

## Introducing the New Website of The IPCR Initiative

On December 20, 2007, a new website for The IPCR Initiative became accessible via the Internet. The website address for The IPCR Initiative remains the same: [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net).

This new website contains many recently created documents, and some documents which were completed some time ago, but have remained unpublished manuscripts.

There are five sections on the homepage of the new IPCR website which will be described here:

- 1) **“Keynote Documents”**—a section which currently features a 41 page essay titled “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (see p. 9-10 for an excerpt from this essay).
- 2) **“Basic Reference Documents”**—a section which includes a 31 page document titled “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”, and a 15 page document titled “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts”.
- 3) **“Core Documents”**—a section which includes a 240 page document titled “The IPCR Workshop Primer”, a 210 page document titled “A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground: A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources’”, a 313 page document titled “An Arrangement of Quotations from ‘Sathya Sai Speaks’”, and a 9 page short story titled “The Spirit of the Sacred Hoop”.
- 4) **“Interact and Contribute”**—a section which includes information about “The IPCR Journal/Newsletter”, “The IPCR Community Journal”, and “The IPCR Building Caring Communities Questionnaire”.
- 5) **“Highlights from The IPCR Community Journal”**—a section which will incorporate contributions from visitors to the IPCR website and supporters of The IPCR Initiative, and which will be updated often to share constructive comments, suggestions, and recommendations relating to the IPCR Mission Statement goals (see p. 7), and goals associated with the “105 Related Fields of Activity” (see p. 15).

This particular issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter (Fall 2007) is an effort to provide a summary of what the new website of The IPCR Initiative has to offer. It may be helpful to mention in this front page article that this document includes an “IPCR Capability Statement” (see p. 6), and a brief overview of the potential of IPCR workshops (see p. 11-12). For further descriptions of the content of the new IPCR website, please refer to the “Table of Contents” on p. 2.

## A Letter from the Editor

This issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter is an introduction to the new website of The IPCR Initiative, located at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net).

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.”

What can we do—at *this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives*—to bring the best ideas *from* the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us and “*through the mist*”, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

This writer hopes readers will find that The IPCR Initiative would like to contribute as much as it possibly can in answer to the above question, to whoever feels they can benefit from it.

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## The Current Outreach Message for The IPCR Initiative

The IPCR Initiative is currently doing outreach by postmail to individuals working in related fields of activity, and by posting notices in related discussion forums. The current outreach message is as follows:

I am writing to you because I recognize the value of your work, and because I believe there are resources available at the website of The IPCR Initiative which may be useful to your efforts. This letter is my invitation to you to visit the new website of The IPCR Initiative at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net)

As starting points for exploring the IPCR website, I recommend the following IPCR documents:

“An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”

“Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”

The Fall 2007 issue of The IPCR Journal/Newsletter (which is an introduction to the new IPCR website, and which includes representative excerpts from IPCR documents)

There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.”

What can we do—*at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives*—to bring the best ideas *from* the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us and “*through the mist*”, so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

The IPCR Initiative believes 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... and which are an answer to the above question.

All IPCR documents can be downloaded for free, or requested as an attachment to an e-mail (at no cost).

I would like to encourage you to offer any comments, recommendations, suggestions, etc. which may assist The IPCR Initiative in being most useful in these challenges times.

I hope we will have an opportunity for future discussion.

With Kind Regards,

Stefan Pasti

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The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

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

**Here is a ten point assessment by The IPCR Initiative of “the most difficult challenges of our times”:** [Note: This ten point assessment is excerpted from a 31 page IPCR document titled “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”, which includes (as supporting evidence) 26 items of commentary and analysis and 17 statistics. To view the information referred to by the footnotes, please access the essay “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”. This particular excerpt is Appendix 1 associated with that essay.]

