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Getting the Fundamentals and Essentials Right, Dealing with the Environment and Climate Change

**Creating the Necessary Conditions for a Sustainable,
Equitable, Secure and Peaceful Future**

Discussion Paper

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Axel Dorscht, PhD

Institute for Human Conceptual and Mental Development (IHCMD)

Ottawa, ON Canada

Tel: 613-233-8354

E-mail: a.dorscht@ihcmd.org

Website: <http://www.ihcmd.org>

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	i
Introduction.....	1
Nature of the Problem.....	3
Results and Consequences.....	5
Deeper-Rooted Causes.....	9
Direction of the Answers and Solutions.....	11
Development, Change and Transformation from Ground Up and From Inside Out.....	11
Understanding and Managing in First Instance the Mind and Mental Existence.....	12
Not Scientific and Technological Advances, or Return to Religion.....	13
Life not a Socio-Cultural or Physical-Material Project.....	13
Mental Development and Growth.....	14
Changing Focus from Economy to Managing Human Existence and Development.....	15
Improving Existence through Improving Mental Existence.....	16
Changing Traditional Path and Direction of Development.....	17
Differentiating between Nature and Culture.....	18
Cultural Change and Transformation.....	19
Next Step in Development of Liberal Democracy.....	20
Realizing the Promises of Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.....	21
Education and Training in Mental Development and Growth.....	22
Dealing with Crises, Symptoms, Consequences within Longer-Term Development and Change.....	23
References.....	24

Introduction

In considering and dealing with the ecological crisis, environmental problems and difficulties we face and we have to deal with, we fail to get at the fundamentals and essentials. We are preoccupied with the self-evident and obvious, symptoms and consequences. We fail to consider deeper-rooted problems, causes and developments, the less than obvious and self-evident, the fundamentals and essentials. The focus and concentration tends to be raising public awareness, not the direction of the answers and solutions, discussed at the level of the individual, in terms of what individually we can and must do to reduce the human impact on nature and the natural environment. How to change the way we understand and manage existence and development to reduce human material consumption to the level of actual human natural material needs, and reduce human interference in nature and the natural environment to a level that is necessary, required and unavoidable. How to understand and manage existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. The focus and concentration, discussion and debate tend to be limited to symptoms, results and consequences, managing crises, instant relief, short and medium-term measures of addressing only symptoms and consequences. We fail to consider the deeper-rooted causes and developments, which lie behind and account for the symptoms and consequences, how to address and move beyond them.

If we take the World Wildlife Fund and Global Footprint Network, Living Planet Report 2006, as an example, to demonstrate the point. (If we take more recent reports on the ecological crisis and environmental problems the issues will be the same, if not worse, and the answers and solutions will essentially be the same.) The Report focuses on and discusses the ecological crisis, the environmental problems and difficulties we face today:

. . . we are using the planet's resources faster than they can be renewed. . . our impact upon the planet, has more than tripled since 1961. Our footprint now exceeds the world's ability to regenerate by about 25 per cent. . . The Living Planet Index, shows a rapid and continuing loss of biodiversity – population of vertebrate species have declined by about one third since 1970. . . we have been exceeding the Earth's ability to support our life-styles for the past 20 years, and we need to stop. We must balance our consumption with the natural world's capacity to regenerate and absorb our wastes. . . The biggest contributors to our footprint is the way in which we generate and use energy. . . our reliance on fossil fuels to meet our energy needs continues to grow and . . . climate-changing emissions now make up 48 per cent – almost half – of our global footprint. . . the challenge of reducing our footprint goes to the very heart of our current models of economic development. . . what we currently accept as 'high development' is a long way away from the world's stated aim of sustainable development. (Foreword, p. 1)

Between 1970 and 2003, the index [The Living Planet Index] fell by about 30 per cent. The global trend suggests that we are degrading natural ecosystems at a rate unprecedented in human history. . . . Since the late 1980s, we have been in overshoot – the Ecological Footprint has exceeded the Earth’s biocapacity – as of 2003 by about 25 per cent. Effectively, the Earth’s regenerative capacity can no longer keep up with demand – people are turning resources into waste faster than nature can turn waste back into resources. . . . by mid-century, humanity’s demand on nature will be twice the biosphere’s productive capacity.” (Introduction, p. 2)

The Report identifies and discusses the state of the environment, environmental symptoms, results and consequences, and their development down the road if the crisis remains unchecked. When it comes to the deeper-rooted causes and developments, the answers and solutions the Report is less clear, precise, substantive and to the point. It acknowledges the need to reduce our impact on the natural environment, i.e., “we need to find ways for the average person to live well on less than half the current global average footprint” (Transition to a Sustainable Society, p. 26). But the authors have difficulties explaining how to get there, i.e., “[c]hange that improves living standards while reducing our impact on the natural world will not be easy” (Foreword, p. 1). The Report fails to consider and understand the fundamentals and essentials, the nature of the crisis, the causes and developments that lie behind it. It fails to consider and understand the causes and developments that lie behind and account for the problems, the human causes of the crisis, and what lies behind them. As a result, the Report fails to identify the direction of the answers and solutions. It fails to get the fundamentals and essentials right, to create the necessary conditions for a sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful future. That is, the Report does not go beyond the self-evident, obvious and apparent, the environmental symptoms, results and consequences of the crisis we face.

Beyond setting targets at international climate conferences, scientific and technological answers and solutions, such as carbon reduction, carbon storage and carbon trading, something much more fundamental and substantial is needed to deal with the environmental problems, ecological crisis and global warming we face and we create as a species globally today. We need to deal with the root-causes and developments that lie behind them.

Essentially, the causes and developments behind the ecological crisis and global warming are how traditionally and today we understand and manage existence and development and resulting problematic human behaviour, actions and practices. We consume natural material resources beyond actual human natural material needs, and we interfere in nature and the natural environment beyond what is necessary, required and unavoidable. We meet non-material mental needs in material ways, not in non-material ways through individual mental work and effort. We attempt to establish in the world around us what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence.

Trying to create the ideal external socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us of easy material abundance.

The causes are what lies behind, defines and governs how we understand and manage existence and development, what lies behind problematic human behaviour, actions and practices. The causes are failing to understand and manage the mind, mental existence and mental development. Failing to understand and manage, be in charge, in control and take responsibility for what takes place, what we face and have to deal with, what we do and need to do, what we must establish, develop and maintain in the mind and mental existence. Failing to establish the necessary internal mental conditions, the conceptual foundation, the framework of understanding and the mental capacity, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

The answers and solutions lie in changing how we understand and manage human existence and development. They require understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions from the ground up and from the inside out. It involves understanding and managing them at the level of the natural conditions of existence, beginning with the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Understanding and managing them in a holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way, in their essence, in depth and detail, within the same conceptual framework. Understanding and managing them beyond human-created socio-cultural conditions, established beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, at the level of the natural conditions of existence, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. At the level of the natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, which lie beyond our human control, but which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust. The natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being. Understanding and managing existence and development, everything in life we face, we do and we have to deal with, at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, from within the mind and mental existence, as reflected in individual experience. Establishing the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us.

Nature of the Problem

The problem, in its essence, is how traditionally and today we understand and manage human existence and development. Understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions from the top down and from the outside in, in a fragmented, generalized, and

disconnected way, in the abstract. It involves understanding and managing them from the human-created socio-cultural level down to the level of the natural conditions of existence. That is, understanding and managing existence and development from the collective, social, political, economic, scientific and technological level down to the level of the individual. It includes understanding and managing external conditions and the world around us, to understanding and managing internal mental conditions, individual mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self. Dividing and separating an integrated, connected, related and interacting world into different issues, subject matter, disciplines, fields of study, and areas of human activity, specialization and expertise. Each defined and governed by different, competing and conflicting assumptions, objectives, approaches and practices. Collectively trying to create the ideal external, socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us of easy material abundance.

We understand, manage, and organize existence and development in the collective, not individually in cooperation with each other. Considering and understanding the conditions, demands and challenges of existence in the abstract, beyond our experience of them. Beyond considering our experience and the conditions that lie behind and that are reflected in them, at some length, in depth and detail. Resulting in different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, about the conditions, demands and challenges of existence, and how to deal with them. Opening the doors to competition, conflict and confrontation over different ways of understanding and managing existence and development, different beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices.

We establish externally in the world around us in the collective what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence. Establishing an identity, a sense of the human and the mental self, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence externally in the world around us, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms. This is in contrast to establishing them in the mind and mental existence, where individually we are in charge and in control, through individual mental work and effort. We understand, manage and improve existence and development through understanding, managing and improving external conditions and the world around us, instead of understanding and managing them within existing and changing external conditions. We try to establish collectively the ideal external conditions of existence in the world around us. Not establishing the necessary conditions, where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and our inner mental life, before engaging and dealing with external conditions and the world around us. Trying to manage, rearrange, control and direct nature, the natural environment, natural forces and processes to fit them into our visions and ideas of the ideal external conditions of existence.

As a result of failing to understand and manage the mind and mental existence, we meet non-material mental needs in material ways, through the possession, accumulation, production and consumption of material resources, goods and values, leading to the

exploitation of natural material resources beyond actual human material needs. Persisting and growing unmet mental needs, in turn lead to rising material demands and expectations. Leading to growing demand on nature and the natural environment, and the exploitation of natural material resources. Leading moreover to competition, conflict and confrontation over the possession, control, accumulation and consumption of natural material resources, goods and values.

Results and Consequences

Today, as a result of a number of related factors, we see an increase in material consumption and exploitation of natural material resources beyond actual human natural material needs. In the developed world, in North America and Europe, we witness a growing social crisis, the disintegration, weakening or loss of traditional social fabric, family, community, morals, ethics and direction, guides for behaviour and actions. The disintegration, loss or weakening of external structures that traditionally have provided a sense of self, identity, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence. The disintegration, loss or weakening of collective external structures comes as a result of a combination of, rising demand and struggle for individual freedom and autonomy, resistance and opposition to authoritarian structures, practices, legislation, rules and regulations, lack of necessary and appropriate education and training, growing individual economic, material-financial independence and self-sufficiency.

The consequences are growing material-financial consumption, demands and expectations, an accelerated exploitation of natural material resources, degradation of, and interference in the natural environment. The result of trying to meet increasing non-material mental needs in material ways, a growing need for a sense of self, identity, a sense of mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence. The problem is, the breakdown of traditional external structures of identity, order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence, family, community and culturally homogenous society, are not replaced by internal structures, individually in the mind and mental existence. Leading to a loss of individual identity, sense of self, sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence, and growing individual mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, fear, stress, anxiety, frustration and depression. Which are addressed in material ways, leading to growing demands and expectations, accumulation and consumption of material resources, goods and values. Falsely understood and viewed as a “higher standard of living,” which today is exported and promoted by the developed countries globally around the world.

Failing external collective structures are not replaced individually by internal structures in the mind and mental existence, because of the limits and shortcomings of traditional education and training. Traditional education and training fails to provide and develop in the individual the basics, essentials and fundamentals in knowledge, understanding and

mental faculties, natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, mental work and effort. Instead, the focus and concentration are socialization and training in established socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, established ways of understanding and managing existence and development. Failing to provide the knowledge, understanding and mental faculties, powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, mental work and effort to understand and manage the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, from within the mind, as reflected in individual experience. Meeting the non-material mental needs in non-material ways, in the mind, through individual mental work and effort. Dealing with individual mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, fear, stress, anxiety and frustration through addressing the mental conditions that lie behind them. Establishing the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

The rise in material consumption, demands and expectations is the result and consequence of the breaking down and loss of the traditional social fabric, collective institutions and structures, and a failure to replace them with the necessary structures and practices individually in the mind and mental existence. Failing to understand and manage the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, establish and maintain the necessary internal mental conditions, through individual mental work and effort. Failing to establish a sense of self, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence, where individually we are in charge and in control, in the mind and mental existence. Failing to meet non-material mental needs in non-material ways, in the mind through individual mental work and effort.

The consequences are growing individual, social and environmental problems and difficulties, which we see in the developed world, in materialist cultures, societies and countries. In countries and cultures where the modernization process is accelerating, such as in Asia, we see the beginnings of the loss of the traditional social fabric, the weakening of traditional socio-cultural values, institutions, structures and practices, family, group and community. And we see a rise in material consumption, demands and expectations. In countries and regions where the process of modernization is less pronounced, with less of a loss or weakening of the traditional social fabric we see a more limited increase in material consumption, demands and expectations. Within this context, 9/11 and current terrorist activities, and the “war on terrorism,” are the results and consequences of socio-cultural communities, deeply rooted in traditional beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, opposing, resisting and fighting off the imposition of the “higher living standard” of scientific-materialist culture. The materialist way of understanding and managing existence and development are seen to threaten the traditional social fabric, external structures of identity, order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence.

As a result of understanding and managing existence and development from the top down and from the outside in, we contradict, conflict with and fall short of the natural

conditions, demands and challenges of existence. The consequences are persisting and growing environmental, social and human individual problems and difficulties. The environmental consequences include problems and difficulties relating and interacting with nature and the natural environment. Exploiting and consuming natural material resources beyond actual human natural material needs. Degrading the natural environment and interfering in nature, natural forces, processes, development and change beyond what is necessary, required and unavoidable. Bringing about changes in nature that in the long term will render the natural environment of the Earth uninhabitable for the human species.

The social consequences include problems and difficulties relating and interacting with each other. Problems and difficulties meeting the needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with one another. The results are competition, conflict, confrontation, war, killing and destruction, between and within societies and cultures. Competition, confrontation and conflict over shared natural resources and about different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, different ways of understanding and managing existence and development. The results include injustice and inequality, domination, exploitation, deprivation and marginalization, poverty and starvation, ethnic, racial, gender and generation discrimination, conflict, confrontation and killing. Failing to meet respective needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with each other.

The consequences include social institutions, organizations, structures, procedures and practices not defined by, or in support of the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence. Designed instead to create and maintain the ideal external, socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us. Social institutions not designed and not in support of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, within existing and changing external conditions. Establishing individually the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, others and the world around us. Relating and interacting, communicating and cooperating in meaningful, constructive and beneficial ways, managing shared existence and development and meeting respective needs, for which we depend on and must interact with each other.

Social institutions, organizations, structures, procedures and practices not designed to support understanding and managing existence and development within existing and changing external conditions. Designed instead, to protect us from and control external conditions and the world around us. Social institutions, organizations, structures, procedures and practices designed moreover to protect, and managed by unstable, confused and insecure minds. Designed to protect social and professional positions, roles, functions, power, status and privilege, and to compensate for individual mental problems and difficulties, limits and shortcomings, errors and mistakes.

The results include the consumption of natural material resources beyond actual human material needs. They include corruption, greed, exploitation, deprivation and marginalization in the name of the larger collective whole. Lack of accountability, openness and responsibility, mismanagement, poor planning and organizing. Problems and difficulties, resistance and opposition to change, dealing with, responding and adjusting to changing conditions, demands and challenges before they develop into larger problems and difficulties. The development of ever more elaborate, complex and costly social-collective, political-administrative, physical-material, economic, scientific and technological institutions, organizations and structures, procedures and practices, rules and regulations, to manage the human-created socio-cultural and physical-material reality. Requiring growing material resources, making greater demands on the natural environment, demanding increasing more natural material resources. Resulting in growing and expanding human interference in nature, the natural environment, natural forces and processes, and degrading of the natural environment. Managing, rearranging, controlling and directing nature, the natural environment, natural forces, processes, development and change, trying to integrate and adjust them to the workings and rationale of the human-created socio-cultural and physical-material superstructure.

The consequences for the individual include problems and difficulties dealing with the individual human self, particularly dealing with the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Facing constant, persisting and growing mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, feelings fear, stress, anxiety, frustration and depression. Lacking the necessary conceptual foundation, framework of understanding and the mental faculties. Lacking the basics, fundamentals and essentials in understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices to understand and manage the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. Understand and manage, be in charge, in control and take responsibility for what takes place, what we face and have to deal with, what we do and need to do, what we must establish, develop and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence. The results and consequences are lack of clarity of mind and understanding about the conditions of existence, individual mental and physical existence and development and the world around us. Understand the role of nature that lies beyond our control, which we must accept and accommodate and to which we must respond and adjust. And the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are ours to understand and manage, where individually we are in charge and in control.

Individual problems and difficulties include poverty of understanding, a sense of ignorance, incompetence, helplessness and hopelessness. Being lost, not feeling at home and not finding one's way around in the mind and mental existence. Acting out, and acting out of mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, fear, stress, anxiety, frustration and depression. Being unable to make sense of individual experience, the conditions of existence and the world around us. Difficulties making choices and decisions, defining aims, goals and objectives, planning, organizing and managing individual behaviour and actions. Difficulties behaving and acting, relating

and interacting, communicating and cooperating in meaningful, constructive and beneficial ways. Looking for, expecting and demanding the ideal external conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world of ease and comfort. Making errors and mistakes, causing problems and difficulties, of which we are unaware, which we fail to recognize, which we deny and reject, and for which we hold others and the world around us responsible. Answers and solutions we take to lie beyond the self, with others or the world around us.

The consequences include escapism from constant, persisting and growing mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity. Escapism into fantasies, abstractions, idle speculation and wishful thinking. Escapism into and addiction to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, obesity, extreme exercise, travel, adventure, and so on. Escapism into possession, control, accumulation and consumption of material resources, goods and values, beyond actual human material needs. Individual consequences include irrational, unpredictable, counterproductive, harmful, violent and destructive behaviour and actions. Abrogating to others and higher authority the role and responsibility for the individual self, individual behaviour and actions, choices and decisions. Including looking to others and holding them responsible for personal problems, difficulties, limits and shortcomings, errors and mistakes, for answers and solutions. Dependence and reliance on and resentment of others, external conditions, and the world around us for what individually is our role and responsibility.

Deeper-Rooted Causes

The deeper-rooted causes that lie behind the crisis and problems, which define and govern how we understand and manage existence and development, are located at the level of the mind and mental existence. The causes are failing to understand and manage the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Failing to understand and manage what takes place, what we face and have to deal with, what we do and need to do, what we must establish, develop and maintain individually in the mind. We fail to understand and manage the mind as the place where we consciously exist and act, where problems and difficulties have their roots and beginnings, and where answers and solutions must start. Failing to establish the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. We fail to develop, exercise and practice individually the necessary knowledge, understanding, and the mental faculties. Developing our natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engage in the required mental work and effort. Failing to be in charge and in control, and to be actively engaged in the mind. Taking responsibility for the knowledge, understanding and the mental faculties we develop, on which we rely, how we develop and use them, the choices and decisions we make, and how we make them, the aims, goals and objectives we pursue, and how we define them, the behaviour, actions and practices in which we engage, and how we consider, plan, organize and manage them.

Consciously we exist and act in the mind. It is where the inner mental life takes place and where the mental self is active. It is where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence, our own individual mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them. It is in the mind where we make choices and decisions, where we define goals and objectives, and where we must consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and actions. What takes place and what we do in the mind and the inner mental life defines and governs how we understand and manage existence and development. It defines and governs how we deal with the individual self, how we relate and interact with others, and how we deal with the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

Traditionally, in religious culture, the non-material and intangible in human existence, that which cannot be perceived by the five senses, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self have been viewed as the human spirit or soul. Taken to be the driving or animating force within living beings, seen to be governed by supernatural forces. Requiring appeals and offerings to supernatural forces, spirits or gods to guide and direct our behaviour and actions. In the transition from religious to scientific culture, and the questioning of supernatural forces, causes and a supernatural world, the human mind, the driving and animating force, becomes redefined as the neurological structure and workings of the human brain, defined and governed by the human genetic code and make up. Human behaviour, actions and practices are now seen to be defined and governed by the human genetic make up, and the neurological structure and workings of the human brain, influenced to a degree by external conditions.

Today, we have yet to accept, understand and deal with the non-material and intangible in human existence, the mind as the place where consciously we exist and act. A reality that is real, but not material in nature. The driving and animating force that defines, guides and directs our behaviour, actions and practices is what takes place, what we do, what we establish, develop and maintain in the mind and our inner mental life. We have yet to consider and understand the mind as the place where individually we are in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we must take responsibility for what we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and actions. The mind is where in the first instance we must understand and manage existence and development. It is where we need to understand and manage the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage.

We have yet to understand and accept what governs, defines, guides and directs our behaviour, actions and practices is what we do, establish, develop and maintain in the mind our inner mental life and existence. We are individually in charge and in control, and we must take responsibility for our behaviour, actions and practices. We individually are the force and drive behind our behaviour, actions and practices. We individually are the energy and determination, the ambition and initiative, the motivation and effort, the urge, desire and passion behind our behaviour, actions and practices. We individually govern, define, guide and direct individually our behaviour, actions and practices, our choices and decisions, our goals and objectives.

Direction of the Answers and Solutions

The direction of the answers and solutions to the environmental, as well as the social and human individual problems and difficulties we face and we have deal with, lie in addressing the causes, not just dealing with symptoms, results and consequences. Symptoms, results and consequences, in this case of the ecological crisis, cannot be address in a direct way. They need to be addressed through dealing with the underlying problems and causes, the problems and causes that give rise to them. That is, the answers and solutions require long-term development, change and transformation addressing deeper-rooted problems, causes and developments. They require going beyond just managing crises, instant relief, short and medium-term measures addressing only symptoms, results and consequences. Managing crises, instant relief, dealing with symptoms, results and consequences must be part of, take place within and contribute to long-term development, change and transformation addressing underlying problems and causes. To ensure they do not down the road lead to further and greater problems and difficulties, further problematic results and consequences. To make sure we do not just deal with symptoms, results and consequences, while leaving untouched the causes that lie behind and give rise to them, continuing to create the same conditions and problems.

Development, Change and Transformation from Ground Up and From Inside Out

The answers and solutions require development, change and transformation, understanding and managing human existence and development, from the ground up and from the inside out. Understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions at the level of the natural conditions of existence. Beginning with the individual, the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self, individual mental development and growth. Environmental, social and human individual problems and difficulties are the results and consequences of problematic human behaviour, actions and practices. Addressing them requires dealing with the problems and causes that lie behind and give rise to them. It requires changing how we understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions.

Understanding and managing them, beginning with the fundamentals and essentials, from the ground up and from the inside out, not from the top down and from the outside in, as traditionally is the case. We need to understand and manage existence and development in a holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way, in their essence, in depth and detail, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. Understanding and managing them not at the human-created socio-cultural level, the level of established beliefs, views, values, conventions and

practices, but at the level of the natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern our human existence and development. The natural conditions of existence that lie beyond our control, but which we must deal with and accommodate, to which we must respond and adjust. The natural conditions moreover that are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience, the experience of every human individual. The answers and solutions require understanding and managing existence and development, everything in life we face, we do and we engage in, at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self, on the inside, as reflected in individual experience. Establishing the necessary internal mental conditions before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us.

Understanding and Managing in First Instance the Mind and Mental Existence

The answers and solutions require understanding and managing the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self, establishing the necessary internal mental conditions, the necessary conceptual foundation, framework of understanding and the mental faculties for a sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful future. They require establishing the necessary internal mental conditions to reduce the human ecological footprint. Reduce human material consumption to actual human natural material needs, and reduce human interference in nature, the natural environment, natural forces, processes, development and change to what is necessary, required and unavoidable.

