

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

Vol. 2 No. 1

“... bringing to the fore what is often hidden....”

Winter 2006-2007

IPCR Workshops Now Being Offered in Leesburg, Virginia

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative is now offering 1 hour, 2 hour, 3 hour, and 4 hour workshops in Leesburg, Virginia. The workshops will be held at public access community use locations, according to availability. The workshops will provide an overview of evidence supporting the need for an IPCR Initiative, and provide an introduction to some or all of The Eight IPCR Concepts. The Eight IPCR Concepts are “Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters.” This issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter provides an introduction to The IPCR Initiative. For more specific information about The IPCR Initiative—and for more information about The Eight IPCR Concepts in particular—please see the “Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative” article on p. 15.

A Brief Description of The IPCR Initiative

The IPCR Initiative is aware of an urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people; both as a response to the implications of ecological footprint analysis and the “peaking” of oil production, and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

The IPCR Initiative is an accumulation of documents, resources, and observations brought together to support the propositions that we—collectively—have both the need, and the potential, to be

- 1) much more organized and deliberate about “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: how many good people there are, how many ways there are to do good, and how much happiness comes to those who extend help, as well as to those who receive it.”
- 2) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability and
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the accumulated storehouse of wisdom and “embodied energy” which is now accessible to us.

The Website for The IPCR Initiative

Note: The website for The IPCR Initiative is located at www.ipcri.net. While the IPCR website does provide much useful information (including descriptions of six of The Eight IPCR Concepts), there are many recently created documents and already outlined modifications which have not yet been incorporated into the website.

Letter From The Editor

The goal of this Winter 2006-2007 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter is to introduce The IPCR Initiative to people in the Leesburg, Virginia area; and to make the resources of The IPCR Initiative as accessible as possible, so people can make use of them. While special attention is given to the offering of IPCR Workshops, there are—throughout this issue—references to many fields of activity which contribute to a more peaceful and sustainable quality of life, here in the Leesburg, Virginia area—and in other parts of the world.

I kindly and respectfully invite readers of this issue of the IPCR Journal/Newsletter to explore The IPCR Initiative in any way you feel will be helpful to you. I am most willing to answer questions by e-mail or by telephone, most willing to arrange for IPCR Workshops (as my schedule permits), and most willing to meet with people interested in helping The IPCR Initiative to carry out its mission. (For more information on The IPCR mission, see “The IPCR Mission Statement” on p.5) (For contact information, see p.16)

Stefan Pasti, Editor
The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

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The Need for an IPCR Initiative (A Comprehensive Community-Building Response to the Challenges of Our Times)

Consider: the increasing world population, and the increasing number of people who are consuming material goods and ecological services indiscriminately. From the viewpoint of ecological footprint analysis, “sustainability requires living within the regenerative and absorptive capacity of the planet.” Ecological footprint analyses have been made which suggest that if everyone in the world had an ecological footprint like the average North American, we would need at least 2 more Earths. There is also growing evidence that we are near or at peak production of our finite supplies of oil—meaning that soon there will be less and less oil available.

We should also be aware of the following difficulties:

- 1) “cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence which have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable
- 2) conflicts arising from “what are perceived as irreconcilable differences” among religious, spiritual, and moral traditions resulting in many, many people who are so disaffected, discouraged, and alienated by religious, spiritual and moral traditions that the real treasured wisdom of such traditions remains mostly hidden
- 3) any shortages of goodwill in times of unprecedented transition could tilt already precarious systems into further disarray—and thus erode established systems in even the most stable communities and regions and
- 4) sorting out what are real challenges 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.

Furthermore, in a world where the goals of reducing the incidence of violence, establishing community life and cultural traditions associated with ecological sustainability, and providing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs *all depend on building trust...* we—collectively—are creating more and more “urban agglomerations” (cities with a population of more than 1 million people), which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures... and where it is more and more difficult to trace the consequences of our individuals investments of time, energy, and money.

