

# POLITICAL RISE

ISSUE 1

**THE WELL-BEING ECONOMY**  
PUTTING QUALITY OF LIFE AT THE CENTER



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# WELCOME

Welcome to Issue #1 of the Political Rise digital magazine.

You have a critical role to play in determining what happens next for humanity.

We have created this publication to support you in rising into your leadership-in-action to create the best possible future for us all.

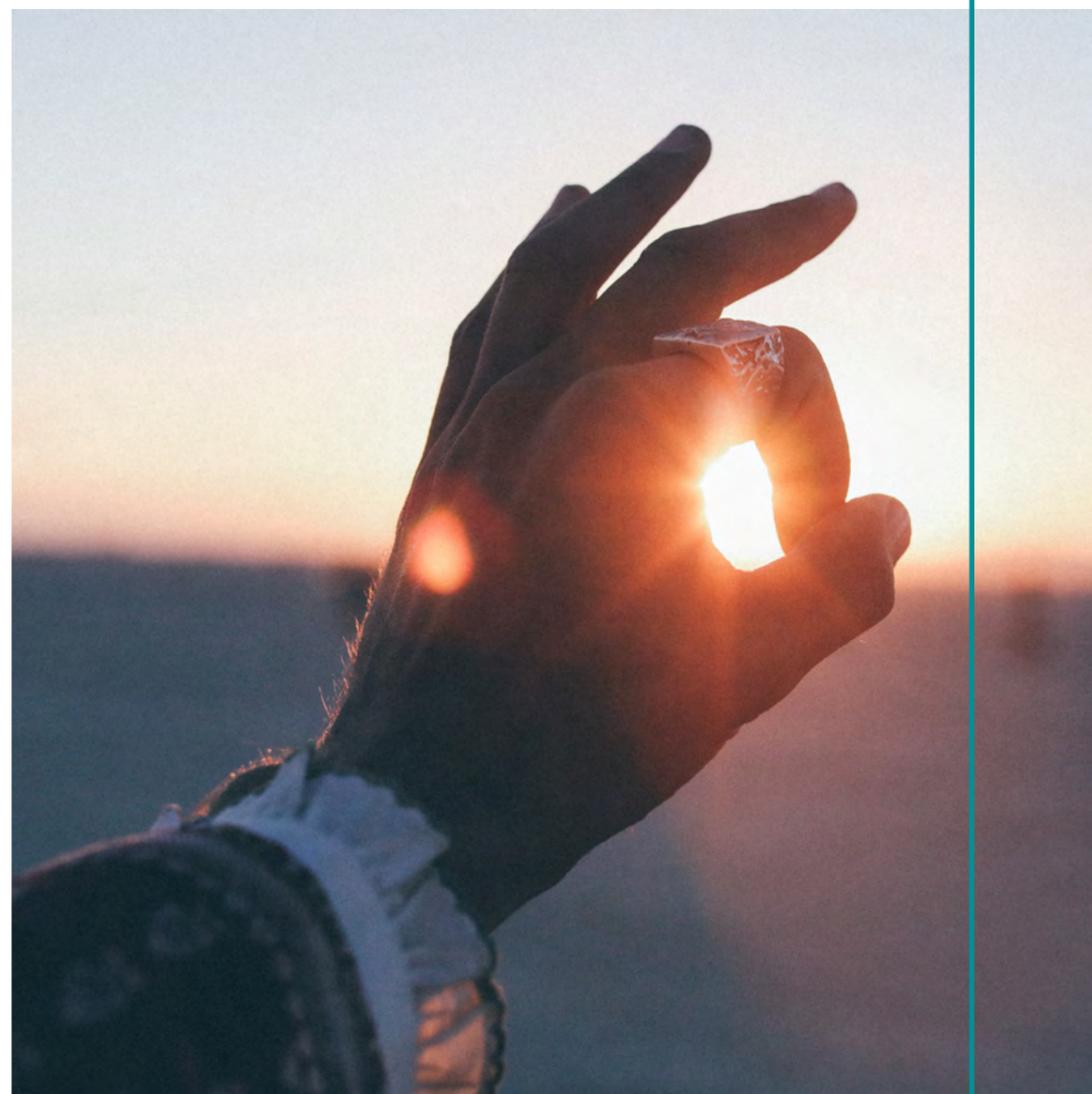


The practical and conceptual domain of the Political Rise creates a space in which we can meet each other as fellow stewards of a thriving future, make sense of our world, integrate our diverse perspectives and collaborate to create something greater together than we could ever create on our own.

This publication is intended to serve as a rallying point, an incomplete yet ever refining blueprint, and beacon for all those who wish to work together to realize a world that works for all, a world in which all can win in the infinite game of creating an ever-more thriving planet. In each issue we will be selecting a topic of focus that

helps to educate our readers about critical domain of social, cultural, and political evolutionary change. As we weave the stories of real systemic transformations already being designed and actualized around the world, we'll be weaving the core principles of the Political Rise as the conceptual golden thread that ties them all together.

In Issue #1 we are exploring a fundamental shift in the orientation of human civilization, the notion of putting 'Quality of Life' at the center of our societal blueprint. We tell the story of the 'Emergence of the Well-Being Economy' as an example of a global movement that is applying this blueprint through national governments worldwide. We conclude the issue with an ignition of the Independent National Union, a new American political initiative designed to embody the principles of holistic well-being and the Political Rise through US Independent politics, and a call to artists to bring their visions and leadership to this emerging political movement.



The developments made by the people and projects highlighted in this Issue remind us that mature, responsible, visionary stewardship is alive and thriving.

Enjoy these carefully crafted articles and resources designed to inspire you to Rise into your own purpose and participation. Even just by reading and contemplating this content and the potential future it points us towards, you are contributing to the emergence of a world that works for all.

What if we really could create a human civilization that put the quality of the experience of being alive - the pain, the joy, the grief, the celebration - as our highest priority - devoted to an experience of wholeness, vitality and thriving for all?

We believe this is possible. This magazine, and its inaugural issue, are dedicated to this collective potential. Together we rise.

- Christopher Life | Editor

# THE WELL-BEING ECONOMY

# POLITICAL RISE

Politics is the process of expressing human principles and values at the societal level through governmental stewardship.

The dichotomy and spectrum between the political right and the political left do not represent the full range of human principles and values.

The political rise is a new domain of political thought and organizing that encompasses a defining set of principles and values that represent a novel synthesis, integration, and ultimately transcendence of the values represented by both the left and the right.

Emerging from the increasingly apparent failures and inadequacies of the left vs right duopoly system, the political rise provides a domain of politics that meaningfully speaks to those who haven't felt at home anywhere on the left/right spectrum, have been forced to compromise their values to participate, and those who have disengaged from politics completely due to lack of alignment with existing options.

The Political Rise is arriving to meet the rising generations of leaders who have worked tirelessly to reform the existing political systems to no avail, and the powerful societal leaders who have thus far opted out of politics.

Welcome to the political rise. We are fiercely devoted to stewarding society in a way in which all people, all communities, and all societies are healthy, whole, and thriving. We do not engage in the win/lose paradigm of the left and right, although we care tremendously about the authentic needs, interests, desires, fears and perspectives of both the right and the left. We organize and work to provide leadership to humanity through government stewardship with a culture of inquiry, dedication to quality of life for all, and the all-win paradigm.

Equipped with a unifying set of principles, voters, candidates, policy researchers and advocates, political funders, organizers, media channels and organizations with values outside of the left and right can now find each other in the political rise to integrate, collaborate, unify and rise together as we create a thriving world for all.

## 21 PRINCIPLES OF THE POLITICAL RISE

- 1 **QUALITY OF LIFE**  
Organizing society around improving the quality of the experience of being alive
- 2 **ALL-WIN**  
Overcoming win/lose thinking, expanding choices, and improving quality of life for all
- 3 **DIGNITY**  
Reinforcing the respect and compassion of which all beings are inherently worthy
- 4 **HOLISM**  
Rigorously considering whole economic, social, societal and ecological systems
- 5 **HEALING**  
Fundamental healing for mind, body and community; of trauma, disease and chronic pain
- 6 **INTEGRATION**  
Combining, reconciling and synergizing diverse perspectives, disparate groups and unintegrated potentials
- 7 **UNIFICATION**  
Always seeking to bring all people together, by sentiment and action
- 8 **THRIVING**  
Pursuing the best possible experience of vital, inspired and positive life for all
- 9 **STEWARDSHIP**  
Taking full responsibility for caring for the people and nature with whom we share our home, city, nation and planet
- 10 **INTEGRITY**  
Acting honorably in the best interest of the whole community
- 11 **CREATIVITY**  
Being inventive and generative to create new solutions and access new potentials
- 12 **MATURITY**  
Being secure enough within oneself to focus on ensuring others are safe and supported

## 13 FUNCTIONALITY

Creating solutions that work well in achieving the outcome of improving quality of life for all

## 15 INQUIRY

Perpetually expanding our field of awareness and understanding by earnestly investigating what we don't yet know

## 17 EMBODIMENT

Practicing individually and collectively to live in alignment with a set of principles and values

## 19 RESOLVE

Dauntless long-term commitment to ensure the best possible condition for future generations

## 21 TRANSFORMATION

Acting boldly to catalyze deep change and midwifing people and systems through the phase-change processes of dissolution, reconstitution and rebirth into something new and better

## 14 SENSE-MAKING

Committing competency in understanding reality as holistically and accurately as possible

## 16 PROCESS

Establishing and refining effective processes able to generate reliable societal value in diverse situations

## 18 REGENERATION

Replacing extractive, polluting societal systems with systems that inherently sustain, nourish and improve the whole

## 20 SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Understanding the nature of complex systems of change, emergence, the systemic origin of key societal problems, and consciously designing systems that enable our collective potential

**“The Political Rise is the natural maturation of our politics.”**

– Christopher Life

# THE QUALITY OF LIFE

**‘Quality of Life’ can serve as a central organizing principle for ourselves, and even entire societal systems, when we realize, and remember, how precious the experience of being alive truly is.**

Writer, Sophia Life

As a human species, we take life for granted. We are not intrinsically taught to value our own life, cherish our human existence and create for ourselves the conditions we need to thrive. In contrast, we are conditioned to live our lives in accordance with societal norms, to reach outside of ourselves in search of fulfillment and to spend our precious days distracted by trivial pursuits. We are not taught to ask the deeper questions and venture into our own subjective inner process to discover for ourselves how to generate meaningfulness and create a quality of lived experience that reflects the greatness and potential we yearn for in being alive.

We exist in a world that revolves around the maximization of financial profits, and this profit-driven system determines our cultural values, paradigm and worldview in service to its agendas. Courageous

people around the world are waking up to realize the ways our economic systems are undermining our actual experience of living well and are standing for a new way of being, which prioritizes Life - my life, your life, all life - as valuable.

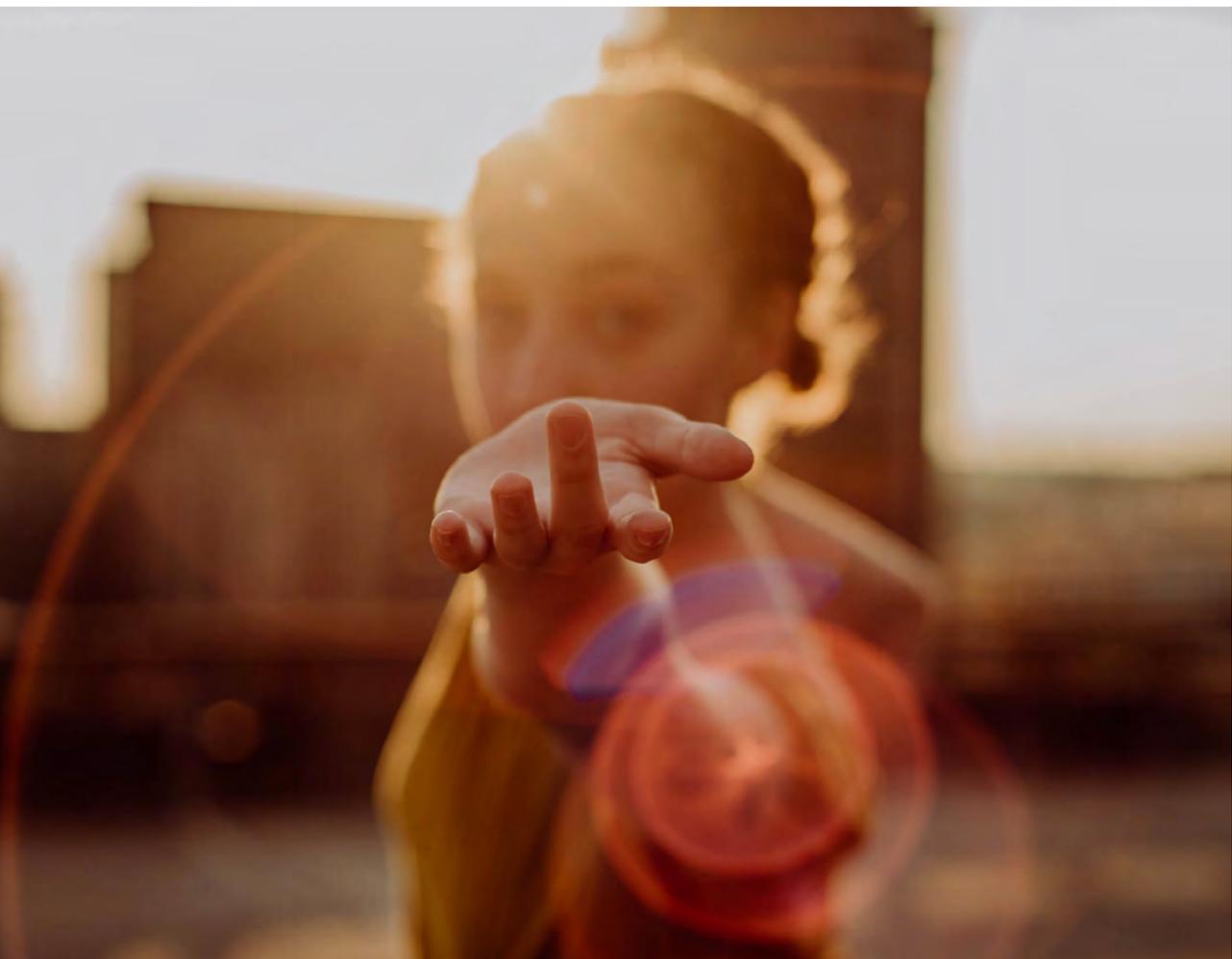
Humanity is undergoing a rebirth. The old systems are dying and decaying and in this transition new systems are emerging. “The good life” is ripe for a redefinition, as the stories of progress and The American Dream fall flat, far from delivering their promise of a world that is fair, healthy, and free. It is increasingly clear that inexhaustible consumption, a culture of consumerism and materialism, nuclear family isolation, individual success and the climb to the top of the corporate ladder are no longer serving the ultimate pursuit of happiness.