We need to establish the necessary internal mental conditions, the necessary conceptual foundation and framework of understanding before engaging and dealing with external conditions, to reduce social conflict and confrontation. To communicate, interact and cooperate with each other, beyond socio-cultural differences, in positive, constructive and mutually beneficial ways, and not compete and conflict over the control, accumulation, possession and consumption of material goods, values and wealth. Not to compete and conflict about different beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, different ways of understanding and managing existence and development. Instead, establishing a conceptual foundation and framework of understanding about the conditions, demands and challenges of existence and development we share in common. To relate and interact, communicate and cooperate at the level of the natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, which lie behind and that are reflected in the experience of every human individual. Relate and interact, communicate and cooperate to meet the needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with each other.

We need to establish the necessary internal mental conditions to deal with, understand, address and move beyond individual mental problems and difficulties, limits and shortcomings, understanding and managing the individual human self. Particularly, dealing with problems and difficulties, limits and shortcomings understanding and

managing the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Meeting non-material mental needs, not in material, but in non-material ways, in the mind through individual mental work and effort. Establishing a sense of the human self, a sense of order and stability, clarity and coherence, certainty, security and confidence, individually in the mind. Not looking for or trying to establish them externally in the world around us, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms. Establishing individually the necessary internal mental conditions, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. Not looking for, expecting or demanding the ideal external, socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world around us of easy material abundance.

The answers and solutions require developing, exercising and practicing individually the fundamentals and essentials. Understanding the human mental faculties, how to develop and use them. Developing our natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. To understand and manage existence and development within existing and changing external conditions, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. Understanding the role of nature that lies beyond our control, which we must accept and accommodate and to which we must respond and adjust. And the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, where we are in charge and in control.

Not Scientific and Technological Advances, or Return to Religion

The answers and solutions do not lie in scientific and technological advances and developments as much as they lie in conceptual and mental development and growth, mental work and effort. They do not lie in developing the scientific knowledge and the technological tools, methods and techniques to manage, rearrange, control and direct the world around us, nature, the natural environment, natural forces, processes, development and change. Trying to improve and create the ideal external socio-cultural and physical-material conditions for human existence. Neither do the answers and solutions lie in a return to religious fundamentalism, a development which today we see taking place across different religions, from Christianity to Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and so on. A return to a literal interpretation of religious scripts and doctrines, as a way to re-establish and reinforce traditional external structures of identity, order and stability, certainty, security and confidence.

Life not a Socio-Cultural or Physical-Material Project

Life, human existence and development, is not a socio-cultural or physical-material project, creating the necessary socio-cultural and physical-material conditions of existence. Living our lives, understanding and managing our existence and development, is not a matter of creating the ideal external socio-cultural and physical-material

conditions. Trying to create the ideal external socio-cultural and physical-material conditions is part of the problem. Human existence, in its essence, consists of unfolding, changing and transforming natural forces, processes, development and change, in which we have an active role to play. Managing our existence and development involves understanding and managing the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. Meeting our needs, both mental and physical needs, in necessary ways, at the appropriate time, within the natural parameters. Meeting our physical needs in material ways, through interacting with nature and the natural environment, and meeting our non-material mental needs, in non-material ways, through individual mental work and effort, and through interacting with each other. Dealing with, responding and adjusting to change and changing conditions, demands and challenges, in our own mental and physical existence and development and in the world around us, when only a minimum in mental work, effort and adjustment are required, and before they develop into larger problems, difficulties and crises.

Mental Development and Growth

The answers and solutions require mental development and growth, individually and as a species. Developing, exercising and practicing individually the necessary understanding, the human natural mental potential, natural mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, mental work and effort, to understand and manage existence and development, existing in and as part of a constantly unfolding, changing and transforming world. Understand and manage existence and development, beyond establish socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, at the level of the natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, that lie behind and that are reflected in human experience. Understand and manage existence and development within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature, without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence. Understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions in a holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way, in their essence, in depth and detail. Developing the understanding, the mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices to understand and manage existence and development, at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, on the inside.

Developing, exercising and practicing individually the understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, and engage in the mental work and effort to understand and manage, be in charge, in control and take responsibility for what takes place, what we face and have to deal with, what we do and what we need to do, what we must establish, develop and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence. Make sense of individual experience and consider the conditions that lie behind and that are reflected in them. Establish a sense of the human self, a sense of order and stability,

clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in. Deal with mental disorder and instability, doubt and confusion, uncertainty and insecurity, feelings of fear, stress, anxiety, frustration and depression, through considering and addressing the conditions that lie behind them. Meet individual natural mental needs, not in material, but in non-material ways, in the mind through individual mental work and effort. Establish the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others, the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

Changing Focus from Economy to Managing Human Existence and Development

The answers and solutions to the environmental crisis do not lie in and do not require, as the WWF Living Planet Report suggests, macro-managing global resources allocation schemes. They require reducing human material consumption beyond human natural material needs, beginning with the individual. They require meeting non-material mental needs, not in material but in non-material ways, through individual mental work and effort. They require understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, from the ground up and from the inside out, beginning with the individual. Understanding and managing them at the level of the natural conditions of existence, beginning with the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Understanding and managing existence and development at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, on the inside, as reflected in individual experience. The answers and solutions require establishing the necessary internal mental conditions, before engaging and dealing with external conditions and the world around us.

The answers and solutions are less a question of economic analyses and investment of financial resources, as argued in the Report. They are a question more of developing and investing the necessary mental resources, mental work and effort. They require conceptual and mental development and growth. Developing, exercising and practicing the necessary understanding, the human natural mental potential, natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, at the level of the individual, with every individual. The understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, mental work and effort to understand the fundamentals and essentials, the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence, how to deal with, respond and adjust to them.

The answers and solutions do not lie in “resource accounting and reporting,” “establishing baselines” and “setting targets,” as is argued in the WWF Report. Understanding and managing existence and development is not a business enterprise of producing material goods and services or generating material-financial surplus and profits. The answers and solutions require reducing human material consumption, at the

level of the individual, to the level of human natural material needs, through meeting non-material mental needs in non-material ways, in the mind through individual mental work and effort. What is required is reducing interference in nature, the natural environment, natural forces, processes, development and change, to the level of what is necessary, required and unavoidable. Not trying to manage, rearrange, control and direct external conditions, the world around us, nature and the natural environment, trying to integrate and adjust them to abstract ideas about the ideal external, socio-cultural and physical-material conditions. Reducing the human ecological footprint requires reducing the exploitation of natural material resources and the human impact on the environment. It requires understanding and managing existence and development within existing and changing conditions, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature.

The answers and solutions require changing the central focus and concentration from the economy and economic activity to understanding and managing human existence and development. The economy and economic activity, providing the material means to meet human physical-material needs, is only one element or aspect of human existence and development, i.e., human physical existence and development. It does not include the non-material side of human existence and development, the mind, where we consciously exist and act, where the inner mental life takes place and where the mental self is active. It does not include mental development, or meeting mental needs in the mind through individual mental work and effort.

Improving Existence through Improving Mental Existence

Improving human life and existence, addressing problems and difficulties, the answers and solutions must begin at the level of the mind and mental existence. They must start with improving mental existence and mental development, improving how we understand and manage the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Improving understanding and managing being in charge, in control, and being actively engaged in the mind and our inner mental life. Taking responsibility for what takes place, what we face and have to deal with, what we do and need to do, what we must establish, develop and maintain in the mind and mental existence. Meeting non-material mental needs in non-material ways, in the mind through individual mental work and effort. Establishing and maintaining the necessary internal mental conditions – a sense of self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in, before acting, before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us. Not improving the material conditions, trying to create the ideal external conditions of easy material abundance. Instead, developing, exercising and practicing the necessary knowledge, understanding and mental faculties, developing our natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort.

Changing Traditional Path and Direction of Development

The answers and solutions require changing the historical path and direction, approach and focus of development. Changing how traditionally and today we understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions. Understanding and managing them not from the top down and from the outside in but from the ground up and from the inside out, starting with the individual, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, mental development and growth. Moving beyond competing and conflicting socio-cultural differences. Moving beyond different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values and conventions, about the conditions, demands and challenges of existence and development. Instead, understanding and managing existence and development at the level of the natural conditions of existence that are common to all human beings, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, that lie behind and that are reflected in individual human experience. Understanding and managing existence and development in a holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way, in their essence, in depth and detail. Understanding and managing existence and development, everything in life we face and we have to deal with, we do and we engage in at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self. Understanding and managing the mind, mental existence and mental development, on the inside, as reflected in individual experience. Establishing individually the necessary internal mental conditions, before acting, engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us.

The traditional path and direction of development, the way traditionally and today we understand and manage human existence and development is not sustainable in the long-term. At best, we can buy more time for this path of development, but we cannot continue it indefinitely. We cannot continue indefinitely understanding and managing existence and development in the collective, from the top down and from the outside in. We cannot continue conceptualizing and understanding the conditions of existence in the abstract, beyond our experience of them. Establishing externally in the world around us, in socio-cultural and physical-material terms, what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence cannot be continued. We cannot carry on understanding and managing existence and development through understanding and managing, controlling and directing the world around us. Trying to create the ideal external socio-cultural and physical-material conditions, of an ordered, stable, secure and predictable world of easy material abundance.

The way traditionally and today we understand and manage existence and development was possible in earlier times, with a smaller global population, a less material lifestyle, homogeneous cultures, societies and communities, with a stable external socio-cultural identity, order and stability, certainty, security and confidence. With a breakdown of external socio-cultural structures and institutions, an expanding global human population, increasing global travel, interactions and movement, increasingly more heterogeneous or

multicultural societies, countries and communities, and rising material consumption, the traditional way of understanding and managing existence and development is no longer sustainable. It cannot be continued into the future without growing problems and difficulties for the human individual, society, future generations, nature and the natural environment. It is leading to an accelerated exploitation of non-renewable natural resources, degradation of the natural environment, and interference in natural forces, processes, development and change, taking us further into the direction of rendering the natural environment uninhabitable for the human species.

Focusing and concentrating on symptoms and consequences, trying to make how traditionally and today we understand and manage existence and development environmentally more friendly, less wasteful, harmful and destructive will buy some time. But it will not resolve the problems and difficulties we face. With an expanding global human population and the global exportation and promotion of the materialist-consumer society, the materialist way of understanding and managing existence and development, the gains from any such temporary improvements will be quickly exhausted.

In the long-term, we must change the way we understand and manage human existence and development. And we need to start the process today, not wait until it is forced on us, until we no longer have a choice, by which time it will be too late. We may no longer have the time for the generations it will take to change how we understand and manage existence and development. Making the way traditionally and today we understand and manage existence and development more environmentally friendly, less harmful and destructive will buy some time. But it will confront us later with the same problems and conditions, when we will have less time to bring about the necessary change and transformation in the way we understand and manage existence and development. Focusing and concentrating just on managing crises, dealing only with symptoms and consequences will lead to getting caught up and side tracked into never ending debates about the nature and seriousness of the crises and problems we face, and how to deal with them, as has been the case for decades with global warming.

Differentiating between Nature and Culture

The answers and solutions require differentiating between nature and culture, between the natural conditions and human-created conditions of existence. On the one hand, there is our nature, our natural make up, the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence and development, which are defined and governed by nature. We are composed and made up of constantly unfolding, changing and transforming natural forces and processes, within which we have an active role to play. Understanding and managing the role and responsibility in our existence and development that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, where we are in charge and in control. Our natural role and responsibility requires conscious work and effort, both mental and physical work and effort. Meeting our needs, both mental and physical needs, and dealing with, responding and adjusting to change and changing conditions, demands and challenges, in our own

individual mental and physical existence and development and in the world around us. By nature we are not self-sustaining entities, automatically meeting our needs and dealing with change and changing conditions at the right time, in necessary ways. We have to make choices and decisions, define goals and objectives, and consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and actions.

On the other hand, there is culture, the human-created conditions. Culture is not a natural product, it is what we create and construct. It consists of human beliefs, views, values, conventions, institutions and practices, about the conditions, demands and challenges of existence and the world around us, our role and responsibility in them, and how to deal with them. Cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices inform our knowledge and understanding, how we develop and use them. They define and govern our choices and decisions, and how we make them, our goals and objectives, and how we define them, our behaviour and actions, and how we consider, plan, organize and manage them.

