



RECREATING THE WORLD: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

3rd Edition

Michael Bopp and Judie Bopp
Four Worlds Press

ABOUT THE BOOK

Rooted in decades of work with Indigenous communities in the Americas, as well as extensive experience in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the former Soviet Union, *Recreating the World* is really two books woven together. The first is a down-to-earth exposition of models, principles and strategies for understanding what community development is and how it can be promoted. The second is a rich collection of stories, games, activities and tools that can be used to help others to learn about various aspects of community development practice.

In this book, building sustainable community is presented as a primary strategy for solving critical human problems. Community building is not merely viewed as a means to an end, however. Sustainable community is a basic human need, and in its absence, human life becomes distorted, painful, and often self-destructive.

In this interdependent world, at the gateway of the twenty-first century, we are all in the same lifeboat. It makes no sense to be thinking in terms of “them” and “us.” As the inimitable Pogo put it, “I have seen the enemy, and he is us.” We are the environmental crisis, the debt crisis, the crisis in spirit, and the crisis in confidence in our leaders and our economy. And it is us, acting together in unity of purpose, and in a harmonization of our methods with our values, that will ultimately enable us to bring about the sorely needed transformation of the fundamental life-systems upon which our families and communities must depend for survival.

The approach to community development presented in *Recreating the World* is:

- practical
- participatory
- oriented to learning as a primary strategy
- culturally based
- principle centered
- values driven
- aimed at fundamental transformation

We invite you to think of community development not as merely rearranging the proverbial deck chairs on the Titanic, but as a process of transforming ourselves and our communities into new models of living that are truly life-promoting and life-enhancing for us, for others with whom we share the planet, and for future generations.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE 3RD EDITION

As we go to press with the third edition of *Recreating the World* (in the Spring of 2011), the hunger of people everywhere to be engaged in shaping their own future and building sustainable wellbeing and prosperity for their children and grandchildren has never been more apparent.

In northern Pakistan, where we are currently engaged in a comprehensive poverty alleviation project that seeks to develop sustainable alternatives to violence and extremism, hundreds of community leaders (men and women) are making extraordinary personal sacrifices to develop their own capacity and that of their community institutions to foster and guide sustainable improvements in the quality of life of grassroots people. They are doing this work in the face of extreme food insecurity (they can grow food to last two to four months of the year, after which they need food aid to survive). What keeps them going is the spark of hope that springs from the spiritual insight that human beings can re-create the world within which they live.

After ten years of continuous practice worldwide utilizing *Recreating the World* ourselves as a basic tool, and after receiving many letters, emails, phone calls and personal testimonials from practitioners, educators, students and government program leaders from many countries who consider *Re-creating the World* to be their “bible” for community development, or at very least an extremely useful, even “essential text” for understanding how to facilitate sustainable development from within communities, we have decided that this third edition will be very much like the second, but with updated references and many fewer printing errors.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael and Judie Bopp have worked for over thirty years in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the former Soviet Union, as well as in urban and rural North America. They are co-founders of Four Worlds International, a human and community development organization with roots in Indigenous peoples’ development work in North America and well known for its ability to bridge between the cultures of communities and the culture of the agencies and professionals who attempt to serve them. They have written and published extensively on many issues related to civil society and learning for human and community transformation.

Michael holds a Masters degree in Community Development and a Doctorate in Education for Development and Judie has a Masters degree in education with a focus on curriculum development and a Doctorate in Education

Michael and Judie now co-direct the Four Worlds Centre for Development Learning, based in Cochrane, Alberta, Canada. The Centre is a sister organization of Four Worlds International that focuses on building human and institutional capacity for social and economic development, as well as international research and consultancy activities related to eco-health, civil society strengthening, governance and institution building and indigenous people’s development.

The Bopp’s have been husband and wife and professional colleagues for more than thirty years. They live on a small acreage backed against a nature conservancy in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, some thirty five-minutes west of Calgary.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT RECREATING THE WORLD

Recreating the World is a cutting edge contribution to Indigenous community development and healing that connects a holistic theory of personal development and transformation with community building through the unifying use of Indigenous principles and values. It presents insights, gleaned from experience, into Indigenous community development that are essential reading for anyone interested in the health, development and well-being of human communities.

-Dr. Lee Brown, Institute for Aboriginal Health, University of British Columbia

Recreating the World is the finest piece of work on sustainable community development that I have ever encountered. It derives lessons from practical experiences and builds on the spiritual and cultural foundations that have shaped and helped communities sustain for centuries. It is also, a very practical and well grounded guide for professional teams as well as grassroots development leaders in facilitating sustainable improvements in the lives of people."

-Nawab Ali Khan, General Manager, Aga Khan Planning and Building Service, Gilgit, Pakistan

Recreating the World is a treasure. This book has been a required text for the graduate courses I have been teaching for almost a decade. In the coming year, it will serve three different graduate programs—a testament to its many strengths.

The book is a mosaic of approaches: philosophy, principles, stories, theory, and practitioner tools—all solidly grounded and all invaluable. There are depths to *Recreating the World*; each time I teach from it, I deepen my own understanding and practice and the learners discover aspects of models or applications that I had not discovered myself.

-Ann Perodeau Community and Organizational Development Consultant, Associate Faculty, Royal Roads University

Recreating the World is a core text in my course on Community Development. From it the students receive a solid grounding in principles and concepts that must lie at the heart of development initiatives undertaken in communities anywhere in the world, but especially here in Africa, where the pursuit of economic growth and modernization often displaces meeting essential non-economic needs as priorities on the development agenda. *Recreating the World* presents the whole picture in very practical terms. It's really a great book!

-Dr. R. Lalonde, Lecturer, Mulungushi University, Zambia

The real work is community development. 80% of our people are still living in poverty. Colonization has created multigenerational hardship, stress and displacement for our people. We know that this reality can be changed when people in families tap into their Indigenous intelligence, start their healing journey and come together with others in their community to build a movement for change. Community development isn't just another program. It's healing the hearts. It's sparking hope. It's working hand-in-hand with others for the sake of our children and grandchildren.

-Brenda Rivers, Co-founder of the Sagamok, Anishnawbek First Nation, Community Development Movement

Always in a colourful and very accessible prose, the book provides a thorough grounding in very practical principles and exercises for participatory development processes.

For anyone interested in pursuing a more participatory and sustainable development, in building partnerships and a strong civil society, in addressing human rights, and in advocating for policies which support the marginalized, *Recreating the World* provides an invaluable combination of practical theory and thought-provoking exercises.

-Darren Hedley, Former Country Director, Care, Cuba, International Development Consultant

ORDERING INFORMATION

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