

Beloved Community Action

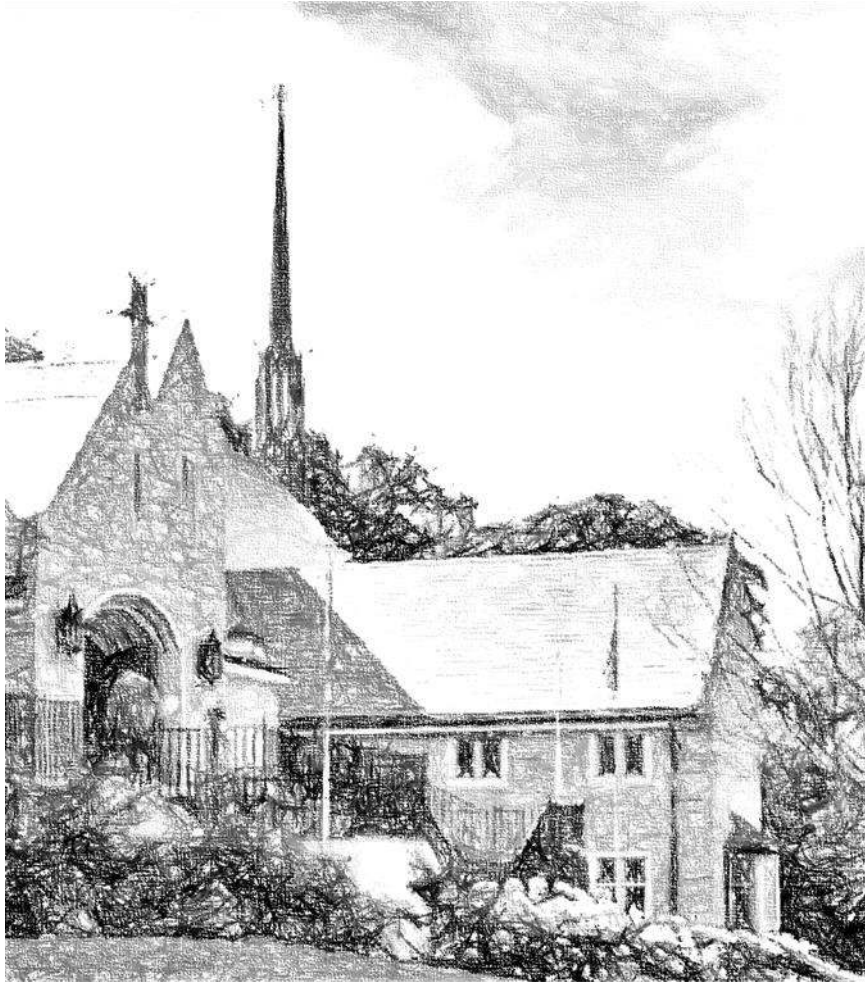


Video Series One

Workbook

This workbook is designed to accompany a video series. There are seven videos in series one, each less than ten minutes in length. To access the videos, go to:

www.belovedcommunityaction.org



Beloved Community Action
a program of
Saint Paul's Episcopal Church
on Lake of the Isles
Minneapolis, Minnesota
www.belovedcommunityaction.org
www.stpaulsmpls.org

June 9th, 2023

We

*Is the **Truth** about reality
Is the **Solution** to our problems
Is the **Instruction** to us from many Leaders
Is the **Future** (only possible)
Is the **Goal** of Beloved Community Action*



Background

Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. famously dreamt of a society, he called the Beloved Community, that is inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and prosperous. But he certainly wasn't the first to dream of a holistically conscious humanity. The idea that humanity should or could organize itself around interdependent values has been a common theme throughout history. The Golden Rule for example, "*do unto others as you would have them do unto you,*" is an expression of interdependent values that can be found in every major culture and religion on earth, going back thousands of years. Why do we humans carry this Beloved Community type of ideal along with us, when we have never come very close to accomplishing it? Today, with a growing list of global environmental threats looming, intractable social justice challenges, and tribalized politics extinguishing any expectation of collaboration or progress, it's easy to understand why many view Doctor King's dream, as little more than a fantasy. An empty hope, condemned to failure by a selfish human nature, unable to leave greed and tribalism behind. Except for one problem... it's happening right now, right in front of us, if we're willing to see it.

Now I say it that way... "if we're willing to see it," because it takes a little evidence examination to overcome our perception biases and see the truth. Wired to see hazards first, optimistic patterns can become obscured by fearful events and news. But when we examine our collective life and history in context, multiple patterns emerge to tell a more optimistic story.

Program Description

The Beloved Community Action program examines the evidence that an interdependent Beloved Community type of society is developing in our time. And we examine how and why we, as individuals, may want to participate in it. The program is discussion based and is open to all individuals and groups. Church groups, neighborhood groups, business groups, cause oriented groups, school groups, you name it. The program involves screening a series of video's (Ten minutes or less in length) and then a group discussion to follow. We also provide a workbook that can be helpful in guiding group discussions or for individuals not in a group.

Executive

Skeptics and
doubters
enter here!



Video 1. Coming of Age

Our collective life conforms to development and other patterns just as our individual lives do. One of those patterns is expressed through the literary pattern of the typical “Coming of Age” story. Specifically, the idea that major change, like maturation doesn’t happen without a challenge (a beast) to overcome. The video suggests our environmental and social justice challenges represent a beast in our collective journey. The video also suggests that through reflection we will discover hidden powers with which to fight the beast.




Video 2. The Meaning of Now

This moment has been inevitable from the beginning of our journey. One of the patterns in our world is that a dominant species will grow and consume until it has damaged its own environment and then be weakened or die. Our existential environmental and social justice challenges represent such a point in our journey. Unique to humanity however is our ability to accumulate knowledge, this means we have been building solution capabilities for all our beastly problems. What remains is our collective will to act together. The will to employ the solutions will involve becoming a more interdependent humanity.