If our cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices are too far removed from the reality of the natural conditions of existence, we are likely to contradict, conflict with and fall short of the natural conditions, demands and challenges. Causing problems and difficulties for the individual, others, society, the world around us, for nature and the natural environment. Preventing causing persisting and growing problems and difficulties, our cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices need to reflect the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence. They need to be firmly rooted in, arise out of, accommodate, respond and adjust to the natural conditions of existence.

It requires understanding and managing existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions at the level of the natural conditions, which in the first instance define and govern our existence and development, which lie behind and that are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being. It requires understanding and managing them in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. More fundamentally, we need to understand and manage them at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life and the mental self. It involves establishing the necessary internal mental conditions, the necessary conceptual foundation, framework of understanding and mental faculties, before acting, engaging and dealing with external conditions, the world around us, with nature and the natural environment.

Cultural Change and Transformation

The answers and solutions require cultural change and transformation, development and growth, at the level of the individual, with every individual. It requires cultural change

and transformation, development and growth from the ground up and from the inside out, from inside the mind and mental existence, beginning with the individual. The answers and solutions require cultural change and transformation, development and growth, in both the developed and the developing world. Cultural change and transformation, development and growth to understand and manage human existence and development, communicate and cooperate with each other, locally and globally around the world, and relate and interact with nature and the natural environment in necessary, positive, constructive and mutually beneficial ways, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature.

It requires cultural change and transformation, development and growth to reduce the human ecological footprint, reduce human consumption of material resources, to actual human material needs. Meeting non-material mental needs, in non-material ways through individual mental work and effort, and interact with each other, to meet the needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with others. Reduce human interference in nature, the natural environment, natural forces, processes, development and change to what is necessary, required and unavoidable. Not trying to create, externally in the world around us, what by nature we must establish and maintain individually in the mind and mental existence. Cultural change and transformation, development and growth to move beyond different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, different ways of understanding and managing existence and development. To understand and manage existence and development, relate and interact, communicate and cooperate with each other at the level of the natural conditions of existence, which are common to all human beings, which lie behind and which are reflected in the experience of every individual human being.

Cultural change and transformation, development and growth to understand and manage existence and development, deal with demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Understand, manage and deal with them, beyond human-created socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, at the level of the natural conditions, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development. Understand, manage and deal with them, at the level and within the context, of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind, mental existence and mental development, from within the mind and mental existence, as reflected in individual experience. Establish the necessary internal mental conditions before engaging and dealing with external conditions, with others and the world around us.

Next Step in Development of Liberal Democracy

The answers and solutions require taking the necessary next step in the development of liberal democracy. Developing individually the understanding, the mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices to behave and act as sovereign, autonomous and

individually responsible human beings. To be in charge, in control, be actively engaged, and take responsibility for developing, exercising and practicing individual knowledge and understanding, individual natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices, individual choices and decisions, goals and objectives, individual mental and physical behaviour and actions and practices, individually considering, planning, organizing and managing them. Being actively engaged in understanding and managing individual existence and development, considering, understanding and dealing with the demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions of individual and shared existence and development. Actively engaging and participating in public life, through actively engaging, understanding and managing, being in charge, in control and taking responsibility for individual existence and development. Relating and interacting, communicating and cooperating with each other to meet the needs for which by nature we depend on and must interact with each other.

Realizing the Promises of Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment

The answers and solutions lie in progressing and taking the necessary next step on the path of development that began with the Renaissance of the 14th century, the Reformation of the 16th century and the Enlightenment of the 18th century. A path of development of freeing the human mind from the constraints of preconceived socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices. A path of development of breaking the conceptual and mental constraints and bonds of established cultural conditions and practices. The answers and solutions require developing, exercising and practicing individually the knowledge, understanding and the mental faculties, individual natural mental powers and abilities, necessary mental skills and practices to behave and act as rational beings. The mental faculties, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices to reason. To engage in the mental work and effort necessary to consider, understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions, in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way.

Understand and manage the role and responsibility in our existence and development, which by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, where individually we are in charge and in control. Understand and manage existence and development, at the level and within the context of understanding and managing mental existence and mental development, from within the mind and mental existence, as reflected in individual experience. Establish the necessary internal mental conditions, the required conceptual foundation and frame of mind, before acting, engaging and dealing with external conditions, others and the world around us. Developing, exercising and practicing individually the understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices to understand and manage existence and development within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. Understand and manage the individual self, communicate and cooperate with each other, relate and interact with the world

around us, nature and the natural environment, without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions, demands and challenges of existence.

Education and Training in Mental Development and Growth

The answers and solutions, creating the necessary conditions for a sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful future, require taking the next step in human conceptual and mental self-development and growth, individually and as a species. They require education and training in mental development and growth, not socialization and training in established socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices. Providing future generations with the fundamentals and essentials, the basics in understanding, mental powers and abilities, mental skills and practices, mental work and effort. To understand and manage existence and development existing in and as part of a constantly unfolding, changing and transforming world, in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways, within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature.

Education and training understanding and dealing with the mind as the place where we consciously exist and act, where the inner mental life takes place and where the mental self is active. The place where individually we are in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we need to take responsibility for what we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and actions. Understanding and dealing with the mind as the place where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence, our own individual mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them.

Education and training understanding the nature, elements and processes, the conditions, needs, demands and challenges of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage, how to manage and deal with them. Establish and maintain the necessary internal mental conditions, a sense of self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in. Dealing in the mind with the conditions, needs, demands and challenges of existence, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions when only a minimum in mental work, effort and adjustment are required, before they develop into larger problems, difficulties and crises, which we are no longer able to deal with alone.