'Quality of life' has been most commonly used to refer to the field of geriatric and palliative care, and is often defined by the absence of health threatening hazards, disease or medical issues. Its meaning has become largely associated with those who have been identified as having a poor quality of life, and is used to indicate a value for improvement.

Quality of life also appears in the context of intentionally designing spaces and places that encourage livability and enhance the citizen's experience through good design and public policy. Our environments most certainly influence our experience of life, and can be designed to elicit behavior change, support an active lifestyle, increase beauty, as well as fostering both connection to community and nature.

However, our quality of life isn't founded on good environmental and urban design alone, nor is it the process of aging gracefully or how well we die. Our quality of life is rooted in how well we live, what resources and opportunities we do or do not access, and how we experience all of our determinants as well as choices in the precious time we are alive.

**As our human civilization prepares to undergo massive transformation, it is critical that the term quality of life be reborn to illuminate our experience of being alive, and as such, become the central metric to determine the success or failure of our societies.**



## QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OURSELVES

If we, as a society, aim to prioritize quality of life as a value for all, we must prioritize quality of life for ourselves first. It is our responsibility to discover how to maximize and enhance the experience of being alive, moment to moment, before we can understand what it takes to create societal systems designed to support others in thriving.

What makes you feel alive, satisfied and purposeful? What is most precious and meaningful to you? What relationships do you want to have with other people, with nature, with your physical body? How do you want to use your time? What do you want to create? What do you want to be able to offer others?

The answers to these questions get us closer to realizing what it would take for us to experience a thriving quality of life, and for many, it may be a substantial journey to create the life experience that reflects every individual's ideals. As we undertake this unique inquiry process into our personal desired reality, it is critical to remember that quality of life has far more to do with our experience of being rather than our experience of having.

**Equally vital for the true embodiment of our quality of life, is the personal exploration into our suffering to heal the cultural programming, traumas, limitations and intergenerational patterns that have made a thriving quality of life seem unattainable.**

Without a focus on personal growth and transformation, we unconsciously perpetuate our fear, addiction, abuse, the suffering of our parents, and biases carried through our lineage, accepting all of these as normal and passing this behavior and belief system to our children.

As we wake up from the slumber of unquestioned norms that have resulted in our acceptance instead of our thriving, we also realize we are indisputably interconnected to each other. As we choose to rise in our individual quality of life we show the way for others to do so as well. Yet, we cannot create for others what we do not personally understand. If we envision a world where quality of life for all is valued, we must come to understand it well, through resolving aspects of ourselves that are subconsciously creating pain, and consciously generate love, connection, well-being, fulfillment and peace.

We all have the potential to generate the happiness quotient and integrate together with family, community and our world, to maximize our greatest outcomes for optimal quality.

## QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

Every individual's quality of life is fully integrated with the quality of life of all. To witness suffering in the world around us and be unable or unwilling to alleviate it is to challenge our own sense of dignity and empowerment, which degrades our own quality of life as a result. To disassociate from the suffering we see and not acknowledge or attune to the pain in others, is to fragment ourselves from the intelligence of our own heart and disconnect us from our inherent mutually interdependent nature.

If we are not participating in the liberation of others' suffering, we are undermining our own experience of being alive. As the parents of the future and those here to lead the way for the generations who follow, it is our responsibility to support the whole of humanity and help ensure a safe and viable future for our children and all life on earth.

For those of us who choose to participate in creating a world where the improvement in quality of life is accessible to all, we must lend our support to transforming the existing societal systems of power that have used people as cogs within a machine rather than relate to them as independent beings each with inherent worth and aspirations. It is time to take responsibility for our lives and the lives of others, and participate in re-establishing the foundation of human civilization to replace the 'profit growth imperative' with 'improved quality of life imperative' as the central organizing principle of our culture, economy and social systems.



## OUR QUALITY OF LIFE IS POLITICAL

Quality of life has not been a primary political topic of conversation, and it is time for that to change. Quality of life offers a lens to assess the effectiveness and success of our elected leaders, the driving force of our economies and our entire societal system as a whole.

Improving quality of life for all gives us a central political goal that can, and should, shape our thinking, voting, spending, advocacy and activism.

What if our health systems, education systems and social services revolved around the holistic well-being of each person; not reducing those they serve to symptoms and transactional remedies, but deeply considering every person's sense of belonging, happiness, purpose, fulfillment, physical vitality and aspirations?

When we ask ourselves, "What is actually hindering or supporting the quality of my experience of being alive?", our answer will lead us to better understand what matters to us most. And what matters to us most should become the focus of our political activity. Improving our quality of life, and the quality of life for others, serves as the most useful driving force of our activism.

It is time to look at our school boards, city councils, local policies and national legislation through the primary lens of 'quality of life' to assess the value of how our decisions directly impact the experience others have of being alive.

## INDICATING THE HEALTH OF SOCIETAL SYSTEMS

As we experience the world today, we see and feel the negative impact our social, economic and political systems have on the quality of all life on our planet. What we may, or may not yet see, is that we are part of a complex system of dynamics, interconnected, integrated into the whole of life. Like cells in a larger body, we are inextricably part of a living ecosystem, co-arising through our relationships with each other.

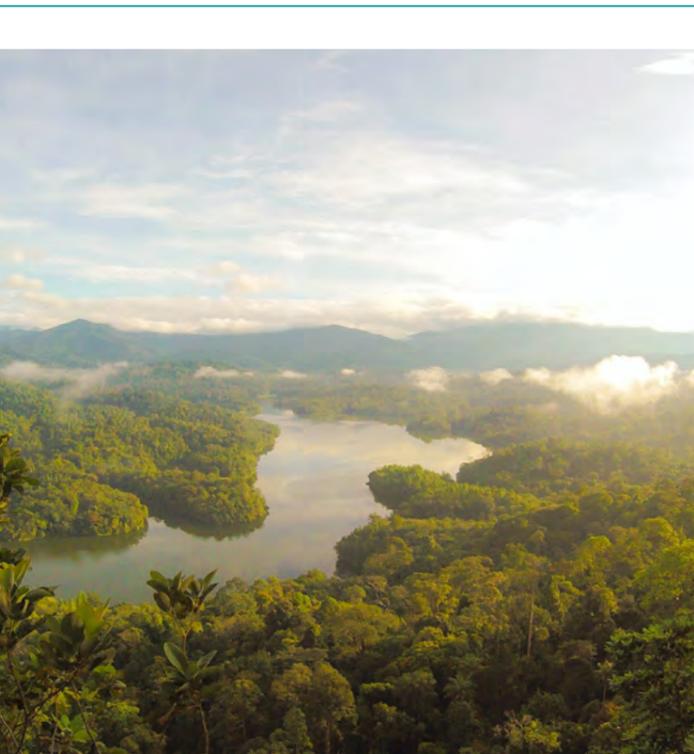
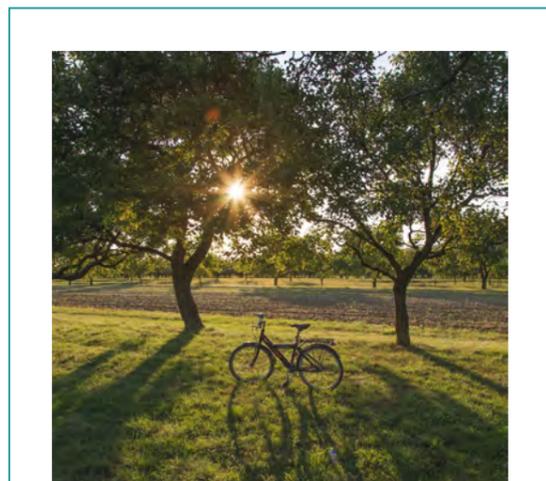
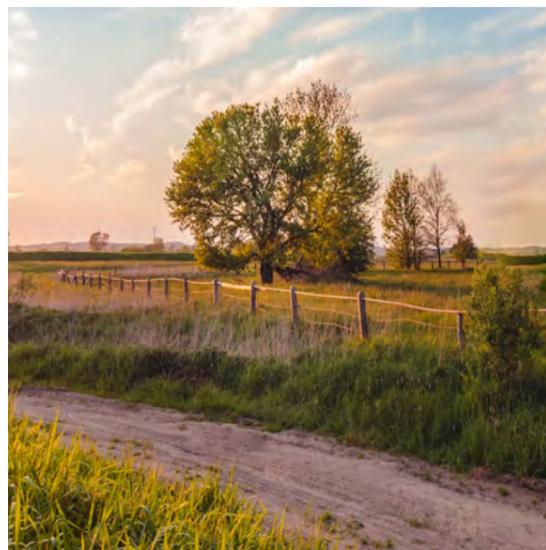
When we see ourselves as part of a living and interconnected whole, it becomes obvious that when one part is affected, the whole is affected. Social issues like depression, suicide, violence,

substance abuse and child abuse are not inherently personal, despite often being ascribed as such. They are systemic. They reflect the breakdown in our current system and indicate our need for transformation, to restore balance and wholeness within ourselves, our communities and our world.

Our quality of life can be seen as an emergent result of how well our greater societal and ecological systems are functioning. These social and ecological systems are mutually informed by the choices we make and the ways in which we perceive our available choices. In order for our personal quality of life to make an impact on the quality of all life on planet earth, we need a new worldview and decision-making metric that allows us to measure success based on our collective impact on what matters most.

### WORLDVIEW

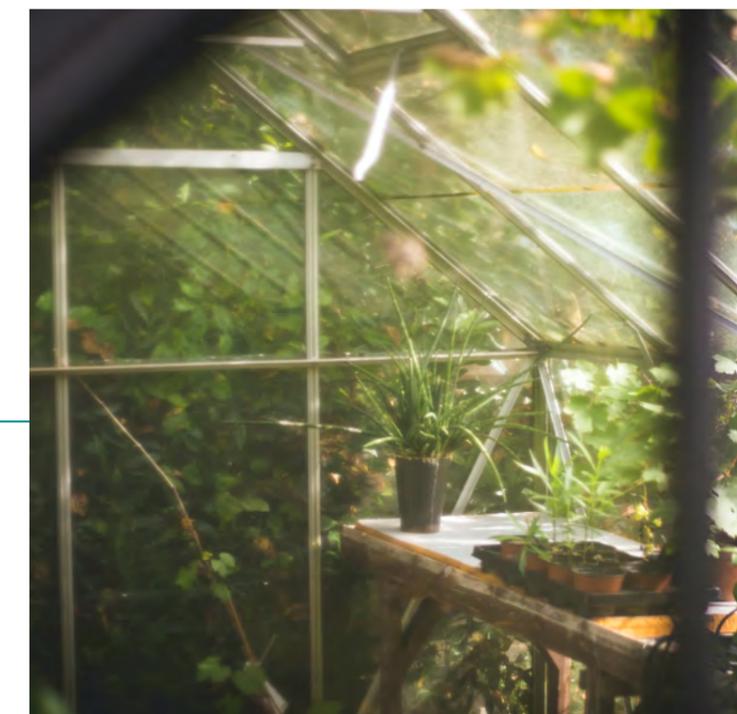
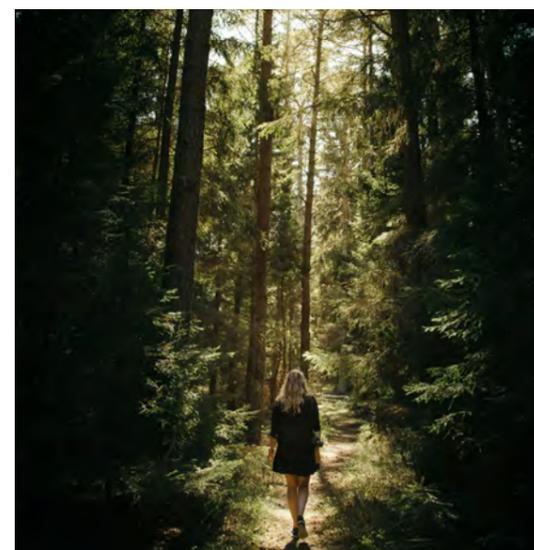
We are born with the inherent power of choice. While many institutions benefit when we accept the prescribed choices for us as consumers and citizens, enhancing our quality of life isn't an over-the-counter remedy or decision we leave to someone else to determine for us. It is a choice we make in every moment, that informs how we relate to our circumstances and who we choose to be in the face of challenge, adversity and fear. It is our worldview that determines how we relate to the world around us and whether or not we interpret disharmony, discongruity and destruction as an impassable failure or an opportunity to rise, act and co-create what we want and what we choose.



