The Inner Alignments that support the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
‘Transforming Ourselves to Transform Our World’

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The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) articulated through the United Nations express the will of 193 counties in addressing the critical challenges of our times. They are universal, ambitious and meant to transform the world.

These accompanying inner human alignments to the 17 SDG’s show the transformative process of change that reminds us WHY it is important for each one of us, each day, to respond to the urgent calling of a new time.

• Goal centered thinking focuses the individual and collective mind on the many challenges ahead and develops our ‘know-how’ and ‘know-what’ to do.
• Inner alignment process grows our ‘know-why’ – the consciousness of ourselves SEEING why we are called to respond to the calling of a new time to create a different future.

These alignments are the beginnings of a new conscious attitude about living on this planet and honoring life – an attitude that sustains and grows opportunity for ourselves and all life now and for generations yet to come to go alongside the SDGs.

We must lift ourselves up and SEE that each one of us has a part to play in creating a better world – together.

To transform the world, we must transform ourselves

We have arrived at a pivotal point where continuing as we do is no longer sustainable. This is the unerring consensus of the scientific community that led to the adoption of the SDG’s.

We are daily assailed by the evidence that suggests we need to change. Floods and intense heat and uncommon weather patterns are affecting almost every part of the planet, but it is the congruence of challenges exemplified by the 17 SDG’s that show that the entire human race is now living under the threat of imminent extinction.

It is of universal concern that we find a new way forward.

The catalyst for real change is not just to see the peril of our situation and react (often seeking short term solutions aimed at redressing ‘what’ is wrong and ‘how’ we are going to fix it), but to see the opportunity to make a conscious response in creating a new world built on principles that bring harmony out of the division.
Each of these alignments demonstrate the beginnings of an inner human response corresponding to each of the SDG’s and shows the vital shift in ourselves that is necessary to see beyond the challenges of our times to the vision of a different world that we can create.

Each alignment is encapsulated in a short video / writing / audio that nurtures the shift that scientists are referring to as a ‘new altruism’ – a concern for the whole rather than the parts, so essential in the evolutionary unfolding of human life at this significant moment in history.

These inner alignment help to show the way we can all make the necessary shift to a more conscious level of human response that begins inside ourselves.

The purpose of these alignments is NOT to answer the questions (there are no convenient answers), but to quicken the global conversation about the vital issues of our times and to encourage the movement of change that creates a new world by supporting the vision of the SDG’s.

The Facebook page ‘Aligning to the SDG’s – Transforming Ourselves to Transform Our World’ is a gathering point for the global conversation, inviting reflections and stories and sharing ways we can and are helping the world forward with the SDG’s, either individually or as a group and refocusing on the vital challenges that the SDG’s raise for us to ACT.

Through universities and schools and youth organizations we are making a special effort to ensure that the voice of the new generation is heard clearly in this world.

For talks on each of the Sustainable Development Goal Alignments, plus workshops on the way conscious change can support the SDG’s, please contact us below:

Write an email: contact@humanevolutarychange.org
Visit our website: www.humanevolutarychange.org
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*Drawn from the philosophical frameworks of Human Evolutary™ Change and presented by the Global Center, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization based in New York.
We see plastic on the beaches and in the rivers. We can recognize, amongst the debris, samples of what any one of us might use and buy in their daily life.

We then read accounts of animals dying from ingesting the plastic and know that the oceans contain millions of tons of plastic concentrated in gyres swirling around and breaking down into micro-particles – the images are there for us all to see.

Now we learn we are ingesting these plastic particles in the fish and seafood we eat and in the products that we buy.

We address the problem with the goal of ‘sorting it out’ and give ourselves a time scale to do it. The way we think is to eliminate the problem as a goal that will bring about the desired outcome in the way in evolution past we have addressed threat.

In reality, each of the examples of plastic pollution is a result of the same basic human attitudes playing out with ever more serious consequences – a threat of our own making.

As much as is done to rectify the problem and disarm the threat, until we humans change and have a different value for water, the planet and the limited resources of the world, nothing fundamentally changes in the outer world.

Yes, we are responsible and changes can take place in the way we consume, the way we package goods, the way we recycle and we need to continue to strive to do this, but there is one step further that is the contribution of the SDG Alignments.

Sorting out the mess we have created is one part of the equation (how and what we do), but acting from the conscious principle (why) to not leave life in any situation that we occupy in a lesser state than when we entered it (including our interactions with water) is a universal principle about the whole of living and the daily interactions we enter into.

Only when we think to ensure the pristine opportunities that living presents us with (not to take them for granted and pollute them) can we guarantee a sustainable future and this begins inside each one of us, each day – the inner shift that proposes a cultural change of immense significance.

The SDG Alignments stand alongside the SDG’s, showing an unselfish, truly universal kind of thinking that can shine a light on addressing the great problems of our times. The charge upon us all is to grow up and take responsibility for ourselves acting in the world.

The SDG’s are the best we have and we must make the promise of a new world REAL.

(An Extract from the EVO News Broadcasts and Public Lecture on SDG 6.)
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Extreme poverty rates have been cut by more than half since 1990. While this is a remarkable achievement, one in five people in developing regions still live on less than $1.90 a day, and there are millions more who make little more than this daily amount, plus many people risk slipping back into poverty.

Poverty is more than the lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. Economic growth must be inclusive to provide sustainable jobs and promote equality.
Wealth generation

At root, the greatest cause of poverty is the human self-centered way of thinking almost exclusively about themselves/their own (perceived) needs at the expense of others and at the expense of the larger context of living on a planet.

This mental disposition, an overrun from the ‘adolescent’ phase of our evolutionary past, when we assumed that there were unlimited resources, that considered only what we could get from life (no matter the cost) rather than what one gives, is at the core of the needless poverty in the world and the ensuing sense that there is not enough to go around.

This attitude drives a person to see every situation as an opportunity to profit, to make more for themselves (regardless of need), to own and to possess until the resources of the world are appropriated to the ‘winners’ of the competition – at the cost of all.

Now driven by economies and industry that exploit this propensity to sell more and encourage others to consume more in the name of an assumed goal, be it happiness or status, is untenable and simply not sustainable in our world today.

The evidence increasingly suggests that breaking out of this cycle is vital if we are to bring about a different future. In fact, it is quite the opposite attitude, that of giving and adding to the well-being of the larger community, that is the only way to grow and find peace and live significantly in oneself.

Every moment and in every situation, there is an opportunity to generate and share wealth meaningfully and the benefits of doing this are immediately obvious to those who make this shift and try, as it is to those around.

Wealth generation is about much more than the distribution of money. It stems from the recognition that real value is centered in the opportunity to serve a greater purpose than competing for resources.

It is what we bring into the world that makes a difference and by sharing and giving service in creating a different future we fulfill our own growth potential – and this is deeply satisfying.

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Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

It is time to rethink how we grow, share and consume our food.

If done right, agriculture, forestry and fisheries can provide nutritious food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting people-centered rural development and protecting the environment.

Right now, our soils, freshwater, oceans, forests and biodiversity are being rapidly degraded. Climate change is putting even more pressure on the resources we depend on, increasing risks associated with disasters such as droughts and floods. Many rural women and men can no longer make ends meet on their land, forcing them to migrate to cities in search of opportunities.

A profound change of the global food and agriculture system is needed if we are to nourish today’s 815 million hungry and the additional 2 billion people expected by 2050.

The food and agriculture sector offers key solutions for development, and is central for hunger and poverty eradication.
As long as we pursue life as a goal to reach rather than as an opportunity to value and uphold, we remain divided in ourselves, living only one half of the available human experience (SDG Alignment 1).

Goals are about how and what we do and are fulfilling only alongside the consciousness of our purpose why we do what we do – why, how and what we do make an integrated and whole life.

In the absence of a purpose (why), beyond the default position of feeding our perceived needs, we make life an unattainable goal and we become driven by an inner emptiness and hunger never filled.

While millions hunger for the basics to live, the ‘privileged’ few often hunger for more from the external world in possessions and fruits of the earth in the hope of finding satisfaction – an existential hunger as we call it.

Only when life has some meaning and purpose can one feel deeply satisfied. The figures on antidepressants and stress and obesity in developed countries are a staggering testament to that imbalance that rules much of the activity of the developing world and the aspirations of those who have almost nothing who try to emulate this.

The global sense of ‘we’ the global community is subsequently ruptured and divided (a reflection of our own level of thinking) when we compete to achieve the successful realization of our own goals at the cost of the suffering of others.

The imbalance of lives unsatisfied seeking to ‘get’ (SDG Alignment 1) resonates throughout the whole system of food distribution, causing industries to short cut natural cycles of harvest to feed the endless demand to the point of degrading the very earth that would otherwise produce enough to feed all.

Resolving the ‘adolescent’ dichotomy (this divided state) into one whole life is a shift to a new human maturity – an evolutionary next step that feeds our inner human world with satisfaction and fulfillment.

The SDG Alignments are not a chore or sacrifice or a burden to carry – they are an invitation to join a new ‘whole’ life and establish a more harmonious global community that is a fulfilling purpose for all.
GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

We have made huge strides in reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and fighting HIV/AIDS. Since 1990, there has been an over 50 percent decline in preventable child deaths globally. Maternal mortality also fell by 45 percent worldwide. New HIV/AIDS infections fell by 30 percent between 2000 and 2013, and over 6.2 million lives were saved from malaria.

Despite this incredible progress, more than 6 million children still die before their fifth birthday every year. 16,000 children die each day from preventable diseases such as measles and tuberculosis. Every day hundreds of women die during pregnancy or from child-birth related complications. In many rural areas, only 56 percent of births are attended by skilled professionals. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among teenagers in sub-Saharan Africa, a region still severely devastated by the HIV epidemic.

These deaths can be avoided through prevention and treatment, education, immunization campaigns, and sexual and reproductive healthcare. The Sustainable Development Goals make a bold commitment to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030. The aim is to achieve universal health coverage, and provide access to safe and affordable medicines and vaccines for all. Supporting research and development for vaccines is an essential part of this process as well.
Alignment 3: Sanctity of life

Health and well-being begin inside the consideration of the ‘Sanctity of Life’.

To bring a child into this world is a conscious consideration about offering a life a chance to grow and fulfill its potential and play a significant part in the world and not just to be thrust into life to struggle to survive.

The sheer number of infant deaths and those suffering curable diseases can have a numbing effect on us all. Every life is precious and none more so than those who have just entered this world.

SDG Alignment 3 asks us a reminder to ourselves that the sequence of life, from birth, to childhood, to adolescence... and on to old age, is the fundament of our planetary experience of growing up. Each phase of life is meaningful.

We must be mindful that it is the whole sequence of a life that is a growth pattern and that disease can disrupt life’s sequences and the basic well-being of a life at any phase.

A child being born and entering into this world is the promise of a fulfilling life (SDG Alignment 2), living through the whole sequence from birth to old age and the value we may extend from those considerations to all life is an extension out from our adherence to the Sanctity of Life.

The Sanctity of Life seeks to grant to each life what is due in full measure (respect) to ensure its integrity and to support the fullness of growth through all the phases of life.

These purposes are then supported by the knowledge of all branches of medicine that can provide health and well-being.

This SDG Alignment challenges us to work together towards a collective well-being – beginning inside ourselves and extending to others the respect for life that is due.

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Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning

Since 2000, there has been enormous progress in achieving the target of universal primary education. The total enrolment rate in developing regions reached 91 percent in 2015, and the worldwide number of children out of school has dropped by almost half. There has also been a dramatic increase in literacy rates, and many more girls are in school than ever before. These are all remarkable successes.

Progress has also been tough in some developing regions due to high levels of poverty, armed conflicts and other emergencies. In Western Asia and North Africa, ongoing armed conflict has seen an increase in the number of children out of school. This is a worrying trend. While Sub-Saharan Africa made the greatest progress in primary school enrolment among all developing regions – from 52 percent in 1990, up to 78 percent in 2012 – large disparities still remain. Children from the poorest households are up to four times more likely to be out of school than those of the richest households. Disparities between rural and urban areas also remain high.

Achieving inclusive and quality education for all reaffirms the belief that education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable development. This goal ensures that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate gender and wealth disparities, and achieve universal access to a quality higher education.
Formal education in schools provides the essential knowledge *how* to function in society so that each child can discover *what* part they can play in it. We need to earn, to live and to be able to survive.

But those coming up through the current educational systems (and all children should have access to formal education) may not be able to navigate a new course into the future from that kind of learning alone.

The SDG Alignment alongside SDG 4 shows a greater aspiration in education for the development of the ‘whole person’ through Natural Learning that harmonizes us to the ways of the planet and life as a whole (SDG Alignment 3).

Natural Learning is not centered in ‘getting an education’, but in valuing the sequences of life as they play through us – naturally and organically. We are all the time ‘being educated’ by the world around us, the growth patterns of flora and fauna life that we are surrounded by, the interconnection between all things, the way life serves a purpose within the ecology we find ourselves.

It is fundamental to living on a planet to understand its ways and it is only by catching the significance of such natural learning that we come to appreciate the special place and responsibility we humans have in the natural order of life.

Natural Learning preserves the awe about life and our environment and the extraordinary way all life is a community of needs in service – each part feeding some other part as a function of the whole.

Sensitivity to our environment, to others, to the balances of life – this locates the individual in having a well-balanced view of the world and not thinking that everything ‘out there’ is for us to do with as we want.

If we are to stop the trend of destruction that we now see is so prevalent in all parts of the planet, Natural Learning is an essential platform for the beginning of a sustainable future.
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

While the world has achieved progress towards gender equality and women’s empowerment under the Millennium Development Goals (including equal access to primary education between girls and boys), women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large.
Alignment 5: Honoring the whole human through its expressions of gender

While the world continues to rebalance the legacy of gender inequality from the past, SDG Alignment 5 starts by honoring the whole human design through its two equal and complimentary expressions of gender.

Gender equality is not just a goal to work towards. It is a consciousness of the inherent nature of human life and the significance of gender that can only be appreciated in the NOW.

The discrimination and violence suffered by women and girls spoken of is a consequence of a fundamental imbalance for which there is no justification. How and what we do to fight this wrong is something we must continue to address, but to bring about real equality we must see the purpose of gender.

Life not only begins from the union of the two genders – throughout life the generation of new and productive thought and feeling and interaction arises from these two principles in interaction – in fact all that we do is a reflection of gender (it is a Natural Learning as described in SDG Alignment 4).

Whether it be listening and talking, or giving and receiving, or pathfinding and consolidating, we must recognize that all of these require actions are a union of both gender principles and that none of these acts are the exclusive domain of either gender, nor can they take place without both.

Gender is a difference of function from an equal constitution.

When we really see that to not honor the whole human through its two gender expressions reduces the integrity of both genders, only then can we discover the full and correct and dynamic balance that liberates the potential of all.

It is by virtue of the separation and union of gender difference that anything can be done in practical life – it expresses a natural law. How can we value one gender above the other when it diminishes us all?

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Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. But due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for poor families across the world. Drought afflicts some of the world’s poorest countries, worsening hunger and malnutrition.

By 2050, at least one in four people is likely to live in a country affected by chronic or recurring shortages of fresh water.
Alignment 6:
Sustainable human process

We are part of the story of water. Not only does it flow thorough life in rivers, streams, gathering in oceans and ponds and the land and plants and trees in the forests as rain... water courses through our body in our blood and through most forms of life.

It is a host to vital microorganisms on which life depends and it carries unwanted toxins and other poisons out of our body to ensure our health and continuance.

Even our human process, the way we interact with others and all living things, is like water - we describe life as a ‘flow’, there are ‘currents’ and ‘tides’ in the times in which we live and ‘undercurrents’ in the dealings we have in daily life.

Bad economics and poor infrastructure, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation are a consequence of the alignment of our human thinking (how and what we do). As long as we think of water as just something we use this will continue.

We cannot hope to dispose of endless waste in the rivers of life, be they the oceans and rivers, or the flow of life between ourselves and other lives, without there being consequences.

Criticism, prejudicial talk that maligns and downgrades others... when we dump these endlessly in the flow of life we cannot hope to support a sustainable level of human process.

The level of global of conversation has to rise above being stagnant, polluted, full of untrue words and ideas attached to disagreement that literally pollutes and contaminates the possibility of aspiring to the necessary human response needed in a new time.

When we take responsibility for our own process, in ourselves and with others, we cannot but see there is a direct correlation between our reverence for life as a process and our reverence for water.
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential.

Sustainable energy is opportunity – it transforms lives, economies and the planet.

Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was leading a Sustainable Energy for All initiative to ensure universal access to modern energy services, improve efficiency and increase use of renewable sources.
The greatest source of energy is natural energy.

Humans can wake up each day refreshed and feel the fresh breath of new opportunity waiting to be responded to and yet almost every aspect of modern life is debilitating and wearing on the human and stress and exhaustion the inevitable end result.

Situation after situation has the effect of using us up – as we cut ourselves off from the natural uplift of a purpose-filled life.

Even the simple act of going to sleep for so many is a surrender to exhaustion in which the natural systems that cleanse and refresh us in our hours of sleep are over-burdened by an excess of labor.

That we might wake up unrefreshed should tell us something vital!

Natural energy flows from purpose – knowing why we do what we do. Meaningful employment, seeing that what one does fulfills a vision of a new time, collaboration based on consciously adopted values – all this enhances the flow of energy.

This Energy may be available for ‘free’ – but that does not mean we should treat it as of less value – it is one of the greatest sources that support growth.

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Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

Roughly half the world’s population still lives on the equivalent of about US$2 a day. And in too many places, having a job doesn’t guarantee the ability to escape from poverty. This slow and uneven progress requires us to rethink and retool our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty.

A continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments and under-consumption lead to an erosion of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress. The creation of quality jobs will remain a major challenge for almost all economies well beyond 2015.

Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. Job opportunities and decent working conditions are also required for the whole working age population.
Alignment 8: 
Volunteering for the future

The future is inclusive of every person in the way every person has the opportunity to play a significant part. This inclusion is an extension of the inherent opportunity that being born into this world extends to each person on the planet. Only we can exclude ourselves.

Unfortunately, how economic structures work against this natural right and what they do to control human contribution and co-opt it to profit (often for the few) is a deep fault line that has scarred the world and imprisons many in negative cycles.

Everyone who sees the future can do something to contribute – it is a matter of volunteering one’s response and playing a part and creating systems that support this.

A global movement of change is occurring and changing the way we think about employment is at the heart of it. The current attachment of wages to employment (‘being employed’) and the inherent fear of loss of employment that serves as a threat to one’s continuing survival runs contrary to our birthright and this system is no longer viable.

The great shift to a different notion of employment that we are struggling with in these times changes the focus from working for ‘others’ or having others work ‘for us’ to embracing a common future as volunteers in which we can be of meaningful service.

This shift moves us to a choice based system where it is possible to be in service through real human work in the establishment of a common future through one’s volunteered human response.

Whether as teachers, or gardeners or medics, or nurses or… it is the purpose why that enlightens our work – it is why we do what we do that ensures that our work is not something we do that is ‘other’ and disconnected from our purpose.

This shift is so utterly enormous and is at the heart of the uniting of peoples and the uniting of nations – it transcends all else and proposes millions of small projects arising in and around the SDGs – in support.

The SGD Alignments are inherently liberating and not a dominance on anyone. It is what we choose to do that can change the world and join us to others of like mind that is our inherent freedom.
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries. It has long been recognized that growth in productivity and incomes, and improvements in health and education outcomes require investment in infrastructure.

Inclusive and sustainable industrial development is the primary source of income generation, allows for rapid and sustained increases in living standards for all people, and provides the technological solutions to environmentally sound industrialization.

Technological progress is the foundation of efforts to achieve environmental objectives, such as increased resource and energy-efficiency. Without technology and innovation, industrialization will not happen, and without industrialization, development will not happen.
Alignment 9:
Conscious human connection

SDG Alignment 9 invites us to consider the human side of infrastructure and ‘why’ it is so essential in a world in change.

The most vital pathways of human interaction grow along the lines of human compassion and empathy that we create. They cannot be replaced by technology but are a result of human attitudes and values – enacted (SDG Alignment 8).

We forge connections every day that can join people together and allow the traffic of human interaction to flow and act as a buffer to isolation and the potential for conflict.

We live in a world that is wired. From the simple roads that once carried goods from village to village, we live today in a world where there are paths of instant communication with other people in almost every corner of the planet.

Understandably, how we use this to provide services faster and more cost efficiently has been a great force in driving innovation in industry with many economic benefits. But we humans have to evolve and grow to not become secondary or lesser than the technology we now employ.

All the evidence in the developed world points to there being an increasing sense of isolation between people as we give over our human ‘natural technology’ to artificial ones.

Isolation is a breeding ground for stand-off, suspicion, conflict and then bigotry and prejudice become rife able to fester and grow in isolated conclaves.

It is our responsibility to rejoin the evolving line of our humanity and grow that central wire from which so many new roads and pathways of enhanced human interaction can become nourished and refreshed.

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Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

The international community has made significant strides towards lifting people out of poverty. The most vulnerable nations – the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing states – continue to make inroads into poverty reduction. However, inequality still persists and large disparities remain in access to health and education services and other assets. Additionally, while income inequality between countries may have been reduced, inequality within countries has risen. There is growing consensus that economic growth is not sufficient to reduce poverty if it is not inclusive and if it does not involve the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental.

To reduce inequality, policies should be universal in principle paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.
The titles, accreditations, credentials, educational qualifications, status signatures, wealth indicators that exist and that we daily use are filters that influence what we see in each other and in turn determine how we then react.

In a similar vein, we talk at the global level of ‘developed country’, ‘least developed country’, ‘small island developing country’ etc., terms that seem to suggest that some countries and their people are more important than others.

Over-reliance on these titles often creates a culture of inequality where the level and status of one person (or country) is given greater credibility and weight over another and their opinion and voice amplified accordingly.

The platforms of power available to the few who then dictate the decisions and direction of policies for the many often do so at the cost of those with no voice who have to shout to be heard and, in this way, inequality breeds further inequality.

The alignment shift to recognizing real merit in oneself and others (a meritocracy) is a move away from judging oneself and others based on these external filters (and what we think someone or something is worth).

Seeing oneself and others through accurate assessment based on true merit is a shift to a world less driven by inequality and guides practices that can be consciously undertaken daily.

In every circumstance, there are opportunities to meaningfully actualize and employ one’s natural faculty of measurement to assess quality and merit and to acknowledge that merit in oneself and in others. We can all learn to deal in open non-judgmental ways.

We each need to find a voice in a new world and to know that voice is centered in what is real and enduring and towards a common future (SDG Alignment 9) and not what is at the service of cultural persuasion that divides us.

The SDGs along with the SDG Alignments show the power of the global community to facilitate a new world through the daily interactions we have.
Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Cities are hubs for ideas, commerce, culture, science, productivity, social development and much more. At their best, cities have enabled people to advance socially and economically.

However, many challenges exist to maintaining cities in a way that continues to create jobs and prosperity while not straining land and resources. Common urban challenges include congestion, lack of funds to provide basic services, a shortage of adequate housing and declining infrastructure.

The challenges cities face can be overcome in ways that allow them to continue to thrive and grow, while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty. The future we want includes cities of opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more.
Alignment 11: Creating safe spaces

To make cities ‘inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’ requires of us to do more than identify these goals and implement policies towards realizing them (‘how’ and ‘what’ we do). This is of course essential, but there is our human part to consider, as safety (or the lack of it) is a deeply rooted reality affecting our physical, emotional, mental lives – even our gender expression.

Even judgment can be a practice that creates exclusion and unsafety (SDG Alignment 10)

SDG Alignment 11 focuses us on the contribution we can all make to the quality of the spaces we occupy as the essential component in making cities ‘inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’.

We are all responsible for ensuring the life quality of the worlds we occupy, be it our homes, workspaces, communities, cities and the planet… and the very basic sustainability principle that guides this is ‘to do no harm’.

As a conscious principle, we extend this from our inner world of values into the living actions we make in the world outside ourselves.

Recognizing the dynamic correspondence between the inner human world alignment to ensure we do no harm and the way we develop and occupy the external world spaces helps to guarantee safety.

Developing a harmonious relationship between our inner and outer worlds challenges us to design cities for human growth, as well as for commerce, transportation and a well-functioning society – that is a vital element in the conscious planning of our cities.

Our practices in developing these spaces become the model for the future world we want to live in. Ensuring that we do not decimate the forests, pollute the rivers or let our living spaces degrade the surrounding space as we develop our cities goes a long way to ensuring our own inner space is kept open and vibrant.

The last unpolluted place on earth is inside ourselves and we must ensure that we continue to have access to that inner world where our true human response to the purposes and principles of a different future can find a new beginning – and we must feel safe to do that.

