

SHIFT

the global change-makers' magazine

 **ATAMAI**
ECO-VILLAGE P. 17

AFTER THE **G20**

Who, What, Why, and How? P. 9



Exclusive preview of Carolyn Baker's upcoming book:

Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse P. 47



Change the Culture, not the Climate P. 21



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One-Planet **SOLIDARITY**

EARTH COMMUNITY

ISSUE

6



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NEXT ISSUE RELEASE
26th Jan



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Dear reader,

Dear reader,

Welcome to the sixth issue of SHIFT magazine!

In our increasingly globalized system of crony capitalism the natural world is processed ever more efficiently into resources for profit. While the resulting wealth spirals to the top of the economic pyramid, the consequences trickle down.

In this issue of SHIFT we peer beneath the surface of the modern life we take for granted, taking aim at globalization, disconnection, and the fetishization of economic growth. Our competitive, compliant, consumerist culture is not likely coming with us into the future, according to the cultural creatives pushing the envelope on change.

From Atamai Eco-village in New Zealand, Rafaele Joudry reports on a community that is putting localization, downshifting, and participatory governance into practice; Geoff Mosley, Queensland director of CASSE, sketches a vision for a steady-state economy of the future; and author Carolyn Baker reveals a sneak-preview of her upcoming book: *Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse*, examining the art of cultivating resilient communities. We also report on the G20 Summit in Brisbane, Australia, lending voice to views absent from the mainstream media.

SHIFT is brought to you each second month by a community of cultural creatives inspired by the opportunities that crisis brings. Darting (and dodging) between schedules, meetings, and the mundane errands of everyday life, our all-volunteer team has seized every available moment, pulling strings on a shoestring budget, to investigate, interview, vision, scribble, edit, design, and print (on recycled paper, of course) this sixth issue of ad-free insight, critique, and inspiration to practical action.

Gossip-free and devoid of commercial clutter, SHIFT provides a platform for a movement that is uncompromised by revenues and remits, cutting straight to the chase on subjects of social significance. SHIFT is made possible by supporters who care about shifting the discourse and being the change we wish to see. Thank you for taking part in the much-needed shift in public discourse, and for making time for the conversations that matter.

We hope that you will find SHIFT an inspiring and empowering read, and that you will find information worth sharing. Take care, and have a good read!

Love and solidarity,

The **SHIFT** Team

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Theo Kitchener

Theo Kitchener has a background in activism and community building, and more recently has been working to raise awareness around collapse and transition possibilities through the Melbourne-based volunteer group, Doing It Ourselves. Self-described apocalypsimist, Theo is positive about the future, focusing on community, permaculture, appropriate technology, voluntary simplicity, participatory democracy, community economics and our potential transformation. Theo is based in Melbourne Australia.

[/DoingItOurselves](#)
www.doingitourselves.org



Kari McGregor

A committed downshifter, Kari's career pathway through non-profit management and mainstream education recently culminated in a leap from the treadmill and a return to her activist roots. Harbouring nomadic tendencies, she has lived in the UK, Spain and Thailand before settling in Australia and making the Sunshine Coast her home for now. Kari now divides her time between consulting for the non-profit world, and working for the grassroots non-profit, Sustainability Showcase. She blogs as The Overthinker, freelancing a critical spin on our planetary predicament.

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www.theoverthinker.org



Dave Pollard

Dave Pollard retired from paid work in 2010 after 35 years as an advisor to small enterprises. He is a long-time student of our culture and its systems, of history and of how the world really work. His books include Finding the Sweet Spot: The Natural Entrepreneur's Guide to Responsible, Sustainable, Joyful Work, and Group Works: A Pattern Language for Bringing Life to Meetings and Other Gatherings. He is currently working on a collection of short stories about the world two millennia from now. He lives on Bowen Island, Canada.

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Anneke Vo

Anneke Vo, aka Miss Metanoia, is a millennial-generation freelance writer, cultural creative, and professional homebody. A digital native, she critiques culture through the lens of a generation raised on selfies and status updates, whilst attempting to navigate an economic and political terrain unrecognizable to previous generations of thinkers. Anneke is based in Sydney, Australia.

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Sean Crawley

Sean Crawley has decided to hang around and get involved in earthly affairs for as long as possible because his curiosity to see how all this pans out is greater than the sometimes attractive option of hanging up one's boots. Sean has worked as an educator in schools, community settings and in youth mental health, and currently donates much of his time to the grassroots non-profit, Sustainability Showcase. He lives and works on the Sunshine Coast, Australia.

www.fourtentytwoam.blogspot.com.au



John Oliver

Having spent much of his life in the corporate world, John was exposed to the inner workings of energy production, banking, and government departments. Realising that he was selling his soul to whichever devil was offering the highest price, John jumped ship and began actively working at making a positive difference, as opposed to just making a profit. Life on the other side of the fence, according to John, is not only much easier, but also more satisfying.



Carolyn Baker

Carolyn Baker, Ph.D. is the author of Collapsing Consciously: Transformative Truths For Turbulent Times. Her previous books are Navigating The Coming Chaos: A Handbook For Inner Transition (2011) and Sacred Demise: Walking The Spiritual Path Of Industrial Civilization's Collapse (2009). She lives and writes in Boulder, Colorado. A former psychotherapist and professor of psychology and history, Carolyn offers life coaching for people who want to live more resiliently in the present as they prepare for the future.

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Geoff Mosley

Geoff Mosley (BA Hons., MA, PhD) has been a conservationist for over 60 years. In 1966, at ANU, he gave the first Australian year-long university course on conservation. From 1973 to 1986 he was the CEO of the Australian Conservation Foundation, and from 1981 to 1988 he represented Australasia and Oceania on the World Conservation Union Council. Geoff is the author of over 20 books on conservation, including Steady State Alternative to Endless Economic Growth. In 2008 he was the winner of the United Nations Association of Australia's individual award for his conservation efforts. Since 2008 Geoff has been the Australian Director of the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy.

[/steadystateeconomy](#)
www.steadystate.org



Rafaele Joudry

Rafaele Joudry, has spent several years in the environment movement and was a Non Violent Action trainer at the Franklin Blockade in 1983. She then worked as a community developer before starting her own natural health business, which she has run for the last 25 years. She also holds a Masters in Psychology. Rafaele is in the process of relocating to Atamai Eco Village in New Zealand, and is available to speak to groups in Australia or New Zealand about this unique initiative.

[/atamavillage](#)
www.atamavillage.org

f



World News Digest

Oct to Nov 2014

With the fast pace of today's news cycle it can be hard to know what to pay attention to, and information overload is often the inevitable result. Listed under the categories of Economy, Energy, Environment and Geopolitics, our selected news highlights bypass celebrity gossip and partisan politics, cutting through the crap to shine the spotlight on the world affairs that affect us most strongly.

The SHIFT team has trawled through hundreds of news sources and stories, turning up our bullshit filter to maximum volume, to bring you October and November's global affairs highlights...



Economy



Get Ready for another Global Crash

Another financial crash is on its way — even UK Prime Minister David Cameron acknowledges it, warning of instability and uncertainty, and alluding to imminent crisis. The only questions that remain are what the immediate catalyst will be, and when it will begin.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ Growth: the destructive god that can never be appeased
- ➔ UK PM warns on second global crash
- ➔ Red lights are flashing on the global economy

www.theguardian.com
www.cnbc.com
www.theguardian.com



Challenges to the Orthodoxy of Economic Growth

More and more academics and thought leaders are publicly questioning the orthodoxy of economic growth. The endless pursuit of economic growth is making us unhappy and risks destroying the Earth's capacity to sustain us; it is also the key driver of climate change. The good news is that taking steps to make our lives more sustainable will also make us happier and healthier.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ Do we dare to question economic growth?
- ➔ To get climate change under control, our growth fetish must go

www.theguardian.com
www.theguardian.com



Australia's G20 Grief

Australia finally has a high profile on the geopolitical stage, but not for the reasons one might wish. Now infamous for its blasé attitude to climate change, obsession with fossil-fuelled economic growth, and inhumane treatment of refugees, the G20 provided the golden opportunity to voice dissent and demand better from Australia.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ Pope Francis letter to Tony Abbott calls on G20 to be 'examples of generosity' to refugees www.theguardian.com
- ➔ Aboriginals Decry G20 Host Australia as Leaders Gather www.bloomberg.com
- ➔ Kids 'arrest Abbott' for climate crimes www.sbs.com.au



Has the Political Right won Control of the English-Speaking World?

Over the last three decades, left-wing parties in the English-speaking world have taken on much of the right's antidemocratic program. Each country has its own internal political dynamics, and in each case the right has come to power in different ways — yet they share a lot of ideological common ground. This is no accident — multinational corporate lobbying, a global network of think-tanks, and the planetary echo chamber afforded by organisations like Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation keeps right-wing ideas circulating and resonating throughout the English-speaking world. However, fresh alternatives from the left are showing they can adapt and thrive in a crisis.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ The right has won control of the English-speaking world - thanks to the weakness of the left www.theguardian.com
- ➔ Viva Podemos: the left shows it can adapt and thrive in a crisis www.theguardian.com

Energy



Oil Price Plunge a Challenge to Geopolitical & Energy Industry Assumptions

Global oil prices have fallen 25 percent since June, marking the return of oil-price fluctuation as a geopolitical wild card. Although oil prices have been relatively stable — about \$100 a barrel — for the past five years, the historical pattern has seen high oil prices boost the strategic clout of producing countries by boosting government coffers, and falling prices have had the opposite effect. Low prices are expected to hurt the economies of Russia and Iran are expected to suffer while the US and Saudi Arabia weather the storm.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ Plunging oil prices challenge geopolitical, energy industry assumptions www.theenergycollective.com



China Levies Import Tariffs on Coal Imports, Hitting Australia and Russia, but Sparing Indonesia

China, the world's top coal importer, will levy import tariffs on coal imports after nearly a decade, in its latest bid to prop up ailing domestic miners who have been buffeted by rising costs and tumbling prices. The sudden move by China to levy import tariffs of between 3 percent and 6 percent from October 15 is set to hit miners in Australia and Russia — among the top coal exporters into the country — while exempting Indonesia, the second largest shipper of the fuel to China.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ China to again levy coal import tariffs after nearly a decade www.reuters.com

Environment



Planetary Boundaries Update

The habitats of 140 Australian threatened species are found not to be protected according to the WWF; the UN announces CO2 emissions must be zero by 2070 to prevent climate disaster; fish show signs of failure to adapt to rising levels of CO2 in the oceans; rising sea levels in Jakarta, Indonesia, cause city to sink by up to 6 inches per year; and pharmaceuticals flushed into the environment appear to be a new source of chemical pollution threatening wildlife.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ Habitats of 140 Australian threatened species not protected, WWF study finds www.theguardian.com
- ➔ CO2 emissions must be zero by 2070 to prevent climate disaster, UN says www.theguardian.com
- ➔ Fish failing to adapt to rising carbon dioxide levels in ocean www.theguardian.com
- ➔ Sinking Jakarta Starts Building Giant Wall as Sea Rises www.bloomberg.com
- ➔ Drugs flushed into the environment could be cause of wildlife decline www.theguardian.com



Magical Thinking a Key Tool in Fighting Climate Change

We are burning through so much of our remaining 'carbon budget' today that in "safe" projections of the 2070s and 2080s, greenhouse gas emissions must go negative for the climate to stay safe. It will be necessary to remove carbon from the air through reforestation or some as-yet unproven airborne-carbon removal technology. The assumption that we will know how to do this is closer to magical thinking than to scientific solutioneering.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- ➔ The Magical Thought That's Assumed in Climate Studies www.bloomberg.com



Nobel Laureates Call for Revolutionary Shift in Resource Use

Eleven Nobel laureates have pooled their clout to sound a warning, declaring that mankind is living beyond its means and darkening its future. At a conference in Hong Kong coinciding with the annual Nobel awards season, holders of the prestigious prize pleaded for a revolution in how humans live, work and travel. Only by switching to smarter, less greedy use of resources can humans avert wrecking the ecosystems on which they depend, the laureates argued.

FOLLOW THE STORY: [Nobel laureates call for a revolutionary shift in how humans use resources](#)

www.theguardian.com



Are we Re-entering the Cold War?

Ukraine, Iran's nukes, the price of oil: There are ties worthy of a Bourne film, if the media connected the dots. With parity between West and non-West, US hegemony be damned — it looks as though we are re-entering the Cold War.

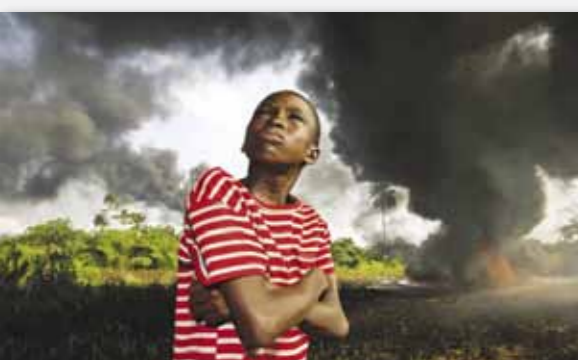
FOLLOW THE STORY:

- [What really happened in Beijing: Putin, Obama, Xi - band the back story the media won't tell you:](#)
- [Are Europe and the world slipping back into a second Cold War?](#)
- [Putin says the United States wants to subdue Russia](#)

www.salon.com

www.theconversation.com

www.cnn.com



Environmental Protests Against Big Oil Gather Speed in the Niger Delta

A new wave of anger, manifesting in large protests, is sweeping through Nigeria's Ogoni enclave. Following a year of direct action, blockades have forced shut-downs of two oil refineries and a seaport, protests against Shell's oil exploitation in the Niger Delta — and the devastating environmental consequences — are gathering momentum.

FOLLOW THE STORY: [The spirit of Saro-Wiwa rises: In one of the most polluted places on earth there's a resurgence of resistance](#)

www.newint.org



The Geopolitics of Climate Change

For over a decade, the Pentagon and other Western militaries such as Australia have put serious thought into the medium and long-term implications of climate change. For example, in 2003, the Pentagon released a paper titled "An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and its Implications for United States National Security." The report predicted massive flooding, storms, forced migration, food shortages, starvation and water crises. Moreover, as a result of diminishing carrying capacity, the report also foresaw a dramatic growth in violent political and social unrest over dwindling resources.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- [Militarism And Climate Activism: Staring Down The Threat Of Climate Disaster](#)

www.newmatilda.com

Geopolitics

Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West's Fault

According to the prevailing wisdom in the West, the Ukraine crisis can be blamed almost entirely on Russian aggression. Russian President Vladimir Putin, the argument goes, annexed Crimea out of a long-standing desire to resuscitate the Soviet empire, and he may eventually go after the rest of Ukraine, as well as other countries in eastern Europe. In this view, the ouster of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014 merely provided a pretext for Putin's decision to order Russian forces to seize part of Ukraine. But this account is wrong: the United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the crisis. The taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West.

- FOLLOW THE STORY:**
- [Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault](#)
 - [Russia, Ukraine Dispute Truce Format as NATO Sees Buildup](#)
 - [Putin Rebukes Ukraine for Cutting Links with Eastern Regions](#)
 - [Putin Warns he won't let Ukraine Defeat Eastern Rebels:](#)

www.foreignaffairs.com

www.bloomberg.com

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www.bloomberg.com



Media AWOL on Public Responsibility when Governments go to War & Botched CIA Missions Backfire

Recent research shows that when governments go to war, the mainstream media fails to live up to its brief of providing fair and unbiased information to the public. The mainstream media obediently echoes and reiterated the aims and goals of "the mission", and reports campaign announcements uncritically. Historical facts, context, and comparisons are avoided, allowing the "official version" to gain momentum. Meanwhile, the CIA continues to arm rebels in Syria despite evidence of this being counter-productive to the aim of peace in the region.

FOLLOW THE STORY:

- [When governments go to war, the Fourth Estate goes AWOL](#)
- [f you thought the ISIS war couldn't get any worse, just wait for more of the CIA](#)

www.theconversation.com

www.theguardian.com

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After the G20

Who, What, Why, and How?

SHIFT magazine treats you to an analysis of the G20 you won't see in the mainstream media!

WHAT IS THE G20, AND WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY DO?

The G20 is a forum for international coordination of economic policy. It is the latest initiative for global economic governance in a string of such initiatives since World War II that includes the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The G20 heads of government or heads of state have convened at nine summits since the Group's first meeting in 2008.





















And if you're a little confused by all the G-numbers out there, you can relax, as the G20 has replaced the G-8 as the main economic council of wealthy nations since 2009, so this is the one you need to know about.

One important fact to keep in mind regarding the G20 is that its parameters for development are very narrow — economic growth is the key goal, and one school of thought dominates the Group: neo-liberal 'free' trade as the means by which perpetual growth is to be achieved. It is a faith-based notion that the invisible hand will provide, and the exclusion of economically poor countries from the Group casts suspicion on who the invisible hand is supposed to provide for.

The weekend of 15th — 16th November saw the G20 descend on the sub-tropical metropolis of Brisbane, capital of the quintessentially Australian state of Queensland. At a cost of AU\$400 million, the ninth meeting of the Group of Twenty attracted around 4,000 delegates to knock heads together over their shared goal of furthering economic growth.

Global economic forums aren't really aimed at informing the general public, much less engaging us in the conversations that dictate our futures — and you could be forgiven for thinking global economic governance is a rather dry topic that you have little chance of understanding. Although we may not be able to make it sound all that exciting, we can put it all in a nutshell so you'll at least be able to reel off a few facts when asked what you think of it all. After all, it's our economic future the leaders of the world's major economies have just been deciding behind closed doors...

The list of G20 member states, ranked according to GDP, is as follows (data according to the IMF, 2014):

G-20 member	GDP rank	Participating leader at Brisbane Summit	% of global GDP
 EU — represented by the European Commission and the European Central Bank	-	<i>Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council & Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission</i>	23.7%
 USA	1	<i>Barack Obama, President</i>	22.4%
 China	2	<i>Xi Jinping, President</i>	13.3%
 Japan	3	<i>Shinzō Abe, Prime Minister</i>	6.1%
 Germany	4	<i>Angela Merkel, Chancellor</i>	4.9%
 France	5	<i>François Hollande, President</i>	3.7%
 UK	6	<i>David Cameron, Prime Minister</i>	3.7%
 Brazil	7	<i>Dilma Rousseff, President</i>	2.9%
 Italy	8	<i>Matteo Renzi, Prime Minister</i>	2.7%
 Russia	9	<i>Vladimir Putin, President</i>	2.7%
 India	10	<i>Narendra Modi, Prime Minister</i>	2.6%
 Canada	11	<i>Stephen Harper, Prime Minister</i>	
 Australia	12	<i>Tony Abbott, Prime Minister</i>	
 South Korea	14	<i>Park Guen-Hye, President</i>	
 Mexico	15	<i>Enrique Peña Nieto, President</i>	
 Indonesia	16	<i>Joko Widodo, President</i>	
 Turkey	18	<i>Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister</i>	
 Argentina	21	<i>Axel Kicillof, Minister of Economy</i>	
 Saudi Arabia	19	<i>Salman, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia</i>	
 South Africa	33	<i>Jacob Zuma, President</i>	

In addition to the 20 member states, the CEOs of several other international forums and institutions participate in G20 meetings — including the managing director and chair of the IMF, the President of the World Bank, the International Monetary and Financial Committee, and the chair of the Development Assistance Committee.

