

EDGES



NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

Shifting Images

How do you facilitate behavioural change at the group level? The play between messages, self-image and behaviour may be at the very heart of this human factor.

**Do you want more
participation
and commitment
from the staff
of your organization?**

Facilitator as Image

BRIAN STANFIELD

Jim Jensen had taken courses in Technology of Participation ToP™ Facilitation Methods the year before and prided himself on having practised the methods “to the max.” As a human resources director, he had used the discussion and workshop methods many times over, had received additional mentoring several times, and considered himself well past muster at strategic planning. He kept a journal of reflections on his use of the methods and their results. One day, as he was flicking through the pages, he began to notice a pattern around several items. He went to his computer and began listing them in his journal. The common strand centred around people’s responses to the methods. “Well, this is interesting,” he said to himself.

Originally, what had fascinated Mr Jensen was that the facilitation methods worked. People were able to discuss issues without tearing each other to bits; they could brainstorm and organize data to reach a point of consensus; he could take two days with his staff to come up with a plan that previously might have taken two weeks. Later, as he developed more expertise, he was fascinated by the techniques themselves and *how* paying attention to the details of the methods resulted in better problem-solving. Now, as he inspected his data, he noticed a shift in his perspective: it was dawning on him that using these methods over many months was having an impact on the people themselves. First of

**Do they have
a self-image that
will support increased
participation, or do
they see themselves
simply as employees
doing a job?**

**Do you have the skills
necessary to facilitate
the image shift?**

*The meaning
of a message
is the change
which it produces
in the image.*

KENNETH BOULDING

all, his staff had reached the point where they considered it unthinkable that they would not be expected to help solve issues. They had also become more confident about their own creativity. There were also a lot fewer “fights” and arguments, and there was an increasing sense of belonging together in this task of developing human resources.

Jim was experiencing an image shift in his grasp of ToP™ methodology. Previously, he valued the pragmatism and cleverness of the methods. Now, he was more interested in the tangible. The methods were not only helping him and his staff to do the job better—they were also changing the whole culture of his department for the better. This image shift allowed Jim to discover some of the value-added aspects of the ToP methods.

The concept of the **image shift** has been around a long time. Perhaps professor, poet and activist Kenneth Boulding, author of *The Image*, best conceptualized the process of image change. Boulding’s process can be captured in a few sentences:

1. Everyone operates out of images of themselves and the world.
2. People’s images determine their behaviour.
3. Images can be changed by new messages.
4. When images are changed, behaviour changes.

What does this look like? Some of us remember the radical anti-smoking

Shifter

health films shown beginning in the late 1960s. Smoking was still very much the "in" thing; just about everyone smoked something. Then came this graphic film depicting the horrendous state of a smoker's lungs with lung cancer. Suddenly the invisible had become visible, and for some, the image shift was immediate. The phases of the image shift went like this:

- old image: just about everybody smokes, so it must be OK.
- message: this is what smoking can lead to: lungs that look like a coal cellar.
- new image: my lungs look like that! That is horrible. This is not acceptable.
- behaviour shift: I quit. I am now a non-smoker, and an unordained evangelist on behalf of quitting smoking.

Unfortunately, only some people responded like this. Denial can set in very fast. For other smokers who saw the film, the process was more like this:

- old image: just about everybody smokes, so it must be OK.
- message: this is what smoking can lead to: lungs that look like a coal cellar.
- new image: some smokers' lungs look like that! I had no idea. That's awful.
- resistance: But I'm special. And young. And I smoke filter cigarettes. It won't affect me like that.
- behaviour shift: None.

Perhaps for them, it will take the development of a permanent, bone-jarring, hacking cough. Or worse.

Another example: The newspaper reported recently that a group of Bay

Street stockbrokers had paid a visit to a shelter for the most deprived homeless in Toronto when the normal inhabitants were not there. They were radically affected; the sight of the poor surroundings and minimal furnishings went straight to their hearts. They had been transported from one world to quite a different world. Their big bucks, high tech, quick money image of the world had shifted to include that of no bucks, no tech and slow money. They had certainly experienced an image-shifting situation. Previously, "the homeless" was an economic reality; suddenly, it became a category of humanness and a summons to compassion. (Perhaps next time they will meet some homeless people, too.)

