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WHITE PAPER

ON BECOMING FORBES MAGAZINES #1 BEST SMALL
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&

THE AMERICAN CIVIC LEAGUES #1 BEST
ALL-AMERICAN CITY

#1 Lowest Stress & Healthiest City In the Nation Project

*Understanding the Importance of
Sense of Community (SOC) in
Combating Social Dysfunction*

RAPID CITY, South Dakota

AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES OF:

**PINE RIDGE, HOT SPRINGS, CUSTER, KEYSTONE, HILL CITY,
STURGIS, BLACK HAWK, LEAD, DEADWOOD, BELLE
FOURCHE, AND SPEARFISH**

**The Black Hills of South Dakota;
Spiritual Heartland of the Midwest!**

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Notes:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Clear Cause for Optimism in the 21st Century:

OUR CHILDREN

Why you are being contacted: This is not a proposal to address a social ill or need of an underprivileged minority. Neither is this about starting a new program or organization. This is not about something that affects someone else. This affects you, every day, directly.

Who is affected?

This is about you. This affects you as well as every single other person in the community. Although exposure to this is entirely natural, and every single one of us is continuously exposed with no one being left unaffected, the degree of that exposure and one's sensitivity to its effects may vary for different people. Although natural, exposure is not healthy, pleasant, nor desirable. This is not rhetoric or an attempt to be dramatic. This is about something we had no real understanding of previously and so there could be no determining of what degree of exposure we might or might not find acceptable. We now have that option. We can find ways to reduce "it" within our communities if we so wish. "It" has affected you and your family in the past, "it" is affecting you now, and you are as much a part of "its" spread as everyone else. "It" has affected who you are, how you view the world, and how you view yourself and others. If you have children "it" is even now having a significant affect on what kind of person they will grow up to be. This is *NOT* about any specific social ill or dysfunction such as spousal abuse, suicides, child abuse, juvenile crime, and drug or alcohol abuse. *"It" is about all of these together, plus some.* Even if you and your family never *directly* experience "it" or any social dysfunction whatsoever, this *still* affects them, and you, in a myriad of ways that we are only just now dimly beginning to fathom or to understand.

Behaviorally Transmitted Neurodegeneration (BTN)

Before you read on any further, slow down and take a moment to think about these last few words you've just read. *Behaviorally-transmitted* – contagious – necrosis of brain tissue.

***Behaviorally* transmitted !!!**

- **Brain Damage:** Only recently has it become known that stress in childhood from physical or sexual abuse, or neglect, can result in actual physical damage to the brain (neurodegeneration). Exposure of children to stress from familial and social dysfunction causes brain damage that may be permanent, resulting in up to a 30% smaller hippocampus, amygdala (emotional control, emotional memory, eating) and corpus callosum (stability of personality, nerve bundle that connects two halves of brain). Additionally it is worth noting that *the left hemisphere continues to grow after*

*birth and that it develops more slowly than does the right. The left hemisphere is thus more susceptible to being developmentally delayed and damaged by early abuse or neglect. **Neglect** causes more severe neurological damage in young **men** than it does in young women, and young **women** are more severely damaged by **sexual abuse** than young men are.*

- **Behavioral Transmission:** Based on animal and human models the scientific community has only recently been able to state conclusively that certain dysfunctional behaviors are highly transmittable socially and behaviorally. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) with their background in contagious diseases and pathogens have now taken the groundbreaking position that violence and abuse should be dealt with as a matter of Public Health. Anecdotal and observational evidence has accumulated for decades indicating an intergenerational transmission of physical and sexual abuse and neglect. Now there is solid scientific evidence from the biochemical, neurological, genetic, psychological, and sociological fields as well as animal models and statistical longitudinal epidemiological studies that corroborate this.
- **Secondhand Transmission of Dysfunction:** A high percentage of individuals displaying dysfunction in a community increases the susceptibility of everyone, especially children, to the second-hand transmission of dysfunctional behaviors and of situational and societal chronic stress.
- **Fractional Abuse:** While this secondhand *social* exposure certainly does not result in the same degree of alteration of brain morphology and necrosis as actual direct *familial* abuse, it just as certainly has some effect, possibly significant, in altering your child's behavioral development and future susceptibility to social dysfunction, hence the usefulness of the term, "fractional" abuse. There is no clear line, which once crossed, means that one suddenly becomes classifiable as having a diagnosable psychological disorder, it is a smooth continuum along which we all have a place.

It is Not Just "Fluff," The Real and Tangible Importance of Sense of Community (SOC):

The exact same unexpectedly extreme "*biobehavioral*" sensitivity that makes the behavioral transmission of social dysfunctions possible **also** makes the seemingly superfluous and intangible "Sense of Community" (SOC) an unexpectedly powerful and real protective factor against those social dysfunctions. An awareness of, and eventual measurement of, SOC is especially important and timely in light of our societies, and our children's, current exposure to both the social dysfunction within our communities and the stress of worldwide **terrorism**.

In regard issues of familial dysfunction and especially child abuse it is no longer acceptable to just pat someone on the head and suggest they "get over it" because it happened when they were a child. This new knowledge has major implications for

changing how we treat social and familial dysfunction, spousal abuse, personality and eating disorders. We all agree it would be misguided, unreasonable, and even abusive to berate and make a quadriplegic feel guilty for not having the internal fortitude to get up out of their wheelchair to walk. It is equally misguided to be surprised, and even indignant when a socially dysfunctional, abused or neglected individual cannot simply be “talked,” counseled, or “jailed” into normalcy. We now know that such a person’s impairment is equally physical, in every meaning of the word, to that of the quadriplegic. If a madman were driving around randomly tossing acid into the faces of one out of every four of the young girls in our community, and one out of every seven young boys, leaving behind hideous life-long scars - and if this were occurring in every city in the nation, we would be calling out the national guard, plus the army, navy, air force, and every single one of us would be sitting out on our front porches with a shotgun all night long, every night. This is not hyperbole or being dramatic, who cannot but doubt that this would be the case, of course it would! This type of hideous life-long scarring and carnage is occurring right now, the scars are EQUALLY REAL in *EVERY* sense of the word, there is no use of metaphor, analogy, semantics, wordplay or hype involved - but **the scars are all on the *inside* of our children, invisible and hidden away.** In light of these recent fMRI images it is clear that new methods of looking at this problem, and of treatment will be needed. It is also clear that new, far bolder levels of effort and commitment are called for by all of us, especially our community leaders. We must be willing to embrace new ideas, to take new risks, and to initiate new programs and efforts.

Is a Person’s IQ Affected?

<p>The 20-30% observed damage to certain brain structures DOES NOT in any way mean that an affected person has a LOWER IQ!</p>

It *does* however mean that how that person views the world, their “worldview;” their lifestyle choices, their behaviors, and their responses to certain situations will be affected, and incredibly, that “worldview” **IS** transmissible!

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND DYSFUNCTION WILL NEVER GO AWAY, IT IS ALL PART OF THE “HUMAN CONDITION!”

The newest scientific evidence that dysfunctional behaviors are behaviorally transmitted indicates otherwise. There is at least a theoretical chance over time (multiple generations) of seeing a decrease across-the-board of suicides, spousal abuse, alcoholism, teenage pregnancies, juvenile crimes and numerous other societal dysfunction’s because they are all linked together and stem from one perpetuating core root – *exposure to familial and societal dysfunction and imprinting of this pattern during childhood* through specific types of neurological damage caused by toxic diasthetic stress. ***Violence, abuse and familial dysfunction are not an unavoidable part of the human condition; they are a blight on it, like smallpox.***

This linkage is how these ills spread: it is what maintains them, and there is hope that this can be the means by which these social ills can be reduced en-mass as a group within our communities. At one time, prior to the advent of “sanitary hygiene,” frequent deaths from childbirth and severe trauma was similarly also considered just part of the “human condition.” Historically the major focus of prevention efforts has been “after the fact” to

help those victims directly affected by familial dysfunction and actual child abuse or neglect. This latest information in fact shows clearly that this is even more hugely important than we realized because these will be the “Typhoid Mary’s” of social dysfunction in the future. But this type of intervention measure is only half of the picture, *no matter how stable your own, or anyone’s household, no one is completely unaffected.*

Personality disorders were found in **85 percent** of men referred for SPOUSAL ABUSE. (*Hart, Dutton, and Newborn, 1993*)

The PUFF-PASTRY of Linked Social Dysfunctions

A Common Link Connects Many Different Social Ills:

Dr. Jim Mercy and Reshma Mahendra of the **Centers for Disease Control**, CDC, and Dr. David Chadwick, and Lucy Berliner of “Stop It Now” are collaborating on a *meta-study* analysis and review of the literature to demonstrate for health professionals the links that have been found between child sexual abuse, disease and disorder.

One Single Core Social Ill Links All: In their search, more than **400** studies describing myriad social ill, physical ailments, and psychological dysfunctions have come to the surface.