Regarding membership, the G20 states that:

"In a forum such as the G20, it is particularly important for the number of countries involved to be restricted and fixed to ensure the effectiveness and continuity of its activity. There are no formal criteria for G20 membership, and the composition of the group has remained unchanged since it was established. In view of the objectives of the G20, it was considered important that countries and regions of systemic significance for the international financial system be included. Aspects such as geographical balance and population representation also played a major part."

WHO ARE THE G20 COUNTRIES ANYWAY?

It wouldn't be entirely unreasonable to expect that the G20 is simply a collection of the world's wealthiest 20 nations, as it certainly seems clear that wealth is the clique's main concern. The Group of Twenty in fact comprises strategically selected governments and central bank governors of twenty major economies — 19 individual countries, and the European Union (EU), all of which are among the top 34 ranking economies in GDP terms. The G20 economies collectively account for 85% of gross world product (GWP), 80% of world trade, and two thirds of the global population.

G20 membership policy has been heavily criticized since the Group's inception.



Controversy over the attendance of Russian President Vladimir Putin divided NATO alliance members, and a July 2014 poll found that 49% of Australians did not think Putin should be allowed to attend, following the eruption of the Ukraine crisis and the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, despite the dearth of evidence regarding Russia's involvement.

WHAT ABOUT THE COUNTRIES NOT INCLUDED?

Not represented by membership in the G-20, despite ranking higher in GDP terms than some members, are:

- Switzerland – 20
- Nigeria – 21
- Norway – 26
- Taiwan – 27
- United Arab Emirates (UAE) – 29
- Iran – 30
- Colombia – 31
- Thailand – 32

With respect to having a more equal representation of nations from various global regions, it would, perhaps, make sense to include Nigeria and either Iran or the UAE in the Group of Twenty, as both Africa and the Middle East are barely represented. As the selection criteria for G-20 membership is not transparent, the reasons for their exclusion are open to speculation.

The following countries are not included independently, but are represented by the EU:

- Spain – 13
- Netherlands – 16
- Sweden – 22
- Poland – 23
- Belgium – 25
- Austria – 28
- Denmark – 33

Spain, although not an official G-20 member, has been involved as a “permanent guest” of the organization, and the Spanish government's policy is not to request official membership.







The under-representation of the African continent has been at the forefront of criticisms leveled at the G-20's exclusivity. It is of particular interest to note that the European Union is included in the G-20, but the African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are not. Hard questions need to be asked regarding the exclusion of the developing economies of the Global South from the world's foremost coalition for global economic governance. What does their absence imply, if not a higher priority given to the growth of already wealthy nations?

WHO ARE THE GUEST COUNTRIES?

In the spirit of fairness, or at least lip-service to fairness, each G20 meeting generously throws its doors open to a number of guest countries. Typically invitees include the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – currently Myanmar, the Chair of the African Union – currently Mauritania, and a representative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development are invited – in this case Senegal, as well as leaders of the Financial Stability Board, the International Labour Organization, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations (UN), the World Bank Group, and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Other invitees are chosen by the host country, and usually include one or two countries from its own geographic region. Australia invited New Zealand and Singapore, benign neighbours with whom it has no cause for quarrel. In light of Australia's outsourcing of its refugee quota to its poorer neighbours, it would have been an interesting exercise in international economic governance had Papua New Guinea and Nauru been invited instead.

The 2014 G20 invitees included the following 6 countries:

G20 member	GDP rank	Participating leader at Brisbane Summit
 Mauritania	152	<i>Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, President</i>
 Myanmar	75	<i>Thein Sein, President</i>
 New Zealand	54	<i>John Key, Prime Minister</i>
 Senegal	116	<i>Macky Sall, President</i>
 Singapore	36	<i>Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister</i>
 Spain	13	<i>Mariano Rajoy, Prime Minister</i>

DRACONIAN SECURITY MEASURES

Amid heightened security, legislation introduced specifically for the G-20 suspended civil liberties, enabling police to:

- make arrests without warrants
- detain people without charge
- predispose courts to refuse bail to arrestees
- conduct extensive personal searches without warrant – including strip searches

A number of household items – including eggs and flour – were banned from being carried in public, and anyone caught with one of these objects subjected to penalties. Penalties also applied to anyone carrying, for whatever reason the creative mind might imagine, whips, bows and arrows, and lizards.

The Peaceful Assembly act was also suspended during the G-20 meeting dates. Permission to protest was strictly regulated and restricted to certain locations; even the size of protestors' placards was restricted to within certain parameters.

The G-20 security legislation made heavy fines enforceable, with penalty units of \$110, and most offenses carrying between 50 and 100 penalty units' worth of fines. The weight of the penalties combined with the draconian restrictions on freedoms rendered protest against the Summit all but impotent. A handful of demonstrations carried out by creative activists – such as the staged 'arrest' of a Tony Abbott impersonator by a group of children for his 'crimes against the climate' – succeeded in highlighting the absence of matters of critical importance from the G-20 agenda.

Independent Legal Observers were also on hand to observe and document any police brutality, but were prohibited from intervening, with the clarification that intervention could compromise their evidence, rendering it legally void.

If the security measures employed by the Brisbane G-20 Summit are built upon for future Summits, activists are going to need to rise to the challenge by employing ever more creative measures to get their messages of protest across. The likelihood of success in delaying or closing down the Summit's proceedings is small, but would lead to opportunities to demand transparent and accountable global economic governance.



WHAT DID THE G-20 ACHIEVE?

The joint communiqué of the G-20 leaders summarized the points of agreement of the summit. None of these agreements are binding, but the G-20 intends to oversee development in the directions specified.

For the first time in G-20 history, climate change was not included on the agenda for discussion, with the Australian Prime Minister stating that he did not want the agenda "cluttered" by subjects that would distract from economic growth. EU and US officials are reported to have been unhappy with this decision.

Although the main focus of the Summit, as agreed in advance, was economic growth, other topics of global concern that did not feature in the resulting communiqué – including climate change, energy supply, and the West African Ebola epidemic – were discussed, thanks to pressures both internal and external.

Key points of agreement featured in the communiqué are as follows:

Economic growth

- Plans to increase global economic growth by an extra 2%
- Job creation
- Increased trade – via multilateral trading systems
- Poverty reduction
- Economic recovery post global financial crisis
- Resilience to future shocks such as another global financial crisis

Infrastructure spending

- Investment through the creation of a four-year infrastructure hub (to be based in Sydney, Australia), linking government, private sector, development banks and interested international organizations.
- Investment in infrastructure is to be facilitated by better information sharing and the collaboration between the private sector, governments, development banks and international organizations.
- The hub intends to assist construction globally by helping countries "improve their general investment climates, reduce barriers to investment, grow their 'project pipelines', and help match investors with projects."

Stability of global systems

- Measures to reduce risk in financial systems
- Improvements to the stability of banks
- Measures to make international taxation arrangements fairer and more transparent (the topic of tax avoidance was fueled by disclosure of confidential tax agreements between 340 multinational corporations and Luxembourg).
- Reduction in corruption
- Strengthening of global institutions

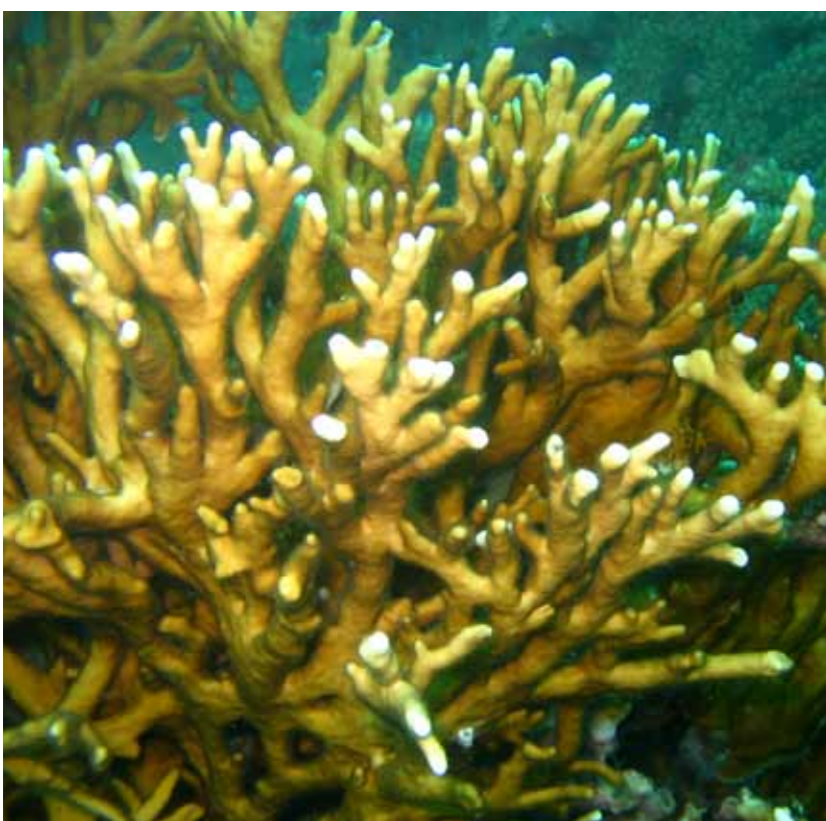
The extent to which any of these goals can be achieved is debatable. Economic recovery since the Global Financial Crisis has not been reassuring, and many analysts now predict another global recession is looming, with UK Prime Minister David Cameron prominent among them.

With the absence of alternative schools of thought to neo-liberalism, the supremacy of the economic growth imperative, and the exclusion of developing economies from the discussion, the G-20 is a force for maintenance of the status quo, not a force for positive change.

The economic future of our global community demands fair representation, consideration of alternative schools of thought informed by evidence, and a set of realistic, tangible and achievable goals. If the G-20 cannot provide, then it is an illegitimate structure for economic governance.

FIRE CORAL By John Oliver

Each edition of SHIFT presents one species of life that is classified as critically endangered, Homo sapiens excluded. By definition, whether it be by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), or your nation state's environmental governance structure such as the Department of the Environment in Australia, critically endangered means that the species is facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future.



Renowned for their beauty, on the whole coral reefs are a rare and fragile environment. Created over thousands of years, a coral reef is but a memorial to the life that has flourished in the warm shallow waters.

Fire Coral, named as such more for appearance and location, rather than genus, is one of the rarest and most endangered of all corals. It is actually more aligned to jellyfish, in that they reproduce asexually by releasing a gelatinous capsule containing the sperm and the egg, which forms a free-swimming larva. Its close ties to jellyfish are the reason that fire coral has a sting similar to that contained in jellyfish tentacles. Whilst not known to be fatal, the pain can last up to two weeks if stung.

-  **COMMON NAME:**
Fire Coral
-  **SPECIES:**
Millepora Boschmai
-  **RANGE:**
Coral reefs off Panama and Indonesia
-  **THREATS:**
 - Coral bleaching through increased water temperature
 - Storm damage
 - Colony damage caused by fishing or diving
 - Pollutants entering the waters primarily from farming in coastal areas
 - Climate change is likely to have significant impact through water temperature rise and increased severity of storms



The fragility of the coral belies its strength in overcoming natural temperature and storm damage as it is able to respond quickly once the storm has passed or the water temperature has returned to habitable levels. Storm fragmentation also allows the coral to create new habitats away from the primary site.

As it stands today, Indonesia and Panama hold the only known reef habitats containing Fire Coral, whilst numerous reefs contain remnants indicating previous habitation. The most significant of these is off the coast of Brazil.

Human intervention, be it direct (fishing) or indirect (climate change) have been the primary reasons for reef degradation, and therefore the destruction of marine life.

In some cases, the reefs have been deliberately destroyed by divers hunting fish for the lucrative aquarium trade. These divers have no hesitation in smashing the coral to force the small reef fish from hiding and into the nets. It is interesting to note that divers hesitate in also taking Fire Coral. Aquarium owners have found that as it reproduces asexually, it often overtakes the aquarium because of the optimal conditions.

Poor agricultural practices, silting, and pollutants have been some of the most common reasons for permanent reef degradation, and we are now finding that the permanent changes in water temperature caused by climate change are creating an environment that cannot sustain Fire Coral.

Coral Bleaching, caused by temperature change, is likely to affect Fire Coral before it impacts on true corals in the reef habitat. Most of the hundreds of existing Fire Coral colonies were destroyed through bleaching during the 1982-83 El Nino, when there was a significant and extended increase in water temperature.

The Fire Corals are critically endangered for various reasons, and the human race has a hand in each of them. Whilst we cannot reverse climate change in the short term, we should be able to save some Fire Coral through implementing sustainable farming methods — rather than the toxic and wasteful ones currently in place — and also through controls placed on the divers seeking aquarium fish. Seeing it grows so prolifically, an argument may also be made to transplant to other coral reefs where it has only recently become extinct in the hope that we can resurrect a rare and beautiful species.

Collected around the unifying principles of Permaculture, those who come to the village share a vision of a new way of living lightly on the planet.

but then everyone has to leave every morning to go out to work, and there is no real social or economic productivity in the village.”

In contrast, the traditional village model was a hub of interaction, productivity, invention, and livelihood opportunities. And this is what Atamai aims to be.

Already they have a number of productive enterprises running, including the community orchard, community garden, and community farm and winery — all on Common land.

Villagers also work within the village on forestry and timber production, eco building services, admin and IT services, yoga and Tai Chi, and are embarking on cheese-making, herbal medicine, honey, food preserving, and offering educational workshops on finance and adjustment to future scenarios.

The village has been attracting young couples with children as well as early retirees with a life vision to fulfil. Those wishing to bring up their families in a more nurturing world find the village provides a safe and stimulating environment.

Melbourne couple, Craig and Tracey, are IT specialists in their early thirties. Over a lovely dinner of fresh fish and baked veggies cooked in their wood-burning stove, they told me about how they decided to move to Atamai village because they were living in Melbourne and their cat got hit by a car. This led to a series of events that brought them first to Auckland and then to Atamai Village. They had been seriously looking for the perfect community and had a number of specific criteria. When they didn't find a community that matched these, they looked further afield — in New Zealand. These criteria included local food production, transport — train or water based, agricultural underpinnings to the local economy, a cultural mix including strong environmental awareness, drought resistance — lots of water resources, and a climate that was not too hot and not too cold.

“We were looking specifically in terms of resilience and energy security, so we looked for towns that had some resilience.” Craig explains. “We didn't want to base our interest in a town with just a tourist trade. So we compiled a list of things we wanted to be near or have, and Atamai ticked every box except a train line. But Motueka traditionally had water freight, so at least the history was there for a non-carbon based transport system.”

I asked them what they liked about living at Atamai. “It's just fabulous. The land is perfect — the location, a mountainous river

The villagers see their settlement as a mosaic of different skills and attributes that each person can contribute to the local economy and social fabric.

Atamai Ecovillage:

It's Just Common-Sense

A newly formed Permaculture Village in New Zealand is providing families a different way of living. At the top of the South Island, which boasts a temperate, Mediterranean climate with the most sunshine of any part of New Zealand, Atamai Village is nestled in a picturesque, hilly valley just ten minutes' drive from the Tasman Strait and the town of Motueka. But what makes Atamai different is its vision for a different future. “Atamai” means common sense in Maori. The village was formed as an intentional response to pending climate change and energy descent.

What is required to do this, says one of the founding members, Joanna Santa Barbara, is not just physical structures and meeting practical needs, but a new form of social organisation to enable self-management at a village scale. Joanna, a retired child psychiatrist from Canada, is one of the villagers specialising in group process, making sure all the meetings and communications in the village run smoothly.

Already under development for 7 years, the village is now populated with close to a third of its eventual target, which will be about 50 to 100 families. “It's exciting for us to welcome new members” says Joanna, “because each of them brings a different skill set and social contribution.”

The villagers see their settlement as a mosaic of different skills and attributes that each person can contribute to the local economy and social fabric.

“The problem so many communities and eco villages have confronted,” explains Ben Van Der Wijngaart, one of the Trustees of the project, “is a lack of planning or infrastructure for economic viability. They may create a nice place to live,

People are moving to the village from around the world to participate in this social-ecological experiment in living sensibly. Collected around the unifying principles of Permaculture, those who come to the village share a vision of a new way of living lightly on the planet.



By: Rafaele Joudry



"We love the commitment everyone brings to the community, the conscious focus on resilience and sustainability, and the strong interest in having our own local economy."



valley — is the exact picture of my perfect locale", reports Craig. Tracey adds, "We love the commitment everyone brings to the community, the conscious focus on resilience and sustainability, and the strong interest in having our own local economy."

Specifically, Craig is interested in hand-woodwork and village textiles. Tracey does weaving as a hobby. "There's the capability to make something happen here," said Craig. "Village scale technology, powered by open-source hardware devices and machines is a possibility."

But for the present both he and Tracey are working in Social Enterprise, which allows them to express some important values. "We like to see a social mission written legally into business structures and constitutions alongside the profit mission. Another important principle is a decentralisation of knowledge and power in the business." These are of course common threads with the way business tends to be conducted at Atamai.

Another story comes from Craig and Charlie, a Canadian couple I met with on Skype. They have finished globe-trotting, started a family and are in the process of moving to Atamai. Craig, 39, is currently finishing his PhD in Computer Science. Craig tells how he had bought land in Central Alberta in the mid-90's, where he tried to create a sustainable property, but came to grief fighting the oil companies.

"When the oil companies came through I had a real fight to keep them off my land", relates Craig. "They did seismic work all around us. It was a two-year struggle. After going through the fight I didn't want to hang around anymore. I was even more interested in sustainable living, but the energy

footprint is so high in Canada. I did lots of research in design, looked at cordwood which has an extremely high R value, or underground living. But the oil company thing derailed it all."

The other thing that bothered him was that in Canada a house is always heated to 20 degrees Celsius. "Whereas here in New Zealand we feel more connected to the outside", he explains. "And I have to be, I like that. In Canada houses feel like hospitals. They are sanitized. Here all houses have spiders in them. You have to accept them as roommates. In the US, in a lot of States, you're not allowed to hang your washing outside!" Craig says, incredulously. "We don't own a dryer now," adds Charlie.

