve the needs of our communities during this time of multiple crises, can we believe that there is no one among us who can step forward and provide the leadership necessary to create whole universities where “there was no provision for securing land, buildings, or apparatus?”²⁰ And can we then appreciate why it is so important for journalists, writers, and publishers to do their utmost to bring good examples to the forefront of the reading material accessible to both young and old?

Here also, it will be most appropriate to provide some inspiration relating to the key role which can be played by philanthropy, in both creating education systems, and in the “just transition” to more solution-oriented employment: (Note: Specifically, this writer believes that if there was anything resembling the kind of philanthropy described below directed to the support of Community Visioning Initiatives, there could be much momentum generated towards resolving the challenges of our times.) Again, the work of Booker T. Washington (and of the philanthropists who recognized the value of the work he was doing) is most inspirational:²¹

“Washington's philosophy and tireless work on education issues helped him enlist both the moral and substantial financial support of many major white philanthropists. He became friends with such self-made men as Standard Oil magnate Henry Huttleston Rogers; Sears, Roebuck and Company President Julius Rosenwald; and George Eastman, inventor and founder of Kodak. These individuals and many other wealthy men and women funded his causes, such as supporting Hampton and Tuskegee institutes. Each school was originally founded to produce teachers. However, graduates had often gone back to their local communities only to find precious few schools and educational resources to work with in the largely impoverished South.

“In 1912, Rosenwald provided funds for a pilot program involving six new small schools in rural Alabama, which were designed, constructed and opened in 1913 and 1914 and overseen by Tuskegee; the model proved successful. Rosenwald (then) established The Rosenwald Fund. The school building program was one of its largest programs. Using state-of-the-art architectural plans initially drawn by professors at Tuskegee Institute, the Rosenwald Fund spent over four million dollars to help build 4,977 schools, 217 teachers' homes, and 163 shop buildings in 883 counties in 15 states, from Maryland to Texas. The Rosenwald Fund used a system of matching grants, and black communities raised more than \$4.7 million to aid the construction. These schools became known as Rosenwald Schools. The local schools were a source of much community pride and were of priceless value to African-American families when poverty and segregation limited their children's chances. By 1932, the facilities could accommodate one third of all African American children in Southern U.S. schools.”

Problems That May Arise (in preparing for, and implementing, Community Visioning Initiatives)

People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people’s fears, manipulating people’s trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community. (Note: As a general observation, education can be defined as a way of “proactively encouraging a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action”.)

Organizers alerted to the above problems—and others problems that may arise—may choose to provide workshops early in the Community Visioning process which can prepare participants so they can minimize such problems. [Note: This writer has created a document titled “36 Problems That May Arise (in preparing for, and implementing, Community Visioning Initiatives) which can be accessed at <http://www.worldpulse.com/node/13829>].

Drawing on some of the observations in that “36 Problems...” document, this section will touch on two problems which are of great concern to peacebuilding and ecologically sustainability efforts:

1) The ability to develop independent judgments about the content of mass media programming

(Note: To illustrate the depth and range of this problem, I have included excerpts from sources which readers may wish to explore further, on their own....)

a) As young children grow into adults, the everyday circumstances of community life and cultural traditions provide “frameworks” by which they “understand their experiences and make judgments about what is valuable and important”. These “frameworks” shape the way people come into contact with each other, and the way they interpret facts, issues, and events—and provide the context by which people decide what are appropriate responses to the circumstances of their lives. These “frameworks” are often the source of a person’s thoughts about who they are, how they feel about themselves, how they evaluate other peoples “frameworks”, and how other people might evaluate their “framework”.²²

b) “Socialization: the process by which a human being beginning at infancy acquires the habits, beliefs, and accumulated knowledge of society through education and training for adult status.”²³

(Merriam-Webster’s Medical Dictionary)

c) The following passages²⁴ are excerpts from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach” by Art Silverblatt and Nikolai Zlobin (July, 2004) (most content accessible at Google Books)

“Popular programming reflects a level of acceptance and shared values among large numbers of people. People tend to watch programs that meet their approval. If they are truly offended by violent programs, they would not watch them. In that sense, media programming can be regarded as a text that reflects the attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths that define a culture.” (p. 66)

“At the same time, media programming reinforces cultural attitudes, values, behaviors, preoccupations, and myths. Media messages are communicated through the countless hours of media programming that repeat, directly or indirectly, the cultural script.” (p. 68)

“Finally, the media do not merely reflect or reinforce culture, but in fact shape attitudes, values, behavior, preoccupations, and myths.” (p. 68)

“The United States is the home of the world’s largest and most influential advertising industry. As of 2001, 43% of the advertising produced in the world originated in the United States. Indeed, half of the top 100 global marketers—and six of the top ten—are U.S. companies.” (p. 228)

“The international market is saturated with American entertainment programming. Hollywood films account for approximately 85% of movie audiences worldwide. Further, American programming makes up approximately 65% of global prime-time TV viewing.” (p. 69)

This writer’s commentary on the above excerpts from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach”:

1) Consider the following excerpts from other parts of this paper:

a) From pre-conference information for “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” [From the “Notes and Source References” section at the end of this paper (from Note #3b) (see p. 25)]:

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the ‘Triple Crisis,’ the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming;
- The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”);
- The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”

b) From the Worldwatch Institute’s “Letter to the New Education Secretary” (see p. 10):

“Transforming our nation's economic, energy, and environmental systems to move toward a green economy will require a level of expertise, innovation, and cooperative effort unseen since the 1940s to meet the challenges involved.”

Are our education systems serving us as well as they can in these urgent circumstances?

What can we do—at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives, to help our education systems bring the best ideas “*through the mist*”, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

2) Some thoughts on conflicts which arise when groups of people have different ideas about morality and the best way to live²⁵

“Because systems of meaning and ways of thinking differ from one culture to another, people from different cultures typically develop different ideas about morality and the best way to live.... These cultural differences become even more problematic when groups have radically different expectations about what is virtuous, what is right, and how to deal with moral conflicts.”

(Some of the problems:)

- a) “Because identity describes who we are as a person, we tend to protect those things (beliefs, values, group affiliations) that help create our sense of self.”
- b) “Each party may believe that its ways of doing things and thinking about things is the best way and come to regard other ways of thinking and acting as inferior, strange, or morally wrong.”
- c) “They may form negative stereotypes and attribute moral depravity or other negative characteristics to those who violate their cultural expectations, while they ignore their own vices and foibles, perceiving their own group to be entirely virtuous.”
- d) “They may view any compromise about their most cherished values as a threat to their very identity and a grave evil.”
- e) “In some cases, one group may come to view the beliefs and actions of another group as fundamentally evil and morally intolerable. This often results in hostility and violence and severely damages the relationship between the two groups. For this reason, moral conflicts tend to be quite harmful and intractable.”
- f) “Since resolving conflict necessarily involves some kind of change, it is essential to understand the operation of worldviews. When people are asked to change their identity or things they find meaningful, they will resist, sometimes even when the alternative is death.”

[Most of the above quotes are from the article “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (July, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036) (see also Note #25, in “Notes and Source Reference” section at end of this paper)

Again: to summarize up to this point: *If the three propositions on p. 8-9 are true, there is much more potential to be realized through education systems than we are currently realizing.*

And further: *Community Visioning Initiatives have much to contribute to the realization of this potential.*

On the Importance of Preliminary Surveys

Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and solutions, and to build consensus for collective action.

The “1000Communities²” proposal described above (see p. 2-3) includes a “15 Step Outline for a ‘1000Communities²’ Version of a Community Visioning Initiative” (see Section 6). Step 3 of that 15 step outline suggests creating a “Preliminary Survey”, and sending such a survey to 150 key leaders who represent a variety of fields of activity in the community. Responses and summarized results from “Preliminary Surveys” can provide:

- a) evidence from local leaders of the need for a re-assessment of current priorities
- b) examples of local leaders stepping up in support of Community Visioning Initiatives
- c) starting points for public discourse about the importance of the Community Visioning Initiatives
- d) starting points for “Community Teaching and Learning Center” workshop content
- e) starting points for some participants as they develop “Final Version” decisions (“votes”) on challenges, solutions, and action plans
- f) an aid to mobilizing a high level of interest in the Community Visioning Initiative, and a high level of citizen participation
- g) an initial sense of support or non-support for the “sister community” element

Here in this paper, in the “1000Communities²” proposal, and in a document I just recently completed titled “39 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions” (accessible as an attached pdf file at <http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com/node/13094>), I have highlighted the importance of Preliminary Surveys, because I believe they can provide critical assistance to realizing the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives. There are three sample questions from the “39 Suggestions...” document in the section titled “Education Systems in Times of Crises” (above). Below are four additional questions from that document, included here to further emphasize the importance of Preliminary Surveys.

16. People, Institutions, etc. Which You Personally Place Your Faith In

During the course of any given day, each of us consciously or unconsciously places our faith in a variety of people, institutions, organizations, businesses, beliefs, principles, practices, commonly agreed upon codes of conduct, etc. Consider carefully the ‘things you do in the everyday circumstances of your life’—and then list 10 people, institutions, etc. which you personally place your faith in. Then, please mark or arrange the list so that #1 is the most significant person, institution, etc which you personally place your faith in, #2 is the second most significant, and so on.

24. Global Drugs Trade, Global Arms Trade—and Solutions?

Consider the following excerpt from the “World Report of Violence and Health: Summary (Recommendations for Action)” (by the World Health Organization, 2002):

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”²⁶

a) Do you believe there are “solutions in sight” for the above mentioned problems, or do you agree with the authors at the World Health Organization? If you believe there are “solutions in sight”, please be specific and describe such solutions. Or, if you agree that “no solutions seem to be in sight”, offer your view as to why we seem to be at a point where “no solutions seem to be in sight” for those problems.

b) Please check the box (or boxes) which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement.

How much daily contact with the treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions do you feel people in general would need before we would see noticeable progress on the above mentioned problems (the global drugs trade and the global arms trade)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X <input type="checkbox"/>	Y <input type="checkbox"/>
more than is likely to happen	a profound increase from current levels	a lot more	a little more	additional solutions will be essential to make noticeable progress	have different view—or different understanding of our present circumstances

c) If you checked boxes X and/or Y, please describe below any solutions to the above two problems (drugs trade and arms trade) which you feel would be helpful contributions to making noticeable progress on resolving these problems.

32. Identifying the Most Important Elements of Community Life and Cultural Traditions

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, _____ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

Please “brainstorm” on the subject of what would best fill in the blank in the above statement. Then choose 5-10 items from the “brainstormed list”, and rank them according to most important, and next most important, using 1 as most important, 2 as next most important, and so on.

35. The Person Who Will Help Me the Most....

Please complete the following sentence in as many ways as you believe may help others who will read your responses:

The person who will help me the most is the person who will _____.

The Treasured Wisdom of Religious, Spiritual, and Moral Traditions—is it in the “tool box”?

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance.

And yet, when we wish to discuss matters of religious, spiritual, or moral education, we often find ourselves in the same position as Prof. J. S. MacKenzie, as he expressed it in 1908:

“The subject of religious education is one on which it is difficult to say anything at present without appearing to take sides in those unhappy wrangles to which there seems to be no end...”²⁷

And, as mentioned earlier (in the section “Problems That May Arise...”. see p. 15):

“In some cases, one group may come to view the beliefs and actions of another group as fundamentally evil and morally intolerable. This often results in hostility and violence and severely damages the relationship between the two groups. For this reason, moral conflicts tend to be quite harmful and intractable.”

This writer feels that *somehow* many people have—unfortunately—learned to mistakenly equate flaws in human nature with the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. This writer also feels that, with enough experiences of a positive and mutually beneficial nature, many people can come to learn more about the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions and less about the flaws in human nature.

The challenges of our times are such that it is now critical for us to access the storehouses of wisdom which have accumulated over the many centuries of human experience, and which have been confirmed again and again as essential to individual well-being and social harmony by the saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views”.

Such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring to the fore what is often hidden: 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.”

This writer believes it is becoming more and more likely that an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings will need to become an essential and critical element of a truly comprehensive response to the challenges of our times. In such circumstances, we cannot afford to exclude from our “tool box” the time-tested sources which have helped people learn compassion over many centuries.

What we need to do instead is to learn how to cultivate the time-tested sources so that the sources yield the treasured wisdom.

The IPCR Initiative—Creating a “Multiplier Effect” of a Positive Nature

This writer is the founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (at www.ipcri.net).

The IPCR 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.

The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

The IPCR Initiative is a “constellation” of initiatives which provide a “trellis” for communities of people to “organically grow” towards their own collective definitions of “spiritual formation” and “right livelihood”.

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make, along the lines described by the four preceding paragraphs, are as follows:

- a) inspire, encourage, and support the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of the “1000Communities²” proposal—so that Community Visioning Initiatives take place in as many ways and in as many communities as possible
- b) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks”, “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) through workshops offered at the local community level (For an overview of these concepts, see the IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>)
- c) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- d) help to establish, and contribute to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- e) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 113 fields of related activity [see reference in f) below] and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional model projects, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)

f) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in the document “Starting Point Links for Learning About 113 Related Fields of Activity” (accessible as an attached pdf file at <http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com/node/12720>)

—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

Opportunities for Local Newspapers to Contribute Valuable Community Services

This writer hopes that the above advocacy of Community Visioning Initiatives—in the context of both the multiple challenges ahead, and the efforts of The IPCR Initiative to contribute to resolutions of those challenges—is sufficient to support the propositions that we-- collectively-- have both the need, and the potential, to be

a) much more organized and deliberate about "... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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."

b) much more multi-faceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability

c) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and "embodied energy" which are now accessible to us

This writer also hopes that the commentary provided here is sufficient to suggest that there are many opportunities for local newspapers to contribute very valuable community services in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow up stages associated with Community Visioning Initiatives. Here is a list of some of the community services local newspapers could contribute:

- 1) provide information about the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives
- 2) advocate for the implementation of Community Visioning Initiatives
- 3) be directly involved in making Preliminary Surveys accessible, provide in-depth coverage of the response compilation process to assure credibility, and provide a variety of summary and analysis of the responses.
- 4) provide ongoing public access to details of each stage of the Community Visioning process
- 5) provide ongoing public access to details of workshops and other educational experiences at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”
- 6) provide in-depth coverage of the response compilation process to assure credibility
- 7) provide a variety of summary and analysis of the responses at each stage of the process

- 8) provide follow-up coverage of the projects and initiatives which spin-off from the action plans receiving significant community support
- 9) encourage citizen input as a way of further evaluating the successes and failures of the process

Concluding Comments

As part of this writer's current work-in-progress, he created a document titled "Starting Point Links for Learning More about 113 Related Fields of Activity (accessible at <http://www.worldpulsemagazine.com/node/12720>) One possible outcome for readers of that document is an increased awareness that

a) There are countless numbers of "things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives" which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

Hopefully, one possible outcome for readers of this document is an increased awareness that

b) People can, one by one, decide to deliberately focus the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on many or all of the action plans which emerge from Community Visioning Initiatives.

c) The result can be that there are countless 'ways to earn a living' which contribute to the peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts necessary to overcome the challenges of our times.

Truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, "Community Teaching and Learning Centers" and "sister community" relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of "close-knit" communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others 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.

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars.¹⁰

While there may be many people—some of whom are authorities in their fields of activity—who may already have clear ideas about what the challenges ahead are, and what solutions will be most effective

and

while there may also be many people who feel that they do not—because of lack of experience or education, or for other reasons—have the "appropriate skills" to fit into this kind of community activity....

it is critical, and cannot be emphasized enough, that the Community Visioning Initiative process can give as much importance to developing a close-knit community (and thus as much importance to increasing compassion for our fellow human beings, and increasing our willingness to help each other) as it does to

- a) contributing to accumulating and integrating the knowledge and skill sets necessary for the highest percentage of people to act wisely in response to challenges identified as priority challenges
- b) helping people to deliberately channel their time, energy, and money into the creation of “ways of earning a living” which are directly related to resolving high priority challenges
- c) assisting with outreach, partnership formation, and development of service capacity for a significant number of already existing (or forming) organizations and businesses
- d) helping to build a high level of consensus for specific action plans, which will help inspire additional support from people, businesses, and organizations with significant resources

As a closing comment, this writer hopes that this paper has provided sufficient information and inspiration so that

- a) more Community Visioning Initiatives are organized and implemented as a way of responding to the challenges of our times
- b) residents of communities where Community Visioning Initiatives are being organized and implemented are encouraged to participate in as many ways as possible—*and encouraged to help and support others who are making sincere efforts to contribute to the process.*

Notes and Source References

1. Excerpt from document titled “Papers on Moral Education—Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress” (Held at the University of London, September 25-29, 1908) Edited by Gustave Spiller (Hon. General Secretary of the Congress) (accessible through Google Book Search) [Specific excerpt from the Sixth Session, in presentation titled “Systematic Moral Teaching” by Prof. J. S. Mackenzie [University College, Cardiff (UK)], see last paragraph (Note: Searching book for “MacKenzie” will locate presentation)] (Confirmed October 21, 2009)

2. Some references to the urgency associated with mitigating global warming:

a) From TimesOnline article “Global warming must stay below 2C or world faces ruin, scientists declare” on May 28, 2009 (see <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article6380709.ece>) (confirmed October 21, 2009) [references document “The St James Palace Memorandum” from Symposium “Action for a Low Carbon and Equitable Future” London, UK, 26 – 28 May 2009) (for that document, see http://extras.timesonline.co.uk/pdfs/sjp_memorandum_290509.pdf) (confirmed October 21, 2009)]

(Excerpts from the news article at TimesOnline) (see paragraphs 1-4)

“World carbon emissions must start to decline in only six years if humanity is to stand a chance of preventing dangerous global warming, a group of 20 Nobel prize-winning scientists, economists and writers declared today.

“The United Nations climate summit in Copenhagen in December must agree to halve greenhouse-gas emissions by 2050 to stop temperatures from increasing by more than 2C (3.6F), the St James’s Palace Nobel Laureate Symposium concluded.

“While even a 2C temperature rise will have adverse consequences, a bigger increase would create ‘unmanageable climate risks’, according to the St James’s Palace memorandum, signed today by 20 Nobel laureates in physics, chemistry, economics, peace and literature.

“The temperature target “can only be achieved with a peak of global emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2015”, the document said. If emissions continue to rise after that date, the required cuts would become unachievable.”

(Excerpts from the actual “St. James Palace Memorandum”) (see paragraphs 1, 4—and last paragraph)

“The robust scientific process, by which this evidence has been gathered, should be used as a clear mandate to accelerate the actions that need to be taken. Political leaders cannot possibly ask for a more robust, evidence-based call for action.”

“Leadership is primarily required from developed countries, acknowledging their historical responsibility as well as their financial and technological capacity. However, all countries will need to implement low carbon development strategies. *In this spirit of trust, every country must act on the firm assumption that all others will also act.*”

“All scientists should be urged to contribute to raising levels of public knowledge on these threats to civilization and engage in a massive education effort to popularize the principles in this Memorandum.”

b) From the “UN Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World” Director and Lead Author: Kevin Watkins Published for the United Nations Development Program Released November 27, 2007 In “Summary” of Complete Report (See http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr_20072008_summary_english.pdf for free download) On p. 19, in section “Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change: Strategies for Mitigation” paragraph 1 (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Avoiding the unprecedented threats posed by dangerous climate change will require an unparalleled collective exercise in international cooperation.”

c) From Lester Brown’s “Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization” Published by Earth Policy Institute 2008 (See <http://www.earth-policy.org/Books/PB3/Contents.htm> for free download) From “Introduction”, in section “Plan B—A Plan of Hope” p. 20, paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Plan B is shaped by what is needed to save civilization, not by what may currently be considered politically feasible. Plan B does not fit within a particular discipline, sector, or set of assumptions. Implementing Plan B means undertaking several actions simultaneously, including eradicating poverty, stabilizing population, and restoring the earth’s natural systems. It also involves cutting carbon dioxide emissions 80% by 2020, largely through a mobilization to raise energy efficiency and harness renewable sources of energy. Not only is the scale of this save our-civilization plan ambitious, so is the speed with which it must be implemented. We must move at wartime speed, restructuring the world energy economy at a pace reminiscent of the restructuring of the U.S. industrial economy in 1942 following the Japanese attack on Pear Harbor. The shift from producing cars to planes, tanks, and guns was accomplished within a matter of months.”

d) From the “About Focus the Nation” section of the “Focus the Nation” website (see <http://www.focusthenation.org/about>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“Our 2008 Civic Engagement campaign organized 1900 climate change teach-ins on college campuses on Jan. 31, 2008, engaging 64 members of Congress in direct dialogue with youth activists during the height of the early presidential primaries. Between teach-ins and web-casts, we directly engaged more than 240,000 people in climate change educational forums. The teach-ins generated more than 900 press hits, including articles in TIME, Grist, New York Times, Newsweek, NPR, USA Today, MSNBC, Los Angeles Times and nearly every major daily from the Houston Chronicle to the Boston Globe.”