1) Community building associated with energy descent (see Challenges #4, 5, and 6) (as a result of either wise decisions, key supply shortages, or lack of other options) may or may not be accompanied by an exponential increase in compassion for our fellow human beings. *Without such an exponential increase, an increase in the need for emergency assistance to people with basic human needs [as a result of migrations from areas where carrying capacity has been exceeded (areas such as mega-cities), for example (see Challenge #8)] may coincide with a decrease in our capacity to respond to such emergencies*

2) “Cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence which have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable<sup>26</sup>

3) The source of threats—whether perceived or real—to the identities and/or cherished meanings of many communities of people is too often linked to religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions; and such threats too often result in conflicts which cast a shadow of negative associations onto such traditions. These negative associations have caused many people to disassociate from the religious, spiritual, and/or moral traditions linked to such threats; and have accumulated to such a degree that the real treasured wisdom of many such traditions now seems as if it is hidden—or remains undiscovered. This is unfortunate—as such treasured wisdom contains teachings which inspire and encourage people to

- a) appreciate truth, virtue, love, and peace—and live disciplined lives for the purpose of adhering to truth, cultivating virtue and love, and maintaining the pathways to enduring peace
- b) sacrifice personal desires for the greater good of the whole
- c) find contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- d) prefer peacebuilding which supports and actualizes mutually beneficial understandings, forgiveness, and reconciliation—and *which abstains from violent conflict resolution*—as a way of bringing cycles of violence to an end
- e) use resources carefully, so that there is surplus available for emergency assistance
- f) support community life and cultural traditions which “... bring 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.”

4), 5) and 6) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming, the end of the era of cheap oil (“peak oil”), and widespread resource depletion and extinction (the “Triple Crises”)

Consider the following references (with additional corroborating quotes) to pre-conference (September, 2007) information for a “Teach In: Confronting the Global Triple Crises—Climate Change, Peak Oil (The End of Cheap Energy), and Global Resource Depletion

and Extinction” (September 14-17, 2007 at The George Washington University Lisner Auditorium in Washington D.C.) (USA) Sponsored by The International Forum on Globalization ([www.ifg.org](http://www.ifg.org)) and The Institute on Policy Studies

“The planet’s ecological systems are on the verge of catastrophic change for which few societies are prepared. So far, responses by governments to this emergency are inadequate, or counterproductive. We call it the “Triple Crisis,” the convergence of three advancing conditions:

- a) Planet-wide climate chaos and global warming (“There is a serious risk of widespread, catastrophic climate change if we do not begin dramatically reducing global carbon emissions”<sup>27</sup>)
- b) The end of the era of cheap energy (“peak 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....”<sup>28</sup> )
- c) The depletion of many of the world’s key resources: water, timber, fish, fertile soil, coral reefs; and the expected extinction of 50% of the world’s species.

“All are rooted in the same systemic problem—massive overuse of fossil fuels and the Earth’s resources; all driven by an economic ideology of hyper growth and consumption that’s beyond the limits of the planet to sustain.”<sup>29</sup>

- 7) The increasing world population and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion (with special focus on *the increasing number of people* who are consuming material goods and ecological resources *indiscriminately*)
- 8) Current trends indicate that we 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, where it is more and more difficult to trace the consequences of our individuals investments of time, energy, and money—and which are the least appropriate models when it comes to implementing resolutions to many of the other challenges included in this list.<sup>30</sup> (Note: “Response nodes” for emergency assistance, and centers for regional and international exchange of “weak link” materials do not require a mega-city infrastructure base )
- 9) 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
- 10) 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.

## The IPCR Capability Statement

This IPCR Capability Statement appears in the context of the essay “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form” (see section “A ‘Multiplier’ Effect of a Positive Nature”) as follows:

Assessments of the challenges of our times such as the one offered in Appendix 1 provide evidence that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—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
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy” which are now accessible to us.

Specifically, the contributions The IPCR Initiative hopes to make along the lines described by the three goals listed above are as follows:

- 1) inspire, encourage, and support 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 the “Core Documents” section of this website)
- 2) introduce The Eight IPCR Concepts through workshops offered at the local community level
- 3) actively develop the concept of “Questionnaires That Help Build Caring Communities”, administer such questionnaires at the community and/or regional level, and then share compilations of the responses (with summary and conclusions)
- 4) actively contribute to the planning, preparation, and realization of “Community Visioning Initiatives for Peace” at the community and regional levels
- 5) help to establish, and contribute 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
- 6) identify, develop, and create enough descriptions and examples of the 105 fields of activity

and generate enough regular feature material in categories such as local community and regional good news, workshop and conference listings, committee reports, resource reviews, letters to the editor, “community journal” postings, and links to other useful information and organizations

to justify monthly local community specific publications of an IPCR Journal/Newsletter (or a similar publication with a different name....)