Of course, as Boulding goes on to

•sometimes a message hits some sort of nucleus or supporting structure in the image, and the whole thing changes in a quite radical way. The image shift that happened to Saul on the road to Damascus is a dramatic example of this.

It is this level of image shift, for example, that some travellers (not tourists) visiting places like Bangladesh for the first time have experienced. They may describe on several levels—intellectual, emotional and physical shock, often followed by the statement, "I had no idea!", followed by many attempts to grasp the meaning of it all; finally feeling that their whole life style has to change.

What makes images difficult to shift is the value that we twine about them. If, for example, I just love double-cheese,

Shifting Images in the Education System

OLD IMAGE OF STANDARD EDUCATION	NEW IMAGE OF WHOLE SYSTEM LEARNING
Students are taught	Students participate in their own learning
Student retains information	Student knows how to change her image of herself, the earth, society and others
Absorb the pieces of the content	Internalize the structure of the discipline/ content
Preparation for life	Life long learning
Understand conventional wisdom	Story the human drama and participate in unconventional wisdom
Memory and some thinking on outer world	Body-Mind-Spirit images of wholes
Conform to social ethic	Create own images of limits, possibilities and destiny
Everybody learns the same way	Each person has a unique learning style
IQ determines learning capacity	There are many different ways of being intelligent
Test by regurgitating information	Test by means of real life projects
Focus on language, rationality and memory	Learn to see, touch, smell, listen to and interpret outer and inner world

point out, the process of image change is not mechanical. When images have been deeply held and nurtured over years or decades, one clearly delivered message can rarely cause an image shift. Boulding points out three results of message delivery:

- the image may remain unaffected.
- the image may be altered by simple addition; not an image shift, but I know more than I knew before. For example I knew that the Black Hills were in western USA; I know now, in addition, that they are in South Dakota. A lot of what we call education involves this simple add-on of facts about the world.

half-pound hamburgers, and a friend points out the deleterious effects of eating such delights, his message will come to me as hostile to my image of what's good to eat, and I will resist accepting it. Similarly, if a wife insinuates to her golf-loving husband that he might think of spending less time at the golf course and more time with the kids, there will also be resistance. Both these examples require a shift in values and priorities.

Resistance usually takes the form of ignoring the message—the hamburger lover says, "I'll wait till a doctor tells me to give up junk food"; the golf-lover ignores his wife's message with "Yeah, we

need to talk about this some time," as he walks out the door with his clubs. The wall of resistance may be broken down with the cumulative effect of repeated messages. Sometimes the wall tumbles down when a message is delivered with great force and authority, as in the following example from a counselling situation.

A colleague employed as a counsellor on a university campus tells this story of an undergraduate woman who came for counselling. An interesting part of the student's profile was that she had a long neck—a really long neck. She was quite a sight walking across the quadrangle. She tried to hide her long neck with a hang-dog posture and by draping her long hair all round her head. Her clothes were trampy; her feet scraped along the pavement. Every week she came to the counsellor to talk about all her problems. The counsellor would attempt to draw out from her what was at the bottom of these problems, but the process seemed to be going nowhere. Finally, on a Friday afternoon the situation blew up. The counsellor was tired at the end of a hard week, and when the undergrad came in, something inside the counsellor rebelled against the normal questioning process, and, instead, out came an explosion of rage: 'Look, this is ridiculous! You want to know what your problem is? Your problem is that you are a long-necked girl, and you hate being the long-necked girl that you are. That's your problem.' Her response was fast and vicious. She lashed out, and left four parallel scratches along her counsellor's right cheek, and ran away.

In the counsellor's mind, the student was a lost cause. She would never come back. Six months later the counsellor was sitting in her office looking out the window when an apparition swam before her eyes. The problem undergrad was walking across the lawn, but she looked different; she had piled up her hair, honeycomb-style; her head was held high, her clothes looked new and just right, and her long neck was gloriously exposed and looked even longer. She looked like a million dollars. It was obvious that something radical had happened. The outburst had struck a chord. It had taken six months of processing, but now the image shift was obvious in her behaviour. The long-necked girl had decided not to hide who she was but to celebrate it. Applying Boulding's formula

to the story might yield an analysis like this:

- Image: I cannot live my life because I have a long neck.
- Message: all your problems stem from the fact that you do indeed have a long neck and you don't want to be the long-necked one that you are.
- New image: My long neck is part of who I am and I can live with it.
- New behaviour: Walking tall, taking care of herself; new sense of confidence.