3. Some references and commentary regarding the significance of peak oil:

a) From the “Hirsch Report” [“The Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation and Risk Management” —Project Leader: Robert L. Hirsch (SAIC) Commissioned by the Department of Energy, and dated February, 2005] [Accessible at the website of Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)(USA) at www.bartlett.house.gov/EnergyUpdates/] (see <http://www.bartlett.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hirschreport.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

(in “Summary and Concluding Remarks”)

“Over the past century the development of the U.S. economy and lifestyle has been fundamentally shaped by the availability of abundant, low-cost oil. Oil scarcity and several-fold oil price increases due to world oil production peaking could have dramatic impacts.” (see Point #2: “Oil Peaking Could Cost the U.S. Economy Dearly”, p. 64)

“The world has never faced a problem like this. Without massive mitigation more than a decade before the fact, the problem will be pervasive and will not be temporary.” (see Point #3: “Oil Peaking Presents a Unique Challenge”, p. 64)

(in “Executive Summary”)

“The peaking of world oil production presents the U.S. and the world with an unprecedented risk management problem. As peaking is approached, liquid fuel prices and price volatility will increase dramatically, and, without timely mitigation, the economic, social, and political costs will be unprecedented.” (see paragraph 1, p. 4)

“The challenge of oil peaking deserves immediate, serious attention, if risks are to be fully understood and mitigation begun on a timely basis.” (see point #2, p. 5)

b) From pre-conference information for “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization (www.ifg.org) and The Institute on Policy Studies (with other co-sponsors) From Teach-In Flyer and Draft Program at http://www.ifg.org/events/Triple_Crisis_Speakers.pdf (see p. 2) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the ‘Triple Crisis,’ the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming;
- The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak oil”);
- The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”

c) From this writer, in “Spiritual Peacebuilding: 47 Quotes and Proverbs” (August, 2007) at The IPCR Initiative website (at <http://ipcri.net/images/Spiritual-Peacebuilding--47-Quotations-and-Proverb.pdf>) (see section F, number 9, p. 5) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“If many people can learn to find contentment and quality of life while consuming much less, this limiting of desires at the ‘root’ will save much trouble trying to respond to the symptoms as they materialize worldwide. This is part of the ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked...”

d) Further commentary by this writer, on the implications of resolving the “triple crises” of global warming, peak oil, and widespread resource depletion:

This writer understands peak oil in the following sense: the increasing awareness that the era of “cheap oil” is over is one element among many (including global warming, widespread resource depletion, ecological footprint analysis, etc.) which are pointing to the need for much less energy intensive human settlements in the future. As high level investment portfolios shift in response to these indicators, the likelihood that the vast sums of investment necessary to produce “very costly oil”—and the likelihood that there will be customers willing to pay a high price to use it—will very likely diminish, and continue to diminish, *as more and more people discover that it is possible to have high quality of life while using much less resources*. Thus, while there may yet be more oil on this planet than we have used thus far, it is becoming more and more likely that we have arrived at a “peak” in terms of how much oil we—collectively—will use in one year.

e) As to the adaptations we—collectively—must make to live in much less energy intensive human settlements in the future, here (below) are four summary statements which may be helpful indicators of steps towards sustainable human settlements:

i) From an article titled “The Green New Deal” by Richard Heinberg, published on the website of Energy Bulletin on October 20, 2008 (at <http://energybulletin.net/node/46934>) (see paragraph 3) (Confirmed October 20, 2009) (Initially published on October 20, 2008 by Post Carbon Institute).

“Peak Oil and Climate Change present threats and imperatives of a scale unprecedented in human history. By taking up these imperatives through a de-carbonized retrofit of the nation’s (and ultimately the world’s) transport, food, and manufacturing systems, policy makers can address a number of crises simultaneously—environmental decline, resource depletion, geopolitical competition for control of energy, unemployment, balance of trade deficits, malnutrition and food related health problems, and more.”

ii) From the article “Energy and Permaculture” by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (see paragraph 4 in subsection titled “Mollison”) (<http://permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy back to a solar-based (agriculture and forestry) economy will involve the application of the embodied energy that we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes and ideas, mostly inappropriately configured for the “solar” economy. It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”

iii) From the FAONewsroom section of The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) website. In the “Focus on the Issues” subsection, see “High-level conference on world food security...”, and then see “Conference News” (6/6/2008). Specific article “Food Summit Calls for More Investment in Agriculture” (paragraphs 1, and 9) (at <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2008/1000856/index.html>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The Summit on soaring food prices, convened by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (June 3-5, 2008), has concluded with the adoption by acclamation of a declaration calling

on the international community to increase assistance for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices.

...“On climate change, the Declaration said: ‘It is essential to address (the) question of how to increase the resilience of present food production systems to challenges posed by climate change... We urge governments to assign appropriate priority to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, in order to create opportunities to enable the world’s smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people, in particular vulnerable areas, to participate in, and benefit from financial mechanisms and investment flows to support climate change adaptation, mitigation and technology development, transfer and dissemination. We support the establishment of agricultural systems and sustainable management practices that positively contribute to the mitigation of climate change and ecological balance.’”

iv) From pdf version of “The Food and Farming Transition: Toward a Post Carbon Food System” by Richard Heinberg and Michael Bromberg, Ph.D Post Carbon Institute 2009 (Available online at www.postcarbon.org/food) Excerpt from Section “Farm Work” (see p. 28-29) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“While the proportion of farmers that would be needed in the U.S. if the country were to become self-sufficient in food grown without fossil fuels is unknown (that would depend upon technologies used and diets adopted), it would undoubtedly be much larger than the current percentage. It is reasonable to expect that several million new farmers would be required—a number that is both unimaginable and unmanageable over the short term. These new farmers would have to include a broad mix of people, reflecting America’s increasing diversity. Already growing numbers of young adults are becoming organic or biodynamic farmers, and farmers’ markets and CSAs are springing up across the country (Figure 11). These tentative trends must be supported and encouraged. In addition to government policies that support sustainable farming systems based on smaller farming units, this will require:

Education: Universities and community colleges must quickly develop programs in smallscale ecological farming methods—programs that also include training in other skills that farmers will need, such as in marketing and formulating business plans. Apprenticeships and other forms of direct knowledge transfer will assist the transition. Gardening programs must be added to the curricula of all primary and secondary schools, especially in summer programs.

Financial Support: Since few if any farms are financially successful in their first few years, loans and grants will be needed to help farmers get started.

Community and Cultural Revitalization: Over the past decades American rural towns have seen too many of their young people flee first to distant colleges and then to cities. Farming communities must be interesting, attractive places if we expect people to inhabit them and children to want to stay there.”

4. From “Hunger Facts: International/Facts and Figures on Health” section of the Bread for the World website (see <http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics/hunger-facts-international.html>) (see “Facts and Figures on Health” Bullets #3, #4, and #6) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“In 2006, about 9.7 million children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Almost all of these deaths occurred in developing countries....”

Most of these deaths are attributed, not to outright starvation, but to diseases that move in on vulnerable children whose bodies have been weakened by hunger. “

“The four most common childhood illnesses are diarrhea, acute respiratory illness, malaria and measles. Each of these illnesses is both preventable and treatable. Yet, poverty interferes in parents’ ability to access immunizations and medicines. Chronic undernourishment on top of insufficient treatment greatly increases a child’s risk of death.”

5. From www.infoplease.com at www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0883352.html ; and U.S. Bureau of the Census POP Clock estimate at www.census.gov/cgi-bin/ipc/popclockw)
(Both confirmed on October 20, 2009)

“In 1804, the world population was 1 billion.
In 1927, the world population was 2 billion (123 years later).
In 1960, the world population was 3 billion (33 years later).
In 1974, the world population was 4 billion (14 years later).
In 1987, the world population was 5 billion (13 years later).
In 1999, the world population was 6 billion (12 years later).”

“As of October, 20, 2009 at 00:43 GMT (EST + 5), the world population was estimated to be 6,791,794,939.”

6. Here are two different “commentaries” on the subject of increasing urbanization

a) From website of Population Reference Bureau-- see
<http://www.prb.org/Educators/TeachersGuides/HumanPopulation/Urbanization.aspx>)
(see paragraphs one and two) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“In 1800, only 3 percent of the world's population lived in urban areas.”
“By 1900, almost 14 percent were urbanites, although only 12 cities had 1 million or more inhabitants.”
“In 1950, 30% of the world’s population resided in urban centers. The number of cities with over 1 million people had grown to 83.”
“In 2008, for the first time, the world's population was evenly split between urban and rural areas. There were more than 400 cities over 1 million and 19 over 10 million.”

b) From Press Release of City Limits Report (August 13, 2002) “Londoners Running Up Massive Debt on Earth’s Resources” (at www.citylimitslondon.com/city_limits_press_release.htm) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

“Forty one per cent of the Ecological Footprint (2.80 gha) is accounted for by the food Londoners eat.... In total, London consumes 6.9 million tones of food (per year), more than three quarters of which is imported. London throws away 560,000 tonnes of food (per year) as waste.”

[Notes: i) “City Limits is the name of the research project conducted by leading environmental consultancy Best Foot Forward. Best Foot Forward Limited (BFF) is a sustainability consultancy based in

Oxford (UK).” (from bottom of page in “Notes to Editors” section, at the end of above press release). ii) “Best Foot Forward was awarded the Queens Award for Enterprise in the Sustainable Development category in 2005 for our ecological footprinting work.” (from the “Our Story” section of the “Best Foot Forward” website (see <http://www.bestfootforward.com/story>) (Above notes confirmed October 25, 2009)]

7. Here are two sources which provide evidence of widespread resource depletion:

a) Relating to the “Millennium Ecosystem Assessment”

--From Washington Post article “Report on Global Ecosystems Calls for Radical Changes: Earth’s sustainability not guaranteed unless action is taken to protect resources” (Shankar Vedantam, March 30, 2005 p. A02 (see <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A10966-2005Mar29.html>) (paragraphs 1, 2, and 4) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

“Many of the world's ecosystems are in danger and might not support future generations unless radical measures are implemented to protect and revive them, according to the most comprehensive analysis ever conducted of how the world's oceans, dry lands, forests and species interact and depend on one another.”

“The new report collates research from many specific locales to create the first global snapshot of ecosystems. More than 1,300 authors from 95 countries participated in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, whose results are being made public today by the United Nations and by several private and public organizations.”

“The effort brought together governments, civil society groups, industry and indigenous people over a four-year period to examine the social, economic and environmental aspects of ecosystems.”

--From the “Overview of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment” at the Millenium Ecosystem Assessment website (see <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/article.aspx?id=58>) See section “What are the main findings of the MA?” (see 4 “bullet” summaries)

i) “Over the past 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than in any comparable period of time in human history, largely to meet rapidly growing demands for food, fresh water, timber, fiber and fuel. This has resulted in a substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on Earth.”

ii) “The changes that have been made to ecosystems have contributed to substantial net gains in human well-being and economic development, but these gains have been achieved at growing costs in the form of the degradation of many ecosystem services, increased risks of nonlinear changes, and the exacerbation of poverty for some groups of people. These problems, unless addressed, will substantially diminish the benefits that future generations obtain from ecosystems. “

iii) “The degradation of ecosystem services could grow significantly worse during the first half of this century and is a barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.”

iv) “The challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystem while meeting increasing demands for services can be partially met under some scenarios considered by the MA, but will involve significant changes in policies, institutions and practices that are not currently under way....”

b) See also #3 b) in this “Notes and Source References” section (p. 24):

From pre-conference information for “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion and Extinction”

8. From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”

9. Some statistics associated with “cultures” of violence

a) From “Table on World and Regional Military Expenditures 1988-2007” in “Sipri Data on Military Expenditure” section of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute website (http://archives.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_wnr_table.html) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“According to an estimate by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, world military expenditures for the years 1997-2007 totaled 10.791 trillion dollars (\$10,791,000,000,000) (10,791 billion dollars).

b) From “Crime in the United States” section of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation website, (using the “Quick Finds” subsection at the bottom of the page, for the question “Where can I find the number of estimated violent and property crimes for the Nation over the past twenty years?”) (at http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/data/table_01.html) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

According to FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) statistics, in a Table titled “Crime in the United States: by volume and rate per 100,000 inhabitants”-- there were an average of 16,757 deaths by murder or non-negligent manslaughter per year in the United States, during the years 1996-2005.”

c) From the “Publications” section of the Small Arms Survey website, in the subsection “Small Arms Survey 2003”, (in “About the Small Arms Survey 2003, see “Key Findings” box) (at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/sas/publications/year_b_pdf/2003/2003SAS_press-release_yb03_en.pdf) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

“There are at least 639 million firearms in the world today, of which 59% are legally held by citizens.”

“At least 1,134 companies in 98 countries worldwide are involved in some aspect of the production of small arms and/or ammunition.”

d) From the “Publications” section of the Small Arms Survey website, in the subsection “Small Arms Survey 2007: Guns and the City” (in “About the Small Arms Survey 2007, under “Key Findings”, in “section “Guns and the City”) (at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/sas/publications/year_b_pdf/2007/2007SAS_English_press_kit/2007SAS_cover%20sheet_en.pdf) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

“• Large-scale and uncontrolled urbanization appears to be associated with increased rates of armed violence.

• Rapid urbanization is generally coupled with decreasing levels of public safety, posing serious challenges to the provision of security and justice.”

10. Here are links to five different introductions to the “1000Communities²” proposal cited above. Each of these five introductions approach describing the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives from a different point of view.

a) *The shortest introduction*

“The ‘1000Communities²’ Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature”
<http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2-for-Outreach-Package-B.pdf>

b) *The introduction with the most quotes from other sources on the critical challenges ahead*

“The ‘1000Communities²’ Proposal: Determining the Markets that Supply the ‘Ways of Earning a Living’”
<http://ipcri.net/images/The-IPCR-Journal-Newsletter-Fall-2008.pdf> (see p. 3-8)

c) *The introduction which goes into the most detail of how such Community Visioning Initiatives can help with identifying and supporting more solution-oriented employment*

“Transitioning from Less Solution-Oriented Employment to More Solution-Oriented Employment”
<http://ipcri.net/images/Transitioning-from-Less-Solution-Oriented-Employment.pdf>

d) *The introduction written just after the “economic crises” began to unfold (in September, 2008)*

“A Greater Force Than the Challenges We Are Now Facing”
<http://ipcri.net/images/A-Greater-Force-than-the-Challenges-We-Are-Now-Fac.pdf>

e) *The introduction which emphasizes how all of us have important responsibilities, and how we really need to be on the same side, helping each other*

“Community Visioning Initiatives For the Duration of the Emergency”
<http://ipcri.net/images/Community-Visioning-Initiatives-for-the-Duration-of-the-Emergency.pdf>

11. The statistics are from “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again”, a brochure this writer received from Chattanooga Venture. These statistics are also accessible in a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”, at the website for the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership at

<http://www.academy.umd.edu/Resources/AcademyPublicationsPDF/BoundaryCrossers-CaseStudies/Ch3-Chattanooga/Chattanooga.pdf> (see p. 7) (Confirmed October 20, 2009)

12. “The more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.”

From “Why The Village Movement?” by J.C. Kumarappa p. 73 (The edition this writer has includes the 1939 edition foreword by Mahatma Gandhi, and was printed on handmade paper in Rajchat, Kashi in 1960).

13. From the “Sister Communities International” website (all excerpts confirmed October 20, 2009)

Excerpts a)-d) From Fact Sheet titled “About Sister Communities International” in the “Media Contacts” section (see <http://www.sister-cities.org/about/press/FactSheet-FINAL-pdf.pdf>) (on p. 1)

e) From Fact Sheet titled “About Sister Communities International” in the “Media Contacts” section (see <http://www.sister-cities.org/about/press/FactSheet-FINAL-pdf.pdf>) (on p. 2)

14. From “Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education” by John Dewey New York The Macmillan Company 1916 (p. 24) (whole text accessible through google books) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

15. From “General Education in a Free Society” by The Harvard Committee, 1945 in “American Higher Education Transformed, 1940-2005: Documenting the National Discourse” Eds. Wilson Smith and Thomas Bender Johns Hopkins University Press Baltimore, Maryland 2008 Selections from “The Harvard Report” on p. 14-20 [Excerpt a) is from p. 14, and excerpt b) is from p. 20] Editor’s introduction to “The Harvard Report”, which may also be of interest to readers, begins “The dominant curricular statement of James Bryant Conant’s presidency of Harvard University (1933-53)...” (excerpts accessible through limited preview of “American Higher Education Transformed...” at google books) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

16. Sri Sathya Sai Baba from *Sathya Sai Speaks* Vol. 14, Chpt. 11, p. 69 Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust Prasanthi Nilayam India (Note: Vol. 14 contains discourses delivered by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during 1978-80)

17. From “Why the Village Movement?” by J.C. Kumarappa The edition this writer has includes the 1939 edition foreword by Mahatma Gandhi, and was printed on handmade paper in Rajchat, Kashi in 1960 [Excerpt a) is from p. 65; excerpt b) is from p. 183]

Note: This writer has incorporated insight and inspiration from “Why the Village Movement?” into the IPCR Initiative in many ways, one in particular being the description of “Spiritually Responsible

Investing”, one of The Eight IPCR Concepts (see IPCR document “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”, p. 8, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>).

Here also is some biographical information about J.C. Kumarappa:

“In 1935, the India National Congress formed the All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA) for the development of (the) rural economy (in India), with Gandhiji as President and Kumarappa as Secretary and Organiser. Between 1935-1939, Kumarappa established the AIVIA headquarters at Maganwadi, developed various experiments of rural technologies, and helped others to reorganize village industries all over the country. (At Maganwadi), he edited a monthly journal, ‘Gram Udyog Patrika,’ and wrote a book, ‘Why the Village Movement?’ for AIVIA.” [Note excerpted from “Brief Life Sketch of J.C. Kumarappa (1892-1960) at the website of the Kumarappa Institute of Gram Swaraj (KIGS) www.kigs.org (click on picture, and see paragraph 8)]

18. From the website of the Worldwatch Institute (see <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5971>) (confirmed October 20, 2009)

19. Here are some notes and source references related to ecovillage training courses at Findhorn Community, Scotland.

Findhorn Ecovillage Training “provides a practical forum for learning, and for developing action plans. It draws on the experience and expertise developed within the Findhorn Ecovillage over the past 46 years, as well as on other local and international initiatives. Findhorn Ecovillage has the lowest recorded ecological footprint for any community in the industrialised world, just half the UK national average.” [from paragraphs 2 and 3 <http://www.findhorn.org/whatwedo/ecovillage/ecovillage.php>] (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

a) A very comprehensive “Ecovillage Training” brochure, which provides much information about the Findhorn Community, and a detailed overview of a Permaculture approach to ecovillage training (accessible at <http://www.findhorn.org/workshops/resources/EVTflyer.pdf>) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

b) For another example of ecovillage training at Findhorn, see <http://www.findhorn.org/programmes/programme353.php> -- the Internet address for “Gaia Education Design for Sustainability - Training of Trainers - Incorporating Transition Towns Training”

“Design for Sustainability- Training of Trainers- is an advanced training course based at the Findhorn Ecovillage providing a practical forum for learning and developing skills needed to work effectively with design for sustainability at all levels. It comprises four separate week-long modules, which may be attended as a whole or separately. The curriculum draws on the experience and expertise developed in a network of some of the most successful ecovillages and community projects across the Earth.” (paragraphs 3 and 2 at <http://www.findhorn.org/programmes/programme353.php>) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

[Note: The Findhorn Foundation Ecovillage Project received Best Practice designation from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in 1998.] (last entry, bottom of page, at <http://www.findhorn.org/programmes/evt.php>) (Confirmed October 25, 2009)

20. Below are excerpts from “Up from Slavery” (published in 1901) which will provide some context to the brief quote on p. 12: (Passages are a mixture of paragraphs 6 and 8 from Chapter VII “Early Days at Tuskegee” (see <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/WASHINGTON/ch07.html>)

“Before going to Tuskegee I had expected to find there a building and all the necessary apparatus ready for me to begin teaching. To my disappointment, I found nothing of the kind.....

“I found that about a year previous to my going to Tuskegee some of the coloured people who had heard something of the work of education being done a Hampton had applied to the state Legislature, through their representatives, for a small appropriation to be used in starting a normal school in Tuskegee. This request the Legislature had complied with to the extent of granting an annual appropriation of two thousand dollars. I soon learned, however, that this money could be used only for the payment of the salaries of the instructors, and that there was no provision for securing land, buildings, or apparatus. The task before me did not seem a very encouraging one. It seemed much like making bricks without straw....

I did find, though, that which no costly building and apparatus can supply, - hundreds of hungry, earnest souls who wanted to secure knowledge..... The coloured people were overjoyed, and were constantly offering their services in any way in which they could be of assistance in getting the school started.”