### OUR EVOLUTIONARY EDGE

We don't yet know how to create a society that revolves around quality of life. We need to experiment, discover it together, and share what we are learning with each other. We can restore balance to our current local, national, and international systems, stand courageously for the change we want to see, and rebirth our values, our behaviour, and our attitude towards our collective quality of life. We can create a future where the improvement in quality of life for all is central to our decision-making process and a core value we can achieve.

All of life is in our care, and it is our responsibility to make choices that care for all of life.



# THE EMERGENCE

# OF THE WELL-BEING ECONOMY

## ORIENTING OUR CIVILIZATION TOWARDS QUALITY OF LIFE

Writer, Benjamin Ross

### INTRODUCTION

Despite sweatshops, ecocide, global food insecurity and systemic poverty, intellectual property wars, monopolization of industries and financial systems, loss of identity and culture in many Western countries to simply that of 'consumer,' invasions of sovereign nations for unfettered access to natural resources, assassinations and US-backed coups of democratically elected leaders to enforce US economic interests, cold-blooded murder of labor organizers, and countless other horrors of history driven by an economic and cultural paradigm that emerged in the late 1700s, capitalism is also responsible for many of our greatest triumphs as a species.

Capitalism has given us global communications and supply chains that move information and goods in a truly planetary system of coordinated value creation. Industrial innovations have allowed us to create at scales previously unimaginable, using a rudimentary form of [distributed cognition](#) we call 'markets.' Particularly when contrasted with other human organizing experiments like Soviet Communism and Feudal societies, capitalism has generated relative freedom of choice for some humans to craft and create their reality without explicit centralized limitations on what they choose to create. While markets are proving to be vastly insufficient at incentivizing collective well-being,

**“We live in capitalism. Its power seems inescapable. So did the divine right of kings. Any human power can be resisted and changed by human beings. Resistance and change often begin in art, and very often in... the art of words.”**

– Ursula K. Le Guin

**“It is easier to imagine an end to the world than an end to capitalism.”**

– attributed to Fredric Jameson and Slavoj Žižek

capitalism's incentives do reward certain forms of efficiency and innovation, creating conditions that make it possible for humanity to do more with less under some circumstances. Even as our existing industrial food system poisons our land and bodies and drives [hundreds of thousands of farmers to suicide](#), we can't help but acknowledge the immediate yet short-sighted necessity and benefit of the Green Revolution's [GMO](#), [petro-chemical](#) pesticide and [fertilizer-induced boom](#) in food production that may have [saved over one billion human lives](#).

We can honor these contributions to the evolutionary journey of humanity while simultaneously acknowledging that our current economic paradigm is driving humanity at breakneck speed on a [self-terminating trajectory](#). Excessive consumption, runaway growth, and a lack of systemic incentives to preserve the very ecological functions that make life possible and meaningful, are all tell-tale signs that humanity is in desperate need of [a new story](#), a new

socio-economic paradigm, and a new set of guiding principles that will allow us to preserve the immense gains of a global economy without losing the very foundation upon which our global system is built. Returning to ancestral wisdom traditions and worldviews, our own personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal desired experience of being alive, and our emerging scientific understanding of complex living systems, we can begin to identify the principles and protocols of a life-affirming society and economy. This article attempts to outline, through the work of indigenous and community leaders, public intellectuals, and forward thinking global politicians, a new paradigm of social and economic thinking that emerges from the interdependent, mutually informing experiences of well-being at the levels of self, community, ecosystem, and planet. This new paradigm is the Well-Being Economy.

“THE MARKETPLACE,  
BY ITSELF, CANNOT  
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- POPE FRANCIS

## OUR MOMENT

From one perspective, our entire species is currently experiencing a planetary psychedelic trip, psychotic break, or “[spiritual emergency](#).” [Stanislav Grof](#), a Czech psychiatrist and early pioneer of psychedelic therapy, suggests that psychedelics act as ‘non-specific amplifiers’ of experience: indiscriminately magnifying the conscious and unconscious patterns embedded in our psyches. And much like psychedelics, COVID-19 has magnified the fragility and instability of our health, food, and economic systems. Most notably, our systems of communication, our capacity for shared meaning



and understanding, have been shattered into millions of [tribal identities](#) and their corresponding [filter bubbles](#). While it might be easy to assume our own perspective is more true or rational, at a fundamental level our society has moved from a mode of shared meaning through [centralized broadcast of information](#) into a [completely distributed](#), chaotic, self-contradicting information ecology, [weaponized by big tech platforms](#) that are auctioning our attention and outrage to the highest bidder. Just as a psychedelic trip creates novel, often nonsensical, neural pathways in our brain, new neural pathways in humanity's collective brain, [the internet](#), are spasming into being, forming clusters of meaning that defy traditional logic and reason. [Quoting psychedelic historian Erik Davis](#), “we're in a lightly psychedelic state where there's

multiple narratives, multiple possibilities, multiple emotional reactions, that have an excessive, surreal, dreamlike quality even. These polarised political events have revealed that the media as some kind of coherent maintainer of consensus reality is just gone.”

Unmoored from consensus reality and set adrift in a sea of new and terrifying possibilities, humanity is now free to look back at the underlying assumptions of our social and economic reality, previously deemed **the only viable choice**. With this 2020 vision, we can take an unflinching look at the ways in which our values, tools of measurement, and incentive models have been designed. In the space created by this new awareness, driven by the immediacy of our crumbling systems and the human suffering they generate, and understood through **new ways of knowing** what is true, good, and beautiful, we have the opportunity to redesign our economy with the well-being of the whole in mind.

## OUR CRISIS OF PURPOSE

Within the paradigm of extractive capitalism, each of us is an isolated, rational actor. Developmental psychology suggests that this mental model of a separate individual is actually an **illusion of an adolescent human psychology**, itself on its own evolutionary journey into higher order identity and maturity. Our identity frames of the separate individual, consumer, and member of nuclear families are being actively deconstructed by the planetary catalyst of climate change as we realize at scale that our choices impact one another and our individual identities are only possible through the underlying interconnected web of life. Life is teaching us through our changing climate and our interconnected ecological crises that we very literally belong to one another.

While capitalism deserves recognition for the ways in which it has created the very affordances that enable me to reflect upon our evolutionary potential and live a life insulated from the real challenges of growing food, building



technology, and sharing information, our socio-economic narrative lacks the most critical component of any good story: purpose. The driving narrative of capitalism is the **perpetual increase of efficiency and growth**. This narrative fails to take into account the questions of: “efficiency at what cost?” and “growth towards what?” Post-capitalist narratives emerging primarily from the so-called ‘developing world’ call into question the very notion that ‘development’ leads to a higher quality of life and effectively meets the needs of people and the nature upon which people depend. **Simon Kuznets**, the economist who worked with the US Department of Commerce to define and measure Gross National Product (GNP), a metric based on the cumulative economic output of a nation and a primary indicator economists use to determine the health of an economy, himself noted that “the welfare of a nation can scarcely be inferred from a measure of national income.”

Decontextualized from a shared purpose for our economic activities, GNP is a hollow metric that fails to track the actual quality of lived experience of human beings. Combined with capital market deregulation and the resulting extreme inequality of wealth distribution, we’ve seen that “growing the pie,” “raising the tides” and even “redistributing the pie” doesn’t equate with more meaningful, more joyful, more purposeful human experiences.

This hollow narrative of endless growth for its own sake reduces each of us to mechanistic cogs in an ever-refining yet purposeless machine that grinds down the human spirit of poor and wealthy alike, driving an **existential meta-crisis** that contributes to and catalyzes the crises of depression, addiction, suicide, ecological collapse, public health and chronic disease, information warfare, and tribal nationalism. Defining a new story that provides a shared purpose and sense

of meaning for humanity's existence, and the corresponding social and economic structures that emerge from that story, becomes a moral, ethical, and even spiritual imperative in the face of mass extinction and needless loss of precious life. This new story isn't an argument for free markets or government regulation, it's a calling forth of the soul of humanity to evolve from shortsighted, immature competition to shared stewardship of a thriving planet that supports our individual and collective potential.

Discovering what exactly this new story might be and what values and concepts might inform its systems and structures is less a final destination and more of a journey humanity must now take. The [failures of modernism's top-down approach to our political economy](#) reveal the necessity of a plurality of perspectives whose synthesis can provide higher order insight on the complex and inter-subjective question of what it means to live a good life. As such, it would be hypocritical for this author to attempt to provide a definitive answer to this massive planetary question. What we can do, however, is provide an opening, a calling, and an invitation to engage in a multi-perspective inquiry process that can meet the complexity of this vast inquiry into humanity's purpose and ultimate potential.

Many thinkers, spiritual leaders, and community practitioners have already begun to offer their own answers to this question and have arrived at a very simple yet powerful frame that holds the potential to unite all political philosophies and spiritual traditions. Emerging from the Bhuddist context of Bhutan and the indigenous cosmologies of communities in Ecuador and Bolivia, this frame proposes the purpose of

human growth and development as a process of optimizing the quality of human experience in relationship to self, community, society, and nature. Despite the vast differences in cultural and social context between indigenous communities in South America and the remote Bhuddist communities of South Asia, what seems to unite these new and ancient stories is an emphasis on the mutually informing and interconnected levels or scales of well-being that include the well-being of the individual, the well-being of the community, the well-being of the society, and the well-being of nature. [These interlocking levels of well-being are all measured differently](#) and each of them raises many vital questions around incentives, enforcement, deployment, and systems design. As the longest standing experiment in actualizing these principles at a national scale, [Bhutan has done the most of any nation](#) to outline how this political philosophy grounds into tangible metrics like [Gross National Happiness \(GNH\)](#) and [national development strategies](#) targeted to provide essential infrastructure in areas like health and education while maintaining ecological health and cultural resiliency. Well-being and Gross National Happiness are still emerging from the domain of [theory into practice](#), but in exploring the historical and practical contexts of nations already running experiments with these new value systems, metrics, and underlying sense of purpose, we can provide a conceptual basis for further experimentation in other communities and nations. There are endless questions and implications for this shift towards a well-being economy, yet by laying out the metrics and values that might inform the shift, we can begin to take meaningful steps towards an economy that works for all.

**“Many people have also said that GNH (Gross National Happiness) and Buddhism are inextricably linked... I have disagreed with that. GNH is a political philosophy and Buddhism is a spirituality... I believe that any spirituality is inherently good... and I do believe that all of them can be used as a basis to promote a more wholesome political ideology, a political philosophy such as GNH.”**

**– Tshering Tobgay - Former Prime Minister of Bhutan**

## GROSS NATIONAL HAPPINESS: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND UNIFYING WORLDVIEW



The metrics we choose to measure and optimize for reflect what we value. For Bhutan, when faced with the imminent impact of globalization, their beloved [King Jigme Singye Wangchuck](#) saw the impending and unavoidable impact that would unfold from engaging in an industrial global economy. He also saw the needs of his people to receive education, health care, and the improvements to quality of life that come through electrical power, communications technologies, and transportation infrastructure. To safeguard his country's unique cultural heritage and offset the potential harm caused by development for its own sake, he invoked a little-known economic metric, [Gross National Happiness \(GNH\)](#), as his nation's ultimate yardstick and orienting principle as they opened to international trade and investment. Initially, GNH was broadly defined in four areas: sustainable economic development, preservation and promotion of cultural values, conservation of the environment, and good governance, with a sequence of five year plans designed to meet goals in each area. In the decades following the

king's 1986 decree and corresponding five year plan that established GNH, the nation has become a modern parliamentary democracy and GNH has evolved into a sophisticated, 'warm data,' feedback process that measures 33 indicators under nine domains. Data is collected and analyzed using a robust multidimensional methodology known as Alkire-Foster method.

After running their own experiments with the GNH survey and policy design, Bhutan brought a resolution to the UN General Assembly in 2011, with support from 68 member states, calling for a "holistic approach to development" aimed at promoting sustainable happiness and wellbeing. This was followed in April 2012 by a UN High-Level Meeting on "Happiness and Wellbeing: Defining a New Economic Paradigm" designed to bring world leaders, experts, civil society and spiritual leaders together to develop a new economic paradigm based on sustainability and wellbeing. After decades of internal refinement of this political ideology, Bhutan brought its leadership to the international stage, initiating a critical dialogue that has impacted the development strategies of many other nations and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

International criticism has been levied against the subjective and qualitative nature of measuring happiness, calling into question its validity as a useful metric of progress given how prone individuals are to cognitive bias and self-delusion. To a traditional economist, used to working in terms of balance sheets and purchase power analysis, the experiential approach to this metric may be confronting. And yet, there is ample psychological research that suggests that happiness measures, such as answers to open-ended questions and sociability, relate to biological measures

functioning and observable behaviour (Wood & Boyce, 2017). Furthermore, giving people authority over their own experiences, as opposed to allowing someone else to assert what constitutes a good life, brings a democratisation to the wellbeing agenda.

The structure and design of the GNH survey and strategy point towards a revolutionary political and ethical philosophy, akin to the Buddhist notion of "interbeing," that connects the well-being of self, community, society, and nature. Connecting questions like "Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?" and "How would you describe your sense of belonging to your local community?" with questions like "How would you rate the government's performance in the last twelve months?" and "Do you feel responsible for conserving the natural environment?" - reveals a politics of interconnected thriving that requires each piece of the whole to be healthy and cared for in order for the whole to rise into its fullest potential.

Moving from a fragmented culture of atomized measurements and analysis into a rigorous, holistic and mutually informing framework of well-being is a critical cultural contribution made by the Bhutanese people and government to a world drastically in need of whole systems thinking and a rebirth of our democratic and economic institutions to represent what really matters to humanity. In the space opened by the Bhutanese, a diverse array of similar and additive well-being economy initiatives from South America to Europe have emerged onto the scenes of national and local governments, each informed by its own unique history and a unified commitment to the qualitative experience of being a living human being on planet Earth.



