

Community Visioning Initiatives “For the Duration of the Emergency”  
(or: how to sort through all this, and arrive on the same side, so we can help each other)

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

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

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

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

One suggestion which could assist in bringing many solutions to light at the local community level is a 161 page proposal by this writer titled “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>”. “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” (“1000CommunitiesSquared”) advocates for Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” with ongoing workshops, and “sister community” relationships, as a way of generating an exponential increase in our collective capacity to overcome the challenges of our times.

Much of the discussion relating to the economic crises has focused on the concept of “confidence”. From this writers’ point of view “... true confidence is built up because people believe that the efforts of everyone working together is a greater force than the challenges they are facing.” (from “A Greater Force than the Challenges We Are Now Facing” by this writer, see below). The “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” proposal describes one way of generating this kind of “true confidence”.

For readers who would like to explore these ideas further, this writer has created more than 5 different introductions to the “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” approach. Three of these “introductions” are included in the Fall, 2008 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter (<http://ipcri.net/images/The-IPCR-Journal-Newsletter-Fall-2008-B.pdf>). One of those introductions is titled “A Greater Force than the Challenges We Are Now Facing”

(<http://ipcri.net/images/A-Greater-Force-than-the-Challenges-We-Are-Now-Fac.pdf> ). Another one of those three “introductions” is titled “The ‘1000Communities<sup>2</sup>’ Proposal: Creating a Multiplier Effect of a Positive Nature”. This “introduction” is also part of an “Educational Materials Outreach Package”, which is accessible for free, and which is located at the bottom of the homepage of The IPCR Initiative (at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net) ). The most comprehensive introduction to the “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” proposal was written in December, 2008 and is titled “Transitioning from Less Solution-Oriented Employment to More Solution-Oriented Employment”(<http://ipcri.net/images/Transitioning-from-Less-Solution-Oriented-Employment.pdf> ).

We are in need of innovative and imaginative solutions.

In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a Community Visioning Initiative (“Vision 2000”) that attracted more than 1,700 participants, and produced 40 community goals—which resulted in the implementation of 223 projects and programs, the creation of 1,300 permanent jobs, and a total financial investment of 793 million dollars. (for source references, see p. 9 of the “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” proposal, at <http://ipcri.net/images/1000Communities2.pdf> )

*If even a few* of the kind of Community Visioning Initiatives described in the “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” proposal generated results similar to those achieved by the Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA) Visioning Initiative, people in all parts of the world—keenly attuned when it comes to resolving challenges which require urgent solutions at all levels of society— *could be* inspired to carry out similar Community Visioning Initiatives. And if many communities carried out similar initiatives, and also achieved significant results, our collective capacity to resolve the challenges of our times *would surely* begin to accumulate at an accelerating rate.

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

Even now, as you are reading this, truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill are being generated in a variety of ways—and in a variety of circumstances—by countless numbers of people in communities around the world. A combination of Community Visioning Initiatives, “Community Teaching and Learning Centers” and “sister community” relationships can bring to light the many truly inspiring contributions of genuine goodwill in your community and region, and contribute much to the building of “close-knit” communities of people... communities with a healthy appreciation for each others strengths, communities with a well-developed capacity to resolve even the most difficult challenges—and communities which demonstrate a high level of compassion for their fellow human beings.

[Note: In light of the urgent need to increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, anyone may access all IPCR documents (including the above mentioned 161 page “1000Communities<sup>2</sup>” proposal) for free, at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net) )].

With Kind Regards,

Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator  
The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative