

Agora eBuzz

Institute for 21st Century Agoras

January 2009

You Are Invited

New Course

Carbon Footprint and SDD

Starting March 1, Agoras personnel will be teaching an online course at Flinders University in South Australia. Its title is **Dealing in Dialogue with the Carbon Footprint**. The course will follow two parallel paths: the Predicament of Mankind especially regarding the carbon footprint and the Structured Dialogic Design Process (SDDD). These paths will be joined in an online SDD (Co-Laboratory) workshop that addresses the question: “What are the obstacles that Southern Australia faces in trying to reduce its carbon footprint?” The course will go on to construct an action plan that addresses the leverage points the student/participants uncover.

If you are interested, contact Ken Bausch ken@globalagoras.org or Janet McIntyre janet.mcintyre@flinders.edu.au. The 13 week course is aimed at students who want to work more effectively on complex problems across disciplines and organizations to address areas of concern. The syllabus will soon be posted on the Flinders University website flinders.edu.au. If you want to see it now, Ken will send it to you upon request. For further information about Structured Dialogue Design and Co-Laboratories, please see www.harnessingcollectivewisdom.com.

Obstacles to the Obama Vision of Bottom Up Democracy

An international team of practitioners of the science of Structured Dialogic Design (SDD) met online from December 1 – 13. They worked together to discover the roadblocks facing President Obama in realizing his vision of a bottom-up democracy for the people and with the people of the United States of America. (For a full and transparent view of their activities go to: <http://obamavision.wikispaces.com>.)

There were 15 active participants and several observers. They were located in Canada, United States, Mexico, England, Germany, Cyprus, South Africa, Australia, and Japan.

The team participated asynchronously (different places at different times from December 1 to 12), and synchronously (different places at the same time on December 13) employing the Webscope wiki <http://obamavision.wikispaces.com>. The group was engaged for approximately six hours during the period of December 1 to December 13. For more details about the methodology employed see: <http://www.harassingcollectivewisdom.com/>). For a brief video of SDD in Action visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1VJFGPdAW4>.

The triggering question addressed was:

"In the context of Obama's vision for engaging stakeholders from all walks of life in a bottom-up democracy employing Internet technology, what factors do we anticipate, on the basis of our experiences with SDDP, will emerge as inhibitors to the actualization of his vision?"

The group did not finish its work on December 13. It is reconvening next week to finish rounds 4 and 5 of SDD. Its results will be available soon.

A Global Ethic for the Obama Years

David Loye, Agoras Board member, has developed A global ethic for today. It is based on his study and recent publications on Darwin and general evolution by the Benjamin Franklin Press www.benjaminfranklinpress.com. David calls this global ethic the **Global Sounding Code**. It is a translation of fifteen scientific and spiritual guidelines for evolution into tenets for a Global Ethic for the Obama years

1

Honor and respect rather than plunder and rape our living environment.

[cosmic evolution]

2

Honor and respect Earth as the Mother of us all rather than sell her into slavery.

[chemical evolution]

3

100 years of science tells us Earth can still provide the resources for health for all of us if given a fair and practical human distribution system.

Establishing health systems for the many rather than the chosen few is the moral requirement, and must be our goal.

[biological evolution]

4

100 years of science tells us that a healthy brain and healthy mind depends on adequate food and love in childhood.

Thus nurturing and expanding, rather than starving and blighting, is the moral requirement for the feeding of brain and mind,

which must be our goal.
[evolution of the brain]

5

Mind is the precious gift of life to be nurtured, enlightened, and celebrated, rather than orphaned at birth and thereafter degraded and exploited.
[psychological evolution]

6

Culture is *the most precious gift of evolution*, to be cherished and nurtured in the wonder of its diversity, rather than seized, shucked and twisted to serve low ends.
[cultural evolution]

7

Over thousands of years freedom and equality have been and will remain the most precious goals for evolution, rather than just words to be used by power-mad deceivers to sell control and inequality.
[social evolution]

8

Three hundred years of capitalism and two hundred years of communism have shown us that a fair, peaceful, and practical distribution of Earth's bounty requires a balance of public and private governance, rather than the breeding of misery, war, and corruption with a shift in overwhelming power to one or the other.
[economic evolution]

9

Democracy, rather than the sham of the oligarchy of wealth, the creep by stealth toward fascism, or the prison of any other form of tyranny, is a moral requirement, and must be our goal.
[political evolution]

10

Education for all, rather than the fact of good schools for some and bad schools or no schools for all others, is a moral requirement, which must be our goal.
[educational evolution]

11

Develop technologies to strengthen and expand the voices of caring and reason and the abundance of life, rather than technologies that ever more powerfully threaten to, and indeed then are driven to, launch and kill life
[technological evolution]

12

Differently stated but the same for all, the message of thousands of studies of progressive science is exactly the same as for thousands of years for progressive religion: Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you—rather than do it unto others before they can do it unto you.
[moral evolution]

13

Affirm our identity but also our responsibility in tandem with a greater being, a greater reality, or a greater mission, rather than fool yourself by claiming some one and only holy being, idea, or cause for your own low ends.
[spiritual evolution]

14

The most precious gift of evolution is consciousness. Love, nurture, and expand it, rather than automatically seek to narrow, blunt, or otherwise slap it into shape and seize the pitiful remnant for your own low ends.
[evolution of consciousness]

15

For over 100,000 years the choice before our species has been unchanging. Either join those who take action on behalf of the better world, or fall back in shame or ignorance with those willing to sell out to the highest bidder and join the march to extinction.
[evolution of action]

From *Bankrolling Evolution: A Program for a President*, and *Measuring Evolution: A Leadership Guide to the Health and Wealth of Nations*, by David Loye. Benjamin Franklin Press, 2007.

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#There are a number of websites that document the SDDP activity that is going on, such as www.blogora.org, www.cwawiki.wikispaces.com, <http://effectiveteaching.wikispaces.com/>

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Institute for 21st Century Agoras
8213 Hwy 85 #901
Riverdale, GA 30274
www.globalagoras.org
info@globalagoras.org