## BUEN VIVIR, GOOD LIVING: AN ANCIENT FUTURE WAY OF BEING

South America has arguably borne the brunt of some of the most vast ecological, social, and political impact of globalization. From the US-backed coup that deposed the Democratically elected socialist president of Chile, Salvador Allende, to the unimaginable destruction of the Amazon Rainforest driven by a global economic system that values a tree more when it's cut down than for its vital contributions to the very oxygen we breathe, South America has suffered vast loss, violence and destruction in the name of development. The trap of natural resource 'rent income', developing a dependency and addiction within the elite business and political class on the money generated from extracting oil, minerals, and trees, makes it difficult for countries to escape the invisible hands of trans-national corporations. Internal conflicts naturally emerge between urban poor and rural indigenous and agriculturalists as urban communities pressure politicians to redistribute the wealth from resource extraction and rural communities fight to preserve their way of life. Relying on the wealth generated by exporting raw materials to buy manufactured goods traps the economic development of these nations from ever crossing the threshold of developing their own national infrastructure or re-investing in the long term well-being of their own people.

**“Not only do human beings have rights, but mother earth should have them too. The capitalist system has made the earth belong to human beings. Now it is time to recognize that we belong to the earth.”**

– Evo Morales,  
Deposed Bolivian President



## POLITICAL RISE

Emerging from this sense of [neo-liberalism](#) as a trap with “no horizon,” political theorists and civil society leaders from across Latin America have contributed an immense amount of thought and praxis for what a “[post-development](#)” or “post-colonial” political economy might be. Amidst the process of reclaiming national sovereignty from trans-national corporations, a reclaiming of indigeneity, indigenous wisdom, and indigenous leadership has emerged in parallel with other socio-political reforms. The first indigenous President of Bolivia, a nation in which 20% of the population identifies as indigenous, Evo Morales was the leader of the country during a [Constitutional Assembly](#), which approved a [new constitution](#). Among many structural reforms, [the new constitution emphasized](#) Bolivian sovereignty of natural resources, forbade foreign military bases in the country, and affirmed every Bolivians’ right to water, food, free health care, education, and housing.

Also enshrined in the landmark new constitution’s section devoted to the ethical and moral principles that define the values and objectives of the state is the concept of ‘Vivir Bien.’ The concept is multicultural, referring to a web of distinct yet connected indigenous cultural concepts like: harmonious living, good life, the land without evil, and the path to noble life. These ideas come from different indigenous cultures (Aymara, Guaraní, and Quechua)



## POLITICAL RISE

**“We hereby decide to build a new form of public coexistence, in diversity and in harmony with nature, to achieve the good way of living.” – Ecuadorian Constitution**

but all are presented together at the same level, without hierarchies. This constellation of indigenous values and principles are linked to other principles like unity, equality, dignity, freedom, solidarity, reciprocity, social and gender equity, social justice, and responsibility. This multi-cultural plurality of ethical and moral foundations are linked to the economic organization of the State. [The Bolivian Constitution](#) introduces an integrative multi-cultural approach to define the objective of its government as increasing quality of life and ensuring the [Vivir Bien](#).

In Ecuador, the concept of Buen Vivir has taken root in a similar constitutional context, with perhaps further reaching implications. While the country struggles with the profound contradiction between Buen Vivir and its massive rainforest oil contracts, Ecuador’s Constitution refers to Buen Vivir as a set of rights, which include the human rights to health, shelter, education, food, environment, and also the rights of Nature. These concepts are drawn directly from the Quechua indigenous people’s concept of [sumak kawsay](#).

The Quechua describe [sumak kawsay](#) as a way of doing things that is community-centric, ecologically-balanced and culturally-sensitive. The indigenous wisdom embedded in the concept contributes a complex worldview to the very notion of well-being and its role in society. [Eduardo Gudynas](#), a senior researcher at the Latin American Center on Social Ecology (CLAES) in Montevideo, Uruguay whose academic and



political work focuses on the environment and alternatives to development, describes the distinction between well-being in a colonized context versus a post-colonial or de-colonized context: “With buen vivir, the subject of wellbeing is not [about the] individual, but the individual in the social context of their community and in a unique environmental situation” ([Buen vivir: the social philosophy inspiring movements in South America](#)). Integrated with the concept of the rights of nature, Ecuador’s constitution emphasizes harmony with the natural living world as an essential part of humanity’s thriving. This powerful shift in perspective constitutes a holistic paradigm shift rather than a shift in economic development strategies alone.

When thinking of how to apply Buen Vivir in production, [Gudynas proposes](#) that businesses “use low levels of raw materials and energy, and [which are] orientated towards regional markets. This would imply a certain disconnection of South America as an exporter of primary commodities for the global economy. It also implies extracting only the amount of natural resources that we need to demand in the continent itself.” [In terms of education](#), “Buen vivir wouldn’t design education programmes as forms of investment in human capital, but rather it would design them so that people become more ilustrados [enlightened]”. Contrasted against the Western environmental notions of [natural capital](#) and bottom-line accounting for the value of Ecosystem Services, Buen Vivir proposes that the rights of nature make owning and extracting from nature an abuse of its rights to exist.

[“If you put a price on nature, then you’re suggesting an ownership of the planet,”](#) Gudynas argues.



“Furthermore, capital is something that is interchangeable between people. But if you destroy the environment, then it’s difficult to rebuild it, which undermines it being interchangeable.”

Late summer of 2015, Ecuador embarked on its most ambitious transition into the Buen Vivir socio-economic model through a project called FLOK Society (which stands for “free, libre, open knowledge” society), a concept taken straight from [Ecuador’s five-year strategic plan called the Plan of Good Living](#), which was first published in 2009. The plan itself provides a path for transitioning away from Ecuador’s extractive, oil-reliant economic model toward one that is based on open and shared knowledge.

Through a collaboration with academics from Ecuador’s post-graduate-focused state school the [IAEN](#), a Quito open-source software company, and Michel Bauwens of the [P2P Foundation](#), a group of international researchers, led by Bauwens, began to outline a vision and policy plan for a radically different Ecuadorian economy, based in shared prosperity, that operates in line with the Buen Vivir worldview and political philosophy. Drawing on the indigenous Quechua traditions of Buen Vivir in Ecuador, Daniel Vazquez, a researcher from IAEN, explains “For us, Sumak Kawsay is a product of Sumak Yachay, which means good knowledge. Shared economic prosperity comes from the sharing of knowledge, effort, and technology. The Plan of Good Living establishes a clear framework for the creation of a peer-to-peer, knowledge-based economy in Ecuador.”

While the [project ended prematurely due to internal conflicts](#) between Ecuadorian civil society, business elites, and the presidential administration, in FLOK’s short life it outlined a truly visionary possibility of how our world might be organized. Imagine a patchwork network of off-grid rural

agrarian and indigenous communities, each with solar power, 3D printing and micro-manufacturing, access to satellite internet, all running cooperatively owned community enterprises that share knowledge, sustainably harvested materials, and finished products with their surrounding villages. No longer reliant on resource extraction to pay to import manufactured goods, Ecuadorians would be empowered to create their own value-added products using local resources and local collective intelligence. This vision represents a powerful integration of the ancient human technologies of village communities and reciprocal exchange networks with futuristic peer-to-peer information technologies like [Holochain](#) and [interoperable distributed governance protocols](#). To [Carlos Prieto, director of IAEN](#), nothing less than a “paradise of knowledge” in Ecuador is needed to “open the necessary political space for designing a set of public policies that will accomplish the political pact underwritten in the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 [ie Buen Vivir].”

While Bolivia and Ecuador’s conceptual and legal contributions to the field of well-being have been vast and visionary, their implementation has been fraught with challenges and hypocrisy. [After failing to convince the international community](#) to pay the Ecuadorian government to keep its Amazonian oil reserves in the ground, in line with the demands of local indigenous communities fighting to preserve the fragile ecosystem, the government [has embarked on an extractivist policy against its own promises and plans](#), disbanded oppositional civil organisations like the [Pachamama Foundation](#), and exerted pressures against critics in the press. According to Bauwens’ [after-action](#)

[report analysis](#) of where the FLOK society project failed, “there is a growing schism between the beautiful and enthusing political programs and principles as expressed in the Constitution and the National Plan, and the actual policies that are often contrary to it, and many of those that believed in these ideas are... losing power and influence. The radical sounding ‘neo-socialist’ language of the government is not matched by structural reforms that go into the direction of anything beyond capitalism. On the contrary, the real policies are essentially redistributionist and actually aim to create better conditions for capitalist development. The poor are less poor, a middle class is being created, but the economic policies do not fundamentally challenge the global political economy. The current direction seems to be towards more adaptation to the demands of the global system. But there is no doubt that the situation of the country and its people has improved.” [Similarly, Bolivia has been fraught with internal conflict between civil society, business, and government actors.](#)

These systemic blocks to the success of an otherwise well-designed and transformational project like FLOK highlight the inescapable interconnectedness of the current global economic paradigm and the colossal influence it holds over sovereign nations that attempt to instantiate a new socio-economic order. This failure and the other forms of governmental failures in Bolivia and Ecuador to live up to the intentions of Buen Vivir point to the [need for a trans-national alliance that could lead to a planetary culture and implementation of the well-being economy.](#)

**“This is a call to ensure that everyone is included, that no one is marginalised. ‘Leave no one behind’ implies that it is the system, our collective institutions and their interactions, which does the ‘leaving’ – not that it is those left behind who are to blame. Taking this system-wide viewpoint enables a conversation about the interconnected nature of people’s opportunities and conceptualisations of development, how they interact with the environment, and how shifts in one sphere have consequences in the other.”**

– Katherine Trebeck,

[A new economy for all – Katherine Trebeck writes for UN Association](#)

## WELLBEING ECONOMY ALLIANCE: WEALL DESERVE A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Founded in 2018, the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll) is a blending of initiatives, building upon the work of organizations and individuals like [ASAP \(the Alliance for Sustainability and Prosperity\)](#); [L4WB \(Leading for Wellbeing\)](#); and [NESI \(New Economy and Social Innovation\)](#). With 100 organisational members and over 50 renowned academics in their network, WEAll is attempting to provide the connective tissue between the different elements of a planetary movement for a wellbeing economy.

At the [OECD World Economic Forum hosted in South Korea in 2018](#), New Zealand, Scotland and Iceland together launched the [Wellbeing Economy Governments \(WEGo\) Alliance](#), with Wales joining in 2020. Linking government leaders, each committed to a new form of holistic populism

that transcends the left/right divide, Wellbeing Economy Governments partnership (WEGo) is a collaboration of national and regional governments promoting sharing of expertise and transferrable policy practices. The aims are to deepen their understanding and advance their shared ambition of building wellbeing economies. Interestingly, with the exception of Wales, all leaders of these jurisdictions are women. Without creating unnecessary meaning from this phenomenon, it does point to perhaps a [third wave feminist approach](#) to inclusion and care within the domain of politics and economics.

Motivated by their participation in the WEGo Alliance, many European nations and local governments are [beginning to establish state budgets](#) and metrics that center around human well-being.

Most notably, the city of Amsterdam announced that its COVID economic response would be guided by the Donut Economics model, initially proposed by Kate Raworth in her 2012 work with OXFAM. The premise of the donut model, while not explicitly linked to the traditions of Bhutan or South American indigenous cultures, relies on similar interlocking levels of well-being at the scales of the individual, community, and society.

#### INTERACTIVE DIAGRAM: Doughnut Economics

The model suggests that human economic pursuits must fall within a 'doughnut' of the foundational quality of life for all people and the environmental ceiling of what the Earth's living systems can sustain. Raworth outlines the environmental ceiling as "nine planetary boundaries, as set out by Rockstrom et al, beyond which lie unacceptable environmental degradation and potential tipping points in Earth systems." The WWF adds that, "these environmental boundaries are set on a planetary scale, which implies we have to respect them collectively". At the lower boundary of the donut are the twelve dimensions of a social foundation as "derived from internationally agreed minimum social standards, as identified by the world's governments in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015." Raworth concludes,

**"between social and planetary boundaries lies an environmentally safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive."**

## **"A healthy economy should be designed to thrive, not grow"**

**– Kate Raworth**  
**Author of *Doughnut Economics***

The model emphasizes the need for a "degrowth" process within wealthy nations due to the trans-national impact and exported consequences of high consumption rates. While degrowth might seem like a tremendous loss to citizens of so-called "developed" nations, research shows that "there is... a negative association between a broad array of types of personal wellbeing and high levels of consumption". And further research, "found that once our basic needs are fulfilled, additional income and consumption growth adds very little to personal and community wellbeing, when compared to non-economic aspects of our lives." Degrowth in this context doesn't mean reducing the quality of life for those in so-called "developed countries," but rather shifting from focusing on the quantity of the economy's output towards focusing on the quality of the "non-economic aspects of our lives," i.e. community, health, education, culture, nature, democracy etc.

Eduardo Gudyanas, the Uruguayan academic and environmentalist cited in the previous section, has called into question the "western" nature of the donut model and its reformist relationship to so-called "sustainable development", yet Raworth could also be seen as a bridge between the Bhutanese,

Ecuadorian, Bolivian, and European well-being economy strategies, a critical step towards the implementation of a trans-national well-being economy.

Similarly, WEAll has attempted to provide a Western, rational-materialist, scientific, and sociological approach to the well-being economy narrative. Their theory of change calls for collaboration in order to create impact, articulating a form of 'togetherness above agreement' that is informed by a shared sense of what a wellbeing economy is.

WEAll agree with aspects of Gudyanas' critique of the unsustainable, unfair, unstable, and unhappy nature of the 'neoliberal'; 'market fundamentalist'; 'overly financialised'; 'extractive'; and 'toxic' dominant economic model, but they have developed their own framework that draws more on Enlightenment ideals of democratic values and classical Liberalism than it does on traditional spiritual or ecological knowledge.