We are at critical point in the evolution of spiritual understanding.

There is now a profound and critical need for as many people as possible to exercise as much love, understanding and forgiveness as possible—in as many ways as possible.

(“The Need for an IPCR Initiative”, continued)

On page 6 of this issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter, there are 105 fields of activity listed which are in some way—or which are in many ways—related to the goals in The IPCR Mission Statement.

The IPCR Initiative can provide practical assistance to people working in those fields of activity

- 1) by inspiring, encouraging, and supporting the creation of many local community specific and regional specific variations of the “...Towards Higher Common Ground...” Survey—so that the actual survey takes place in as many ways as possible (for more information about the “... Towards Higher Common Ground...” Survey, see p. 7)
- 2) by introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts through workshops offered at the local community level
- 3) by actively developing the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administering such questionnaires at the local community level, and then sharing compilations of the responses
- 4) by helping to establish, and contributing to, local community points of entry acting as “clearinghouses”, where residents can discover more about the countless number of “things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives” which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- 5) by identifying, developing, and creating enough descriptions and examples of the 105 fields of activity listed on p. 6

and generating enough regular feature material in categories such as workshops and conferences, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “discussion board” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter

- 6) by combining the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in “A List of Related Fields of Activity”—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

The IPCR Mission Statement

The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative is an effort to facilitate the practical application of the Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—at the local and regional level—as a way of contributing to the following goals:

- 1) “... bringing to the fore what is often hidden: how many good people there are, how many ways there are to do good, and how much happiness comes to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it.”
- 2) increasing our collective capacity to encourage and inspire individual spiritual formation—with all the beneficial consequences that follow for individuals, communities, regions. etc.
- 3) building trust among people from different faith communities and cultural traditions
- 4) increasing our capacity to be responsible stewards of our time, energy, and money
- 5) increasing our capacity to access what is necessary for basic human needs and quality of life through principles and practices of ecological sustainability and permaculture, especially in light of the implications of ecological footprint analysis and the “peaking” of oil production
- 6) increasing our awareness of the countless number of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in our own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world
- 7) reducing the incidence of violence—and all the costs associated with war
- 8) increasing emergency assistance to people with basic human needs
- 9) reflecting an understanding of the value of silence
- 10) creating local community and regional publications that provide a format for sharing the good news which would be identified, encouraged, supported, and sustained by contributions to the first 9 goals

The Guiding Question of The IPCR Initiative

Here is the guiding question of The IPCR Initiative: how can the good people of different faith communities and cultural traditions work together towards the highest ideals each faith community and cultural tradition has to offer?

“The mariner uses his compass to guide him aright amidst the dark storm clouds and raging waves. When Man is overwhelmed by the dark clouds of despair and the raging confusion of irrepressible desires, he too, has a compass which will point to him the direction he has to take.... That compass is a Society that is dedicated to the propagation of Spiritual Discipline.”

Sri Sathya Sai Baba
(from “Sathya Sai Speaks” Vol. 8, Chpt. 21, p. 108)

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

“... bringing to the fore what is often hidden....”

A List of Related Fields of Activity

[which are in some way—or which are in many ways—
related to the goals of The IPCR Mission Statement (see p. 5)]

