

Rebalancing the Globe from the Ground

We require nothing less than reformation, on a global scale, to rebalance our heads, our societies, and our world. Despite all the effort to deal with our problems—climate change, social injustices, the demise of democracy, and more—we will make no headway until these efforts consolidate around common cause, namely the restoration of balance.

1. We don't need Big Structural Change. **We need to bring our societies into balance across three sectors that cooperate while holding each other in check: a public sector of respected governments, a private sector of responsible businesses, and what should be called a plural sector, of robust communities.** Few societies remain so balanced.
2. Communism took the countries of Eastern Europe to imbalance on the side of public sector government, which suppressed markets and communities. Since it fell, **capitalism has taken many societies, and the globe itself, to another imbalance, with private sector interests overwhelming the functioning of many governments and communities.** And this, in turn, has led to a dangerous resurgence of populism, where parochial interests within plural sector communities take control of society (whether from the left, as in Venezuela, the right, as in Hungary, or religion, as in Turkey).
3. Alexis de Tocqueville suggested that community associations were key to the maintenance of democracy in the new America. **if we are to stop our dissent into self-destruction, the plural sector will have to take its place alongside the sectors called public and private** (hence the label plural, instead of "civil society" and many others). This sector is huge yet obscure, comprising all those associations, many community-based, that are controlled neither by the state nor by private investors: NGOs, co-ops, clubs, charities, trusts, "private" universities, and many more, as well as the social initiatives we create and the social movements we join. In other words, we are the plural sector: some of us may work in the private sector and most of us may vote in the public sector but all of us live much of our personal lives in the plural sector.
4. **The established authorities will not fix the establishment.** Fixing capitalism will no more fix our broken societies than will 30-year plans by 4-year governments fix our deteriorating climate. **Above all, it is our societies, and our own worldviews, that need to be fixed.** How, for example, can we reverse climate change so long as we let ourselves be consumed by consumption?
5. **We require a global movement for peaceful reformation, from the ground up, driven by community groups networked worldwide.** In the 16th Century, people in Central Europe, incensed by the corruption of their established church, drove the Reformation that changed the world. The problems we face today are more alarming, and have thus given rise to more social initiatives than ever before. Yet these problems, and the imbalance itself, grow steadily worse. The reason is that the forces for imbalance work in concert, for self-interest, all of us included, whereas the initiatives for the common interest are scattered across many problems. **Our efforts will have to consolidate into a movement that addresses the imbalance, directly.** For the sake of our planet and our progeny, we require global reformation.