Trebeck describes a wellbeing economy as:

**"a regenerative, collaborative and purposeful economy in service of human and ecological well-being, which aims at meeting the needs of all, rather than the wants of a few." She defines a thriving society as meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."**

WEALL HAVE PROPOSED THE PILLARS OF A WELL-BEING ECONOMY AS:

#### DIGNITY:

Everyone has enough to live in comfort, safety and happiness

#### NATURE:

A restored and safe natural world for all life

#### CONNECTION:

A sense of belonging and institutions that serve the common good

#### FAIRNESS:

A sense of belonging and institutions that serve the common good

#### PARTICIPATION:

Citizens are actively engaged in their communities and locally rooted economies, at the interconnected scales of:

#### PERSONAL WELL-BEING

How a person feels about their own life; often thought of as happiness or life satisfaction of having a good quality of life.

#### COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

What we need to live well locally, within our communities. This goes further than aggregating personal wellbeing, bringing in concepts of social capital and democracy and the quality of the local environment.

#### SOCIETAL WELL-BEING

What we need to live well together as a society, now and into the future. This goes further than personal and community wellbeing by asking us to consider inequalities between people and places, and our responsibility to future generations and our natural environment.

Notably, while the model refers to restoring the natural world and the necessity of ecosystemic health for all levels of well-being, it stops short of the cosmological context of “inter-being” or the rights of nature. Still, it provides a useful tool for traditional Western economists and politicians to begin the transition into a well-being economy. Overall, the transitional measures proposed in many European countries have an [early approval rating](#) that suggests the potential popularity of macroeconomic shifts that support the well-being of all citizens, particularly in the context of COVID response and economic recovery. Groups from diverse socio-economic and political backgrounds are able to find “alignment beyond agreement” through WEAll’s emphasis on human rights, equality and equity, and personal agency.

Promisingly, WEAll’s work seems to be having an impact in the mainstream worlds of media, academia, and international politics.

[Between the Gallup World Happiness Poll, OECD’s Better Life Index, and the New Economics Foundation’s 5 Ways to Wellbeing, the world seems to be waking up to the failures of GDP, the urgent necessity for new values and metrics, and the viability of an economy based on collective well-being.](#)

With the additional scrutiny of the concept on the international stage, combined with the challenges of implementing policies designed to generate community and societal well-being in places that have become

extremely atomized and polarized, important gaps and questions about well-being oriented policies are coming to the surface. These questions include:

- How do we address and reconcile the conflict between a person’s own pursuit of happiness at the potential expense of others’ happiness?
- Is it necessary for some people to be less happy than they otherwise could be, for the good of the whole?
- How might ethnocentric conceptions (the idea that one’s own group is superior) of happiness be used to justify harmful choices that lead to the subjugation of different peoples throughout the world or to environmental degradation?
- How do we account for the effects of our choices that we may not directly see, such as on carbon emissions or on the happiness of future generations?

These unanswered questions point to the challenge and the promise of a world that works for all. Katherine Trebeck’s book, [The Economics of Arrival: Ideas for a Grown Up Economy](#), holds a possibility that the answer to the question of capitalism vs. socialism is actually a matter of growing up as a species and arriving at a world in which our collective potential might be realized. We may disagree on how to create that world, but a revolutionary first step in the journey is realizing we have the common interest and responsibility to optimize our civilization for the well-being of all people and nature. Through indexes like Gross National Happiness, constitutional rights of nature and collective well-being, and awareness of our ecological limitations and social imperatives, we have a foundation upon which to test experiments that might hold the possibility of not only preserving life on earth but creating a thriving planet, economy, and society.

**“A Trimtab moves directly into the currents that oppose it. It actually uses opposition, adversity, and resistance to accomplish its goal. A Trimtab relies on the forces pressing against it to leverage its power. Using opposition in this way is uncommon yet extremely powerful. A few questions now...How do you engage with opposition? What new possibilities might arise if you shift your mindset to embracing resistance instead of fighting it or ignoring it?”**

– Val Jon Harris, [The Power of “Trimtabs”](#):  
[What Bucky Fuller Taught Me About Human Greatness](#)



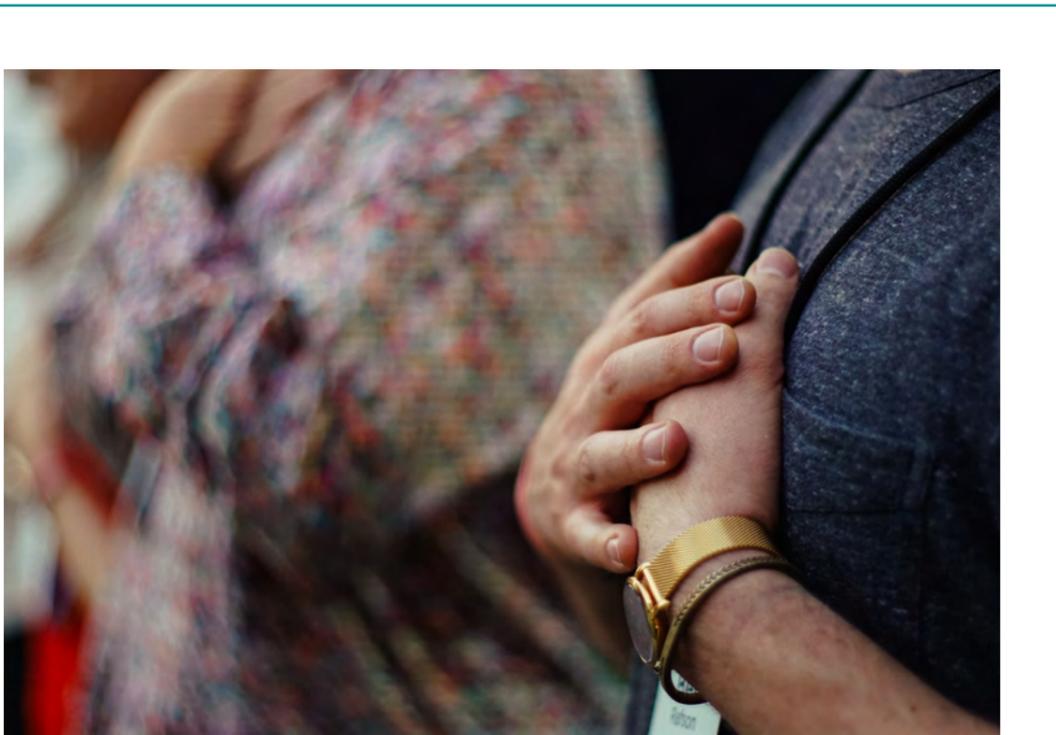
## OUR OPPORTUNITY

Instead of leaning out of politics and economics as we watch our democracies and global supply chains quiver and quake in the face of systemic collapse, we have the opportunity and responsibility to future generations to lean into the most tragically flawed and vitally important aspects of our civilization and reboot the base code that has shaped them into the crumbling behemoths we experience today. Beneath the chaos, confusion, and violence that many can see unfolding in their streets and communities, there is a vision for a thriving world that has the potential to unite all of humanity around a common purpose: a world in which people and nature are free, healthy, and whole. Perhaps this vision is powerful and moving enough to transcend our partisan, cultural, racial and class divides and invite us to come together as a species to define

“What is a good life?” and  
“How do we ensure a good  
life for all?”

Instead of worshipping the religion of the all-mighty dollar, choosing a religion of collective well-being might be the most critical choice any human being, policy maker, or social change advocate can make.

Religion comes from the latin religare, meaning to bind or to return again. Many human beings have been traumatized by religions that have bound them in ways that didn't honor their essential worthiness and humanity, and yet a religion that binds us all together around our shared commitment to our own thriving, to each other's thriving, and to our planet's thriving invites us on an endless journey of refinement towards building a world that works for all. At this dire moment in human history, such a bold, devotional commitment to our most positive future feels both urgently necessary and ultimately fulfilling.



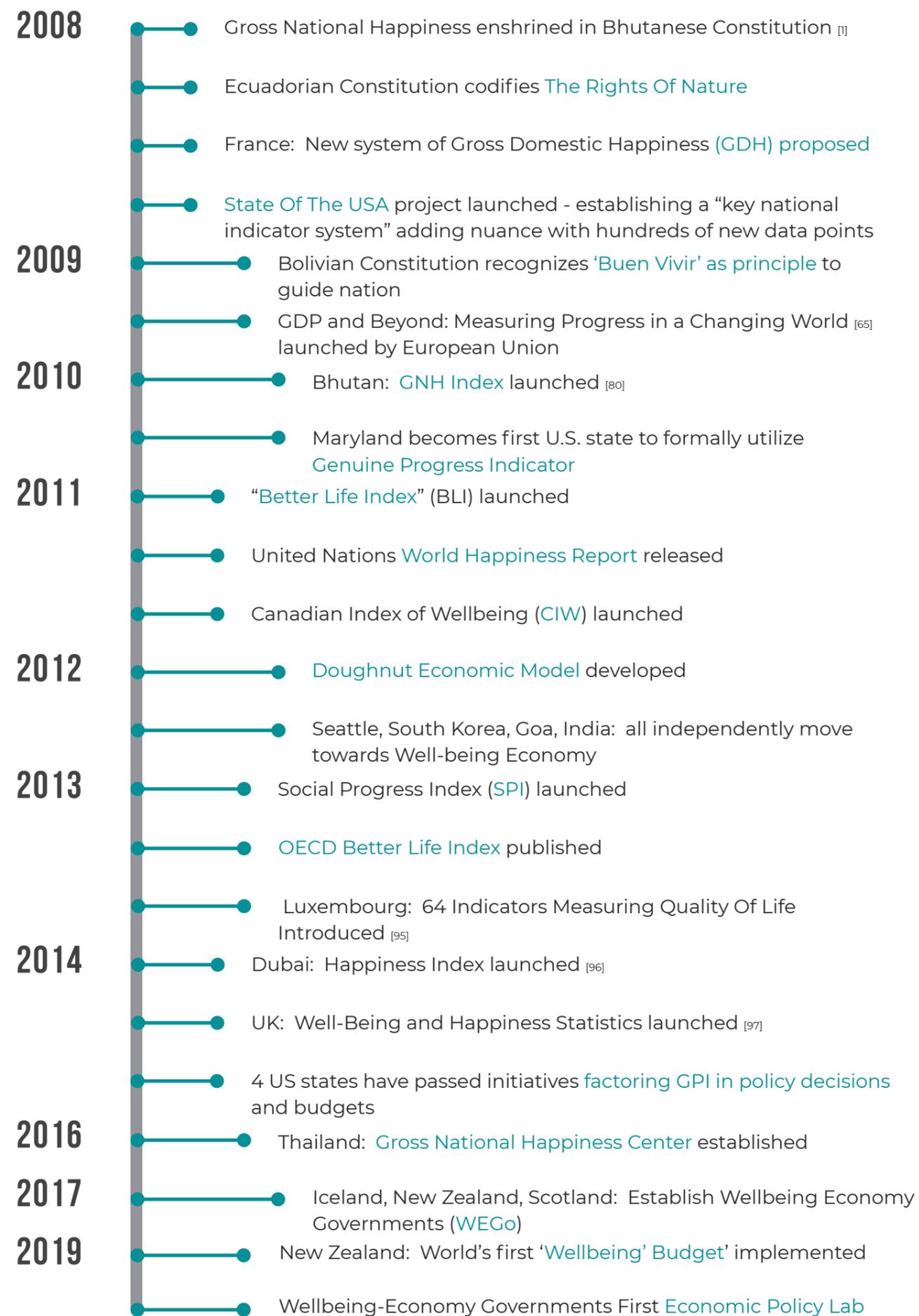
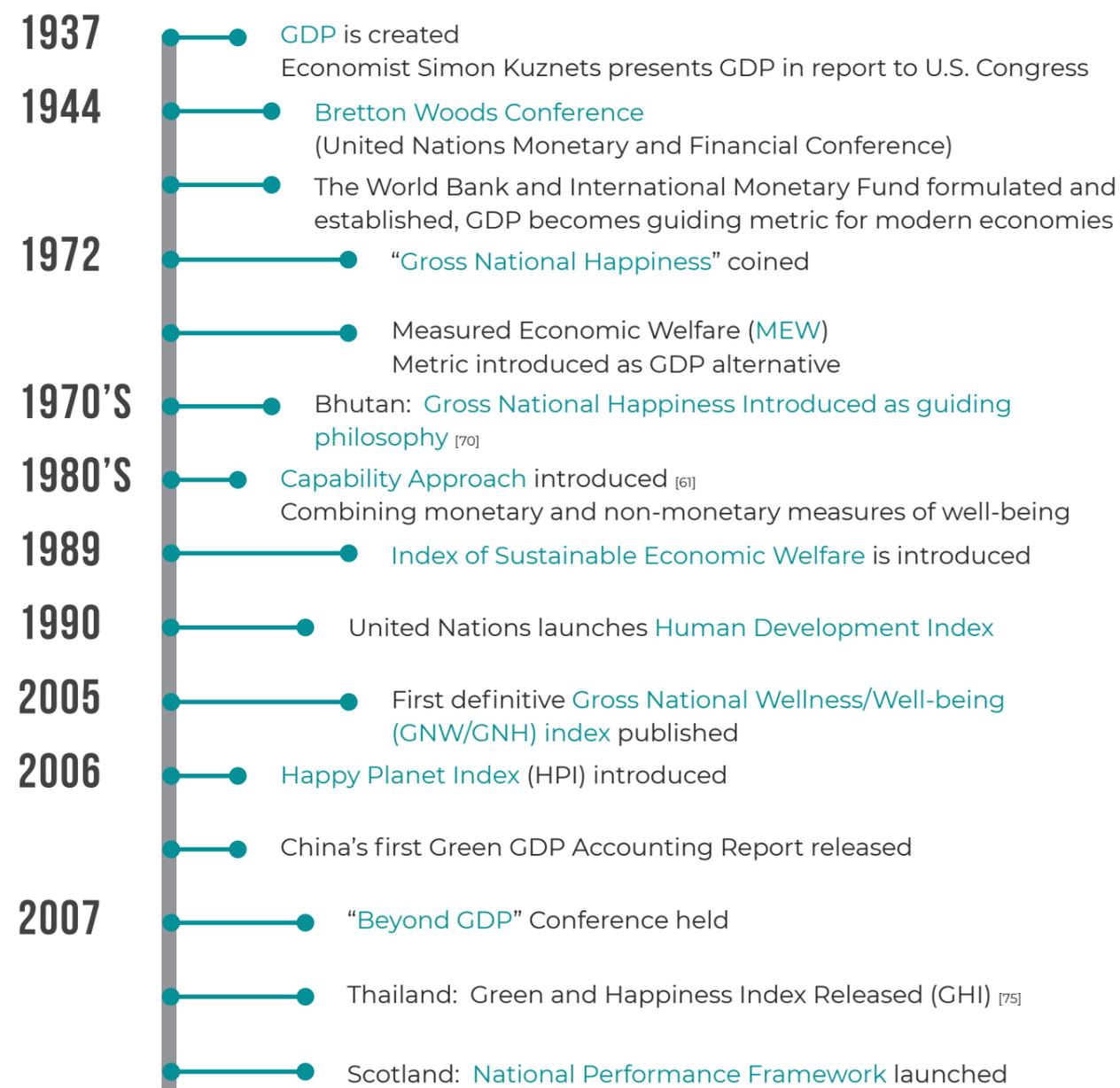
As we each discover our own purpose in service to the whole of humanity and our planet, our lives take on a mythic quality that imbues even the smallest action with a sense of meaning as a critical contribution to something greater than ourselves.