accountability indicators, alleviating hunger, alleviating poverty, alternative gifts, appropriate technology, barter networks, biodynamic agriculture, building civic skills, building community, car-free zones, character education, citizen participation, citizen peacebuilding, co-housing, community banks, community development, community economics, community gardens, community good news networks, community journals, community land trusts, community membership agreements, community revitalization, community revolving loans, community self-awareness, community service work, community supported agriculture, community supported manufacturing, community visioning initiatives, consensus decision making, cottage industries, creative commons, cultural diversity, development assistance, disease control, eco-classifieds, ecological architecture, ecological footprint analysis, ecological tipping points, economic conversion, edible schoolyards, emergency humanitarian aid, emergency medical assistance, energy conservation, energy farms, fair trade, faith-based educational institutions, faith mentoring, farmers markets, food co-ops, green living, green politics, green purchasing, green retrofitting, holistic health care, homesteading, identifying problems and solutions, inclusive decision-making processes, individual spiritual formation, inspiring role models, interfaith dialogue, interfaith peacebuilding, intergenerational projects, local community points of entry, local currency, locally based food processing, locally grown organic food, low impact transport systems, medical assistance, meditation, mentoring, neighborhood revitalization, non-profit human service organizations, non-violent conflict resolution, oil depletion protocol, peace studies programs, peak oil, permaculture, positive news, powerdown projects, preventative health care, questionnaire construction, recycling, relocation, renewable resources, right livelihood, right livelihood employment listings, rural renaissance, socially engaged spirituality, socially responsible investing, solutions journalism, spiritual discipline, spiritual diversity, spiritual friendships, spiritually responsible investing, sustainable health care, vegetarian nutrition, village design, village industries, violence prevention, voluntary simplicity, water conservation, win-win conflict resolution, world population awareness, yoga, zero waste, etc.

The Potential for a Wide Range of Workshop Offerings

The IPCR Initiative is currently offering workshops with the goal of introducing The IPCR Initiative, and The Eight IPCR Concepts—and the goal of making the resources of The IPCR Initiative as accessible as possible, so people can make use of them. There does exist, however—and it is worth emphasizing here in this issue—both the need and the potential for people (including myself) to provide workshops at the local community level on all of the 105 fields of activity listed above, so people can make best use of *resources associated with those concepts*. Such a wide range of workshop offerings would, I believe, be most accessible as workshop offerings from some kind of community center. If there are any readers of this IPCR Journal/Newsletter who would be interested in developing the idea of a “wide range of workshop offerings,” please contact me—Stefan Pasti—at stefanpasti@ipcri.net. Thank you.

“The more we realize the repercussions of our actions on our neighbours and strive to act according to the highest we are capable of, the more shall we advance in our spiritual development.” [J.C. Kumarappa in “Why The Village Movement?” Rajchat, Kashi (India) 1960 p. 73]

Everyone is involved when it comes to determining the markets
that supply the “ways of earning a living.” (SP)

The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

“... bringing to the fore what is often hidden...”

**A Brief Description of the Proposed Survey “Towards Higher Common Ground”:
A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources**

(for more information about the survey, see “Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative” on p. 15)

Believing that many of the challenges of our times
are far more deeply rooted than most of us understand;

believing that *while the resources we have*
are more than sufficient to overcome the challenges of our times *and*
are now more accessible than at any other time in the course of history
-- such resources are often obscured by the complexity many of us experience in
the everyday circumstances of our lives;

and

believing that well-organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions
are a universally recognized approach to problem solving
commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings
in every part of the world--

this writer is proposing a project titled “Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most
Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources”.

The survey would consist of the following four questions:

- 1) What are the most difficult challenges of our times?
- 2) Do we have the resources necessary to overcome the challenges of our times?
- 3) If your answer to Question #2 is yes, please describe the resources you believe
will contribute the most to helping us—collectively—overcome these
difficult challenges.
- 4) If your answer to Question #2 is no, please offer any and all sincere,
constructive, relevant, and practical suggestions for what we—
collectively—can do to inspire, encourage, and/or create the resources
you believe *would be necessary* to overcome these difficult challenges.

**About “A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground:
A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources’”**

One of the recently created documents not yet available on The IPCR Initiative website is titled
“A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most Difficult
Challenges and Most Valuable Resources.’” The project proposal provides 1) an overview of
evidence which contributed to this writers sense that there is a need for a survey like this (see
above) 2) a wide range of resources which may be helpful in framing local community specific
and regional specific variations of the proposal 3) a wide range of examples of possible
responses to an actual survey, as a way of illustrating the significant potential energy which can
be realized by a careful and conscientious use of this approach. (For more information about this
document, see “Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative, on p. 15)

Excerpts from the section of “The IPCR Workshop Primer” titled
“An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”

- 3) From the “World Report on Violence and Health” (World Health Organization Geneva 2002) in Chapter 9 “The Way Forward: Recommendations for Action” p. 254 (at <http://whqlibdoc.who.int/hq/2002/9241545615.pdf>)

“The global drugs trade and the global arms trade are integral to violence in both developing and industrialized countries. Even modest progress on either front will contribute to reducing the amount and degree of violence suffered by millions of people. To date, however—and despite their high profile in the world arena—no solutions seem to be in sight for these problems.”

