

“IPCR Critical Challenges Assessment 2011-2012: Summary Report”

Table of Contents

I. Definitions of Education, Suggestions for Questionnaires.....	8
A. What do we want our education systems to do?.....	8
B. Suggestions for Questionnaires (which can help build local community consensus on what we want our education systems to do locally).....	12
II. Ghosts of Capitalism Past.....	15
A. Speculations about the origin and development of human power structures.....	15
B. Some tragic and terrifying examples of people overly influenced by a desire for profit.....	17
C. “The misery with them all...”	23
D. Another Echo from the Past.....	24
III. The United States—and “Implicit Legitimation”	26
A. “Implicit Legitimation”	26
B. “Economics is one thing; morality is, quite clearly, another.”	27
C. “... a sort of tolerance within the culture for this sort of irregular kind of self-enrichment...”	28
D. Religion—the “wallpaper of the social system”	29
E. “...the dangers and consequences of America’s growing petroleum dependency”	29
F. “...significant, largely unaccounted for, and unchecked social and environmental externalities.”	30
IV. Cultures of Violence, Greed, Corruption, and Overindulgence.....	31
A. Military Expenditures.....	31
B. Small Arms Proliferation.....	33
C. Global Drugs Trade and Global Arms Trade.....	33
D. Global Entertainment.....	33
E. Worldwide and U.S. Advertising Expenditures.....	34
F. Alcohol, Gambling, Tobacco (United States); Lottery Revenue (United States).....	36
G. Maintaining Prison System (United States).....	40
H. Professional Sports (United States) (Annual Revenues).....	40
I. “Levels of Overweight on the Rise”	41
J. Pornography.....	42
K. Black Friday.....	44
L. “...the company had been dramatically under-reporting its pollution.”	45
M. % of Global Wealth Controlled by Millionaires.....	46

V. Other Challenges Which Are Part of This Writer’s Ten Point List (see Appendix A) and Which Need to be Resolved as Part of a Sustainable Solution to the Current Debt Crises.....	48
A. Global warming—reducing carbon emissions.....	48
B. The end of the era of “cheap energy” (particularly in reference to “peak oil”).....	56
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 <i>indiscriminately</i>).....	63
D. Current trends indicate that we are creating more and more “urban agglomerations” (cities with a population of more than 1 million people—more than 400), 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 critical challenges ahead (see Appendix A)	73
E. A marginalization of the treasured wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions..	93
F. Global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death.....	101
VI. Four Summaries of Critical Challenges Ahead.....	105
A. “...the world is only one poor harvest away from chaos.”	105
B. “Humanity is now being challenged as never before to grow in wisdom, maturity, and understanding.”	105
C. “We have to somehow get through this collapsing passageway and into the next paradigm....”	106
D. “...overcoming the challenges of our times will require problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before....”	106
VII. “The U.S. and many other countries will enter the next 15 to 20 years burdened by substantial public debt....”	108
A. Some Important Considerations Associated with U.S. Debt.....	108
1) “Wall Street and the Financial Crisis: The Role of Investment Banks”..... (“Millions of Americans have lost their jobs, their homes and their businesses in the recession that the crisis sparked....”)	108
2) “Wall Street and the Financial Crisis: The Role of Investment Banks”	110
(“...the jargon is complicated, the transactions are complicated—you’ve relied on that complicated situation to avoid a lot of scrutiny. “)	
3) Federal Debt—Presidential Debt Commission.....	111
4) “The U.S. National Debt and How It Got So Big”	112
5) Statistics—U.S. Government Debt, Liabilities, and Unfunded Obligations.....	114
6) From a report titled “The Big Reset” (February, 2010—National Governors Association).....	115
7) From article “Wall Street plummets as fear jumps on historic downgrade”	115
(August 8, 2011)	
8) From article “Stock Market losses threaten economic recovery as household income takes another hit” (August 10, 2011).....	116

