

Making Ripples

Ripples 2014 Resolutions

by Amanda Bancroft

New Year's resolutions are rushing towards us like the Polar Express – and are statistically likely to leave us behind if we don't stick to them. It can be helpful to pick a resolution that matches our deepest-held values. If the following four foundational Ripples concepts inspire you, try applying them to your New Year's resolutions and pick something measurable to achieve. Measuring results like how much CO₂ or waste has been reduced can reveal what we've accomplished with a resolution, and will often make us feel better than if we'd simply sought to live sustainably.

The **Solutionary Method** was conceptualized by GrandAspirations.org, and "is about seeing the world in terms of the solutions possible all around us." This method is composed of values, principles, and strategies. Our values include sustainability, economic prosperity, justice, and community. Principles guide our approach. These are: to make progress, collaborate, be entrepreneurial, empower cyclically, build for the long-term, think critically, and honor the process. Finally, strategies apply values & principles to actions. Our strategies are to train emerging leaders, build transformative learning communities, achieve concrete results, create models, share vision and evaluate our process.

Effective Altruism is a philosophy that encourages maximizing the amount of good accomplished in the world. Some key concepts of effective altruism are cost-effectiveness and impartiality. Cost-effectiveness promotes support for charities which are the most efficient at helping the most people or doing the most good while meeting their mission. Impartiality means that all lives are valued equally, so that a person in a foreign country is equally as valuable as someone in our own community.

Capacity Building is a field in the non-profit sector which aims to improve an organization's ability to meet its mission and become self-sustaining. If an organization can help one hundred people but needs to serve five hundred, we attempt to implement strategies like website design or grant writing assistance to help the organization meet the need efficiently. Capacity Building focuses on indirect service, rather than direct service, in order to enable organizations to help many more people in the future instead of helping a few people today. It encourages non-profits to change according to what is most needed and what will be the most effective.

Interdependence is a worldview that affects how Ripples operates. In this interconnected world, we promote holistic solutions to global problems. Instead of seeing separate causes, like environmentalism or health, Ripples observes the synergy between them. An intervention that intentionally addresses multiple causes that are affecting a single problem is better than ignoring

other causes to focus on only one. We promote interdisciplinary thinking with a goal of accomplishing results which are the healthiest, least harmful, and contain the best potential.

The solutionary method, effective altruism, capacity building and interdependence all guide Ripples. What principles are guiding your 2014 New Year's resolutions?

Ripples innovates solutions that maximize positive ripples in the world. We operate a 100% solar-hosted website with resources and services for individuals and non-profit organizations. For more information, visit: www.RipplesBlog.org.