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The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

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

(The IPCR Capability Statement, continued)

7) and combine the resources created by “clearinghouses,” and “community newsletters” to link many associated efforts—such as those in the list of “105 Related Fields of Activity” (see p. 15)—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 Initiative is providing this assistance as a result of believing that any community of people, however small in numbers, who follow through on most or all of the practical assistance described in the seven steps mentioned above, will contribute a “multiplier effect” of a positive nature on *whatever goals are decided on at the local community and regional levels.*

### **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 global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil
- 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

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The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

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

## **An Excerpt: The “Introduction” to “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”**

There are three implied propositions in the content of the IPCR website which can be summed up as follows:

- 1) The 45 observations and statistics in this “Assessment” section (and other related observations which can be added as further evidence) are indicators of specific “trends” in the larger story of human evolution on the planet Earth. By bringing these observations and statistics together in one place, this writer is encouraging readers to look at them very closely, and decide for themselves which direction the “trends” should go in the future if they were to go in a direction compatible with interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability.
- 2) The Mission Statement of The IPCR Initiative (see p. 7) is an effort to list a set of goals which summarize (from this writer’s point of view) what would need to happen for those 45 “indicators of specific trends” to go in a direction compatible with interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability.
- 3) The Eight IPCR Concepts encourage and facilitate a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as appropriate recipients of peoples time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see “105 Related Fields of Activity” on p. 15). As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. There has never been a time in the course of history when both the capacity to cultivate practical wisdom and the capacity to build a positive and constructive consensus were as important as they are now. *Are we up to the challenge?*

Hopefully, the urgency suggested by the content of this “Assessment” will be considered sufficient to encourage readers (if they have not done so already) to explore the assessments of many people working in many different fields of activity—and to actively develop their own assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times. (This writer’s 10 point assessment is on p. 4-5) The more people make an effort to arrive at a clear understanding of the challenges before us, the more likely it is that we will be able build consensus for the collective action necessary to overcome those challenges.

## **An Excerpt: The “Introduction” to the essay “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”**

In Appendix 1 of this essay, there is a ten point assessment of the most difficult challenges of our times.<sup>1,2</sup> Such an assessment of the challenges of our times has compelled this writer to the conclusion that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—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
- 3) much more resourceful in the use of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom and “embodied energy”<sup>3</sup> which are now accessible to us.

There has never been a time in the course of history when both the capacity to cultivate practical wisdom and the capacity to build a positive and constructive consensus were as important as they are now. The complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolution of a significant number of issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggest a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

This writer is the founder and outreach coordinator for The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative. The IPCR Initiative is now offering a document titled—“A Project Proposal for ‘Towards Higher Common Ground’: A Survey of Most Difficult Challenges and Most Valuable Resources”—which advocates that communities and regions should undertake such surveys, so that public discourse on what our most difficult challenges are, and what our most valuable resources are, is sufficiently relevant and constructive. The actual survey (as proposed) 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.

The survey proposal itself provides:

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- 1) an overview of evidence which contributed to this writers sense that there is a need for a survey like this
- 2) many examples of what responses to such a survey might look like, as an indication of how useful such a survey could be.

Well-organized efforts to identify problems and brainstorm solutions are a universally recognized approach to problem solving which is commonly used in family, community, business, and government settings in every part of the world. Such efforts would surely increase participants' awareness of the storehouses of accumulated wisdom which are our heritage from the past, *and* the significant numbers of people who are *currently* accumulating valuable experience and establishing constructive understandings relevant to overcoming the challenges of our times.

*Unfortunately, there are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite "coming through the mist as much as they should be".*

As supporting evidence for the above statement, consider the following two questions:

- 1) *In your opinion, how many people—at this particular point in time—have a realistic understanding of the depth and range of the challenges of our times?*
- 2) *In your opinion, what percentage of the people now living on this planet will overcome such challenges as are stated in Appendix 1, and arrive at a point of time in the future which represents a positive outcome?*

This writers' conclusion: we are going to need many more new approaches to problem solving, and many more new initiatives, if we are to be successful in overcoming the challenges of our times.

What can we do—*at this particular point in time—in the everyday circumstances of our lives*—to bring the best ideas *from* the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us and "*through the mist*", so that our community building processes will be most effective in helping us overcome the challenges of our times?

In the best of times, even the most profound challenges can be overcome; for in the best of times, \_\_\_\_\_ is/are nurtured, supported, and sustained by family, friends, teachers, mentors, elders, and the everyday influences of community life and cultural traditions.