It will truly take all of us, working together, to create an economy that values life as much as our current paradigm seems to value profit. That work begins within each and every one of us as we unwind the ways in which our own sense of worthiness and security has been connected to our productivity within a GDP-centric economy. But as we define what truly matters to us and we begin to organize with others who share those values, the choices we make as individuals, communities, neighborhoods, and bioregions will send ripples across the economy as a whole. As we each take actions that improve our quality of life with an awareness of the quality of life the whole, we take the small yet necessary steps towards a world in which all can thrive.

Our present crises can be the catalyst that drives a renaissance in new civic and religious cultures of wholeness, belonging, and well-being of our world. A world in which all have enough, a world in which we all feel connected to a meaningful purpose greater than ourselves, a world in which our families, communities, and nature are safe and thriving is within reach if we each choose to create it.



# TIMELINE: HISTORY OF THE WELL-BEING ECONOMY



2020

- Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels Region: adopt Doughnut model for shaping post-COVID-19 recovery
- UK's Women's Equality Party adopts Doughnut Economics as Official Economic Policy

**Distinctions must be kept in mind between quantity and quality of growth, between costs and returns, and between the short and long run. Goals for more growth should specify more growth of what and for what.**

– Simon Kuznets (1962)

**“What we measure informs what we do. And if we’re measuring the wrong thing, we’re going to do the wrong thing.”**

– Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz



**We shall overcome because somehow the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice... No lie can live forever... Truth crushed to earth will rise again.**  
– Martin Luther King Jr. (1967)



# KEY PLAYERS OF THE WELL-BEING ECONOMY

Researcher, SanShin Russell

From space travel to poetry, humans with vision and devotion shape our world. We wanted to know who were the key people shaping the emergence of this world-wide well-being economy. We are honored to acknowledge these 14 leaders, amongst many others, who are playing formative roles to ensure we create a human civilization that puts quality of life at the center.

**“Modern challenges demand new economic thinking”**

– Katrín Jakobsdóttir

## JACINDA ARDERN

- Prime Minister of New Zealand
- Founding Member [Wellbeing Economy Governments](#)
- Head of the first country to release a budget explicitly centered around the well-being approach
- Ranked 2nd Greatest World Leader by Fortune Magazine Recent landslide re-election by over 20%
- Introduced World's First 'Wellbeing Budget'

- RESOURCES
- [New Zealand Ditches GDP For Happiness And Wellbeing](#)
  - [New Zealand is focusing on the well-being of its people, not just economic growth](#)
  - [Politics And Economics To Focus On Empathy, Kindness and Well-Being](#)

## DR. KATHERINE TREBECK

- Advocacy & Influencing Lead - [Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#)
- Founding Member - [Wellbeing Economy Governments](#)
- Author - [The Economics of Arrival: Ideas for a Grown-Up Economy](#)

- RESOURCES
- [Ted Talk: Why the Future Economy has to be a Wellbeing Economy](#)

## KATE RAWORTH

- Economist, Creator of [Doughnut Economic Model](#)
- Author of [Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist](#)

- RESOURCES
- [TED Talk: Doughnut Economics](#)

## NICOLA STURGEON

- First Minister - Scotland
- Founding Member - [Wellbeing Economy Governments](#)

- RESOURCES
- [Ted Talk - Why Governments Should Prioritize Well-Being Quote](#)

## KATRÍN JAKOBSDÓTTIR

- Prime Minister - Iceland
- Founding Member - [Wellbeing Economy Governments](#)
- Introduced [Icelandic Wellbeing Framework](#)
- [Iceland puts well-being ahead of GDP in budget](#)
- [39 indicators](#) Covering Social, Economic and Environmental Dimensions of Quality of Life

## LORENZO FIORAMONTI

- Former Minister of Education - Italy
- Founding Director - [Center for the Study of Governance Innovation](#)
- Author of: [Wellbeing Economy The World After GDP How Numbers Rule the World Gross Domestic Problem](#)

## CHUCK MAROHN

- Founder and President - [Strong Towns](#) “Working to stop bad development practices and help make cities and neighborhoods more livable, sustainable, and prosperous.”
- 1 of 10 most influential urbanists of all time
- Author of: [Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity](#)

**“We’re embedding that notion of making decisions that aren’t just about growth for growth’s sake, but how are our people faring?” Ardern said. “How is their overall well-being and their mental health? How is our environment doing? These are the measures that will give us a true measure of our success.”**

– Jacinda Ardern



#### DESTA MEBRATU

- Professor, Founder, CEO - [ATLAS](#) in Ethiopia  
“Promoting and supporting transformational change in African development landscape”
- Sustainable Infrastructure Development
- Sustainable Resource Management
- Inclusive Green Industry
- Distributed Renewable Economy

#### JANELLE ORSI

- Lawyer, advocate, writer, and cartoonist focused on cooperatives, the sharing economy, land trusts, shared housing, local currencies, and rebuilding the commons
- Co-Founder, Executive Director - Sustainable Economies Law Center ([SELC](#)) “Facilitating the growth of more sustainable and localized economies through education, research, and advocacy.”
- [Ashoka Fellow](#)
- Author of: [Practicing Law in the Sharing Economy: Helping People Build Cooperatives, Social Enterprise, and Local Sustainable Economies, and Sharing Lawyer’ Carves Out Niche Leveraging Community](#)

#### EDUARDO GUDYNAS

Senior Researcher - [Latin American Center on Social Ecology](#)

- RESOURCES
- [Is doughnut economics too Western?](#)
  - [Contribution to a Roundtable on Vivir Bien](#)
  - [Buen vivir: the social philosophy inspiring movements in South America](#)
  - [Value, Growth, Development: South American Lessons for a New Ecopolitics](#)



#### ALBERTO ACOSTA

- Economist, Former Minister of Energy and Mining - Ecuador
- Ex-president - Constituent Assembly That Created Montecristi Constitution, [Ratifying The Rights Of Nature](#)

- RESOURCES
- [Post-Growth and Post-Extractivism: Two Sides of the Same Cultural Transformation](#)
  - [Living Well: ideas for reinventing the future](#)



#### AYABONGA CAWE

- Recent Appointee - South Africa’s Economic Advisory Council
- Development Economist, Columnist, Radio Presenter, Photographer, Activist

- RESOURCES
- [A Human Economy is Possible](#)



#### LEBOHANG LIEPOLLO PHEKO

- Senior Research Fellow - [Trade Collective](#)
- Board Member - [International Network on Migration and Development](#)
- Board Member - [Association of African Trade Practitioners](#)
- Deputy Convener, Founding Member - [Pan African Network in Defence of Migrant Rights](#)

- RESOURCES
- [Lebohang Pheko on Economic Strategy Blueprint](#)



#### TSHERING TOBGAY

- Former Prime Minister - Bhutan
- President - [People’s Democratic Party](#)

- RESOURCES
- [TED Talk: Happiness Matters](#)
  - [TED Talk: This country isn’t just carbon neutral, it’s carbon negative](#)

**“In this new economy, people will be productive by performing activities that enhance the quality of life of their peers and the natural ecosystems in which they live. If not for moral reasons, they should do so for genuine self-interest: there is nothing more rewarding than creating well-being for oneself and society.”**

– Lorenzo Fioramonti

## The Culture of Inquiry

# WELLBEING ECONOMY INQUIRY PROCESS

One of the key principles of the Political Rise is 'inquiry.' Inquiry as a Political Rise term means to 'perpetually expand our field of awareness and understanding by earnestly investigating what we think we already know, what we know we don't yet know, and what is completely unknowable to us up until now.' Inquiry is the opposite of asserting an opinion as it humbly and wisely acknowledges what is not yet known, and seeks to receive information, perspectives and insights that improve one's accurate relatedness to reality. Inquiry is more than just asking a question. It's an orientation that helps us stay open to and pursue new possibilities, novel contexts, and the emergence of higher order synthesis.

Our human civilization is an unfathomably vast complex system that requires a perpetual culture of inquiry to reliably expand our appreciation and understanding of it. Only through this holistic and perpetually refining process can we even begin to understand the problems and opportunities humanity is faced with at this critical junction in our species' journey of collective maturation.

The Political Rise magazine will regularly reinforce a culture of inquiry in each issue by stating a list of some driving questions left unanswered in the issue that we must all

continue to explore together as we journey into an unprecedented yet inherently self-determined future.

We hope that you take these questions to heart from our Well-Being Economy Inquiry Process and play a role in helping to answer them over the course of your lifetime. Exploring humanity's collective potential will require all of us to participate in generating an ongoing ecosystem of questions that will guide our shared journey into our best possible future.

We also encourage you to practice the inquiry process on your own, in any aspect of your life you are seeking to understand better, to make the best decisions and inform the most effective path forward. Simply start with a root question. Then on your own, or preferably with a group of collaborators, ask all the next most relevant questions

## ROOT QUESTION:

### WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO CREATE A WORLD-WIDE ECONOMY THAT REVOLVES AROUND WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE?

that would be needed to answer the root question. Continue asking questions, either related to the new sub-questions you generate or the original root question, until you feel complete. Through deep listening, which always involves being moved and changed by someone else's contributions, a collective intelligence or collective flow state is possible. An inquiry process IS NOT about answering the questions. It is about perpetually discovering the questions needed to answer the previous questions which reliably illuminates your field of further investigation by revealing the domains of what is relevant and not yet known.

Arrange those questions visually by topic and you have an inquiry tree.

Asking the right question could shift the trajectory of your life, and all life on earth.

## WHAT IS A WELL-BEING ECONOMY?

What are the features that make up a well-being economy?

What are the activities that make up a well-being economy?

What are the roles of people and organizations within a well-being economy?

## WHAT INCENTIVES WILL BEST DRIVE THE EMERGENCE OF A WELL-BEING ECONOMY?

What is the role of money in a well-being economy?

What are the best non-monetary incentives that will align people's behaviours and aspirations with the emergence of a world-wide well-being economy?

What types of behaviours do we want to disincentivize in a well-being economy and what are the best ways to disincentivize them?

How do we incentivize existing power brokers to participate in, and not against, the emergence of a worldwide well-being economy?

## HOW DO OUR POLITICAL SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND PARADIGMS NEED TO SHIFT IN ORDER TO ENABLE A NEW ECONOMIC PARADIGM AND MODELS THAT REVOLVE AROUND QUALITY OF LIFE TO EMERGE?

What policies can be implemented that have the highest leverage impact on shifting into a well-being economy?

What type of leadership is needed by candidates and those in elected office to enable this shift?

What changes to political culture would enable a well-being economy to emerge?

What is the relationship between personal freedom and collective accountability /enforcement of a well-being economy?

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF MEDIA AND ART IN THE EMERGENCE OF A WELL-BEING ECONOMY?

What societal narratives will best enable and inspire this shift to occur?

How do we fuel the inspiration of supporters, and activate the inspiration of skeptics, to share a vision of a positive future with an economy that revolves around quality of life?

## HOW DO WE PRACTICALLY ROLL OUT A WELL-BEING ECONOMY WORLDWIDE?

What are the best local experiments we can run in order to learn about the principles, ideals and assumptions with a well-being economy?

What is the role of government, of the private sector, of academia, of activists and the non-profit sector, of the general public in the emergence, cultivation, and sustaining of an economy that revolves around well-being and quality of life?

What is the role of business education in the transition towards a well-being economy?

What are the best existing experiments with a well-being economy and what can we learn from them?

What is the role of grassroots organizing, government leadership and the relationship between the two to roll out a worldwide economic transformation?

## ROOT QUESTION:

# WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO CREATE A WORLD-WIDE ECONOMY THAT REVOLVES AROUND WELLBEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE?

## HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS TRANSITIONING FROM A PROFIT-DRIVEN ECONOMY TO A WELL-BEING ECONOMY?

What are the best indicators and metrics of a well-being economy?