Video 3. The Nature of Reality

We are interdependent beings living in an interdependent world and we are becoming a more interdependent humanity. The maturation process in humans goes from a dependent child, to an independent adolescent, to an interdependent adult. Collectively we are going through the same process. Beloved Community is what we call the interdependent adult stage of our collective maturation process. It is also the solution to our most pressing problems.



Summary



Video 5. Our Evolving Economy and Culture

Change is happening to us in addition to because of us. This video focuses on the many changes towards an interdependent economy and culture that are happening. How new interdependent expressions are popping up in the economy and culture. New forms of caring and new forms of sharing.



Video 4. Our Choice Dystopia or Utopia

The contrast of our collective futures is great. We look at how our most pressing problems fit into our collective journey. How they are a stimulus pushing us towards greater interdependence. How we identify as individuals and as part of the on-going human enterprise as well. How the choices are extreme in their consequence. How the benefits of greater interdependence are incalculable.



Video 6. Change Causes Turbulence

The extraordinary chaos we see is to be expected. As a more interdependent perspective in individuals makes its way into our collective culture, we can expect pushback from people focused on independence. The last time this happened was when we went from a dependent culture and economy to an independent economy and culture during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Understanding what is happening allows us to stay focused and calm despite the chaos.



Video 7. The Battle Within

We examine where the real battle will be fought and won. While we in our battle for interdependence has many real enemies outside that are real. The real enemy and battle is inside. In our own hearts as we try to overcome the prejudices and bigotries that reside inside us.



“WE” enter a changed world here!

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Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #1

Coming of Age

Notes:

Coming of Age stories follow a familiar literary pattern, including several common elements.

1. An innocent child.
2. A significant threat of some type.
3. The child is alone and unable to summon help from family or friends.
4. Afraid the child reaches into her soul for deliverance, and in the process discovers courage, wisdom, and a secret new weapon.
5. The child fights the beast alone and survives. The threat imposed by the beast eventually passes, but both the child and the world have been transformed.
6. The child has become a mature heroic adult, and the world has been transformed as well, into a world of promise and opportunity.

Patterns happen and we recognize them whether we understand the causes of them or not. The sun rises and its light, the sun set's and it gets dark. You don't have to understand nuclear fusion to recognize the pattern. This is true for religious people and non-religious people alike.

The video introduces the idea that the human maturation process follows a pattern as described. (More to come on this in future videos)

And; second, the video suggests we collectively (humanity) is also on a journey through life, and that the "Coming of Age" pattern applies to our collective journey as well. (More to come on this in future videos.)

Discussion Topic 1:

In your experience, is transformative human change often associated with difficulty or a challenge or threat of some type?

Discussion Topic 2:

In our collective life, one of the possible attributes of a significant existential threat, is that it puts humanity on the same page by creating a common enemy. What are some common enemies we face today?

Notes:

Martin Luther King Jr. famously dreamt of a society he called the Beloved Community that is inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and prosperous. Similarly thought leaders from every culture on earth over thousands of years, have pointed to a similar cultural destination for humanity. For example, its interesting to note that the sentiments expressed in the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you’d have done to you”, has made its way into every major religion and culture on earth.

Discussion Topic 3:

Are qualities like greed and selfishness innate human qualities? Do those qualities prevent humanity from evolving the type of cooperative interdependent society that has been envisioned by so many thought leaders for so long?

Notes:

The video suggest we can expect, when our backs are against the wall, and we become reflective about our lives and situation, we will discover hidden powers with which to fight. I think one way to look at this, is that we are capable of so much more that we think we are, particularly when faced with an existential threat.

Discussion Topic 4: (Author notes on the following page)

What are some individual powers we might not use unless we’re under pressure?

Authors Perspective: How about asking for help? Asking forgiveness? Patience? Empathy? Courage? Acceptance? Caring?

What are some cultural or collective powers we might not use unless under pressure?

Notes:

Third, the video suggests that we (humans) have developed a perception bias that acts to enhance our ability to perceive possible threats first, but consequently, our journey's positive progress can be obscured. Among these perception biases are:

- A cultural bias towards skepticism.
- An evolutionary bias towards “fitness benefits” even at the expense of truth.
- A self-protective bias that does not want to find fault within ourselves.

All of which combine to make it much easier to see bad news than good news.

Discussion Topic 5:

Can you think of examples of these types of biases, or can you come-up with additional biases?

How does today's media environment support or detract from the truth?

Despite these negative internal perception biases, careful examination of the evidence can reveal hopeful and optimistic patterns.

Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #2

The Meaning of Now!

Notes:

Individual life: We have an individual life and identity that is on a journey. Our journey includes our goals and aspirations, our decisions, character assets and flaws, the circumstances of our life out of our control, and the circumstances within our control. We learn, plan, revise, grow and mature.

Collective life: We are also part of a collective life, humanity. Like our individual lives, humanity is on a journey as well. Humanity's journey began with the first modern humans, some 200 thousand years ago. Our journey includes our goals and aspirations, our decisions, character assets and flaws, the circumstances of our life out of our control, and the circumstances within our control. We learn, plan, revise, grow and mature.

This is an important moment in the human journey because it represents the intersection of two patterns. 1. One of the patterns that is showcased in the video is the idea that dominant species grow and consume until they have spoiled their own environments. When that happens, destruction follows recreating balance. And 2. the second pattern is humanity's unique ability to accumulate knowledge. The Meaning of Now is the intersection of these two patterns.

We are in a position technologically to solve many of our global problems, the issue is whether we have the "will" to do so. "Will" in this context means willingness to cooperate with each other. A recent readout of the problems and issues being dealt with at a recent UN Climate Conference is illustrative of the issues. The oil countries want a slower timeline, the poor countries want money from the rich countries to switch to renewable resources, and island countries want reparations for sea level rise caused by industrial countries. Coming to a consensus and implementing the required changes has caused a new more inclusive conflict resolution pattern to emerge.

Discussion Topic #6

Do you see this conflict resolution pattern in other areas of society? Work, School, Governance, etc.
How does WOKE fit into this discussion?

Authors Perspective: Companies need investors, and employees and customers, so they try to cater to their expectations. Schools, government, and others also need to attract people to various roles, so they try to meet expectations.

Global
Existential
Issues

Solutions &
(Technology)



**Cooperative
Interdependent
Means**

Beloved Community
Values Screen

- Inclusion
- Justice & Equity
- Empathy
- Forgiveness

Discussion Topic #7

What are some of the qualities we will need to make these deals? And how do they relate to the issues?

Authors Perspective: Forgiveness, Empathy, Patience, Caring, Courage, Others?

Notes

The qualities and powers listed above, are they the same as those qualities listed in the first video as the type of hidden powers that are available when we have our backs to the wall and look inside?

Coming of Age stories follow a familiar literary pattern, including several common elements.

1. An innocent child.
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5. The child fights the beast alone and survives. The threat imposed by the beast eventually passes, but both the child and the world have been transformed.
6. The child has become a mature heroic adult, and the world has been transformed as well, into a world of promise and opportunity.

Discussion Topic #8

How does this pattern relate to the “Coming of Age” literary pattern described in the first video?

Authors Perspective: These are the qualities necessary to cooperate. And only through cooperation can we solve our existential problems.

Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #3

The Nature of Reality

Notes

ME WE! Considered to be one of the shortest and most important poems ever written.

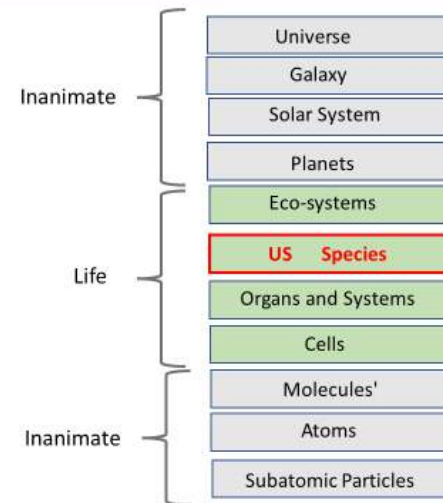
Discussion Topic #9

Why?

Note

The video discusses the interdependent construction method of our world. The video points out that because the elements on the lower part of the construction system are inanimate, and no life-giving particle has ever been found, life is an emergent property of interdependent community.

Construction Method



Notes (continued)

The video further makes the point that the operating system of our world is an interdependent community as well.

We are interdependent beings living in an interdependent world, and “life” is an emergent property of interdependent community!



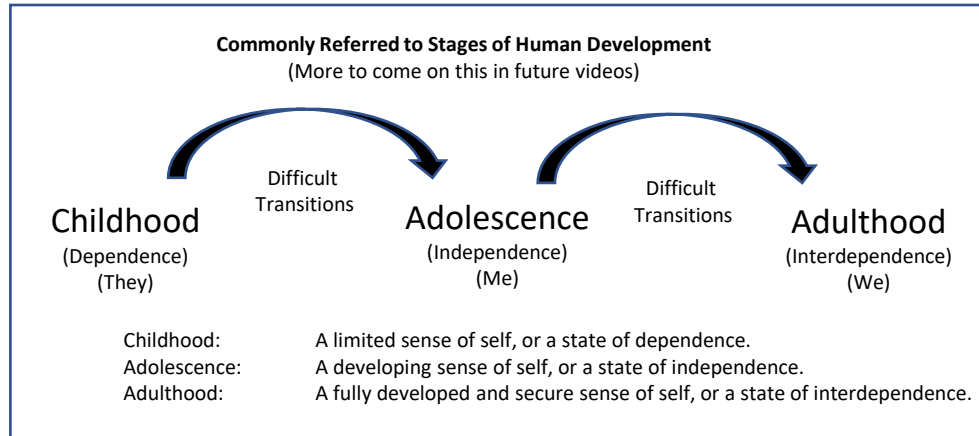
Discussion Topic #10

Why is this relevant?

Authors Perspective: A value for interdependent community is a core value expression of our world

Notes

The video references a collective maturation process.



This is the process of maturation discussed in the first video “Coming of Age”. The transitions between stages are often characterized as turbulent and difficult. In the case of going from childhood to adolescence as an individual we commonly hear stories involving power struggles between the transitioning child and the adult authority figures.



Discussion Topic #11

How does this mirror your own experience, either as the adult or as the child in the transition to adolescence?

