



The Village View

August 25, 2022

Hollis Ryan & Barbara Brucker, Editors

Coming Up—

General Circle, September 12, 7pm

Letting Go of Our Old Reality

By Hollis Ryan

Over the last month, you may have read about the Goodenough Community's choice to defer the 2022 Human Relations Laboratory in favor of having a group of 15 long-time community leaders meet at Sahale for reflection and evaluation of our 50 years' history under the leadership of John and Colette Hoff. As Marjenta Gray wrote last week, "This work is a priority right now, for our healing and integrity, and to discern our values and best practices going forward with our organizations."

I have been a member of the Goodenough Community for 40 years—more than half my lifetime so far. During those 40 years, I have struggled with privacy, confidentiality, and secrecy. In my personal effort to maintain confidentiality and to respect an individual's or a group's privacy, I have been accused (sometimes correctly) of secrecy and withholding. I have had to learn to distinguish between confidentiality and secrecy, between allowing time for things to "percolate" and withholding information.

Now, as I contemplate this edition of our Village View, I again confront the need for privacy and integration time on the one hand, and on the other hand the desire to begin sharing with our readers learnings from the "Alt Lab." Many who did not attend the Alt Lab are keenly interested in what evolved there, and we who attended want to share our learnings. Yet because our experience together struck deep, tender places and unearthed many feelings and emotions, we need time to process our experiences before exposing them.

On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System

www.goodenough.org

American Association for the Furtherance of Community

Convocation: A Church and Ministry / Mandala Resources, Inc.

Sahale Learning Center / The EcoVillage at Sahale

As we prepared to leave the Alt Lab, our facilitators, Sky Blue and Kelen Laine, advised us to “stay under the blanket” for as much time as we needed in order to integrate. Yet secrecy was identified as part of our community’s shadow, our audience is curious and interested, and I do not wish to contribute to mystification.

So, let me use some words from a few participants to *begin* lifting the veil from our deep, perhaps sacred, time together.

Norm Peck has compared the Alt Lab with the traditional Human Relations Laboratory (Lab):

I do believe the time was really a Lab, a Community Relations Lab that, rather than being individually focused on healing, development, and growth, focused instead on the community’s need for healing, re-definition, and growth. I believe those of us there have had the longest view, and the best hope of seeing the patterns that would be confusing to someone plopped in the middle of it, attracted to the positive energy and then finding (without warning or recognition) the Shadow.

While serving at Sahale after Alt Lab, Barbara Brucker wrote of the deep personal disruption she was experiencing:

I have found it has required great discipline to keep myself focused and I’ve done more ditzzy things than usual. Underneath this is a current of sadness and disbelief about what we all discovered together.

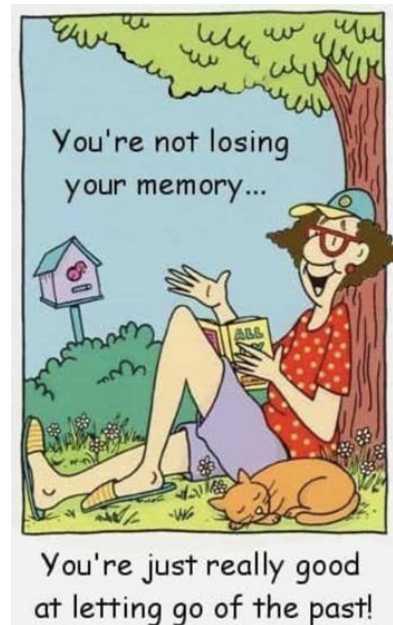
At the same time, I value what I have learned these many years in community. It’s a version of loving the teachings and finding the teacher is not always consistent with the teachings.

Likewise, Norm began to see his own shadow as part of the larger community Shadow while continuing to appreciate what he has received within the community:

I do hope to take part in the process of working my shadow, also hopefully as a part of “our Shadow.” ... I do know that my personal faith in the concept that living in collaborative communities is good for the planet, as an ecologist, kept me trying to make it work. It probably also kept me from seeing clearly and speaking out about the ways it was **not** working, as well as the good things coming out of our effort to be a community.

Marjenta Gray said succinctly, “We all made errors and contributed to the craziness.”

Norm went on to clarify his love for John and Colette and describe the atmosphere of the Alt Lab:



I want to be clear: I love John and Colette, just as I love my parents. What I received or was given by each of them contributed greatly to who I have been able to become. That is and has to be the overarching frame as I also acknowledge all of them also harmed me and limited my capacity to function well in an emotionally intimate setting, be it personal or organizational.

For the record, I didn't see or hear anything at our "not-Lab" time that looked like anything other than respectful conversation among equals about what I am beginning to see as a difficult time in our lives together.

I hope that Norm, Barbara, and Marjenta's words shed a glimmer of light on what we were engaged in. As I wrote above, I intend that their words will **begin** to lift the veil. There is more, much more, which will come forth as we as individuals and as a group emerge from "under the blanket" (that is, from caring for our own integration processes).

Meanwhile, the Tibetan concept of *bardo*, which is generally understood to refer to the afterlife, makes sense to me at this time in our communal life. Bardo is the intermediate state that Tibetan Buddhists believe occurs between one life and the next, and in so many ways, I find myself in just such an intermediate state. Marjenta Gray sent this excerpt from *Lion's Roar*. Maybe it speaks to you, too:

The Tibetan term bardo is not just a reference to the afterlife. It also refers more generally to these moments when gaps appear, interrupting the continuity that we otherwise project onto our lives. ... To be precise, bardo refers to that state in which we have lost our old reality and it is no longer available to us.

https://www.lionsroar.com/four-points-for-letting-go-bardo/?goal=0_1988ee44b2-4914199dcc-25193280&mc_cid=4914199dcc&mc_eid=cb50c9c469

Whatever else may have happened at the Alt Lab, it is true that each of us has had to relinquish some old sense of reality and a new reality has not yet formed. We must be gentle with ourselves and each other as we process our changes.





