

## **Making Canada's Community Economy More Visible and Real**

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What can we do right now with or without leadership?

Thursday, February 5, 2015 -- Michelle Strutzenberger

If we agree the community economy holds great promise for Canada's future, what else might be done to make it more real and visible?

Folks joining a teleconference earlier this week named what they see a big de-energizer: people working in silos.

"We aren't leveraging the social capital we have to really create change," said David LePage.

Founder of Accelerating Social Impact, one of B.C.'s first community contribution companies, David is one of four initiators of a proposed series of national dialogues and media-making intended to energize Canada's community economy.

The teleconference earlier this week included these initiators and a small group of people bringing experience in work such as placemaking, organizational development, social enterprise and community economic development.

These folks and so many others are all circling the same issues, David said, and yet there's this disheartening lack of connection.

A contributing factor is likely people getting caught up in their own "tribes".

While there's certainly a place for the tribe, what's being missed in not being

intentional about finding one's place in the larger "us"?

As community builder Leslie Wright says, "It is a myth, a profound myth, that I can live my life unaffected by the choices other people make and certainly my own choices.

"There isn't this separate universe for us to live in; we're all interconnected and so how do we bring people back to that."

The opportunity in this community economy context is how do we invite people to walk together as part of that larger us. You don't have to abandon your identity in the tribe. You don't have to abandon your identity as an important, individual person. But how will you also take on that identity as a member of the larger us and be accountable to that?

Though there is no one answer, no brass bell to ring when we get to the end, it's hoped that this series of national dialogues and media-making can make a meaningful contribution to enabling more of that connection, the breaking down of those silos and "walking together."

The question now is how to shape this effort in such a way that it actually does do that.

One proposal is that we make a guiding question for this dialogue and media-making series, "What can we do right now, with or without leadership?"

"Figuring out how to do stuff seems to be the real urge," Axiom News founder and CEO Peter Pula says.

Or, as another teleconference participant put it, "How do we learn by doing while dialoguing?"

What about you? Does this call resonate: What can we do right now with or without leadership?

- More soon

In the meantime, please contact [peter@axiomnews.com](mailto:peter@axiomnews.com) if you're interested to learn more or want to contribute to the shaping of this initiative.

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