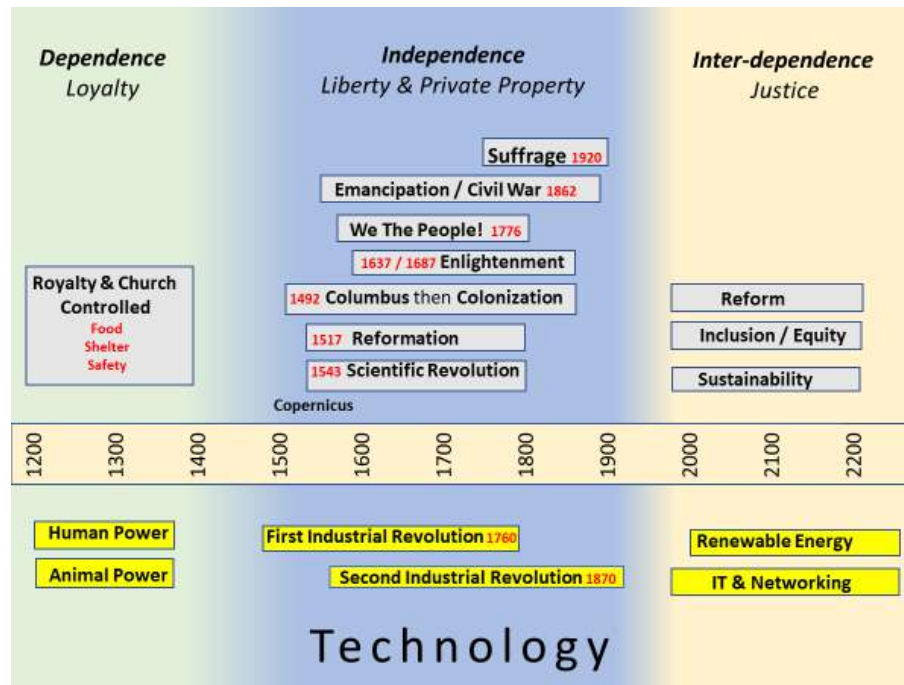
Discussion Topic #11 (continued)

Is maturation something we do or is it something imposed upon us?

Authors Perspective: Both!

Note

The video suggest a maturation process is also happening in our collective life as well just over much longer time scales.



Discussion Topic #12

Is this something we are doing or is happening to us?

Authors Perspective: Both!

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Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #4

Our Choice Dystopia or Utopia

Note

The video portrays humanity at a crossroads. Facing a large and growing list of existential problems and a timeframe for change that feels overwhelming. The greatest and fastest change in human history. It sounds bleak, but from previous videos we've learned that we're wired to perceive the negative stuff easily and the positive stuff with difficulty. Let's try and see some positives.

Environmental Issues

- Climate Change (Carbon Emissions)
 - Unproductive areas
 - Rising sea levels
 - Uninhabitable areas
- Acidifying Oceans
 - Fishing resource loss
 - Plankton, crustations, corral
- Fresh water resources
 - Glazier erosion
 - Delivery sys. (lead pipes)
 - Depletion of aquifers & rivers
- Soil health
 - Erosion control
 - Soil nutrient depletion
 - Pollution (spills and practices)
- Biodiversity
 - Hive collapse
 - Plankton
 - Wasting disease
- Air pollution
- Toxic materials and chemicals
- Natural habitat reductions
 - Rain forest destruction

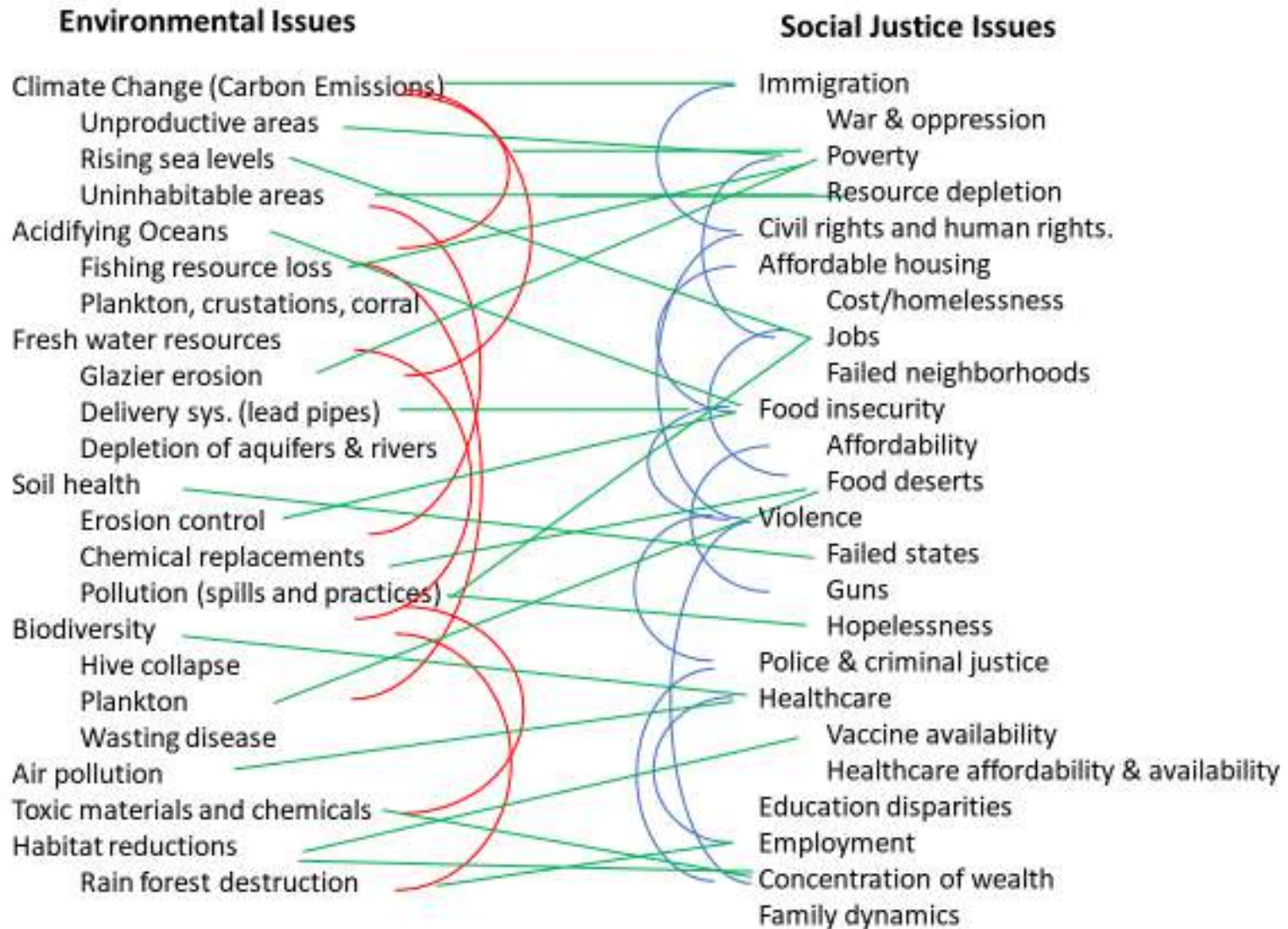
Social Justice Issues

- Immigration
- War & oppression
- Poverty
- Resource depletion
- Civil rights and human rights.
- Economic disparity / Wealth concentration
- Affordable housing
- Cost/homelessness
- Jobs
- Failed neighborhoods
- Food insecurity
- Affordability
- Food deserts
- Violence
- Failed states
- Criminal Justice / Guns
- Hopelessness
- Healthcare availability & affordability
- Vaccine availability
- Education disparities
- Family dynamics



Notes continued

The red lines represent relationships between the environmental issues. The blue lines represent relationships between the social justice issues. The green lines represent relationships between the environmental issues and the social justice issues.



Discussion Topic #13

How does the relationships between these issues affect our collective task?

Authors Perspective: Because they're all related, when we fix one others will improve as well. These problems are cascading negatively, but they can also cascade positively.

Notes

1. The video makes the points that we have no time left. Our backs are up against the wall and we have to act now. 2. It also makes the point that these problems are global meaning they cannot be solved by individual countries. 3. Lastly it makes the case that these issues are existential in nature.

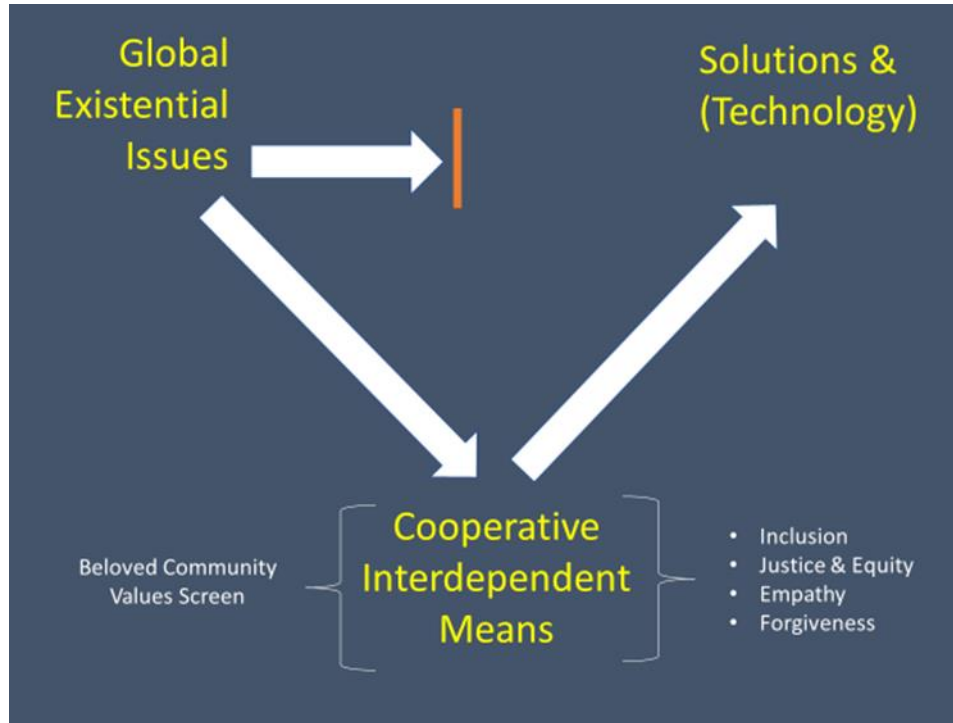
Discussion Topic #14

Are there positive ways of looking at those three characteristics?

Authors Perspective: No time left leaves us no out. Also no one can be left behind. We have to work together. Also, the existential nature of the problems means status quo is not a visible option. Could we act without these characteristics?

Notes:

Referencing the conflict resolution diagram from Video #2, typically conflict resolution becomes more difficult when people feel like they have been treated unfairly.



Discussion Topic #15

What is the relationship between Social Justice issues and Environmental problems?

Can we solve one without the other?

How about people in the future? Do they have rights today?

Discussion Topic #16

The video makes the point that the Golden Rule reflects the kind of change required for humanity to move forward. It expresses a value for an interdependent cooperative humanity. It's interesting to note that this piece of wisdom has made its way into every major religion and culture on Earth going back thousands of years before Jesus.

Christianity

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Jesus (Matthew 7-12)

Taoism

Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your loss.

Lao Tzu, T'ai Shang Kan P'ien 213-218

Sikhism

I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me.
Indeed, I am a friend to all.

Guru Granth Sahib, p 1299

Confucianism

Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself.

Confucius Analects 15.23

Buddhism

Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

The Buddha Udana-Varga 5-18

Hinduism

Do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you

Mahabharata 5:1517

Judaism

What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor.

Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a

BAHA'I Faith

Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid on you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

Baha'u'llah, Gleanings

Islam

Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith

Jainism

One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.

Mahavira, Sutrakritanga

Zoroastrianism

Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.

Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29

Native Spirituality

We are as much alive as we keep the earth alive.