The CDC found links with the following: ADHD, alcohol abuse, anxiety disorder, bedwetting, blood pressure abnormality, brain disorders, cancer, gastrointestinal problems, criminality, delinquency, depression, diabetes, disassociative disorder, drug abuse, eating disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, homelessness, ischemic heart disease, intimate partner violence, nightmares, obesity, pelvic pain, physical injuries, engaging in prostitution, psychosomatic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder, relationship issues, self mutilation, sexual dysfunction, sexual victimization, smoking, stroke, suicide attempts, suicide, teen pregnancy, welfare and poverty.

The implications of the this new data regarding the behavioral transmission of dysfunction and neurodegeneration are clear: “If we fully grasp the harm caused by sexual assault and were to find a way to eliminate or significantly reduce child sexual abuse, this alone would significantly reduce many social and physical ill in America far beyond what one would have hitherto had cause to expect.”

Here in the cities of Western SD the rates for juvenile suicide, juvenile pregnancy, juvenile and adult alcoholism, tobacco and drug abuse, juvenile incarceration, child sexual abuse, rapes, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and spousal abuse are higher than we would like to see, and likely higher than we realize. Some of these statistics are due to extreme diligence on the part of our social service and police agencies, some may be due to increased awareness and reporting by the public, and the locating of the Federal courthouse in Rapid City means that the crimes committed on the reservation are tried

here. Also, here in Rapid City we are fortunate enough to have a top-notch Rape Crisis Unit as well as a superb Social Services Agency, Child Advocacy Group, Working Against Violence shelters, and Children's Home which each provide some of the best services of their type in the entire country.

“Today the unexplored areas of our world are not in the continents, the oceans, or the vastness of space; but in the minds and hearts of men.”

— Allen E. Claxton

Making the “PUFF-PASTRY” of Linked Social Ills Fall:

CAUSE FOR EXCITEMENT AND OPTIMISM

Mathematical computer scale-free simulation models indicate that reducing the pathogenic contagion of dysfunctional behaviors in a community by as little as 5-15% might potentially bring about a “*phase change*” in the system. These models indicate that smaller communities are especially at risk of a runaway cascading chain-reaction occurring if the level of dysfunction rises above a certain “critical point.” Such a runaway reaction might result in 30-40% or more of a population being affected. *This same potential for exponential increase means there is potential to cause an exponential decrease.* It is hoped that targeting *both* direct familial and “*secondhand*” social exposure of children and adults to dysfunction and employing a new awareness of “*behavioral hygiene*” might cause the self-inflating, self-perpetuating “*puff-pastry*” of myriad inter-linked dysfunction to “*fall*” and decrease as a group – this is the “Holy Grail” of social spending and social service efforts.

Secondhand Behavioral Transmission and Being Fractionally Abused

For example, when twenty to thirty percent (or more) of a population are affected then this means that almost every other person your child befriends throughout his or her life will expose them to certain types of related behaviors and there is the possibility of “*fractional abuse*” and of “*secondhand transmission.*” While this secondhand *social* exposure certainly does not result in the same degree of alteration of brain morphology and necrosis as actual direct *familial* abuse, it just as certainly has some effect, possibly significant, in altering your child’s behavioral development and future susceptibility to social dysfunction, hence the usefulness of the term, “fractional” abuse. In fact it appears from computer behavioral models that this peripheral secondhand exposure may be the fuel that keeps the cascading cycle of dysfunction going within a community every bit as much as the “direct” transmission of dysfunctional behaviors that occur generation to generation within families.

There is no clear line, which once crossed, means that one suddenly becomes classifiable as having a diagnosable psychological disorder, it is a smooth continuum along which we all have a place.

Secondhand transmission is aptly described in part by Dr. Paul Mason when he states, “The very definition of a personality disorder is that it causes distress for both the person who has the disorder and those that interact with them.” (*Stop Walking on Eggshells, Taking Your Life Back When Someone You Care About Has Borderline Personality Disorder, Mason, Paul T., Randi Kreger, (1998), New Harbinger Publications, Inc.*)

The concept of a fractional abuse scale has application not just as a means of facilitating useful discussion in regard individuals however, it applies equally usefully when one seeks to characterize social groups, communities, cities and societies. What does it mean if 20, 30, or 40 percent of everyone in a community has been exposed to some degree of fairly severe dysfunction? How much of a factor are secondary modes of behavioral transmission in the continued transmittal of social dysfunction within such a blighted

community? Might such a community then be said to be 20, 30, or 40 percent fractionally abused?

DISTURBING FACTS AND TRENDS

“Using new fMRI brain-imaging techniques the size of the corpus callosum, hippocampus, and amygdala of abused children have been found to be as much as thirty percent smaller.” – *Scars that Wont Heal: The Neurobiology of Child Abuse*, Scientific American, Martin H. Teicher, March, 2002.

Nationwide a 7% increase has been seen for rapes in small and mid-size communities in the past few years (2003) – many are statutory rapes of children under 14.

Before the age of 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will experience sexual abuse. U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1996.

Is the Brain Damage Permanent?

What if I have been abused or exposed to childhood stress, neglect, abuse, or familial dysfunction? What if someone I love has? - Does this mean there is no hope for me, or for them? Recent functional magnetic resonance images (fMRI) have shown conclusively that major components of the brain connecting the two hemispheres that deal with emotional control, mood, and personality (corpus callosum, hippocampus, amygdalla) are severely damaged and reduced in volume by up to 30%. There is concern that this damage may in fact be permanent, the result of early childhood stress and abuse: sexual, physical, emotional, chemical, and neglect. Stress hormones have been implicated in the damage done to some brain regions either through the *delaying of development*, through *necrosis*, by causing *disuse* of certain neuronal pathways in the brain, or by a combination of these.

Brain Plasticity and Neuronal Regrowth

If *disuse* or the *delaying of development* are primary causes of the reduction in volume then there is **cause for optimism**: A strong support and belief system may provide the guidance needed later in life to slowly re-mold ones personality to more closely resemble that which one was born with and to compensate for the childhood trauma. The brain is now known to be highly plastic throughout ones life, far more so than previously believed. Only recently believed impossible, the re-growth of neurons is now known to occur throughout ones lifetime. Stem cells migrate out from the hippocampus even into old age.

If *necrosis* is a primary factor then there is **cause for optimism** because: Just as it is the brains extreme plasticity in the face of negative environmental and social influences that results in these changes, this same plasticity from positive social influences and protective factors can provide a path to health and happiness. Like a cast for a broken arm to guide the healing, a strong source of guidance and support has been found beneficial. As a result of this latest information, entirely new treatment methods

are being developed and will offer alternatives to the conventional counseling that has proven so ineffective for so many persons in the past. Also, certain anti-depressant drugs have been found to actually stimulate re-growth of the affected areas.

THE SKEPTIC: *Even if I believed the damage is as severe as you make it sound, there is no way I am going to advise telling people that they may be brain damaged. Actually, I don't want to believe it! And even if I did, it would be just plain cruel to tell someone that, especially if it were true!*

SOME OF THE MOST GIFTED AND GIVING AMONG US

These types of concerns are precisely why it is that a community-wide education effort is so important. Persons exposed to childhood stress, neglect, dysfunction, and abuses are often some of the most sensitive among us, and as such are a component of our communities that are to be most valued. Theirs are the true faces of our humanity. Not unexpectedly there is found a high incidence of persons from dysfunctional backgrounds and abuse among first responders, philanthropists, law enforcement, psychologists, counselors, and social workers. In some cases the extremity of the elicited emotions and character traits, although they may cause excessive maladaptive difficulties socially, can be motivational and nonetheless result in a high degree of success in academic, business, philanthropic and scientific areas.

Canaries in the Mines

“Sensitives” among us: It cannot be overstressed how important it is to avoid an “*us and them*” mentality. “They” are our children whom we have failed, and in far too many cases, failed quite horribly and unforgivably. “They” are arguably the most valuable component of our communities. “They” are arguably the most sensitive, like the caged **canaries** once carried into mines because they would succumb to dangerous gases first and give the miner time to escape. When the first responders, caregivers, and “*sensitives*” among us signal distress, when suicide rates increase, when more marriages fail than succeed, it is a sign of extreme danger for a community and a society. The suicide and child abuse rates in our community are a warning sign. Here, and in other small communities across the nation, it is clearly time to take action.