21. From Booker T. Washington Wikipedia entry, see paragraphs 5 and 6 in “Career Overview” at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Booker T. Washington](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Booker_T._Washington)) (confirmed October 21, 2009)

22. By this writer, with ideas (and one partial quote) from article “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (July, 2003) (see paragraph 3) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences) Michelle Maiese (see knowledge based essay "Moral or Value Conflicts", paragraph 3) The Beyond Intractability Knowledge Base Project is “A Free Knowledge Base on More Constructive Approaches to Destructive Conflict “, and is affiliated with the University of Colorado, Colorado (USA) Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Co-Directors and Editors c/o Conflict Information Consortium (Formerly Conflict Research Consortium)

23. Merriam-Webster's Medical Dictionary. Retrieved October 18, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/socialization>

24. All excerpts are from “International Communications: A Media Literacy Approach” by Art Silverblatt and Nikolai Zlobin M.E. Sharpe July, 2004 (most content accessible at Google Books) (confirmed October 21, 2009)

25. Most of the quotes are from the article “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (July, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences) (See specific source references below) The Beyond Intractability Knowledge Base Project is “A Free Knowledge Base on More Constructive Approaches to Destructive Conflict “, and is affiliated with the University of Colorado, Colorado (USA) Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess, Co-Directors and Editors c/o Conflict Information Consortium (Formerly Conflict Research Consortium) (All links confirmed October 21, 2009)

First quote: from paragraph 7 in section “What is Moral Conflict?”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

a) From paragraph 1 in section “The Importance of Identify Frames”, in “Identify Frames” by Robert Gardner (June, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/identity_frames/)

b) From paragraph 7 in section “What is Moral Conflict?”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

c) From first paragraph in section “Negative Stereotyping”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

d) From paragraph five in section “Why Moral Conflict is Intractable”, in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

e) From last paragraph in section “What is Moral Conflict?, in in “Moral and Value Conflicts” by Michelle Maiese (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/intolerable_moral_differences/?nid=1036)

f) From paragraph 1 in section “Summary”, in “Cultural and Worldview Frames” by Michelle LeBaron (August, 2003) (see http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/cultural_frames/)

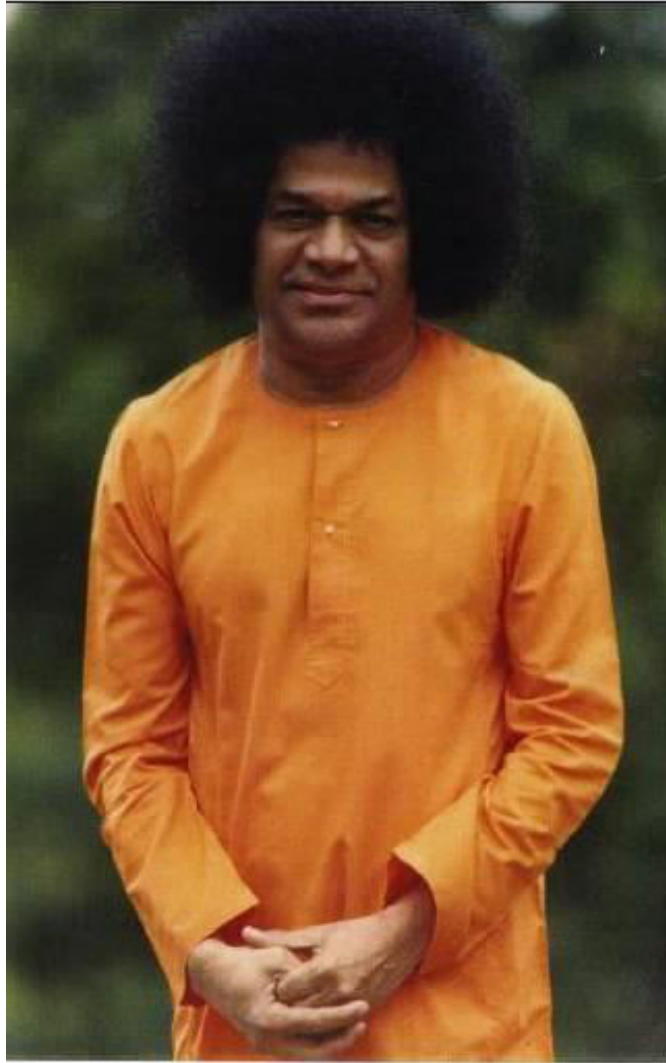
26. From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>) (Confirmed October 21, 2009)

27. Excerpt from document titled “Papers on Moral Education—Communicated to the First International Moral Education Congress” (Held at the University of London, September 25-29, 1908) Edited by Gustave Spiller (Hon. General Secretary of the Congress) (accessible through Google Book Search) [Specific excerpt from the Sixth Session, in presentation titled “Systematic Moral Teaching” by Prof. J. S. Mackenzie [University College, Cardiff (UK)], see paragraph 3] (Note: Searching book for “MacKenzie” will locate presentation) (Confirmed October 21, 2009)

Appendix 2—Part B

Divine Intervention

A Collection of Quotations from “Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 1-15



includes sections on

The Avathara of Sri Sathya Sai Baba
The Critical Need to Utilize the Wisdom of the Ages
How Sages, Elders, Teachers, Parents and Students Can Contribute
Responding to Personal Difficulties

A Note to Readers

This collection of quotations titled “Divine Intervention” was created to be a part of a larger work-in-progress titled “Calling ‘the Better Angels of Our Nature’: Preparing for Ongoing Re-evaluation of Education, Peacebuilding, and Community Revitalization Efforts as Part of Responding to the Challenges of Our Times”.

I have known of the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba since 1991. In 1997, I completed a 301 page arrangement of selected quotations from “Sathya Sai Speaks” (Vol. 1-11, first U.S. editions) (discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-1982). Since 2001, I have been building an initiative called The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. I hereby attribute the inspiration for the approach and substance of The IPCR Initiative, my personal capacity to see good in the efforts of people from many different faith communities and cultural traditions, and my personal faith in a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times to close contact, over many years, with the wisdom and compassion in the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

I still have a long ways to go to come near putting into practice the spiritual wisdom represented by the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba. And yet however much I may fall short as a student of Baba’s teachings, I do believe there is something profoundly significant about Baba’s Presence at this particular time, and something profoundly relevant about His Teachings.

We live in very complex and challenging times. These challenges include, but are not limited to: global warming; peak oil; wide-ranging resource depletion; an ever increasing world population; global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death; cultures of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence; a marginalization of the wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions; insufficient understandings of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to enduring peace and which do not—and a urgent need to restructure our economic and education systems to respond to these challenges. (For a more detailed assessment by this writer, see “A Ten Point Assessment by The IPCR Initiative of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”, accessible at <http://www.ipcri.net/images/Ten-Point-Assessment.pdf>). More and more people are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

Again, I believe there is something profoundly significant about Baba’s Presence at this particular time, and something profoundly relevant about His Teachings.

I believe there is spiritual wisdom in the excerpts from Baba’s discourses which are included in this collection. And I believe that the most advanced societies are the ones which have been successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life. In this collection titled “Divine Intervention”, I have tried to “bring to the fore” excerpts from Baba’s discourses which I consider most relevant to assisting with the process of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

In addition to these brief comments, there are some practical considerations regarding the source of these quotations, and the way I have referenced the quotations, which I will also include here.

(continued)

(A Note to Readers, continued)

“Sathya Sai Speaks” is a series of books containing discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, and published by the Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division, Prasanthi Nilayam, India. There are now 39 volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks”, which contain discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-2006. (Sri Sathya Sai Baba is currently 82 years old, with a main residence called Prasanthi Nilayam, in Southern India.)

In 1997, Sri Sathya Sai Book and Publications Trust (the name at that time for the above mentioned Publications Division) changed over to revised (Sanskrit words were replaced with English equivalents where possible) and enlarged-print editions of the “Sathya Sai Speaks” series, to replace the earlier editions as the primary source of discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. At intervals during the years 2004-2006, I chose to update the references of each quotation in the above mentioned “Arrangement of Quotations...”(see paragraph two, previous page), so that they corresponded to the current revised and enlarged-print editions of “Sathya Sai Speaks” (instead of the out-of-print and not-accessible-by-the-Internet 1st U.S. Editions). There were two important reasons for updating the references: 1) to make it easier for readers to examine the quotations in the context of the discourses they are a part of and 2) to make it easier for readers to verify the authenticity of the quotations. (That larger quotation collection can be accessed at <http://ipcri.net/images/2-Quotations-from-Sathya-Sai-Speaks-Vol.pdf>).

All of the quotations in this “Divine Intervention” collection can be found in Volumes 1-15 of “Sathya Sai Speaks” (current revised and enlarged-print editions)(discourses from the years 1953-1982), and have source references which correspond to those current revised and enlarged- print editions of “Sathya Sai Speaks”. Since all of the quotations in this book are from the “Sathya Sai Speaks” series, the format used for citing the source of each quotation does not include an abbreviation such as SSS (for “Sathya Sai Speaks”). The quotations are referenced by citing the volume number, chapter number, and page number. (For example, 6.13 p69 refers to “Sathya Sai Speaks” Volume 6, Chapter 13, Page 69.)

For readers who would like to examine the context of the quotations, and/or verify the authenticity of the quotations, here are two suggestions: 1) they can refer to the current revised and enlarged-print “Sathya Sai Speaks” editions, which can be purchased through bookstores authorized to sell books in this series (see <http://sathyasai.org/inform/content.htm#USA>) or 2) they can refer to the website of the “Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division” (formerly “Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust”) (see specifically <http://www.sssbpt.info/english/sss.htm>). Pdf versions of all the volumes of “Sathya Sai Speaks” used in this collection of quotations are accessible at that website address. [By this approach, however, the reader will have to rely on the chapter number, and search the whole discourse (usually not longer than 5 pages) for the quotation, as the pdf versions accessible by the Internet are of each chapter, not of the whole volume—and as such, there are no corresponding page numbers.]

We are at a critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding. There is now a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to be exercising as much love, understanding, and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible. This writer has gladly and willingly contributed time, energy, and money to make this collection as accessible as possible to people who might benefit from it.

Stefan Pasti
Leesburg, Virginia (USA)
June 28, 2009

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Section 1

About Avatharas

I. About Avatharas

(“... the Formless Absolute individualizes Itself....”)

- A. “... part of the primal resolution... to protect the spiritual structure of the Universe.”
- 1) “As the clouds form droplets and fall upon the fields which they choose to foster, the Formless Absolute individualizes Itself, assumes Form and comes down among Humanity to save and sustain.” 3.1 p3-4
 - 2) “Whenever there is a languishing of Dharma or righteousness and an upheaval of unrighteousness, I create Myself, for it is part of primal resolution or Sankalpa to protect the spiritual structure of the Universe. I lay aside My formless essence and assume a name and a form suited to the purpose for which I come.” 7.13 p65
 - 3) “Whenever A-santhi overwhelms the world, the Lord will incarnate in human form to establish the modes of earning Prasanthi and to re-educate the human community in the paths of Peace.” 4.27 p150
- B. “The Lord is Love Itself.”
- 1) “The Lord is Love Itself. He comes in human form so that you can talk to Him, move with Him, serve Him, adore Him, and achieve Him, so that you can recognize your kinship with Him.” 4.45 p262
- C. “The very authority which laid down the road....”
- 1) “Dharma is the code of conduct which will promote the ideals of each stage of man—learner, householder, earner, master, servant, saadhaka, sanyaasi, etc. When the code is distorted and man undermines his earthly career, forgetting the high purpose for which he has come, the Lord incarnates and leads him along the correct path. That is to say, He comes as Man, to restore the principles and re-establish the practice of Dharma.” 3.10 p63
 - 2) “When Dharma declines or rather, when those who have a duty to regulate their lives according to dharma lose faith in it, then its restoration cannot be taken up by all and sundry. A broken bridge on a highway cannot be set right by amateur skill and the momentary enthusiasm of the villagers around. The very authority which laid down the road and planned the bridge has to initiate repair.” 3.32 p185
 - 3) “When the road laid down for man’s uplift is overgrown with thorny bush and becomes unrecognizable, the Lord Himself takes human form and marks it out again.” 8.20 p103
 - 4) “Man... has a great destiny, and he is equipped with the skills needed to achieve that destiny. He is not a helpless victim of circumstances.... The tragedy is that he has allowed the equipment to rust through neglect and he has forgotten the goal. The road he has to traverse is also overgrown with brambles and the sign boards have disappeared. That is why the person who laid the road has come again to lead man along it, after repairs and renewals.” 6.43 p215-16
 - 5) “God incarnates for the revival of Dharma (Righteousness) which includes morality, truth, virtue, love and a host of other qualities that uphold the communities of man as well as the individual.” 8.8 p34

D. "Why should the Lord Himself incarnate?"

("... the intensity of affection that the Lord has for good men is so great....")

"You may ask, why should the Lord Himself incarnate? Why can He not set about the task of restoring Dharma, through the many minor gods He has at His command?

"This question was posed before the courtiers by Akbar himself, for, he laughed at the Hindu idea of the Formless adopting Form, and descending into the world, as an Avathar to save Dharma. Tansen asked for a week's time to furnish the answer and got it granted by His Imperial Majesty.

"A few days later, when he was in a pleasure boat of the Emperor sailing across the lake with his family, Tansen cleverly threw overboard a doll made to look like the emperor's little son, crying at the same time, 'O, the Prince has fallen into the water!' Hearing this, the emperor jumped into the lake to rescue his son!

"Tansen then disclosed that it was only a doll and that the son was safe. He allayed the anger of Akbar by explaining that he had perforce to enact this drama, in order to demonstrate the truth of the Hindu belief that God takes human form, Himself, to save Dharma, without commissioning some other entity to carry out that task. Dharma is as the son, God loves it so dearly. Akbar could have ordered one among the many personnel he had on board, to jump in and rescue his son; but, his affection was so great and the urgency so acute that the Emperor himself plunged into the lake, to pull out the 'son'. The Decline in Dharma is so acute a tragedy; the intensity of affection that the Lord has for good men is so great, that He Himself comes.

"The Lord is Love Itself. He comes in human form so that you can talk to Him, move with Him, serve Him, adore Him, and achieve Him, so that you can recognize your kinship with Him."

4.45 p262

E. "... so that He could be listened to, contacted, loved, revered and obeyed."

- 1) "The Lord too has to come in human form and move about among men, so that He could be listened to, contacted, loved, revered and obeyed. He has to speak the language of men and behave like human beings, as a member of the species. Otherwise, He would be either negated and neglected or feared and avoided."

1.15 p90

F. "... I incarnate from age to age."

- 1) "For the protection of the virtuous, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for establishing righteousness on a firm footing, I incarnate from age to age."

Section 2

The Avathara of Sri Sathya Sai Baba

I. About This Avathara

("No Avathara has done like this before....")

A. "... human form, in which... all the Names and Forms ascribed by man to God, are manifest."

- 1) "The very Divine principle which seekers strive to visualize by means of years of asceticism and renunciation is before you, here and now...." 14.1 p7
- 2) "'This is a human form, in which every Divine Entity, every Divine Principle, that is to say, all the Names and Forms ascribed by man to God, are manifest.'" 8.19 p99

B. "The welfare of the world will be ensured...."

- 1) "The Avathara-purusha... has come solely to save mankind, and so, He is aware of the pilgrim, the path and the goal. He is the Master of Creation and He is fully conscious of his power. He knows the past, the present and future of all. He leads and liberates." 11.15 p88
- 2) "I have come to illumine the human heart with the Light Divine and to rid man of the delusion that drags him away from the path of Santhi, the perfect equanimity of Realization." 1.16 p93
- 3) "I have come because I felt I had to come. I resolved upon this.... The welfare of the world will be ensured through the fostering of the Godly everywhere...." 3.35 p205
- 4) "Be assured that the Lord has come to save the world from calamity." 2.4 p17

C. "... this Avathaar has come unarmed. It has come with a message of love."

- 1) "In each Yuga, the Divine has incorporated itself as an Avathaar for some particular task. This Incarnation is different in that It has to deal with the crisis which is world-wide and world-shaking." 8.28 p157
- 2) "... in this Kali age, the wicked have to be reformed and reconstructed, through love and compassion. That is why this Avathaar has come unarmed. It has come with a message of love." 7.25 p139
- 3) "Note this also. In the case of this Avathaar (Divine Incarnation), the wicked will not be destroyed; they will be corrected and reformed and educated and led back to the path from which they have strayed." 1.2 p15-16
- 4) "Darkness will not flee, if you throw stones at it; nor will it disappear if you lay about it with a sword, or shoot it with a gun. It will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit." 3.12 p73

D. "The Lord has to take the Form that is suitable for the task He has to fulfil."

- 1) "This Avathaar (Divine Incarnation) might have taken birth in a particular community, but it has come for the weak, the diseased, the distressed, the downtrodden, the devoted, the divinely oriented, among all mankind." 11.26 p143
- 2) "He selects a place full of pavithrathwam (holiness) and Dhivyathwam (divinity) and takes on human form, so that you may meet Him and talk, understand and appreciate, listen and follow, experience and benefit." 1.21 p130

- 3) "The Lord has to take the Form that is suitable for the task He has to fulfil." 5.11 p67
- 4) "I am addressing a gathering today; but even though it may be new to you, for Me it is not new. I have given advice to large gatherings before, though not in this Appearance. Whenever Niraakaara (formless) becomes Sakaara (one with form), it has to fulfil the Mission and it does so in various ways. But the one purpose, the re-education of Man persists, whatever the yuga (the era)." 1.1 p2
- 5) "I will be in this mortal human form for 59 years more and I shall certainly achieve the purpose of this Avathar, do not doubt it." (from September 29, 1960 discourse) 1.31 p198

E. "... so that faith in God and Power to recognize Divinity are added to human faculties."

- 1) "Since I move about with you, eat like you, and talk with you, you are deluded into the belief that this is but an instance of common humanity. Be warned against this mistake.... any moment, My Divinity may be revealed to you; you have to be ready, prepared for that moment." 8.19 p99
- 2) "The Avathara behaves in a human way so that mankind can feel kinship, but, rises to super-human heights so that mankind can aspire to those heights..." 3.9 p60-61

3) "When this Body.... behaves as if it is filled with supra-human potentialities...."

"The Divine is recognized by gifted people as the vast, the magnificent, the beautiful, the mighty, the majestic, the awesome. But, for the generality of mankind, the consciousness that each one is a miracle sustained by God, that each breath is a witness of God's Providence, that each event is proof of His Presence, comes but rarely in life. When this Body, that is apparently human, behaves as if it is filled with supra-human potentialities, then, amazement draws the attention of all towards the Divine that is the inherent nature. Off and on, it becomes necessary to give this lesson to mankind, so that faith in God and Power to recognize Divinity are added to human faculties. Then only can the mind of man be turned from the world to the Master of the Worlds." 10.37 p250

- 4) "You might have heard people talk about the miracles; of My 'making' this and 'giving' that, of My fulfilling all your wants, of my curing your illnesses. But they are not so important as the Sathwaguna I appreciate, promote and instill. Of course, I confer on you these boons of health and prosperity but only so that you might, with greater enthusiasm and with less interruption, proceed with spiritual Sadhana." 1.11 p62-63
- 5) "Even in My case, do not be attracted simply by stories of what I 'create' by a wave of the hand etc. Do not jump to conclusions with closed eyes; watch, study and weigh." 1.9 p.57

F. "...Sai is ever established in the Principle that is beyond both time and space."

- 1) "Though Sai is involved in events conditioned by time and space, Sai is ever established in the Principle that is beyond both time and space." 15.27 p145
- 2) "I have no ego. I do not own any thing." 15.33 p183
- 3) "I have no likes or dislikes." 12.9 p37
- 4) "I have no special attachment, to any one; nor, any special aversion." 8.6 p26
- 5) "I am unattached to any event or plan." 3.34 p199
- 6) "Not today, but since the beginning, the thought that 'I must have this or that' has never arisen in me. It is not rising now. It will not arise at any time." 15.55 p317
- 7) "Divya Swaroopas, whether you believe it or not, I shall tell you one thing. There is not the slightest trace of self-interest in me. Whatever I do, whatever paths I pursue, everything is intended for the happiness of all, for the good of all and for the improvement of all. Not a single action of mine is undertaken for the satisfaction of My own personal desires. Desire is something alien to Me. All My wishes are only to promote the welfare of the World. 'Lokassamasthaa Sukhino Bhavanthu' is the only objective of Sai. (May all the world be happy.)" 14.58 p332-333

G. "It is My sankalpa (resolve) that you progress in spiritual development."

- 1) "The Lord is Love Itself. He comes in human form so that you can talk to Him, move with Him, serve Him, adore Him, and achieve Him; so that you can recognize your kinship with Him." 4.45 p262
- 2) "I turn you towards the Divine, winning your confidence, your love, your submission, by being among you, as one of yourselves, one whom you can see, listen to, speak, touch and treat with reverence and devotion." 10.30 p184
- 3) "I draw you to me and then re-form and re-shape you. I am a kind of smith who repairs broken leaky damaged hardware. I repair broken hearts and fragile minds, warped intellects, feeble resolutions and fading faith." 5.43 p249
- 4) "Come, I am the repairer of broken hearts...." 2.16 p77
- 5) "Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence." 1.2 p15
- 6) "... to say that I will respond only if I am called or that I will save only if I am thought of is wrong." 3.22 p133
- 7) "My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it." 7.80 p500
- 8) "You should not also yield to despair or become dejected. It is My sankalpa (resolve) that you progress in spiritual development." 2.16 p78

H. "I do not give you up."

- 1) "... I am exhorting you to take up the vow of Seva as a spiritual Sadhana; I must say that I am not satisfied with your performance yet. But, I have not given up instructing you, and commissioning you, for, I am hoping that you will catch up with the ideal some day or other. This is an example of the quality of mercy that is natural to Me. That quality makes Me appreciate even the little attempts you make to practice the ideal of Seva." 10.6 p29

- 2) "Those who see you here tomorrow may ask; since directions are not strictly followed, and since service is not sublimated into worship by these people, why is the badge given to them, year after year? Well, when you continue repeating the lines and trying to sing them, some day, you may succeed in singing them well. Expecting that you will get to know things better and become more and more perfect as the days pass, I am encouraging you to learn, by practice. I do not give you up. That is a sign of My Grace." 8.33 p181
- 3) "I have been repeating every time the same advice to you; and sometimes you may even get the feeling that I have only a few things to say! Well, a mother has to repeat the same directions to the child again and again until the child learns and behaves accordingly.... That is the sign of all mothers, an over-whelming desire to reform the children and to direct them along the path of progress." 1.31 p194
- 4) "... I never call upon people to worship Me, giving up the Forms they already revere. I have come to establish Dharma and so I do not and will not demand or require your homage. Give it to your Lord or Guru, whoever He is; I am the Witness, come to set right the vision." 2.18 p89

I. "This task will succeed...."

- 1) "Few have realized My purpose and significance; but I am not worried." 5.23 p128
- 2) "God incarnates for the revival of Dharma.... I shall fulfil that task, whatever the comments that others may make. Comment is a natural corollary. I do not pay any attention to it; nor should you." 8.8 p35
- 3) "My activities and movements will never be altered, whoever may pass whatever opinion on them. Meanness may prompt people to remark on My Dress, this gown of colour, or they may talk cynically of My Hair, but, I shall not be affected a bit. My discourses, My plans for Dharmasthapana, My movements, I shall not modify at all." 5.42 p234
- 4) "Some complain that I did not give them this or that, but that is because their vision is limited to the immediate future or the present; whereas I know what is in store and so I have to safeguard them from greater grief. They even blame Me and heap abuses but I will not give them up. I am not influenced by anybody, remember. There is no one who can change My course or affect My conduct to the slightest extent." 1.30 p191
- 5) "This task will succeed; it will not be impeded by any obstacle. It will not be limited or slowed. When the Lord decides and wills, His Sankalpa cannot be hindered; It will not be hindered." 4.49 p285

J. "...during no previous Age did man have this unique chance."

- 1) "No Avathara has done like this before, going among the people, the masses, the millions and counseling them, guiding them, consoling them, uplifting them, directing them along the path of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi, and Prema." 5.42 p233
- 2) "For during no previous Age did man have this unique chance. No organization of this nature was established, no Conference of this character was held in the Presence and no opportunity was given then to derive Ananda through such close association, through conversation and singing together. Undoubtedly, you are all singularly fortunate. Therefore, do not let the opportunity slip through your hands." 10.35 p238
- 3) "... in no previous Yuga did the people get so many clear intimations of the nature of Avathara as now...." 2.22 p113

- K. "Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you."
- 1) "... the whole world is today in the throes of anxiety and fear. But, I assure you that very soon the dark clouds shall be scattered and you will witness a happy era all over the world."
(from discourse on July 8, 1971) 11.28 p164
 - 2) "Many hesitate to believe that things will improve, that life for all will be happy and full of joy, that the Golden Age will ever recur. Let Me assure you that this Dharmaswarupa has not come in vain; It will succeed in averting the crisis that has come upon Humanity."
5.11 p70
 - 3) "... great days are coming; let not your sloth stand across and deprive you of the chance."
2.17 p87
 - 4) "Make full use of Me, that is all that I ask of you."
6.20 p108

II. His Omnipresence

("There is only one God; He is omnipresent.")