Chief Dan George

Unitarianism

We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Principle

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Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #5

Our Changing Culture and Economy

Note

The video defines the changes we're talking about, interdependent values, being defined as "Cooperation for Mutual Benefits". Traditionally we have split the economy into two broad types of activities, Profit motivated activities and Altruistic motivated activities. The video suggest that these interdependent values are producing a third alternative that rises in between Profit and Altruism, Cooperative Mutually Beneficial activities. The basic proposition in this video is that these changes represent not just new innovations, they also represent a change in kind. In essence the economy and culture is inventing new ways for our people to express interdependent values in their everyday lives. These represent new forms of caring! And caring is at the core of interdependent values. Let's look at each of these innovations in more detail.

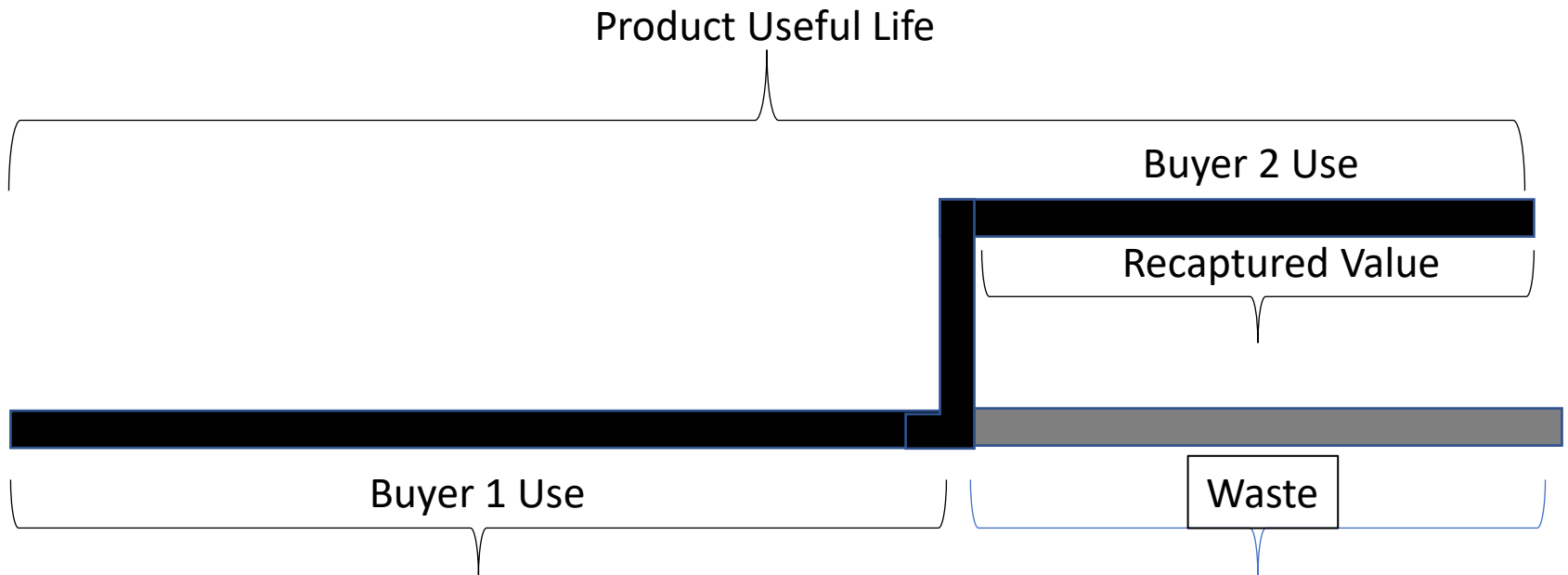
Profit Motivated Activities	Cooperative Mutually Beneficial Activities	Altruistic Motivated Activities
Buying and Selling	Shared Economy	Giving
Advertising	Cause Marketing	
	Feedback Loops	

Discussion Topic #17

How are these types of innovations expressing new forms of caring?

Note

The graphic below demonstrates the way most shared economy businesses work. They capture and utilize the values that were wasted in the traditional economy. Additionally, the values recaptured accrue to the owner users not the traditional supplier chain. This generates tremendous efficiencies, defuses the economy, and provides economic participation to people who have been cut out of the economic process.



Discussion Topic #18

Think of some real-life examples of how this meets our criteria of "cooperation for mutual benefits"?

Note:

Cause marketing campaigns are neither Profit oriented activities nor are they Altruistic activities. But they generate a lot of giving for causes consumers like. This is a new way for caring to be expressed in our new interdependent economy and culture.



1 Limited Edition Chalice = **5** Years Clean Water

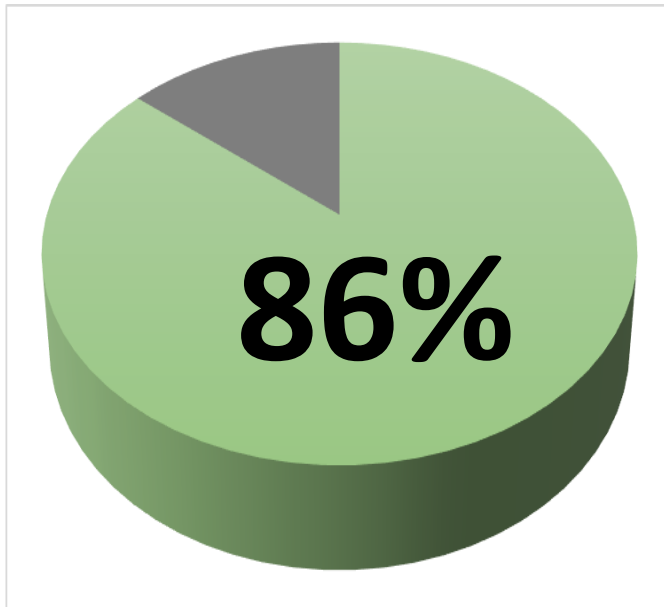
\$6.25 provides clean drinking water to 1 person for 5 years. Stella Artois will donate \$6.25 for each chalice in the US, up to 20000 chalices.