Charlie tells how a turning point came when Craig was doing his PhD in Computer science and they were living in Raglan, outside of Hamilton New Zealand. They met Craig and Tracey Ambrose — already residents of Atamai Village — online. Here was another couple who, like them, were computer geeks, and were into Permaculture!

"When we heard about the village, at first we just thought 'if Craig and Tracey like it — good luck to them.'" Craig explains. "Then Charlie started working with Craig Ambrose at Inspiral." Charlie bounces in enthusiastically and takes up the story: "Dr Craig is doing his post-Doc and we've spent the last year thinking about 'what shall we do afterwards?' We know the energy glut won't last."

They explain that they didn't want to live in a 'commune', but are serious about being sustainable. "So after a time we said 'Well, Craig and Tracy haven't run screaming. They were both very forthcoming about both the good and the challenges. So, we decided to visit.'" Craig relates. "The



four of us drove to Wellington and caught the ferry. We reached Atamai and just fell in love with it."

The couple are bubbling with excitement as they describe what turns them on about the village. "It's real life! People were welcoming, amazing, very practical. The conversation is not all about superficial mumbo jumbo or celebrity gossip, but real topics. The whole area was great. And it doesn't hurt that it has the most hours of sunshine — like Calgary," adds Craig. "It rekindled my interest in sustainability. After my fights with the oil companies I had lost sight of it."

Here they found lot of infrastructure already established, they explain:

- The work of council
- Waste water management
- Water capture
- Alternate construction
- Off grid
- Collective gardens

"We were so excited to see someone doing it right. And for someone as highly experienced as Nicole Foss to confirm this, just confirmed what we were thinking." They refer to Nicole Foss, highly regarded futurist and economic commentator, who has, herself, also relocated to Atamai Village. Nicole says "There's more joined up thinking here, I would say, than just about anywhere I've ever been."

"It all comes together! It's just common sense!"

If you're interested in learning more about Atamai, check out: www.atamaivillage.org



Change the Culture, not the Climate

The following is adapted from a presentation given by Theo Kitchener, founder of grassroots group, *Doing It Ourselves*, at the 2014 Climate Action Summit in Brisbane, Australia, on 21st September, 2014.

So I've been thinking about what I would do about climate if I didn't believe in collapse.

And it turns out it's the exact same thing I would do if I did.

And that is: I'd build an alternative system and do community organising work around the dissatisfaction people feel about the dominant system.

An important point that's been coming through loud and clear through all the noise generated by the heavily politicized climate debate is:

- politicians don't care how many people support action on climate change;
- they care how many people support action at significant cost.

And I think the root of why people in general don't want action at significant cost, and hence why we haven't had any movement on climate change, is that people know they can't live the way they do now, and solve climate change.

As far as the science is concerned, we need a wholesale, fast transition, zero emissions and massive drawdown; and it will change everyone's lives.

People intuitively know that, and they don't want to change, and so they have cognitive dissonance. Which allows them to ignore the issue. In my opinion, this is why the climate movement hasn't really gotten anywhere.

The only way to change that is through cultural change.

People aren't actually happy with their lives the way they are. 1 in 3 Australians have a diagnosed mental illness; I'd say it actually seems like 90% or so of people would acknowledge they're actually pretty unhappy, if they're honest with themselves.

The only people I know who really are happy

“ Politicians don't care how many people support action on climate change; they care how many people support action at significant cost. ”

are the ones who have downshifted, or were never up to begin with. The stay-at-home dads and the students living in sharehouses, the people in Ladakh, the people in ecovillages, and the people who've just chosen to opt out of the rat race in whatever way they can.

Many people have realised that you can be a lot happier working less and living on less. The people who 'get' voluntary simplicity are also the people who 'get' climate change, and have the energy to do something about it.

People aren't happy with their full time jobs and their mortgages; their plasma TVs are a coping mechanism, not a joy. They're overworked and stressed out. They know this. But they don't think there's any alternative.

One of my housemates, on the other hand, lives in a tent in the backyard, gets up every morning at 6am, plays with the chickens and ducks, does some exercise, teaches himself languages in the morning, works in the garden, does a bit for Quit Coal, and socialises throughout the day. He lives on next to nothing, so he isn't going to work at all for a while. He's the happiest person I know, sometimes there's even a cute little skip in his step.

So what I'm proposing is that we go door-knocking and talk to people about how they're going with life in the system. That's not enough though. We have to give them an alternative as well. I'm thinking about starting a network of environmental workers co-operatives. Everyone would work part time, and the co-ops would give people the experience of working in a group with no boss. Being part of the network would give you a sense of community, sufficiency and participatory democracy. I also wrote an article about that network in a previous Shift magazine article.

I think a lot of people would love to downshift and get out of the rat race, but they don't feel like they know how. We could help with that.

And the cultural change would spread. It already is. Happiness is infectious — the only thing stopping it is a workable alternative.

Once people have the experience of living more simply, and they know how much happier it makes them, the cognitive dissonance about climate change could disappear.

Talk of climate change wouldn't make them feel guilty, and it wouldn't make them fearful about their loss of affluence either. It would make them fearful about the threat to the planet and its inhabitants, the way we react to it.

There's even a study that shows that because climate change requires a collective response, the only people who are able to accept it are the ones who believe collective action works. If we give people the experience of collective action working, then they're more likely to believe in climate change.

So I'm not suggesting we stop campaigning on climate change, just that some people start building alternatives and campaigning for people to shift to voluntary simplicity. A movement like what I'm talking about could allow the climate movement to build into the mass movement we've all been hoping for. The two movements are inextricable.

This cultural change is already happening — what I'm talking about is working to drastically speed it up. Perhaps people think this could never work, but the truth is we've never tried. The community organising people have been doing around CSG and coal has been working really well. The voluntary simplicity movement has never tried doing the same thing.

I'm not quite talking about changing the system the way Naomi Klein is in her new book — I'm talking about changing the culture. Once we do that, the system will change itself and we'll be able to deal with climate change in a sensible rational way.

Affluenza doesn't make people happy. Community does. That's the only leverage point we've really got to change the dynamic.

“ Perhaps people think this could never work, but the truth is we've never tried. ”

Further reading

1. www.shift-magazine.org/magazine/the-economics-of-human-need



By: Theo Kitchener



A Message from the Future: The **Steady State Economy** and the Incompatibility of Capitalism

The following is adapted from a presentation given by Geoff Mosley, Australian Director of the Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy, at the 2014 Fenner Conference on the Steady State Economy at the University of New South Wales on 2nd October, 2014.

I want you to imagine that I am a time traveller coming back from the future to tell you about our steady state economy. I am not going to explain how it was achieved, or when. That is up to you and following generations.

Once I've explained how we live, I think you will conclude that every major facet of our lives is completely different from yours. The biggest difference, though, is that our way of life has a good chance of survival — because it is in close harmony with the environment in every way. It is important, I believe, to also let you know that the way of life I am going to describe extends across the whole globe.

Above all we live within the earth's means. This means, firstly, that we have fitted ourselves into the environment in a manner **that utilises natural processes for the provision of food, water and energy in a non-disruptive way.** Secondly, we also live in harmony with each other in a fully cooperative way, and this is essential because there is none of the competition, greed and dominance of some over others that is a major cause of environmental depletion and social disharmony in your way of life.

In the brief time and space I have I will describe the main features of our steady state way of life: our values, our food, water, energy and transport systems, and our social organisation — including our settlement patterns and governance arrangements.

We see ourselves as belonging to the earth rather than the earth belonging to us, and do not see ourselves as superior to other living things.

Values: a new ethic

Our main aim is to live sustainably and cooperatively. We seek and enjoy a good life rather than material accumulation and privilege. **We see ourselves as belonging to the earth rather than the earth belonging to us, and do not see ourselves as superior to other living things.**

Similarly, our attitude of non-superiority applies to our view of other human beings. In our society all people are regarded as equal and treated equally throughout their lives, and this has brought obvious benefits in terms of health, education, **satisfying work, and involvement in governance.**

The community, not individuals, own and regulate the land and its resources. **Private ownership of land and resources has been fully replaced by cooperative ownership and organisation at the local community level.**

Supply of food, energy, water & housing

The underlying principles concerning our access to food, energy, water, housing and other materials are those of sustainability and self-sufficiency. **Every community is responsible, to the maximum extent possible, for supplying themselves with the basic necessities of food, energy and water, and for providing health and education services from the places where they live.**

This means, of course, that by being in direct contact with their environments, people have a very close understanding of their character and potential, and how to use them sustainably, and, as a result of that, have great respect for them. The kinship between people and their environment has been re-established. **The people who have the most to lose from resource depletion are now in charge.**

Water is drawn from within the catchments where people live. Fruit and vegetables are major crops, and as a result of reliance on local production and permaculture-type practices — such as use of legumes for nitrogen production, and waste from humans and animals — there is no industrial scale agriculture and no use of industrial fertilisers and pesticides. **Energy supply is from local renewable sources, and, being decentralised, we do not have the vast energy grids of your day.** Goods are designed to have a long life and be capable of being recycled. There has been major recycling of materials left over from the huge abandoned cities of the past.

Needless to say, we did not arrive fully at our steady state destination until we had repaired the serious environmental damage of the past, and adjusted our populations and their consumption to sustainable levels.

Trade

With communities being largely self-reliant there is little need for trade in commodities. Where it does occur it is largely between adjacent regions of the same country, and on an exchange basis. Exploitation of resources and labour by means of international trade and competition are a thing of the past.

Populations, settlement patterns, and quality of life

Population levels and settlement patterns are largely determined by the character and carrying capacity of the different localities in which people live, hence most settlements are small in scale.

The alienation of people from the environment that was created by living in large cities is a thing of the past; people work where they live. We have a settlement hub in each region for the purposes of technology development, manufacturing, governance, health, education, and the arts. In these larger-but-not-large towns we have cooperatively-run community gardens.

In our non-hierarchical classless society all people are treated equally. There are no superiority distinctions made with regard to the nature of the work people do, and there is a considerable amount of job sharing. Cooperation in performing tasks and in creative activities is normal, but there are no private companies for this purpose.

Overall, people live more simply than they did in the economic growth-driven societies of the past. With all basic needs met, and cooperation having replaced competition as a major goal, people have richer and more creative lives. In addition, because we no longer have an economy based on the goals of endless economic and population growth, and because we do not have economic and social inequality, the world's overall population and consumption of resources has been massively, yet gradually, reduced from levels they once reached — roughly a quarter the level it was in the year 2000.

Travel and transport

With most communities and regions being self-reliant in terms of the supply of the basic necessities there are no major long-distance supply chains for the transport of commodities. People work in their local area, and public transport, cycling and walking are sufficient means of transport servicing connections between localities and regional hub. Air and sea travel is by means of publicly-owned planes and ships.

There is a considerable amount of human travel both within and between countries for a number of purposes including recreation, education, health, governance, libraries and creativity. People travel to learn and take pleasure from the differences between places, the wonders of the natural world, and the way in which different communities relate sustainably and creatively to their environments. Internships in different regions and countries are common, and usually work on an exchange basis.

Governance and security

Our governance is based on the fundamental principles of self-government and participatory democracy. Every person has a voice and a say in the planning and management matters that concern him or her. At the local community level people assemble and vote on measures and issues, and choose delegates for regional assemblies. The same approach of voting and choosing delegates is used for representation at the national and international assemblies.

Any national issue is put to a vote of the whole national population after discussion in the various assemblies. The scope of the assemblies at the various geographic levels has been determined so that they only deal with relevant matters.

For instance, at the international level the matters discussed relate to global scale environmental changes and threats, and include the management of the global commons.

The universal acceptance of the sustainable use of resources on a self-sufficiency basis eliminated the resource struggles between communities and nations — including the use of the military to secure access to resources and territories that was diverting major resources into the manufacture and sale of armaments and causing major social disruption.

The universal acceptance of the sustainable use of resources on a self-sufficiency basis eliminated the resource struggles between communities and nations — including the use of the military to secure access to resources and territories that was diverting major resources into the manufacture and sale of armaments and causing major social disruption.

The economy

Private ownership of land and resources has been replaced by community ownership, and the communities — through their individual and collective efforts — are responsible for the supply of all goods and services. People do not aspire to accumulate wealth and to live in better conditions than their fellow human beings.

In our steady state economy all people are guaranteed the same standard of living. As a result, when we made these changes there was no need to continue the past practices of allowing private individuals or groups to either make investments for profit (creating additional costs) or taking out loans and creating debts. Money and the market in our world are purely for their original purpose of facilitating transactions, and we have no private banks making money out of the interest on loans.

Capitalism

This brings me to the final question: why was capitalism found to be incompatible with our steady state economy?

In fact, nothing illustrates so well the difference between our system and yours. Capitalism, as you know well, was an integral facilitator of the economic growth-driven system of the past. It depended on economic growth, competition, and the making of profit for its very existence. In the capitalist market people exercised enormous power, and it helped to create and maintain social inequality. Since it depended for its very existence on never-ending economic growth, it could not survive in a steady-state economy.

Capitalism was a beneficiary of the globalisation of trade — involving the foreign ownership and development of resources such as fossil fuels in distant places, destroying the nexus between people and their lands. The capitalist owners of land and resources themselves had little or no feeling of responsibility for the long-term future of the lands and inhabitants of the places they were exploiting. Their overriding objective was maximisation of production.

Capitalism placed a money value on things of intrinsic value, resulting, for instance, in the deforestation of water catchments and the destruction of the habitat of indigenous wildlife in order to supply distant markets. Capitalism was, in effect, economic colonialism, and seriously obstructed efforts to move to the sustainable use of land and resources, and to self-sufficiency, by interfering with local and national control of resources. Short-term profits were viewed as more important than the future.

We decided that it was far better for control of the land and its resources to be exercised by the people who live there and who have a better knowledge of it, and have a greater stake in its future. Also, just as the economic and social class system was closely interlinked with capitalism, it was realised that full equality was an essential necessity for our steady state economy; capitalism did not make a good bed-fellow with our system of participatory democracy. For all these reasons, capitalism had to go.



Capitalism was, in effect, economic colonialism, and seriously obstructed efforts to move to the sustainable use of land and resources, and to self-sufficiency, by interfering with local and national control of resources. Short-term profits were viewed as more important than the future.

Capitalism is not in crisis.
Capitalism
Is The
Crisis!

If we had not made this change to a steady-state economy the prospects for the survival of humanity would have been bleak. We have readapted our way of life to the biophysical limits of earth and its dynamic equilibrium, and in doing so produced an altogether more sustainable and more satisfying way of life.

Conclusion

If we had not made this change to a steady-state economy the prospects for the survival of humanity would have been bleak. We have readapted our way of life to the biophysical limits of earth and its dynamic equilibrium, and in doing so produced an altogether more sustainable and more satisfying way of life.

Finally, when our historians looked back at how the steady state economy evolved in your time they found several works that were prescient in terms of describing what our steady-state economy would look like. The pioneer, of course, was John Stuart Mill, who in his 1848 book Principles of Political Economy described “an alternative, stationary state of population and capital”. More recently, Samuel Alexander, in his 2013 book Entropia: Life Beyond Industrial Civilisation, wrote an imaginary but far-sighted account of a flourishing simple way of life on a small Pacific Island. Then, of course there is Herman Daly, a winner of the 2014 Blue Planet prize who was described in the nomination as “the preeminent exponent of the steady state economy, the main alternative to the prevailing economic growth paradigm”.

Such history is an excellent teacher, if we are prepared to be good students.

CULTURAL EVOLUTION IN A WORLD OF MORAL TRIBES

Many sustainability writers and activists believe that we need a mythopoetic vision — a new story to replace the old — in order to heal and transcend the ruins of industrial civilization. This emerging story relies on an idealistic vision of the convergence of universal human values — the expectation that it is our job as activists to change people at their core to adopt peaceful, eco-conscious and 'awakened' values.

While this may seem like a humane, noble pursuit, geopolitical unrest and division continues to exist in a world of moral tribes, underpinned by divergent, seemingly irreconcilable worldviews and ideologies. According to cultural historian Richard Tarnas, author of *Cosmos and Psyche: Intimations of a New World View*, the evolution of Western culture and intellectual history has taken place within a paradoxical context of competing narratives: the myth of progress and enlightened modernity versus the myth of civilization's fall from unity into separation. These archetypal paradigms are represented in the tension between today's social movements and major subcultures, and according to sociological research conducted over the last decade they comprise three main groups: Cultural Creatives, Moderns and Traditionalists. (Anderson, S. R. and Ray, P. H., 2001)



Deviantart:
Zectumsempra

SHIFT readers are most likely to recognize themselves in the description of Cultural Creatives, who, clocking in at approximately

50 MILLION OF US,

tend to be empathic and prosocial, valuing humanitarian and environmental causes over techno-fixes and traditional conservative dogmas.

CULTURAL CREATIVES

SHIFT readers are most likely to recognize themselves in the description of Cultural Creatives, who, clocking in at approximately 50 million of us, tend to be empathic and prosocial, valuing humanitarian and environmental causes over techno-fixes and traditional conservative dogmas. With its roots in the anti-war, civil rights and women's movements of the 1960s and 70s, this emerging tribe of intuitive healers, subversive artists, teachers, systems thinkers, Gaian mystics, culture-jammers, peaceful activists and revolutionaries are the pioneers of a new chapter in global consciousness.

Due to their deep understanding of global interdependence, Cultural Creatives today are at the forefront of the deep ecology movement, the natural, wholefood, organic movement, the attachment parenting movement, the holistic wellness and authentic vulnerability movement, and so on. Eco-conscious and sensitive to injustice, they are concerned with living principled, sustainable lives, rich with purpose and meaning. While new age spirituality advocates transforming the self as a sufficient means for healing the world, and conventional politics champions collective change at the expense of the individual, Cultural Creatives are both self-aware and politically engaged. They are motivated to integrate the need for community resilience with personal growth and self-actualization, promoting both meaningful social change and inner transformation.

Cultural Creatives can be understood as comprising a core group of dedicated, leading activists — 66% of whom are women — and less involved groups of interested supporters, also known as greens and transitionalists. Greens are generally concerned about climate change, social justice, integrative health and ecology. They may be proactive on the logistical front lines of activism, but tend to place less importance on inner psychological, spiritual or existential experience. Like transitionalists, who are still in the process of developing awareness, some may feel torn between their convictions and competing demands. Ray and Anderson's research suggests a higher correlation between inward soul searching and mindful change-making, as core Cultural Creatives are more likely to contemplate the deeper motivations behind their values.



By: Anneke Vo

Modern SCIENCE

MODERNS AND TRADITIONALISTS

Moderns and Traditionalists, in contrast, represent the antithesis of Cultural Creative values. Moderns stand for the neo-Enlightenment story of 'homo economicus', scientific reductionism, material growth and civilized progress.

