

5 page Introduction

to “Invitation Package for Possible Board of Advisors (at www.cpcsc.info)”
[the Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative]

Documents now accessible at the Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability (CPCS) Initiative website include--

“Invitation Package for Possible Board of Advisors (at www.cpcsc.info)” (589 p.; 3.65 MB)

and the following supporting documents (most of which are included in the “Invitation Package” document):

1 page introduction
5 page introduction
20 page Introduction
1 page short version Table of Contents
27 page long version Table of Contents
and “The Potential of Community Visioning Initiatives (in 500 words)”

All of the above documents are accessible at <http://cpcsc.info/invitation-package/> .

This “Invitation Package” document is a compilation of observations from a wide range of vantage points, which provides both a “big picture” assessment of the critical point we are at, and more than enough evidence that we have the resources to overcome the challenges of our times. Never before in the history of life on planet Earth has there been so many opportunities for redemption.

This 589 page document is an invitation to the 272 people listed in Section III “List of People Being Formally Invited to Join CPCS Initiative Board of Advisors”—and to citizens from every variety of circumstances who might read this—

to help create, become involved, contribute to, and participate in

a) one or more of the thousands of Community Visioning Initiatives (or some similar stakeholder engagement/collaborative problem solving process designed to maximize citizen participation) needed to overcome the challenges of our times

b) clearinghouse websites for both Community Visioning Initiatives (or community wide collaborative problem solving/stakeholder engagement processes) and Community Teaching and Learning Centers (Neighborhood Learning Centers).

and to

c) find what inspiration you can from the “Invitation Package” resource, and use it to make a positive contribution somewhere. No association of societies ever on planet Earth has had to resolve the kind of challenges the next few generations of people will have to resolve. We are going to need all the

resources, knowledge, and skills each one of us has, and we are going to need to make the best efforts we can at working together, if we are going to succeed at resolving the challenges ahead of us. If there are readers who have not yet been invited to become a part of the unprecedented effort that is needed, such readers are in every way encouraged to consider this document as their invitation.

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

Many hands make much work light.

Some Additional Information about the “Invitation Package” Document:

1) The “Invitation Document” includes:

a) a short version Table of Contents

b) a 20 page Introduction, and a 27 page long version Table of Contents (in Appendix 6), both of which can serve as an Executive Summary

2) In Section III. of the “Invitation Package” document, there are short biographies (mostly excerpted from associated websites) of the 272 people being formally invited to become a member of the Board of Advisors for the Community Peacebuilding and Cultural Sustainability Initiative. (This list of descriptions provides more than enough evidence that 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.)

Section III. has 13 subsections including: Stakeholder Engagement (20); Surveys/Questionnaires/Survey Methodology (16); Educational Systems/Lifelong Learning/Neighborhood Learning Centers (21); Sustainable Communities/Permaculture/Community Economics (49); Local Finance/Microcredit/Local Currencies/Social Media Financing (18); Peacebuilding (21); Interfaith/Socially Engaged Spirituality (37) (Note: the number in parentheses indicates number of people listed in that category.)

3) A multitude of statistics (throughout the document) as supporting evidence, to help “connect the dots” on both challenges, and potential solutions

Here are some examples of supporting evidence statistics:

“For almost 3 billion people, wood is the main energy source for heating and cooking....”/“People in industrialized countries comprise only about 20% of the global population, yet they consume 81% of the world’s paper and 76% of its timber.”/ Deforestation contributes more to global greenhouse gas emissions than the world’s entire transport sector./ “By 2001 the rainforest areas of Brazil were reduced by a fifth (respect of 1970), to around 4,000,000 km²; the ground cleared was mainly destined for cattle pasture - Brazil is the world's largest exporter of beef with almost 200,000,000 head of cattle.”/“...the last remaining rainforests could be consumed in less than 40 years”

"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."

4) Valuable insights from a wide variety of sources throughout the document

a) "...every article in the bazaar has moral and spiritual values attached to it...." (J.C. Kumarappa)

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...."

