

Master Social Strategies

which someone, someplace, sometime
has to carry out if our Planet is to be a viable place for human habitation

a summation by Gene Marshall

1. **Ending Corporate Rule**
2. **Recovering Popular Democracy**
3. **Reinhabiting our Earth Regions**
4. **Protecting Regional Economies** (Mindful Markets in Ecological Balance)
5. **Building Economic Options** (example: Worker-Owned & Controlled Cooperatives)
6. **Promoting Local Community Empowerment and Revitalization**
7. **Establishing Smart Planetary Aid Programs**
8. **Promoting Planetary Peace**
9. **Conducting Ethical Reeducation** (Ecological, Economic, Political, & Cultural)
10. **Overcoming Patriarchal Oppression**
11. **Ending Racial, Cultural, and Religious Oppression**
12. **Organizing Nurture Groups with Spirit Grounding**

1. **Ending Corporate Rule** is a key. Most conservative politicians and interest groups take the view that corporations should rule the world unimpeded by popular government. Most liberal politicians and most non-governmental agencies pursue the strategy of helping the corporations to rule the world better. It is true that corporations embody many important wisdoms and values. And it is true that corporations will be around for a while longer. Therefore, strategies for “working-with-the-corporations” have some validity. But it is not true that we can, through such strategies alone, arrive at the vision outlined above. We must end corporate rule. By neglecting the strategy of ending corporate rule we allow the destructive momentum of corporate rule to increase. The destructive effects include: undermining popular democracy, making the rich richer and the poor poorer, and leaving the earth devastated. There is no way to reverse these grim trends as long as corporations rule the world. The first step is to restrain corporate rule through an economic playing-field that is refereed by popular government instead of by the corporations themselves and their political puppets. It may also be of use to overhaul the internal structures of corporations toward less top-down, management-heavy formats. But in the end we must do away with the traditional format we call “corporations.” We must create new types of economic institutions that are fully responsive to all the stakeholders--labor, communities, environments, as well as investors.

2. **Recovering Popular Democracy** indicates that the vacuum left in ending corporate rule must be filled with some **popular enthusiasm for democratic responsibility**. A lethargic, uninformed voting population is not going to rule the world much better than the corporations. The people living in actual local neighborhoods can be trusted with the planet only if those persons end their individualistic isolationism and industriously join discussion groups, action groups, town meetings, and other corporate gatherings in which serious grappling with the actual information of our era is taking place. Expecting citizens, on their own, to properly interpret the vast and ambiguous offerings of the internet and/or the news media is naive. Vast energy will have to be expended in recovering a passionate participation in social responsibility for the majority of our citizens. The possibility of doing this has been proven in the last century. For example, large were the numbers of women and men who fought for decades to get the vote for women, and larger still were the numbers of blacks and whites who participated in the civil rights and black

power movements. Our current popular movements for various forms of justice and ecological sanity might indeed now be inspired to coalesce into a huge united campaign to save democracy and preserve the very possibility of democratic solutions.

3. Reinhabiting our Earth Regions points to a stylistic movement with vast political and economic ramifications. The term “reinhabiting” implies leaping up out of our current sense of home places and then landing in our Earth regions. To so **redefine our sense of “HOME”** in an ecological fashion changes the context for all our living. Currently we define the geography of where we live in terms of nations, states, counties, zip codes, and other fairly arbitrary human definitions. Huge are the implications of allowing the natural planet itself to define our sense of place. Huge would be the implications if a majority of our citizens made a covenant of responsibility with their home part of the natural planet, including all its trees, grasses, wild animals, atmospheres, rocks, soils, as well as humans.

4. Protecting Regional Economies (Mindful Markets in Ecological Balance) is something that could be done if we had a real democracy and if our citizens were covenanted with their local Earth regions. This strategy is a counter to the current misguided enthusiasm for unfettered global trade. Our huge global slosh of investable money owned by the very wealthy can seem impressive in certain ways, but it is also creating very dangerous instabilities for entire regions of the planet. The greedy movement of such uncontrolled capital will in the end destroy the wellbeing of rich and poor alike. The only effective option to this increasingly destructive global economy is to **give ordinary local citizens the power to mindfully design their own local regional economies.**

5. Building Economic Options (example: Worker-Owned & Controlled Cooperatives) is something that is already in motion in small ways. Worker-owned-and-controlled cooperatives is a mode of production organization that is already proving itself far superior to the corporation. The success of the Mondragon Industrial Cooperative in Spain is a case in point. “Building economic options” also includes pursuing such experiments as: no-interest service banking, local exchange systems, interest-and-inflation-free money models, and so on. All these experimental options become possible for the larger scopes of society when corporations no longer rule the world and when citizens are willing to take responsibility for redesigning their lives in ways that work for them.

6. Promoting Local Community Empowerment and Revitalization is also something that many are working to do at the present time. Town meetings, local improvement groups, and full-fledged community organizations have all trumpeted this need. It is plain to see that state and national governments as well as international corporations are too far removed from local problems to be effective in solving them. **Returning power to the people** means in the final analysis giving much more power to local institutions of decision-making and requiring big governments and big businesses to comply with whatever local decisions are being made.