Comprising half the US population, Moderns are the largest demographic, engineering the dominant social, political and economic pillars of our current system. Emblematic of the status quo, they are the architects of empires and mercenaries of corporate welfare, upholding established institutions such as big business, banking, politics, the military, mainstream media and the criminal justice system. Moderns tend to be driven by lessons pertaining to the accumulation of power, success, wealth and status — valuing rational self-interest, conformity to established norms and extrinsic motivation above inner-directed ethics and ideals.

Traditionalists are cultural conservatives who represent the far, religious right of politics. This group serves the interests of evangelical fundamentalists, puritan ascetics and lawful militants who tend to be rule-bound, god-fearing, and reactionary to progressive movements. Some Traditionalists may share a common thread with Cultural Creatives through their distrust of corporatocracy, techno-fixes and big government, but for different reasons, such as the belief that secularism is destroying old fashioned "family values."

REACHING OUT

Ray and Anderson's research suggests that Cultural Creative core group efforts might be better spent reaching out primarily to greens and transitionalists who, to some extent, already 'get it', as opposed to the 39.7% of Moderns and 15.4% of Traditionalists within the general population.

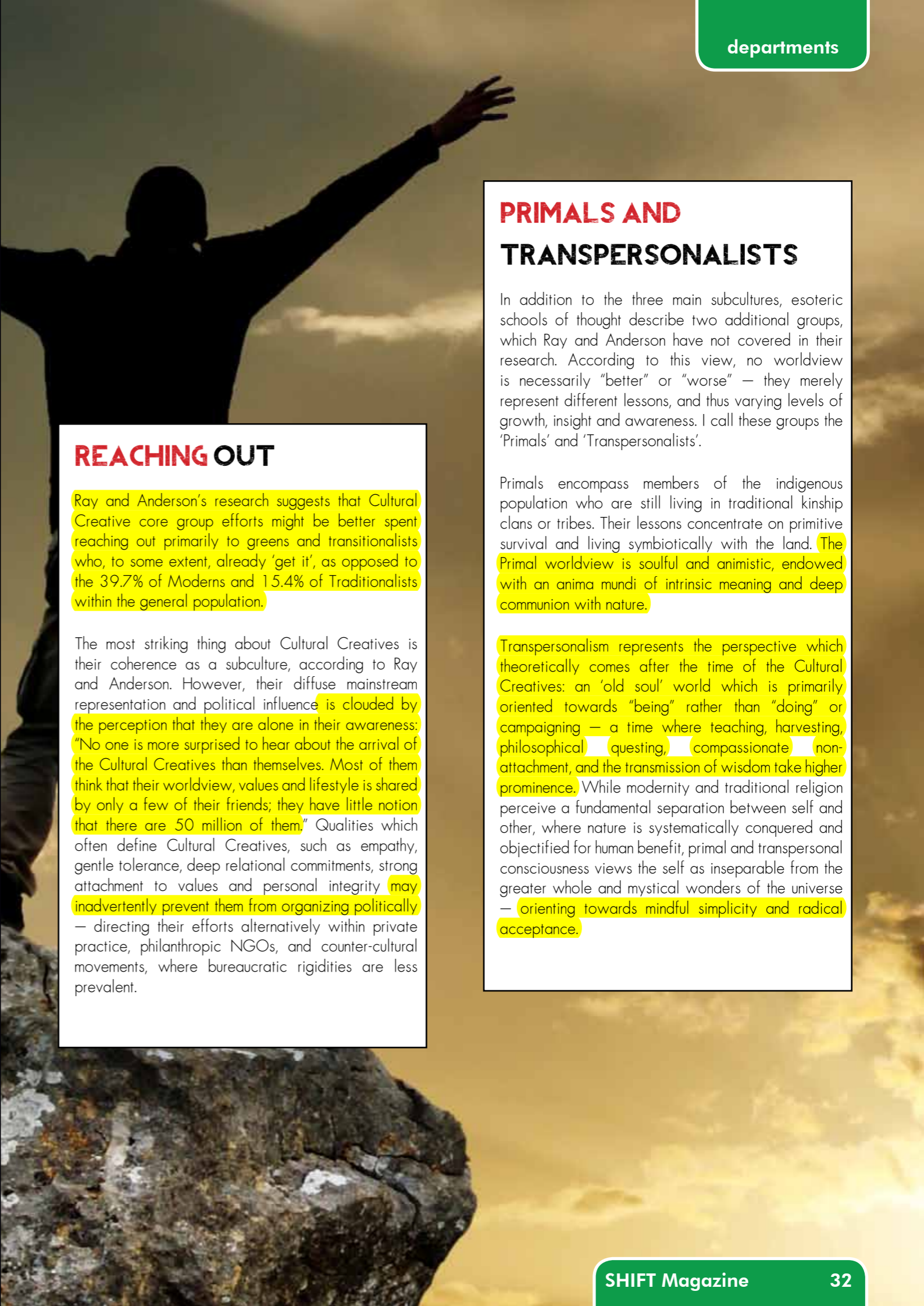
The most striking thing about Cultural Creatives is their coherence as a subculture, according to Ray and Anderson. However, their diffuse mainstream representation and political influence is clouded by the perception that they are alone in their awareness: "No one is more surprised to hear about the arrival of the Cultural Creatives than themselves. Most of them think that their worldview, values and lifestyle is shared by only a few of their friends; they have little notion that there are 50 million of them." Qualities which often define Cultural Creatives, such as empathy, gentle tolerance, deep relational commitments, strong attachment to values and personal integrity may inadvertently prevent them from organizing politically — directing their efforts alternatively within private practice, philanthropic NGOs, and counter-cultural movements, where bureaucratic rigidities are less prevalent.

PRIMALS AND TRANSPERSONALISTS

In addition to the three main subcultures, esoteric schools of thought describe two additional groups, which Ray and Anderson have not covered in their research. According to this view, no worldview is necessarily "better" or "worse" — they merely represent different lessons, and thus varying levels of growth, insight and awareness. I call these groups the 'Primals' and 'Transpersonalists'.

Primals encompass members of the indigenous population who are still living in traditional kinship clans or tribes. Their lessons concentrate on primitive survival and living symbiotically with the land. The Primal worldview is soulful and animistic, endowed with an anima mundi of intrinsic meaning and deep communion with nature.

Transpersonalism represents the perspective which theoretically comes after the time of the Cultural Creatives: an 'old soul' world which is primarily oriented towards "being" rather than "doing" or campaigning — a time where teaching, harvesting, philosophical questing, compassionate non-attachment, and the transmission of wisdom take higher prominence. While modernity and traditional religion perceive a fundamental separation between self and other, where nature is systematically conquered and objectified for human benefit, primal and transpersonal consciousness views the self as inseparable from the greater whole and mystical wonders of the universe — orienting towards mindful simplicity and radical acceptance.



PARADIGM SHIFT

In *The Passion of the Western Mind*, Richard Tarnas asserts that all paradigm shifts are conceptually archetypal, as well as socio-historical in nature. Every dominant worldview must undergo its own mythic journey or evolutionary path, passing through developmental sequences of gestation, growth, crisis and revolution: "When a paradigm has fulfilled its purpose, when it has been developed and exploited to its full extent, then it loses its numinosity, it ceases to be libidinally charged, it becomes felt as oppressive, limiting, opaque--something to be overcome--while the new paradigm that is emerging is felt as a liberating birth into a new, luminously intelligible universe."

Within the Cultural Creative psyche there is a primal self which needs ritual and sustenance, a Traditional self which regulates boundaries and structure, a Modern self which craves independence and ambition, and a Transpersonal self which seeks unconditional love and wholeness. Cultural Creatives need to be aware of the tendency to become too attached and identified with their convictions for they are prone to becoming overcome with despair when their ideals fail to materialize, believing there is nothing to be gained or learnt from engaging different perspectives.

The Modern worldview is approaching its final limits to growth, catapulting itself into obstinate crisis. But before the seeds of revolution and cultural creative gestation can flourish, lessons of the dominant Modern paradigms need to be authentically integrated. Pushing the limits of affluence and self-interest currently serves a specific purpose for Moderns, in the same way cultivating relationships, inner awareness and social justice does for Cultural Creatives. Such labels and characteristics aren't fixed; they represent an individual's internal framework, their primary lessons, and evolving journey.

Jung posited that the unindividuated person believes everyone is, or ought to be, like himself, and that people don't change until they've suffered enough. Likewise, some people need to devote their lives to climbing to the top — projecting their views of success and prosperity onto others —

WITHIN THE CULTURAL CREATIVE PSYCHE THERE IS A PRIMAL SELF WHICH NEEDS RITUAL AND SUSTENANCE, A TRADITIONAL SELF WHICH REGULATES BOUNDARIES AND STRUCTURE, A MODERN SELF WHICH CRAVES INDEPENDENCE AND AMBITION, AND A TRANSPERSONAL SELF WHICH SEEKS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND WHOLENESS.



before they begin to question why it isn't making them happy. Industrial civilization is fundamentally driven to preserve its 'psychological basic ground', which must experience the psychic death of its individual, social and collective mythos in order to be transformed.

At some point, activists will inevitably confront the sovereignty of conflicting worldviews and their respective self-serving mythologies, underlying the post-modern collapse of Grand Narratives. We needn't adopt the nihilistic consequences of post-modernism, surrendering as passive voters and consumers, which Noam Chomsky states would be "pointless" for meeting tangible challenges. Rather, the Cultural Creatives' influence upon the Information Age signifies a thematic shift towards grassroots participatism, eco-psychological re-integration, and the intentional co-creation of culture.

The quest for universal truth is, paradoxically, an emergent, relativistic process, and the imminent epochal meta-narrative we re-imagine will need to encompass a humble, open-hearted acceptance of imperfect plurality.

Further reading/viewing

1. <http://www.kindredcommunity.com/2013/09/same-planet-different-worlds-how-cultural-creatives-are-bringing-forward-the-practical-wisdom-of-conscious-living/>
2. http://admin.alternet.org/story/10487/the_cultural_creative_paradox
3. Richard Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*
4. Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind*

SEE NO EVIL: THE MORALITY OF COLLAPSE



As we wade into discussions about the consequences of collapse, and the most effective ways to become resilient in face of it, most of us avoid discussions about morals (personal standards of 'right' and 'wrong') and ethics (collective standards of 'just' and 'unjust' behaviours). As an example, it doesn't matter whether climate change is human-caused, we assert, we need to focus on how to deal with it, not who to blame for it.

Alas, it is not so easy to avoid the issue, because our worldviews are inevitably rooted in our beliefs, including our moral and ethical ones. So when it comes to preparing for collapse, the different groups, who accept that the near-term collapse of industrial civilization is inevitable (or at least requiring immediate and drastic action to avert), possess worldviews that are rooted in different, and

I would argue, almost irreconcilable moral and ethical standards. This makes collaboration, or even agreement on what to do, fraught with difficulty, if not impossible.



By: Dave Pollard

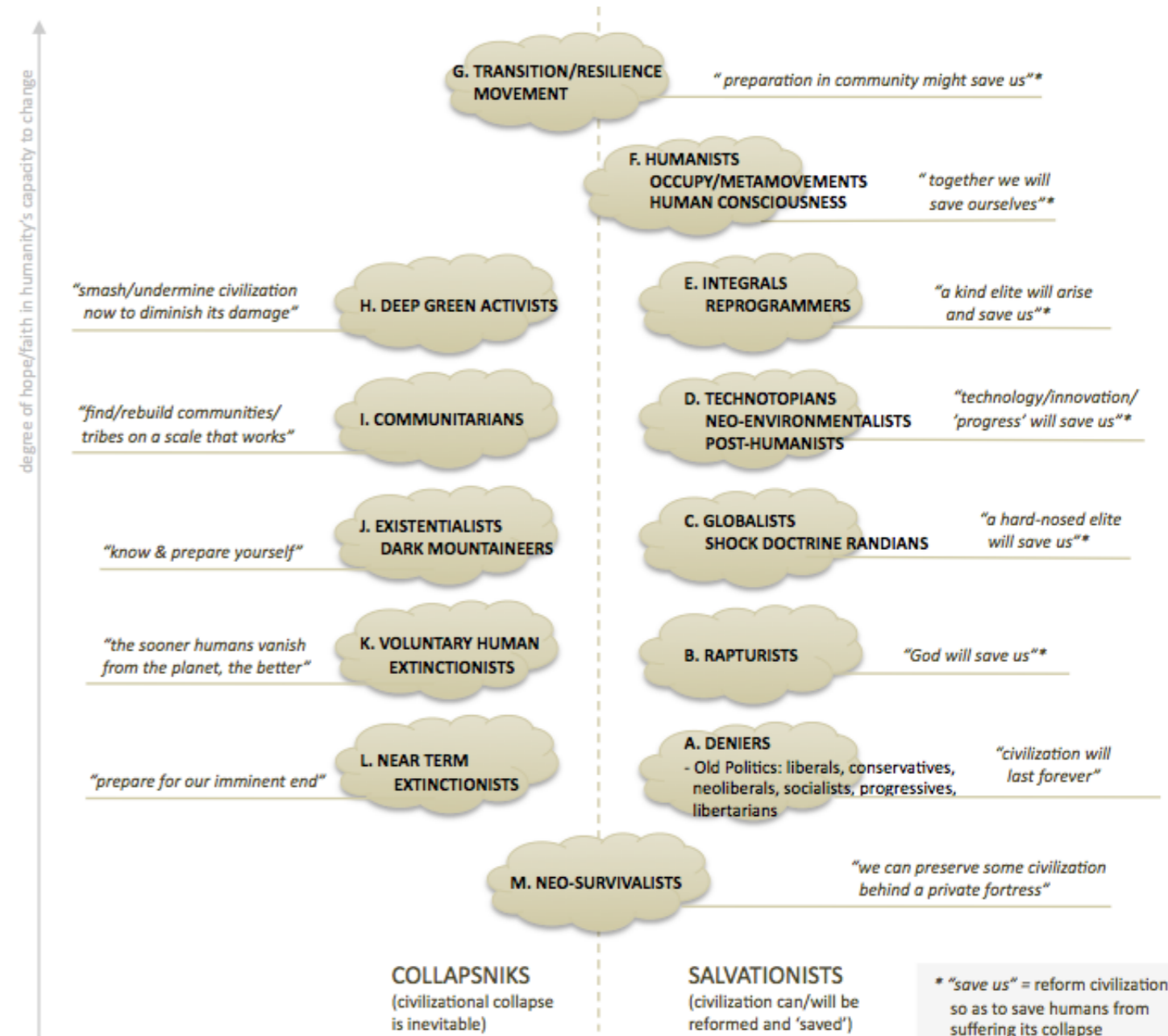
Collapsnik tribes

In the chart opposite, I've identified several groups which have come to accept that our civilization either may not or will not be 'saved' from collapse. The five groups (groups H through L) — I call them 'collapsniks' — no longer harbour serious doubts that industrial collapse is either imminent or already underway, and that this collapse is unstoppable. They do differ though, in how they believe we should be preparing for the fall.

They are distinct from the many 'old-style' political groups, and from some new age groups, that I call (without meaning to be disparaging) 'salvationists' (groups A through E). They believe, for a variety of different reasons, that civilization can and will be 'saved' from collapse.

Both 'salvationists' and 'collapsniks' fall along a spectrum that indicates how strongly they believe in humanity's capacity to change (higher in the chart, stronger the belief in that capacity). See the value judgements creeping in here already?

Preparing for Collapse: The New Political Map



In addition, there are three groups that straddle the salvationist/collapsnik divide — they aren't sure (groups F & G) or don't care (group M) whether collapse is inevitable or not.

Few of us 'fit' neatly into any of these groups — we migrate among them as our learning and context evolves and shifts, much as many old-school politicians have come to embrace social liberalism and economic conservatism, and then may flip to the opposite as they get older, more fearful and more dependent.

I argue that we 'collapsniks', and the Humanists and Transition/Resilience movement fence-sitters — everyone, in other words, who shares some of the worldviews of groups F, G, H, I, J, K, and L — needs to work together if we are to have any hope of being at least somewhat prepared for the collapse to come. Over the past year I have been, at various points, in fundamental agreement with each of these seven groups, and I am constantly inspired by articulate speakers (notably at the moment Charles Eisenstein, Rob Hopkins, Derrick Jensen, Ran Prieur, Paul Kingsnorth, John Gray and Guy McPherson respectively) who espouse these seven diverse worldviews.

Worldviews & interpretations

The different moralities and ethical beliefs underlying these seven worldviews surface pretty quickly, and have driven wedges between us, making us, to some extent, our own worst enemies. Consider these questions:

- Is it acceptable to use violence when pacifism seems inadequate to confront the most devastating aspects of industrial civilization?
- Are large public protests a means of raising awareness and political pressure, or are they a useless distraction from preparing for economic and political collapse?
- Are social justice and equality essential preconditions for collectively addressing issues such as climate change, or would that be just rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic?
- **Would it be a great service or a great disservice to deliberately provoke a collapse of markets and the economy in order to reduce consumption and energy use?**
- Is giving up on environmentalism and large-scale attempts in response to climate change, and instead focusing on local initiatives and personal and community preparedness, a realistic and pragmatic strategy, or dangerous, irresponsible defeatism?

On all these questions, and more, there is strong disagreement among collapsniks. This stems in part from different interpretations of what we know about what is happening in the world and what is technically possible, but it stems, I think, principally from different worldviews informed by different moral and ethical beliefs on what is humanly possible.

Humanists, for example, tend to have a worldview that suggests humans are essentially good. Hence by sheer force of numbers (say, 99%?) we can accomplish anything we put our collective minds to — even at this late date. Reform the systems by popular demand, and save the world. Others argue that the 1% don't have nearly the power that is commonly presumed, and that their conversion or demise will not prevent the juggernaut of industrial civilization from accelerating off the collapse cliff. **Still others argue that the so-called 1% are doing their best, like the rest of us, and that the enemy is all of us (leading to a wide variety of prescriptions on what that realization might lead us to do, if anything).** And others argue that the 1% are psychopaths, and that the only option is to smash the systems that they lead (hoping, perhaps improbably, that whatever fills the resultant vacuum will be significantly better).

Layers of moral complexity

There is no 'right' perspective on these issues, no answers that are certain or even highly probable. There are too many variables, too little appreciation of the sheer unknowingness of massively complex systems, such as produced by industrial civilization, and the reinforcing feedback loops that have evolved to perpetuate them. Hence the impossibility of knowing how, or even if, we can intervene in these systems effectively.