\$6.25 x 20,000 = \$125,000.

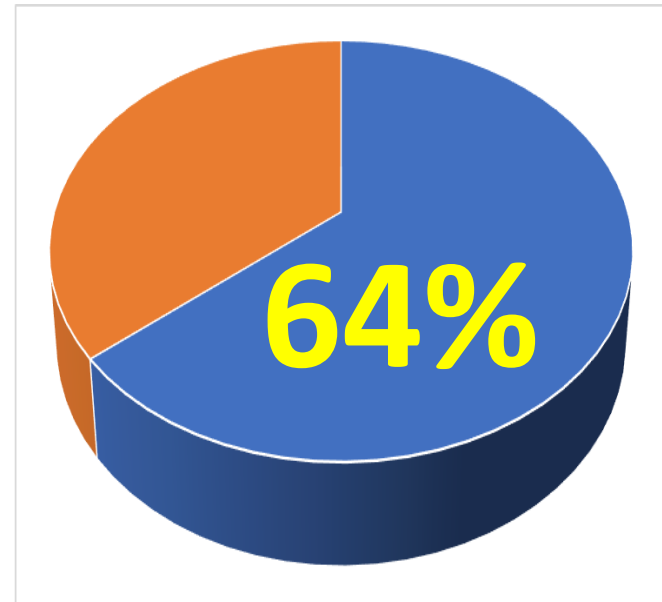
Note:

This gets at why cause marketing works.

**Consumers or Investors
who say that companies
should take stands on
societal issues!**



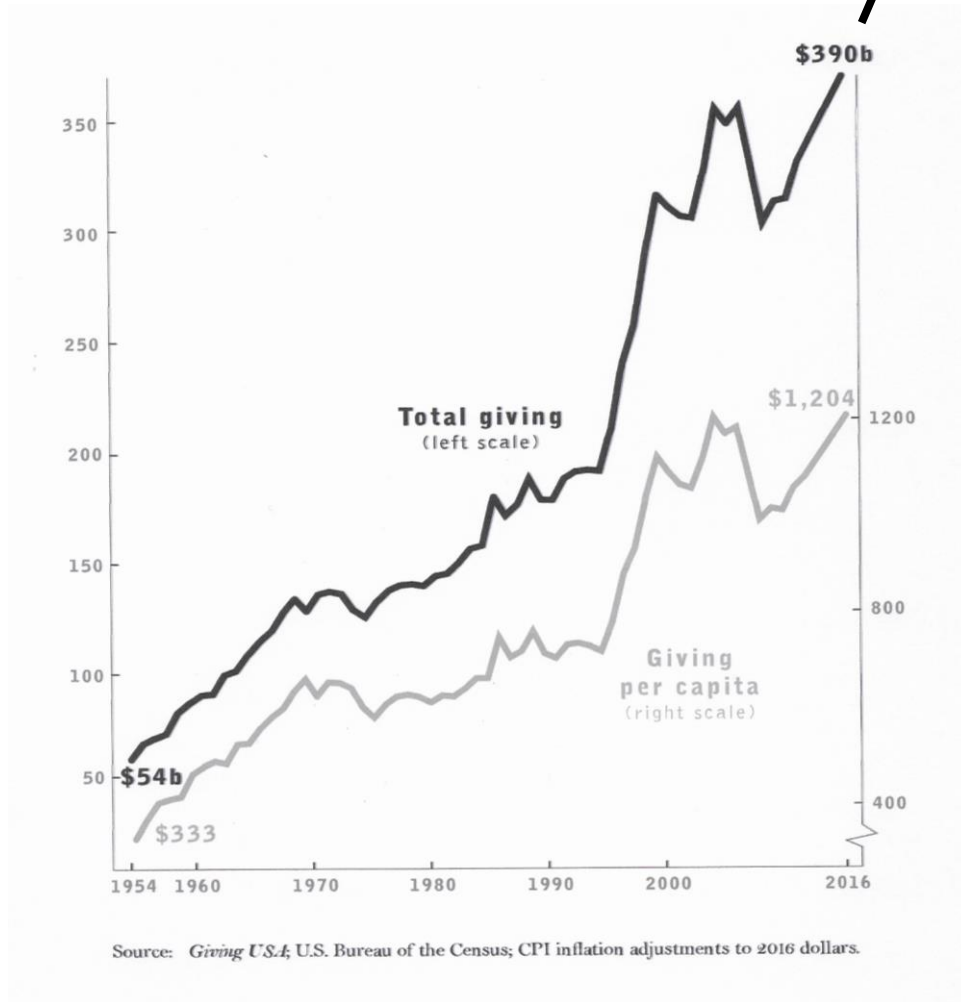
**Consumers or Investors
who will switch, avoid, or
boycott a brand based
on a company's policies.**



Notes:

New forms of caring

\$471 Billion
2020 USA

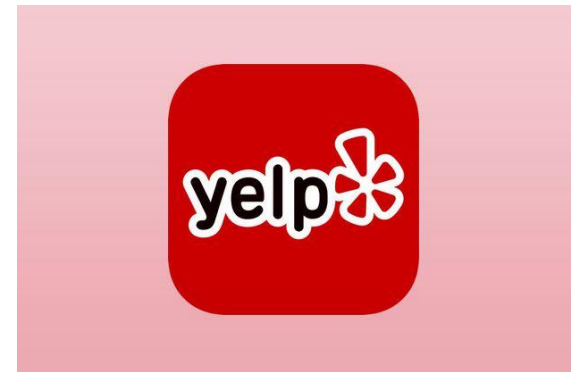


Notes:

The third new interdependent activity pointed to in the video is FEEDBACK LOOPS. It's hard to be an incompetent professional these days because it gets reported.