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Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Sustainable consumption and production is about promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation helps to achieve overall development plans, reduce future economic, environmental and social costs, strengthen economic competitiveness and reduce poverty.

Sustainable consumption and production aims at “doing more and better with less,” increasing net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole lifecycle, while increasing quality of life. It involves different stakeholders, including business, consumers, policy makers, researchers, scientists, retailers, media, and development cooperation agencies, among others.

It also requires a systemic approach and cooperation among actors operating in the supply chain, from producer to final consumer. It involves engaging consumers through awareness-raising and education on sustainable consumption and lifestyles, providing consumers with adequate information through standards and labels and engaging in sustainable public procurement, among others.
A new future seeks to establish itself against the mass of human habit (‘how’ and ‘what’ we do) that has come to assume it is not necessary to be economical or respectful of the limited resources available to us.

There is a direct relationship between the underlying assumption of our habits and the challenges the world now faces in terms of its patterns of consumption.

While there IS enough to go around, it is the casual disregard that we have come to have for the finite resources available that is misaligned and has made it seem to not be the case.

Deliberate thinking starts in the NOW and not in the assumptions we have grown accustomed to – it challenges us all to think about each and every situation in life afresh and ask ourselves: ‘Are we using things wisely and respectful of the larger circle of life in which we are all encompassed?’

Deliberate thinking is itself the most economical way to think - it is surprising just how many resources inside us are freed up and how much it reduces conflict that consumes so much effort and energy and time and human good will.

By not resorting to the past to justify what we do now we preserve energy that can be invested in purpose rather than needless debate.

Every day is an opportunity to practice deliberate thinking. It refreshes conversation dialogue, exploration, insight and action.
Goal 13:
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Climate change is now affecting every country on every continent. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives, costing people, communities and countries dearly today and even more tomorrow.

People are experiencing the significant impacts of climate change, which include changing weather patterns, rising sea level, and more extreme weather events. The greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are driving climate change and continue to rise. They are now at their highest levels in history. Without action, the world’s average surface temperature is projected to rise over the 21st century and is likely to surpass 3 degrees Celsius this century—with some areas of the world expected to warm even more. The poorest and most vulnerable people are being affected the most.

Affordable, scalable solutions are now available to enable countries to leapfrog to cleaner, more resilient economies. The pace of change is quickening as more people are turning to renewable energy and a range of other measures that will reduce emissions and increase adaptation efforts.

But climate change is a global challenge that does not respect national borders. Emissions anywhere affect people everywhere. It is an issue that requires solutions that need to be coordinated at the international level and it requires international cooperation to help developing countries move toward a low-carbon economy.
Alignment 13: Regulating ourselves to live in harmony with the planet

Climate change is the major trigger in the emerging global consciousness of the need for humans to transform and wake up.

How human emissions have affected the planet’s environment is sufficiently understood for us all to be aware that to continue to act as we do imperils the planet’s ability to regulate its climate. SDG 13, supported by extensive science, is absolutely clear on this point.

The effects of climate change are felt everywhere today – across all borders and every one of us needs to be on board in tackling this issue, not just at the governmental level with regulations limiting dangerous emissions and in our own daily awareness of what our actions cause and how we impact the environment.

We are part of the planet’s ecosystem, more than seven billion of us and counting, and as our activities are damaging almost every aspect of the planet and it is heating up to a point of making life potentially unbearable, we are becoming a non-viable part of that ecosystem.

We cannot continue to think that the planet has an unlimited ability to regulate its systems, while the massive impact of human life living on its surface continues unabated – while we fail to regulate our own systems.

SDG Alignment 13 shows that a new level of mature human response can bring about a new state of harmony with the planet. We cannot think we are evolved enough to manage a planet and ‘sort out’ global warming (when human activity has been the major contributor), but we can begin with ourselves and regulate our own systems and realign our own inner world to live in harmony with the outer world.

Science has provided so much evidence that we humans can regulate emotions and reactions and that a chosen response is possible even under duress – and this is where the rebalancing of the human inner world with the world outside begins.

As long as we are in unrestrained reaction, we fail to ‘hear’ or ‘see’ the distress this world is in. This is not just a goal to reach, but an alignment to a new level of human response – and as an act of deliberate thinking, it begins NOW.

Find out more! Click HERE to join the new Global Conversation!