

## Submission of “1000 Community Visioning Initiatives” Idea to Solutions Summit

by Stefan Pasti, Founder and Resource Coordinator  
The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative  
(August, 2018)

### Introduction

On August 15, I read the following tweet from the UN Foundation, and immediately thought that I should send in a submission related to the [“13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change”](#) (78p) [see [“Tweet Series for ‘13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change’”](#) (15p) for a brief overview of each step].

**UN Foundation** [Verified account](#) @unfoundation Aug 15

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I was especially hopeful about the prospect of the ideas of Community Visioning Initiatives and Neighborhood Learning Centers be brought forward—in the context of the UN Solutions Summit, and in the context of the UN General Assembly. There was still so many people at the local community level who were not engaged—in any way: not with climate change mitigation, not with the SDGs, and not at all with the many unprecedented challenges I have identified ([“Unprecedented Challenges Ahead—February 2017”](#)). Further, so much energy lost to friction and hostility over differing world views and polarizing opinions could be re-gained by the process of identifying common challenges, and collaborating to resolve them.

I was not so much interested in actually becoming one of the presenters at the Solutions Summit's programs during the UN General Assembly—and only in the most urgent circumstances would I have even considered traveling, as I have more than a few health concerns and physical limitations. What I was interested in was the possibility that someone would read my submission who could understand it, and by such a transmission, people who could move the ideas along would come in contact with them.

However, as readers will notice, I could not answer the submission form questions without making it very plain that I thought there were shortcomings in the approach of the UN's push with the SDGs (see Question on "How does your approach differ....?") It seems I am just too far outside the mainstream....

What follows this introduction are my responses to the questions on the Solutions Summit submission form.

Stefan Pasti  
Fulton, MO  
September 15, 2018

## Solutions Summit Application Final Version

1. Share with us your motivation(s) for applying to be a part of the Solutions Summit (to present a project or serve as Selection Committee Member). Describe how you have used innovation for positive global impact. \* (1500 characters allowed) (used 1499)

Because I have had access to teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba<sup>1</sup>; because I have had access to unprecedented resources via Internet; because I have done in-depth research over decades on both challenges of our times and solutions which can reach positive tipping points on those challenges<sup>2,3,4, 9.5</sup>; and because I have summarized such findings into documents which are very concise and content-rich<sup>5,6</sup>--I feel I have something to contribute to how to accelerate solutions-oriented activity at this critical time.

I believe there are essential and critical pieces to comprehensive response to challenges of our times which are missing from approaches now at forefront--and I believe I have some of those pieces. I can see the potential energy which would be actualized if the pieces I have were actualized (*I can see many multiplier effects would be created, and many other people w/ pieces to contribute would have many more opportunities to contribute their pieces*)—and if such potential is not actualized in my lifetime, I hope to contribute in every way I can so it can be actualized sometime in the future.

I have no clear evidence that outreach work (see response to Question 11) or educational work (see [www.cpcsi.org](http://www.cpcsi.org)) I have done up to this point has achieved any positive global impact--although my Twitter account<sup>7</sup> followers (500+) may indicate significant number of people in related fields have acknowledged value in my message.

Footnotes=Links in response boxes for Questions 14, 15

2. Biography \* (1500 characters allowed) (used 1489)

Mr. Pasti has been actively involved in peacebuilding and community revitalization work for over 30 years.

Beginning in the early 1980's, Mr. Pasti developed a "compilation of excerpts" (from books, articles, etc.) style as a way of synthesizing complex information into an outline format--an approach which seemed to make "connecting the dots" moments more likely to occur.<sup>1,3</sup>

The most important influence in Mr. Pasti's life has been, and still is, the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011). Those teachings provided Mr. Pasti with profound insights into the potential benefits of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life. Contributing whatever he can to realizing such profound potential, regardless of whether or not such potential is realized in his lifetime, has been the central motivating spirit of Mr. Pasti's life for decades. The results of Mr. Pasti's work have been in-depth challenge assessments leading to a concise two page summary assessment<sup>5</sup>, and collaborative problem solving and citizen peacebuilding approaches which do not require participants to adhere to the teachings of one particular religious, spiritual, or moral tradition<sup>6</sup>.

Mr. Pasti was the founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative<sup>8</sup> from 2001-2013, and is currently the founder and resource coordinator for The Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative<sup>9</sup>.