A. "I am present everywhere at all times...."

- 1) "There is only one God; He is omnipresent." 11.54 p312
- 2) "I am present everywhere at all times; My Will must prevail over every obstacle. I am aware of the past, present and future, of your innermost thoughts and carefully guarded secrets." 10.30 p184
- 3) "God is everywhere at all times; He accomplishes everything. He accomplishes the minor feat of assuming the human form and growing up among men as one of themselves right in their midst, in order to win them over to the path of truth." 11.31 p183-84

B. "I am in every one of you...."

- 1) "I am in your heart all the time, whether you know it or not." 11.14 p86
- 2) "I am part of you, a partner and partaker in all your efforts, inspiring and instructing, when you ask or need inspiration and instruction." 10.1 p2
- 3) "I am in every one of you and so, I become aware of your slightest wave of thought." 9.19 p105

C. "... I have no geographical 'far' and 'near'"

- 1) "God is not somewhere away from you, some one distinct from you. He is in you, before you, behind you, beckoning, guiding, guarding, warning, prompting, the Inner Voice speaking ever with you.... Call on Me and I am always by your side." 12.14 p.64
- 2) "... I have no geographical 'far' and 'near'; My 'far' and 'near' are not calculated in miles or yards. Nearness to Me is not acquired by physical nearness. You may be by My side-- yet, far; you may be far, far away-- yet, very near and dear. However far you are, if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me and I am close to you." 7.14 p71-72
- 3) "Cultivate Prema (Love) towards all; that is the way to gain nearness. I do not measure distance in terms of meters or miles. The range of Love decides distance for Me." 8.28 p156
- 4) "If I am available in your heart, I will be available over the phone. But, remember, I have My own special postal and telephone systems. They operate from the heart straight to the heart. There are rules and regulations for the operation of that system, which the Sastras declare. You can find them there." 4.21 p120

D. "... you have to be aware of Me and make use of My Presence."

- 1) "My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it." 7.80 p500
- 2) "... I am with you, in you, beside you, ever; only you have to be aware of Me and make use of My Presence." 5.11 p68

- 3) "You think that I pay attention only to those who sit in front, but, I see all and I am with all, wherever they may be." 3.5 p39
- 4) "Even if you are posted to the Canteen or the Hospital, do not get downhearted, that you cannot get Darsan, all (the) time. I have no such handicaps; you can have my Darsan, wherever you are." 11.10 p59

E. "He can be concretized anywhere by sincere prayer."

- 1) "You do not realize that I am everywhere at all times, that God is not confined to the upper regions of the sky or to one little room where you keep his picture! He can be concretized anywhere by sincere prayer." 10.19 p115-116
- 2) "... if you sincerely, unhesitatingly, constantly, gladly, lovingly, offer all your skill and strength to the service of others, God will melt and move and manifest Himself in you, before you, with spontaneous Grace." 7.21 p122
- 3) "When you change your puuja (worship) room in your house, it does not mean that God too shifted from one room to another, that He is no longer where He was and that He has been brought over to a new place! He is not a piece of furniture that you can transfer hither and thither! He is here, there, everywhere, inside and out, above, below, around. Accommodate all forms of God in your heart; do not exclude some and welcome others; bear with those who adore Him in another form through another name and acclaim Him in another language." 11.29 p172

F. "The Universe is the Field where God sports."

- 1) "The Universe is the Field where God sports. Be aware of this fact, every moment of consciousness, and there is nothing more you need for a happy existence. For, you will then contact God in every thing through every thought at every place and at every moment. His Leela is evident in the smallest flower and the most distant star. The joy that you can derive from the contemplation of these proofs of providence is indescribable." 13.16 p.80-81

III. His Footprints

(“... everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes.”)

A. “All hands are His...”

- 1) “There is only one God; He is omnipresent.” 11.54 p312
- 2) “Eakam sath; vipraah bahudhaa vadhanthi—‘The One alone exists; wise men call it by many names.’” 12.44 p239
- 3) “God has a million names, Sages and Saints have seen Him in a million Forms; they have seen Him with eyes closed and eyes open. They have extolled Him in all the languages and dialects of man; but yet, His glory is not exhausted.” 8.22 p.119
- 4) “All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His.” 11.22 p115-116
- 5) “When you clarify and sanctify your Vision and look at them through the Atmic eye, the eye that penetrates behind the physical (with all its attributes and appurtenances), then, you will see others as Waves on the Ocean of the Absolute, as the ‘thousand heads, the thousand eyes, thousand feet’ of the Supreme Sovereign person or ‘Purusha’ sung in the Rgveda.” 13.8 p38
- 6) “All the 1000 names of thousand-faced society connote only the One God that plays in those 1000 roles. The One appears as if it is enshrined in the 1000 bodies. This is the truth you have to realize and cherish as the most precious in life.” 11.47 p278

B. “... recognize His Footprints in every thing of beauty, every act of goodness....”

- 1) “God is not to be spoken of as coming down or going up, since He is every where, available for your becoming aware of Him, through beauty, truth, goodness, strength, love or any one of the divine attributes.” 8.3 p13
- 2) “We too can discover the Lord through His Footprints, which can be discovered everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes. You can find the footprints wherever there is beauty, virtue, humility, justice, truth, love and peace.” 6.37 p185
- 3) “Yes, the lesson is: recognize His Footprints in every thing of beauty, every act of goodness, every tear of gratitude, every sigh of compassion, and discover Him in the bower of your own heart, filled with the fragrance of Love and Light of Virtue.” 9.17 p89

C. “There is no need to change, after you have seen Me and heard Me.”

- 1) “The Grace of the Lord is a subject dear to every one. It is a subject that is within the grasp of all. The Lord also can be addressed by any Name that tastes sweet to your tongue or pictured in any form that appeals to your sense of Wonder and Awe. You can sing of Him as Muruga, Ganapathi, Sarada, Jesus, Maithreyi, Sakthi, or you can call on Allah or the Formless, or the Master of all Forms.... He is the beginning, the middle and the end, the substance and the source. So, any story that brings into your consciousness, His Glory, His Grace and His Beauty must perforce appeal to you.” 3.18 p.104-105

- 2) "You must welcome all Names and Forms, though you might have a personal attachment to one Name and one Form. You have to admit that the God whom you adore is universal enough to have many Names and many Forms." 7.37 p190-191
- 3) "Do not be under the impression that I will be angry with you if you do not accept Me as (your) Dhyanarupam! I am not concerned at all; you have perfect freedom to select the Name and Form that gives you the necessary encouragement." 1.5 p30
- 4) "I have no wish to draw people towards Me, away from the worship of My other names and forms." 8.45 p246
- 5) "Along the lines already familiar to you, continue the worship of the God of your choice; then you will find, that you are coming nearer and nearer to Me; for, all Names are Mine and all Forms are Mine. There is no need to change, after you have seen Me and heard Me." 5.22 p122

D. "Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more...."

- 1) "I shall give you one prescription which will give you the Peace and Contentment which you seek: It is Naamasmarana (remembering the name of the Lord). Install on the tongue any one of the thousand names of the Lord, current in any part of the world, among any community of devotees. Repeat the Name for some time at least every day...." 3.38 p217
- 2) "There is a secret spring in the heart that will well up when the name is uttered and that will slake your thirst." 2.34 p199
- 3) Without that spring of Love that bubbles in your heart, you will not be prompted to love at all. Recognize that spring, rely on it more and more, develop its possibilities... discard all touch of self from it, do not seek anything in return for it from those to whom you extend it." 5.17 p96-97
- 4) "Have the Name of God on your tongue, in your breath, ever. That will evoke His Form, as the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events. That will provide you with His Company, contact with His unfailing Energy and Bliss. That is the Sathsanga (good association) that gives you maximum benefit." 8.11 p.48
- 5) "... it is only when coal is in contact with the live embers that it can also become live ember." 4.31 p183

E. "The Formless will... undergo any transformation to satisfy the yearning of the devoted aspirant."

- 1) "The same Divine substance appears in different times and places, assuming different Names." 2.2 p5
- 2) "It is the same substance poured into different moulds." 2.2 p5
- 3) "The Formless will assume any Form and undergo any transformation to satisfy the yearning of the devoted aspirant." 3.14 p84
- 4) "The Lord takes the Form that the seekers crave for.... He is eager to satisfy the yearning of the genuine seeker." 8.30 p168
- 5) "God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for." 14.59 p343
- 6) "... if you sincerely, unhesitatingly, constantly, gladly, lovingly, offer all your skill and strength to the service of others, God will melt and move and manifest Himself in you, before you, with spontaneous Grace." 7.21 p122

F. "... I respond to whatever request you make, with a pure heart and a sanctified motive."

- 1) "God is there as Love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing Love with others." 11.7 p42
- 2) "Love is God, God is Love. Where there is Love, there, God is certainly evident. Love more and more people, love them more and more intensely; transform the love into service, transform the service into worship; that is the highest Sadhana." 5.17 p96
- 3) "If you develop love for all beings, in the faith that God resides in all, you may be anywhere else, but, your prayers will reach Me and My Grace will reach you." 5.50 p276-277
- 4) "I answer to whatever Name you use; I respond to whatever request you make, with a pure heart and a sanctified motive." 3.22 p133

G. "...the One manifested Itself as the many... there is really no scope for hatred or irreverence."

- 1) "The Universe is the Field where God sports. Be aware of this fact, every moment of consciousness, and there is nothing more you need for a happy existence. For, you will then contact God in every thing through every thought at every place and at every moment. His Leela is evident in the smallest flower and the most distant star. The joy that you can derive from the contemplation of these proofs of providence is indescribable." 13.16 p.80-81
- 2) "The whole Universe is a University for you. You can imbibe wisdom from the sky, the clouds, the mountains, the rivers, the daily phenomena of sunrise and sunset, the seasons, birds, trees, flowers, the insects-- in fact, all Beings and Things in Nature. Approach these teachers with awe, reverence and humility; they will respond with their lessons." 12.30 p.168
- 3) "The Divine is what integrates and unites all this diversity into one single essence." 12.40 p218
- 4) "When it is known and appreciated that the One manifested Itself as the many and that the One is known by many names, there is really no scope for hatred or irreverence." 13.39 p226

H. "You must be happy that the Seva of the Lord keeps you always in His Presence...."

- 1) "All beings are images of the Universal Atma, in the names and forms they have apparently assumed." 11.54 p306
- 2) "... every name is but a facet, a part, a ray, of the Supreme. The spiritual discipline consists in recognizing and becoming aware of the One that supports and sustains the many. That is the precious gem of wisdom that one must secure and treasure." 13.24 p136
- 3) "Be convinced that God can and will appear in any form and so all forms are His. Don't refuse to recognize Divinity in the form you dislike or did not expect! He can appear as a fox, as a dog, as a beggar, any Form. When you call on God, whatever Form appears, treat it as God." 11.29 p175
- 4) "Whatever happens, accept it gladly as His Handiwork, a sign of His Compassion.... His Glory, His Compassion, His Grace-- these are inscrutable; they shape themselves in manifold forms, as He wills." 8.28 p159
- 5) "Even if you falter in the adoration of God, do not falter in the service of the living God, who has assumed human shape and is moving all around you in such large numbers and wearing such manifold costumes of apparel and speech!" 10.39 p264
- 6) "You must be happy that the Seva of the Lord keeps you always in His Presence and ever vigilant to carry out His behests." 4.24 p137

I. "... co-mingle and become more and more composite."

- 1) "We too can discover the Lord through His Footprints, which can be discovered everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes. You can find the footprints wherever there is beauty, virtue, humility, justice, truth, love and peace." 6.37 p185
- 2) "God, out of His infinite Grace, assumes the Form that the devotee yearns for." 14.59 p343
- 3) "In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite." 7.48 p240

IV. His Power

("God can do anything....")

A. "There is no task which I cannot accomplish...."

- 1) "God can do anything...." 10.39 p262
- 2) "There is no task which I cannot accomplish...." 2.19 p98
- 3) "I can solve any problem however knotty." 12.38 p212

B. "There can be no limit for Sai Sakthi, no hindrance, no opposition or obstacle."

- 1) "Nothing can stand in the way once I have decided on any step." 2.30 p161
- 2) "Nothing can hold Me up or agitate Me or cast a shadow on Me in this Human Form; be certain of that. Not even a hair can be touched by forces of calumny or distrust or ignorance. My sankalpa (resolve) must prevail; My task must be accomplished. My mission will succeed." 1.16 p93
- 3) "The Sai Principle, the Sai Divinity can never be affected by any slander; it can never be shaken by any tactics; its progress can never be halted. Do not pay heed to the barkings you hear." 12.36 p202
- 4) "There can be no limit for Sai Sakthi, no hindrance, no opposition or obstacle. You may believe it or you may not, but Sai Sakthi can transform earth into sky, the sky into earth." 10.35 p235
- 5) "I may sometimes wait until I can achieve ten things at one stroke; just as an engine is not used to haul one coach, but awaits until sufficient haulage in proportion to its capacity is ready. But My Word will never fail; it must happen as I will." 1.31 p198

C. "... Divine Power.... can transmute earth into sky and sky into earth. "

- 1) "Let Me tell you one more thing: Nothing can impede or halt the work of this Avathara." 3.15 p92
- 2) "Believe Me, nothing can hamper Me; My will must prevail." 1.16 p93
- 3) "What I will, must take place; what I plan must succeed. I am Truth; and Truth has no need to hesitate, or fear, or bend." 12.38 p211
- 4) "There is nothing that Divine Power cannot accomplish. It can transmute earth into sky and sky into earth. To doubt this is to prove that you are too weak to grasp the grandeur of the Universal." 4.49 p286
- 5) "The power of Sai is limitless; It manifests for ever. All forms of 'power' are resident in this Sai palm." 12.38 p210

D. "Love is My highest Miracle."

- 1) "Yearn for the Love that will bring you the Love of God, Prema. I have no power mightier than that. I might change earth into sky or sky into earth, but that power is nothing before the power of Love that can bind the world and rule the world." 11.31 p187
- 2) "Love is My highest Miracle." 13.21 p116

V. "... the Current of His Grace."

("The current is flowing ever....")

- A. "The Divine principle... is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs...."
- 1) "The Divine principle that is in every one is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs, before Me here, of different colours and different candle powers. The same God shines in and through every one, whatever be the creed, colour, tribe, or territory. The current animates and activates all bulbs; the Divine animates and activates all." 8.22 p115
 - 2) "... like the radio receiver which catches the tune from the ether when it is switched to the correct wavelength. The current is flowing ever; when you fix the bulb, you will get the light." 2.10 p41-42
- B. "... the divine current... flows and functions in every living being...."
- 1) "You must realize that the divine current that flows and functions in every living being is the One Universal Entity." 13.27 p157
 - 2) "... whatever the voltage, the current that flows through them is the same." 13.10 p47
 - 3) "You have to outgrow the idol, picture and image; they are the kindergarten materials in spiritual schools; seek to know the Divine Energy, that is burdened with no Name and no Form. Rise higher into the empyrean heights of the Pure Attributeless Transcendent One." 10.30 p184
 - 4) "God may be referred to as Allah, prayer may be called namaz, priests may be known as kajis, scholars may be hailed as mullahs, the Bible may be in the form of the Holy Koran. But the undercurrent of energizing power in all cases is love, love of all beings towards all beings." 13.23 p126
- C. "Let... the bulb... be humble... that it is but an instrument, used by the current...."
- 1) "When I know that I am the current that illumines all the various bulbs, I am indifferent to the bulbs, which you consider so important." 8.19 p96
 - 2) "Let not the bulb think that it is shining through its own will; let it be humble, that it is but an instrument, used by the current, to shed light." 7.38 p195
 - 3) "God is there as Love and you are only drawing on Him, when you are sharing Love with others." 11.7 p42
 - 4) "So, attach yourself to Me and the current will flow through you and get things done for your good." 2.6 p25
 - 5) "The current is flowing ever; when you fix the bulb, you will get the light." 2.10 p41-42
 - 6) "My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it." 7.80 p500
- D. "... you must bring the power from the power-house...."
- 1) "Have the Name of God on your tongue, in your breath, ever. That will evoke His Form, as the Inner Core of every thing, thought or turn of events. That will provide you with His Company, contact with His unfailing Energy and Bliss. That is the Sathsanga (good association) that gives you maximum benefit." 8.11 p.48

- 2) "If you must bring the power from the power-house to your residence to illumine your place, you have to put up poles at regular intervals and connect the house with the power-house with cables. So too, if you must win the Grace of God, do saadhana at regular timings and connect yourself with God by the cable of smarana (remembering the Lord)." 5.34 p190
- 3) "... Naamasmarana (rolling the sweet Name of the Lord... in the mind)... will keep you in constant touch with the Infinite and so, it will transmit to you something of the wisdom and Power of the Infinite." 6.7 p39
- 4) "In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite." 7.48 p240

E. "... one's duty is to connect oneself with the current of His Grace."

- 1) "Eakam sath; vipraah bahudhaa vadhanthi—"The One alone exists; wise men call it by many names." 12.44 p239
- 2) "All hands are His, all feet, all eyes and all faces and mouths are His; He works through all hands, He walks through all feet, He sees through each eye, He eats and speaks through every mouth. Everything is He. Every step is His, every look, every speech, every act is His." 11.22 p115-116
- 3) "God can do anything...." 10.39 p262
- 4) "'Let the will of the Lord prevail; one's duty is to connect oneself with the current of His Grace.'" 1.3 p18-19

VI. "... you cannot understand the Nature of My Reality"
("... even if heaven and earth combine, My truth can never be fully grasped.")