A Sliding-Scale of Fractional Abuse Avoids Separation into “Us” and

“Them:” It helps to picture everyone’s relative mental health as being measured on a sliding scale from left to right. Each of us falls somewhere in-between the two endpoints on this sliding continuum or yardstick. There is no clear line beyond which one suddenly becomes classifiable as being abused or having a personality disorder – we are all on a continuum. A “diagnosis” is made for personality disorders only when the severity and degree of the damage caused has reached the point where an individual feels he or she can no longer maintain stable relationships or find happiness in life, and this point varies widely individual to individual. Dr. Dutton describes “fractional abuse” precisely; “A personality type becomes a disorder when it becomes so fixed and rigid as to cause the person interminable difficulties. People afflicted with a disorder literally cannot escape themselves. Clearly, though, even the less severe forms are problematic, and the point at which a personality type becomes a disorder is somewhat arbitrary.” (D., Dutton, 1995, p. 142)

Prevalence of Borderline Personality Organizational-Pattern Thinking

In 1977 psychiatrist Otto Kernberg provided an even more precise definition of “fractional abuse” which he described as borderline personality organization, BPO, when he spoke of **11 to 15 percent of the general population exhibiting the symptoms of borderline personality organization**: of these, only 10 to 25 percent manifest signs of the more severe version, borderline personality disorder, BPD (*O., Kernberg, 1977, p.118*). With newer testing and survey methods, and given that these numbers are in constant flux with large increases of as much as 3-400% noted for child sexual abuse in the decades following Dr. Kernberg’s estimation, it is unclear what percentage might currently be estimated to exhibit fractional symptoms. In a small community suffering from a high degree of dysfunction, a realistic number for persons showing some (fractional) degree of borderline personality organization in our own day might now be fifty percent, or more. *“They” are clearly “us.”*

We All Have The Same Control Knobs in Common But With Different Settings; Our Differences are Minimal Compared to our Sameness

Imagine that we all have an exact same number and type of control knobs that govern the various different specialized organs of our brains. The ONLY difference between us is that the settings on those various control knobs are just a little different for each of us, and this would correspond to having a larger or smaller organ. As humans we all have the same number and type of specialized brain “organs” identifiable by function, morphology and structure, just as we might be said to have the same number and type of control knobs. This is arguably one of the most powerful, and perhaps the most profound, protective inoculating conceptual metaphors to come from this latest fMRI brain image data. Its strength comes when one realizes that there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between the most severe borderline personality disorder patient and ones own behaviors other than a matter of there being different settings on those knobs. Every single response and behavioral pattern is shared and the same in a “normal” as in a “diagnosable” individual, it is just a matter of degree. The volume or amplification is simply turned more up or down in volume in an affected individual, that is the only difference. We can have a sense of what it might be like to have a big nose by knowing someone well who has a big nose, or by viewing ourselves in a fun-house mirror that enlarges it. This same ability to see oneself, as in a mirror holds true when dealing with an affected individual, one can see oneself, but with a larger or smaller sense of trust, a greater or smaller lability of emotions, or a smaller or larger corpus callosum.

“They” mirror and magnify the best, and the worst, of the middle “Us.”

Ones own humanity can best be understood by the opportunity to be friends with, or to love, such individuals. Persons who care diligently and lovingly for children and adults affected by exposure to alcohol in the womb (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, FASD) are a good example of this. FASD children and adults exhibit a characteristic set of dysfunctional behaviors and physical scarring of the brain similar to that of abused and neglected persons with borderline personality disorder (BPD). The same brain structures that are so sensitive and damaged by childhood stress are equally sensitive and damaged by stress from neonatal exposure to alcohol. This makes both FASD and BPD individuals extremely difficult to deal with emotionally. The amount of pure, totally

selfless, unconditional love that these super-caregivers are capable of giving, despite the incredible emotional hardships they are subjected to, seems superhuman. These super-caregivers and parents to FASD children have had the opportunity to glimpse of themselves in the magnifying mirror of a common humanity that these children represent. Seeing others and ourselves in such a fashion, seeing the humanity we share in our cores exposed so starkly, is a view and perspective few of us ever is given the opportunity to accomplish in our lives.

Misunderstood Minds

For those fortunate persons that have not ever been exposed to any direct familial dysfunction in their lifetime it is particularly difficult to understand, let alone deal with, the dysfunctional behaviors of those that have, and we all, every one of us, deal with such persons every day of our lives. But it is this exposure that can bring one into the most direct contact with what it is to be human, and a deeper understanding of what unconditional loves means, than can be found in any other fashion. In seeing them, their pains, struggles and fears, one cannot but see oneself; it is holding up a mirror to ones own deepest humanity. One cannot but be humbled by the realization that these persons have dealt with their lot in life and risen above it.

They are the measure of our humanity and the keepers and guardians of our highest ideals of what humanity is all about. Few of us are capable of walking as tall in their shoes, or would have the will and fortitude to be able to, were we to trade places. They have been tested and despite being dealt a poor hand in life have risen above it to become survivors that exemplify the best of the best of what it means to be a human being. The place made for child-victims in a society once they become adults is a strong bellwether indicative of the health of that society. They *are indeed*, us.

New Information; A New Way of Seeing; New Questions; New Solutions

Post-traumatic Stress disorder (PTSD), modern day “suicide **terrorists**,” eating disorders; the world does not as much change, despite appearances, as does our ability to discern, to see, to understand, and to make visible things that were previously unseen. Sadaam Husein was abused as a child and came from a highly dysfunctional family – is anyone surprised? What does it mean that a person can be affected for decades, and on into adulthood, displaying a complete social incompatibility and dysfunctionality due to as little as one single exposure to severe abuse or dysfunction as a child that then results in PTSD? If abuse or neglect occur at a “low” level (as hard as characterizing what a low or high level might be) for a long period of time and this changes the size of portions of the victims brains from 20-30%, then what of truly immeasurably mild abuse, or periodic neglect? What of exposure to slight, even socially acceptable, levels of dysfunction? What if everyone in ones close family were to come from a background of abuse, even if one is not technically abused oneself? What effect is there on a person as they are maturing if half or more of everyone that they meet in their lifetime has come from a background of abuse of some type? What if the *anonymous* health and stress survey were to evolve to have an interactive on-line component that provides children with someone or something to talk to and trust in? For a child that is being abused, might this be enough

to reduce by some percentage the physical and psychological damage done - by one quarter, or even just ten percent, even if the abuse itself is not stopped? Might there be pills prescribed that can correct and prevent further brain damage? If the damage can be reduced by any amount, even a fraction such as ten or twenty percent in enough individuals, then over many generations might this have an effect on the rate of transmittal and cause the total number of affected individuals in a community to lower, possibly dramatically?

Everyone Exhibits Borderline Personality Organization Traits, Each of Us

Fractional abuse and everyone falling onto a point on a sliding scale means that it is possible that many of us are altered by our environment and may even have also experienced neurodegeneration to some small degree. It is hard to understand but this is actually entirely natural, everyone falls onto a sliding scale in this regard. Although currently not measurable, what would it mean, how might one be changed, by having a deficit of only say, just five percent? What if one displays social dysfunction but not to the point where it is a diagnosable condition? These situations are what the term “fractional abuse” is proposed to be useful in describing. How comfortable are any of us with the thought that major organs of our brains that connect the two hemispheres, govern our emotions, and determine our personality may have had even as little as five percent literally excised and removed for all practical purposes?

Instead of focusing on the potential deficit in brain matter however, lets give some thought to how ones behavior or personality might be affected if one displayed just five percent of the dysfunctional behaviors of a person suffering from a full-blown diagnosable borderline or other personality disorder. A diagnosable person might display a 20-30% deficit in specific brain regions on their fMRI. If a 25% deficit in those portions causes social dysfunction, then what if one has suffered from just five percent of that 25%, in other words, just a 1.25% reduction? If someone is not “diagnosable” but has a 1.25% deficit in those same portions of the brain discussed, are there behavioral or “worldview” changes that might be measurable? Is the relationship between percentage brain alteration and percentage effect on behaviors linear, or is it exponential so that five percent of the damage that normally results in a diagnosable condition (a 1.25% reduction) might result in ones displaying not five, but twenty percent of the typical borderline and dysfunctional behaviors? A five percent mental instability still sounds like a lot to most of us, let alone twenty. Five percent is one part out of twenty, like cutting an organ of ones brain into twenty pieces and then tossing one aside. Toss two to six pieces aside and you have tossed 10-30% out, and will likely suffer from a personality disorder. A person can be completely incapable of dealing with the social realities or their life and be diagnosable as having borderline personality disorder at two to six pieces. So what might it mean to toss away one piece and display 1/20th of the essentially total incapacity and irrational and/or antisocial behaviors that a fully affected person typically exhibits? Looked at this way five percent seems less trivial. How might we behave differently, who would we be?

Like Asking a Fish to Describe Water

In ourselves we may not even be aware of many of the various knobs and controls, as patterns and types of responses, that we have within ourselves. If the percentage differences between our brain parts are small then the extremity of the responses may be far below our level of awareness and ability to detect in ourselves or in others. Have you ever had a momentary lapse of memory immediately after being caught off-guard by an unexpected question or turn of events? Might this be compared to a supermicro-post-traumatic stress incident? Or perhaps you have noticed that under times of stress your thoughts tend to be more black and white in regard how you view the world and any situation you must deal with?