7. Establishing Smart Planetary Aid Programs means finding truly effective ways for the **richer regions of the planet to assist the poorer regions of the planet** to care for their citizens and for the planet as a whole. This is a necessary strategy because local empowerment alone in this increasingly interdependent world cannot end the tyranny of the wealthy regions over the poorer regions. Each local region of people needs to understand that its own wellbeing depends upon the wellbeing of every region of the planet. If some new contagious disease is allowed to establish itself in a region with poor health services, every region of the planet will soon have this disease to deal with. If one region cannot afford to take care of its trees or its atmosphere, then every region has to breathe the resulting foul air, battle the weird weather changes, fight back rising oceans, and so on. Every region of the planet is part of the planet. This obvious indicative results in the equally obvious imperative to structure effective generosity between rich and poor regions. And only local regions can perform this kind of generosity. International,

profit-making corporations cannot be truly generous without losing out to their competitors. Corporate benevolences will never be anything more than a public relations cover for their basically destructive greed. If there is a corporation for which this is not the case, it is certainly an exception to the rule.

8. Promoting Planetary Peace means requiring every political body to assume responsibility for restraining all-out warfare wherever it threatens to occur. Conflicts there will always be, but our current capacity for massive destruction requires of us fresh urgency in promoting negotiated settlements. Ironically, peace-loving governments must also be equipped to restrain violence with military force whenever negotiation efforts fail to stop genocidal crimes. Every responsible democratic body must assume responsibility for forcefully restraining other governmental bodies who are committed to the all-out use of violence. This strategy seeks to define responsible governments as those who are restrained in their use of both military action toward other groups and police action against non-violent protesters in their own areas. This strategy also seeks to define responsible protest groups as those who respect law and social order even while protesting bad laws. **Maintaining restraint in the responsible restraint of violence and oppression** is the key principle in this master strategy for sorting through the complex ambiguities that characterize resolving our social conflicts.

9. Conducting Ethical Reeducation (Ecological, Economic, Political, & Cultural) means preparing the vast majority of humans on this planet to participate responsibly in all twelve of these strategies and to learn the skills needed to be successful. Some education of this nature is already going on, but fully pursuing ethical reeducation as a major strategy implies a vast increase in the numbers of people being reached and an equally vast improvement in the overall vision that this education is communicating and in the skills-training required to realize such vision. Ethical reeducation, fully conceived, is a broad strategy that includes new forms of womb-to-tomb nurture and training of the whole person of each and every member of the human family.

10. Overcoming Patriarchal Oppression means deep changes in the ordinary habits of both men and women. None of these twelve master strategies can be accomplished unless women recover their power and freedom and unless men gain access to their feelings and capacities for vulnerable relationships. Men must also renounce all prerogatives of privilege and rulership and take their places as partners with women. Women must renounce their collusion with male unconsciousness and demeaning behaviors and become forthright in demanding respect. Men and women must renounce all bitterness over the past, all hostility over the changing present, and give buoyant support to each other in embracing the terrors and glories of a gender-balanced future. Overcoming patriarchy also includes overcoming our heterosexual biases against same sex orientations.

11. Honoring Racial, Cultural, and Religious Diversity means overcoming humanity's many-faceted tendencies toward belonging to some most-exalted in-group. Such oppression demeans both the oppressed and the oppressors. To the extent that we do not renounce these egoisms based on group membership, we are disempowering ourselves for the building of equity, justice, and ecological viability for this planet. This deep journey into a thoroughgoing respect for diversity is a strategy without which all the other strategies are weakened and threatened with failure. If we cannot renounce these ancient prejudices, we will remain trapped in the other suicidal malfunctions as well.

12. Organizing Nurture Groups with Spirit Grounding indicates the emergence of a vast diversity of creative religious and secular movements. The establishment of reawakened Buddhist practices, the expansion of the Reevaluation Counseling movement, the appearance of various movements of Christian resurgence, and the emergence of other such movements are illustrations of this overall strategy. It is important to see this strategy as a crucial part of the

master list because the human energy for doing all the other strategies is going to be derived from the human beings who are awakened and energized by these movements.

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This picture of master strategies could be much further elaborated, and my grasp of master strategies will certainly be deepened and expanded in the decades to come. Many elements of this strategic outline are very controversial at this time, but the basic direction indicated in this strategic overview will, I hope, become more and more obvious to millions of people as we move through the coming decades. Whether or not we fully realize that prospect depends upon the immediate actions of those of us who choose to be the vanguard.

Let me clarify that these strategies are not like a do-list for one person. Each of us will tend to tie into only two or three of these strategies as our major push. These twelve strategies are a portrait of the pressure points in our society where action must take place to move the whole.

The chart on the next page diagrams how these twelve strategies feed each other or follow from each other. In this chart, I have given the largest type to ENDING CORPORATE RULE because I see it as THE FOCAL STRATEGY into which all the others feed or from which all the others follow. I have given a medium-large sized type to the Education and the Nurture Strategies because I want to emphasize how important they are as feeders for all the others.

All these strategies are important. The overall victory cannot be fully won if any one of them is missing. This entire book is focused on creating new forms of Christian community. I see forming viable Christian communities as part, though not the whole, of Strategy number 12. So with this overall picture in my mind, I can say to myself that I am saving the planet as I build “fresh wineskins for the Christian breakthrough.”

Saving The Planet/Humanity