- A. "This is an Incarnation, an Embodiment, which is beyond any one's comprehension."
- 1) "Do not spend your time trying to understand Me; do not waste your time in the attempt...
It is beyond any one's capacity to understand Me." 12.53 p290-291
 - 2) "This is an Incarnation, an Embodiment, which is beyond any one's comprehension." 10.28 p170
 - 3) "You may benefit from God, but you cannot explain Him." 4.30 p175
 - 4) "I am beyond the reach of the most intensive inquiry and the most meticulous measurement." 12.38 p212
- B. "What do people know of the motives that prompt the Lord and His actions?"
- 1) "You do not know the real reasons behind the actions of the Lord." 1.1 p4
 - 2) "People do not understand the ways of God. How can they know why a particular event takes place at a particular time in a particular manner? He alone can know." 7.7 p43
 - 3) "What do people know of the motives that prompt the Lord and His actions?" 1.3 p20
 - 4) "... every act of Mine has its significance, which you cannot understand." 3.17 p101
- C. "The ways of the Lord are inscrutable..."
- 1) "The ways of the Lord are inscrutable..." 2.32 p179
 - 2) "It is beyond you to know how or why I create things in My Hand." 2.20 p100
- D. "No one has the authority to lay down rules regulating God's deeds."
- 1) "You should not construct a picture of God according to your needs and norms and then complain that God does not conform. God is all powerful, all knowing and all-pervading. How then can limits be prescribed for Him?... No one has the authority to lay down rules regulating God's deeds." 15.53 p309
 - 2) "... you must not limit God to any particular Name and Form. How can you fix a label on God and compel Him to conform to your specifications?" 12.16 p76
- E. "... the patient has to believe and carry out (the doctors) instructions..."
- 1) "... the patient has to believe and carry out (the doctors) instructions if he desires to improve. He can give his judgement on the doctor only after the course of treatment is finished. Unless he obeys the orders of the doctor strictly and to the very letter, he has no authority to pronounce judgement. So what can you now speak about Me?" 1.13 p78

F. "Love is My highest Miracle."

- 1) "In truth, you cannot understand the nature of My Reality either today, or even after a thousand years of steady austerity or ardent inquiry even if all mankind joins in that effort." 8.19 p99
- 2) "... even if heaven and earth combine, My truth can never be fully grasped." 6.13 p72
- 3) "Love is My highest Miracle." 13.21 p116

Section 3

Renovating and Recasting Education

I. The Wisdom of the Ages

(“Man has to preserve this knowledge and foster it, revere it, and use it.”)

A. “Dharma is a body of principles that are fundamental to social stability and individual progress.”

1) “... a beneficent code of morals....”
 (“... preserved and handed down as heritage....”)

“Long before the birth of this generation a beneficent code of morals and a precious collection of guidelines for the realm of the spirit had been preserved and handed down as heritage through the efforts of selfless seers and sages.

“Each generation draws inspiration and knowledge from the previous ones, especially from the pathfinders, the pioneers, and bridge-builders in the regions of ethics, law, mysticism, sociology, and religion. These persons promote concord and progress and remove social conflict; their footprints mark out the lines of individual and social development.... They have handed down a precious quantity of knowledge about nature, about consciousness, and also about the means and methods of testing and enlarging that knowledge. But today man is neglecting this heritage and even discarding it as invalid and superfluous.... Man has to preserve this knowledge and foster it, revere it, and use it.”

13.31 p.181

2) “Man has set down, in all lands and communities, certain rules and regulations in order to secure orderly and smooth running of his daily schedule of activities directed to the actual process of living. Since they have become part of the code of conduct, they are also described as ‘discipline’. They are also subsumed under the basic principles of dharma (righteousness). Dharma promotes peace and happiness, contentment and joy. In every community, there have appeared, off and on, great personalities who shaped and burnished the codes and adapted the details to the needs of the times.”

13.27 p154

3) “Dharma is a body of principles that are fundamental to social stability and individual progress.”

3.37 p210-11

4) “Wherever sathya, dharma, shanti and prema are emphasized, in whatever religion or language, by whichever teacher wherever he may be, there we have Sanaathana Dharma.”

1.8 p45

B. “I declare that this task of renovating and recasting education is a part of My Mission....”

1) “The fear and anxiety that infect humanity today are the results of (a) degradation of values, (an) ignorance of what is of significance and what is not, (a) want of faith in what the elders and sages have handed down as the wisdom of ages. People prefer what is pleasing to what is beneficial.”

5.42 p232

2) “The fate of the country will depend on the character of its people....”

5.56 p306

- 3) "There are duties to oneself, one's family, and one's society which must be carried out intelligently and joyfully. Then only can life be harmonious and fruitful. I declare that this task of renovating and recasting education is a part of My Mission...."

1.16 p96

II. The Critical Need for the Wisdom of the Ages

(“... in the grip of a supreme moral and spiritual crisis....”)

A. “Never has there been so much distrust, hatred and violence....”

1) “The world today is in the grip of a supreme moral and spiritual crisis.... Never has there been so much distrust, hatred and violence as is witnessed today, in almost every country.”

15.17 p95

2) “Nowadays, man has got into the habit of acting and talking as per his whims. There is no control exercised by conscience or moral sense or manners.”

9.28 p147

3) “Man... is immersed in perpetual anxiety and worry. Busy beyond description, with no time to stand and silently contemplate God’s handiwork, he is troubled by strange inexplicable misgivings; he runs helter-skelter after hollow comforts; he is blinded by hate and greed. Caught in this toil and turmoil, man has lost knowledge of the one anchor that will save him from the tornado, namely, discipline of the vagaries of the mind.”

6.11 p57

B. “Man must recognize (the)... regulations... laid down by the sages of the past....”

1) “Man has become artificial, crooked, twisted out of his normal shape. He has left behind the simple natural ways and made his mind a lumber-room for ideas, worries, anxieties and terrors. He can live on very much less, with much greater joy for himself and others. If only he remembers that he is a treasure chest with the Divine Spark in it, he will be more loving and more useful.”

8.8 p34

2) “The illness is unlimited freedom. That has brought about the state of uncontrolled passions and the resort to weapons of destruction. Liberty has to be enjoyed within certain limits; otherwise it becomes licence or even licentiousness. The limits of liberty are called disciplines. The discipline has to be exercised in all fields of activity. Absence of this discipline has led to the sad plight of the country today.”

6.41 p206

3) “An undisciplined person is a danger to society; any moment he may run amuck. Man must recognize what limits, regulations, and do’s and don’ts are laid down by the sages of the past in order to ensure social security and individual advancement.”

14.11 p71

4) “Just as you obey the rules of health for fear of falling ill, you have to practice certain mental restrictions and regulation so that you may have peace, contentment, joy, enthusiasm and faith.”

3.38 p216

C. “It is time to open one’s eyes to the tragedy and retrace the steps.”

1) “The radio, the newspaper and other means of communication or information cause so much fear and discontent, that worry and anxiety are increased and the mind of man gets weakened.”

5.38 p217

2) “... people are now after cultures that cater to the senses—the outer, the external, the frill and the fancies, the mirages and the momentaries.”

6.7 p38

- 3) "Instead of making the senses (which are after all very poor guides and informants) his servants, he has made them his masters; he has become a slave of external beauty, evanescent melody, exterior softness, tickling taste, fragile fragrance. He spends all his energies and the fruits of all his toil in the satisfaction of the trivial demands of these untamed underlings." 6.43 p218
- 4) "... I advise you against 'the evil of the eye'; do not relish ugly, vulgar, demeaning, degrading sights, sights such as the horrid film posters that are paraded at all city squares to draw you away into vice and crime. You must also avoid the 'evil of the ear'; relishing scandal, blasphemy, tidings of hate and greed, talk by the godless and the wicked, who have no love in their hearts and brotherliness in their deeds." 10.14 p93-94
- 5) "It is not a sign of culture to overvalue the body, by over indulging in its whims. It is a sign of barbarism." 9.21 p111
- 6) "... the giving up of the disciplines which shaped one's daily life (has) in turn led to deterioration in moral standards; this has bred misery, disunity, hatred, and disgrace. It is time to open one's eyes to the tragedy and retrace the steps." 12.27 p141

D. "Darkness... will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit."

- 1) "Man's mind is too full of the world, his stomach is demanding too much of his time and energy. His desires and wants are multiplying too fast for his capacity to satisfy them; his dreams are far too real for him; they lead him into false victories and absurd adventures." 8.8 p30
- 2) "The world is becoming more and more deeply immersed in irreverence and cruelty. Codes of decent behavior are being ignored and laughed at. The material is receiving greater attention than the moral and spiritual. Faith in the victory of truth, justice, and goodness is fast disappearing; the distinction between good and bad is seldom recognized." 8.28 p150
- 3) "... more terror and counter-terror cannot establish cordiality and harmony.... Little is done to cleanse the mind of hate, but every one expects international peace tomorrow at dawn." 5.12 p71
- 4) "If you long for peace of mind, you must take up the spiritual discipline that will confer peace on you. If, instead, you still engage in old habits, how can peace be yours? You stand at the square yonder and, wishing to come to Whitefield, board a bus that moves in the opposite direction and takes you to Hoskote. Is that the sign of an intelligent man?" 13.26 p149
- 5) "Darkness will not flee, if you throw stones at it; nor will it disappear if you lay about it with a sword, or shoot it with a gun. It will be destroyed only when a lamp is lit." 3.12 p73

E. "The saddest part of the story...."

- 1) "The saddest part of the story is that man, though he sees and hears, suffers and falls, does not get quite convinced that sin is a dangerous experiment...." 2.34 p187

III. How Sages, Elders, Teachers, Parents, and Students Can Contribute

(“... the standards by which he can test his desires.”)

A. “The only guarantor of peace...”

1) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind...”

a) “What is required is the awareness of the vicious game that the mind plays. It presents before the attention, one source after another of temporary pleasure; it does not allow any interval for you to weigh the pros and cons. When hunger for food is appeased, it holds before the eye the attraction of the food, it reminds the ear of the charm of music, and it makes the tongue water for the pleasant taste of something that it craves for. The wish becomes very soon the urge for action, the urge soon gathers strength and the yearning becomes uncontrollable. The burden of desires gradually becomes heavy and man gets dispirited and sad.” 13.8 p34

b) “The mind is the mischief-maker; it jumps from doubt to doubt; it puts obstacles in the way. It weaves a net and gets entangled in it. It is ever discontented; it runs after a hundred things and away from another hundred..... So take up the task of training it into an obedient servant; it is educable, if only you know how to do it. Place before it things more tasty and it will hanker only for those.” 2.3 p13

c) “You may have a costly transistor or watch or phonograph with you, but if you do not know how to use it efficiently they are mere lumber. Now, imagine what a wonderful machine you yourself are! Should you not know how to operate it and get the best results out of it?” 6.17 p.90

d) “The thought manifests as word, the word manifests as deed; the deed develops into habit; the habit hardens into character. So, watch the thought and its ways.” 10.25 p.225

e) “Man has to be continually examining every desire that emerges in his mind, so that he may suppress or destroy or by-pass or obey. He must learn, from parents, elders, teachers, friends and the leaders of the land-- (and from) the books written by wise men of his own as well as other countries-- the standards by which he can test his desires.” 12.44 p.242

2) “...is it born out of Love, is it based on Truth? Does it result in Peace?”

a) “The only guarantor of peace for the individual and for society is spiritual progress and spiritual discipline.” 6.13 p69

b) “The moral life is the best prescription for joyful life.” 4.8 p41

c) “Ideas, principles, laws, customs, codes, habits, actions—all are to be judged on the twin points of intention and consequence. Is the intention pure, is it born out of Love, is it based on Truth? Does it result in Peace? If yes, dharma is enshrined in that action or law, custom or conduct.” 2.44 p250

3) “That compass is a society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline.”

a) “For the illness of greed, hurry, hatred and discontent that this country, along with the rest of the world, is afflicted with now, the planners of education must discover the correct remedy.” 2.49 p276

- b) "The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline." 8.21 p.108
- c) "Dharmo rakshathi rakshithaha—Dharma guards its guardians." 5.16 p90
- d) "Real education must be judged by the concern for others which it promotes." 15.33 p.178
- e) "Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom." 7.47 p236

B. Sages—"... you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic."

1) "...the path of spiritual progress has been cleared by them for the good of all!"

- a) "Great sages, filled with magnificent sympathy for their fellowmen, laid down rules, regulations, limits and directions for daily life and conduct, so that man's hand and brain, his instincts and impulses may not turn against man, but may turn towards the ideals of sathya, dharma, shaanthi and prema." 6.31 p156
- b) "Imagine the enormous efforts of these seers, as a result of which the path of spiritual progress has been cleared by them for the good of all! Why do you not proceed along it? If you take the very first step, you will immediately recognize that their experience is authentic." 5.26 p.145

2) "Pay respect to spiritual excellence and intellectual discrimination wherever it is evident."

- a) "Listen and ruminate over the stories of the great moral heroes of the past, so that their ideals may be imprinted on your hearts." 8.5 p.19
- b) "Select stories from the scriptures of all faiths to interest the children in the values of good life. Speak to them of the moral heroes of all lands, the Saints of all faiths.... All saints are embodiments of service, compassion and renunciation." 12.22 p.114-115
- c) "For saplings, to grow, soil is essential; for ideals to get implanted, knowledge of the struggles and successes of saints and sages is essential." 3.6 p.41
- d) "Pay respect to spiritual excellence and intellectual discrimination wherever it is evident." 7.7 p.42

3) "Those great men spoke from actual experience and so... promoted faith and encouraged belief."

- a) "Deep reflection is needed to realize the enormously important work carried out by such great personalities.... Those Mahaatmas bound themselves with the duties and obligations of dharma... they gave up all desire to cater to the ego; they respected the rules and regulations presented for them by the Shaastras; they curbed all evil desires.... Those great men spoke from actual experience and so their authoritative exposition promoted faith and encouraged belief." 6.14 p79-80
- b) "Simple faith in the words of the wise is more profitable than years of study and discussion." 3.32 p189
- c) "... attach your mind to the Lord. Then you will be led on to the company of good men and your talents will be transmuted." 1.11 p64

C. Elders—“... restore confidence among the people in the higher values of life.”

- 1) “The elders must... show how Divine Life can confer joy, mental poise, contentment...”
 - a) “The individual by his thoughts, words and deeds develops or undermines the welfare of Society, and thus affects the World.” 11.34 p199
 - b) “... it is the duty of the elders to show the rising generation by their lives that spiritual Sadhana and study have made them more joyful and courageous in the adventure of life.” 1.8 p.50
 - c) “The elders must practice what they preach, show how Divine Life can confer joy, mental poise, contentment and real happiness.” 1.17 p102
 - d) “Hence on you lies a great responsibility: the responsibility of demonstrating by your calmness, composure, humility, purity, virtue, courage and conviction under all circumstances, that the Sadhana you practice has made you a better, happier and more useful person.” 7.17 p.89

- 2) “You can prove that there are still people who believe in truth, righteousness, peace, and love...”
 - a) One’s duty is to act; act well; act in love; continue acting; act within the bounds of morality; act in love; continue acting; the consequences will naturally follow as the fruit follows the flower.” 8.14 p.59
 - b) “And, what is the best he can contribute? Each has his particular duty, task, role as an individual and as a member of a society to which he belongs. Do that duty, carry on that task, play that role, as best as you can...” 11.38 p.225
 - c) “If even the tiniest screw thinks, ‘I am just a small screw; what does it matter if I am not cent per cent efficient?’, a fatal accident can easily happen! Do not neglect your duty wherever it lies.” 11.23 p.124-125
 - d) “Your task... is to grow in love, expand that love, practice love, strengthen love and finally become Love... love expressed through service to those that draw that love from you, and by drawing, help to increase it and deepen it. Spiritual Discipline is designed to canalize that love...” 9.30 p.158
 - e) “You can prove that there are still people who believe in truth, righteousness, peace, and love; that acts of loving service rendered in a spirit of humility and reverence are still making people happy; and that the day when the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God will shine bright and beautiful is dawning and drawing near.” 13.18 p.93-94

- 3) “Love your religion, so that you may practice it with greater faith...”
 - a) “Love your religion, so that you may practice it with greater faith; and, when each one practices his religion with faith, there can be no hatred in the world, for all religions are built on universal love.” 5.44 p246
 - b) “By the examples of your lives, you have to restore confidence among the people in the higher values of life.... Have the picture of the happy, united, love filled human community in your heart. That will give you enough encouragement in your mission.” 15.12 p.70
 - c) “Chaos or no chaos, your duty is to pray for the welfare of the world and to work for it as far as lies in our power.” 2.28 p151

D. Teachers— “... this golden chance of imparting instruction, inspiring devotion, instilling courage...”

1) “Teachers... must practice what they preach.”

- a) “The teachers should be simple, sincere, straightforward Sadhakas, radiating joy and love.... must be like the rishis of old: balanced, contented, quiet, calm scholars who have practiced self-control and who carry about with them an atmosphere of cool equanimity.”
7.15 p.78-79
- b) “Teachers must be examples which can inspire students. They must practice what they preach.”
14.39 p.217
- c) “Whatever you desire others to do, you must first put into daily practice sincerely and with steadfastness.”
7.18 p96-97
- d) “... exposition without experience is bound to be unconvincing; words that come from the depth of experience have the ring of sincerity that convinces.”
8.17 p77

2) “Teachers must be on the watch for chances to instill this ideal (unselfish sharing)....”

- a) “The teacher should bring to his pupils the common factor of good advice about human conduct contained in the scriptures of all religions.”
14.3 p.15
- b) “Tell your pupils stories from the scriptures of all religions, so that they can realize that the saints and seers of all lands are equally good and great.”
14.3 p.15
- c) “Whatever information, instruction, or inspiration man has gained, or whatever wealth, riches or material possessions he has earned, he should share them with others in an unselfish manner. This is his primary duty. Teachers must be on the watch for chances to instill this ideal in the hearts of their pupils.”
14.39 p.216-217
- d) “One day in each week or fortnight, teachers should gather students and instruct them in certain lofty ideals of life; (then) they should go to the villages of the students and devote themselves to some program of welfare activity in the village. This is very advisable.”
12.25 p.135

3) “The teacher dedicates himself to a great Sadhana....”

- a) “The teacher dedicates himself to a great Sadhana, when he enters upon this profession. He has himself to be what he advises his pupils to be. The tender minds in the classroom are easily moulded by his example.... Any misdemeanour of his, becomes the talk of the town; it is discussed during dinner in a hundred homes the same day.”
10.5 p.21-22
- b) “He should watch his behaviour rigorously and find out whether there is some habit or trait which if imitated by the pupil will be harmful....”
1.24 p.147
- c) “If you are deep in the mire, you cannot pull out another who has fallen into it.”
3.21 p123

4) “... as the teacher, so the students....”

- a) “Fundamentally, the years of life are but a short span, a rest in a wayside caravanserai, a drama played on a rickety stage, a bubble upon the waters. During this fleeting hour, it has been given to few to share this golden chance of imparting instruction, inspiring devotion, instilling courage, into the growing children, so that the generation to follow will be ever grateful.”
8.31 p.172
- b) “... as the teacher, so the students....”
4.6 p33

E. Parents—"The family is essential for the blossoming of human personality..."

1) "... the homes where they grow have to be the first schools."

- a) "The family is essential for the blossoming of human personality; how can the helpless baby grow and learn, talk and move forward without the home?" 12.3 p.7

b) The Parents as Example

("... they should not be seen... as if they have no God to lean upon...")

"Of course, to instill in the minds of the young the value of prayer and of humility and loving service to others, the homes where they grow have to be the first schools. The parents have to be imbued with faith in the basic truths of this Universal Religion. They must be seen worshipping at the family altar, meditating in silence, forgiving the lapses of others, sympathizing with pain and grief; they should not be seen by the children as worried, helpless, discontented and distressed, as if they have no God to lean upon, no inner reserves of strength and courage to fall back upon."

7.15 p78

F. Students--"As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined."

1) "The destiny of nations hangs on the direction the youth will take..."

- a) "The destiny of nations hangs on the direction the youth will take in these turbulent times." 13.18 p.95
- b) "Youth always imitates the elders..." 1.8 p.50
- c) "Why blame the boys and girls that they do not respect the elders or obey their parents or believe in God or adhere to high principles of character? The elders are not providing them examples to show that those traits of character are useful or valuable or essential." 2.6 p25

2) "If properly guided... they can be led into constructive activities saturated with love..."

