

## 10.0 CPR the VITAL ORGANS of LIFE

### MINDSHIFT MOMENT

If the economics of extraction and consumption got us into our present problems, how can we get out?

Remember what our friend Lao Tzu said in the story of the cave walls?

“Be careful with your thoughts because  
They will become your words:  
Be careful with your words because ...  
They will become your destiny.”

So how can we get out of the mindset extraction and consumption?  
By thinking the exact opposite.

The opposite of consumption  
(waste) is conservation;

The opposite of plunder and  
pillage is protection and  
preservation.

The opposite of removing to  
restoring.

### CPR Economics

So, the opposite of the  
economics of Extraction and  
Consumption (Ex-Con) is  
Conservation, Protection, and  
Restoration (CPR).<sup>1</sup>

Remember the vital  
organs of the Earth? The Land, Air, and Waters? CPR also means the procedure  
that is applied to the heart and lungs of the human body that is about to expire – the  
Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation of the vital organs of the Earth.

Applied to economics, this will shift economic activities from its present  
relentless extraction and reckless consumption to something that is the exact  
opposite. Economic activities will be to conserve, protect, and restore the land, air  
and waters that make life possible – The Land, the Air, and the Waters.



<sup>1</sup> Thanks to David Bower for this very descriptive term.

With the great damage that we have done to these vital organs of life, there is so much to do. As our friend Mr. Winston Churchill said, "We are faced with insurmountable opportunities."

This kind of economics is called other names -- Natural Capitalism, Sustainable Development, Climate Capitalism, New Economics, Ecological Economics, etc.

They are all very good and very intelligent words. They encapsulate the very essence of what we must do to care for the Life-Sources of the Earth.

But I am not a non-native English speaker and its words need translation before it is understood by my brain. Also, foreign words that need long (and often-complex) explanations does not easily resonate with my heart.

Economics to Restore the --

1. The LAW of Life
2. The lost connection between man and Nature
3. Tearing fabric of human relationships
4. Experience of Happiness



I like to use the word 'CPR Economics' because the word itself -- CPR -- describes what we must do: Conserve (use wisely), Protect (Preserve), and Restore. And what do we CPR? The damaged sources of life and vital organs of Life on Earth - The Land, the Air, and the Waters --

**The LAW of Life.**

## RESTORATIVE Economics

We can also call CPR Economics as 'Restorative Economics'. It is the economic model that seeks restores:

1. The life-giving forces of the Land, Air, and Waters
2. The lost connection between humans and Nature
3. The connection between and among human beings
4. The common sense goal of life – the experience of happiness.



## Economics of Restoration

### 1. Restoring the LAW of Life

With all the damage our kind has done to the Life-Sources of Land, the Air and the Waters, there is so much to do. There is also very little time left. The window of opportunity is fast closing.

But you see, we are a very intelligent animal. And if we decide on something, we will do it. In the early 1960s, a leader of one country promised that before the end of the decade, men will land on the moon. It was dream, a fantasy, when it was said. But with the will to do it, in 1969 the first man landed on the moon.

Yes, it can be done if we decide to do it.

### A NEW FRONTIER of ECONOMICS

CPR Economics will be the new frontier of economic industry, activities, and livelihoods. This will include, among others,

- a. Cleaning and restoring the rivers with clean, healthy and plenty of water
- b. Restoring the condition of our marine resources so they will be a good source of food protein if used well.
- c. Restoring order and sanity to our roads with clean and efficient transportation systems with a preference for non-motorized mobility

- d. Relentless energy conservation campaigns.
- e. Total shift into clean and energy- efficient systems
- f. Massive mountain revegetation
- g. Land and soil conservation and restoration
- h. Water conservation and recycling systems.
- i. And many, many, many more!

These are the economic activities that all lead to the conservation, protection and restoration of the vital organs of life on Earth – Land, Air and Waters.

In the next section, there will be a great number of examples around the world where this “CPR Economics” is already happening.

I trust you get the drift. On your own, feel free to think up of how you can transform your own place -- town, city, province, state, country -- in this new world of CPR Economics.

Is your river or creek dirty? Does your river have no more water? How can it be cleaned up and its water restored into flowing and healthy condition?

Are much of the land paved with concrete? Imagine If you broke up half of all the concrete and restored them all to land and to soil growing vegetable and fruit trees? Imagine turning that parking lots of a mall or a government building. Imagine turning them into parks, rain gardens, ponds, and community mini-forests. Is that possible?