By getting to know some of the characteristic behavior patterns of someone suffering from a personality disorder one is able to view the minute and finer details of human nature as if they were blown up out of proportion. Like the amplification of a magnifying glass or microscope, small things are made larger and more visible. The functioning of those organs in ones own brain, how they function and what effects they have on behavior can then be discerned and made visible more readily.

This analogy applied to the brain and our behaviors is useful because it forces us to think of how sets of control knobs have a tendency to be turned up or down in certain patterns or groups, so that if knob A is at high volume, controls M through P will go down for example. When a person is stressed in childhood, and starts out with a certain personality, there will be a finite range of responses and resultant behavioral patterns that result.

A Last, Intractable, Almost Invisible Bigotry

Fifty years ago the issue of homosexuality was just something people did not want to even think about, it was not a topic for discussion or thought, it was an area of human behaviors that was best left in the closet. This same attitude applied to spousal abuse, which was after all, considered to be a family matter between a man and his wife and not anyone else's business. Things change, and are still changing. Just as we have learned that skin color and the slant of ones eyes, ones hair or eye color, or size of ones nose have little to do with who a person is as a human being, so too conceptualizing of our brains as electronic instruments with many knobs allows one to see that "who" we are as individuals is not necessarily in the settings of the knobs, but in having the knobs themselves. Someone whose leg reflexively jerks far higher when struck in the kneecap than someone else is no more or less a human being for it. Someone with a larger or smaller hippocampus, amygdalla or corpus callosum is the same person at the core regardless of the sizes of these appendages, even though ones behavior may be altered significantly as the result. It truly is no different than having different size nose or different skin color when one is considering the core self inside. In this sense one must look beyond the "appendages" of the brain just as one must look beyond the appendage of someone's nose. There remains a core person that exists separate from behavioral and personality disorders and dysfunction and despite alterations in the shape and size of these brain parts as the result of exposure to abuse and dysfunction. The core personality one is born with is still there in the larger sense, although it may be significantly masked, and may come and go in its intensity or clarity frequently.

Unconditional Love, Unconditional Understanding and Compassion

We find it easy to understand that we are clearly not our proboscis (nose), or eye, or skin color, it is more difficult to grasp that we are also not our corpus callosum or hippocampus. Parents of FAS children understand this. Many teenagers suffering from FAS will go through a period of extreme angst as they become older and first come to realize that they cannot function and perform in life as do their pre-adult and adult peers. The natural and adoptive parents of these children suffer this angst with them. These parents understand precisely what is being discussed here; they have dealt with unimaginable emotional abuse from their children, but have come to understand that even while some of the behaviors are quite malicious appearing on the surface, they are, paradoxically, also completely without malice. These parents love these children every bit as deeply and perhaps more, for all the emotional and other abuses they have suffered. FAS victims can suffer brain damage that is truly comprehensive across the entire brain and dramatic, or the damage can be much less, with the most vulnerable structures being the corpus callosum, hippocampus and amygdalla structures just as with child abuse and neglect. Parents of FAS children know that as important as certain brain structures are, we are still not our hippocampus. We are not our corpus callosum. Damage to any of these brain structures can severely affect our behaviors, just as severe damage to our legs affects our ability to walk. But except in the most severe cases there will still be a person at the core that will still be a focus, despite the most outrageous behaviors, of deep parental affection.

Like six blind men trying to describe an Elephant, each only getting to feel a small part of it, their impressions would have been quite different had they known what it was they were describing. This applies especially well when contemplating a person that exhibits dysfunctional behaviors, that person is not their behaviors, just as an elephant is not his tail or trunk. Once one sees other people, oneself, and the world in a new and larger truth, one can never again quite see it, or them, any other way. When from the pinnacle of a new perspective and higher truth one glimpses the roundness of the earth for the very first time, horizon to horizon extending, then only from there can one ever again stand to look out upon the world without knowing it to be round. One cannot but do otherwise. To stand anywhere else becomes impossible; it would go against truth and our deepest nature

- **A Single Core Causal Agent of Myriad Social and Health Ills:** Through a meta-analysis of 400 different studies the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, has documented direct and indirect linkages outward from child abuse that connect to dozens of health and social ill.
- **Risks of Cascading Chain-Reaction Epidemics in our Communities:** The behavioral transmission of neurodegeneration means that there is the potential within every community of a run-away epidemic outbreak.
- **Existence of a Mass-Psychology Community-Mind:** Characteristic dysfunctional behaviors can be displayed by both individuals and whole communities en-mass and become a part of the culture when a high enough percentage of individuals in a community are affected. Characteristics such as extreme mistrust, fear of new situations, black/white thinking, swings of emotions, extreme self-interest, narcissism, greed, untruthfulness, mirroring, and resistance to accurate self-

perception or therapy can all be exhibited and have analogues at a socio-cultural level.

Importance of the Protective Concept of “Behavioral Hygiene” as being Analogous to “Sanitary Hygiene”

Before the relationship between disease and germs was known, one in three births involved severe complications or death. It was then common to hear people say that “nothing can be done,” and “this is just the way things are,” and “death in childbirth is God’s will, it is part of the natural process of life, it cannot be changed.” Once the cause was known, hand washing and basic hygiene reduced this by over half within only a few years, an improvement of such magnitude as to be completely incomprehensible prior to the dissemination of the groundbreaking knowledge of the concepts of germs and of sanitary hygiene to combat them. We now hear the same in regard to child abuse, social ills and dysfunction; “you can’t prevent people from being people,” “this is just the way people are,” “it is part of the natural order, it will never go away.”

Cause for Hope - “Sense of Community” and “Behavioral Hygiene”

We are now aware of the problem and already are discovering new technological means of identifying and helping those in need – but as before with the then “new,” protective concept of “sanitary” hygiene, the real miracle will occur only once a knowledge of behavioral hygiene is widely disseminated and a new awareness had of the need to treat children “like gold.” Hopefully it will prove as powerful a protective factor and concept as was that of “sanitary” hygiene. The power of the innovative concept of “sanitary hygiene” in the early 18th century was that it enabled an awareness of simple actions and changes in behavior that could be taken, such as the washing of ones hands with soap, that paved the way to seeing dramatic improvements in the public health.

An awareness of behavioral hygiene also means making simple changes in our behaviors and actions; such as by seeing to it that the SOC is maintained at an adequate level. A logical consequence of exposure to natural, societal, or familial dysfunctional stress as a child is that the behavioral responses of the child are then re-set to be more mistrustful of new situations and more focused on self-protection and narcissistic, self-serving behaviors. These behaviors will then be incorporated as a part of the social culture of the community at-large if a high enough percentage of that community is similarly symptomatic. In this fashion dysfunctional behaviors can become self-reinforcing and a cascade effect can occur. A strong SOC is a protective factor, especially in children, against this undesirable result. The SOC is both a protective factor against social dysfunction and an indicator of the level of social dysfunction in our communities. It is worth noting that when the SOC is low there is an increased probability that a community is experiencing a high level of social dysfunction, and that such a community is also more susceptible to damage and psychological upset and repercussions from future social and environmental upsets, such as from terrorism.

Once the protective concepts that encompass an awareness of behavioral hygiene are known by a large enough percentage of a community, nation, or the world, then the culture will hopefully change to accommodate that new knowledge in a myriad of invisible, intangible ways – and without anyone’s having the least awareness of it having occurred, as a result people will come to know others in a different way, will make allowances and forgive others in new ways, and society itself, and culture, will change subtly as the result. In this new world there may be hope for victims of abuse because of these new types of supportive mechanisms, however invisible. For example, where it is now common to think these persons cannot change, because they don’t, this may no longer then hold as true. The reasoning is that affected individuals may be far more susceptible and influenced by the larger society, and social norm and convention than is currently suspected or understood – this is the reason for instance that a strong sense of community (SOC) has been so strongly emphasized throughout as a significant protective factor.

As adults the behaviors of abuse victims tend to be unresponsive and resistant to change, and yet that same intractability includes a strong response to authority and awareness of social strictures and norms. This strong response can be elicited from the social directives of that authority and from an encompassing community support, especially if it is reward based. If those directives are inclusive and accommodating of their needs, and the person can be convinced to trust and believe in that authority, and in that community support, then that person might then be empowered enough to be able to see their behaviors change in subtle ways.

For decades it has been taught that the way to deal with autistic adults and children is to speak very slowly and simply and to limit the amount of external stimulation as much as possible inasmuch as most of them have no or little capacity for true communication, understanding or comprehension. It now appears this was the complete opposite of what truly works. With diligence and the proper support, and by speaking quickly and meaningfully, in many cases there are fully developed personalities with complex thoughts, likes, and dislikes that are capable of communication “trapped” inside many autistic individuals. It has been hypothesized that an increase in harmony between the two hemispheres of our brains might help to reduce social disharmony and dysfunction and that this might be achieved by increasing the harmony between what we ask of ourselves as individuals and what is expected of us by society.

