What You Can Do: Meeting Human Needs

- We can support policies promoting social justice, health and a local living economy.
- We can smile, treat everyone with respect, and connect with our neighbors.
- We can make socially responsible investments and purchase fair trade products.
- We can donate our time and resources to create a sustainable community.
- We can ask if we really need more stuff.
- We can practice a healthy lifestyle and encourage discussions about meeting fundamental needs. (See discussion on Meeting Fundamental Human Needs below.)
- We can design our workplaces, homes and organizations to give us more of what we want (healthy, attractive and nurturing environments, meaningful work, sense of community) and less of what we don't want (pollution, stress, violence and expense).

Choose one of the following:

1) Meeting Fundamental Human Needs
Utilizing the work of Manfred Max-Neef, assess how well you are meeting each of your ten fundamental needs: subsistence, protection/security, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, creation, identity/meaning and freedom, transcendence.

Make a decision on how you can better meet at least three of your needs and describe your experience and what was the biggest challenge and the best part of doing so.

2) Socially Responsible Investing and Fair Trade Products
After conducting some basic research, make a decision to switch at least one of your investment or retirement funds or bank accounts into a socially responsible investment, fund or community bank or co-op bank AND purchase at least one certified fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate or other product assuring a decent wage and safe working and living conditions for the workers.

Describe your experience and what were the biggest challenges and the best parts of doing it.

3) Community Service and Random Acts of Love and Kindness
Donate at least two hours to serving those in need in your community or protecting the environment (visiting someone in a nursing home or hospital or volunteering for a community or environmental group).

AND for one day, make the commitment to smile and be respectful to every person you see, whether at home, on the street, at work or in your car. In at least 5 cases, do something that would never ordinarily happen, such as letting the person go in front of you, paying for their coffee, toll, etc.

Notice their responses and how you feel.

Write up what you noticed, how you felt, what your life and the world would be like if everyone did this and what was/would be the biggest challenge and the best part of continuing?