This essay, "Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form", is an effort to assist fellow human beings in identifying what—from the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us—would best answer the above question "What can we do..."—and what—from the storehouses of accumulated wisdom now accessible to us—would best fill in the blank in the above statement.

## **An Excerpt: the section “About ‘The IPCR Workshop Primer’” in “The IPCR Workshop Primer**

### **A Primary Resource for IPCR Workshops**

This publication “The IPCR Workshop Primer” is intended to be a primary resource for people facilitating IPCR Workshops—and for people participating in IPCR Workshops.

In general, IPCR workshops will provide an overview of evidence supporting the need for an IPCR Initiative (see Section 3 “An Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times” and “Related Statistics”), 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”

The overview of each concept in Section 8 “Brief Descriptions of The Eight IPCR Concepts” provides sufficient insight into the nature of the concepts to initiate significant discussion on what each concept can contribute as a response to the challenges of our times, and how to begin applying the concepts to everyday community life.

Specifically, IPCR workshop discussion can “branch out” using content from any of the sections in this “workshop primer”. Here are some examples of content in this document which can be used as starting points for IPCR workshop discussion:

- 1) the 6 points describing what the IPCR Initiative hopes to contribute in the “Capability Statement” (Section 3)
- 2) the 9 goals in “The IPCR Mission Statement” (Section 5)
- 3) the 105 Related Fields of Activity (Section 6)
- 4) the 4 parts of “The IPCR Vision Statement” (Section 7)
- 5) the 23 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative (Section 8)
- 6) the 60 sample questions in the “Building Caring Communities” Questionnaire (Section 11)
- 7) the 78 Inspiring Role Models (Section 13)
- 8) the 75 Service-Oriented Initiatives (Section 14)

(“About ‘The IPCR Workshop Primer’”, continued)

In addition to focusing on material provided by this “Workshop Primer”, IPCR workshop discussion can also be supplemented by material on the IPCR website (at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net)), by comments contributed to the IPCR Community Journal (at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ipcri/>), by material associated with the 105 related fields of activity listed in Section 6, and by other related material accessible through the Internet, or by personal experience. There is much that can be done to generate goodwill and promote peace that has not yet been done. There is much potential which can be explored in the context of IPCR Workshop discussion.

### **The Cost of Attending IPCR Workshops**

Facilitation services for IPCR Concept Introduction Workshops are currently offered through the IPCR website 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 3 hour workshop, the cost would be \$30 for each participant; if there are 15 participants for an all day workshop, the cost would be \$20 for each participant.]

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.

### **IPCR Copyright Policy**

In light of the urgent need to build bridges and increase collaboration between 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.]

## **Excerpts from “23 Different Ways to Describe The IPCR Initiative”**

1) 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 global warming, ecological footprint analysis, and the “peaking” of our finite supplies of oil—and to be proactive about individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, and the creation of ecologically sustainable communities.

2) The IPCR Initiative understands that the complexity associated with building bridges and increasing collaboration between diverse communities of people, the urgent need for resolutions to a significant number of critical issues in the near future—and *the seemingly chronic nature of many of the challenges of our times*—suggests a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before.

3) The IPCR Initiative believes that the nature of the “Culture Change” necessary to overcome the challenges of our times will require utilizing the best tools we have in every area of capacity building (physical, ecological, medical, spiritual, educational, social, economic, technical, political, etc).

8) How can local communities arrive at practical definitions of “right livelihood”? What local institutions would be most appropriate as commissioners and overseers of a resource guide to “right livelihood”? How can leaders at the regional and local community level assure residents that they understand the challenges of our times, if they themselves do not participate in the very activities they advocate for overcoming the challenges of our times? How can our communities change “the way things get done” so that more people can live in accordance with their moral convictions? Workshops associated with The IPCR Initiative can identify, discover, create, support, and sustain comprehensive and practical answers to these questions— and provide a system by which the answers could be re-evaluated and re-stated on an ongoing basis. Therefore, it may be said that by its very nature The IPCR Initiative includes a built-in and ongoing process for re-evaluating and re-stating the “moral compass” of a community or region.

9) The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain that part of the many “frameworks”<sup>1</sup> in the world which contribute positive repercussions to the fields of activity described by The IPCR Mission Statement goals—and to other related fields of activity (see “105 Related Fields of Activity” on p. 15).