Try that exercise in your own place. Take a picture of what it is now and imagine a world of what you would like to it be. You have the power of imagination. Remember what Mr. Einstein said? “Imagination is more powerful than knowledge.” Knowledge is what it is now. Imagination is the power to think of what it can be.

If you can draw or paint a picture of your imagined world, please go ahead. If you wish, please share that with us so we can publish your idea as well.

## 2. Restoring the Lost Connection between Man and Nature

The most serious problem of modern man is that he is detached from Nature.

The first part of the poem in the preface describes it as:



“In a city ablaze with light  
 Making day of a dark night.  
 A shooting star I do not see,  
 And the world becomes all about me.”

Because of our modern concretized world – a world paved over with concrete -- humans are disconnected from Nature. This is aggravated these days by the digital world where trees and animals appear only on the screen.

We ‘forget that we are but a grain of sand,  
 Of a rich and living land’

This is that land that has been here 4.5 billion years before our kind came along.

The climate in crisis is the most powerful symptom of this Nature-Deficit Disorder (NDD). We have burned down everything, and called it progress. Lately we are only beginning to see that by burning our Earth, we are burning ourselves.

Yes, ‘the obscure is figured out sooner or later. It is the obvious that takes a lot longer.’

This is called the innate love of humans for Nature— biophilia. We must once again touch and feel the soil. Only by doing that will we better understand that our food comes from that rich and living land. We must again be in the company of trees -- the climax species of the plant kingdom, as man is the climax species of the animal kingdom. We must again walk in the company of birds and butterflies. When we do that, we feel in our heart that our role on Earth is that of a ‘caregiver’.

We must again touch the cloud  
 As Mother Earth sings clear and loud.  
 We must again touch the starlight  
 The spirit of magic and great delight.



### 3. Restore the Connections between Humans

After we disconnected ourselves from Nature, we went on with the single-minded pursuit of material things. Then the game became all about competing who had the most things, who had the biggest house, the flashiest cars, etc. To many, it all became competition on who has the most numbers in their bank accounts.

But humans are hard-wired to cooperate with one another. That is the essence of being human – a social animal. That is why the worst punishment for a person is to isolate him from human company.

That is the spirit of community vitality. It is in being with our friends and family, and in cooperating with one another that we find great joy and collective fulfillment. Instead of competition, Restoration Economics seeks to restore cooperation and community vitality into everyday life.



#### 4. Restore the Experience of Happiness

A worldwide survey was done by an Oxford psychologist. It asked the question: What are the three sources of genuine happiness. The results showed that it was:

1. Social relations -- with family and friends
2. Work satisfaction
3. Leisure

Nowhere is money mentioned. All studies show that generally, after a people reach a level of income stability and security, they aspire for something over and beyond money. They seek fulfilment of greater, non-material, aspirations.



On the other hand, those who constantly seek money ... oh, they remind me of a story.

One day, there was rider of a horse who was galloping across the fields at full speed. In his haste and without a care, he trampled over the grain and flower beds of his neighbors. At his speed, of course he could not smell, nor even see, the flowers. He was too busy whipping his horse to run faster and faster and faster.

As he made a turn, his horse slipped and the rider was thrown off the horse. He fell hard on the ground. People rushed to help. One asked him if he was all right. No he said, he was in great pain. Another asked him, "Where were you going? His answer:

"I don't know, ask the horse."  
 \_\_\_ (find source and cite in end notes)

### Experience of Happiness

It is not the pursuit of happiness that matters. It is the *experience* of happiness. Being in the moment, appreciating and savoring each and every moment that we live, to see a blade of grass, a living being, to be with family and friends, to do something we enjoy doing, to find fulfilment in human life.

Are those not what we aspire for?

All these thoughts and visions of happiness may sound too polyanna and kumbaya. The challenge -- and the fun -- is how to structure a system of economics and governance that will promote these values and aspirations.

Life is a lot like music.  
 It is a series of moments,  
 Of alternating moments of sound  
 and silence.  
 All leading to a point of rest

But today lets us laugh,  
 No, NOW!  
 For moments hence our laughter  
 Will be but the distant sound of a  
 Happy memory.

Let us reaffirm this very moment  
 With a laughter unbridled by  
 inhibition,  
 "And then howl at the ceiling,  
 For the sheer pleasure of living."