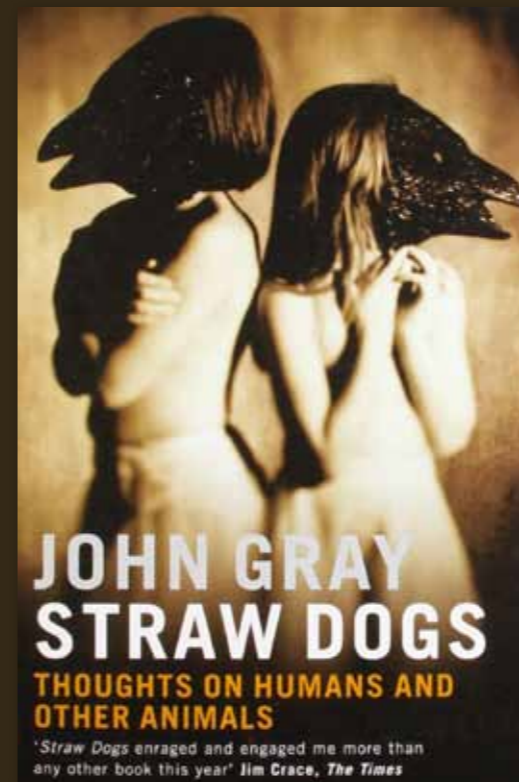
If that weren't enough, the two 'newest' groups on the collapsnik spectrum, the Voluntary Human Extinctionists (group K on the chart) and the Near Term Extinctionists (group L) add a whole new layer of moral complexity for collapsniks to deal with. The Voluntary Human Extinctionists would have us believe (see if you can detect any moral judgement here) that the human species is inherently violent, aggressive and destructive, and the world will be much better off if and when we vanish from the planet. The Near Term Extinctionists would have us believe that climate change is accelerating at such a pace that the human species, along with most complex life forms on the planet, will be extinct by as soon as mid-century.

If the world would be better off without us, does that mean we should do nothing, or should we try to accelerate our demise (perhaps by working on some new viruses)? And if the human species is doomed within our lifetimes, why should we not party like it's 1999 (or perhaps 2049)?

Every time my worldview shifts along the spectrum of groups F-to-L, I find myself asking these questions, and apologizing to the true believers with their irreconcilable worldviews and action (or inaction) plans — and apologizing to myself for my earlier, and recurring, foolishness. **I'm living in a philosophical, epistemological, ontological and moral minefield, navigating it as my viewpoint constantly shifts.**

Guy McPherson's 'Near Term Extinctionist' advice is to act to make a better world even though people are not going to be part of it, for the sake of those species that might survive. He has also said that we should act as if the Earth is in hospice, and treat it with commensurate respect, and honour its decline by living full, joyful, responsible and meaningful lives. How many people do you know who could handle doing that?

“Would it be a great service or a great disservice to deliberately provoke a collapse of markets and the economy in order to reduce consumption and energy use?”



Doomed by determinism?

John Gray's book *Straw Dogs* is my favourite treatise on the current state of the world and the actions available to us as we face collapse. He says unequivocally that we have not changed and cannot change what we are, what we do, how we behave or what we value, and that we are doomed by the coding in our DNA to continue along our inexorable path of self-destruction, and to inflict large-scale but ultimately transitory damage on our planet in the process. He writes:

“A human population of approaching 8 billion can be maintained only by desolating the Earth... [Quoting Reg Morrison, *The Spirit in the Gene*] If the human plague is really as normal as it looks, then the collapse curve should mirror the growth curve. This means the bulk of the collapse will not take much longer than 100 years, and by 2150 the biosphere should be safely back to its pre-plague population of *Homo Sapiens* — somewhere between a half and one billion...

Climate change may be a mechanism through which the planet eases its human burden... [or] new patterns of disease could trim the human population... War could have a major impact... weapons of mass destruction — notably biological and (soon) genetic weapons, more fearsome than before... It is not the number of states that makes this technology ungovernable. It is technology itself. The ability to design new viruses for use in genocidal weapons does not require enormous resources of money, plant or equipment... By ceding so much control over new technology to the marketplace, [governments] have colluded in their own powerlessness...

The mass of mankind is ruled not by its own intermittent moral sensations, still less by self-interest, but by the needs of the moment. It seems fated to wreck the balance of life on Earth — and thereby to be the agent of its own destruction... What could be more hopeless than placing the Earth in the charge of this exceptionally destructive species? It is not of becoming the planet's wise stewards that Earth-lovers dream, but of a time when humans have ceased to matter...

*Homo sapiens is only one of very many species, and not obviously worth preserving. Later or sooner, it will become extinct. When it is gone Earth will recover. Long after the last traces of the human animal have disappeared, many of the species it is bent on destroying will still be around, along with others that have yet to spring up. **The Earth will forget mankind. The play of life will go on.*** ”

I found John's book liberating and exhilarating, though most of my collapsnik friends found it negative, unconvincing and depressing.

But recently, reading his more recent works, I've begun to wonder whether **John's brilliant intellect was being steered by an unstated worldview, a profound misanthropy that might be rooted in part in some trauma he has suffered through, some indignity in his past that has coloured his thinking. Is he really a Voluntary Human Extinctionist, or is he rather a wounded and disillusioned Humanist or Existentialist?**

This month, in the *Guardian*, John builds further on this pessimistic view of the human species. He writes:

“It's not that [western leaders] are obsessed with evil. Rather, they don't really believe in evil as an enduring reality in human life. If their feverish rhetoric means anything, it is that evil can be vanquished. In believing this, those who govern us at the present time reject a central insight of western religion, which is found also in Greek tragic drama and the work of the Roman historians: destructive human conflict is rooted in flaws within human beings themselves. **In this old-fashioned understanding, evil is a propensity to destructive and self-destructive behaviour that is humanly universal. The restraints of morality exist to curb this innate**

human frailty; but morality is a fragile artifice that regularly breaks down. Dealing with evil requires an acceptance that it never goes away.

No view of things could be more alien at the present time. Whatever their position on the political spectrum, almost all of those who govern us hold to some version of the melioristic liberalism that is the west's default creed, which teaches that human civilisation is advancing – however falteringly – to a point at which the worst forms of human destructiveness can be left behind. According to this view, evil, if any such thing exists, is not an inbuilt human flaw, but a product of defective social institutions, which can over time be permanently improved.

Paradoxically, this belief in the evanescence of evil is what underlies the hysterical invocation of evil that has lately become so prominent. There are many bad and lamentable forces in the world today, but it is those that undermine the belief in human improvement that are demonised as “evil”.¹

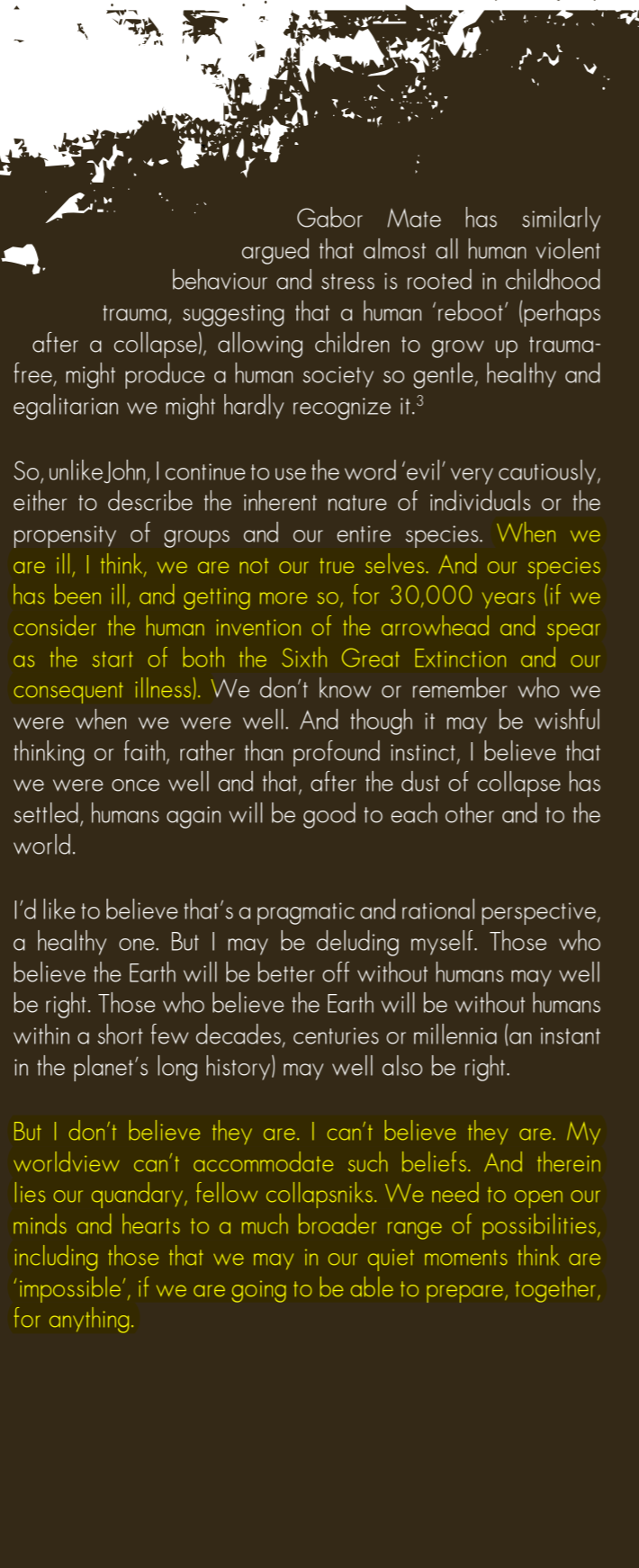


To err is human, but what about evil?

As radical as my beliefs may be, I can't quite accept that “evil” is a propensity that is humanly universal. I think what is missing from Gray's argument is that, yes, we are an inherently destructive and aggressive species, but only when we are suffering from chronic and severe stress. I believe that, like the bonobos, when we are free from stress the traits of destructiveness and aggressiveness are recessive, unneeded and therefore unexercised.

John would probably laugh this criticism off, and provide forceful arguments for this being naive and faith-based thinking. But I would also argue that civilization (likely itself evolved in response to some great natural stresses like climate change) has been an incessantly stressful experiment, and because we have no credible data, we can't know what we are like in the absence of great stress.

Robert Sapolsky has studied baboons in the wild for twenty years and admits he doesn't like them much – they're violent, arbitrarily cruel and self-traumatizing creatures. But he tells the story about one baboon troop whose alpha males all died from eating tuberculosis-tainted meat from a garbage dump. The survivors quickly evolved into a peaceful, gentle, egalitarian matriarchy, and remained so for generations later.²



Gabor Mate has similarly argued that almost all human violent behaviour and stress is rooted in childhood trauma, suggesting that a human ‘reboot’ (perhaps after a collapse), allowing children to grow up trauma-free, might produce a human society so gentle, healthy and egalitarian we might hardly recognize it.³

So, unlike John, I continue to use the word ‘evil’ very cautiously, either to describe the inherent nature of individuals or the propensity of groups and our entire species. When we are ill, I think, we are not our true selves. And our species has been ill, and getting more so, for 30,000 years (if we consider the human invention of the arrowhead and spear as the start of both the Sixth Great Extinction and our consequent illness). We don't know or remember who we were when we were well. And though it may be wishful thinking or faith, rather than profound instinct, I believe that we were once well and that, after the dust of collapse has settled, humans again will be good to each other and to the world.

I'd like to believe that's a pragmatic and rational perspective, a healthy one. But I may be deluding myself. Those who believe the Earth will be better off without humans may well be right. Those who believe the Earth will be without humans within a short few decades, centuries or millennia (an instant in the planet's long history) may well also be right.

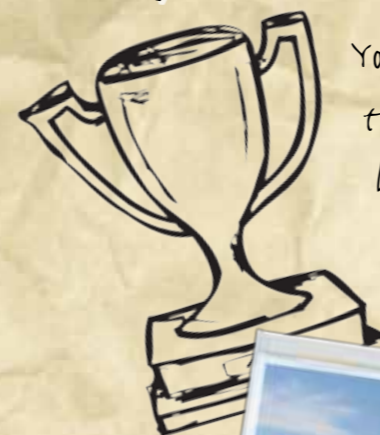
But I don't believe they are. I can't believe they are. My worldview can't accommodate such beliefs. And therein lies our quandary, fellow collapsniks. We need to open our minds and hearts to a much broader range of possibilities, including those that we may in our quiet moments think are ‘impossible’, if we are going to be able to prepare, together, for anything.



Further reading/viewing

1. www.theguardian.com/news/2014/oct/21/sp-the-truth-about-evil-john-gray
2. www.youtube.com/watch?v=A4UmyTnlqMY
3. www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-bragskloBw

Top 10: Community-Building Cheat Sheet



You'd be hard pushed to find anyone who claims they don't want to be part of a thriving community. So why don't most of us live in well-connected communities these days? Is community a relic of a bygone era, or is it possible for us all to rekindle that connection?



Sustainability guru Shani Graham believes community is something we can all connect with, but when asked how to build it she replies that there is no recipe, no magic formula that works the same for everyone.¹ The only thing we can all be sure of is that all communities begin with connection, sharing, and spending time together. A community will develop from the ground up and in a way that is relevant to the people living in it, so there's no sense in trying to provide a one-size recipe that fits all.

But there are a few things we can all do that feed into our communities to help them become more connected, inclusive, and resilient. Here's SHIFT's cheat-sheet of ten tips for getting started...

CONNECT - LEVEL: NOVICE

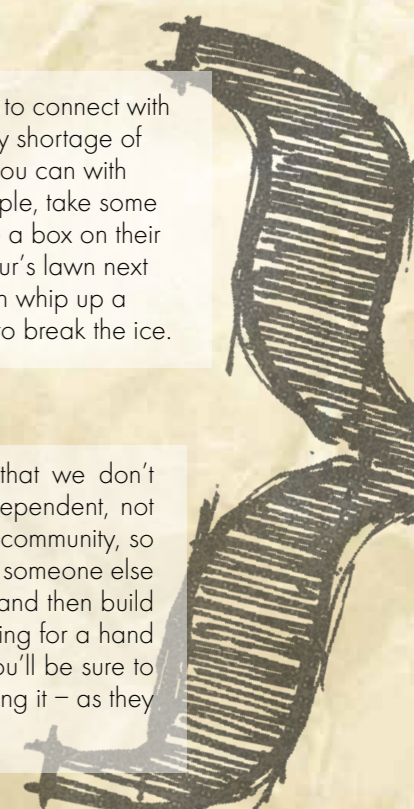
1

Pay it forward

Giving without expecting to receive anything in return is a way to connect with others that builds trust and reciprocity. There's unlikely to be any shortage of needs in your community, so it's a matter of meeting the ones you can with generosity. If you grow food and have a little surplus, for example, take some to your neighbours, or if you're feeling a bit shy, perhaps leave a box on their doorstep with a friendly note. Perhaps offer to mow a neighbour's lawn next time you do your own. Or perhaps next time you bake you can whip up a little extra and surprise your neighbours with a treat that's sure to break the ice.

Learn to receive

For many, receiving is harder than giving, as it involves admitting that we don't have the means to meet all of our own needs – that we are interdependent, not independent. But interdependency is a core attribute of a connected community, so you'll just have to overcome those jitters you feel when you have to ask someone else to meet your needs! Start small – like with the clichéd cup of sugar – and then build up to borrowing bigger or more valuable items such as tools, and asking for a hand with something you can't manage by yourself, like moving furniture. You'll be sure to find others become more forthcoming in asking for help – and in offering it – as they see people helping one another in their community.



Make opportunities for casual encounters

Spending more time in your community in a way that is visible to others in your community provides more opportunities for the casual encounters that can lead to deeper connections. Simply stepping out more makes a difference, and activities such as tidying the front yard, tinkering in the garage with the door open, or simply hanging out on the front porch all increase your chances of encounters that break the ice, as does walking to local stores or markets instead of driving to distant ones, where possible. Moving backyard activities to the front yard trades a little privacy for the reward of connection, and can include anything from putting a chair out in the front yard to read the Sunday paper to shifting the family barbecue to the front yard.

3

SPEND TIME TOGETHER
LEVEL: BEGINNER

Find things to do together

Whether you want your community to work together to address a local cause, to build resilience in the face of uncertain times ahead, or just come together to support one another, spruiking ideology is no way to sell the idea of community. Communities coalesce around shared activities, so that means spending time together doing things that you can all enjoy. The good news is that this can be as simple as having your neighbours over for a barbecue, as functional as inviting your neighbours to chuck their pre-loveds in with your next garage sale, or as dastardly as luring your neighbours into permablitzing your backyard with the promise of lemonade and lunch (you can be sure yours won't be the last backyard to get blitzed)! You could even culture-jam your community by having monthly movie nights in the street, like Shani Graham's Hulbert Street Community.²

4

SHARE /
LEVEL: EXPERT

7

Set up a community sharing register

Sharing is caring, and functions as a way of building trust within your community as well as meeting diverse needs. We all have something that someone else lacks, or lack something that someone else has. Our consumer culture encourages us to try to become self-sufficient by personally owning everything that is desirable to have, regardless how much use you get out of it. This is the reason so many households boast an electric drill that is used for a grand total of between 6 and 13 minutes in its lifetime.⁴ It makes far more sense to find out who in your community has items they're happy to lend out to others, and set up a register so that others in your community know how to get hold of something they need.

8

Set up a community lending library

Going one better than a sharing register, a community lending library is a brilliant means of empowering your community. A library doesn't just have to be for books – libraries are springing up everywhere for the sharing of anything from tools to toys. All you need is a space that is accessible to all members of your community, and sufficient trust in one another. If you have an electric drill that's lying idle while a neighbor needs it, why not put it in your community tool library for common use, and gain access to your neighbour's coveted lawn-mower that you couldn't afford to buy for yourself?⁵ A community toy library enables children to have access to a range of toys without you having to spend a lot of money on things they might get bored of or outgrow quickly, while also demonstrating a culture of access over ownership from a young age.⁶

Kick off a community project

The possibilities for community projects extend as far as your imagination will take you, but the most obvious first step for many is to set up a community garden. Nurturing a patch of earth together is a fun and productive way of engaging your community in something positive and lasting. You can seize on a common grassy area – even your roadside verges – or find someone willing to donate part of their land. So long as someone has a little know-how, others can easily become engaged and learn the basics. Other more unusual projects communities have engaged in include the Hulbert Street pizza oven (used for their neighbourhood movie nights), bike shed (leading to reduced car use), skateboard ramp, and even a sustainability fiesta, in Fremantle, Western Australia – demonstrating what creative projects communities can conjure up, given the chance.⁷

9

ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY IN PROJECTS
LEVEL: NINJA

10

Organize to address a local issue

Collaborating over an issue of mutual interest to your community is an excellent way to build solidarity while exercising empowerment. Every community has at least one issue that can be addressed with a little collaboration and willpower. Grassroots community projects as diverse as establishing safer spaces for children,⁸ campaigning for affordable housing,⁹ or mobilizing to preserve a local woodland or wetland, or protect it from the threat of a 'development' project, have often been successful thanks to direct community engagement and empowerment.¹⁰

Further reading

1. www.shift-magazine.org/magazine/changemaker-profile-the-community-builder
2. www.ecoburba.com.au/community/the-hulbert-street-community
3. www.nextdoor.com
4. www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/17/berlin-borrowing-shop-benefits-share-leila
5. www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_tool-lending_libraries
6. www.toylibraries.org.au
7. www.ecoburba.com.au/community/hulbert-street-sustainability-fiesta-2010
8. www.thecorbetsociety.org.uk/petition-for-a-safer-brownhill-road-for-everyone
9. www.facebook.com/pages/Focus-E15-Mothers
10. www.facebook.com/pages/Save-the-Iconic-Forest-at-the-North-End-of-Steve-Inwin-Way

COMMUNICATE
LEVEL: PRACTITIONER

5

Keep tabs on folks you think might need extra care

We all know someone in our community who needs a little more care or support than they are getting. Often it's the elderly or the sick, but it could just as well be a young family or a new arrival struggling to stay afloat while looking for work. Once you've established initial connections it's relatively easy to keep an eye on people in need and determine who is best placed to offer support. As we all have varying skills, capabilities, resource and time constraints, it takes as many members of a community as possible to do their bit for that community to thrive. People tend to feel a stronger connection to their community if it is clear how they can engage most helpfully or how best to receive support from others.

6

Create a community communication platform

People engage with communities in various different ways, and although face to face communication is ideal, it may take other means for some folks to feel comfortable with engaging. Many thriving communities have a newsletter that provides updates on issues relevant to their community, while others maintain a Facebook page or group for discussion about community events or issues. In fact, community use of social media has become so popular that a website has sprung up to facilitate community connections, with 70 new neighbourhoods joining every day in the US. Nextdoor.com enables people to share tips and recommendations, locate lost pets, and share information about community events such as garage sales, as well as just connect with others in their community.³

The Human Race

Schooling the World:

A Recipe for Competition, Compliance & Consumerism

"A healthy social life is found only, when in the mirror of each soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the whole community the virtue of each one is living."

- Rudolf Steiner

the modern compulsory schooling system has created generation after generation of individuals that have been indoctrinated to be compliant consumers and competitors in a human race that effectively destroys community.

generation of individuals that have been indoctrinated to be compliant consumers and competitors in a human race that effectively destroys community. That community still exists at all is due to the resilience of our true innate nature to live in harmonious groups that share and care for each other and the natural world that supports us.

Humans need community — planet earth built us that way. We are social animals that not only survive physically by cohabitating with each other, but we thrive emotionally and psychologically when our groups are functional and nurturing.

One of the symptoms of an upside-down, insane world, that is collapsing around us, is that the human inhabitants are running around in circles, grieving the loss of community, and wondering how on earth to recreate it. Ironically, in a world of over seven billion people we are lonely and lack a sense of belonging. People are yearning for meaningful connection with each other and with the natural world from which we evolved. Simply stated, modern industrialised and capitalised society is not conducive to healthy, happy, human communities.

A comprehensive analysis of the causes of the downfall of community in the modern world would be a massive task. The scope of this piece will focus on one hypothesis: that the modern compulsory schooling system has created generation after



By Sean Crawley

'Educating' for economic growth

The reality of schooling for many of today's children is approximately thirteen years — from the ages of five to eighteen — of compulsory training in highly regulated institutions. Children

global efforts are directed towards every single child on the whole planet being gifted with the opportunity to sit in a classroom for the duration of their childhood.



who are not getting this brand of "education" are deemed to be disadvantaged, and global efforts are directed towards every single child on the whole planet being gifted with the opportunity to sit in a classroom for the duration of their childhood. The craziness of this is rarely contemplated because we have either been indoctrinated ourselves by the same regime or, if we missed out on school, we have been sold the lie that school is the best form of education for children. We therefore send our offspring off for daily instruction, in their uniforms, without even a question.

During this decade-plus of compulsory training, children are delivered a prescribed syllabus that has been predetermined to be essential for success in the contemporary world. Their skills and performance are constantly measured and ranked within class groups, and even on national and international scales. These educational levels — or should they be called employability skills? — are championed by government and business leaders as essential for a nation's economic success in an increasingly competitive world marketplace. If our children do not come out of the education system more technically adept — and therefore more economically productive — than their parents, the nation will fall behind on the global playing field. This is then sensationally extrapolated by media commentators as a certain disaster that will result in falling living standards for the populace. Perpetual economic growth depends on the in-



creased productivity of the next generation. We can clearly see the ethical issues related to factory farming of animals to satisfy our rapacious hunger for more, but we are essentially blind to the human factories called schools.

Children are well aware of their place in the pecking order. If it is not on a chart on the classroom wall, it is sent home to the parents in regular report cards so they can assess whether their offspring deserve reward or punishment. Imagine if adults were informed that they would be forced to attend a decade of full-time prescribed training at which they would continually be assessed and disciplined to improve

the reality of a lifetime of servitude is so entrenched in our psyche that preparing children for this is the kindest thing to do. The insidiousness of this is that we lie to our kids that doing well at school is the pathway to wealth, freedom and happiness.

their performance, behaviour and attitude. Some might argue at this point that adults, once they leave school, are actually forced into institutions (workplaces), and trained and ranked and pushed to perform for 40 years. Maybe that explains why we “school” our children — the reality of a lifetime of servitude is so entrenched in our psyche that preparing children for this is the kindest thing to do. The insidiousness of this is that we lie to our kids that doing well at school is the pathway to wealth, freedom and happiness. The expectation to be grateful for a first class school education, so as to become a contributing member of a sick society, is surely the final insult. To actually get away with this type of child abuse, a lot of bullshit is required.

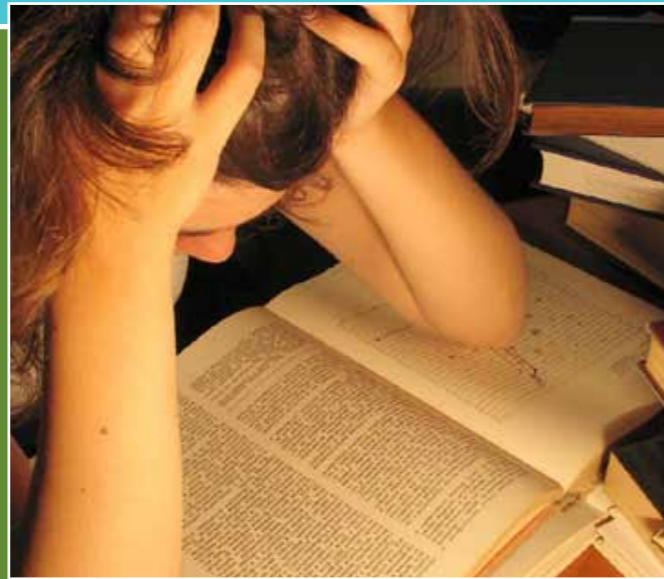


School ≠ education

The biggest lie of all is to label school as education. Most of us accept education, in the true sense of the word, as an essential requirement for a meaningful life, but the compulsory schooling of children to train them for the workforce is not education. The Jesuit doctrine of ‘Give me the child for his first seven years, and I’ll give you the man’, has been usurped by modern secular society to ensure that we all ‘become a useful member of society’. Innate human curiosity and a love of learning are systematically and effectively destroyed by the school system. Ask any year 12 student why they are studying so hard for their final exams and they will tell you it is for the marks, not for knowledge or understanding and certainly not for the love of learning.

The school children who challenge, question, and resist the system are targeted for reform by humiliating discipline, and are shunned and condemned as failures. It is not hard to imagine future archaeologists, sifting through the ruins of modern industrialised civilisation and struggling to understand

Ask any year 12 student why they are studying so hard for their final exams and they will tell you it is for the marks, not for knowledge or understanding and certainly not for the love of learning.



why the artefacts of the school system obviously point to the enslavement of children. What won't be such a mystery will be that a civilisation that did practice such universal child abuse would eventually collapse.

The mass production of unquestioning, self-loathing and competitive consumers is an art form that has been carefully crafted ever since the invention of the modern school system required by the industrial revolution. Its success has been outstanding. The human race is now seven billion people striving and competing against each other for their slice of the planet. The rapidly declining state of the planet in the wake of this madness is hardly a surprising outcome. In fact, the current state of affairs is so bad, that many humans are convinced that Homo sapiens is a fundamentally flawed quirk of the evolutionary process, and that our destiny is to wipe ourselves out. And because we are a mistake, an evolutionary dead end, the sooner we exit stage earth the better — we truly do hate ourselves. Some have decided to give up and run away to the ‘dark mountain’ to observe the inevitable collapse. The

rest of us are scratching our heads, wondering how it all went so pear-shaped, and what the hell are we going to do about it.

Educating the next generation

The evidence is steadily mounting to debunk the myth, still vociferously defended by those already on top of the heap, that studying hard to get the marks to climb the socio-economic ladder is the pathway to a good life. Unfortunately, the indoctrination has been so thorough that parents still blindly send their offspring off to school at the tender age of four or five — I know I did it without batting an eye. The cycle of abuse needs to be broken. While ever we continue to school the next generation to be competitive consumers, to not trust themselves or others, to view the planet as a resource for our

If we are going to school our children, then humility, co-operation, kindness to others, creativity and critical thinking ought to be the core of the curriculum. The modern compulsory school system has manufactured a population of ambitious, competitive, ignorant and fearful consumers who lack the essential attributes required for healthy, happy, and sustainable communities.

own use and abuse, then we will only continue to get what we are getting now. It is not community; it is a plague.

Every one of us has a responsibility to stop and take stock of where we are at and where we are heading. Any rational assessment will uncover a very unpleasant and confronting reality. It is little wonder that so many of us distract ourselves from this unfolding nightmare with the mindless indulgences of sex, drugs, celebrity, and spectator sports. If we dare profess that we want a better future for our children, then surely a serious and critical look at why we train our kids to contribute to a society that is destroying the planet is well overdue.

Community naturally springs from the collective beliefs and actions of the people that reside and intermingle with each other. Let's be honest, a good community is a nice place to be, a place where people feel welcomed and valued for simply being themselves. If we are going to school our children, then humility, co-operation, kindness to others, creativity and critical thinking ought to be the core of the curriculum. The modern compulsory school system has manufactured a population of ambitious, competitive, ignorant and fearful consumers who lack the essential attributes required for healthy, happy, and sustainable communities. Decent communities must have, at the very least, decent people.

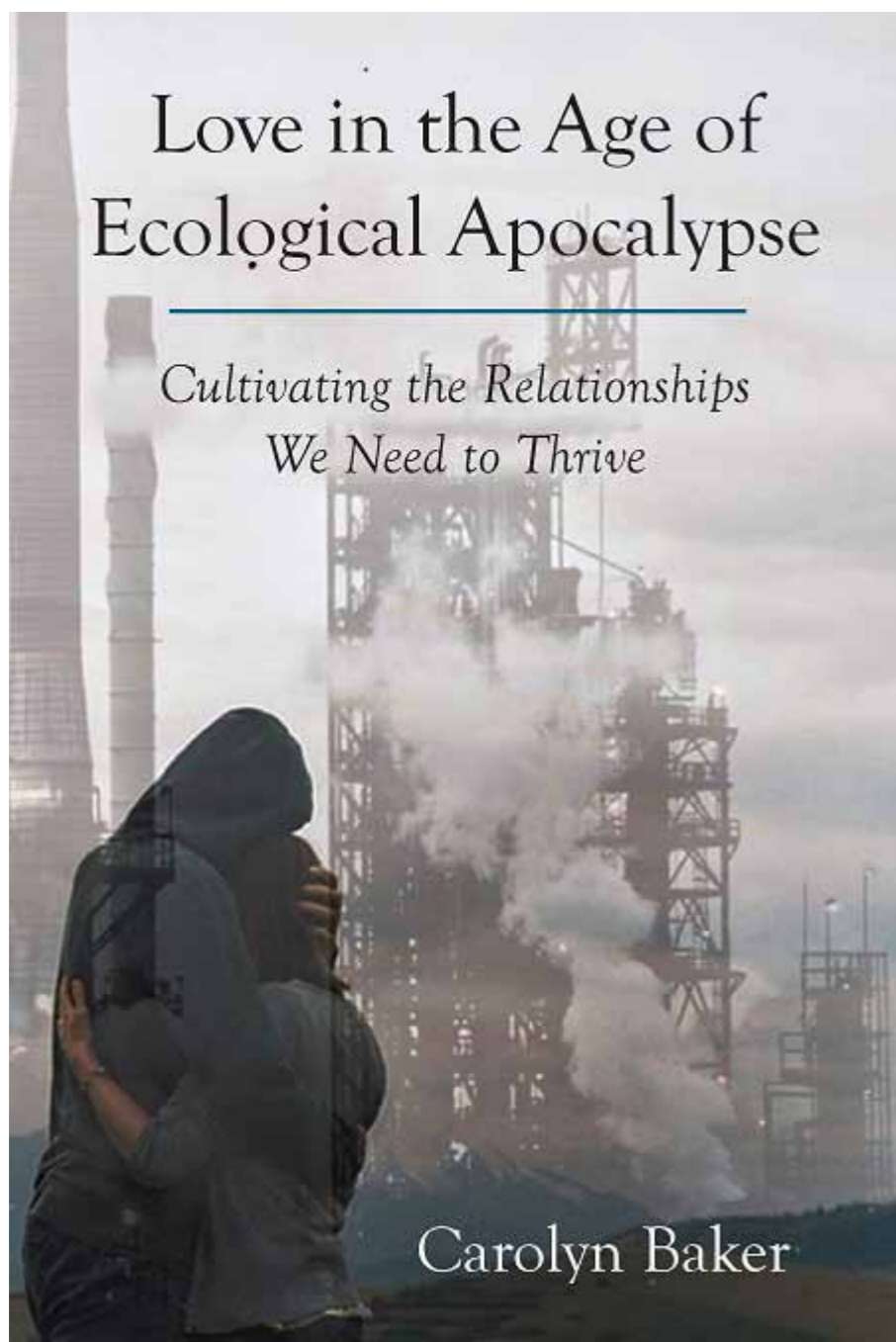
The good news is that despite the lengthy and rigorous training of our schooling system there still exists deep within us a desire to be social, peaceable and loving animals. We are hanging in there.

Further reading

1. ‘EDUCATION’ UNDER CONSUMER CAPITALISM, AND THE SIMPLER WAY ALTERNATIVE, by Ted Trainer
<http://simplicityinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/TrainerEducationSimplicityInstitute.pdf>

Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse

Cultivating the Relationships We Need to Thrive



Carolyn Baker

This article is excerpted from Carolyn's forthcoming book, *Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse: Cultivating the Relationships We Need to Thrive*, to be released March, 2015.

This sneak-preview of *Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse* is part 1 of a 3-part series of excerpts to be published in upcoming issues of SHIFT.



By: Carolyn Baker

Love in the Age of Ecological Apocalypse, by Carolyn Baker

Chapter 3: Friends, Neighbors, and the Community

People use drugs, legal and illegal, because their lives are intolerably painful or dull. They hate their work and find no rest in their leisure. They are estranged from their families and their neighbors. It should tell us something that in healthy societies drug use is celebrative, convivial, and occasional, whereas among us it is lonely, shameful, and addictive. We need drugs, apparently, because we have lost each other.

~Wendell Berry~

Often our relationships with friends and neighbors do not feel as necessary or urgent as our relationships with significant others. However, anyone preparing for collapse who is not in a primary relationship with a significant other is probably well aware of the importance of friends and neighbors in his/her preparation. And even if we are coupled with a partner who is totally on board with collapse, we must consider our relationships with friends and neighbors in our preparation because they will play an enormous role, for better or for worse.

When I speak of community, I am generally speaking of trusted others living in the same vicinity or region. While many of us have close friends who live in other regions whom we consider part of our "community," unless we live on a desert island, quite unlikely in the twenty-first century I might add, we are part of a regional community. If we live in a large urban area, the entire city is our community, but more specifically, our immediate community is our block or neighborhood. The same is true if we live in the suburbs. Rural living may make the community harder to define if our neighbors are a mile or more away, but even so, we inhabit a community, distant though it may be.

In the event of a sudden collapse or collapse-related disaster, communities are likely to react similarly. Everyone will need to eat, have access to clean drinking water, and be treated for injuries and trauma. As the infrastructure of our regions continues to deteriorate, the likelihood of these necessities being available dramatically decreases.

If you have not already done so, it is time to get to know your neighbors. It is not necessary to educate them about collapse or even mention the word, but it is important to begin a conversation about how the neighborhood can respond to an emergency.



Constant assessment of who our allies are and what additional allies we need is superb preparation for the future.

fringes, relating to you perfunctorily or superficially, hoping that someday, somehow, you will “come to your senses” and stop being a doomer. Still other friends may embrace some aspects of collapse but not other aspects, and some may actually be as engaged with preparation as you are. Assessing current friendships and how much support we have from those is important, but equally important are friendships that we consciously forge with people who are deeply engaged in preparation—as well as those who know little of collapse but with whom making alliances will serve both ourselves and them.

Activists and serious collapse preppers well know the necessity of developing relationships with allies in the community. If you are working to make your community self-sufficient, as noted above, it is not necessary that everyone in the community agree with the reality of collapse. They only need to understand the reasons why joining the endeavor you are promoting is advantageous to them. For example, if you are working to solarize your neighborhood or community, the people you want as allies do not need to understand the finer points of peak oil, and perhaps they do not need to understand it at all. Perhaps their motivation is community self-sufficiency and not needing to depend on an aging, deteriorating power grid or greedy power companies.

Or if you are working to shift your community to the consumption of more local, organic food, your allies do not need to be experts in understanding Monsanto’s attempt to control the world’s food supply, nor do they need to be experts in organic farming. They only need to want to eat food that is safe and free of toxic pesticides and keep themselves and their families healthy and disease-free.

Collective community endeavors are superb places to form friendships that will be mutually supportive as collapse intensifies. In this context, we can form alliances that could help save our lives in times of disaster or acute collapse conditions. Moreover, these friendships are not about

food with a number of neighbors, and in return, they have begun to share food with me. As a result, in an emergency situation, neighbors sharing food is not a novel idea and comes naturally as a result of past practices.