In other words part of a “cure” for those suffering from personality disorders may be to change what is expected of them by society since it is so hard for them to change as individuals – for us to change the entire world underneath and around them - for the world to change in order to make it possible for them to heal – for US to change. This could only happen were each of us to change by educating ourselves about the behavioral transmission of neurotoxic stress, the importance of a strong sense of community, and about the need to be as aware of employing behavioral hygiene in our daily lives as we are of employing sanitary hygiene. As a society, in far too many cases we have failed to protect those that cannot protect themselves. Were this process of changing ourselves be found to actually work, it is hard to imagine anything more poetic, or more just, as a

means of our finding absolution and atonement for those prior failures (changing our perceptions in regard behavioral hygiene, especially around children, reduces secondhand transmission modes and subtly changes the world around those that we have failed, which is something they themselves cannot as readily change).

“My father says that almost the whole world is asleep. Everybody you know, everybody you see, everybody you talk to. He says that only a few people are awake - and they live in a state of constant, total amazement.”

— *Meg Ryan to Tom Hanks in Joe vs. the Volcano*

WE HAVE SOCIAL SERVICES, THEY KNOW ALL THIS, THEY ARE ON IT ALREADY, SO WHATS THE DIFFERENCE?

Abuse, violence, suicides, and crime are typically dealt with on an individual basis. What is new is that the effort to become #1 will mean focusing on familial and social dysfunction not through individual interventions, but as a matter of Public Health at the community level - this is a significant shift in paradigm. It is this focus which makes a **Community Social Services Channel** and the need of increasing the publics awareness of and involvement with our **Community Civic Center** so important. Concern and attention will be focused on the community-mind, or community-mentality, and on education of the community as a whole.

Stricken Communities Have Protective Institutions In-Place That Have Come into Existence Like a Natural Autoimmune-Response That Are Ready To Be Used: A Community, Charity, and Social Services Channel and more community involved Civic Center can help to bring all of the pieces together and make the entire project of seeing Rapid City become the number ONE lowest stress and healthiest small town in the nation a reality. It is theorized that an increased Sense of Community (SOC) may be a strong protective factor against stress. It is hoped that a community channel may be useful in helping to increase the SOC and to bring together the pre-existing protective factors and entities within the community into a more powerful whole.

Violence is NOT an Unavoidable part of the Human Condition It is a Blight Upon It, Like Smallpox

At one time disease was thought to be a part of the human condition, and thus unavoidable. *Violence, abuse and familial dysfunction are not an unavoidable part of the human condition; they are a blight on it, like smallpox.* Dissemination and knowledge of the concepts of childhood stress from exposure to dysfunction and the behavioral transmission of neurodegeneration and of how behavioral hygiene can combat them will hopefully lead to equally successful results as occurred earlier in this century with germs and sanitary hygiene.

The “Hidden-Hand:”

The real power behind educating and “inoculating” the public with “protective concepts:” In this there is great hope and reason for optimism. People are not just good; they are INCREDIBLY good! Things DO change; Wife-beating used to be considered a private matter between a man and his wife, it is now a reportable crime called spousal abuse. Believe in goodness not because you are a hopeless optimist, but because this basic urge towards happiness and goodness is reality - this is the “hidden hand” that functions to prevent the transmission of dysfunction from reaching a critical mass and fully engulfing a community or society. Understanding, knowledge and truth are key. The Japanese were inhumanely brutal to their captives in the Philippines during World War II, over 80% died in captivity. No human being can be expected to treat another in that fashion, the Japanese were quite clearly nothing but inhuman animals, seemingly there can be no other conclusion. Or can there? And if they are as human as we are, then we are nothing but evil incarnate ourselves. Or are we? The Japanese culture considered it a matter of extreme shame and individual failure and cowardice to allow oneself to be

captured. To the highly cultured Japanese mindset and world-view of the day a prisoner of war was better off dead and was an abomination. This is the value of knowledge, of truth, of reconciliation, what all protective concepts ultimately serve to make possible – the seeing in all hearts of a common humanity.

What is a Human Being?

So how is it that child abuse can cause such a dramatic internal physical result? The degree to which our physical brain is responsive to our socialization as children is nothing short of astounding. What defines us as human beings is the degree of our socialization, we are the only creatures on the planet to work cooperatively in groups of 100's of millions and billions, and the only creature to care for our young as long as we do.

Our one single most defining characteristic is our capacity for sociability. It is this sensitivity to socialization that is both the source of the problem and its solution, it is only by this same cooperation as a community and society that there is now a plausible hope that we may actually be able to stop the cycle of social and familial dysfunction, child abuse and evil.

A “National Research Testbed Community”

In light of recent discoveries the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) of the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have taken the position that dysfunction, abuse, violence and crime are a matter of Public Health falling under their jurisdiction that can perhaps best be dealt with as a community. Precisely because our local statistics are completely unacceptable, precisely because we are America's heartland both figuratively and literally, **we** are the logical *bulls-eye* for targeting this scourge.

The “Holy Grail” of Government Spending on Social Programs:

- ❖ See the Puff-Pastry of Linked Social Ills ALL Fall as a Group
- ❖ Realize Savings that are a *Significant Percentage* of the 3,000 Billion Estimated Annual Economic Cost (Inefficiency) of Transmittable Social Dysfunction in the US

Knowing now the enemy we face, and its nature, it is proposed that Rapid City and the surrounding communities put themselves forward as a **national research test-bed** to demonstrate that a concerted effort might be able to dramatically improve the statistics of dysfunction within our community across the board – in essence, to show that the cross-linked self-supporting “*puff-pastry*” of dysfunctional behaviors in our communities can be made to fall.

Success in this effort would show that these negative statistics of the “human condition” are clearly not part of the human condition at all, but are a blight upon it - a behaviorally transmitted disease. To those that will shrink from the words, "number one" upon hearing that we will strive for the happiest and healthiest children in the nation, one need simply ask of them; “Why not here?” Think about it: “*Why not?*”

Of course there is no reason, so here it should be. We can be number one, we can show the way - not because of pride or braggadocio, but because of our love for our children.

Ten Steps to a Solution

What is proposed is the Measurement (surveys, surveillance) and Reduction (intervention, prevention, treatment) of Behaviorally Transmitted Neurological Necrosis by the reduction of Direct (familial, stranger) and Secondhand (social) exposure to the Communicable (pathogenic) Behavioral Teratogens of Childhood Stress (without intent) and Abuse (with intent) through:

- **First** is the goal to unite the community behind the **#1 Lowest Stress and Healthiest in the Nation Effort**. State, county and local government, churches, schools, social organizations, and mass media are critical to this effort. A Community Channel can help to get this effort started and reach out to laypersons and specialists alike with the necessary information more quickly and effectively than any other means.
- **Second** is to provide regular **Expert and Community Forums** related to the topic of preventing childhood stress that involve national and local experts and lay people. This also encourages a strong Sense of Community (SOC) by providing a forum for national and local experts and laypersons to communicate and dialogue. Within these forums a core list of protective concepts particularly suited and tailored to the needs of that community can be developed. Seminars can be provided for social service, counseling, and charitable agencies to educate them in the latest data relating to these matters and to learn from them how the community effort can best be crafted and organized.
- **Third** is to employ a **Community PEG (Public, Education, Government) Access TV Channel for the “Social Marketing” of Core Protective Concepts** that were developed by community consensus through these community forums. It is imperative that every single person in the community knows and understands them, this is the “inoculation” phase of the program. Again, a Community Channel will have the widest market reach and frequency for accomplishing this social marketing. The results of seminars and forums can be aired on the Community Channel repetitively for extended periods. Neurotoxic Childhood Stress is an example of just such a powerful protective concept. Just having a PEG Community Channel is invaluable in and of itself because it implicitly supports and presents a strong Sense of Community, number eight, following.
- **Fourth** is to develop a confidential and comprehensive means of tracking and documenting problems of dysfunction in our communities by implementing a **Nationally Standardized Statistics Database**. We can follow existing guidelines already developed in detail by the CDC and NIH. These statistics can be made more widely available to all through use of a Community Channel.
- **Fifth** is to offer a *totally free, completely voluntary, and fully anonymous* **Stress & Health Community Survey** that persons of all ages will be encouraged to take part in. A Community Channel can help to ensure that everyone knows the reasons it is being made available and how the data will be used.