### 3. CV or resumé

(link for Resume of Stefan Pasti)(resume updated August, 2018) <http://bit.ly/2NdgLEF>

### 4. What is the name of your solution? \*

1000 Community Visioning Initiatives

### 5. Please provide a tag line description of your solution \* (150 characters allowed) (used 147)

1000 Community Visioning Initiatives + supporting Neighborhood Learning Centers = maximizing citizen participation towards positive tipping points

### 6. In which countries is your solution currently, or intended to be, in implementation? \*

(500 characters allowed) (used 493)

Community visioning, strategic visioning, and stakeholder engagements practices are being actively applied in many settings, but not to maximize citizen participation because of a convergence of unprecedented challenges<sup>5</sup>. If even a few Community Visioning Initiatives such as advocated here generated results similar to those achieved by the Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA) Visioning carried out in 1984 (13 min documentary<sup>10</sup>) many communities would be inspired to carry out similar initiatives.

7. Why do you think your solution is at the stage of innovation you selected above? \*

(500 characters allowed) (used 497)

- a) need for problem solving on scale advocated for is far from being widely recognized
- b) dominant preferences for solutions favor continuing urbanization trends; building technological resilience (which allows for avoiding the building of human morality resilience)
- c) my personal background--since I have no traditional credentials, no affiliations, no partnerships
- d) the most important influence for me, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, appears, to many, to be controversial as spiritual personage

8. Please describe the problem your solution is addressing \*

(500 characters allowed) (used 488)

1000 Community Visioning Initiatives are way of accelerating solution-oriented activity, to respond to the challenges identified in 2 page document "Unprecedented Challenges Ahead—February 2017"<sup>5</sup> (more evidence for same challenges on p. 10-20<sup>16</sup>)

If challenges assessment and solutions I advocate for were supported, I believe there would be multiplier effect of positive nature on most or all of the goals necessary to reach all relevant positive tipping points (including all of SDGs).

9. How does your solution work, and what is the long-term vision for global impact? \*

(1500 characters allowed) (used 1495)

Short Overview of Key Steps

- a) Colleges are likely lead organizations for "Challenge/Solutions" surveys--to *key informants* globally, then locally. Confidence will be dimmed by lack of clarity until there is truthful public discourse on full dimensions of critical challenges ahead. *Again: what are the challenges we are now facing?*<sup>5</sup>
- b) Global survey results would provide progressive, ready-for-pilot communities with foundation for local surveys--which would engage key leaders, help citizens understand need for Community Visioning Initiatives (CVIs) and Neighborhood Learning Centers (NLCs), and provide starting point input for workshops needed in NLCs.
- c) Thru workshops and associated local learning networks [involving other "steps" and many other frameworks (SDG goals, etc)], citizens can gain greater awareness of how all "little events" in everyday community life have positive, cumulative effect on challenges-solutions-investment-training-

employment sequence... and thus how all investments of time, energy, and money (the “votes”) each of us make in everyday circumstances become the larger economy. *Citizens from every variety of circumstances can learn how to wisely cast such “votes”.*

(Note: For detailed overview of surveys, CVIs, and NLCs, see p. 15-25 in “13 Steps...”<sup>18</sup> With attention to all “13 Steps”<sup>18</sup>, this approach represents peacebuilding at a most enduring level.)

Long Term Vision: see paragraph c) in Question 12 “Planned Goals and Milestones” response

**10. In what way is the solution unique from other approaches that exist in this space? What is the new perspective or methodology? \*** (1500 characters allowed) (used 1499)

a) Not any of 13 well-known examples of critical challenge assessments and solution guides from past 50 years<sup>11</sup>; nor the 17 SDG goals and 169 indicators<sup>12</sup>—nor any proposal I could find at this Solutions Summit platform—give serious attention to variations in human morality as significant contributor, either to challenges ahead, or solutions needed. We need to make unprecedented progress towards resolving timeless shortcomings of human nature<sup>13</sup>—*even though such shortcomings are perceived as so much a part of who we are that most of us accept such as inevitable.*

b) Most current solution models accept world population growth towards 10 billion people; identify urbanization as desirable trend (in form of more megacities); maintain sustainable economic growth is necessary for widespread prosperity; and maintain that sustainable consumption can be achieved without significant change in human nature. This proposal identifies unqualified/not seriously discussed world population growth and urbanization trends<sup>14</sup> as significant threats to ecological stability and social cohesion—and uncouples consumption and prosperity. High quality of life would be more sustainable if based on wisdom and compassion, and would be in accordance with consuming much less material goods and ecological services than developed countries now consume.