Additionally, you may be somewhat familiar to your community because you are serving it in some fashion. You may have organized local food events, participated in fundraising for non-profit organizations, served on the city council, had a booth at the farmers market, or gathered signatures for various petitions. The more visible you are, the more your neighbors and fellow-citizens will look to you for leadership in crisis situations. A double-edged sword indeed, visibility nevertheless can establish you as a trustworthy ally. And while you probably know more about the realities of collapse than your peers, your challenge is not so much to educate as to cooperate in helping the community survive and, if possible, thrive in the midst of myriad disruptions.

As noted above, we must always be attuned to cultivating relationships in the community that will serve ourselves and others. Constant assessment of who our allies are and what additional allies we need is superb preparation for the future. If we remain committed to this process, opportunities for building strategic relationships will invariably present themselves.

Perhaps you have experienced subtle or dramatic shifts in your relationships with friends over the course of your collapse preparation. Some may have exited your life entirely because they could not abide with your pre-occupation with collapse, whereas others may still be hanging out on the

Thus, as we contemplate a sudden collapse or disaster, we need to prepare logistically for our own access to food and water, and we should have some emergency response and first aid training and know how to treat basic wounds. In all likelihood, most of our neighbors will not be prepared on the same level. For this reason it is wise to begin dialoging with them about how the neighborhood might handle an emergency situation.

If you have not already done so, it is time to get to know your neighbors. It is not necessary to educate them about collapse or even mention the word, but it is important to begin a conversation about how the neighborhood can respond to an emergency. As both the blatant and telltale signs of collapse have accelerated in the past decade in the form of natural disasters and infrastructure failures such as pipeline explosions, more people are thinking about disaster preparation. While they may not wish to talk about it on a daily basis, most individuals are willing to discuss it from time to time.

The most prudent way to approach neighbors we do not know is not by beginning with the topic of disaster response. Rather, it is wise to cultivate relationships with them over time. One of most effective ways to begin this process, and it is a process, is by sharing. Sharing food, tools, or services paves the way for deeper conversations about the future. For example, baking an extra batch of cookies and sharing them with your neighbor can open the door to conversation. In fact, any time we share food with a neighbor, we are subtly communicating with them that we are not willing to let them starve. In my neighborhood, I have been practicing sharing

everyone agreeing on everything, or even everyone agreeing on the reality of collapse.

Forging friendships and alliances with friends and neighbors takes time and patience. The culture does not lend itself to forming these kinds of relationships but rather, disregarding them and living in our own individualistic bubbles. Therefore, some conscious effort will be required. Furthermore, these relationships will flow more freely if we can quietly ponder what we might be able to offer these individuals as well as what they might be able to offer us.

Kindness

There are two factors we need to consider and utilize when we consciously develop relationships. The first is basic human kindness. This requires some risk and some vulnerability. If we initiate the connection, we need to confront our fears and perhaps our feelings of awkwardness as we speak with people we may know of but not really know. While we may feel intimidated by breaking out of our societally-designated role of “nameless neighbor,” the truth is that our neighbors

We live in a culture that fundamentally does not know kindness. We are taught to donate clothing and money to organizations and people in need but never really deal with them up close and personal. In volatile situations, we feel comfortable with calling 911, but we don't want to get involved.

feel as vulnerable and awkward as we do. Otherwise, they would have made the first move! Whether we actually like them is less important than the fact that they are, like us, human beings at risk of being devastated by collapse.

We live in a culture that fundamentally does not know kindness. We are taught to donate clothing and money

to organizations and people in need but never really deal with them up close and personal. In volatile situations, we feel comfortable with calling 911, but we don't want to get involved. Let someone else deal with it. Sometimes this is appropriate if our lives would be endangered by getting involved, but very often, modern humans, particularly Americans, don't want to get their hands dirty. Genuine kindness, however, is about going the extra mile and demonstrating compassion where it isn't required or asked for. A verse from Naomi Shihab Nye's poem "Kindness," captures its essence:

Before you know kindness
as the deepest thing inside,
you must know sorrow
as the other deepest thing.

You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
catches the thread of all sorrows
and you see the size of the cloth.

In other words, kindness flourishes in the soil of compassion, and compassion only flows from the rivers of our own suffering. And this is precisely why many do not want to "get involved." Exposure to the suffering of others often rips open the scab so tentatively covering our own wounds. We've been inculcated to believe that avoiding our pain is preferable to sharing it with others or demonstrating acts of kindness that would help heal our pain.

Yet there are appropriate ways to demonstrate kindness and other ways that harm more than heal. For a profound visual example, I suggest viewing the 2012 film "Beasts of the Southern Wild" in which well-meaning, white healthcare professionals want to assist dirt-poor black swamp dwellers in the context of Hurricane Katrina but fail miserably because their kindness is not tempered by cultural sensitivity.

Yet another factor that must be considered and implemented in developing relationships is personal boundaries. Boundaries are limits we set on our personal, physical space and our emotional interactions with other people in order to stay safe and take care of ourselves. We may feel tremendous compassion for another suffering human being, but we must also maintain our boundaries if we decide to assist them. Allowing ourselves to be exploited or endangered is unacceptable. The great Buddhist teacher, Chogyam Trungpa, spoke of the difference between genuine compassion and "idiot compassion" in which we want to help but do not maintain our boundaries and actually put ourselves in danger on many levels. Another word for this is enabling. When we enable, we assist the other person to remain in their suffering by allowing ourselves to be exploited.

Again, poetry often conveys the deeper meaning of a concept than prose. For example, these lines from Robert Frost's "Mending Wall":

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

Something in us doesn't like walls between ourselves and other people, but sooner or later, we discover that while "walls" may not be necessary, strong and healthy boundaries are. The dance between demonstrating kindness and keeping one's boundaries intact is always a tricky one. None of us is trained in how to do this, but with time and practice, we become more skilled.

Intentional Communities

I occasionally interact with individuals who are living in intentional communities or would like to. I must confess that often it is difficult to get beyond the horror stories I hear about such communities, but I salute individuals who have been living in intentional communities for years or even decades. I honor their willingness to navigate the vicissitudes of a living arrangement where nearly every psychological issue known to humankind is apt to surface.

In current time a great deal of energy in intentional communities is invested in processing emotional wounding—although some residents of intentional communities would not name it as such. In fact, it is virtually impossible for inhabitants of industrial civilization to possess the skills necessary to reside harmoniously in long-term intentional communities. Such living arrangements are guaranteed to evoke emotional and visceral memories of growing up in families where individuals did not engage authentically with each other and where there was almost no awareness of or support for communicating directly and cleanly with other family members.

I believe that it is still too early in the collapse process for residents of intentional communities to avoid onerous emotional processing. For most inhabitants of industrial civilization, our situation is not yet dire, and as a result, we do not depend on our peers for our survival. When our interdependence with each other reaches a state in which survival needs supplant the residue of our personal, emotional wounding, the latter is likely to be eclipsed by bedrock compassion and a focus on keeping each other alive and well.

In this culture, few people understand that conflict is an essential aspect of any human relationship. Without it, relationships become sterile and vacuous.

Nevertheless, in the meantime, groups living communally need to invest significant amounts of energy in learning and practicing masterful communication and listening skills. Often, this concern is near the bottom of the list of priorities in a group considering living together. For example, I have occasionally facilitated workshops for groups of people who are considering creating an intentional community. It is not unusual for such groups to have acquired the financial resources and property for launching their endeavor, yet learned little about personal dialog. In one such workshop, after introducing several exercises in which individuals sat one-on-one with another member of the proposed community and dialoged for extended periods of time, one participant commented, "We have hardly ever sat and talked with each other like this. We have talked extensively about our financial resources, how to grow gardens and raise chickens, the land we might purchase for our community to live on, but we've never really gotten to know each other in this way."

In this culture, few people understand that conflict is an essential aspect of any human relationship. Without it, relationships become sterile and vacuous. When people, whether in a one-to-one relationship or in a community, consistently agree on everything, conflict will invariably erupt because something in us craves the color, texture, taste, and timbre of disagreement. Divergent perspectives in human relationships potentially provide the ingredients for a feast of conviviality enhanced by new experiences of the deeper layers of oneself and the other. Conflict offers the juice that lubricates the arid landscape of tranquil concurrence and facilitates unforeseen ventures into virgin territories of the heart and soul.

Human relationships need conflict in order to thrive. But for us, unlike our indigenous brothers and sisters, conflict is usually synonymous in our minds with warfare, hostility, betrayal, domination, and the intent to harm the other. Our one-dimensional experiences of conflict have usually been those that result in separation and rejection.

Furthermore, in the "polite society" of Anglophile industrial civilization, one learns to behave in a manner that accedes to the assumed or verbalized wishes of one's peers. Disagreement is in "poor taste." Go along to get along.

This kind of inculcation assumes that things are always as they seem and blatantly excludes the possibility of the human shadow. Overall, indigenous cultures understand that the persona we present is always attended by an "inner other" that we prefer to conceal. Carl Jung named this unconscious aspect of the psyche, "the shadow." Thus, in traditional societies, one usually finds specific rituals or practices that honor the shadow and as a result, provide structured opportunities for its members to disagree, and even to do so mightily, but without doing harm to anyone.

An indigenous person steeped in his or her tradition, when entering a room of individuals who are conversing in "cozy concurrence," might find such apparently seamless consensus puzzling. They might become very curious about what is not being said, or they may intentionally "stir the pot" in order to evoke controversy. Non-indigenous members of the "polite" gathering might experience this as rude, crass, or provocative, and indeed, such behavior is deviant in the context of the mores of industrial civilization.

Jung believed, and certainly most indigenous traditions would agree, that when the shadow is ignored or repressed, it does not vanish, but invariably persists and usually with a vengeance so that the untidiness of dealing with it directly is paled by comparison when experiencing its inexorable eruption. In other words, address the shadow now because it will not be ignored and in one way or other, will insist on being seen.

The shadow consists of thoughts, feelings, and impulses that we disown and dis-identify with. For example, we consciously want a particular dialog to go well and end harmoniously, but another part of us, out of our awareness, really wants to be "right" or may even want to sabotage the conversation. Or, we may be only vaguely aware that we distrust someone, and when engaged in dialog, because we want to trust them and

At worst, men deal with conflict through war, but at their best, they hold the tension of opposing forces in their bodies and do not act from the shadow but with consciousness and clarity in an attempt to resolve the issues at hand. On the other hand, women have been enculturated with the notion that disagreement in any form is not "nice" and that they must accede to and above all, please the other.

complete familiarity with our internal community before entering an external one, but it does mean that interactions with an external community will activate most of the members of our internal community. The real question is: How will we deal with that? Most of us need assistance with developing the skills necessary to do so.

No one can be 100% aware of their shadow 100% of the time, but with practice, we can deepen our awareness and prevent words or actions "out of left field" that harm, alienate, or undermine our relationships. Moreover, a deepening awareness of our own shadow serves to protect us from the shadow of others and speech or behavior by them that could harm us.

So how do we engage in conflict with each other, opening ourselves to the shadow in ourselves and the other? How do we navigate what may feel like mine fields of shadow material both internally and externally?

First we must recognize that we and all human beings possess a shadow as part of the infrastructure of the psyche. Acknowledging and working consciously with the shadow is scary, risky, and threatening to the ego, but the rewards are momentous, and the consequences of not doing that work are costly on every level.

One way people can develop a relationship with the shadow that may prove useful is to journal about what they may already know or suspect about it. In addition, we might depict it artistically--paint, draw, sculpt, or write a poem. We can also ask for dreams about the shadow which often works well for getting clues sooner rather than later. And of course, after we have some sense of it in terms of an image or a dream, we can sit quietly with eyes closed and dialog with it silently and directly as if we were having a conversation with another human being.

Developing familiarity with the shadow is particularly useful in our relationships with people in the external world. When we engage in dialog that, as they say, "pushes our buttons," we can be fairly certain that some aspect of the shadow has been triggered. Once again, as is so often the case in human relationships, it is crucial to be tuned in to our bodies so that we have an expanded range of "communication equipment" that operates not merely from the intellect, but from intuition and physical sensation as well.

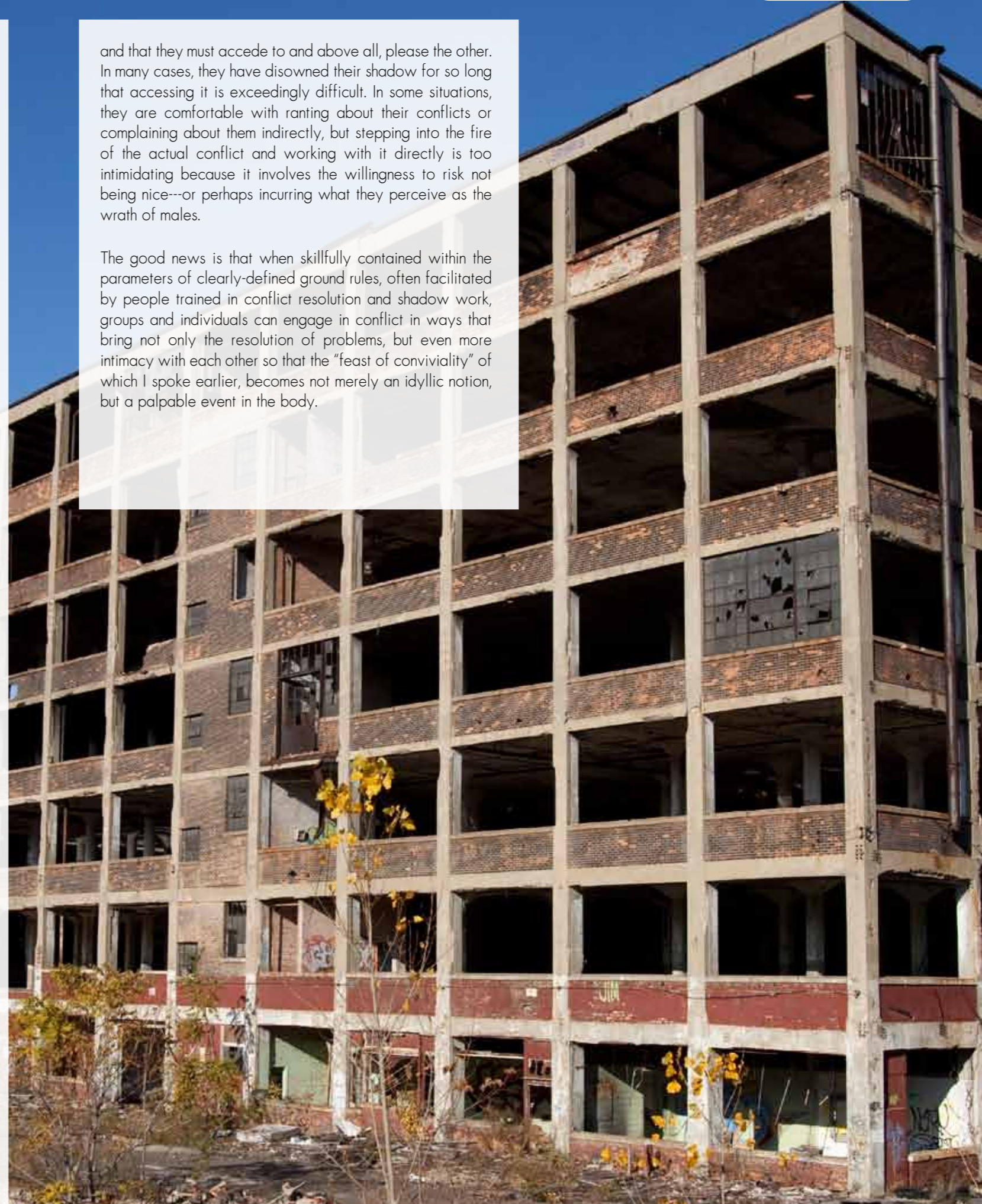
In my experience, men often navigate conflict better than women. At worst, men deal with conflict through war, but at their best, they hold the tension of opposing forces in their bodies and do not act from the shadow but with consciousness and clarity in an attempt to resolve the issues at hand. On the other hand, women have been enculturated with the notion that disagreement in any form is not "nice"

and that they must accede to and above all, please the other. In many cases, they have disowned their shadow for so long that accessing it is exceedingly difficult. In some situations, they are comfortable with ranting about their conflicts or complaining about them indirectly, but stepping into the fire of the actual conflict and working with it directly is too intimidating because it involves the willingness to risk not being nice--or perhaps incurring what they perceive as the wrath of males.

The good news is that when skillfully contained within the parameters of clearly-defined ground rules, often facilitated by people trained in conflict resolution and shadow work, groups and individuals can engage in conflict in ways that bring not only the resolution of problems, but even more intimacy with each other so that the "feast of conviviality" of which I spoke earlier, becomes not merely an idyllic notion, but a palpable event in the body.

deepen our connection with them, we ignore our distrust then end up speaking or acting in a hostile or passive-aggressive manner. Had we paid more attention to our compulsion to be "right" in the first instance and our distrust in the second, we may have behaved differently.

Ancient traditions such as Greek mythology viewed humans as complex creatures who were comprised of many characteristics which they called "spirits." Some of these traits we may be familiar with, and others to a lesser degree or not at all. From the perspective of mythology and Jungian psychology, it is as if a cast of characters inhabits the psyche and influences our thoughts, feelings, moods, and behavior. (No, I am not referring to multiple personalities.) Predictably, we feel and often express these traits when we are in conflict, although they may not be fully conscious, and because we are not familiar with the "community" living within us, we find it exceedingly difficult to abide amicably with the external community. Therefore, it behooves anyone longing for external community to become very familiar with the one inside. This is not to say that we must develop





One-Planet Solidarity



Solidarity From the French, *solidarité*

1. communion of interests and responsibilities,
2. mutual responsibility,
3. union or fellowship arising from common responsibilities and interests, as between members of a group or between classes, peoples, etc.



Solutions proposed within the framework of Western culture tend to favour actions that appeal to our individualism rather than to our sense of responsibility to society.

The traditional East-West divide between collectivist and individualist cultures has long fuelled debate on how to find an appropriate balance between fulfilling responsibilities to every member of society and honouring the integrity of the individual. It is commonly held that Eastern cultures are often collectivist to the detriment of the individual, while Western cultures are individualistic to the detriment of the collective.

Our environmental predicament, as well as the increasing wealth disparity between the world's haves and have-nots, provides ample evidence that individualistic Western consumerism is extremely damaging to the population as a whole. We have razed forests, vacuumed the oceans, and poisoned our air, water and soil in our terminally accelerating quest for the perpetual economic growth that maintains us in the manner to which we've grown accustomed, and we have wrought misery on the populations that bear the consequences.

