

## **A POCKET SIZED VISION STATEMENT**

12/10/06

Our wise Sherry wrote in her last email, "I sure love this process of sharing." I agree and I apologize that so many daily hours at the work computer have tapped my energy for more emails.

But that word "beacon."

Note. When I read Guy's stab at a vision statement (to be a beacon of health, compassion, and creativity), it did not grab me. It's growing on me more and more, like making kimchee.

### **ON THE ONE HAND...**

I don't like the word beacon. Anne doesn't like the word beacon even more than I don't like the word beacon. She envisions art being made around our vision statements - lighthouses and searchlights in a desert land. Someday maybe a neon lighthouse atop the Butte...

### **ON THE OTHER HAND...**

I'm announcing that I'm fine with taking that neon risk, and I feel excited about the word "beacon."

The most helpful way for me to understand good vision is whether or not it fits in a pocket, and whether or not it comes out of our pockets to help us when we need it.

For example, would being a beacon of health, compassion, and creativity apply to the discussion on time/commitment that I missed at the last meeting? Would it help us make housing decisions? Would it help us choose where we invest our energy? And most concretely, if cohousing is faced with two or more options, and must make a decision, does being a beacon of health, compassion, and creativity guide us toward making the choice for cohousing that is most consistent with all our values?

Visions that lasted from the Hebrew Tradition were pocket worthy. "do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Thanks Micah.

And from that Jesus part of the Hebrew Tradition - "love your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. And love your neighbor as yourself. Full stop."

I'm a simple guy, one word is more than I can handle. My vision word is "compassion."

If I were bolder, I'd get over my Scandinavian self-effacing tendencies and say "my vision is to be a beacon of compassion."  
And I'd make this statement public. And I'd critique myself by this statement, as I already do to some extent. But I'd also invite the critique of others by stating my deep hopes that I can make some difference in this world by being a "beacon of compassion."

That beacon word opens us up to internal and external critique. Twenty years from now people will be sitting at the Vogue and saying that the batteries are dead on the beacon at Sunshine/Chelan Cohousing or else that, yes, here in the middle of condo-central, there's a group of people who have added something to the wider sensibilities about health, compassion, and creativity.

I believe a vision statement should not only help us critique ourselves, but it should also help others critique us. And our conversations to date, while they include the community we are creating, also include our dreams for a human population that will outlast oil and global warming with a measure of health, compassion, and creativity. I'd like to try and be a beacon for that, with no guarantee that we'll succeed. Beacon is a faith word for me, something not yet realized, but hoped for. We may well have no idea of whether we've become a beacon until this founding group passes our vision to the next generation.

How much we succeed or fail is less important to me than having our eyes set in a good direction and having given all we are capable of toward living into good vision.

More later, maybe...thinking about the characteristics of this vision  
- health, compassion, and creativity, and the justice word that Rolf offered last meeting.

Better to stick with beacon for now. As I said, I don't like that word much, and I'd like an alternative to its neon implications. But I love what that word pushes us toward. Maybe we'll find another word that pushes us and still fit into our pockets.

Blessings friends,  
Lars