

## Join the Re-Generation

Daniel Christian Wahl

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After the post-war Baby Boomers came Generations X, Y and Z. So what's next? Creating a viable future for humanity on an overpopulated planet in crisis requires all of us to collaborate, across generations, ideologies and nations. We all need to join the **Re-Generation**.

How do we keep the lights on, avoid revolution and turmoil, keep children in school and people in work, yet still manage to transform the human presence on Earth before 'business as usual' leads to run-away climate change, a drastically impoverished biosphere, and the early demise of our species?

### Asking deeper questions

The word sustainability begs the question what it is that we are trying to sustain: an outdated cultural narrative, an unhealthy view of the relationship between humanity and nature, business as usual in a deeply inequitable world? Rather than simply sustaining a structurally dysfunctional system and worldview, our questioning has to go deeper.

We need to search for new ways to restore ecosystems, celebrate cultural diversity, initiate a worldview change, and facilitate the transition towards diverse cultures that regenerate not just vital resources and community resilience, but contribute to the health and vitality of nature's life support systems.

What questions serve to find potential pathways towards a regenerative human presence on Earth? Could we define a set of questions to offer an effective cultural compass that would help us steer our way into an uncertain and unpredictable future? In [Designing Regenerative Cultures](#), I explore a wide range of such questions along with many solutions and answers as transient means to ask even better questions.

### Transformative innovation and design

In the face of multiple converging crises, mere sustainability is no longer enough. Too much damage has already been done. We need to restore ecosystem and community health, and create regenerative systems that allow us to face uncertainty creatively. To do this we need to go beyond "sustaining innovation" and "disruptive innovation" and engage in *transformative innovation*. Any proposed innovation should be evaluated in terms of its potential to serve as a stepping-stone towards regenerative cultures.

Over the last 20 years, our understanding of the role of design in the transition has expanded drastically. Design is the way our worldview and value systems express themselves in our material culture, through the artefacts, systems and processes we create. Past design decisions - like the buildings and cities we inhabit - shape our worldview and value systems. Design is a conversation through which different perspectives are integrated into culturally creative action.

Clearly, there are limits to the extent that we can design regenerative cultures. All complex dynamic systems - our communities and cultures included - are fundamentally unpredictable and uncontrollable. We have to learn to see design and emergence of unpredictable novelty as two faces of the same coin. This will help us to design with humility and careful attention to systemic feedback.

### Design as nature!

The false dichotomy between nature and culture is the root cause of many of the converging crises we face. Applying the lessons of eco-literacy and engaging in nature inspire innovation, while biomimicry design drastically improves our capacity to meet human needs.

But we can do more than simply learn from nature: we can design *as nature*: maintaining ecosystems integrity, nurturing systemic health, and strengthening the planetary life support system. We are already designing *as nature*. There are inspiring examples from green chemistry, product design, sustainable architecture, community design, industrial ecology, to urban and regional planning (dozens of these examples appear in the book).

Just one example of how we are already applying systemic biomimicry is Allan Savory's work on holistic land management and holistic planned grazing. These techniques are part of the toolbox of regenerative organic agriculture. This approach to the production of food and key resources for regional bio-economies also offers an effective way to slow down climate change and eventually return to pre-industrial levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. The same techniques also regenerate soil fertility and aquifers by storing the carbon underground as organic matter and root-mass. Regenerative intentions and practices are spreading into all walks of life.