

## 5. Thrive as Individuals, Families and Friends in Close, Cooperative, Caring Communities!

**We find and cultivate important love, support, care, relationships, meaning and fulfillment in close communities of people who know each other, live and work together to create and maintain lives, environments and lifestyles of choice. Without that, something important is missing and we suffer. Get together, be, create and thrive together in close, sharing and caring communities!**

For at least the past 2.5 million years, we became civilized human beings living together in close, cooperative, communicating, caring, sharing and loving communities. In contexts of close communities we developed most of our greatest strengths as a species, including:

- abilities to share and preserve information, knowledge, experiences, thoughts and wisdom;
- coordinated division and sharing of labor and resources for shared benefits;
- development and sharing of abstract thinking and language;
- efficient shared nurturing, education, development and protection of our young;
- creating and sharing security and well-being for all of us;
- learning to live together and work out our interpersonal and other differences and problems;
- developing ideas greater than ourselves and organizing and devoting ourselves to them;
- caring for and helping each other during illness, injury, old age and other times of need;
- creating and sharing entertainments and good times and energies; and
- developing and sharing other tools and applications of knowledge, and their impacts.

We are what we are because of sharing, caring, helping, loving and collaborating in close communities. Yet, many of us are no longer part of close, caring, sharing, living communities, and we are suffering as individuals from stress, burdens, anxiety, dissatisfactions and community deficit disorders, as a result. Family, friend, neighbor, romantic, and other relationships are stressed and dysfunctional, as a result. We lack social, emotional and psychological support, and nurturing care when we are sick or injured. We miss being a part of something greater than ourselves and seeing the benefits of our efforts shared and appreciated by those we care about. In communities we are greater than we are individually.

Our children have inadequate access to shared experiences that produce real learning and wisdom, and we worry for their safety and feel bad about their neglect. Our elders are abandoned and lonely, stranding their love and hard-won wisdom outside of our reaches. We are so busy inefficiently trying to make our lives work as individuals in relative isolation within giant systems that we don't have adequate time to nurture good health and fitness, having fun, time off, relaxation, meditation, self-development, social fulfillment, sleep, beauty and spiritual growth. As a result, we are not happy, satisfied or fulfilled.

We need to prioritize being active parts of close, cooperative, sharing, supportive, living communities and each know and care about those we live around. We need to develop shared values, desires, activities and functions that benefit us as communities and learn to work out our differences, issues and problems together in community. We need to create efficiencies and shared benefits as communities and all participate in raising our young to be better than we are, take care of our old, sick and injured, and support and learn from our elders, together. We need to create and share together experiences of beauty, laughter, recreation, play, raising spirit, joy, well-being, music, art, security, love and awareness.

We need to develop and share fundamental principles, values and intentions that create a common character for our communities and live together with shared integrity, being true to that character.

We need to be tolerant of others and let others and other communities develop as they will to be true to their values and characters, creating valuable diversity, as long as we do no harm or violate other shared principles and values. We need a sense of belonging, to be able to know others, identify with and appreciate something greater than ourselves. We need to create and share good food and water. Close living community is no larger than the number of people we can personally know in community.

We need to work with people we know and care about with shared purpose we believe in together to create the local realities we want to exist in, evolve in and enjoy. We want to feel we each personally have the power to influence the reality we live in, and together in communities we do. We need and want to create and share the real wealth and abundance we value, and together in communities we can. We need to create together experiences and wisdom we value, so we, others in our communities and others in other communities can learn and benefit from them. Together in communities we can.

It will never, ever work to slave away in relative isolation, playing in an abstract game we have little influence over and do not really believe in, expecting a government far away to solve all our problems. It's never going to happen. Let's each speak our truths and do what we can to make larger, shared government work better, but we need to take responsibility together with people we personally know, relate to and care about for changing and creating the local worlds we want to live in, and do that now, without waiting for faraway shared and broken governments to be repaired and work for us.

If everything was the way we wish it was, how would we live our lives? Let's start living that way now, where we can, with those who share those dreams! Make it happen locally with like-minded people! When we do, we change, and our world changes, for the better. We don't have to wait for the whole world to change to be the way we want to be, to be true to our principles and values. We can be and make that change ourselves, now, together with like-minded colleagues, friends and family. If enough of us do that, it is a revolution; it changes the world; and it does nobody any harm. Get together and create desired realities now, working in close communities, no matter what anybody else is doing!

Want to have true democracy? Make one in a community! Want to live with character and integrity? Do it, and create with others a shared environment where that character thrives! Want to have time for creativity, art, music, sleep, time off, family, friends, lovers, children, elders, beauty, nature, meditation, leisure, fun or presence? Get together with others and share, creating efficiencies and abundance, so we aren't always busy inefficiently providing for ourselves as individuals! Tired of the stress of always competing for livelihood? Cooperate with others instead! Sick of money, greed, ego and power games? Create a community without them! Want to be free of fear and anxiety? Create security together! Want fairness? Make a fair community! Want to evolve in spirit and consciousness? Create community to support that! Want less centralized abuse of power? Move power from centralized to local systems!

We can be or do most anything we truly desire, if we work together in close, caring community for it. We don't have to change the whole world or everyone in it for things to be the way we wish they were. We can simply gather and create shared community with enough people who share our good values and intentions, be true to them, and apply ourselves together to make it so. We feel good when we do, even if we are not always successful. Life is fulfilling. We are empowered. We care about our lives and are inspired to engage in them. We feel love, support, happiness, freedom. We get to serve others and feel good about it. Our spirits are alive, and collectively we are learning, evolving and thriving.

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