

## An Economic System That Honors Our True Purpose

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Confined to our homes by a virus for which we are severely underprepared, the whole world is faced with the inadequacies of our systems.

We Unificationists, in particular, because of our high ideals, are challenged to reassess who we are, what values we are expressing in how we live, and how can we choose the best path to a future that manifests our vision for one united world (see my previous article on this site).

Besides the obvious failures of the healthcare system, from the perspective of a Unificationist, we

can see that our current Western economic system fails to serve our deeper purposes in life in many ways. We spend most of our lives in debt, trying to catch up, and figuring out how to pay for healthcare, education, etc., instead of being able to invest time and love in our children.

Given that we expect to live in an eternal world after this, how can we design an economic system that allows for the greatest freedom to make our own decisions, and that enables personal growth?



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Humans grow by receiving love, and by giving love, by investing effort, through relationships, by exercising their own responsibility towards living a life of value fulfillment. We grow by living for both the whole purpose and the individual purpose, and especially through investing in our children and communities.

Indigenous communities sustained their way of life throughout thousands of years, supported by nature, and without destroying that natural world. Despite its technological achievements, Western thinking, originating in Europe but now worldwide, has led us to the brink of destruction of the natural world, as now seen in the sudden clearing of atmospheric pollution as human economic activity is forcibly shut down in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead of going back to total communal ownership, hunting, fishing, and raising GMO-free crops, consider what could have emerged from a respectful analysis of the two ways of life that clashed as Europeans moved into the New World, sadly displacing the original residents.

There are a few basic facts to take as a foundation for our future economics: the universe provides all of nature for free, for the equal use of every person. There is no income requirement for what is provided. However, shaping the natural environment for the purpose of maintaining humanity does require some effort. Both facts lead to one level of responsibility, and so far, there is no responsibility on anyone's part to work anywhere near as long hours as is typical in America today, because ensuring that everyone has a house, food and basic needs would not involve more than probably one or two days a week, if everyone contributes.

The second level of responsibility is oriented more toward growth of humanity as a whole. Our absolute responsibility is to raise healthy and happy children, and guarantee that their individual survival needs are met, allowing them to be ready to work on their own personal goals and values, to express their own individuality in the context of becoming loving, capable adults. This inevitably leads to the evolution of humanity, the expression of humanity's values.

Indigenous thinking, embedded in the world as part of nature as they were, is necessary but not sufficient, in that it is unlikely such a way of life in itself would have led to the current level of progress in science, technology, psychology, etc. However, by merging with and influencing Western values, there could well have been a much more healthy development of all these areas of knowledge.

Thus we are led, in analyzing what could have been, to incorporate the best of both worlds. Simply jettisoning capitalism would leave us bereft of what could be a very strong pillar of our economic future, while ignoring our identity as community, we already can see has severe consequences, particularly in terms of honoring the divine, unique, and sacred value of each and every individual.

Our society simply throws away those who haven't achieved parity in the economic competition that we

think of as life. They end up in poverty, in economic slavery, working all hours for survival only, never attaining the economic capacity to move further toward value fulfillment, thereby impoverishing humanity beyond any imagining.

Capitalism has shown itself to be highly vulnerable to being hijacked by the "winners" in the economic race, and needs some very fundamental modification. Firstly, we must recognize the unconditional aspect of nature's contribution. Without nature, without the bees to pollinate, without the tendency of seeds to grow, existence itself would be threatened, and no corporation would make an easy profit if they had to replace all the functions of nature through their own ingenuity. This belongs equally to every person, because we are all equally created as part of nature.

Therefore we can see two distinct levels of economic thinking here, the first being the meeting of our needs within a hugely benevolent, well-suited planet, and the second being the enabling of growth through the creative use of nature and our relationships with each other. Thus, every person should receive the basics, within the context of a couple days' work a week for the benefit of maintaining this basic level of life, and once that is achieved, then beyond that people may freely work toward profit and creative expression of what is important to them. I say freely because work as we know it is not necessarily the highest value, as any Unificationist can attest.

Thus a person who wants a very nice home should be able to achieve that on the basis of hard work, but to the extent she or he uses more than say half an acre of land on which to build, there should be recognition that the community must be compensated for the loss of the use of this extra land. If people use nature for economic purposes, and obviously they have to, then they can receive the rewards of their transforming nature into useful commodities, but also compensate the whole for whatever they use that rightfully belongs to the whole.

A nature-value tax would be a natural source of income distributed to everyone, out of which those who choose not to work (other than the time needed for maintaining the communal level of life) for some time, or even for large parts of their lives, may do so freely and without guilt of feeling like a parasite. At this point, spending time at home raising one's children in this country is considered almost parasitic behavior. Clearly this violates the deeper purpose of life, and yet we are all driven to live in this fashion.



*In a YouTube video, the author asks, "Everyone needs to live somewhere, which makes land a fundamental necessity -- so can we just regard land as a commodity to be bought and sold for profit?" A companion video is here.*

Without the obligation to work for survival, people would be able to choose whether or not to take a job, and employers would have to pay enough to entice workers to work. Our view of corporations would evolve, and we would see them more as sources of community value, rather than as ways of enriching the owners, the current "super-rich." Corporate leadership would be compensated for their time and work, well-compensated, but would not be as excessively rich as they are today. However they would have people's respect and gratitude instead of resentment. They would not be forever fending off lawsuits, because people's anger would be relieved as we all start to feel more valued and loved. Even inter-corporate cooperation might evolve into a real phenomenon, beyond simply that of buying up smaller corporations to increase short-term profits.

The sharing of corporate returns might also prove a source of some kind of living wage, or basic corporate income, in such a world.

Freedom from debt and from bureaucracy-imposed burdens are both necessary aspects of any future system. Servicing debt is maybe the most debilitating aspect of our current economic lives. If we have to have a system with built-in debt, then at least build a protective wall around the retail economy and people's savings, so that no one can lose everything because of such debt. Likewise we need a greatly strengthened firewall between retail and the speculative behaviors that have forced us to bail out wealthy corporations, especially banks, several times in recent decades.

Government must also evolve to stop using our technology to impose order upon us under the guise of providing for us. Such evolution though requires a much greater level of trust of each other, because so much of the endless filling out of forms and paying vast amounts for insurance emanates from our distrust. Lawyers and courts have taken over so much of our decision-making, leaving us very inadequate in our capacity to solve problems by working things out together, and leaving us vulnerable economically as we have to pay for this distrust. We have not learned wisdom in the handling of an information economy, and until this evolves, our data is used for the profit of some and for the ease of controlling the population by others.

Capitalism has given us ways to use money by investing in corporations and businesses such that our money can grow even while we are not actively working. This has been a great relief to many, in providing retirement income and freeing up one's time. Simply discarding our capitalistic system devalues the Western progress that freed us from so much of our servitude to nature. The path to living within the natural world and also freeing ourselves from the limitations of living only as part of the natural world is a path that requires thought and universal values.

In Unificationist terms, we could be focusing on horizontal progress instead of being paralyzed by vertical issues of who should we be obeying.

The Unification movement is very well-placed to contribute to this, given the supreme value of the human being in its philosophy, and once we have overcome our differences and are reunited as a movement, we will no doubt engage on this level once again. Western values need to be incorporated in our movement toward the future, so that we have hope to see a world that of course incorporates intellectual accomplishment, but also values justice and heart more than intellect alone.

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