

# How to Create a World that Works for All

**Our System of politics and economics is nearing its end.** It was established in a time when people were independent so it is based on competition. The idea is for each of us to just focus on our own self-interest and, by design, the collective results will be optimal. But now we are increasingly inter-dependent and the collective results are worsening toward eventual collapse. Some symptoms are: Destruction of our planet's resources, an L-shaped curve for distribution of wealth and power, increasingly bankrupted governments, skyrocketing health care costs, loss of community, a politics and media of denial, lack of meaningful jobs, and a collective thinking process that is shallow and adversarial.

Most solution ideas are aimed within the existing System: enact election reform, elect better leaders, inspire citizens to act from their better selves, take the money out of politics, cut taxes, etc. Besides being stuck in partisan paralysis, they do not address the System itself.

**There is a safe, accessible solution.** Our economic and political System should be fair to all, spark innovation, bring out the best in people, and it should generate wise collective choices in politics and economics. The key to safely achieving "Wise Democracy" is to add a new conversation to our existing System, where all the people come together as We the People and provide responsible leadership to both government and the market. See the reverse side for more about the "Wisdom Council" and how this social innovation can spark Wise Democracy. Or check out the Center for Wise Democracy ([www.WiseDemocracy.org](http://www.WiseDemocracy.org)). Experiments show this approach to be realistic.



## Examples of Wise Democracy

- **Government-led:** On the afternoon of Oct 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the Parliament of Vorarlberg, westernmost state of Austria, took the afternoon off to meet around tables in the foyer of their building. With the Governor all elected representatives visited together about one of the hot issues facing the region: economic growth vs. limits of growth. A random group of 14 citizens presented first and set the tone of the conversation. This citizen "Wisdom Council" met earlier in the week for a day and a half. They were dynamically facilitated to reach a unanimous perspective and then presented this "viewpoint of the people" to the elected officials. They excitedly shared this new framing of the issue, their final conclusions, and how they reached their conclusion. This was an example of wise leadership to government from "the people." Following this, the elected representatives were able to cut through the usual partisan positions and work creatively together.
- **Citizen-led:** In the Rogue Valley of OR a group of three citizens organized a Wisdom Council for the county. They randomly selected a citizen group who chose their own topic and presented their views to a diverse audience. The results of this Wisdom Council are still reverberating in Ashland OR, dramatically affecting the town charter, the makeup of the City Council, and the empowerment of ordinary citizens.

# Safe Strategy for achieving “Wise Democracy”

## Wise Democracy is where ...

- 1) All citizens are involved in a public conversation where the important issues are addressed.
- 2) This public conversation is inclusive, respectful, heartfelt, and creative, and it determines thoughtful near-unanimous win/win solutions.
- 3) All the people come together as “We the People” developing shared vision, providing responsible leadership to government, and making holistic, intelligent institutional changes.

## How to shift to Wise Democracy ...

*Is this really possible?* ... Yes. The key to achieving it is to reliably evoke a system-wide conversation on important issues, one that is “choice-creating” rather than “decision-making.” In choice-creating people face impossible-seeming issues creatively and collaboratively, determining win/win answers. “Dynamic Facilitation” can reliably evoke choice-creating in small groups, while the “Wisdom Council” (WC) and the “Creative Insight Council” (CIC) can evoke it throughout large systems.

**First, establish a Creative Insight Council (CIC) to spark a breakthrough on a hot topic:** For a community, state or nation, it’s not hard to convene a randomly selected group of twelve citizens to meet for a few days on a contentious, ill-defined topic like “the budget” or “health care.” These people are dynamically facilitated to create a unanimous perspective and to present this perspective back to the citizens (or to the legislature).

All citizens are then invited to hear and consider the results of the CIC in face-to-face gatherings, online networks, and informally with others. They visit about the conclusions and register their level of support in a public way. Usually, most everyone who hears the CIC supports its conclusions. So if the whole system attends the presentation, these statements can become a legitimate voice of the people. Also, the process shifts the quality of public conversation to where diverse voices are valued and people seek answers that are best for all.

**Second, establish a Wisdom Council (WC) Process to transform the system:** The Wisdom Council Process is like a CIC, except each randomly selected group determines its own issue to address and is part of an ongoing series. This process stimulates a perpetual system-wide, choice-creating conversation where a legitimate, thoughtful and powerful “We the People” emerges. This is a shift from the collective stupidity of today to the collective wisdom we need. It is a way that all of us together can begin to live human values instead of System-imposed corporate values.

**Possible next steps:** Understand and experience choice-creating as the essential quality of thinking for true democracy. Learn how it is evoked through Dynamic Facilitation. Learn how Wisdom Councils, the CIC, and the WC process are being used to involve citizens, transform the public conversation, build shared vision, generate a spirit of community, and make wise collective choices. Explore how we can use these social innovations to safely transform the global System merely by adding a conversation to what we already have. Join with the Center for Wise Democracy to explore and implement this exciting new future for our families and our society.

## References:

- 1) Center for Wise Democracy ([www.WiseDemocracy.org](http://www.WiseDemocracy.org))
- 2) Dynamic Facilitation Associates ([www.DynamicFacilitation.com](http://www.DynamicFacilitation.com))
- 3) Society’s Breakthrough! Releasing Essential Wisdom and Virtue in All the People by Jim Rough, 2002 ([www.SocietysBreakthrough.com](http://www.SocietysBreakthrough.com))