- 5) From the website of UN Habitat—United Nations Human Settlements Programme— at <http://www.unhabitat.org> (from “Media Centre/Press Kits” section)

a) from “State of the World’s Cities 2004-5” (foreward)

“Many cities face pervasive and persistent problems, including growing poverty, deepening inequality and polarization, widespread corruption at the local level, high rates of urban crime and violence, and deteriorating living conditions.”

- 10) From the “Hirsch Report” [“The Peaking of World Oil Production: Impacts, Mitigation and Risk Management”—Project Leader: Robert L. Hirsch (SAIC) Commissioned by the Department of Energy, and dated February, 2005] [Accessible at the website of Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD)(USA) at www.bartlett.house.gov/EnergyUpdates/]

“Over the past century the development of the U.S. economy and lifestyle has been fundamentally shaped by the availability of abundant, low-cost oil....The peaking of world oil production presents the U.S. and the world with an unprecedented risk management problem.... The world has never faced a problem like this.... As peaking is approached, liquid fuel prices and price volatility will increase dramatically, and, without timely mitigation, the economic, social, and political costs will be unprecedented.”

- 20) From “Permaculture and Energy” (by David Holmgren, co-creator of the “permaculture” concept) (article first written in 1990, published in “Permaculture Activist” Issue #31 May, 1994) (accessible at <http://permacultureactivist.net/Holmgren/holmgren.htm>)

“The transition from an unsustainable fossil fuel-based economy back to a solar-based (agriculture and forestry) economy will (require making best use) of the embodied energy that we inherit from industrial culture. This embodied energy is contained within a vast array of things, infrastructure, cultural processes and ideas, mostly inappropriately configured for the ‘solar’ economy. It is the task of our age to take this great wealth, reconfigure it, and apply it to the development of sustainable systems.”

Excerpts from the section of “The IPCR Workshop Primer” titled
“**Related Statistics**”

1) *World Population*

In 1804, the world population was 1 billion.

In 1927, the world population was 2 billion (123 years later).

In 1960, the world population was 3 billion (33 years later).

In 1974, the world population was 4 billion (14 years later).

In 1987, the world population was 5 billion (13 years later).

In 1999, the world population was 6 billion (12 years later).

As of January 16, 2007 (23.39 GMT EST + 5), the world population was estimated to be
6,570,255,064

(from www.infoplease.com at www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0883352.html; and U.S. Bureau of the Census POP Clock estimate at www.census.gov/cgi-bin/ipc/popclockw)

3) *Number of Vehicles, Worldwide*

“In 1900, only 4,192 passenger cars were in existence (there were no trucks, buses, etc.)”

“In 1968, there were 169,994,128 passenger cars in the world, and 46,614,342 trucks and buses—for a total worldwide, of 216,608,470 motor vehicles.”

“In 1996, there were 485,954,000 cars registered worldwide, and 185,404,000 trucks and buses—for a total, worldwide, of 671,358,000 motor vehicles.”

[from Glenn Elert’s webpage “Number of Cars”—(statistics attributed to various sources) at <http://hypertextbook.com/facts/2001/MarinaStasenko.shtml>)

7) *Global Consumer Class, 2004*

“By virtually any measure—household expenditures, number of consumers, extraction of raw materials—consumption of goods and services has risen steadily in industrial nations for decades, and it is growing rapidly in many developing countries.”