- a) "If properly guided, the youth of India can be saved from imitative adventures, reckless wanderings into realms of fantasy; they can be led into constructive activities saturated with love and sympathy, where their enthusiasm and skill can be best utilized." 8.17 p79
- b) "... pupils in schools must have, for their satisfactory progress in life, a strong foundation. And what is a strong foundation? Moral, ethical, and spiritual knowledge and experience are the best foundation." 14.6 p.37
- c) "As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined." 6.12 p.65

- d) "The snake gourd is apt to grow crooked, if left alone. So, gardeners tie a stone to its end and the weight pulls it straight, as it grows longer and longer. The minds of children and of youth too are apt to grow crooked, under the influence of sensuous films, the hollow hypocritical atmosphere created by the elders, the lure of glitter and glamour, and of a false sense of adventure and fame. So, schools have to attach the stone of discipline and make them grow straight and true. 10.5 p22
- 3) "... have good activities and good companionship."
- a) "The more systematic and successful your Sadhana, the more useful you will be for yourself and society." 9.35 p.182
- b) "... have good activities and good companionship. That will help very much in spiritual Sadhana; proper atmosphere is very essential for the aspirant. That is why the Sadhaka used to go and dwell in the ashramas maintained by the sages in the past. (There) they had the unique chance of being immersed in good thoughts, good activities and good company." 1.15 p.88
- c) "What is required is inner experience resulting from actual practice." 14.7 p.42
- d) "Don't say, 'Let me have a taste of the reward and then I shall start the Sadhana.' Practice and the experience will follow, must follow." 3.24 p.145
- e) "Practice-- that is the real thing in spiritual matters." 4.8 p.41
- 4) "Share with others around you the good things you are given."
- a) "Your heart should be like glass, with the spiritual light inside illuminating the world outside; the world outside reacting on the inner urges and making them lean towards service, sympathy and mutual help." 1.28 p173
- b) "It is your duty to recognize all men as your kin and to share your skill with others so that the maximum benefits accrue therefrom." 7.47 p.237
- c) "Share with others around you the good things you are given." 13.3 p16
- d) "Try to console, encourage, strengthen, and enlighten those who are miserable, downhearted, weak or ill-informed." 5.6 p.42
- e) "... seek to speak only that which will be conducive to peace and harmony." 14.11 p.71-72
- f) "You must have not merely enthusiasm to serve, but, the intelligence and the skill; then only can you be efficient and useful." 5.54 p293
- 5) "Don't deny the validity of your own experience."
- a) "When you live a life of saadhana, you will meet with opposition from various sources.... Do not be cowed down by cynics or the critics.... (or by) public opinion, which might decry the spiritual path and subject you to ridicule or worse." 9.35 p185
- b) "Don't deny the validity of your own experience." 7.37 p193
- 6) "Watch your likes and dislikes with a vigilant eye...."
- a) "Watch your likes and dislikes with a vigilant eye and discard anything that threatens to encumber your path." 5.6 p41

- b) "Be careful, therefore, that the success you have won in the promotion of virtue, in the conquest of baneful habits and in the assumption of the regular disciplines, (is) not frittered away by trite company, loose talk, cynical criticism or lackadaisical effort." 1.15 p88
- c) "Keep away from impure listening, impure acts, impure words, impure thoughts-- everything that contaminates the will to serve, and the skill to serve." 5.51 p282
- d) "... do not fritter away your energy and time, seeking sensory satisfaction in ungodly company." 4.20 p112
- e) "... (do) not be tempted to waste time in idle talk or vain pursuits or wanton mischief or vulgar entertainment." 3.33 p192
- f) "When you get, in spite of best efforts, ugly harmful ideas of hatred or anger, or animalism, you must infer that they are due to faults in food habits, or in the company you keep, either with friends or books or films or other forms of entertainment. Keep away from such and pray to God, your Guardian to save you from the Fall, towards which you are heading." 10.23 p141
- g) "Why pay undue attention to things you do not need and do not benefit from?" 13.24 p139
- 7) "Encourage others... by demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward..."
- a) "Do not serve for the sake of reward, attracting attention, or earning gratitude, or from a sense of pride at your own superiority in skill, wealth, status or authority. Serve because you are urged by love." 9.10 p52
- b) "Do not damage the faith of anyone, in virtue and divinity. Encourage others to have that faith by demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward, that divinity is all-pervasive and all-powerful." 5.50 p.277
- 8) "Be a light, a lamp, radiating virtue and self-control in the village."
- a) "Show your companions here and in your villages how disciplined you are, how sincerely you obey your parents, how deeply you revere your teachers. Be a light, a lamp, radiating virtue and self-control in the village." 8.5 p.20
- b) "Your acquaintances, family, friends, the elders of the village, and all who have the welfare of the country at heart must be happy and proud to see you acquiring new skills, fine character, and eagerness to serve others." 14.2 p.11
- c) "The people around you must be glad enough (from services rendered) to say 'Ah! How good, how useful, how intelligent, this young man has become.... How exemplary is his speech, manners, and conduct!'" 14.28 p157
- 9) "It does not matter if the standard of life is poor, provided the way of life is pure..."
- a) "Today, towns and cities with their noise and glare are attracting every one towards them; but, villages are far more desirable. Reverence for holy things, for elders, for moral codes are still strong in the villages...." 5.15 p88
- b) "It does not matter if the standard of life is poor, provided the way of life is pure, full of prema, humility, fear of sin, and reverence towards elders." 4.24 p135

G. Education—“Let its validity be examined through actual living...”

1) “Education has to clarify the goal of life... and indicate the ways... of attaining it.”

a) “Long before the birth of this generation, a beneficent code of morals and a precious collection of guidelines for the realm of the spirit had been preserved and handed down as heritage through the efforts of selfless seers and sages.

“Each generation draws inspiration and knowledge from previous ones, especially from the pathfinders, the pioneers, and bridge-builders in the regions of ethics, law, mysticism, sociology, and religion. These persons promote concord and progress and remove social conflict; their footprints mark out the lives of individual and social development.” 13.31 p181

b) “Life has to be lived through the channel marked out by embankments that slow the raging flood and direct it into useful fields. Na sreya niyamam vina; no progress without rules and restrictions.” 11.32 p.193

c) “Man must follow the path of virtue, practice spiritual disciplines and take an enthusiastic part in social service. These three have to be accepted... and assimilated into daily life. Education has to clarify the goal of life to the rising generation and indicate the ways and means of attaining it.” 14.11 p69

2) “... the sages... eager to give the knowledge over to whoever could... make best use of it.”

a) (In the past) “Most of the learning was done by listening to the preceptor. Not only in the seats of higher learning, but even the smith, the artisan, the artist, the carpenter, the farmer, the potter, the writer, the musician, the sculptor-- all learnt from the elders by the silent process of lovingly listening and reverentially watching, not through the process of poring over books. Those days can be revived, if only you love and revere the heritage which is yours.” 14.50 p.284

b) “In those days the sages lived with their pupils in hermitages, in quiet sylvan surroundings on the banks of rivers. Each hermitage was a university with the sage as the Kulapathi (Chancellor). They were proficient in all the branches of knowledge and eager to give the knowledge over to whoever could receive it and make the best use of it.” 13.35 p201

c) Serving the teacher was itself a part of education in those days; it was easy to please the teacher and get the best out of him by the process of loving service.” 13.35 p.202

d) “... it is only when coal is in contact with the live embers that it can also become live ember.” 4.31 p183

3) “Gurukul... where teachers and taught... grow together in love and wisdom....”

a) “... Gurukul—a place where teachers and taught will grow together in love and wisdom, as close to the ideas of the hermitages of the past as is possible under present conditions.” 11.27 p148

b) “This building is named a Dharmashaala, a Hall of Dharma, a School of Dharma.” 5.12 p73

4) “... ideals... confirmed as best suited... by its saints and sages, law givers and leaders, for centuries.”

a) “To reach the goal, one must know where it is, how glorious it is, what the obstacles are, and what the preparatory discipline is.” 4.52 p.298

- b) "I have allowed this college to rise, because it will install in the minds of students the ancient ideals of Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, the ideals that are delineated in the Vedas, described in Sastras, illustrated in the Epics, practiced by countless generations of the men and women of this land, and confirmed as the best suited for individual and social progress by its saints and sages, law givers and leaders, for centuries." 8.26 p139-140
- c) "This College has to set an example, by providing opportunities for the rising generations to practice the disciplines in order to purify and promote these ideals.... You have been influenced in this direction already by the homes in which you have spent the formative years, and by the society in which you have learned your attitudes, habits, and prejudices.... Here, too, you influence each other by your conversation and behavior." 8.32 p175
- d) "In this College, the ancient ideals of Truth, Righteousness, Equanimity and Love are held before you, all the time." 13.5 p.25
- 5) "Moral and spiritual principles have to be emphasized all along...."
- a) "There should not be, in My opinion, separate 'Moral Instruction' lessons in the curriculum; every subject has to be learnt with moral instruction as the thread running through from lesson to lesson." 7.15 p80
- b) "Moral and spiritual principles have to be emphasized all along, even while merely materials subjects are taught and learnt. I want the Committee in charge of this Institution to propagate the ideals of Service, Love and Sadhana, which Sanathana Dharma embodies. Even a small number of such Institutions will be enough... to serve as examples and guides to others." 13.1 p.6
- c) "My Sankalpa (plan of action) is to provide the youth with an education which, while cultivating their intelligence, will also purify their impulses and motions, and equip them with the physical and mental disciplines needed for drawing upon the springs of calmness and joy that lie in their own hearts. Their higher natures will have to be fostered and encouraged to blossom—by means of study, prayer and Sadhana, contacts with the sages, saints and spiritual heroes and heroines of their land-- and place them on the path of self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice, and self-knowledge." 9.31 p.162
- 6) "... communion with the godly and good."
- a) "Cleanse the heart, by listening to spiritual discourses, seeking the company and comradeship of the righteous, the simple, the sincere, the seekers, and by cultivating goodness of character and sweetness of disposition." 10.10 p.68
- b) "... have good activities and good companionship. That will help very much in spiritual Sadhana; proper atmosphere is very essential for the aspirant. That is why the Sadhaka used to go and dwell in the ashramas maintained by the sages in the past. (There) they had the unique chance of being immersed in good thoughts, good activities and good company." 1.15 p.88
- c) "... keep your self surrounded always by persons devoted to the higher life; persons who will encourage you to move forward along the road towards the goal." 6.11 p.60
- d) "Be united in that adventure, and encourage one another while proceeding along that path. Then success is assured." 13.26 p.152
- e) "... Ascetic practices, years of constant recitation of the Name, pilgrimages to holy places and shrines, study of sacred books-- these will not help the aspirant to spiritual victory as much as communion with the godly and good." 8.18 p.80

f) "The value of holy places, sacred theerthas, etc. consists in just this: kindred spirits congregate there and contribute to the deepening of spiritual yearning. You can take sweet and sustaining counsel together, in such places, and strengthen your faith and devotion. If in any place, you do not find such an atmosphere, avoid it and move on, until you secure it." 5.2 p.12

7) "Education must equip you with a discrimination sharp enough to discover these virtues."

a) "Let its validity be examined through actual living... and communicated to others by those who have experienced the peace and joy derivable from it. I do not want the extolling of the drug by persons who have not been themselves cured by it." 7.18 p.94

b) Examine, judge and admire. Examine the daily conduct, the motive, the outlook, the trend of the advice, the coordination between what is said and what is done." 2.2 p.8

c) "Man must saturate his daily life with truthful speech, virtuous acts, and holy thoughts. Education must equip you with a discrimination sharp enough to discover these virtues. You must know what the truth is and develop love and loyalty to it." 14.42 p.236

H. Encouraging an Interfaith Point of View—"... Love... the essential teaching of all scriptures...."

1) "(Love)... the firmest foundation for man's mission of Life."

a) "Wherever sathya (truth), dharma (virtue), shaanti (peace), and prema (love) are emphasised, in whatever religion or language, by whichever teacher wherever he may be, there we have Sanaathana Dharma." 1.8 p45

b) "... Love, which is the essential teaching of all scriptures, the goal of all varieties of Sadhana, the best use to which all opportunities can be put and the most profitable way of utilizing the precious capital, time." 12.36 p.199

c) "The root of all religions, the substance of all scriptures, the rendezvous of all roads, the inspiration of all individuals, is the Principle of Prema (Love). It is the firmest foundation for man's mission of Life." 9.16 p86

d) "Love all religions and all nations. Recognize and accept all religions as paths leading men to the same destination. All of them teach love and compassion, humility and forbearance. I bless all of you and ask you to promote love, sympathy, and compassion towards all beings; God is present in every one of them; and it is your duty to revere God in each of them." 11.40 p.240

2) "... demonstrate... how all faiths lead to the same goal...."

a) "All men are lamps lit from the same flame which is God." 7.3 p.16

b) "It is the same substance poured into different moulds." 2.2 p5

c) "... the basic truths of religion are not affected or tarnished by the evil that men practice or the competitive propaganda they indulge in." 11.54 p307

d) "Do not preach; practice... demonstrate in your own lives, how Love can confer peace and joy, how all faiths lead to the same goal...." 12.7 p.27

e) "Do not damage the faith of anyone, in virtue and divinity. Encourage others to have that faith by demonstrating in your own life that virtue is its own reward, that divinity is all-pervasive and all-powerful." 5.50 p.277

I. "Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom"

1) "Spiritual discipline is the cultivation of love...."

- a) "Spiritual discipline is the cultivation of love...." 13.24 p.142
- b) "A disciplined life is the best offering you can make to the country or to the Divine in you." 13.36 p.210
- c) "I know you have the enthusiasm to carry My message among the people of this country and other countries. Let me remind you that the best and the only successful way in which you can do it is to translate the message into your own lives." 8.19 p87

2) "One step makes the next one easier; that is the excellence of the spiritual journey."

- a) "Discriminate; discover which is good, which is beneficial, which is harmful; then stick to the good, whatever the obstacle." 8.14 p59
- b) "Know it; delve into it; draw sustenance from it; see it in all; serve it in all." 5.58 p315
- c) "Purify the heart by being good and kind to all. Do not attempt to find fault with others. Look upon all with love, with respect.... Repent for the errors that you commit and decide never to repeat them; pray for strength to carry out your resolutions." 4.34 p205
- d) "Love all; revere all; help all to the best of your ability. Endeavor to be as beneficial, as sweet, as soft as possible." 4.44 p.256
- e) "Above all, try to win Grace by reforming your habits, reducing your desires, and refining your higher nature. One step makes the next one easier; that is the excellence of the spiritual journey." 5.35 p197
- f) "'... What kind of Government is the best?' The answer is, 'That Government is best, which helps us to govern ourselves.'" 10.9 p.53

3) "When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you...."

- a) "The Divine principle that is in every one is like the electric current that illuminates the bulbs, before Me here, of different colours and different candle powers. The same God shines in and through every one, whatever be the creed, colour, tribe, or territory. The current animates and activates all bulbs; the Divine animates and activates all." 8.22 p115
- b) "Nearness to Me is not acquired by physical nearness. You may be by My side, yet, far; you may be far, far away; yet, very near and dear. However far you are, if you but stick to Sathya, Dharma, Santhi and Prema, you are close to Me and I am close to you." 7.14 p71-72
- c) "When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you, either from within or from without, through some one He will send, or through illumination from within." 5.31 p.172
- d) "Dharmo rakshathi rakshithaha—Dharma guards its guardians." 5.16 p90

- 4) "...utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord to re-establish Dharma in the world."
- a) "Ideals must become higher and grander. Desires must become more and more selfless and sublime. Attachment must be transmuted into nobler and subtler emotions. The story will be gripping only when there is steady development towards the denouement, isn't it?" 8.35 p194
 - b) "... tune the little will to the Infinite Will of God...." 6.43 p218
 - c) "...utilize the mind to follow the Plan of the Lord to re-establish Dharma in the world." 2.43 p.246
 - d) "Like the needle of the compass always pointing to the North, never deviating from that direction, returning to it, readily, gladly, quickly, whenever it is shaken off that line, so too the Bhaktha must face the Lord ever, must be happy only when he is set towards Him." 3.41 p232
- 5) "Recognise that God is the person at the wheel...."
- a) "Strive to arrive at the stage when His Wish alone will count and you are an instrument in His Hands." 5.34 p192-193
 - b) "The good man is soft; he bends easily before elders, sages, and Saadhakas. 'Na ma' (not mine) is the attitude of 'namaskaara' (prostration); it is really na mamaakaara, the declaration that 'all that I am and have is due to your Grace.'" 1.32 p202
 - c) "Man is but an instrument in God's hands; his plans can win through only when they are in line with His. And, what are His plans? His commands? They are declared in the scriptures, which are revelations of His plan made to the purified intellects of saints. They are also declared by His Avathaars, who appear in human form so that they may speak to men in their own language to win their confidence and lead them and teach them." 5.46 p256
 - d) "Recognise that God is the person at the wheel.... Have faith in Him.... Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles." 15.24 p133
 - e) "When you know that the Lord is the cause, the source of all, you deal with everyone in a humble revered manner. That is the path which will lead you quick to the Goal." 6.5 p28
 - f) "When it is known and appreciated that the One manifested Itself as the many and that the One is known by many names, there is really no scope for hatred or irreverence." 13.39 p226
- 6) "Let the will of the Lord prevail...."
- a) "... the most desirable form of wealth is the Grace of God." 4.45 p264
 - b) "Once people know how great is the Love that God gives, they will not desire any thing else." 9.9 p46
 - c) "Let the will of the Lord prevail; one's duty is but to connect oneself to the current of His Grace." 1.3 p18-19

7) "... co-mingle and become more and more composite."

- a) "The only guarantor of peace for the individual and for society is spiritual progress and spiritual discipline." 6.13 p69
- b) "The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline." 8.21 p.108
- c) "Plant a fruit tree; you get fruits therefrom." 7.47 p236
- d) "In the beginning, the Adored and the Adorer are distant and different; but, as the Sadhana becomes more confirmed and consolidated, they co-mingle and become more and more composite." 7.48 p.240

Section 4

Responding to Personal Difficulties

I. Responding to Personal Difficulties

("If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome.")

- A. "Come just one step forward, I shall take a hundred towards you."
- 1) "The iron weeps that the magnet does not draw it.... The magnet replies, 'you are encrusted with rust, dust, and layers of mud; get rid of them and automatically, without any other ado, you can contact Me and be with Me forever.'" 12.14 p63-64
 - 2) "... your activities and behavior, your routine and road indicate that you are not sincere. You say you are going to Bangalore, but you have boarded the train that goes in the opposite direction towards Guntakal. Ascertain clearly whether the train is the right one and then board it.... the best course is to pray to the God within for illumination and guidance. Then you will get guidance without fail." 6.42 p212
 - 3) "When you call out in all sincerity, the response will certainly come." 5.57 p310
 - 4) "What matters is the determination to climb, the resistance with which the sliding tendency is met, the yearning to rise, to progress, to conquer the lower impulses and instincts. If you have that, hidden springs of power will surge up within you; the Grace of the Lord will smoothen your path. Keep the ideal before you; march on." 1.24 p150
 - 5) "The tree might appear to be dry; but, it will bloom, it will bear fruit; do not despair. I shall make it sprout, provided the sap of repentance is still running. Come just one step forward, I shall take a hundred towards you." 3.5 p39
 - 6) "The Lord rushes towards the Bhaktha faster than the Bhaktha rushes towards Him. If you take one step towards Him, He takes a hundred steps towards you! He will be more than a mother or father. He will foster you from within you, as He has saved and fostered so many saints who have placed faith in Him." 3.23 p137
 - 7) "When you prepare yourself for victory in this battle with your inner foes and the senses, the Lord gives you the reinforcements you need...." 7.8 p44-45
- B. "... Never give up God... believe rather that the ills draw you nearer God...."
- 1) "Many of you have come with problems of health or mental worry of some sort or other. They are mere baits by which you have been brought here, so that you may contact the Grace, and strengthen your faith in the Divine." 5.11 p70
 - 2) "It has become the fashion to claim all good as being one's own achievement and to ascribe all the despair and disappointment to an irresponsive attitude of Divinity." 14.35 p195
 - 3) "Never give up God, holding Him responsible for your ills; believe rather that the ills draw you nearer God, making you call on Him always when you are in difficulty." 10.8 p44
 - 4) Ask Me, when you need any help.... Ask, as the child asks the father; feel that God is nearest and dearest." 11.24 p133
 - 5) "When God is invoked by prayer that emanates from the heart, let it be but once, He responds immediately." 13.24 p140
 - 6) "Bring what you have, namely, your sorrows and griefs, worries and anxieties, and take from Me joy and peace, courage and confidence." 1.2 p15

C. "My Grace is ever with you; it is not something that is given or taken...."

- 1) "... to say that I will respond only if I am called or that I will save only if I am thought of is wrong." 3.22 p133
- 2) "My Grace is showered wherever you are through My infinite Love, without even calculating or measuring the readiness of your sub-conscious to receive it and benefit by it." 7.80 p500
- 3) "My Grace is ever with you; it is not something that is given or taken; it is given always and accepted by the Consciousness that is aware of its significance." 11.14 p86
- 4) "This Prema cannot be cultivated by reading guidebooks and made-easies and learning the steps by rote. It has to begin with a great yearning for the Light, an unbearable agony to escape from the Darkness, as in the prayer, 'Thamso maa jyothir gamaya.' The yearning itself will draw down the Light. The Love will grow of itself and by its slow and inevitable alchemy turn you into Gold." 1.34 p214
- 5) "Faith can work wonders, it can compel the Lord to manifest Himself and give you what you believe He will give." 2.43 p248

D. "Do not be affected when the results you anticipate are not produced...."

- 1) "To run away from the place which you have been assigned is cowardice, it is foolish, it is fruitless.... And when troubles pile up or disappointment confronts you, be thankful for the toughening it gives your character... for the trial you are privileged to face.... Reason out and convince yourself that tolerance, forbearance, love and sweetness can alone ensure peace for yourself and for society." 12.12 p53
- 2) "I sometimes act as if I keep you at a distance; that is done to reform you quicker. When a stretch of road is being repaired, I go by another detour and I do not use that bit of road for some time. The purpose is to let the repair works proceed more quickly so that I may use that road again." 1.30 p191
- 3) "When something you dislike happens to you, why don't you take that also to be a sign of God's Grace? Resign yourself into God's hands; let Him give success or failure, what does it matter? He may be bent upon toughening you, or it may be for your good, in the long run. How can you judge? Who are you to judge? Why judge? Do your best and keep mum." 3.30 p176
- 4) "I will take My Own Time to carry out My Plan so far as you are concerned.... But My Word will never fail; it must happen as I Will." 1.31 p198
- 5) "Do not be affected when the results you anticipate are not produced; do not anticipate at all, but, leave it to Him." 12.9 p34
- 6) "Recognize that God is the person at the wheel. He will take you happily to the destination. Have faith in Him.... Surrender to Him. His grace can save you, His wisdom can enlighten you, His power can overcome all your obstacles." 15.24 p133