The Western framework

Solutions proposed within the framework of Western culture tend to favour actions that appeal to our individualism rather than to our sense of responsibility to society. Greenwashing business as usual enables the self-deceit of 'green' consumerism, fitting neatly within the parameters of a growth economy while pandering to individualistic desire. We anonymously contribute our share to inequitably distributed GDP by working and spending, and tithe the fruits of our labour as taxes frittered away on unaccountable cronyism. And we abdicate our political power by electing lesser evils to office in lieu of collectively organizing to meet our needs.



By: Kari McGregor

This framework casts the individual not as a responsible participant in society, but as a consumer, a tax-payer and a voter. Individuality itself is eroded by our conformity to these designated roles and narrow parameters. Denied active participation in society, we are appeased by celebrity theatrics and access to consumer goods manufactured by those lower down the economic food chain, and we are fed a steady diet of reminders that our core responsibilities are to vote, pay our taxes, and go shopping. We are to be individualistic, not individual, collectively serving power, not powerfully serving the collective.

To address our environmental and economic predicaments effectively, self-serving individualism and abdication of responsibility must be supplanted by solidarity. Recognition of, and commitment to, shared responsibilities and interests are the very foundation of a resilient Earth Community.

Common needs and the Golden Rulers

Access to clean, safe water, healthy food, shelter, safety and security are inarguably the most basic of needs that we all share in common. The inequity of a world in which more than two billion live below the poverty line¹ with inadequate access to the basics while 1,645 billionaires live in the lap of obscene luxury is a profound failure of solidarity.² While we profess to care deeply for the plight of the have-nots, a wealthy lifestyle is indicative of an unwillingness to level the playing field by sharing with those who otherwise go without.

Whether those 1,645 billionaires wish to share their wealth or not, it is of no help for those of us who have plenty to rattle

complaints about the injustice of inequity around a self-righteous echo chamber while we are in a position ourselves to live more simply so that others may simply live.

On a finite planet, to waste drinkable water on irrigating golf courses or producing luxury goods while aquifers are bled dry damns those who rely on subsistence agriculture. It is obscene that children die of hunger while many adults die young from the maladies of affluence. Homelessness due to unaffordable housing and insufficient incomes casts doubt on the ethics of profiting from property sales and driving up prices. While the wealthy developed world lives relatively buffered from the impacts of natural disasters, the impoverished third world takes a regular beating thanks to the unaffordability of safety measures.

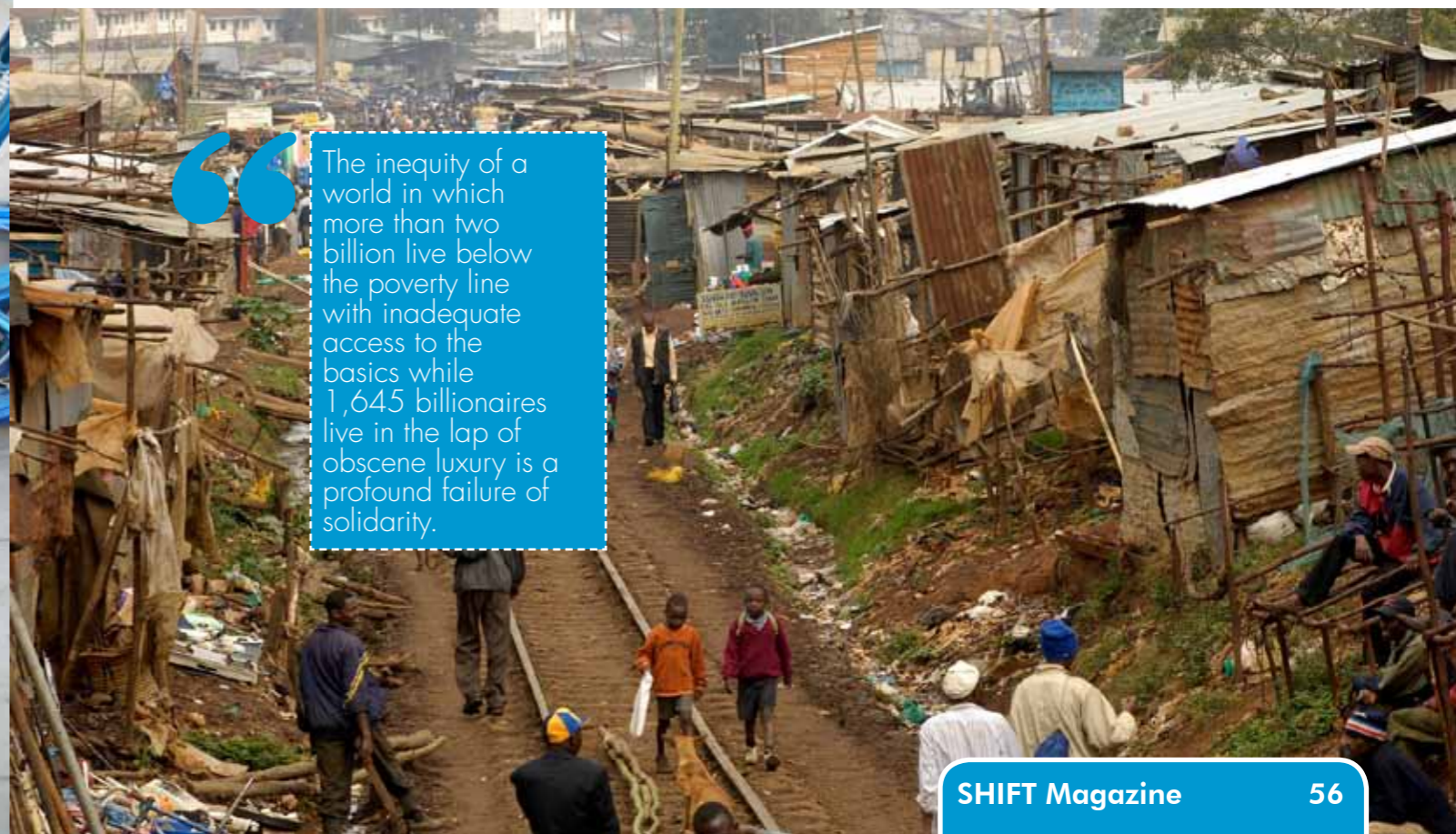
Will the poor forever continue to turn the other cheek while the rich continue to exploit the wealth disparity to their own advantage in a misapplication of the Golden Rule (he who has the gold makes the rules), or is a leveling of the playing field on the cards?

Shared challenges and the Golden Rule

Many of the problems that plague the world's poor are unimaginable for their comfortable counterparts in developed countries. However, there are challenges we all share. Energy constraints will eventually constrict us all, and our perpetual growth economy is nothing better than a race to the finish line in which the winners are pre-determined, but also destined to be losers in the long run. Environmental damage ravages the



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poor first, but eventually boomerang back to their source. And economic contraction topples the smallest dominoes first, but without their support, the larger ones are destined to fall too. A position on the top deck of the Titanic does nothing to prevent the ship from sinking upon impact.

Sentiments of pity for the have-nots do little to engender the sense of solidarity required to steer this boat we are all in together onto a safe course. If we are all, indeed, in the same boat, regardless which deck we are on by default, then extending care to others is pragmatic as well as compassionate – the Golden Rule (do unto others) is a form of insurance. A sense of responsibility to a broader community provides fertile ground for the cultivation of one-planet solidarity.

Parameters for one-planet living

The fact that all 7.2 billion humans share space with a diminishing variety and number of other living organisms on the only habitable rock circling a distinctly ordinary star in the outer reaches of a pretty standard galaxy in the immense expanse of space provides a humbling set of parameters for how best to survive.

Some of us – a minority, of course – are living a 4-planet lifestyle³ in terms of consumption while our global human population averages a 1.5-planet lifestyle.⁴ Many countries are running ecological deficits with ecological footprints far beyond their biocapacity.⁵ On a finite planet it is simply impossible to provide an increasingly high standard of living to an increasing population – something's got to give, and in our case it's been the environment, while the status of the poor has yet to be elevated, and conflicts rage. Enter competition and the invisible hand of the 'free' market, aided by the military-industrial complex – the ethereal and imperial tools of 'resource' allocation in a world of diminished responsibility and absent of solidarity. The maintenance cost of privilege is paid by those who can least afford it.

To rein in our consumption to a level that the Earth can sustain will require solidarity. Resource limits and planetary boundaries imply a set ecological 'budget' from which to provide for all humans without harming the planet or any of our fellow Earthlings. Apportioning a few aid or investment dollars to the game of catch-up – which translates to the poor as running to stand still – bears the unintended consequence of adding to environmental damage and resource depletion, thus accelerating our pace over the cliff-edge from which we will not return, at least not to life as we know it. The only way to

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both provide a reasonable standard of living to everyone and sustain the environment that sustains us is to reduce the consumption of our species' over-consumers to a one-planet level.

The greatest point of leverage for change is the consumption level of the average citizen of any wealthy country. Downshifting from a 4-planet lifestyle to a one-planet lifestyle has a net positive impact, whereas trying to enable 4-planet living for the poor would render space exploration our only chance for survival. Joking aside, this is precisely the approach favoured by wealthy elites such as Elon Musk, of Tesla Motors fame, belying their insistence on the virtue of their eco-capitalist model of techno-fix salvation.⁶

7.2 billion is a heck of a lot of humans, and with each new addition our ecological budget is stretched thinner and thinner, a circumstance exacerbated by peaking resources. Those at the top of the pyramid of consumption may not notice the constriction, but those at the burgeoning base sure do as the rug is pulled out from under them. We have four choices for a course of action, only one of them viable:

1. Continue business as usual – growing consumption and population until we hurtle over the cliff-edge
2. Continue to increase consumption while reining in population – until we go over the cliff-edge in a lower gear
3. Continue to grow our population while curtailing our per-capita consumption – until we go over the cliff-edge in a lower gear
4. Curb both population and consumption – until human civilization is operating within nature's carrying capacity

In order to bring both population and consumption into line with carrying capacity it is necessary to ascertain an optimal threshold for meeting basic needs, and peg this to the maximum number of humans any given landbase can support at this level. Anything else simply defies logic. It is quite obvious that rapidly reducing our consumption buys us the time required to stabilize and reduce human population to a sustainable level.

The privilege pitfall

If it were as simple as encouraging large-scale downshifting we would probably have already carved a large chunk out of our planetary predicament and be well on the way to a more stable future. But downshifting simply isn't appealing to many, and therein lies the catch: the privileged aren't naturally disposed toward relinquishing their privilege.

While our culture encourages us to aspire to greater wealth, higher status, and a higher plane of power and privilege, the relative privilege of the average person in the developed

world is obscured and normalized, despite being unsustainable. Until we view this privilege for what it is there is bound to be resistance to the perceived injustice of losing or giving up what we feel entitled to. **And a guilt-trip isn't very persuasive.**

In order to encourage downshifting to a one-planet way of life, a sense of empowered responsibility can provide both motivation and reward. Downshifting does not simply mean consuming less in material terms – for example foregoing superfluous electrical and electronic appliances, gas-guzzling private vehicles, cluttered wardrobes, and gratuitous air-con – this is necessary, but not sufficient. Meeting some of our needs more creatively via the burgeoning sharing economy provides abundance without the economic and ecological price tags of private ownership and individualistic consumption – and it means we share the challenge of meeting our community's needs while increasing overall access.

Downshifting also means localizing our horizons by participating more in our local economies. This strengthens the resilience of our communities as we rely less on global supply chains and resource-intensive infrastructure whose impact on the environment and the local economies of other regions is largely detrimental. Closing the distance between producers and consumers, between workers and workplaces, and between the haves and have-nots fosters a sense of local solidarity. Localizing our horizons also means more purposeful participation in our own communities, a stronger sense of belonging forged from a mix of contribution and connection. This increased connection and participation along with reduced individual economic burden leaves our communities more politically empowered to take control of our own destiny, **no longer at the mercy of global power structures whose interests do not align with ours.**

Solidarity is our insurance

One-planet solidarity means living purposefully as a valuable member of a connected Earth Community. In sharing responsibility for providing access to basic needs for all humans, and for preventing or addressing damage done to our shared planet in the process, we necessarily connect, collaborate, and co-create the resilient communities of the future. What better insurance scheme could there be?

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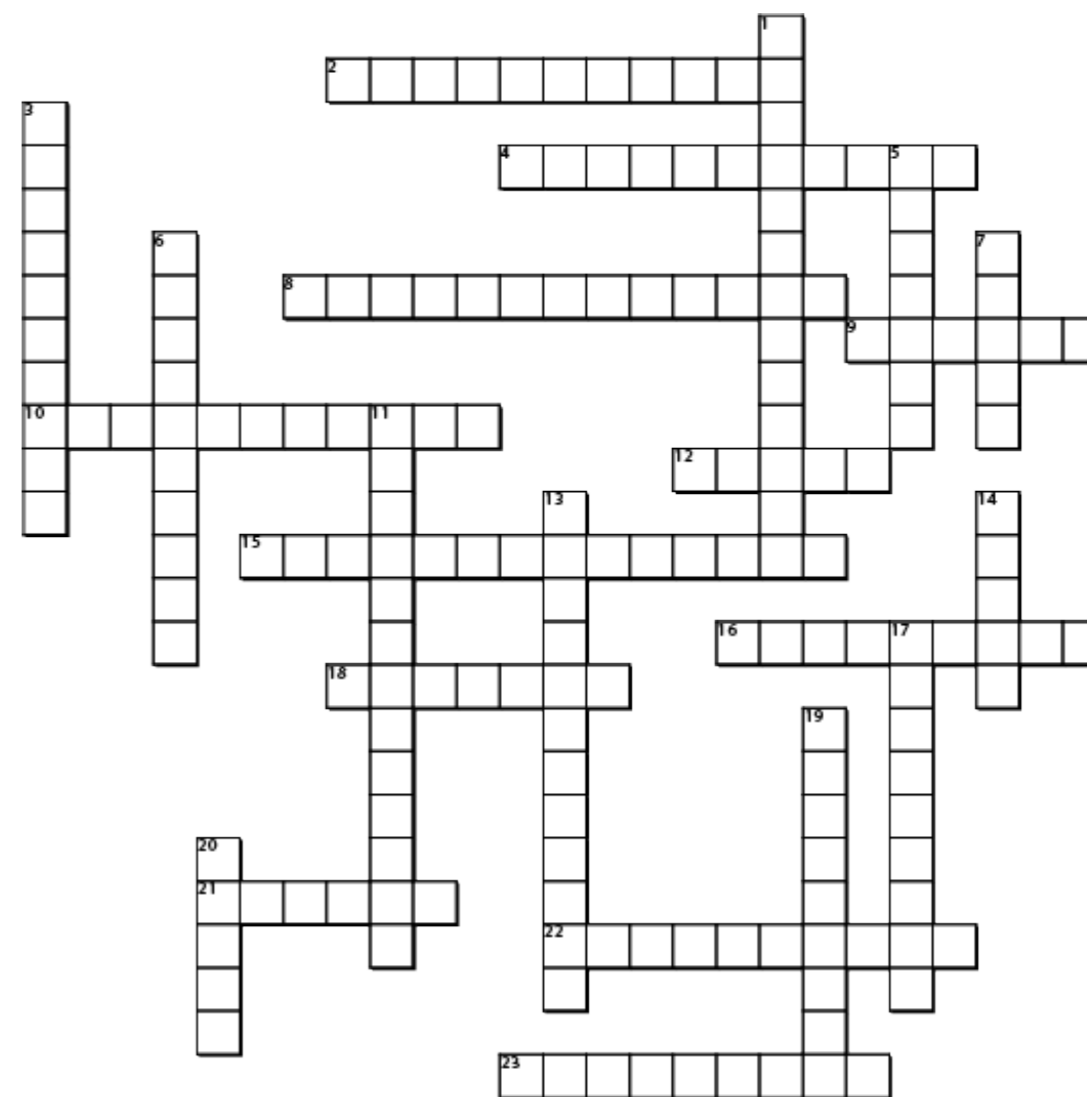
CROSSWORD

The warm and fuzzy puzzle of life

Down

1. Rhinoplasties reconstructed between people
3. Linkage jumbled non conceit
5. Give all about a group of houses in a rural area
6. Tell voice c to rearrange the masses together
7. Association of workers within fun ionic solutions

11. Person next door with head covering is everything around here
13. Warm fellowship greets honest lunatic
14. Dietary preference very close by
17. City mum on mixed up local group
19. Venus liar reformed a characteristic of the whole
20. Getting rid of ugly people starts a gathering of likeminded



Across

2. I read camera about conviviality
4. Company spy of sorts is a business ownedn by workers
8. Breaking down national borders sounds like an act of replacing a light bulb
9. Relatives confuse my fail 10. Nation let in lunatic on purpose

12. Mad biter extended family group 15. Social beings rue aggressions to be this
16. Power to the people comes from deconstructed creamy cod
18. Ice toys smashed a highly structured system of human organization
21. Ignore unusually defined locality
22. The story I laid converted into fellowship arising from common responsibilities
23. Hoe should be used in maintaining a home

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Answers to Cryptic Crossword Issue #5

Across

- 2. Get right out with the hippies beginning to sound impossible - GROWTH
- 6. Ball of life worthy of protection - BIOSPHERE
- 7. Crazy nude Sal employed the ground - LANDUSE
- 9. Resist rifle letters increase soil yields - FERTILISERS
- 10. Upset the iron gent to find the bulk of air - NITROGEN
- 12. Invisible nylons not fit for consumption - MICROPLASTICS
- 14. Auto then beach then beast of burden the innermost self then MDMA, what a gas! - CARBONDIOXIDE
- 16. The mean crazy mother of all greenhouse gases - METHANE
- 17. When all the elephants return starts to wet plants - WATER
- 18. Mix up optional head count - POPULATION
- 19. Spin loop until it turns into contamination - POLLUTION
- 20. Sty mess turns into organisations - SYSTEMS
- 21. Sounds like the chanting outside the automatic earth office and don't the plants like that - PHOSPHOROUS

Down

- 1. Tie up the ram, that's the limits - BOUNDARIES
- 3. The stuff of clean life where farts reassemble - FRESHWATER
- 4. CIA aid fiction and scrambles to decrease pH - ACIDIFICATION
- 5. Inside Kalim it's the end points of everything - LIMITS
- 8. A looser mix used for propellant - AEROSOL
- 11. A bunch of life that sounds like an organic submarine metropolis - BIODIVERSITY
- 13. Return hay with lasso effects the system in mysterious ways - FEEDBACK LOOPS
- 15. Inside Bozo never will you find gas layer - OZONE
- 19. Girl's name keeps on giving to the needy - CHARITY



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Ojibwe prophecy speaks of a time during the seventh fire when our people will have a choice between two paths. The first path is well-worn and scorched. The second path is new and green. It is our choice as communities and as individuals how we will proceed.

- *Winona LaDuke*