- *Sixth* is to promote our region as a **National Testbed Community** for targeting the root problem of childhood exposure to dysfunction in order to more successfully secure federal and other grants in a coordinated fashion among our existing social service providers and organizations. In seeking funds from these agencies the Community Channel will be the prime centerpiece that best demonstrates our communities commitment to tackling these issues as a community in a coordinated, cooperative, inclusive fashion. Promotion of our region as a National Testbed will empower our State political leaders in their efforts to help us secure grants and federal financial support.
- *Seventh* is to open a University “**Center for the Study of Behaviorally Transmitted Neurodegeneration.**” Courses and subject matter can be developed in video format for national distribution and for local airing on the Community Channel.
- *Eighth* is to **Promote a Strong Sense of Community (SOC).** One of the most effective ways to accomplish this is by presenting a Strong Community Leadership, but there are many other ways as well. A Community Channel and involved local community Civic Center are two more. Enlisting the community itself in this effort by emphasizing everyone’s joint responsibility in the effort to become #1 will be invaluable in helping to increase the SOC.
- *Ninth* is to **Promote and Provide Frequent Gathering Opportunities** by whatever means possible. The Community **Civic Center** is the most obvious means of directly targeting this task. Any gathering qualifies as worthwhile; sports events, fairs, street dances, theatre productions, band performances, auctions, group and club meetings, church gatherings and public forums are all ripe venues for this type of encouragement. The provision of a singular focus in the physical sense and creation of a strong sense of common “place” is a profound instinct and correlates with monument building and other historically common behaviors that also involve especially the emotion of community pride.
- *Tenth* is to promote and **Provide a Strong Sense of Leadership** and community pride in that leadership. Concentrating this in a single easily recognized individual is making use of a powerful and very instinctual natural inclination. This need not be a Mayor and will vary with the community. Educational or university leaders, persons of national or local fame, business, church, or any other type of notoriety as long as it is of sufficient quality to qualify as having a sense of power and “alpha-male” quality – even if a woman. If the mayor is this focus in a community for example, then it would be beneficial that it be understood by those involved in the government that there is always a significant ancillary benefit to the community at-large in being extra diligent and aware of the need to protect such a community leaders public image. This extra awareness and diligence should always exist as an additional factor of some significance that extends beyond the context of any specific issue or dealings.

The Need for A Community Response:

Goal of Attracting \$10-15 Million in Additional Grants to the Region

In light of these recent discoveries the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) of the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have taken the position that abuse, violence and crime are a matter of Public Health falling under their jurisdiction that can best be dealt with as a community. The goal of having a community channel; an involved community civic center; a local personality spearheading and presenting a strong community leadership, such as the Mayor; a community-wide effort to become #1; promoting ourselves as a National Testbed Community; a coordinated effort to increase the sense of community (SOC); and effort to attract \$10-15 million in grants is to educate everyone that this is an issue of Public Health. This will help to prevent both the Direct (familial, multigenerational) and Secondhand (social) Behavioral Transmission of Neurotoxic Childhood Stress. An increased Sense of Community (SOC) may well in and of itself provide a degree of protection against early childhood stress, including social stress such as that from terrorism, that is greater than most would know to expect. Attracting an estimated \$10-15 million in Federal and Private grants will be made possible by having an active and involved Community Civic Center, Community TV Channel, and strong presentation of Community Leadership by the Mayor (including cooperation of City, County councils and all broadcast, cable TV, radio, print, and billboard interests) that will make the entire project of seeing Rapid City become the number ONE lowest stress and healthiest small town in the nation a reality.

IMAGINE IF ALMOST EVERYONE IN A COMMUNITY KNEW ABOUT THE Behavioral Transmission of Neurotoxic Stress, the importance of observing Behavioral Hygiene – especially in regard to treating children like *Gold*, and felt a Strong Sense of Community: HOW MIGHT THIS INVISIBLY ALTER ONES LARGER WORLD-VIEW ABOUT ONESELF AND OUR SOCIETY?

These are just a few of the reasons your involvement and support is being solicited.

“The young do not know enough to be prudent, and therefore they attempt the impossible – and achieve it, generation after generation.”

–Pearl S. Buck

“Nature, Mr. Allnut, is what we are put in this world to rise above.”

- Katharine Hepburn to Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*, 1951

ECONOMIC INCENTIVE: There is a financial aspect that will come to play a more and more significant role as word and understanding of the behavioral transmission of neurodegeneration spreads. There is a deep foundational scientific reason for our extreme biological/physical sensitivity to the generational cycle of familial and societal dysfunction, abuse, and neglect. There is a dynamic balance being struck between self-interest and group-interest that plays out in our everyday lives and that defines what sociology and psychology are all about. All of this can now be modeled on computers and understood in terms of mathematical formulas and cellular automata. Even the dual hemispheres of our brains appear to be linked to this generalized strategy that is a part and parcel of our very ability to be social creatures. This natural balancing function incorporates the intergenerational cycles of abuse as a significant component, and hugely impacts not just human emotions, but human economics. Familial and societal dysfunction cause far-ranging economic inefficiencies that percolate throughout a society and go far beyond the costs of divorce counseling and high incarceration rates.

Without getting either too mathematical or too philosophical, the balancing function discussed IS pure economics at its core. Although economic inefficiencies at the level of an individual life can only be guessed at, the effect at the level of national and world economies is definitive and set at a percentage that varies little from microbes to men.

This percentage is a part of nature and of all natural systems. It applies as well to a colony of yeast as it does to large human populations. Somewhere between five and twenty percent of the Gross National Product is affected when the system is balanced, or in a natural cycle of seeking balance. When severely out of balance it might reach thirty percent or greater.

Sadly, social dysfunction and the unhappiness, chaos, and evil that it causes will likely never reach zero precisely because it is a natural part of the innate sociobiological equation that balances self-interests and group-interests; zero may simply not be attainable. However, if an understanding of how this dynamic balancing and control system works can lead to even just a *very attainable ten to thirty percent* reduction in its effects then this *still* remains a huge and real economic benefit equal to perhaps **5-10%** of the GNP of the nation – *a huge economic windfall*. The size of this economic effect is thus such that the benefits of influencing it positively should be able to be felt and visible at the city level, as well as at the larger national and societal levels. This economic gain is real and means that there are savings and profit aplenty to be had by reducing social and familial dysfunction in our communities. It may even be feasible for cities and states to issue bonds at some point in the future to achieve these types of savings for a community. The savings from being able to build smaller prisons alone would justify such novel financial instruments.

The Justice Department reported last week that at the end of 2001, more than 5.6 million adults - one in every 37 U.S. adults - were either in state or federal prison or had done prison time during their lives. - *Bureau of Justice Statistics: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>*

HOW IT MIGHT WORK, *WHERE THE MAGIC WOULD COME FROM:*

Mass Psychology = COMMUNITY-MIND

Can a Community have a *personality*?

Measurement of Familial and Societal Dysfunction: We have all been exposed to some degree of direct or secondhand fractional abuse and each of us falls somewhere on a sliding scale or continuum indicative of the degree of that exposure. We all live within a society or nation, and a community or city that itself will fall somewhere on this same sliding scale. In this manner our own individual degree of secondhand exposure is partially dependent therefore upon the communities and societies we live within, and not just our exposure through family and friends. In Japan, a country of about 300 million people, there are fewer than a few thousand murders per year, this is not a matter of access to handguns, and this takes into account homicides of all types. Here in the United States, also home to the same population of about 300 million people, we have over 15,000 homicides per year. This is not just a matter of one country's statistics being larger than another, this is a whole different ballgame. If in fact there were such a thing as an autocatalytic run-away reaction sociological process whereby first and secondhand behavioral transmission of dysfunction were to feed and maintain the process, then surely the discrepancies in these statistics would be evidence of it. Just as with individuals there is the clinically identified behavioral response termed "resistance" and mirroring, perhaps this can also be displayed at the community level?

If you have not been abused or exposed to dysfunction as a child, how does any of this affect you or your children?

Direct and Secondhand Behavioral Transmission: Familial dysfunction and the accompanying personality disorders and behaviors (which are the result of neurodegeneration and chemical imbalances) are estimated to affect twenty to thirty percent of our community - hard to believe, but a fact! *Direct* (familial, generational) transmission of these behaviors is well documented. *Secondhand behavioral transmission* (social) transmission is less documented but means there is the potential of being partially damaged, or "*fractionally abused*" by ones lifetime social exposure to playmates, friends, acquaintances, workmates and lovers. No matter how stable your own household, your child's neighborhood and school friends are exposing them to these dysfunctional behavior patterns and that exposure will continue into adulthood through fellow workers, relationships, and dates - it is unavoidable.

How Secondhand Transmission Is Responsible For Keeping the Puff-Pastry of Dysfunctional Behaviors Inflated

There is the possibility for secondhand social transmission in addition to direct familial transmission of dysfunctional behaviors and of the physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral consequences. This is not to say that actual brain necrosis is possible just from minor social contact with a person suffering from a personality disorder or from someone exposed to dysfunction as a child. The effects are cumulative both to an individual, to a family, a social group, and to a community as a whole, en mass.

If one were to generate a computer-model showing the linkages between individuals, their interactions, and the linkages between the various forms of dysfunctionality and the transmission of that dysfunction between individuals then *secondhand transmission* might be visible and found to be the main underlying factor that keeps the system inflated. It functions within society to regulate the efficiency and speed of the direct behavioral transmission of abuse and dysfunction. It is what supports its continued propagation to a large degree, and what counteracts many of the naturally evolved protective factors inherent to a community that would otherwise counter the spread and increase of the dysfunctional antisocial behaviors within a family, social group, or community.