E. "... make a move, put a step forward.... The Lord has come to help you."

- 1) "The doctor spoke of people who come to Me with various aims; yes; but when some of them do not get exactly what they want, they blame Me and not themselves for wanting things that are not conducive to their progress or for not deserving to get them from Me." 5.2 p10

- 2) "When you come to Me weighted with wants, prayers for boons and materialistic wishes, you stand the risk of losing faith and losing your moorings; for, that faith is frail." 11.29 p167
- 3) So, make a move, put a step forward. That is the immediate task; your resolve on this day should be to start with a sincere desire to succeed. Light will be shed by the Grace of the Lord. The Lord has come to help you." 2.39 p230
- 4) "Open the doors and the Sun, who has been waiting at the doorstep for just that moment, floods the room with light." 5.2 p10-11

F. "I do not give you up. This is a sign of My Grace."

- 1) "Those who see you here tomorrow may ask; since directions are not strictly followed, and since service is not sublimated into worship by these people, why is the badge given to them year after year? Well, when you continue repeating the lines and trying to sing them, some day, you may succeed in singing them well. Expecting that you will get to know things better and become more and more perfect as the days pass, I am encouraging you to learn, by practice. I do not give you up. This is a sign of My Grace." 8.33 p181

G. "So get the Lord on your side and draw upon His Grace...."

- 1) "You may say that the burden of past acts and their inevitable consequences have to be borne; but, the Grace of the Lord can burn that burden in a flash; the revelation of reality will, in a flash, save you from that burden." 5.26 p143-144
- 2) "... God's Grace can destroy the effects of past karma or modify its rigour. Never doubt that." 1.32 p206
- 3) "... if sincere Sadhana is done, even the most difficult thing can be accomplished." 1.33 p207
- 4) "If you win the Grace of the Lord, even the decrees of Destiny can be overcome." 2.14 p65
- 5) "If you secure the Grace of Madhava, you are reinforced with so much strength that you can carry out even the most difficult tasks. So get the Lord on your side and draw upon His Grace for all your needs." 1.15 p88

H. "Faith can work wonders...."

- 1) "When God is invoked by prayer that emanates from the heart, let it be but once, He responds immediately." 13.24 p140
- 2) "He never fails those who call on Him sincerely and in faith." 5.57 p312
- 3) "Faith can work wonders, it can compel the Lord to manifest Himself and give you what you believe He will give." 2.43 p248

I. "...pray for the peace, prosperity and happiness of all humanity...."

- 1) "Do not pray for your own exclusive happiness, and say, 'Let the rest of the world go to pieces.' You cannot be happy when the rest of mankind is unhappy. You are an organic part of the human community. Share your prosperity with others; strive to alleviate the sufferings of others. That is your duty." 2.4 p17

2) "... I call upon you to give up praying for your own advancement; pray for the peace, prosperity and happiness of all humanity, irrespective of clime or colour." 10.26 p160

J. "... tomorrow is coming towards you. Resolve to sanctify it with Love and Service and Sadhana."

- 1) "The past is beyond recovery; those days are gone." 8.16 p74
- 2) "The present is the most important time for us. Hold on to truth and follow the right path now...." 14.2 p9
- 3) "The fact that you are alive this day is a blessing, for you can know of these ideals and the means by which you can realize them in your daily life." 13.11 p53
- 4) "... tomorrow is coming towards you. Resolve to sanctify it with Love and Service and Sadhana." 8.16 p74

K. "I am ready to help you from the first lesson to the last."

- 1) "Beings exist as a result of His Will, in accordance with His Plan; so no one is beyond His Grace." 1.8 p50
- 2) "Not one of you is a stranger to Me. Bring your promises to Me and I shall give you My Promise." 2.15 p71
- 3) "There is nothing that cannot be achieved by yearning and continual practice." 14.56 p318
- 4) "Come to Me, eager to learn, to progress... and I shall certainly welcome you and show you the way." 1.35 p.227
- 5) "I am ready to help you from the first lesson to the last." 1.32 p206

Appendix 2—Part C

A “Call for Papers”

Requesting Assistance with Creating an “Introduction Section”

for a Document titled

“Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’: How Community Visioning Initiatives and Spiritual Wisdom Can Increase the Likelihood of Solution Oriented Activity in a Time of Great Challenges”

(complete text of “Call for Papers”; unabridged)

by Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator
The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative
www.ipcri.net

“Call for Papers” issued December 19, 2009
Deadline for Submissions: December 19, 2010

This document contains the sections:

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A “Call for Papers”: Requesting Assistance with Creating an “Introduction Section”
for a Document titled “Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’....”
(complete text; unabridged)

About This Message

This message is a sincere request for assistance with creating an “introduction section” (more than 1 introduction) for a document titled “Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’: How Community Visioning Initiatives and Spiritual Wisdom Can Increase the Likelihood of Solution Oriented Activity in a Time of Great Challenges”.

About the document “Calling ‘the better angels....”

The document “Calling ‘the better angels...” has been formed by combining two recently completed documents together:

- 1) *“The Twilight of One Era, and the Dawning of Another”* (35 pages)—a paper by this writer which identifies seven critical challenges, and provides both an introduction to the potential of Community Visioning Initiatives, and an introduction to the potential of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. These two approaches can inspire, support, and integrate many different initiatives at the same time, and thus create “constellations” of initiatives. The “constellations” of initiatives can then bring many of the “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding and ecological sustainability “through the mist” and into the light.
- 2) *“Divine Intervention: A Collection of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)”* (42 pages)—which includes the following sections (of quotes from Sri Sathya Sai Baba): The Avathara of Sri Sathya Sai Baba; The Critical Need for the Wisdom of the Ages; How Sages, Elders, Teachers, Parents, and Students Can Contribute; and Responding to Personal Difficulties. (Compilation of quotations, and arrangement of quotations, by this writer.) (Note: Sri Sathya Sai Baba is 83 years old, with a main residence in Puttaparthi, India.)

[*Special Note on Accessing the Documents:* “The Twilight of One Era...” document can be accessed as a pdf file from the homepage of The IPCR Initiative website, at www.ipcri.net (See the “Keynote Documents” section). The “Divine Intervention...” document can be accessed as a pdf file attached to a post at my worldpulse.com journal (see post titled “New Document titled ‘Divine Intervention: A Collection of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 1-15’” at <http://www.worldpulse.com/node/11326>)]

On November 22, 2009, these two documents were sent (by e-mail, confirmation received) to the Sri Sathya Sai Sadhana Trust Publications Division in Puttaparthi, India. The documents were sent there because the SSSSTPD website states that “We welcome your comments, suggestions, and Literary Contributions in the form of Articles, Compilations, etc”—because this writer felt that it was appropriate procedure to do so—and because this writer was not sure how to go about sharing the documents. In his letter to the SSSSTP, this writer also suggested that it might

be beneficial to combine the two documents into one document, but he could only offer an incomplete introduction to such a document.

The Assistance This Writer is Now Seeking

Now, at this particular point in time, this writer feels that it will be helpful to sincere efforts towards resolving the challenges of our times if he requests assistance with the writing of an “introduction section” to the above mentioned “Calling ‘the better angels...’” document .

In particular, this writer is seeking at least 10 different introductions, with the idea being that the whole publication will benefit from having the two documents described above introduced by people from many different backgrounds—i.e. people who have been raised in different cultural environments, people who have had different learning experiences in life, and people who are speaking from different religious, spiritual, or moral viewpoints.

This writer feels that the act of contemplating writing such an introduction has the potential to be a catalyst for unique discussions and significant outcomes, and thus provide both practical and profound insight into how people—from diverse backgrounds, in communities in every part of the world— can apply the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money towards overcoming the challenges of our times.

In short, this writer is therefore issuing a “Call for Papers”—with the topic being *Help Create an “Introduction Section” to the Document “Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’”: How Community Visioning Initiatives and Spiritual Wisdom can Increase the Likelihood of Solution Oriented Activity in a Time of Great Challenges*”.

How This “Call for Papers” Will Proceed From Here

1) Readers who would like to

- a) ask questions—or offer comments, suggestions, recommendations, etc.
- b) volunteer to be a part of the Committee of 30 volunteers who will evaluate submitted introductions
- c) discuss the two documents mentioned above without participating in any “Call for Papers” process
- d) undertake to submit an “introduction” for consideration and possible selection

can direct their correspondence to this writer, Stefan Pasti, at stefanpasti@ipcri.net
(Note: Stefan Pasti is the founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative, at www.ipcri.net)

2) As this process moves forward, arrangements will be made to create a special website for this “Call for Papers” process. At that website, all appropriate submissions (per permission received) will be posted, so that visitors to that website may examine all the submissions under consideration.

3) This “Call for Papers” has a temporary final application deadline of December 19, 2010.
(Note: This deadline may be shortened or extended in accordance with challenges perceived and resources accumulated.)

4) The 10 (or more) introductions selected by the Committee of 30 volunteers (see above) will become the first section of the “Calling ‘the better angels of our nature’...” book. The book will then be made accessible for free, through the IPCR Initiative website, and through other websites interested in making the book accessible.

5) Hopefully, this “Calling for Papers” process will contribute to the goals expressed at the end of “The Twilight of One Era...” document. Here are the concluding comments of that document:

“As a closing comment, this writer hopes that this paper has provided sufficient information and inspiration so that

a) more Community Visioning Initiatives are organized and implemented as a way of responding to the challenges of our times

b) residents of communities where Community Visioning Initiatives are being organized and implemented are encouraged to participate in as many ways as possible—and *encouraged to help and support others who are making sincere efforts to contribute to the process.*”

Some Possible Themes to Explore

While the “introductions” which will be chosen as the most appropriate do not have to follow any particular format (except that the length of the introduction should be no more than 15 single spaced pages), there are seven particular categories of “themes” which are relevant enough to mention here. The submitted introductions are not required to address these categories; rather, these are included here simply as starting points for discussion and contemplation.

The seven categories or themes:

1) What is the role of the Sai Organization in responding to the challenges of our times, and what is the role of other organizations (organizations associated with the teachings of other religious, spiritual, or moral traditions; other service-oriented organizations and initiatives, etc)? What approaches to peacebuilding, building bridges between diverse communities, humanitarian aid, etc. will be most helpful to creating the level of collaboration between religions, organizations, institutions, businesses, governments, communities, etc. necessary to overcome the challenges of our times?

a) Additional commentary from this writer: “The Lord is Love Itself” (“Divine Intervention...” document, p. 1)—however, by His Appearance He has not negated the experience of “Love Itself” in personal lives and everyday community life where there is no interest in the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

2) What are the most difficult challenges of our times? What are the resources which will be most valuable in our efforts to overcome these difficult challenges?

3) Can Community Visioning Initiatives and “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” generate enough relevant input to give significant guidance to the needed transformation of educational and economic systems? Why or why not? What other “grassroots” community building approaches, socialization processes, cultural traditions, etc. (including those now being actively applied and any new approaches which have not yet been tried) have the capacity to

generate relevant input, and provide significant guidance to the needed transformation of educational and economic systems? How can all the relevant approaches, processes, traditions, etc. be integrated so that the most valuable ideas bubble up to the surface, and are brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples' time, energy, and money?

4) What is the significance of the surveys/questionnaires which are carried out as a preliminary to initiating a Community Visioning Initiative process? How can such surveys/questionnaires best reflect the diverse and unique character of each specific local community?

5) Significant contributions can be made by introductions which make critical assessments of a writers' choices relating to structure and substance. Could the propositions, themes, and theses which are explored in the two documents "The Twilight of One Era..." and "Divine Intervention..." be more effectively developed by way of other approaches to structure and content? Are there suggestions which could be made regarding other approaches to structure and content? Would some of those suggestions point the way towards new lines of thought and action, and other lines of exploration, which would also contribute to overcoming the challenges of our times?

6) How can such a transformation of education and economic systems be evaluated as it proceeds—at the local community and regional levels—to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action?

7) In addition to the above considerations, here is a compilation of themes which this writer is himself considering as part of his efforts to contribute an introduction to the "Call for Papers" process.

a) ...at no other time in the course of history....

i) "Man has set down, in all lands and communities, certain rules and regulations in order to secure orderly and smooth running of his daily schedule of activities directed to the actual process of living. Since they have become part of the code of conduct, they are also described as 'discipline'. They are also subsumed under the basic principles of dharma (righteousness). Dharma promotes peace and happiness, contentment and joy. In every community, there have appeared, off and on, great personalities who shaped and burnished the codes and adapted the details to the needs of the times."

("Divine Intervention..." document, p. 21)("Sathya Sai Speaks, 13.27 p154)

ii) As a result of the unprecedented opportunities created by the expansion of the Internet, we have now arrived at a very auspicious moment in time... for at no other time in the course of history has so many people had access to so much in the way of time-tested guidelines, inspiring role models, and service-oriented initiatives relevant to peace, prosperity, and happiness for all humanity.

iii) There are countless numbers of "things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives" which will contribute to peacebuilding and community revitalization efforts, in their own communities and regions— and in other parts of the world.

b) "... it must be able to absorb and assimilate all that is helpful to its growth."

i) "People who are doing preliminary planning for carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative should be aware that there may be people in the community who—regardless of the difficulties and urgencies associated with resolving multiple crises—choose to focus their attention of trying to make money by preying of people's fears, manipulating people's trust, and/or encouraging people to abandon hope in higher aspirations, and indulge in unhealthy, or immoral behavior. Such behavior is clearly counterproductive to the building of caring communities; it can be very dangerous for community morale, and it can become a crippling obstacle in times of crises. Responsible people will take sufficient preventative measures to proactively encourage a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in their community."
("The Twilight of One Era..." document, p. 13)

ii) "This writer feels that *somehow* many people have—unfortunately—learned to mistakenly equate flaws in human nature with the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. This writer also feels that, with enough experiences of a positive and mutually beneficial nature, many people can come to learn more about the practical wisdom and compassion associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions and less about the flaws in human nature."
("The Twilight of One Era..." document, p. 18)

iii) Below is a description of the community building concept "Community Queries", a concept which eventually became the IPCR concept "Questionnaires That Can Help Build Caring Communities" (see the IPCR document "Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts", at <http://ipcri.net/images/1-Brief-Descriptions-of-The-Eight-IPCR-Concepts.pdf>) (Note: The following description is also in the Spring, 2005 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter)

"Community Queries"— The concept of "Community Queries" introduced here is simply an expansion of the use of "Queries" by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), so that the concept applies to the geographical area sense—and the most inclusive sense— of the word "community." Here are 13 specific examples of "Queries" (from sets of queries used by three different Quaker meetings): 1) "Does our Meeting prepare all its members and children for worship, and for a life consistent with the principles of the Religious Society of Friends?" 2) "Do you seek employment consistent with your beliefs, and in service to society?" 3) "Do you weigh your day-to-day activities for their effect on peace-keeping, conflict resolution and the elimination of violence?" 4) "Are you concerned for responsible use of natural resources and their nurture for future generations?" 5) "Do you try to avoid wasteful consumption and pollution?" 6) "Are you working towards the removal of social injustices? Have you attempted to examine their causes objectively, and are you ready to abandon old prejudices and think again?" 7) "Do any of your interests, important though they may appear to you, unduly absorb your time and energy to the hindrance of your growth in grace and of your service to God?" 8) "Are you loyal to the truth?" 9) "When pressure is brought to bear upon you to lower your standards, are you prepared to resist it?" 10) "Do all adults and children in our Meeting receive our loving care and encouragement to share in the life of our Meeting, and to live as Friends?" 11) "When a members conduct or manner of living gives cause for concern, how does the Meeting respond?" 12) "Are you sufficiently conversant with our Christian Discipline to be able, when difficult questions arise, to consider them with an informed mind as well as a loving and tender spirit?" 13) "Do you live in accordance with your spiritual convictions?" Surely, it would be a valuable exercise for any local community, faith community, nonprofit human service organization, etc. to invite all residents, members, employees, participants, etc. (as appropriate to the nature of the "community") to become involved in the process of creating a set of "Queries" for that particular community of people.

- iv) How can spiritual wisdom be considered practical if it does not result in fundamental improvements in the everyday circumstances of community life?
- v) “Inasmuch as Buddhism is a living religion and not a historical mummy stuffed with dead and functionless materials, it must be able to absorb and assimilate all that is helpful to its growth. This is the most natural thing for any organism endowed with life.” (D.T. Suzuki, in “Essays in Zen Buddhism”)
- c) “The most advanced societies....”
- i) I feel that much more resilience and cohesion would be possible in communities (in general) if there were many people in the same community who were “pulling for each other” to find spiritual strength by way of deepening their faith and belief that there *is* a more advanced and more benevolent spiritual entity than ourselves—and that such an entity *does actually count for something* in overcoming the difficult challenges ahead.
- ii) I believe—and I hope many other people share this belief—that if we are to overcome the challenges of our times we will need not only the resources which innovators can prove the existence of by scientific method; we will also need the resources which people of faith believe exist as a result of inner experience.
- iii) “The yogis believe that a person is capable of cultivating a certain type of personality by choice and design.”
- iv) “... increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, region” [Goal/Indicator #2 in IPCR Initiative Mission Statement (see complete Mission Statement at www.ipcri.net)]
- v) This writer understands that some people may be skeptical that Community Visioning Initiatives of such a comprehensive nature can succeed. Such people may think it is naïve to imagine that people will come together in such a way, and not only encourage, but participate in, a high percentage of constructive thinking and constructive action in response to the difficult challenges ahead. From this writer’s point of view, such skepticism and cynicism depend for their existence on doubts as to whether it is possible for people to achieve highly advanced forms of wisdom and compassion through genuine instruction and sincere effort. Thus it is that there is a great responsibility on those who are in any way representatives of religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions: “... the responsibility of demonstrating by your calmness, composure, humility, purity, virtue, courage and conviction under all circumstances, that the Sadhana (spiritual discipline or systematic learning process) you practice has made you a better, happier and more useful person.” (quote from “Divine Intervention...” document, p. 27)(“Sathya Sai Speaks” 7.17 p89)
- vi) “This writer believes it is becoming more and more likely that an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings will need to become an essential and critical element of a truly comprehensive response to the challenges of our times. In such circumstances, we cannot afford to exclude from our ‘tool box’ the time-tested sources which have helped people

learn compassion over many centuries. What we need to do instead is to learn how to cultivate the time-tested sources so that the sources yield the treasured wisdom.” (“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 21)

vii) “The most advanced societies are the ones which have been successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.” (from IPCR Initiative document “Spiritually Responsible Investing: Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life”)

d) “... His Footprints... everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes”

i) There are opportunities in every minute of every day for people to “catch a glimpse” of this “current” in the process of actively affirming the treasured wisdom from the teachings of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions. Consider the following “awareness exercise”:

During the course of any given day—and in ways we may not even be aware of—acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Hindu faith inspire Muslims to become better Muslims; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Islamic faith inspire Christians to become better Christians; acts of kindness and courtesy by practitioners of the Christian faith inspire Buddhists to become better Buddhists; and so on. (a footnote in IPCR document “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”)

ii) “We too can discover the Lord through His Footprints, which can be discovered everywhere, provided sincere search is made with trained eyes. You can find the footprints wherever there is beauty, virtue, humility, justice, truth, love and peace.” (“Divine Intervention...” document, p. 10)(“Sathya Sai Speaks”, 6.37 p185)

iii) “When you are earnest about it, the Lord Himself will guide you, either from within or from without, through some one He will send, or through illumination from within.” (“Divine Intervention...” document, p. 35)(“Sathya Sai Speaks”, 5.31 p.172)

e) “... developing ‘teacher-leaders’....”

i) “How to find suitable teachers is, therefore, the really important question with which we are confronted. And I doubt whether they can *be found*—at least in sufficient numbers. They will have to be *made*; and how this is to be done is the real problem that faces those interested in moral education at the present time.”