Those situations where we have our images challenged are moments of great possibility—we have the option to be

freed up from the past and move into the future. But there is nothing automatic about the image-shifting process. When a message breaks through the wall of resistance, we may decide to dialogue with the new image. But, then again, we may deny its relevance, finding it offensive. The offense is intellectual: "This just can't be true; I've lived like this for 20 years." The offence is also emotional: "How dare he say that to me! I know how to run my own life." And it is also decisional: "I don't want to hear this message, because I don't want to change!" Saying yes to the new image is a free decision. But when the decision to change

IMAGINAL LEARNING:

Growing through Image Shifting

ICA EDUCATION GUILD

Writers like Marshall McLuhan and Kenneth Boulding have pushed us to realize that everyone has "images" that give form to one's world and determine behaviour. Since new data inconsistent with operating images can challenge those images, it is clear that learning is a perpetual dynamic of re-imaging what's "real." When Freud uncovered the unconscious processes of the psyche, he shattered every human being's image of being simple and rational. Educators themselves know how their images affect their own behaviour and their students'. Experiments have shown that a teacher who images a student as bright tends to treat her that way, regardless of objective evidence. Furthermore, the student begins to image herself as bright, and to behave as if she were. Powerful images can release potential that was not seen or tapped. Images can also block potential and destroy motivation.

Every image is formed out of messages of many kinds—from self, from family and friends, from the immediate environment, and the world at large. Most of these messages we handle easily; they conform to our present images of the way things are. But education

happens when the messages contradict our present images in such a way that they are given up in favour of better ones—images that illuminate the messages. Learning is the process of re-imaging one's self and the world around it. Image change is a painful process of giving up the old and daring to be new.

For example, after inner city American black youths visited a poor Mexican village, they described the shift in image they experienced. They confronted poverty beyond anything they had ever known. They saw a one-room thatched hut with no floor, no heat, no plumbing, occupied by people who subsisted by selling lizards to tourists. That message contradicted everything they knew about themselves. In the midst of that encounter and the struggle to make sense of it all, many of the students decided that they were among the more fortunate of the world and were responsible for poverty in a much larger arena. They were, indeed, among the world's poor, but, by comparison with the Mexican village, they were closer to the world's rich. This kind of imaginal learning is a painful process involving the dying and rebirth of precious images which hold the world together. ♦

the self-image is freely taken, it is the key that opens up behavioural or stylistic changes.

How does all of this relate to facilitation?

When people encounter ToP™ facilitation methods for the first time, they are often so taken up with trying to grasp the details of the method, that they do not have time to grasp the set of image shifts that these methods embrace. But everyone being trained in these methods is asked to subscribe to five major image shifts in the process of leading or joining in participatory conversations or workshops.

1. Everyone has wisdom.
2. We need everyone's wisdom for the wisest result.
3. The wisdom of the whole group is greater than the sum of the parts of the group.
4. Everyone gets to hear and be heard.
5. There are no wrong answers. This is really a shorthand way of saying: "I recognize this person's experience of life as authentic. There is a reason for their answer which comes from their life. If I don't understand or agree with it, I can honestly say so and ask for clarification."

Imagine the impact if these five simple presuppositions were on wall posters in every organization. Imagine what it would be like if workplaces operated out of these assumptions.

Leaders, for example, instead of managing people through their command over "the right answer," would try to come up with the right questions to facilitate answers and commitment from their employees. They would understand that one "right" answer requires

*Participation is not bolted
onto management machinery,
like a muffler on a car.
True participation is not
a program.
It is a whole different way
of dealing with people.*

many perspectives. Then, instead of barking, "Just the facts, please!" manager facilitators would ask for the implications of the facts. Instead of hearing that so-and-so is assigned to come up with a plan, workers would get used to planning in meetings. Instead of meetings invariably resulting in arguments, they would be seen as participatory discussions. Instead of the rather arrogant argument, "Why meet? I know what needs to be done," everyone would see clearly how productive meetings generate commitment and take less time in the end than other approaches.