“The very definition of a personality disorder is that it causes distress for both the person who has the disorder and those that interact with them.”
(Mason, Paul T., 1998)

Everyone experiences secondhand transmission. We deal with it as adults dealing with other adults, as children dealing with other children, and as children dealing with other adults and family. It is thus a potentially powerful factor that is far more ubiquitous and common, even if not as intense and dramatic as direct familial transmission through criminal child abuse.

Analogies that are helpful would be to compare the effects of secondhand transmission to a weakly blowing wind that is constant, 24 hours a day, every day. Such a wind might go on for decades and be almost imperceptible but can wear down mountains. Compare this to infrequent tornadoes and severe thunderstorms that can cause dramatic and easily visible change quickly, but have negligible long-term effects on a landscape.

Using the analogy of a French *puff-pastry*, secondhand transmission would be the invisible supporting gas that allows it to rise and supports it. The effects of secondhand transmission are most analogous however if one compares it to a background temperature and its effect on the likelihood of a forest fire occurring. Forest fires can occur almost anytime, especially during thunderstorms, but when the temperature is 100 degree's outside, or has been very high for a very long time and the ground is very dry, then the odds of a fire occurring increase dramatically.

GETTING THERE: The Goal to Be Number ONE

Forbes Magazine recently rated Rapid City the **8th** best small community in the nation to do business in. Of the various criteria that were taken into consideration Rapid City's worst rating was for crime, in which it rated **101st**. The goal is to become first in not just the statistic of best small community to start a business in, but to be the Lowest Stress Small City with the healthiest and happiest children and adults of any comparable region in the nation – it can be done, we have the knowledge, we need merely need to find the WILL to work together to accomplish it.

Brain imaging studies have shown that child abuse (this includes neglect, physical, sexual, and neonatal exposure to toxins) can reduce the size of the Corpus Callosum (connects the two halves of the brain), the Amygdala, and the Hippocampus (governs emotional control, eating, longevity) by as much as thirty percent – what does this really mean though?

Horrible disfigurement occurs, inside and invisibly. Externally only psychological behavioral personality disorders and dysfunction show. The physical scars are all on the inside of the victim. We didn't know this before, now we do – and it is time to act.

If a madman prowled our streets randomly tossing acid into the faces of fifty children here in town, or one out of every hundred children, 50 kids out of 5,000 - there would be no effort too great on anyone's part to end the carnage. The National Guard and every single citizen would be out on the streets giving 100%, plus some. Of course this number does not reflect the real number, the real number is nowhere close to 1%. The real number is over 25%! How many of these children are horribly disfigured internally by the time they reach 18 one can only guess. We CAN make this the NUMBER ONE best city in the nation for our kids – because we live here, because we love them. What are **you** willing to sacrifice to save even one such child from such a fate?

This is no scare tactic or exaggeration: the scars are on the inside of our children, but are no less REAL for being invisible.

Here in Rapid City, SD, so severe is this problem that our local judges and prosecutors, heroes all, have taken to the streets literally to warn us about the unacceptable rates of juvenile crime. Deserving special note in this regard are Judges Tice and Kerns. It is time we hear their warning cries, time to join with them. Any reasonable parent if given a choice would prefer disfigurement from acid on their child's face to potentially permanent damage to their brains and personalities. The reality is even worse than having a madman loose that is throwing acid into the faces of innocent children. It is hard to conceive of such high numbers, it does not seem possible, or real.

We must not shrink from this. Our children are only twenty percent of the population but are fully 100% of our city's future. The behavioral transmission of abuse and the brain necrosis (tissue destruction) it can cause is no longer an issue of debate, it is scientific fact – and even if small degree's of such damage can be considered “natural” in the abstract sociological sense, few of us would want our own children to be a part of the natural bell curve . A pat on the head for victims of abuse with the admonition to “*get over it, it happened when you were a kid,*” and “*you can't blame everything on your parents*” **is no longer acceptable.** The continued abuse of our children must come to an end – simply **MUST!** *But how?*

Abuse Statistics & Deep Unconscious Psychology of Disbelief/Avoidance

The details of crimes are the stuff of our daily social banter; the Hillside strangler, drive-by shootings, murders. We exchange these stories animatedly over donuts and coffee in the mornings, avidly seeking and exchanging detail upon detail. Yet there is a certain type of crime whose details we shun, the stories are so horrific, we prefer not to think about them:

- A five-year-old baby boys hands are placed on the red-hot coils of a stovetop, and are left untreated so that the fingers heal connected.
- The father of a seven year old little girl cajoles her with how special she is, and uses Marshmallow Puff Crème on himself as a way of enticing her while whispering how dearly he loves her. Afterwards he explains how she will be responsible for Daddy having to leave forever if she isn't convincing enough while explaining to Mommy about the many tiny bloodstained underwear found hidden under the stairwell, and how much it would hurt Mommy if she found out about their "*special*" times together.

We put this particular type of crime out of mind. We don't want to hear it, read it, or even know about it – especially not the horrid details. It is too *horrible*, too *revolting*.

When it isn't talked about, then just like the bloody panties under the stairwell, the problems of child abuse in our own city cease to exist.

To no ones surprise, upon further investigation it is found that the two adults in the prior stories were themselves from abusive dysfunctional families. We don't enjoy discussing the harsh realities of child abuse with our lawmakers and politicians any more than we do with each other. The baby's fingers were eventually surgically separated, making the little hands a little less hideous. His external physical wounds could be effectively treated. Unfortunately, recent research indicates that the equally real and physical injuries inflicted to his developing mind, and to the young girls, are much more resistant to healing.

The scars no less real for being invisible, the scars are invisible because they are all on the inside. The internal scarring is equally disfiguring, if not more so, resulting in tortured damaged minds and lives. It is time we make ourselves read and hear the details. It is time we speak of these things and give them thought, no matter how unpleasant the task. While the details are rightly unfit for social banter, our failure to communicate and

discuss child abuse makes us all complicit to a small degree through our inaction. Inaction too, is a sin.

The incidence of borderline organizational thinking patterns and secondhand transmission of dysfunctional behaviors, although not involving actual sexual abuse as just described, are the most significant indirect factors that maintain high levels of the more severe criminal behaviors within a community. The less “virulent” secondhand displaying of dysfunction becomes part of a self-feeding cycle that increases in virulence to become full-blown physical and sexual abuse. Once this occurs then the cycle repeats as the behavior patterns that result from actual child abuse act as the most virulent and concentrated form of this societal contagion and goes on to affect not just its victim, but all those that he or she contacts, goes to school with, works with, befriends, or has a relationship with for the entirety of that persons life and then beyond through their children, friends, co-workers, and relatives lives. In this way, the propagation of child abuse and of its social consequences within a population occurs in a fashion that is fundamentally different from any other social ill because its spread is essentially identical to a viral pathogen. Just as with a contagious virus, a zero-tolerance attitude must be sought focused on the elimination of child abuse, familial dysfunction, and FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorder) must be sought if an epidemic is to be avoided. With child abuse and neglect the damage is not to ones surface appearance – the damage is far, far worse than that. It reduces the actual volume of parts of the brain by up to thirty percent and damages one mentally and emotionally for life. If you think about it any parent would far prefer to have ones child horribly disfigured for life by the burns of a stovetop heating element or by acid tossed into their child’s face.

So why isn’t there more concern about this?

- ❑ **(one)** The foremost reason is precisely because it is so invisible. But there are also other reasons:
- ❑ **(two)** Because it is so pervasive, possibly as high as 25-40% of the populations in some communities;
- ❑ **(three)** It is only in the past few years that we have had conclusive evidence and fMRI images to substantiate its true consequences physically and emotionally;
- ❑ **(four)** There is also the commonly heard refrain that nothing can be done about it; and it’s corollary, that this type of evil and violence are just part of the “human condition” and thus unavoidable.
- ❑ **(five)** And a final reason is because it so unpleasant and not something anyone is comfortable or enjoys discussing or even thinking about.
- ❑ **(six)** Most people have enough to take care of just looking out for their own families and children and do not realize that when every other person your child meets throughout their lifetime may come from a background of dysfunction and display some fractional degree of borderline personality behaviors. This “secondhand behavioral transmission” means that potentially, no one is unaffected.

The nationwide youth behavior survey finds that 8-10% of all children answers “yes” to the question; **“Have you ever been forced to have sexual intercourse against your will?”** Eight to ten percent! Think about that for a moment. There is not much “wiggle” room left in the way that this question is phrased; it could not be any more direct or straightforward. It is well established that surveys of this type underestimate the real incidence by a factor of two or three, which means 20-30% of our children have been abused. A central glaring error of omission becomes apparent when the focus of public discussion and published articles surrounding the YRBS survey results center on such things as the eating and exercising habits of the children and their chewing-tobacco use. One must ask, *how can this be?*

Nationwide a 7% increase has been seen for rapes in small and mid-size communities in the past few years – many are statutory rapes of children under 14.

