

Introducing “1000Communities²” (“1000CommunitiesSquared”)

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On the homepage of the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative, there is reference to a “Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times”. Such an assessment indicates that there is a need for problem solving on a scale most of us have never known before. Specifically, this assessment has compelled this writer to the conclusion that there is a profound and critical need for human beings—collectively—to be

- a) 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.”
- b) much more multifaceted and participation-friendly in our approaches to peacebuilding, community revitalization, and ecological sustainability
- c) much more resourceful in the use of the accumulated storehouse of wisdom and “embodied energy” which is now accessible to us.

The following is a description of a new resource created by this writer—a document titled “1000Communities²”—which demonstrates one approach to accomplishing the three goals described above, and which is now available for free at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative.

“1000Communities²” (“1000CommunitiesSquared”) is a 161 page proposal advocating 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.

Challenges which receive much attention in this proposal include

- a) global warming and reducing carbon emissions
- b) peak oil and reducing dependence on petroleum based products
- c) global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death
- d) an increasing world population requiring more resources when many resources are becoming more scarce (with a special emphasis on the increasing number of people who are consuming resources and ecological services indiscriminately)
- e) there still seems to be a majority of people on the planet who do not have a clear understanding—well-grounded in personal experience—of which basic elements of community life and cultural traditions lead to mutually beneficial understandings, which lead to cycles of violence—and why it is so important for people to achieve clarity on this subject.

The "1000Communities²" proposal is structured to focus primarily on the process of carrying out a Community Visioning Initiative (of the nature described above) in the “main part”, and to share personal viewpoints of challenges perceived and solutions preferred in the appendices. Here are the titles of Appendices 1-6:

1. A Ten Point Assessment of the Most Difficult Challenges of Our Times
2. About Global Warming, Peak Oil, and Population and Consumption Patterns
3. The Transition to Sustainable Communities
4. Evidence of the Need to Increase Compassion for Our Fellow Human Beings
5. Examples of Humanitarian Aid Which Can be Explored Through “Sister Community” Relationships
6. Integrating Spiritual Wisdom into the Everyday Circumstances of Community Life

The main part of the proposal contains descriptions of the proposal, and its various elements, and includes:

1. A 15 step outline for a Community Visioning Initiative (19 pages)
2. 15 Suggestions for Preliminary Survey Questions
3. A section on “Problems That May Arise”
4. A section on “Evaluating the Process”

The proposal includes over 150 excerpts and quotes, which are provided to refer readers to relevant sources for further research.

The 161 page document is in pdf format at the website of The Interfaith Peacebuilding and Community Revitalization (IPCR) Initiative (see homepage at www.ipcri.net), and can be downloaded for free.

The goal of this “1000Communities²” proposal is to encourage others to create similar community specific proposals for their communities—and to highlight the potential of this kind of Community Visioning Initiative approach. Specifically, this writer hopes that people creating other more community specific proposals for Community Visioning Initiatives in the future will find some useful ideas from this example as they create their own structure and content.

By providing this information, this writer is contributing what he can to informal discussion and public discourse. He hopes that his contributions will add something to efforts working towards the greater good of the whole.

With Kind Regards,

Stefan Pasti, Founder and Outreach Coordinator
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