“By one calculation, there are now more than 1.7 billion members of ‘the consumer class’—nearly half of them in the developing world. A lifestyle and culture that became common in Europe, North America, Japan, and a few other pockets of the world in the twentieth century is going global in the twenty-first.”

(from the “Online Features/Consumption/State of Consumption: Trends and Facts” section of the Worldwatch Institute website at <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/810>)

About the IPCR Initiative

The IPCR Initiative is an effort to apply the accumulated storehouse of wisdom now accessible to us towards the general goal of integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life—and towards the specific goal of generating practical responses to the challenges of our times.

Although there was much in the way of a “building process” before the Spring 2005 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter, the outreach associated with the Spring 2005 issue (which is available in pdf format at the IPCR website) can be considered the beginnings of the IPCR Initiative. Since that time, there has been a steady accumulation of documents, resources, observations, and statistics—all of which have been made as accessible to others as possible, as a way of contributing to the goals listed in the IPCR Mission Statement. (The IPCR Mission Statement is on p. 5)

In May, 2006, the IPCR website was established at www.ipcri.net [Note: While the IPCR website does provide much useful information (including descriptions of six of The Eight IPCR Concepts), there are many recently created documents and already outlined modifications which have not yet been incorporated into the website.]

A research and writing effort (in my free time) during the first six months of 2007 culminated in the creation of two documents during the months of August through November (2007): “A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources’” and “The IPCR Workshop Primer.” Editorial work and revisions associated with two other documents [one created in 1984—a short story titled “The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop”, and another created in 1997—“An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15) (current, large-print editions)] were also completed during the months prior to November, 2007. These four documents can be understood as the four core documents of The IPCR Initiative.

At the present time, I do not have sufficient financial resources to incorporate the above mentioned four core documents into the IPCR website. [Even so, the documents are accessible. People who are interested in any of the above mentioned documents can request a file of such as an attachment to an e-mail. For more information, see “Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative, on p.15] However, *I do have* sufficient resources to proceed with this Winter 2006-2007 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter. This Winter 2006-2007 issue has some similarities with the Spring 2005 issue, as it is also meant to be an introduction to The IPCR Initiative. However, insights from recently accessed resources—and the course of current events—have increased the variety of evidence in support of an IPCR Initiative, and brought about some revisions and refinement relating to how The IPCR Initiative is presented. This writer believes that the content provided here is sufficient to suggest that initiatives like The IPCR Initiative will, in the months ahead, become better understood and more appreciated as useful approaches for identifying and overcoming the challenges of our times. As a result of this belief, the Winter 2006-2007 issue is also more specific than the Spring 2005 issue in its offering of IPCR Workshops; that is to say, there is a deliberate effort to offer IPCR Workshops specifically in the Leesburg, Virginia area.

Here, in the context of this particular article, this writer acknowledges that, up to this point, he has been the sole organizational person associated with the IPCR Initiative. In other words, the IPCR Initiative has existed only as the result of investments of time, energy, and money made by

(“About the IPCR Initiative”, continued)

myself—Stefan Pasti—as founder, creator of IPCR documents, outreach coordinator, and writer and editor for The IPCR Journal/Newsletter. By sharing this Winter 2006-2007 issue with others—in the Leesburg, VA area, and in wider circles of outreach—this writer is inviting readers to bring initiatives like the IPCR Initiative more to the forefront of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts. The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life. The IPCR Initiative is one way of bringing to light the best efforts being made by diverse communities of people towards exercising spiritual wisdom in everyday community life.

On a personal note, I also affirm here that I still have a ways to go to fulfill my spiritual potential, in accordance with the teachings of the spiritual tradition closest to my heart. Even so, I believe that each person has a duty to do his or her part from wherever they are, with the heartfelt belief that by doing so they can “pitch their tent closer to the goal” at the end of the day—and help others to do the same. The IPCR Initiative represents the contributions I can make at this time, from where I am, towards the goals listed in the IPCR Mission Statement.