1000 Community Visioning Initiatives can inspire confidence that our collective efforts are becoming a greater force than the challenges we are facing.

**11. How far has your team progressed in the development of this solution? How do you measure your progress and methodological rigor? \*** (1500 characters allowed) (used 1492)

Outreach from 2005-2012 [for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative]<sup>15</sup>

Outreach from 2013-2018 (for The CPCS Initiative)

- a) (Nov. 2013) Tipping Point Action: Citizen Participation in Times of Unprecedented Challenges Proposal at MIT Climate CoLab Platform <https://www.climatecolab.org/contests/2014/2015-proposal-workspace/c/proposal/1702> Press Kit for Tipping Point Action Campaign at <http://www.cpcsi.org/press-kit-tipping-point-action.html> (Twitter)
- b) (Dec. 2014) Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses Survey Project (emails to more than 50 Offices of Religious and Spiritual Life at colleges in US) (key documents <http://www.cpcsi.org/romc-survey-project.html> )
- c) (June 2015) "Recalibrating Our 'Moral Compasses' ...."<sup>16</sup> (85p; June, 2015/updated July, 2016), CPCS Initiative Summary Paper (Twitter)
- d) (Feb. 2017) "Convergence of Critical Challenges Alert to Peacebuilders, Chaplains"<sup>17</sup> (10 p.)(also featured on [www.cpcsi.org](http://www.cpcsi.org) homepage) (emails to more than 100 people associated with peacebuilding graduate schools, key peacebuilding organizations, and Offices of Religious and Spiritual Life at colleges)
- e) (May, 2017) "13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change"<sup>18</sup> (78p) (Twitter)
- f) (March, 2018) "Tweet Series for '13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change'"<sup>6</sup> (15 p.) (Twitter)

One way progress can be measured is by continuing Global and Local Key Informant "Challenge-Solution" surveys. Local newspapers could also carry out many surveys<sup>19</sup>.

**12. Planned Goals and Milestones for your solution? (for example, any new countries or markets you will expand in, staff you will recruit, and projected lives impacted?) \***

(1500 characters allowed) (used 1496)

a) find organizations/institutions w/ high global credibility and necessary expertise (possible partnerships to explore reviewed p.47-56<sup>16</sup>), so that this approach can contribute its potential to accelerating solution-oriented activity.

b) generate discussion among practitioners, instructors, key community leaders, concerned citizens, etc in many topic areas including: critical challenges assessment; questionnaire/survey design; community visioning, stakeholder engagement, collaborative problem solving; low cost lifelong learning systems; local news media community service; appropriate technology; sustainable community economics, socially responsible investing, community revolving loans, microfinance; low impact transport systems; workforce development; food security, food sovereignty; land use reform; water supply, sewage treatment; recycling, cradle to cradle manufacturing; inspiring role models, right livelihood, mentoring, apprenticeships; local currency; interfaith collaboration; citizen peacebuilding; non-violent conflict resolution.

c) such collaborative, solution-oriented activity could become a common experience... a common cultural tradition... a cultural tradition which can link many diverse communities of people together, in a fellowship of people working towards the greater good of the whole... and a cultural tradition which can help pass on to future generations the most treasured wisdom human beings have accumulated in more than 5,000 years of human history.

13. What resources are most needed for the solution to scale and have considerable impact? Please include your short-term, medium-term and long-term needs. \* (1500 characters allowed) (used 1494)

What is needed now is (for scale and considerable impact):

#### Short Term

- a) *a sense of urgency which comes from honoring the truths about our circumstances*
- b) organizations/institutions which understand the potential of “1000 Community Visioning Initiatives” approach--and organizations/institutions with high global credibility and necessary expertise to scale up sufficiently for the idea to replicate itself

#### Medium Term Needs

- a) colleges, universities as lead organizations [possibly in partnership with Pew Research Center; Joint Program in Survey Methodology (University of Maryland--University of Michigan--Westat) or other international survey institutions] [see “Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses (ROMC) Project Prospectus”<sup>20</sup> (74p; Nov. 2014) for more detailed recommendations, including example list of possible global key informants]
- b) e-publishing team for global “Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses” (or “Challenge-Solutions”) survey results
- c) website development for clearinghouse website(s) on many of survey topics (Ex: “critical challenges”, “field specific solutions”) which can continue to aggregate after the survey is over
- d) progressive, ready-for-pilot communities with many citizens who already understand the need for Community Visioning Initiatives and Neighborhood Learning Centers (to give concept momentum)

#### Long Term Needs

This is a project which can replicate through independent funding and independent project management, and thus “grow organically”.