What are the stages of developing a well-being economy and the milestones that depict those stages we can articulate and pursue to verify we are making progress?

How do we measure the quality of lived experience, and what are the indicators of quality of life?

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PERSONAL CHANGE IN THE EMERGENCE OF A WELL-BEING ECONOMY?

What do we need to let go of, grieve and release in order to participate in the emergence of a global well-being economy?

What education is most needed for children, and adults, that enable this shift to occur?

How do we heal from the trauma of violence and pain we have experienced having been born into a world that did not prioritize our quality of life?

How do we increase our value for the experience of being alive?

How do we cultivate a well-being economy in our own lives, families and communities?

What lifestyle transitions are most impactful in enabling the transition into, and experience within, a well-being economy?

How do we overcome addictions, norms and expectations firmly established by economic systems that do not revolve around well-being?

# SEEDING OUR THRIVING FUTURE

POLITICAL RISE COMMENTARY ABOUT US INDEPENDENT  
NATIONAL UNION PROPOSAL



Power is the ability to make a decision that is implemented. While the Political Rise is devoted to listening, peaceful dialogue and human thriving, these principles are meaningless without real power. To advance the interests of our collective well-being, the Political Rise is committed to the full integration of love and power.

**“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”**

- Martin Luther King Jr.

As interested as The Political Rise is in loving systems, practices, and cultures, it is also very interested in power. Power is how we prevent further harm and how we deploy our visions of a thriving future. And sometimes, in the course of strengthening creative, loving, life-affirming power, we need to make conscious choices to claim the power others have previously controlled.

Political Rise magazine is publishing a proposal for an Independent National Union (INU) in the United States as the first instance of a segment we're calling 'Seeding Our Thriving Future.' The purpose of this segment is to seed the patterns

that we feel will be necessary to grow into large scale endeavors that advance the systemic well-being of all. We chose the INU as our first seed pattern because it manifests how we can use the principles of the Political Rise to organize in new ways that enable transfer of power to independent leaders, without systemic ulterior motives, dedicated to governing aligned with the principles of the Rise.

The Left-Right narrative has been used to deeply manipulate Americans and people around the world by pitting citizens against each other, many of whom are suffering from the same injustices and class subjugation. Leveraging intentionally polarized topics of social and economic ideology, our systems of power and governance have been captured by interests that would rather keep citizens fighting each other than empower them with the perspective or capacity to directly confront the systems of power that are controlling them.

In the US, this ideological control based in right/wrong, good/evil duality thinking has enabled a corrupt two-party system to maintain overwhelming control over the American government—abusing its power to benefit private interests and neglecting the issues that matter most to Americans.

We can see that this Left-Right divide, has not only limited people's creative political thinking, it has resulted in dire political conditions that have enabled systemic collusion and pervasive carnage in the forms of widespread violence, disease, imprisonment, depression and all forms of heart-breaking tragedies resulting from a society that is not designed to generate well-being for all.

The movement off the Left-Right spectrum and upwards toward the Political Rise enables new types of political organizing that can quite literally change the world. This paradigm is a conceptual landscape that enables the unification of groups previously separate because of perceived incompatible ideologies. The Political Rise is the space in which those with diverse ideological perspectives can find inherent common ground and understanding. The Political Rise is a domain in which each participant can maintain their personal values while working together to achieve critical collaborative successes they could never achieve on their own.

What follows is a proposal for a US Independent National Union intended to actualize these principles of unity, holism and integration of diverse perspectives within practical and profound capacities for political organizing. This template is designed to build the political power needed to create a society premised in liberty and quality of life for all.

## US INDEPENDENT NATIONAL UNION

### EXPLORATORY OVERVIEW

#### CHALLENGE

Pervasive depression and chronic disease, mass incarceration, international violence, ecocide, homelessness and poverty, addiction and political disengagement are just the beginning of the evidence that points to the US two-party system's failure to produce a thriving society. Not only is it missing the mark through incompetence, it seems as though it is also functioning through intentional design to support private interests in systematically extracting life and value from people and nature like a parasitic tyrant, controlling and exploiting the world, through the United States government, for personal gain. The legal, media and cultural strategies the two-party system uses to defend its position are extremely powerful and have ensured its immovability for many decades.

A range of political actors independent from the two-party system have emerged as alternatives, working for decades to build political influence, however their electoral results are still negligible compared to the two-party system. Working in silos, against each other, these independent political networks have had limited financial resources, organizing power, press attention and voter support.



There is no other way to liberate the United States government from hegemonic control of the two-party system than for the fragmented independent networks to unite culturally and electorally to enable the concentration of political power behind [one independent candidate per election seat](#).

We are presented with an opportunity to replay the American myth of E Pluribus Unum - Out of Many, One. As the colonies came together to defeat their last tyrant, King George, we independent political actors in the US must now come together to defeat our modern, two-headed tyrant to restore the original promise of American—Life, Liberty and Happiness—and enable a new American era to emerge.

### OPPORTUNITY

A union of independent networks and citizens would enable a new type of political organizing in the US—an internal nomination process to determine the best one independent candidate for any given seat and the alignment to organize concentrated support behind that one candidate to increase the chances of an election outcome. This is intended to systematically move power away from the two-party system by electing leaders independent from it and ready to accelerate critical systemic transformations in health, economics and within our democracy itself.

This paper is proposing the formation of an Independent National Union with the expressed purpose of conducting a primary nomination process for election seats nationwide outside of the two-party system. There are more registered independents than members of either major party and the US electorate has been waiting for the confidence to have their ballot choice reflect their voter registration. We can create that confidence and engagement from the US electorate through unification. We will inspire our fellow Americans by showing our ability to set aside personal agendas for a collective benefit and come into alignment as diverse actors.

Beyond facilitating the local and national nomination processes, the INU will also aim to:

- build relationships of trusts between independent networks,
- enact various strategies to build confidence and engagement in Independent politics from the US electorate,
- recruit, vett, train and empower optimal independent candidates,
- strategize races for maximum chance of an outcome,
- produce media and content that educates, inspires, and activates increased civic engagement from Americans



### PARADIGM

If our only ideological options were Left and Right, the idea of an independent national union is impossible because groups associated with far right or far left would always default to supporting the left or right leaning major party because of an inaccurate assessment of greater alignment with one of the major parties than their fellow independent networks.

Along with the vision of an independent union, we are also offering a vision of a new political paradigm. The 'Political Rise,' is a new domain of political organizing that has a distinct set of ideological features from the Left and Right including principles such as:

- integration of diverse perspectives to produce better holistic understanding
- unification of broad-spectrum stakeholders with diverse interests to create greater opportunities for all than anyone could create for themselves
- a devotion to affirming the dignity and increasing quality of life for all
- listening, understanding, empathy, authenticity and good-faith dialogue
- self-imposed transparency, accountability and integrity
- deep inquiry, improved sense-making and ensuring healthy information ecologies
- personal cultivation, growth and embodiment of political ideals

This new domain, the Political Rise, enables people to let go of their position on the ever-divisive Left-Right continuum and rise into a new domain of political organizing in which we can and must integrate our diverse perspectives to create better outcomes together.

All are invited into the Political Rise, bringing everything that matters so much to us while abandoning the inherent divisiveness, judgement and systemic knee-jerk polarization that has become normalized through the pervasive belief that we have to fight 'the other side' to get what we need. The Political Rise is the ideological landscape in which we can find each other and that will enable a US independent union to function and thrive.

### METHODOLOGY

There are two aspects of the methodology this article seeks to portray. The first is how the INU organization itself could function and the second is how the INU org could then run independent nomination processes.

## Independent National Union Governance

The INU will be composed of three specific bodies that enable the capacity to run independent primary processes—the Executive Committee, the INU Congress and the Membership.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The INU Executive Committee is the central organizing body that manages day-to-day affairs of the INU. This Executive Committee also oversees the assembling of the INU Congress and INU Membership. The committee is responsible for revenue generation as well as the budget. The committee is overseen by a co-director pair, elected by the INU membership and overseen by the INU Congress. The remaining positions in the Executive Committee would be staff positions, hired/ appointed and overseen by the co-directors. Co-directors run together on one ticket in a general INU integrated election process every four years.

### INU CONGRESS

The INU Congress is the body of representatives that ensure various existing parties, networks, groups and communities are represented well in the INU sense-making and decision-making processes. Congress members will be invited by the Executive Committee based upon qualitative assessment of indicators including a) depth of commitment to independent politics, b) depth of influence within their respective groups, c) depth of interest in INU participation, d) depth of alignment and representation of diverse perspectives. INU Congress members are intended to expand the INU Membership network by inviting the individuals in their respective groups to register as INU Members. The INU Congress will inform which races the INU participates in, help engage stakeholders and groups in the INU nomination process and help direct maximum united campaign power behind the INU nominee for any given election race. The INU Congress will also hold the INU Executive Committee accountable to transparency, accountability, integrity and fulfilling their purpose in progressing the mission of the INU.

### INU MEMBERSHIP

INU Membership is available to all US citizens. INU Members participate in the INU nomination processes and the INU Executive Committee elections. INU Members are intended to serve as a support base of the INU nominee in their general election. Members will have opportunities to contribute to the INU sense-making and intelligence through various input channels and are intended to help expand the INU Membership network.

## INDEPENDENT NATIONAL UNION INTEGRATED NOMINATION PROCESS

The intent of the INU Integrated Nomination Process is to support a collection of diverse independent candidates and networks to coalesce into one independent candidate with one independent campaign for any given election seat in which the INU Integrated Nomination Process is deployed. This includes an integration of quantitative and qualitative inputs from INU Members, as well as collective sense-making processes intended to help the best candidate become as universally self-evident as possible to maintain cohesion within the INU and to generate maximum engagement and support for that specific general election behind the INU Nominee.

### 1 DETERMINE RACE

Accountable to the INU Congress's informed suggestions, the Executive Committee will determine which races to engage in based upon various factors including resources available, national political climate, local political climate, likelihood of an outcome, quality of candidates, etc. Once it is determined that an INU Integrated Nomination Process will be run for a given race, this will be announced to the INU Congress and INU Membership.

### 2 PROMOTE ENGAGEMENT

Once a race is determined, an INU Race Committee will be established to oversee the INU Integrated Nomination Process as well as support the subsequent general election. The first role of the INU Race Committee will be to promote the INU Integrated Nomination Process within the jurisdiction of the seat to maximize engagement from existing networks, influencers, potential candidates, INU Members and the remainder of the electorate.

### 3 CANDIDATE REGISTRATION

All candidates interested in participating in the INU Integrated Nomination Process with the potential of being the INU Nominee must complete a registration form prior to a given deadline providing information around background, intent, existing campaign resources, commitment to good-faith participation, commitment to integrus government stewardship and a commitment to support whoever the INU Nominee is, in order to create an independent electoral outcome. All candidate registrations will be reviewed by the INU Race Committee and qualifying candidates will be invited into the INU Integrated Nomination Process.

### 4 BASELINE NOMINATION ROUND

The INU Members relative to a race in which an INU nomination process is conducted, will cast their initial standard vote for one candidate and indicate through checkboxes their justification for selecting this nominee. The intent of this first round is to reveal the existing support any given nominee has and the meaning voters ascribe to their support.

### 5 PROPOSAL-GENERATING NOMINATION ROUND

After hearing from candidates and being informed of the existing support and justifications behind that support from the Baseline Nomination Round, voters will now have a better understanding of the candidate options, their alignment with, and the electability of, various candidates enabling voters to make a more informed vote. This second round of voting is a Rank-Choice-Vote style vote, plus justification data via checkboxes, intended to reveal, from an educated and empowered electorate, the best candidate with the most support.

### 6 PROPOSAL & CONVERSATION ROUND

Subsequent to the Proposal-Generating Nomination round, The INU Race Committee will propose the INU Nominee. Through various digital and physical mediums created by the Race Committee, INU Members will have the ability to ask clarifying questions about the proposed candidate, and make reactions or objections to the proposal.

### 7 MODIFY OR RESTATE PROPOSAL

Integrating the collective sense-making of the Proposal & Conversation Round, the Race Committee will either modify their proposal or restate their existing one with further justification. If modified, another Proposal & Conversation Round will ensue. If restated, then that candidate will become the INU Nominee.

### 8 INU INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN FOR INU NOMINEE

All INU Members, INU Congress Members and INU Candidates who participated in the Integrated Nomination Process are invited, encouraged and expected to participate in an integrated campaign, working diligently to produce an electoral outcome with the INU Nominee.

#### ROLLOUT

The INU need not be declared into existence with fanfair nor demand enrollment, alignment or compliance. If the ideas behind the INU have merit, then that merit will become self evident through experimentation. The INU can naturally grow into its potential, as a national political union shaping all US elections, from the seed and sprout of early experimentation generating lessons learned, successes experienced, credibility gained, exposure expanded, legitimacy increased, relationships cultivated and confidence in the process increased.

#### 2021 MAYORAL RACE EXPERIMENTS

In 2021 we intend to run our first experiments through several Mayoral races. In these experiments we intend to learn about each of our 8 proposed steps in our nomination process in order to refine the process to improve efficacy and prepare it to function more reliably, in a more automated fashion, supported by technology, and at larger scales.

#### 2022 STATE / NATIONAL RACE EXPERIMENTS

If we are ready to run larger experiments in 2022, we can select one, or multiple, legislative or gubernatorial races to practice the INU Integrated Nomination Process on larger scales. This will produce new learnings and insights that improve our effectiveness to work at those scales as well as prepare to operate on larger scales.

#### 2023 ADDITIONAL PRACTICE & PREPARATION

In 2023 we can identify the key areas of learning we still seek and the US politics we intend to directly influence, and use that assessment to inform the activities of the INU and the number, types and location of races we choose to participate in that year.