Prof. J. S. Mackenzie (at the First International Moral Education Congress, University of London, 1908)

(“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 1)

ii) “Fortunately, many trustworthy people in positions of leadership are coming to the realization that resolving these challenges will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before— and that there is an urgent need to restructure our economic systems and our education systems to respond to these challenges.” (“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 1)

iii) I trust, and wholeheartedly believe, that using a system as comprehensive as the Community Visioning process I have outlined (see the “1000Communities²” proposal, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf>) to identify challenges, resources, solutions, and action plans will eventually, over the years, result in people approximating “a highest synthesis of truth and community”, *from their point of view*. I also believe that, because the stakes are high—and because for those communities of people who are sincere enough to carry out Community Visioning Initiatives as comprehensive as I have outlined credibility will gravitate towards efforts which are honest, responsible, compassionate, and service-oriented—what they will discover as a highest synthesis will be of such a similar spiritual essence to other communities (which have carried out Community Visioning Initiatives of a similar nature) as to significantly increase the likelihood of kinship experiences between many diverse communities of people.

iv) “... which establish a significant number of local community points of entry called “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” [if use of the particular description “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” is permitted by the organization “TeachersWithout Borders” (see <http://www.teacherswithoutborders.org/pages/community-teaching-and-learning-centers>)] to act as information clearinghouses, meeting locations, classrooms for ongoing workshops (on a broad range of topics related to the Community Visioning Process, and building the local knowledge base), practice sites for developing “teacher-leaders”, a location for an ongoing “informal” “Community Journal”, a location for listing employment opportunities—and to provide a means of responding quickly (by changing the emphasis of workshop content) to new urgencies as they arise.” (“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 2)

v) “The job fairs which come at the end of the Community Visioning Initiative process 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... and thus helping with a just transition from patterns of investment which in only limited ways represent solutions to prioritized challenges to patterns of investment which *in many ways* represent solutions to prioritized challenges.” (“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 10)

vi) Given the nature of complex societies, it is understandable that many of us would like to believe there are experts “somewhere” who understand how we got into this, and must therefore know how we can get out of it. However, this writer very sincerely hopes that more and more people are also coming to the realization that the difficult challenges ahead are not something that the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else. Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets that supply the “ways of earning a living”; and given the unprecedented nature of the challenges ahead, all of us have important responsibilities in the coming months and years ahead.

vii) “Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money. The result can be a deliberate increase in the ‘ways of earning a living’ which are directly related to overcoming the challenges identified by residents as priority challenges.” (from the IPCR document “The ‘1000Communities²’ Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature”)

viii) “There is much which leaders *could be* asking from the people who respect their leadership, both as a matter of civic duty, and as a matter of necessity; unfortunately, there are many important initiatives which are critical to resolving the challenges of our times, but which are not quite ‘coming through the mist as much as they should be’. There are many people who will be very appreciative when they find that they have an important role to play in the work ahead. Leaders should guide citizens so that they can discover how they can do their part to contribute to the greater good of the whole.” (from “Open Letter to Outreach Package”, IPCR Initiative, November, 2008)

f) “... more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.”

i) The IPCR Initiative is an accumulation of documents, resources, and observations brought together to support the propositions that we-- collectively-- have both the need, and the potential, to be

a) much more organized and deliberate about "... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: 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."

b) much more multi-faceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability

c) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and "embodied energy" which are now accessible to us

ii) “For the soundness of ideas must be tested finally by their practical application. When they fail in this—that is, when they cannot be carried out in everyday life producing lasting harmony and satisfaction and giving real benefit to all concerned—to oneself as well as to others—no ideas can be said to be sound and practical.” (D.T. Suzuki, from “Essays in Zen Buddhism”)

iii) “The transition from an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy back to a solar-based (agriculture and forestry) economy will involve the application of the embodied energy that we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes and ideas, mostly inappropriately configured for the “solar” economy. It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.” (David Holmgren, from article “Energy and Permaculture”)(“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 26)

iv) “The more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.”

(J. C. Kumarappa, from “Why The Village Movement?”) (“The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 32)

v) I am hoping that workshops introducing The Seven IPCR Concepts ("Community Good News Networks," "Community Faith Mentoring Networks," "Spiritual Friendships," "Community Queries," "Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace," "Spiritually Responsible Investing," and "IPCR Journal/Newsletters") can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in the IPCR Mission Statement. I am confident that applying these

concepts— at the local community and regional level— will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute— and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process. I see myself most clearly as a facilitator of such workshops. (from the Spring, 2005 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter)

vi) “As a closing comment, this writer hopes that this paper has provided sufficient information and inspiration so that

a) more Community Visioning Initiatives are organized and implemented as a way of responding to the challenges of our times

b) residents of communities where Community Visioning Initiatives are being organized and implemented are encouraged to participate in as many ways as possible—*and encouraged to help and support others who are making sincere efforts to contribute to the process.*” (end of text of “The Twilight of One Era...” document, p. 22)

About the Writer of This Message

The writer of this message, Stefan Pasti, is the founder and outreach coordinator of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative.

I, Stefan Pasti, hereby attribute the inspiration for the two documents mentioned above (“The Twilight of One Era...”, and “Divine Intervention...”) , inspiration for the approach and substance of The IPCR Initiative, my personal capacity to see good in the efforts of people from many different faith communities and cultural traditions, and my personal faith in a positive outcome regarding the challenges of our times to close contact, over many years, with the wisdom and compassion in the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Here is a brief autobiographical sketch:

Stefan Pasti has been actively involved in peacebuilding and community revitalization work for over 20 years—as a writer (project-related correspondence, short novel, short story); an editor (newsletters, quotation collections); an advocate of ecologically sustainable communities; a practitioner of voluntary simplicity; and, more recently, as founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (www.ipcri.net). Mr. Pasti has been employed in many different settings—door-to-door canvasser for citizen action groups; field worker on organic farms; activity director, companion, and transportation provider for elders with special needs; etc. The most important influence in Mr. Pasti’s life has been, and continues to be, the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (age 83, with a main residence in Puttaparthi, India). In 1997, Mr. Pasti completed a 301 page arrangement of selected quotations from “Sathya Sai Speaks” (Vol. 1-11, first U.S. editions) (discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-1982).

Here also is a special notice, posted in the “Contact” section of The IPCR Initiative website at www.ipcri.net, which provides additional sources of information about me:

“Special Note (dated August 16, 2009): As a way of providing more information about myself (Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator for The IPCR Initiative), I have made series of

posts on my Facebook page. These posts include excerpts from earlier writings, reflections on rare family keepsakes, a more detailed autobiographical sketch, etc.) A journal entry listing the titles in that series of posts is accessible at my worldpulse.com journal (see "Sharing of a More Personal Nature...." at <http://www.worldpulse.com/node/12372>)."

[Note: My worldpulse.com journal also includes many pieces which are part of my current work-in-progress (which was going to be titled "Calling 'the better angels of our nature'....", but which is now going to be titled as an updated "IPCR Workshop Primer"). My worldpulse.com journal is at <http://www.worldpulse.com/user/1111>]

Concluding Comments

"Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money. The result can be a deliberate increase in the 'ways of earning a living' which are directly related to overcoming the challenges identified by residents as priority challenges." [From the IPCR document "The '1000Communities²' Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature" (see <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2-for-Outreach-Package-B.pdf>)]

"Have the picture of the happy, united, love filled human community in your heart. That will give you enough encouragement in your mission." ("Divine Intervention..." document, p. 27) ("Sathya Sai Speaks" 15.12 p.70)

This writer gladly and willingly contributes time, energy, and money to make the resources and documents of The IPCR Initiative accessible to those people who might benefit from them.

Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator
The IPCR Initiative
Leesburg, Virginia (USA)
December 19, 2009

Appendix 3

The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop

A Story by Stefan Pasti
(First Version in Fall, 1984)
(First Revision in Spring, 2004; Second Revision in Summer, 2006)

Contact Information:

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Many years ago there was a sun that warmed up a sphere made of rocks, and created some water where only rocks had been before. As the warmth of the sun continued, some of this water evaporated and became air. The sphere of rocks then seemed to soften, and continued to change, as climate patterns developed, and daily and seasonal variations in the weather occurred. By this process what was once just a sphere made of rocks became an earth—with a sky full of air, a wonderful assortment of land forms, and water cycling through its process of evaporating into the air, falling on the land, and collecting together again to flow towards the sea. Then the sun and the earth discovered that they were in love.

A long courtship followed, and the love between the sun and the earth grew in ways that can only be described, but never understood. Water continued to evaporate into the air, and then fall on the land—and streams and rivers were created which flowed through the thick dark forests in the mountains, and the bright golden prairies in the plains, to again become a part of the sea. Ever so gradually, over a mystical span of timelessness, the love between the sun and the earth evolved into the realm of what is profound and eternal. From that time on, it seemed as if love was efflorescing from the very source and origin of the Universal Spirit of Love—and the spontaneous creation, growth, and flowering of spiritual beings became an ever-present and ongoing part of the earth's spiritual destiny. Many of these spiritual beings remained a part of the earth for some time, and thus became known by specific names and forms. Some of the spiritual beings became known as people.

Where I was, the people saw that the earth was filled with all the necessary requirements for a peaceful and happy way of life; so they formed a tribe, and built a village, and became a part of the earth. There the people discovered that if they lived in accordance with the spiritual gifts they had been given, the earth nurtured, supported, and sustained their peaceful and happy way of life. As thanks for this great understanding, the people held ceremonies of recognition, during which they identified the immediate sources of their support and sustenance, and expressed their gratitude for the gifts they had received.

All this I learned from being a bird. As a bird, I used to sit on the branches of a tree in the village and sing.

Many years have passed since then, and as they did I experienced many changes in the nature of my form. One of the different forms I eventually became was a root of a tree. A few years later I moved up the trunk of the tree and through some of its branches, to become a piece of fruit, and I was eaten by one of the people. When I was eaten, the family I entered into held a ceremony of recognition for the fruit tree I had come from, and that is how I became a part of the tribe.

Once I became a part of the tribe, I experienced something I had not experienced as a bird or as a piece of fruit. I experienced a community in crisis. The climate was becoming colder, and this made the growing season shorter. Trees, bushes, grasses, and plants were providing less food, and animals both large and small seemed to be vanishing from the landscape. The people became concerned, and for some time tried to find a remedy for anything and everything which even *seemed to be* out of accordance with their spiritual tradition. But each year, the seasonal weather patterns seemed colder than the year before. Then the people became afraid. They were afraid that their peaceful and happy way of life was coming to an end.

During this time of fear, I was part of the heart of a young woman in love. She was very much in love with a young man in the tribe, and he was very much in love with her. All the tribe saw this, and knew that their marriage would give the young couple and the rest of the tribe much happiness. But the marriage was not allowed. No marriages were allowed until the time of fear had passed. All the strength of the tribe was to be devoted to meeting and overcoming the time of fear.

The changes in the weather became very severe however, and there seemed little hope that the people of the tribe would outlast this challenge to their existence. But whereas the challenge of the time of fear seemed to wear down the faith of most of the people in the tribe, the young woman I was a part of felt more faith than before, and she became more and more determined to help the tribe overcome the challenge of the times. But how could she help?

She did not know, but one day she became so overwhelmed with the misfortune of her tribe that she could not stay in the village any longer. She needed to be by herself. She chose to walk up into the nearby mountains, and climb to the top of the highest mountain.

At the top of the highest mountain there was a flat rock. When she stepped up onto that flat rock, she felt a tingling sensation in the back of her mind. Then something happened which was unlike anything she had ever experienced before.

When she came down from the mountains, she went directly to the tribal leaders. She told them that she had been to the top of the highest mountain, and there she had had a dream while she was wide awake. In her dream she saw an earth—as if it was something she could see only in her mind... an earth which was as beautiful as their earth had ever been.... And then a bird landed on a rock quite near to where she was standing, and spoke to her. The bird said this:

You must all leave where you are, and travel to a place far away. There you will find an earth which is filled with all the necessary requirements for a peaceful and happy way of life; and, if you live in accordance with the spiritual gifts you will be given there, the earth will nurture, support, and sustain your peaceful and happy way of life. This is the spirit of the sacred hoop, and you have seen it work. It is working even now as you are listening to me speak.

The journey to this far away place will be difficult. Many times you will think that you will never find it. But listen to what I say. You must look for the tree at the center of the sacred hoop. You will know when you have found this tree when you hear birds singing on the branches of a tree, and you understand their song. There will be the end of your search, and another beginning of the peaceful and happy way of life.

But you must not forget about the singing birds. As long as they remain, and you understand their song, you are at the center of the sacred hoop. But if they leave, the sacred hoop has been damaged, and the center lost. Misfortune will follow.

Go now, and tell your tribal leaders all I have said.

Then the bird disappeared. That was the end of the dream.

The tribal leaders immediately recognized that the bird's message was of great importance to the tribe. The people of the tribe were in a time of fear, trying to overcome not only challenges which were wearing down their faith, but challenges which were threatening their very existence. And the bird's message seemed to offer some hope where there had been none before. So the tribal leaders quickly agreed that they should share this message with the rest of the people in the tribe.

But while there was hope in the bird's message, there was also something else... something that worried the tribal leaders, and something that made them unsure about how the tribe would react when they heard the message. Because of this uncertainty, the tribal leaders allowed some time to carefully consider *how* they would share the bird's message with the rest of the tribe.

Two days went by before the tribal leaders were finished with their decision-making process. On the third day, the tribal leaders called everyone in the tribe together for a great meeting. Then-- by sending messengers to designated sections of the gathering-- a brief description of the young woman's experience, and a precise recitation of the bird's message, were given to the rest of the tribe, so that all learned of the bird's message at about the same time. And then the tribal leaders waited....

The people of this tribe had become accustomed to receiving spiritual gifts in strange ways; but even so, they were amazed by the unusual clarity of the dream. Then, suddenly, there was a rush of silence... as the people began to experience an unexpected and extraordinary sequence of collective realizations. First, they realized that in all the ceremonies of recognition they had held (during which they expressed their gratitude for the gifts they had received), they had never held a ceremony for the birds that sang on the branches of a tree in the center of the village. Then, they looked around the village, and they were shocked—as if by a harsh truth which they could no longer avoid believing—for they realized that all the singing birds were gone... and that they had left without even being missed. The tree in which they used to sing had lost its leaves, and seemed to be slowly dying. At this moment, it was as if a tidal wave of grief was poised and ready to sweep over the whole tribe. But the tidal wave of grief never came. In almost the same moment, and as if by a flash of light, the people were filled with hope and love; because they realized that the bird's message—conveyed to them through the young woman's dream—was clearly a good sign.... All at once, and irreversibly, the people perceived the bird's message as yet another gift to the tribe—yet another way that the earth was providing support and sustenance... and thus yet another affirmation of the great understanding, which the tribe had treasured as sacred wisdom ever since they had received it. Having such a dramatic affirmation of their

sacred wisdom at this critical moment in their history touched the people deeply—it was as if a light had suddenly and completely replaced the darkness of struggle and despair; and the people realized that they were being rescued from the challenge of the time of fear. And yet that was not all: it was also clear that the singing birds wanted the people to find them again. Since this sequence of collective realizations had such a hopeful conclusion, the shock and grief the people had experienced, only moments before (at the beginning of the sequence), were soon entirely forgotten. Everyone felt certain that when they found the singing birds again, they would understand their song. In this way the people became willing to leave the earth that was their home.

Of course, as soon as it was decided that the whole tribe was to begin a great journey, the question arose: in which direction do we all go? When the young woman who had the dream was asked she said she did not know, and this was felt by all as an unexpected and immediate setback. Almost in desperation, the people carefully re-examined the bird's message; but, one by one, they reluctantly had to admit that the message they had marveled at earlier—for its unusual clarity—provided no indication of which direction the tribe should go in to begin their search. The question was a difficult one; and, the more they thought about it, the less confident they felt about resolving it... until the people's feeling of being rescued from the darkness of struggle and despair seemed to completely disappear—like a leaf blown away by a gust of wind....

At this point—although the people's circumstances were improved by their belief that the singing birds wanted the people to find them again—the thought of surviving another long cold season, the anticipation of more struggle and despair, and the frustration of being burdened with yet another difficulty seemed to fall heavily on their wavering spirits, all at the same time... and the result was further difficulties. Many people became adversely affected by the pressures and challenges of the times... their judgment, and their customary capacity for kindness and courtesy became impaired.... And suddenly, it seemed as if each person in the tribe had a different set of ideas and suggestions for which direction the tribe should go in to begin their search... and—I am sorry to have to say—there were many

discussions and disagreements which were not in accordance with the wisdom of the tribe's spiritual tradition, and which did not in any way affirm the tribe's great understanding. In fact, it seemed like the great journey was becoming a great disaster even before the journey had begun.

The spiritual destiny of this particular tribe was, however, not to be fulfilled by a great disaster. The issue was settled by the young man who was so much in love with the young woman who had the dream. One day, while he was on a quiet walk beside a nearby river, he saw a bird like those which had once sang from the branches of—what was now, to everyone in the tribe—"the sacred tree". The bird was flying south. Seeing this, the young man experienced a flash of insight, and realized that all the tribe had to do was keep sighting the birds, and follow the birds wherever they went. When he shared his experience with the tribal leaders, they called everyone in the tribe together for a great meeting, and the great problem was settled to everyone's satisfaction—and relief. Only then did the people begin to pack their belongings. Bird sighters were sent in the general direction indicated by the last bird sighting, and instructed to look for the birds by deliberately traveling on different paths or routes, so as to increase the tribes' chances of bird sightings. In this way the great journey began.

During the time of the great journey the tribe suffered the trials of "a way of life in transition", as they did not stay in any one place long enough to call that place home. Rarely did the earth provide the necessary requirements for all the people in the tribe to experience the peaceful and happy way of life. But the time of fear had passed, and marriages were allowed, and many young couples in the tribe were married—including the young woman who had the dream and the young man who helped settle the "great problem"... and there was much joy in the beginnings of many new families. So when the bird sighters did not sight any birds for months in a row, the people did not despair. They were a tribe that had—collectively, as a whole—experienced an extraordinary affirmation of their spiritual tradition. They believed the singing birds wanted their tribe to find them again... and they felt it was their spiritual destiny to live once again at the center of the sacred hoop. So they

just kept on looking for the tree at the center of the sacred hoop by persevering in their search for the birds, and continuing to listen carefully for sounds of birds singing. In this way the people of the tribe I was a part of were able to continue the great journey and never lose hope.

As for myself—whereas before, in the earth that was once home, I had changed into many different forms—now I just changed from being a part of one person to being a part of another person. From the young woman I went to her son, and from him I went to his daughter. In this way I remained a part of the tribe. And so it was that I experienced the same joy that all the others did when we at last discovered the singing birds again.

It was on the edge of a meadow, in a small grove of fruit trees, that the singing birds were finally found. They were found by one of the bird sighters. The bird sighter was so accustomed to seeing a single bird but hearing no singing that the sound of the singing birds overwhelmed him with happiness, and he cried tears of joy. While crying and listening to the birds sing the bird sighter became aware that he knew what the song of the singing birds was, and he instinctively slapped his forehead with the palm of his hand and sat down, gazing around in amazement. Then he cried again, this time for thinking of the joy the rest of the tribe was soon to feel.

Later that day, the bird sighter returned to the tribe, but on his arrival he did not speak about what he had seen and heard. Nor did he reveal in any way what he felt in his heart about what he had experienced. This was because in the bird's message to the tribe, the bird had said, "You must look for the tree at the center of the sacred hoop. You will know when you have found this tree when you hear birds singing on the branches of a tree, and you understand their song." The tribal leaders had often thought of this part of the birds' message, during the many years of the great journey. They had proposed—and the rest of the tribe had agreed—that when a bird sighter heard singing birds, the bird sighter was not to tell the whole tribe, as the general excitement might compel the tribe to believe they understood the song of the singing birds when they really did not. Instead, as a precautionary measure, the bird sighter would tell only the tribal leaders—and they would go

to the tree, and listen and see if they could understand the song. If they could understand the song, they would tell the rest of the tribe. If they could not, they would tell no one, and would conclude that the tree the birds were singing in was not the tree at the center of the sacred hoop.

And so it was only the tribal leaders who followed the bird sighter to the tree where he had heard the singing birds. The bird sighter felt that he understood the birds' song, and was sure that the tribal leaders would too—but he remained silent, so as not to disturb the moment of discovery for the tribal leaders. The tribal leaders were silent too. All they could think of was ceremony... what kind of ceremony of recognition would be appropriate for the spiritual gift they were about to receive here? They approached the tree slowly as if they did not want to get near it. Then they heard the birds singing on the branches of the tree. What did it mean? How should they know what birds mean by singing? All they could be sure of was what they saw and heard—which was birds singing on the branches of a tree. Who could ever know what they were singing about? The tribal leaders were confused. The bird sighter was dazed—how could they not feel what he had felt, in such a moment as this? He tried to explain, but the tribal leaders did not understand what he was talking about. The bird sighter was horrified. According to duty, he must remain silent if the leaders did not become certain of the songs meaning. Maybe he was wrong... maybe this was not the tree at the center of the sacred hoop....

Suddenly, a little girl from the tribe appeared on the other side of the meadow, and ran towards the bird sighter and the tribal leaders. Why? She had been picking berries [singing a little song (she had just made up) to herself as she went along: "... and if events should bring us/ together again/ our love will again/ grow out of the in it was in..."] and had, in a moment of looking up from the berry bushes, recognized her father in the distance. It was a very fine sunny day and she was glad in her heart. As she got nearer the tree, she heard the birds singing—for the first time in her life—and she stopped moving, held her breath in wonder, and then exclaimed "Oh! Love Spirits... singing! Father, where are they? Can I see them?" The girl's father rushed to her, picked her up, and hugged her, and cried tears of happiness. The other tribal leaders cried too. They all knew.

Many years passed. The beautiful earth that was now home was filled with all the necessary requirements for a peaceful and happy way of life. The people of the tribe lived in accordance with the spiritual gifts they were given; and the earth nurtured, supported, and sustained their peaceful and happy way of life. As thanks for this great understanding, the people continued to hold ceremonies of recognition, during which they identified the immediate sources of their support and sustenance, and expressed their gratitude for the gifts they had received. In this way, people of all ages were continually being a part of the very current that sustained the community of spiritual beings at the center of the sacred hoop.

Over time, the people developed deep feelings of love and affection for what they perceived to be the source and origin of all the spiritual gifts that nurtured, supported, and sustained their peaceful and happy way of life. In accordance with their need to fully experience these deep feelings of love and affection together, as a community, the people created special ceremonies, at intervals throughout the year. One of the special ceremonies which became established as a tradition by these people was at the end of the harvest season. At that time of year, the people re-lived the most memorable spiritual gifts in the history of their tribe—through a variety of ceremonial events—and thereby renewed their desire to be as much a part of the creation, growth, and flowering of spiritual gifts as possible, while they were still a part of the earth.

In this way the people lived, and every morning when the sun rose, it shined on an earth filled with spiritual gifts.