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Are You Ending or Beginning?

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Q: Are you aiming your organization's energy and resources at ending something bad, or at creating something incredible?

A: The world is filled with problems. We keep trying to end those problems, but despite our tremendous efforts, those problems just keep hanging around. If your organization is in any way about solving problems, you may have had that same thought occur to you. Will we ever see an end to these problems?

Many around the world have had similar thoughts. What had been the War on Poverty has become the Blueprint to End Poverty. In another 20 years, if we don't change our patterns, it will be renamed as something else.

In all those years, with all those efforts, we are still hoping to end the world's pain. And it still doesn't look like it is any closer to happening.

So what is a caring citizen of the world to do?

Ending Something Bad vs. Beginning Something Incredible

Instead of aiming all our attention and energy at what we DON'T want, what would happen if instead we aimed at building something incredible - something amazing?

What would happen if we stopped aiming our work at ending something bad, and started aiming that work at building something good? What if we aimed at building an incredible place to live - an amazing community, an amazing world?

We certainly cannot create an amazing place to live without addressing in some way the problems we have today. But while problem-solving tempts the question, "Then what?" (So you address hunger - then what?), building an amazing place IS the "then what"!

A community that is compassionate, wise, healthy, vibrant - a community that nurtures artistic expression, that brings out the best in us rather than simply trying to suppress the worst in us.

A world full of people who react from our human potential for wisdom and compassion, before reacting from our animal instincts for survival.

What if the reason we have not ended all those problems is not the number of hours in a day or the number of dollars we have failed to get funded? What if the real issue is that we are aiming at something negative, aiming all our efforts and energies directly at what we do not want?

What if all we need to do is re-aim - this time aiming at beginning something incredible?

Start with your own organization's planning.

Are your plans reacting to your community's increasing demands and needs, trying to end something bad? Or are they aiming at a great beginning - building an amazing place to live? If you plan for building an amazing community, wouldn't you address your community's needs on the way to building "amazing?"

Are you creating a prevention program, aimed at preventing something bad - ending it once and for all - perhaps preventing / ending diabetes, heart disease, obesity? Or perhaps preventing / ending teen pregnancy, high school drop rates, gang violence? Or are you instead aiming at a great beginning - building a healthy community in all ways, a vibrant, resilient, nurturing place to live, where diabetes and heart disease and teen pregnancy and gang violence are addressed as one of many "to do" items on the road to building that healthy place to live?

Now look inside your organization. Are you reacting to internal problems, perhaps considering a Capacity Building initiative? Are you hoping you can get enough funding to address the area that happens to be on fire this year? Or are you aiming those plans at a great beginning - planning for overall health and strength for all your organization's efforts? If you plan to make all your efforts healthy and strong in every way, wouldn't you address those problems on the way to building "amazing?"

And what about your board? Are you aiming your board development efforts at problem-solving, to finally put a stop to those nagging issues of recruitment and fundraising, succession planning and financial planning? Or are you aiming your board at a great beginning - tapping its immense potential to move forward not only the organization, but your mission and your vision for a better community / a better world? If you are encouraging and inspiring your board to its very highest potential, wouldn't the board address its problems along the way to building "amazing?"

It all comes down to this question:

Are we aiming at an ending or a beginning?
Are we aiming all our energies and resources
at ending something bad,
or at creating something incredible?

If you want to address your community's problems, once and for all, perhaps it is time to consider what could happen if you stop trying to solve those problems - stop aiming all your energies at an ending.

Perhaps it is time to consider what might happen if instead you start aiming at a beginning - the beginning of building an amazing, vibrant, energized, nurturing, caring and compassionate place to live.

We are creating the future, every minute of every day, whether we do so consciously or not. What amazing tomorrow will you begin building today?



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