9) From article “\$6.3 trillion wiped off markets in 2011” (December 30, 2011).....	116
10) Consumer Debt.....	118
11) Student Loans.....	118
12) “If you don’t believe that the growth rate is going to be that great, then you have to ask yourself some very fundamental questions...”	118
B. A Timeline of Articles on the European Debt Crisis, and Related Crises.....	119
(August 3, 2011—January 18, 2012)	
(mostly excerpts, some whole articles; from Reuters, Huffington Post, and other sources)	
[includes references to 94 articles, and summary (chronological) list of article titles]	
VIII. Solutions.....	227
A. The “Constellation of Initiatives” Approach of The IPCR Initiative.....	227
1) A Seven Point List for Accelerating and Maximizing Solution-Oriented Activity.....	227
2) About Community Visioning Initiatives.....	230
3) About “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”.....	238
4) Questionnaires—to bring forward perceptions and ideas, and to build consensus for collective action.....	241
5) “Sister Community” Relationships.....	244
6) Estimated Costs associated with Community Visioning Initiatives and workshops at “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”	256
7) If the trend towards urbanization was reversed.....	257
B. Transition Ahead: Less Megacities and More Ecologically Sustainable Towns and Villages...	260
1) Worldwatch.....	260
2) Transition Movement.....	261
3) The Bloomington, Indiana (USA) Peak Oil Task Force.....	266
4) Permaculture.....	269
5) The Global Ecovillage Network/Gaia Education/Findhorn Foundation.....	271
6) Fair Trade.....	274
7) Re-ruralization.....	276
C. Increasing Transitional Employment.....	283
1) From German military report on the Implications of Peak Oil.....	283
2) Persistent Ironies.....	285
3) Community Visioning Initiatives, Job Fairs, and Local Currencies.....	286
D. About the “Interfaith” in Interfaith Peacebuilding.....	287
1) “Some of the challenges of our times are at the very core of the difficulty of being human beings...”	287
2) “And what is possible along the lines of wisdom and compassion?”	288

3) “Commitment to Global Peace” document from The Millenium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders (2000).....	289
4) From article “The Interfaith Movement in the 20th Century” by Marcus Braybrooke.....	291
5) InterAction is the largest alliance of U.S.-based international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).....	292
6) Religions for Peace.....	292
7) United Religions Initiative.....	293
8) Interfaith Youth Core.....	295
9) The IPCR Initiative Mission Statement.....	297
10) Brief Descriptions: “Community Faith Mentoring Networks”, “Spiritual Friendships”, and “Spiritually Responsible Investing”.....	298
11) “...part of ‘spiritual teachings’ element which often gets overlooked...”.....	301
12) “But what is the use of such a bank balance of values if it is not useful in solving our current social problems?”.....	302
13) “We are in uncharted territory...”.....	302
14) “...a very auspicious moment in time...”.....	303
E. Community Service Opportunities for Local Newspapers.....	303
1) Community Service Opportunities associated with Community Visioning Initiatives.....	303
2) Community Service Opportunities associated with “Community Good News Networks”.....	304
3) “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”.....	305
4) “...56 major newspapers in 45 countries speak with one voice on climate change....”	306
F. Re-defining Wealth--and Other Community Service Opportunities for Investors.....	309
1) “We are all investors”—some propositions and premises.....	309
2) Some Service-Oriented/Solution-Oriented Opportunities for Investors.....	310
a) “...America will need to make major new investments in our educational systems to implement the green economy....”.....	310
b) Community Visioning Initiatives.....	312
c) “Community Teaching and Learning Centers”—local community points of entry, resource centers, locations for workshops, practice sites for the development of “teacher-leaders”.....	313
d) Women’s Funding Network.....	315
e) Green Transition Scorecard (and note on MSCI World Index).....	316
f) Socially Responsible Investing.....	317
g) Calvert Group.....	319
h) First Affirmative Financial Network.....	320
i) Springboard Innovation and ChangexChange.....	324
j) “...billions of people in the world who are called desperately poor.”.....	326
k) Forbes 400 Philanthropist seeks ideas for creating jobs for poor.....	327
l) Solution-oriented activity which compensates the whole community.....	336

(more)

G. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Community Visioning Initiatives.....	336
1) “...maximizing the lessons which can be learned....”	336
2) Some general suggestions for evaluating Community Visioning Initiatives of the kind advocated by The IPCR Initiative.....	336
3) Specific Suggestions for Evaluation Questions.....	337

Appendices

A. “Table of Contents” for “IPCR Critical Challenges Assessment 2011-2012”	343
(A list of ten challenges of our times considered most critical by this writer)	
B. 17 Propositions and Premises which make up the foundation of The IPCR Initiative.....	344
C. The IPCR Initiative Mission Statement.....	346
D. Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts.....	347
E. The “1000Communities ² ” Proposal.....	359
F. The Potential of Community Visioning Initiatives (in 305 words).....	360
G. A 15 Step Outline for the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives advocated by The IPCR Initiative.....	361
H. Suggestions for Making Best Use of the Community Visioning Initiative (CVI) Process.....	379
I. 117 Related Fields of Activity.....	381
J. List of Most Inspiring Initiatives Known to This Writer.....	383
K. (Draft) Section #7 (part of “IPCR Critical Challenges Assessment 2011-2012”) “A marginalization of the treasured wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions” (“Commentary” piece).....	384
L. A Sample Questionnaire from The IPCR Initiative (16 Questions) (Some suggestions for questions to use in preparing for Community Visioning Initiatives).....	388
M. The IPCR Resource Sharing Policy.....	397
N. About the Writer and Compiler of This Document.....	398
O. Additional Evidence of Critical Challenges—updated August 4, 2012.....	399
P. Community Visioning Initiatives or General Elections?.....	419