However—and this is a most important point—in contrast to the outlook which claims a “right” to develop an initiative even though such efforts are felt by many as “a threat (perceived or real) to their identity, or cherished meanings, or both”; this writer would slow or discontinue the

(From “23 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative”, continued)

development of this initiative in such circumstances—until such time as communication leads to better understanding, and circumstances are more mutually beneficial.<sup>2</sup>

In addition—and this is also a most important point—it is not necessary for any of the readers of this document, or any of the participants in an IPCR Initiative, to know anything about Sri Sathya Sai Baba (the most important influence in this writer’s life), or the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, to contribute to or benefit from the work of The IPCR Initiative.

And here, as the third important point of this paragraph, this writer would like to affirm with as clear a statement as he can possibly make, that The IPCR Initiative encourages people, whether they are going to participate in an IPCR Initiative sponsored activity or not, to use the resources provided by The IPCR Initiative to nurture, support, and sustain community life and cultural traditions associated with the particular “frameworks” which give their lives meaning.

This writer—the founder of The IPCR Initiative—believes in affirming the above three points for the following reasons:

- a) these points define an approach to interfaith peacebuilding and community revitalization which he can support with all his heart
- b) the challenges of our times are such that it is essential to “bring to the fore” the real treasured wisdom of religious, spiritual, and moral traditions (i.e. there is 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)
- c) this writer understands, by way of the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the existence of a “current”<sup>3</sup>—which can be recognized according to the degree to which one has incorporated spiritual understanding into his or her everyday thoughts, words, and deeds... or by the grace of association with profound spiritual teachings.

10) Viewed in this light, The IPCR Initiative—and all related fields of activity—can be seen as efforts to contribute to religious, spiritual, and moral “tool boxes”... “tool boxes” (many of which have been created from centuries of cultural experience) which have been confirmed by saints, sages, spiritual leaders, and sincere practitioners of all faiths and moral “world views” as storehouses of accumulated wisdom associated with utilizing that “current” to do good.<sup>4</sup>

15) There are many important initiatives which are critical to overcoming the challenges of our times, but which are not quite “coming through the mist as much as they should be.” The IPCR Initiative can be very helpful in exactly these kinds of circumstances, as it encourages and facilitates a “constellation” of initiatives by which the best (*in the view of the participants using these processes*) associated with individual spiritual formation, interfaith peacebuilding, community revitalization, ecological sustainability, etc. can bubble up to the surface, be recognized as priorities, and therefore be brought forward as

(From “23 Different Ways of Describing The IPCR Initiative”, continued)

appropriate recipients of peoples time, energy, and money. Many people can realize the wisdom of deliberately focusing the way they spend their time, energy, and money so that their actions have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals, and on other related fields of activity (see “105 related fields of activity” below). As the ancient Chinese proverb says: “Many hands make much work light.”

## **105 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. 7)]

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 descent pathways, 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, relocalization, 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.

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The IPCR Journal/Newsletter

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

## **The Concluding Paragraphs of the Essay “Peacebuilding in its Most Compassionate Form”**

One of the most persistent ironies in life is that with so many opportunities to provide real assistance to fellow human beings—and with the potential for such assistance to result in happiness “to those who extend help as well as to those who receive it”—there are still many, many people in this world who cannot find a “way to earn a living” providing such assistance. The IPCR Initiative can help to remedy such an unfortunate irony by helping to create “caring communities”, which are defined here as follows:

“Caring communities” are communities with residents who are aware of the depth and range of the challenges of our times, and therefore do their best to take actions which will have positive repercussions on the fields of activity described by the IPCR Mission Statement goals (see p. 6-7), and on other related fields of activity (see p. 3).

The most advanced societies are the ones which are successful at integrating spiritual wisdom into the everyday circumstances of community life.

Our particular moment in time on this Planet Earth *could be* the best of times.

Peacebuilding in its most compassionate form is not a competitive field of activity. Viewed in this light, the most valuable forms of peacebuilding will nurture, support, and sustain the development of an infinite variety of other forms of peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecologically sustainability initiatives. The IPCR Initiative is an effort to nurture, support, and sustain peacebuilding in its most compassionate form.

### **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](http://www.ipcri.net)). [Note: There are many recently created documents and previously unpublished manuscripts which, as of December 20, 2007, have been incorporated into a new IPCR website (still at [www.ipcri.net](http://www.ipcri.net))]. 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 81, 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).