Instead of the image that "all power resides in the boss," the perception would grow that the power really does lie in the centre of the meeting table. In place of the image that we grow by finding out the truth, we would feel ourselves growing by appreciating different viewpoints. Instead of the image that consensus means that everyone agrees, people would understand that they don't have to agree to be able to dialogue creatively. Instead of employees being regarded as the "great uninformed," they would be seen as the experts, whose

scope of responsibility has been enlarged by participative methods.

"Facilitation," one practitioner has written, "is much, much more than a new tool, or a kit bag; or a new management arrow in one's professional quiver; it is a life skill. Finally, we reach a different understanding when we get beneath the wisdom to what the discipline is saying about the way life is. Here the decision about facilitation is a decision about a new style of life."

It is one thing to facilitate in a corporation or a service agency with the image that you are using a "neat" participatory method to help them plan or solve problems. It is quite a different thing to image that through one's skill with the methods, one can shift the image of what is possible for an organization's structure, meetings, and ways of relating and working—in fact, all of their workplace operating images.

To quote Laura Spencer, author of *Winning Through Participation*: (p. 23) "Participation is not just a gewgaw bolted onto the management machinery by social engineers, as... many firms have done. Nor is it 'installed' as if it were a muffler on a car... True participation is not a program. It is a whole different way of dealing with people. Introducing participation into an organization's operations does not add something new—it transforms the existing mode of operation." Image shifts are possible whenever a facilitator sets up an easel, picks up a marker at the front of the room, and says to a gathered group, "Let's brainstorm the issues facing us and decide together how we can deal with them." Out of such invitations can come a series of image shifts that can revolutionize the workplace. ♦

ICA Canada

Annual General Meeting and Research Conference

Saturday, April 20, 1996, 9am to 4pm

579 Kingston Road, Toronto, ON (Kingston Rd. /Main St.)

416-691-2316

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

John Dalla Costa, author of *Working Wisdom*

Join us in the inaugural event in ICA's new offices and training facility. Participate in the launching of ICA's social research project.

1996 Annual Facilitators Conference

The ICA Canada 1996 Annual Facilitators Conference will be held on October 26-27 in Toronto.

Facilitation is emerging as a discipline. Join with other Technology of Participation ToP™ facilitators to share experiences and learnings as well as exploring new edges in facilitation. Engage in meaningful interchange and become part of this exciting learning network.

Call (416) 691-2316 for information.

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS: Using Space Effectively

WAYNE NELSON

The physical atmosphere for facilitated events is as crucial as using sound facilitation methods and techniques.

Ensuring an Appropriate Space

First, the space needs to be appropriate for the event. A small space, for example, might make participants feel cramped and uneasy, while a large space can make people feel their effort is insignificant. Use room dividers, plants and furniture in a large room to delimit the actual meeting area to fit the size of a group.

Seeing the space in advance allows the facilitator to prevent space problems, ensure adequate space for working groups and to check that projectors, VCRs or other equipment actually works.

The facilitated group is trying to accomplish something. Space can contribute in many ways. For example lighting and acoustics need to be appropriate for the kind of work the group will do. Concert stage lighting is likely to blind the participants in a meeting. Likewise, too subdued lighting will not allow the group to see their data up front.

If the facilitator wants a serious atmosphere focused for work, shifts in wall decor and furnishings may be necessary. Artforms that irritate or distract may have to be temporarily taken down—always with permission.

Setting the Space with Intentionality

Participation is about face-to-face dialogue among the people in the group. For the most part, discussions and workshops work best when the group sits at squared-off tables and chairs—a modified UN style. This can be used with large and small groups, provides maximum eye contact, and allows people to be close enough to hear each other without raising voices. Since the group focuses on the group, not the leader, the space arrangement needs to symbolize the unity of the group. Needless to say, podiums and platforms create an atmosphere not conducive to participation, while squared-off tables minimize vulnerability and say that serious work is going to happen here. Chairs need to be comfortable enough that people's energy is used on the task at hand. A little padding goes a long way.

Space should be well cared for and arranged. Use relevant wall decor to en-

hance the atmosphere; place it at eye level for maximum impact. Everything about a room should communicate that the participants are valuable, welcome and important. People work best when they feel honoured and can to focus on the task. Sloppy, unkempt space communicates unseriousness and disrespect for the participants.

Set up the room before participants arrive. Imagine the kind of table setting that goes on in a fine restaurant. Arrange materials at each place flush with the edge of the table. Everything in the set-up communicates care and intentionality. Set up tables with precision. Align chairs along each side of the square. Care for the space during breaks so it helps rather than hinders the work throughout the event.