There is really much that can be done to generate goodwill and promote peace that has not yet been done. I am hoping that workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. I am confident that applying these concepts—at the local community and regional level—will provide for each of us more and more opportunities to contribute towards such goals, more and more understanding about why we would want to contribute—and more and more opportunities to encourage and support each other in the process.

About the Writer and Editor of this Issue

Currently, the writer and editor for The IPCR Journal/Newsletter is Stefan Pasti. Mr. Pasti has been actively involved in peacebuilding and community revitalization work for over 20 years—as a writer (project-related correspondence, short novel, short story); an editor (newsletters, quotation collections); an advocate of ecologically sustainable communities; a practitioner of voluntary simplicity; and, more recently, as founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (www.ipcri.net). [Note: There are many recently created documents and already outlined modifications which have not yet been incorporated into the IPCR website.] Mr. Pasti has been employed in many different settings—door-to-door canvasser for citizen action groups; field worker on organic farms; activity director, companion, and transportation provider for elders with special needs; etc. The most important influence in Mr. Pasti’s life has been, and continues to be, the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba (age 80, with a main residence in Puttaparthi, India). In 1997, Mr. Pasti completed a 301 page arrangement of selected quotations from “Sathya Sai Speaks” (Vol. 1-11, first U.S. editions) (discourses by Sri Sathya Sai Baba from the years 1953-1982).

Inspiring Role Models and Service-Oriented Initiatives

There are a number of core beliefs which have contributed to the development of The IPCR Initiative in general, and The Eight IPCR Concepts, in particular. Two examples of such core beliefs are as follows:

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.

There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.

Readers who wish to confirm for themselves the truth of these statements are encouraged to explore the fields of activity listed on p. 6—and the information provided below.

a) “In the Greater Washington D.C. area, there are

- approximately 2,400 places of worship
- well over 1,200 non-profit human service organizations (with services ranging from food and clothing supplies for needy, homeless shelters, alcohol and drug abuse rehabilitation, healthcare, employment assistance, etc.)
- well over 1,000 civic associations and advisory neighborhood commissions
- over 1,000 public and private schools
- over 350 continuing care retirement communities, independent living retirement communities, assisted living/group homes, nursing care facilities and home health care agencies for elders
- over 200 men’s and women’s service clubs
- over 125 fire departments and rescue squads
- over 50 hospitals
- over 50 central and district police stations
- over 50 universities, community colleges and theological seminaries
- over 30 boys and girls clubs
- a multitude of businesses large and small
- and many, many local, state, and federal government offices and agencies
(from a database compiled in 1996 by this writer)

b) The cross country torch relay for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia (USA) began April 27 in Los Angeles and ended July 19 in Atlanta. Of the approximately 10,000 torch-carriers, about 5,000 were “community heroes selected by local United Way panels based on nominating essays.” Thirty-seven of the eighty-five torch-carriers in the Greater Washington D.C. area were “community heroes.” A graphic—in the newspaper article referenced for this information—listed all thirty-seven “community heroes.” (see the Washington Post on June 13, 1996) What follows are some of the brief descriptions, included in that graphic, of those “community heroes”:

“who does volunteer work with the elderly”; “who is active in the Big Brother program in the District”; “who does volunteer work with AIDS patients and people infected with HIV”; “who does volunteer work at hospitals”; “who is active in literacy programs for children”; “who does a range of neighborhood volunteer work”; “who helps abandoned, orphaned and disabled children”; “who does volunteer work with children and elderly in poor neighborhoods”

A Four Step Approach to Project Development

In addition to the practical assistance The IPCR Initiative can provide (as listed on p.4), The IPCR Initiative offers the following “Four Step Approach to Project Development”.

1. Discussion Groups-- As is emphasized by this IPCR Initiative, there are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world. Forming a discussion group can assist participants in deciding how to further their efforts along the lines of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability. Brainstorming sessions can take place in such discussion groups and provide a starting point for a “clearinghouse” of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives....’”