14. Please provide us links related to your work and / or your solution. For example: company website, project website, scientific / technical articles, process videos. Please include full URLs (including http:// or https:// at the beginning of the link) \* (1500 characters allowed) (used 1490)

Footnotes in previous “Response Boxes” refer here, to these source documents--and to source documents in Question #15 response.

Full URLs associated with my website ([www.cpcsi.org](http://www.cpcsi.org)) are so long that to include them would extremely limit how many documents I can reference here—hence the bitly links.

1. “An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)” (301p; 1997, 2006) <http://bit.ly/2k8QUkQ>
2. “Where a Village is Tended, a Toxic Waste Dump Cannot Grow” (16p) (outreach document) (April-May 1991) <http://bit.ly/2PB1IXR> Highlight: 51 point list--How modern agriculture-based villages can contribute to continuity of peaceful human settlements
3. “IPCR Critical Challenges Assessment 2011-2012: Summary Report” (444p; Jan 2012) <http://bit.ly/2PxOHxS>
4. “Invitation Package for Possible Board of Advisors” (CPCS document) (589p; Nov 2013) <http://bit.ly/2Es9KAg>
5. “Unprecedented Challenges Ahead—Feb 2017” (2p) <http://bit.ly/2kiaEjZ>
6. “Tweet Series for ‘13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change’” (15p; March 2018) <http://bit.ly/2vdz350>
7. Twitter Account (@StefanPasti)
8. Many IPCR Initiative documents (and some of outreach efforts) archived at <http://www.cpcsi.org/about-the-ipcr-initiative.html>
9. CPCS Initiative is represented by [www.cpcsi.org](http://www.cpcsi.org) website as a whole [which includes many writings of Stefan Pasti (see 9.5 “Collected Writings of Stefan Pasti” webpage)]
10. “Chattanooga: Community w/ a Vision” (13min documentary) <https://vimeo.com/9653090>

15. Please provide us any links to videos or audio recordings from your speaking engagements or interviews. Please include full URLs (including http:// or https:// at the beginning of the link) \* (1500 characters allowed) (used 1495)

Footnotes (con’t)

11. see p.25 of “Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses...” <http://bit.ly/2fAhapG>
12. “Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (UN Document) <http://bit.ly/2LlhIK9>

13. Taken together, “Tweet Series for ‘13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change’” (15p) <http://bit.ly/2vdz350> and “30 Proposition and Premises of The CPCS Initiative” (4p) <http://bit.ly/2w7qUNw> provide much insight into CPCS Initiative approach to making unpreced progress towards resolving timeless shortcomings of human nature
14. see Section VI “Large Cities (w/ Pop. of 1 million or more) vs. Villages, Towns, Small Cities” p. 368-431 in “Invitation Package for Possible Board of Advisors” <http://bit.ly/2Es9KAg>
15. “IPCR Outreach Efforts (2005-2012)” <http://bit.ly/2MvzYpF>
16. “Recalibrating Our ‘Moral Compasses’: to resolve unprecedented challenges and discover our collective spiritual destiny” (85p; June 2015/updated July 2016) <http://bit.ly/2fAhapG>
17. “Convergence of Critical Challenges Alert to Peacebuilders, Chaplains” <http://bit.ly/2lWRKRP>
18. “13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change” (78p; May 2017) <http://bit.ly/2GFaVJ4>
19. see overview for Step 13 “Neighbor to Neighbor Community Education (NTNCE) Projects in Local Newspapers” on p54-56 of “13 Steps for Long Term Culture Change” <http://bit.ly/2GFaVJ4>
20. “Recalibrating Our Moral Compasses (ROMC) Project Prospectus” (74p; Nov 2014) <http://bit.ly/1GeMxwG>

16. Please list any awards you or your solution have won, or been a finalist for (Please indicate winner or finalist for each) (500) (499)

No awards won/finalist status, so...

If many people can learn to find contentment, quality of life while consuming much less material goods, ecological services, this limiting of desires at the “root” will save much trouble responding to symptoms of unrestrained or unexamined desires as they materialize worldwide. *This is one of benefits of spiritual teachings which often gets overlooked.* Further: our overreliance on technology allows us to avoid looking too closely at shortcomings in ourselves.

A Final Note: I did not find any way to include the quote below in the above submission, but the truths carried by the quote continue to stay with me in a most heartfelt way, so I will include it here:

“... 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....” [From “General Education in a Free Society”, The Harvard Report (1945)]