

Seeds of Community:

A Treatise on Global Sustainability

The planet Earth is entering a new Era, the human civilization a new stage in its development. Centuries of unrelenting 'growth' as a domineering meta-imperative have now seriously over-extended the Human Project. The natural world upon which this Project depends has become strained, depleted, dismembered, weakened. In a mad rush of 'survival-of-the-fittest' condoned hyper-individualism, the once thriving and vigorous natural world has been voraciously and systematically 'consumed' in a temporary joy-ride of hedonistic – and not at all flattering – self-indulgence. Humanity itself stands at a crossroads: To carry on with business as usual will guarantee the collapse of the life support system called Nature, with resulting re-organization at drastically reduced levels of productivity: mass starvation would then ensue. This new Era, then, is obviously a time for Humanity to change course, to *evolve* – to grow into greater understanding, to reach for and actualize higher latent potentials – to ultimately transform its lower nature away from animalistic, gluttonous self-interest toward higher purposes, thus raising the energy until finally it may become pure enough to be used as an instrument of the Divine.

So when we speak about 'sustainability,' we're not simply talking about recycling aluminum cans, or turning down the thermostat, or taking a cloth bag to the grocery store – no, we're talking about fundamentally re-structuring and re-organizing the entire Human Project. We're talking about explicitly announcing the *goal* of conscious Life to be the enhancement and optimization of the health and *vitality* of Life. At this level, Humanity becomes the thinking/feeling/sensing component of living Nature. The function of Humanity, then, is not to maximize short-term, individual self-interest at the expense of everyone and everything else – that's *sooo* primitive – but rather to enhance and optimize the health and vitality of living Nature, which ultimately benefits all Life. When the natural world is vigorous and thriving, then the human communities that are a part of the natural world have a chance to be vigorous and thriving; but if the natural world becomes strained, depleted, dismembered, weakened, then the human communities residing within the natural world will eventually suffer the same fate. It's really that simple. This is basic 'systems thinking' and perhaps the most vital foundation for a new attitude that promotes long-term sustainability: Honor Life, nurture Life, protect Life – even celebrate Life! – and everything else will take care of itself. That's the place to begin.

The most immediate experience of living Nature is right in our own bodies; therefore, honoring Life, nurturing Life, protecting Life begins with ourselves – sustainability begins right with our own bodies! This means eating right, getting plenty of exercise and playtime, having loving contact, avoiding toxins, etc. – and generally being grounded and centered. The ‘mind’ could be considered an extension of the body; therefore, practices that calm, clear, and sharpen the mind are also important first steps toward long-term sustainability. This is called beginning at the Source. Once the mind and body are healthy and strong, then opportunities will abound for meaningful participation in the greater Life, and joy will come easily.

The primordial living situation for human beings was in roving bands, and then in settled tribes. Human beings are inherently, genetically *social* animals. Human intelligence, conveyed through language, expanded rapidly as a result of *cooperative behavior within groups*. Then, with increasing material abundance made possible by accelerated energy flows, some humans were able to separate from groups and live in relative self-reliant isolation. This trend perhaps peaked in the North America of the 1980s, where every productive individual of the consumer class expected to have their own house, their own cars, their own lawn mower, their own stock portfolio, etc. – while social relations or responsibility outside of the nuclear family, or beyond mere commercial transactions, was strictly optional. You could call this the “poverty of affluence,” for while the material conditions of these people’s lives were very comfortable and reliable, their increasing ego-centric self-absorption caused their lives to become increasingly abstracted from the natural world and from social relations that could provide a sense of common purpose.