2. Local Community Points of Entry-- The development of a “clearinghouse” will be accelerated by establishing a local community point of entry (or points of entry): an inclusive and accessible location where local community residents (and others) can “find out more” about local community and regional peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives. With countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives...’, local community residents who wish to become involved—or increase their participation—in local and regional peacebuilding, community revitalization, and/or ecological sustainability initiatives, should be able to visit a local community point of entry, identify a starting point, and begin developing—or furthering—their involvement within two weeks of the beginning of their search.

3. Concept Introduction Workshops-- Workshops introducing The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”) can be a starting point for many practical collective efforts, based and sustained at the local community and regional level, and representing contributions towards the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. The cost, suggested by this IPCR Initiative, of attending such workshops is deliberately affordable, to emphasize and encourage frequent participation. Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences relating not only to the IPCR concepts—but to many other peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability initiatives as well.

4. Project Development-- A collective effort by even a small community—to apply the first Seven IPCR Concepts—would easily identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 105 related fields of activity (on p. 6) to justify a monthly publication of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (the Eighth IPCR Concept). Such an IPCR Journal/Newsletter and/or a local community point of entry (acting as a “clearinghouse”) can provide a way of linking many associated efforts—and thus assist with outreach, partnership formation, consensus building, and development of service capacity associated with a significant number of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, all at the same time.

About “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”

Organizations and communities of people often use questionnaires and surveys to identify problems and resources, and to build consensus for collective action. A conscious and deliberate effort to develop “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities” would surely result in a resource base of possible questions for communities and organizations to use. Both the “... Towards Higher Common Ground...” document and “The IPCR Workshop Primer” document (see p.15) have sections which include 40 sample questions that can be a starting point for discussion and development of this idea. Here are two sample questions:

29. Please consider this brief description of community visioning initiatives in general, and of Chattanooga “Vision 2000” [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] in particular.

Community visioning initiatives have, in the past, been used most often for the purpose of maximizing citizen participation in the planning and development phases of community revitalization efforts. Community visioning initiatives can be described as a series of community meetings designed to facilitate the process of brainstorming ideas, organizing the ideas into goals, prioritizing the goals, and identifying doable steps. In 1984, the non-profit organization Chattanooga Venture [Chattanooga, Tennessee (USA)] organized a visioning initiative 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. [Note: Statistics are from “Revision 2000: Take Charge Again” brochure, received from Chattanooga Venture. Statistics also accessible in a detailed overview of Chattanooga community revitalization efforts titled “Chattanooga: The Sustainable City”, at the website for the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership.]

Now consider the following statement:

“The mission of a community visioning initiative (in the area where I am a resident) should be to encourage 100% citizen involvement/participation in identifying, creating, and gathering together all ideas for collective effort that

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

Please fill in the above blanks in as many ways as you think might be helpful.

31. b) Please check the box which best corresponds to the way you view of the following statement:

“There are countless numbers of ‘things people can do in the everyday circumstances of their lives’ which will contribute to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability efforts, in their own communities and regions—and in other parts of the world.”

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I believe it-- and there is much evidence to support it | I believe it-- and there is sufficient evidence to support it | I would like to believe it, but there isn't enough evidence to support it | It is difficult to believe it, with the way things are going now | I don't believe it-- there is no evidence to support it |

Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative

1) *The website for The IPCR Initiative, at www.ipcri.net*

Note: While the IPCR website does provide much useful information (including descriptions of six of the Eight IPCR Concepts), there are many recently created documents and already outlined modifications which have not yet been incorporated into the website.