#### 2024 INC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE

Depending on the results of our experiments, the scale of our influence, the depth of trust in our relationships, the size of our organization and the resources we have access to, the INC may run a national Integrated Nomination Process for independent candidates for President. If successful, we stand the potential of uniting the entire Independent sector of Americans behind a single Independent Candidate which could liberate the US Executive Branch from two-party control, enabling a new era in America to emerge.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide a non-comprehensive list of additional considerations regarding the formation of the Independent National Union.

### APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

What modern or historical, successful or failed attempts to achieve something similar can we learn from?

### MEMBERSHIP

What cultural norms, orientation and skills are required for members to effectively participate in the INU nomination processes?

### TECHNOLOGY

What technology solutions are most relevant for the early INU experiments?

### CANDIDATES

What are all the inherent types of values that candidates and networks can receive by participation in the INU and our nomination process?

What characteristics and attributes of candidates are most important at this time and how can we best identify candidates who already embody them and/or uplevel existing candidates through education and training?

### CAMPAIGNS

What are the best ways to involve as many of the independent candidates as possible in any given race into the INU Integrated Nomination Process?

What are the best ways to effectively engage as much of the electorate as possible in our initial nomination process experiments?

How can we generate the best unified campaign and Independent voter turnout for the INU Nominee? What mistakes might limit, reduce or decrease engagement?

### STRATEGIC INQUIRY

What are the most efficient, highest-leverage actions the founding team can take to generate the support and experiences necessary to increase the probability of actualizing the INU from concept to reality?

## UNITY

How can we create a binding force within an INU nomination process that will create ease in candidate selection and enthusiastic support and coherence amongst the nomination candidates, and the respective networks they represent, to back one campaign that results in an election outcome?

What will be the biggest hurdles creating alignment among people with diverse political interests?

What explicit or implicit power dynamics could negatively impact our vision of unity and how can those dynamics be addressed in a way that leaves everyone feeling respected and empowered?

How might unconscious personal fears, traumas and prejudices undermine unity?

What are the principles and behaviours that Members, Congress Members and Candidates must align with, in order to support coherence and unity?

What are all the expected or unexpected sources of resistance to the formation of the INU and the running of our Integrated Nomination Process?

What narratives and modes of storytelling will generate maximum positive engagement?

## YOUR ROLE

You are invited to play a role in the exploration and formation of an Independent National Union.

### KEEP ORGANIZING

The emergence of the INU ideas and experimentation takes nothing away from existing independent organizing. In fact, it further justifies it. In order for the INU to be successful, it needs to interface with existing political networks with coherent values, interest, candidates and leadership. Keep organizing, empowering and building trust with the groups and communities you naturally align with.

### PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Please provide feedback on this exploratory overview. What opportunities do you know about that you can share with the INU research team? What concerns do you have? What fail scenarios can you predict? What nuances, distinctions and insights can you offer to increase the probability of success? Do you endorse these notions and the proposed trajectory of experiments and rollout?

### GET INVOLVED & SUPPORT

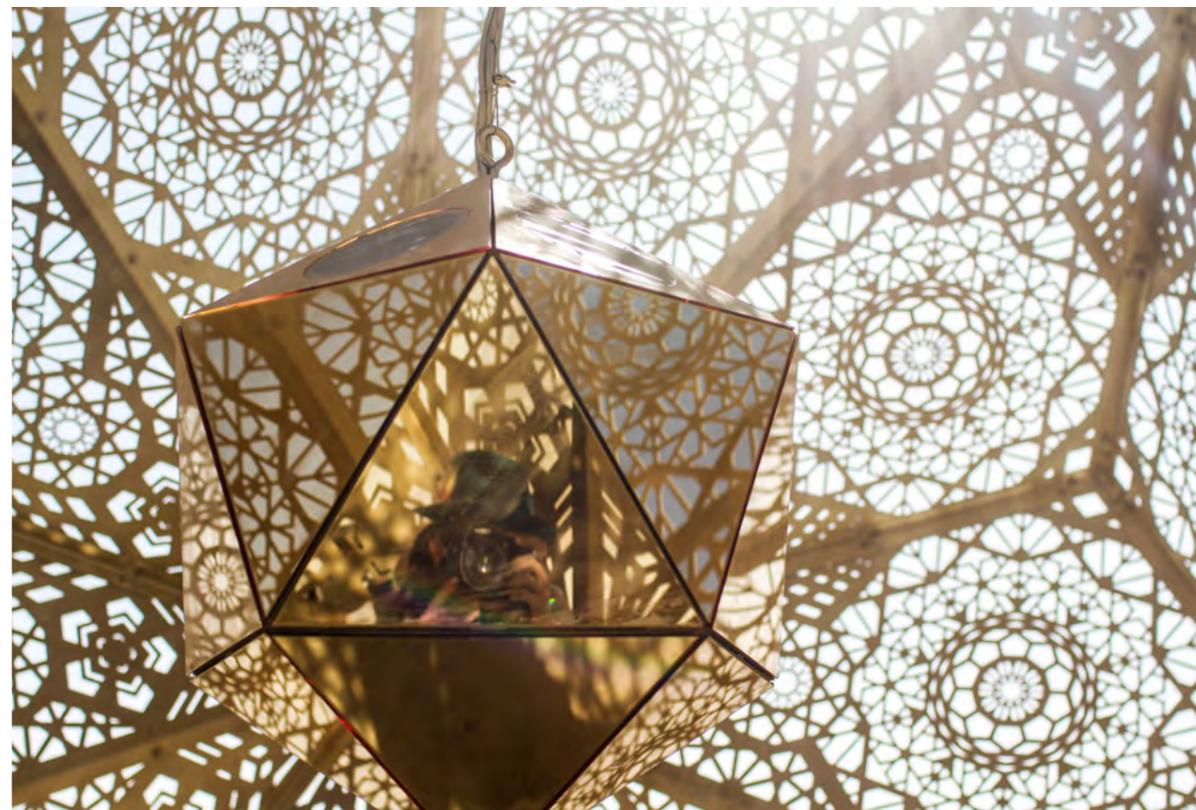
Consider getting involved to play a role with the formation of the INU, suggesting yourself as an INU Congress Member, offering funding or other material support, or stepping forward to play a role in one of our proposed 2021 experiments.

Writer, **ChristopherLife**

If you would like to get involved with the formation of the INU, email [all\\_in@christopherlife.one](mailto:all_in@christopherlife.one)

One of the most distinct features of the Political Rise is creativity. As creators of our world, it's up to us to imagine, envision, and actualize a world that is beautiful, fair, and free. Classical philosophers of the distant past believed that the three transcendent aspects of humanity were our search for truth, goodness, and beauty. Our scientific methods tell us with increasingly narrow accuracy what we know to be true about our world; our religions assert a dogmatic claim on what is good; but our civilization's orientation around what is beautiful is left to fringe members of society who often struggle to get by, living in warehouses and other forgotten, abandoned corners of our decaying urban spaces. All the while, our skyscrapers look like identical blocks of glass and steel, our cities often gentrify with an aesthetic that looks the same whether you're in Austin, TX, or Venice Beach, CA. Our rural communities are an endless drag

# ACTIVATING



of stripmalls, and our suburbs sprawl across McMansion developments. What is lost when our creative impulse towards beauty is ignored and disregarded as excessive or unnecessary? Might a civic renaissance of the Political Rise also be a renaissance of beauty? Systemic structural changes to our education, food, healthcare, and economic systems can't happen without deep cultural changes that drive our care for the whole of humanity.

Artists have always served a vital social function, inspiring us to imagine beyond our current circumstances and use the materials around us to leave the world more beautiful than we found it. Whether creating music that uplifts and heals the soul, or painting murals on the sides of community centers, artists access intuitive and trained capacities to reveal hidden harmonies in color, light, and sound that texture and enliven our world.

# THE ARTISTS

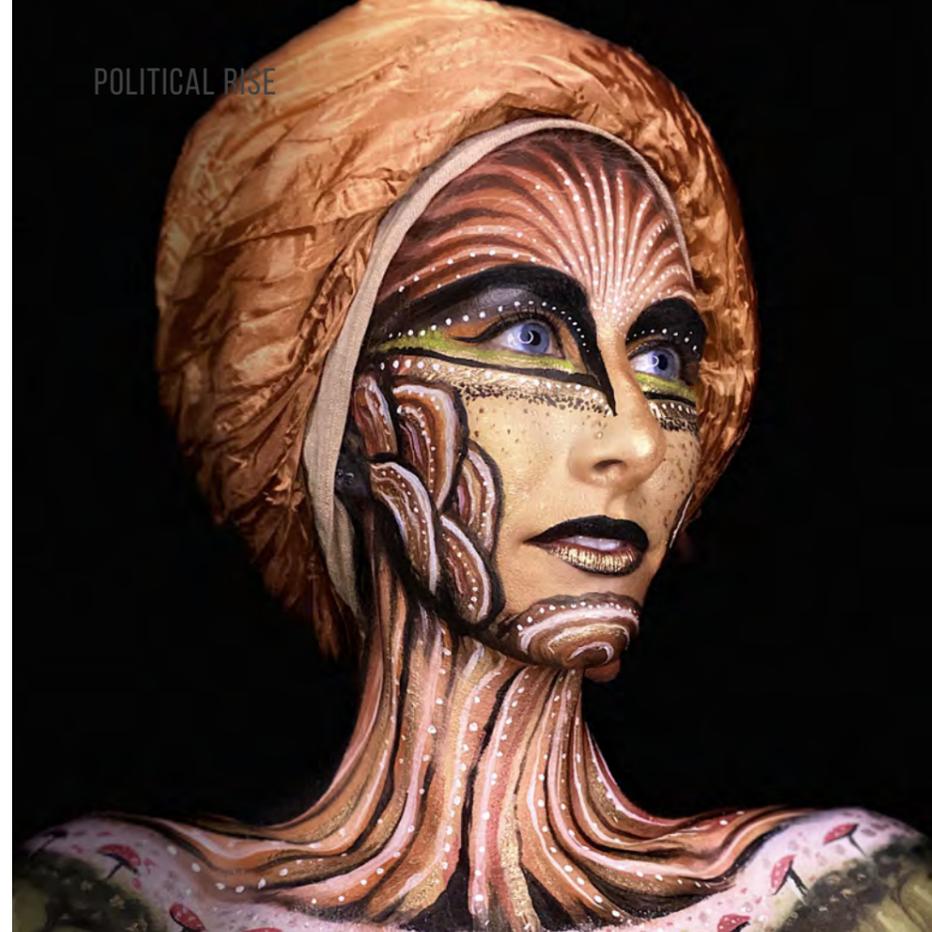
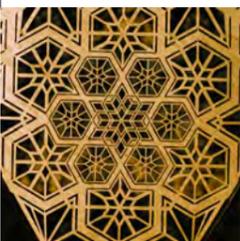
A CALL FOR THE  
ARTISTS OF THE RISE

In tapping into these harmonies of light, color, and sound, artists are tapping into the underlying field of harmonic possibility that we see reflected back to us in nature and our own bodies. Call it God, the Universe, or Evolution - there seems to be a universal yearning towards more harmony, more thriving, and more complexity. Artists tap into this essential unifying force as they create and bring dreams from the adjacent possible into reality. These qualities make artists natural stewards of the Political Rise.

While many artists may not consider their work political, any creative expression rooted in care for the space in which we inhabit is a political act.

Creating beauty is inherently an act of care, offered selflessly to those that experience it. As a political context that intentionally invites care and creativity, the Political Rise is a domain for artists to experiment and bring leadership forward as we remake our world in beauty and care for all.

While all acts of beauty could be seen as part of the political rise, some artists may feel inspired to claim themselves as "artists of the rise," intentionally choosing to identify themselves and their work as part of a larger political movement to create a thriving world for all. Artists of the rise can work together and separately to create the art that will drive the most creative and visionary change possible, all while making it engaging, connective, and real to audiences.



Art provides a multi-sensory access point to what could otherwise be complex and confusing subjects. Creating a thriving world will be a long and complex journey, but being able to directly experience the creative fruits of humanity's rebirth process will enable us to experience a taste of what that world might be as no other medium can.

Humanity's collective potential is certainly greater than our current state, but it's often hard to know what we're capable of until someone illustrates it for us through their own visionary expression. By organizing artists as powerful political actors, we can collectively discover our best possible future through our shared creativity.

We need artists, of all skills and medium, to bring creative force into the Political Rise as we give birth to a more beautiful world together. If you're inspired to bring creative vision as an "artist of the rise", share your art on social media with the hashtag #ArtistOfTheRise and #PoliticalRiseArt.



# CREATORS



## Editor, Writer *Christopher Life*

Entrepreneur, Activist, Founder of One Nation & the Independent National Union



## Creative Director, Writer *Benjamin Ross*

Benjamin Ross is an artist and storyteller in humble service to the life we all share. He tells stories of a more beautiful world and what it will take to create it. You can read his work on [Medium](#) and listen to his music on [Bandcamp](#).



## Designer, Writer *Sophia Life*

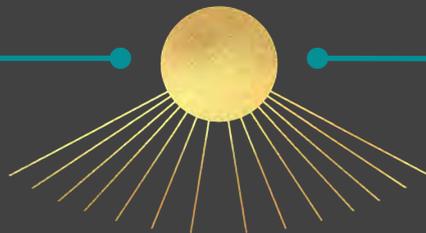
- Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning
- Co-Founder, One Nation
- Executive Director, One Nation Life (501c3)
- Artist / Designer



## Researcher, Writer *Christopher 'SanShin' Russell*

Non Profit Leader, Mindfulness Expert, International Youth Activist Mentor, Former Buddhist Monastic, Ran for City Council age 19  
[Dharma-Gates.org](#)  
[EvoIVR.org](#)

# TOGETHER WE RISE



This magazine was produced by One Nation Life.  
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Political Rise worldwide.