Keeping the Group's Data Visible

Facilitators enable people to dialogue over

ideas. When you write ideas and put them up in front of the whole group, they become the property and focus of the whole group because they are answers to a common question. Ideas need to be written on cards or flip charts large enough for everyone to see.

You need a wall large enough to receive the group's data; and flip charts placed strategically so everyone can see them. A clear and visible summary of small-group work on a flip-chart page helps people participate. Things stuck to a wall actually need to stick. Putty adhesive works best. It is good practice to check with those in charge about putting things on the walls.

Finally, after the event, the good facilitator makes sure everything is put back where it was before the session, and the room is ready for its next use. ♦

Creativity, commitment, action

Get the breakthrough you need in your planning and decision making.

ICA's Technology of Participation Top™ will move you to a high-performance level of participation from your staff, board, volunteers and other stakeholders.

- Tap into the solid bedrock of motivation of each individual.
- Help them express their hopes and dreams and release their creativity.
- Renew their sense of purpose and deepen their commitment to the task.
- Involve them in positive action that gets results.

With ICA Canada you can get high levels of participation without chaos and anarchy, and without unfocused energy and debilitating conflict. Instead, you evoke:

- authentic dialogue
- creative ideas
- genuine consensus
- solid commitment
- effective action.

Our approach to facilitating participation will save you time and money, because we are able to draw upon the collective power of the group.

Ongoing Training

ICA offers regularly scheduled public training programs across Canada. We also specifically tailor in-house programs to train your staff, your leaders, and your trainers. Our objective is a quality product which increases your ability to use ToP™ methods on your own.

For complete details of our consulting services and our training programs call (416) 691-2316.

ICA Canada
579 Kingston Road
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**WORKING WISDOM:
The Ultimate Value in the New
Economy**
by John Dalla Costa

Stoddart Books, Toronto, 1995. 304 pages,
hard cover, Can \$29.00. ISBN: 0 7737 29186

Those who follow organizational development have grown familiar with the parade of the "quick fix guru." Reengineering, one of the more recent of the species, is still causing untold turmoil and suffering for the victims of "downsizing" and those left behind. People are exhausted by change that is reactionary, superficial and unresponsive to deeper human needs. Reengineering has become a flawed metaphor and bogus substitute for the only thing that can transform organizations: the development and integration of real wisdom from within. Enough of reengineering—it's time for rehumanizing. The development of human potential rather than reliance on technology and hard assets can transform companies and organizations. This is how author and consultant John

Dalla Costa opens his argument in *Working Wisdom: The Ultimate Value in the New Economy*.

He argues that organizations need to rely more on the wisdom that derives from their workers and less on the pronouncements of outside consultants. Similarly, direct contact with consumers is more valuable than market research. Learning and leadership are as much a function of the spirit as the intellect.

The middle part of the book describes a two-part journey towards wisdom: "ascending" to a new level of consciousness; then "descending" to apply it in real life. In the corporation or organization, this means applying it to relational interactions in the workplace; to planning and creativity; to marketing as relationship building; and to the worker's identity as a "stand-alone brand" with the skills and integrity to turn her hand to many different tasks, jobs and contracts, as the need arises.

John Dalla Costa has worked with a wide range of multinational and Canadian companies and also happens

*Reengineering has become
a flawed metaphor
and bogus substitute
for the only thing that can
transform organizations*

to be a marathon runner. Perhaps this has something to do with his "no-quick-fix" philosophy. He showers the reader with a host of new images that depicts what it means for an organization to advance on the wisdom front.