2) The following four core documents of the IPCR Initiative are not currently accessible at the IPCR website. However, people interested in exploring these documents, and especially people preparing to participate in IPCR Workshops, can request a Microsoft Office 2003 file of these documents, and I will send the file as an attachment to an e-mail. (Please make requests for these resources to Stefan Pasti, via the e-mail address stefanpasti@ipcri.net)

a) *“A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources’”* (152 pages) (837KB)

“A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources’” includes a 10 page “Introduction”, and sections titled “Most Difficult Challenges,” “Statistics,” “Most Valuable Resources,” “An Introduction to The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative,” “Cultivating Love, Understanding, and Forgiveness” and “Contributions to an Interfaith Point of View” [two unpublished arrangements of quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)], “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities: 40 Sample Questions,” “A List of 75 Inspiring Role Models,” and “A List of 78 Service-Oriented Initiatives.”

b) *“The IPCR Workshop Primer”* (138 pages) (718KB)

“The IPCR Workshop Primer” includes much of the same material as the “...Towards Higher Common Ground...” document, but is organized specifically to be a primary resource for people facilitating IPCR Workshops—and people participating in IPCR workshops.

c) *“An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)”* (313 pages) (1704KB)

“An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’ (Vol. 1-15)” is an unpublished collection of quotations, which includes sections on Sadhana, Satsang, Education, Guru, Namasmarana, What to Avoid, More About Difficulties, Baba Himself, Seva, and Prayers. [Note: “Sathya Sai Speaks” are compilations of discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba, which are published by the Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publication Trust (Prasanthi Nilayam, India) (Vol. 1-15 are compilations of discourses given by Sri Sathya Sai Baba during the years 1953-1982)

d) *“The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop”* (9 pages) (57KB)

“The Spirit of Sacred Hoop” is a 9 page short story which describes significant events in the history of a tribe of people in ways that may help us recognize and resolve some of the challenges of our times. (by Stefan Pasti; 1st Version Fall, 1984; 1st Revision Spring, 2004; 2nd Revision Summer, 2006)

Workshop Information (Facilitators, Cost, Location)

Workshops providing an introduction to The IPCR Initiative—and to some or all of The Eight IPCR Concepts (“Community Good News Networks,” “Community Faith Mentoring Networks,” “Spiritual Friendships,” “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities,” “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace,” “Spiritually Responsible Investing,” “Ecological Sustainability,” and “IPCR Journal/Newsletters”)—are now being offered in the Leesburg, Virginia area. Workshops will focus on material provided by this publication, the IPCR website (at www.ipcri.net), and other resources available from The IPCR Initiative (see “Resources Available from The IPCR Initiative” on p. 15).

Facilitation services for IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops are currently offered at a rate of \$75 for a 1 hour workshop, \$100 for a 2 hour workshop, \$150 for a 3 hour workshop, and \$200 for a 4 hour workshop. (Longer workshops will have greater variety in the approach, structure, and content of the workshop experience.) The recommended number of participants for workshops is 5-15 people. [i.e. If there are 5 participants for a 2 hour workshop, the cost would be \$20 for each participant; if there are 15 participants for a 3 hour workshop, the cost would be \$10 for each participant.] Currently, the only person facilitating IPCR Workshops is the founder of the IPCR Initiative, Stefan Pasti. (For more information about Stefan Pasti, see p. 11)

The cost, suggested by The IPCR Initiative, of attending such workshops is deliberately affordable, to emphasize and encourage frequent participation. Participating in IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops at intervals—over a long period of time—will make it possible for participants to come in contact with a valuable variety of input and experiences relating not only to the IPCR concepts, but to many other efforts associated with peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability.

The location of IPCR Workshops will be determined according to demand-- and according to availability of public access community use buildings.

IPCR Copyright Policy

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between diverse communities of people, all of the documents, information, resources, etc. created by The IPCR Initiative are viewed as resources which ought to be made as accessible as possible to people who can make good use of them. Therefore, all such documents and information (including this document) may be reproduced without permission, and distributed in any way the user believes will be consistent with the goals listed in The IPCR Mission Statement. [Please note: Quotes, statistics, and other copyrighted material used in IPCR documents have been appropriately attributed to their copyrighted sources. Readers may thus be assured that The IPCR Initiative encourages and supports the proper referencing of copyrighted material to their copyrighted sources.]

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The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

“... bringing to the fore what is often hidden...”