It requires education and training understanding our mental needs and how to meet them, in the mind through individual mental work and effort. Understanding our mental faculties, how to develop and use them. Developing our natural mental powers and abilities, translating them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engaging in the required mental work and effort. Engaging in a process of continuous, life-long mental self-development and growth. Continuously, in light of constant change and

changing conditions, reconsider, change, correct and improve the knowledge, understanding and the mental faculties on which we rely, how we develop and use them. Reconsider, change, correct and improve, whenever necessary and required, in the face of problems and difficulties, failure, errors and mistakes, the choices and decisions we make, and how we make them, the aims, goals and objectives we pursue, and how we define them, the behaviour and actions in which we engage, and how we consider, plan, organize and manage them.

Dealing with Crises, Symptoms, Consequences within Longer-Term Development and Change

Dealing with the ecological crisis and global warming, managing crises, dealing with symptoms and consequences, need to take place within, be part of and contribute to the longer-term development, change and transformation addressing the deeper-rooted causes and developments. They need to take place within the context of development, change and transformation understanding and managing existence and development from the ground up and from the inside out, to make sure they do not down the road lead to further and greater problems and difficulties. For this reason, they need to take place within the context of understanding and managing existence and development from inside the mind and mental existence, beginning with the individual, individual mental existence and mental development. It requires, considering, understanding and addressing them in their essence, in depth and detail, in a comprehensive, differentiated, but integrated, connected and related, or holistic way. Moreover, considering, understanding and managing them, beyond human-created socio-cultural conditions, beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, at the level of the natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern our existence, which lie behind and which are reflected in human experience. Considering, understanding and dealing with them, at the level and within the context of understanding and managing, in the first instance, the mind and mental existence, the inner mental life, the mental self, and mental development, from within the mind, as reflected in individual human experience.

References

The discussion paper is based on twenty years of research and study of the root-causes and developments behind the problems and difficulties we face and we create as a species globally today - persisting and growing cultural, religious, racial, political, social, economic, environmental, collective and individual problems, difficulties and crises, competition, conflict, confrontation and violence. Including associated negative results and consequences such as greed, corruption and dishonesty, injustice and inequality, domination, exploitation, marginalization, poverty and starvation, mental problems, substance abuse, addiction and suicide. The direction of the answers and solutions, the direction we need to take to deal with the problems we face, and to understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways.

The project involved research and study understanding existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions at a more fundamental level, in their essence, in depth and detail, beyond the self-evident and the obvious, beyond conventional wisdom and established practices. Consider and understand them in a comprehensive and holistic way, a differentiated, but integrated, connected and related way. Going beyond viewing and dealing with them in separate and disconnected ways, as has been the case traditionally.

The project involved research and study considering and understanding the natural conditions of existence, and the role and responsibility in them that by nature are individually ours to understand and manage. The natural conditions of existence, which in the first instance define and govern human existence and development, human behaviour and action, which lie beyond our human control, but which we must deal with and accommodate, and to which we must respond and adjust. The natural conditions of existence, which are common to all human beings, that lie behind and that are reflected in human experience, the experience of every individual human being. Differentiating between the natural conditions of existence which we share in common, which are common to all human beings, and human-created socio-cultural conditions, different, competing and conflicting socio-cultural beliefs, views, values, conventions and practices, which divide us.

The project included research and study understanding the human mind as the place where we consciously exist and act, where our inner mental life takes place, and where the mental self is active. Differentiating clearly between the mind and the brain, between what takes place and what we do in the mind, and neurological and biochemical processes taking place in the brain. Understanding the mind as the place where we experience, become aware, and where we must consider the conditions of existence, our own mental and physical existence and development and the world around us, and how to deal with them. The place where by nature we are individually in charge and in control, where we must actively be engaged, and where we must take responsibility for everything

we do and we engage in, individual behaviour and action. The place where we make choices and decisions, where we define goals and objectives, and where we must consider, plan, organize and manage our behaviour and actions. Considering and understanding the mind as the place where problems and difficulties, failures, errors and mistakes in what we do and we engage in – in views and understanding, choices and decisions, aims, goals and objectives, in behaviour and actions, have their roots and beginnings, and where the answers and solutions must start.

The nature, elements and processes, conditions, needs, demands and challenges of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self, our role and responsibility in them, how to manage and deal with them. What takes place, what we do and what we need to do, what individually we must establish, develop and maintain in the mind and our inner mental life. Establish and maintain the necessary internal mental condition – a sense of the human and the mental self, mental order and stability, clarity of mind and understanding, a sense of certainty, security and confidence, in everything we do and we engage in. Deal in the mind with demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions when only a minimum in mental work, effort and adjustment are required, before they develop into larger mental problems, difficulties and crises, which we can no longer deal with alone. Understand our mental needs and how to meet them, our mental faculties, our natural mental powers and abilities, how to develop and use them. Translate them into the necessary mental skills and practices, and engage in the required mental work and effort. Engage in a process of continuous, life-long mental self-development and growth.

The project, research and study, involved understanding the historical path and direction of human development through the ages, which has brought the human species to where we find ourselves today. How through the ages human beings have considered and made sense of their experience, and the conditions of existence that lie behind and that are reflected in them, and how to deal with them. How today we understand and manage human existence and development, limits, shortcomings and contradictions, negative results and consequences, the problems and difficulties we face and we create globally today. Considered on the conceptual foundation and within the framework of understanding of the natural conditions of existence, particularly of the mind, the inner mental life and the mental self.

The direction of the answers and solutions, the direction we need to take in mental development and growth, to understand and manage existence and development in sustainable, equitable, secure and peaceful ways. To understand and manage existence and development, demands and challenges, problems and difficulties, change and changing conditions within the natural parameters, the boundaries and limits of existence set by nature. To understand and manage them without contradicting, conflicting with or falling short of the natural conditions of existence, our role and responsibility in them, and without creating the persisting and growing problems, difficulties and crises which we face and we create around the world today.

In addition, the project involved research and study into socio-cultural constraints, opposition and resistance to change and transformation. Research and study into institutional-organizational constraints, and individual human opposition and resistance, individual conceptual and mental limits, shortcomings and contradictions, which lie behind individual human opposition and resistance to necessary development and change.

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