The middle section on the journey of wisdom relies heavily on the language of values and moral philosophy. Some more poetic or mythological language to describe the descent and ascent would have been welcome to me, but not necessarily to most CEOs and managers. The language of values is certainly a few levels up from the language of the bottom line. ♦—Brian Stanfield

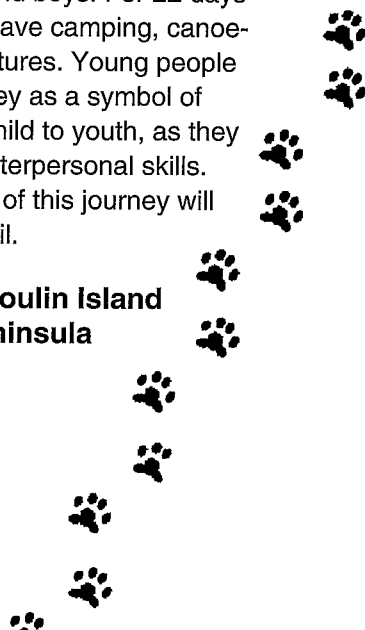
Memories for a Lifetime

1996 Rite of Passage Journey

An initiation into Youthhood for post-6th and 7th grade girls and boys. For 22 days the participants will have camping, canoeing and hiking adventures. Young people experience the journey as a symbol of their passage from child to youth, as they learn personal and interpersonal skills. One of the highlights of this journey will be a 24-hour solo vigil.

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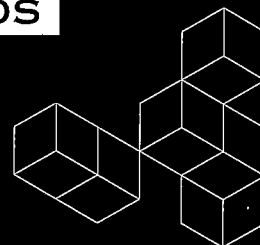
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For ICA members

New ICA Office and Training Space

For the past nine years, ICA Canada's offices have been at 577 Kingston Road, on the second floor above our landlord, MacArthur Realtor. Three years ago, we expanded to the west side of the same floor. This year, we told Paul MacArthur we needed the remaining 500 square feet of space on the floor. Then suddenly, he said, "Why don't we swap spaces?"

"ICA can take the entire first floor and we'll take the second. We'll just swap floors, and renovate the first floor the way you want it."

We jumped at the chance. With the professional help of architect and Board member, Gathorne Burns, plans were drawn up to turn a real estate office into

the kind of ICA office we had envisioned for many years.

The advantages were obvious. It would be at street level—and wheelchair accessible—a big value for the training centre. The size of the seminar room would be increased, which would allow more people to attend training and other events. Instead of having two dissimilar offices, the space would be integrated. The renovation process would upgrade everything and make our space more attractive.

As we go to press, we have just moved into our new quarters, now at 579 Kingston Road, and are loving it.

Please feel free to come and visit.

Part-time or full-time sales staff

ICA Canada is looking for full-time or part-time sales staff. Our first year of direct telephone sales and marketing has been an exciting one and has proven that with the right attitude, telephone sales and marketing can work well.

Sales staff promote:

1. Participation in ICA facilitation skills courses in our new training facility.
2. In-house courses to existing and new non-profit, government and private clients.
3. Consultation services, strategic planning and retreats, primarily to new clients.

Our sales income has increased approximately 30% each year for the past few years and we see long term potential for someone with a background in ICA facilitation skills or training. Our anticipated sales from the above sources in 1996 is \$375,000.

We will consider commission, contract or joint possibilities and we support our sales staff with office, database, mailing and promotional materials.

You may write Bill Staples, in confidence, at ICA Canada with your proposal.

ICA International Conference in Cairo, Sept. 1996

Discovering the Rise of Civil Society:

Shaping Community in the Workplace, at Home and in Society through Greater Participation

CAIRO, EGYPT • 24-30 September, 1996 • Ramses Hilton Conference Centre

ICA members and others are invited to this Action-Research Conference designed to identify trends, models and methods useful in the emerging global civilization and to create new opportunities for networking toward a human and sustainable future.

The Cairo '96 conference will be enhanced by groups promoting the follow-

ing Civil Society themes: Youth, Women, Organizational Transformation, Life-long Education, and others.

Participants are encouraged to help shape the conference agenda through their input as possible presenters. Conference fees can be as low as US\$300. Please call ICA Canada (416) 691-2316 for further information.

EDGES

NEW PLANETARY PATTERNS

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Statement of Purpose The mission of *Edges* is to help people facilitate a culture of participation.

A wave of change sweeping through societies has shaken the foundations of civilization. Every facet of existence is being challenged to evolve into new planetary patterns of knowing, doing and being. The Institute of Cultural Affairs weaves new relations between individuals, organizations and communities. At the core of ICA's work is spirit, sustained by the myths and techniques of many cultures, helping to shape social transformation. ICA's research, education, organizational change, and international linking programs work together to elicit new planetary patterns.

The opinions in *Edges* articles do not necessarily represent the policies or views of ICA Canada.

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Please renew yours, today.*