(General Education in a Free Society; Harvard Report, 1945)

c) "Oh! What a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."

d) "Working at the subsystem level without addressing the forces at the larger systemic level that undermine the work at the subsystem level will not lead to any durable outcome."

(Dr. Hizkias Assefa)

e) "The peace processes that work are those that are founded on a broad spectrum of initiatives in which citizens play a full role." (Andy Carl)

f) "Like the secular intellectuals, activists tend to see all malevolence as being caused by 'them'--the 'system'--without understanding how these negative factors also operate within ourselves.... The opposite view—that radical transformation of society requires personal and spiritual change first or at least simultaneously—has been accepted by Buddhists and many other religious adherents for more than 2,500 years. Those who want to change society must understand the inner dimensions of change. It is this sense of personal transformation that religion can provide." (Sulak Sivaraksa)

g) "The satisfaction of one's physical needs must come at a certain point to a dead stop before it degenerates into physical decadence." (Mahatma Gandhi)

h) 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.

5) a 116 page section on Critical Challenges, providing details, statistics, and “connect the dots” moments on the following subjects:

- a) Monetary Debt
- b) Population, Indiscriminant Consumption, and Resource Depletion—Exponentially Increasing World Population at a time when it is culturally acceptable to encourage indiscriminant consumption (with a special focus on Resource Depletion
- c) More about a time when it is culturally acceptable to encourage indiscriminant consumption (with a special focus on the advertising industry’s and the entertainment industry’s part in what is culturally acceptable
- d) The Threat of Global Warming—and the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

6) a 28 point timeline of warnings about Global Warming—and Fair Use inclusion of some critically important graphs [Ex: Carbon dioxide records for the past 400,000 years; Global Surface Temperature Analysis (1880-2007); “Invitation Package” charts; Sea Surface Temperature (1880-2012); Arctic Sea Ice Volume (1980-present); Sea Level Rise—and Causes (1994-2012)]

7) Some observations on how 1000 Community Visioning Initiatives might be funded...

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

A rough estimate by this writer for a time-intensive (year or more) Community Visioning Initiative (introduced by Preliminary Surveys, and supported by many Community Teaching and Learning Centers) is \$10 million (10 million in U.S. dollars).

Thus, 1000 Community Visioning Initiatives, in communities around the world, would cost \$10 billion.

Some selected observations--

- i) \$10 billion is only .005% of the \$207 trillion in personal wealth held by the richest 10 percent.
- ii) \$10 billion is only .57% (a little more than half of 1%) of \$1,750 billion in military expenditures in 2012.
- iii) \$10 billion is 1.8% of (est.) \$557 billion in worldwide advertising spending in 2012.

8) a 64 page “presentation of dots” on the subject of “Large Cities (with a Population of 1 million or more) vs. Villages, Towns, and Small Cities”—as an effort to provide perspective on the question:

Which models for human settlements are more likely to be ecologically sustainable, more likely to achieve carbon neutral economies—and more likely to achieve resolutions to most or all of the other

challenges brought forward in this “Invitation” document--“Large Cities (with a Population of 1 million or more) vs. Villages, Towns, and Small Cities”?

9) and an 8 page summary of evidence on the theme:

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

Concluding Comments

The challenges of our times are not something the experts will resolve while the rest of us are doing something else.

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.

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

The investments of time, energy, and money that each of us make in our everyday circumstances becomes the larger economy.

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.

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.”

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.

Somehow or other, we need 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.

Again-- No association of societies ever on planet Earth has had to resolve the kind of challenges the next few generations of people will have to resolve. We are going to need all the resources, knowledge, and skills each one of us has, and we are going to need to make the best efforts we can at working together, if we are going to succeed at resolving the challenges ahead of us. If there are readers who have not yet been invited to become a part of the unprecedented effort that is needed, such readers are in every way encouraged to consider this document as their invitation.