Discussion Topic #19

Does the Shared Economy, Cause Marketing, and Feedback Loops reflect interdependent Beloved Community type of values? If so, where did they come from?



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Beloved Community Action

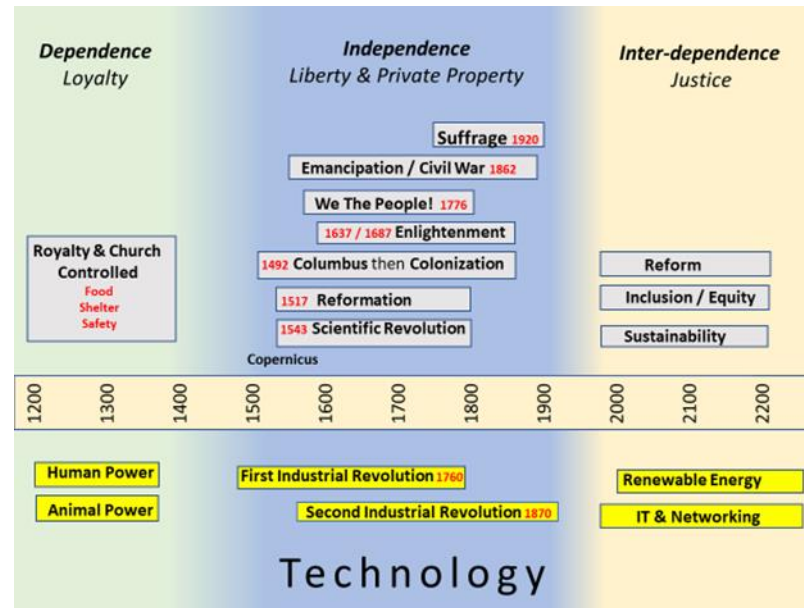
Series #1, Video #6

Change Causes Turbulence

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Notes:

Change causes turbulence! There is probably a difference between big transformative change and small incremental change. But we are talking here about big transformative change. As was made clear in previous videos, the biggest and fastest change in human history. The video is asserting that pushback is a natural cause and effect phenomenon, and it should be seen in the context of change not as a warning we are off track. Referencing previous videos that looked at major changes like when we went from a dependent culture to an independent culture.



Discussion Topic #20

Aren't many of our most contentious issues about defining the boundary between MY rights and OUR rights? Between independence and interdependence?

What happened when we went from a primarily dependent culture to a primarily independent culture? Did we see conflicts at that time?

How are some of the current social and environmental issues examples? What are the relationships between issues?

Diversity and inclusion vs WOKE?

Media? How about guns? Individual rights vs our collective rights. How about government and voting. Voter regulations and requirements vs suppression.

Energy policy and oil and gas regulations vs renewables?

Others?

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Beloved Community Action

Series #1, Video #7

The Battle Within

Notes:

By just focusing on the beast outside, we will ultimately lose, because “it” also resides inside of each of us. From the most Progressive to the most Conservative, from the most educated to the least educated, from the most religious to the least religious, and from the wealthiest to the poorest, the beast of bigotry and tribalism and fear lives in each of us. This fight is about all of us collectively and all of us individually including every school, every workplace, every government, every neighborhood, every organization, every political party and every individual.

Discussion Topic #21

Its so easy to say its not my fight... discuss new ways to participate? Thinking about new ways to participate from video #4 on our changing economy and culture. Environmental Social and Governance ratings (ESG) and how they can be used? Cause marketing? Feedback Loops?

Other ways or examples of how “WE” are confronting the beast inside?

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Concluding Comments

The Series

1. We are not just individuals. We are also part of an ongoing collective humanity.
2. Our collective humanity conforms to patterns (like maturation and accumulating knowledge) just like we do individually.
3. The maturation process goes from a dependent childlike phase, to an independent adolescent phase, to an interdependent adult phase.
4. We are leaving our collective independent phase and moving into a collective interdependent phase.
5. Interdependence is a prime value of our world. Interdependence is expressed through the world's construction, its operating system, and is the key to emergent properties like life. We are interdependent beings living in an interdependent world, and we are in the process of becoming a more interdependent humanity.
6. Major change doesn't often happen without significant challenges to motivate it. Existential environmental and social justice challenges represent common enemies.
7. We have the technical tools to solve our problems.
8. But the solutions cannot be implemented without cooperation. Therefore, interdependent cooperation and negotiation is required.
9. We don't trust "the others" in our world without a great deal of work. Forgiveness, patience, listening, allowing "OUR" rights to best "MY" rights are all required.
10. The change process will always cause pushback or turbulence. Much of the tribalized chaos in society is an example of this type of turbulence.
11. We can make it and we can scarcely imagine how good it could be today.
12. We need to seek out and confront the beast inside as well as the beast outside. No one is excluded. We need to have some humility and remember that we are all going through this together.

Why is an accurate perspective on the future important?

If we think humanity is innately greedy and selfish, we may feel we need to act that way ourselves in order to compete, or that we're justified to do so because everybody else does it! On the other hand, if we see humanity evolving into a more cooperative interdependent culture, then we will act upon that vision, and others will see us doing so, and follow our leadership.

Or because having a context for understanding some of the chaos and difficulty of our time can lead to a sense of wellbeing.

Or because seeing and understanding the patterns that are unfolding in front of us gives us a better ability to predict the future, and therefore a greater ability to seize upon opportunities.

Add your own reason here!

Series #2
Coming Soon