Mindful Mike's Blog: Agreed Area

Mike deAnguera

What sort of relationship do we have with each other? What constitutes friendship? Why have I thought so much about friendship? Friendship is at the heart of everything the Goodenough Community does together.

Why is my life so different from that of my brother Paul? First I am Mike. I am not Paul and have no desire to live his life. I have my own life.

How do I approach things like a career and retirement? I don't like to be defined by my age. That definitely limits me.

I live in a society where my major function seems to be to serve as a cash cow. I exchange money with others to buy stuff like toothpaste, soap, gasoline for my car, and occasional fish and chips. I pay for stuff at a cash register and hardly pay any attention to those manning the register. They have their lives. My relationship with most folks outside the community is defined by money. Why we have all agreed to define our lives this way escapes me.



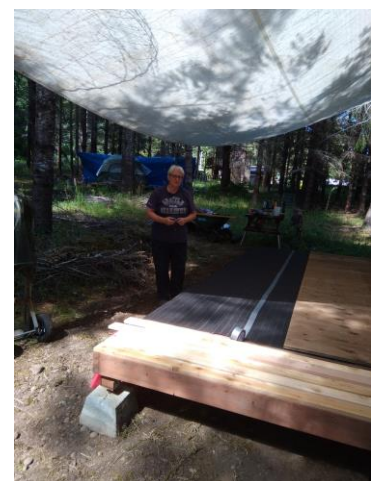
Stairs held in with pegs leading to our beach. I helped finish these up with Drai Schindler. Sure brought back memories of building stairs at Tanglewood, my family's summer place on Vashon Island. A pivotal time in my life. The beach was everything to me then. What a view we had! All the way from Seatac Airport to past Des Moines where Hal Smith and Hollis Ryan live at a retirement home. I am so grateful to my folks for bringing Tanglewood into my life although I realized it meant double the housework for my mom. It was a place my dad could rest up from his demanding job as a banker.

Is it possible a mortal lifetime is in fact an agreed area between all of us? Do we accept certain ways of seeing the world and doing things but not others? Is it possible I am living a mortal lifetime because I want to? Is there some God I have to prove myself to? I don't believe so. God lives within me and is playing me. This is the Being I wish to get to know better. Kathleen Notley has told me about the relationship she developed with this Being while in a coma.

Here is Pam Jarrett-Jefferson building a tent platform for our guests. I have slept in such a tent in Mt. St. Helens Volcanic Park and really loved it.

We have other groups similar to ours using our space here at Sahale. Like the Human Relations Laboratory they create a safe space for people to explore other ways of relating to each other. This is the best way for me to find good friends like Kathleen Notley.

Right now a huge apartment complex is being built above Belfair housing hundreds of people. I wonder what relationship they will have with each other? A whole forest was cut down to make way for this complex. For me the whole feeling of Belfair has changed. Population is exploding. Belfair is turning into a suburb where people commute to



work in their cars. All on Highway 3. At my age I can't even imagine commuting to 'work'. I do work out here at Sahale but it is part of living and sharing our lives together. It is not separate from the rest of my life. My life is not defined by what I do for a living. Instead of making a living I would rather just live. I don't want my life to be consumed by 'making a living'.

You will notice these deer never buy anything. They don't 'make a living'. They just eat our fruits and vegetables and we have to figure out how to keep them out of our gardens. But they are so cute! Don't you love cute deer? Doesn't everybody?



Programs and Events of the Goodenough Community

Community is about adapting to change, and that has been the case with the pandemic as we have adapted many of our ways to connect, most of which are held on Zoom. This has enabled people from outside our area to participate in community events. Throughout the year we offer programs that help you participate in your own development, learn about relating well with others, and help you discover your potential for having a good time in life and with others. Information about programs and upcoming events can be found on our website: www.goodenough.org



The Goodenough Community's governing body, the General Circle, currently meets weekly on Monday evenings, 7 PM on Zoom. **Summer Dates:** Weekly in July.

For additional information, contact [Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson](#)



The Women's Program is a long-established and ever-growing way for women to enjoy each other's company, learn about themselves as women, and even perhaps to experience the Divine Feminine.

For more information, contact [Hollis Ryan](#).

The Third Age - Those age 60 and older have been gathering every other month, Friday evenings, 7 PM by Zoom.

Contact [Kirsten Rohde](#) for more information.



The Men's Program - Our Men's Circle is an expression of brotherhood and practice, with wisdom gathered from our own lives, other men's work, advocates, and the founders of this circle. Future events, including the take-down of the big white tent, to be announced.

Contact: [Norm Peck](#)



Pathwork, A Program of Convocation: A Church and Ministry. Pathwork offers a spiritual home in which to rest and to share your heart and mind as you move through these unpredictable times. Participants come together and find support and encouragement, gaining wisdom from the world's faith and wisdom traditions. All are welcome to join. Meetings are held via Zoom on alternate Sundays: 7 to 9 PM

Contact: [Brucker Brucker](#) for Zoom information.



New: Founders Day Celebration This new event is designed to celebrate our shared community life and to honor our founders, John and Colette Hoff.



Work and Play Parties Throughout the Year. Traditionally, the Goodenough Community sponsors work parties over Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends as well as other times to express gratitude for the presence of our beloved retreat center, Sahale, and to experience the satisfaction of playing and working together.