An informal survey of local psychologists, therapists, and school counselors appears to provide a consensus that an astounding 30-40% of all women and men in our local communities have suffered childhood abuse or been exposed to familial dysfunction. National ads now regularly air a conservative statistic that 1 out of every 4 women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, *yet few of us truly register what all of these staggering statistics really mean – WHY?*

FRIGHTENING STATISTICS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Before the age of 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will experience sexual abuse. Every year child welfare agencies in the US receive more than three million allegations of child abuse and neglect. The suicide rate for white males aged 15 to 24 has tripled since 1950. Suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in the US. Someone attempts suicide every minute of every day, every day eighty succeed. Suicide is the third-ranking cause of death for teen’s aged 10 to 19. Pierre and Rapid City, SD, have the distinction of having two of the highest suicide rates in America. *(Source: Current Trends in Child Abuse Reporting and Fatalities: The results of the 1995 Annual Fifty-State Survey, National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research)*

Under the Endangerment Standard, the number of abused and neglected children nearly doubled from 1986 to 1993. Physical abuse nearly doubled, sexual abuse more than doubled, and emotional abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect were all more than two and one-half times their NIS-2 levels. The total number of children seriously injured and the total number endangered every year both quadrupled during this seven-year period. *(Sources: Data from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System Summary Data Component (NCANDS SDC) NDAS for years 1990 through 1999. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, September 1996, findings from the Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-3))*

Nationally, from 1979 through 1992 the number of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) births per 10,000, nearly quadrupled. The number of children damaged to a lesser degree, called fetal alcohol effects (FAE) is estimated to be triple the number of FAS cases. According

to the National Center for Health Statistics 18% of American children grew up with an alcoholic or problem drinker parent. (Source: *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 42, no. 17, 7 May 1993, pp. 7-9, CDC BDMP data)

A New Meaning for “Zero Tolerance”

The real societal costs of child abuse are far greater than are currently realized. The amount of money, effort, attention, and concern that society currently expends towards this social ill need to be re-evaluated in light of these new scientific findings. The behavior patterns themselves that result from child abuse act as a societal contagion which affects not just its victim, but all those that he or she contacts, goes to school with, works with, befriends, or has a relationship with, for the entirety of that persons life, and then beyond through their children, friends, co-workers, and relatives lives. In this way, the propagation of child abuse and of its social consequences within a population occurs in a fashion that is fundamentally different from any other social ill. Just as with a contagious virus, a zero-tolerance attitude must be sought not in the sense of dealing with it after-the-fact such as by putting to death anyone suspected of child abuse, but by making the societal commitment to focus on figuring out how to get at the roots of dysfunction and prevent its transmittal generation to generation through **reconciliation** and **remediation** efforts. It must be pulled out at the roots to actually see its elimination if an epidemic is to be avoided.

Direct Linkage to Disease and Health, Not Just Mental and Personality Disorders

Exposure to dysfunction in childhood has been linked with increased incidence of physical diseases, not just mental disorders, these include diabetes, immune system allergies, heart disease, cancers, eating disorders, and even an increased frequency of accidents.

*Think of it; what **if** we truly are all born good, for real? If 1 of every 37 persons have been incarcerated, if 1 in 5 have been victim of a sexual crime, if not a single person in the country has never been the victim of a crime of some type, if 100% of us either has or will experience victimization at some time, and **if** we truly are all **born** good, then what does this really mean?*

THE SKEPTIC: I don't even like thinking about it. This "brain damage" news is the ugliest most horrible information I have heard in a long time. How on earth is it that anyone can think this is WONDERFUL and EXCITING news?

- ✓ Social Dysfunction, Violence, Criminal Acts, and Evil may not be as much a part of the Human Condition as they are a Blight upon it, like Smallpox!
- ✓ Much of the unhappiness and stress of our social lives is part of a natural balancing of the invisible forces of variability and of stasis, of self-interest and of group-offspring interests as a natural optimum middle-path set-point of maximum complexity between chaos and stasis is constantly being sought that inherently necessitates a non-zero level of social dysfunction.
- ✓ We must focus on our joint responsibility in regard child abuse, on how we pass it on generation to generation, and on how the cycle of violence can only be made to stop by understanding that we are vessels for this evil and dysfunction, that we pass it on like an ocean of small waters, vessel to vessel, never an ocean seeing, and are not ourselves evil. We are merely the transporting vessels for it; "it" is not of us, it passes through us.

Think of it; what *if* almost all of us *essentially start out "good."* Committing social dysfunction (doing bad) kills brain cells in both victim and victimizer alike. Having bad done to you (being the victim of social dysfunction) kills brain cells, and many victims become victimizers and spread the disease. But "bad" is not who we are. Social dysfunction (bad) is what we transmit, like hollow cylinders or vessels we act to pass it along, but it is not necessarily of us. And in this new conceptualization lies the potential to stop the behavioral "passing along" transmission of it, generation after generation, and to eliminate the most extreme dysfunctional behaviors from our repertoire of what it is that we consider part of "human nature." This is not to say that the entire homeostatic system of upregulation and downregulation as checks and balances, including social dysfunction, is not natural, it is. We have the ability to change what is natural for us, to add and remove those aspects that we will. Flying is now a part of what is natural for us, and it is no longer considered an integral part of our nature as men to treat our women as possessions and chattel. Dysfunctional and ultimately antisocial (bad) actions are not as much a part of us, or our nature, as they are a learned behavioral response. Like a dog conditioned to salivate at the sound of a dinner bell, our minds are pre-wired and programmed to respond dramatically. Our emotional responses, our personalities, and our physical brains literally morph and change in structure, shape, and size when we are exposed to social dysfunction. This dysfunction, and our brains response to it, has no set point of onset, no line to be crossed. Behavioral changes and neuronal damage exist along a continuum that can result from mere neglect or insult, to the most hideous perversion and cruelty. This is a part of a natural order and balance, and we all have a place somewhere on this continuum. Incredibly, this natural ordering and balancing occurs in a manner that is completely disconnected from our conscious awareness, and this dramatic unconscious response can then lead to even more chaos, dysfunction, evil and violence. It is as if we were just the vessels for it, while like an ocean of small waters, it passes bottle to bottle, and yet never an ocean do we see. Passing in this fashion, through millions of

bottles, always in continuous motion, an ocean composed of many small waters has now been found hiding.

ADDENDA:

McLean Researchers Document Brain Damage Linked to Child Abuse and Neglect

December 14, 2000 -- Belmont, MA -- McLean Hospital researchers have identified four types of brain abnormalities linked to child abuse and neglect, providing the first comprehensive review about the multiple ways in which abuse can damage the developing brain. In the Fall 2000 issue of *Cerebrum*, the researchers also review evidence that suggests this early damage to the developing brain may subsequently cause disorders like anxiety and depression in adulthood.

"The science shows that childhood maltreatment may produce changes in both brain function and structure," says Martin Teicher, MD, PhD, director of the Developmental Biopsychiatry Research Program at McLean, and author of the paper. Although a baby is born with almost all the brain cells (neurons) he will ever have, the brain continues to develop actively throughout childhood and adolescence. "A child's interactions with the outside environment causes connections to form between brain cells," Teicher explains. "Then these connections are pruned during puberty and adulthood. So whatever a child experiences, for good or bad, helps determine how his brain is wired."

The McLean team identifies four types of abnormalities caused by abuse and neglect. "These changes are permanent," says Teicher. "This is not something people can just get over and get on with their lives."

1. Limbic irritability: The limbic system is a network of brain cells sometimes called the "emotional brain." It controls many of the most fundamental emotions and drives important for survival. The McLean researchers found evidence that abuse may cause disturbances in electrical impulses as limbic nerve cells communicate, resulting in seizures or significant abnormalities on an EEG, a diagnostic test that measures brain waves. The researchers studied 253 adults who came to an outpatient mental health clinic for psychiatric assessment. A little more than half reported being physically and/or sexually abused as children. The researchers developed a checklist (the Limbic System Checklist-33 or LSCL-33) to determine how often the patients experienced symptoms similar to those that occur in patients with temporal lobe epilepsy. They found that patients who experienced abuse scored much higher suggesting an underlying disturbance in the limbic system. Follow-up studies of 115 children admitted to McLean were conducted to measure EEG disturbances. Patients with a history of abuse were twice as likely as non-abused patients to have an abnormal EEG. Interestingly, all of the extra EEG abnormalities affected the left hemisphere of the brain. EEG abnormalities were associated with more self-destructive behavior and more aggression.

2. Arrested development of the left hemisphere: The brain is divided into two hemispheres, with the left controlling language and the right responsible for visual-spatial ability, perception and expression of negative affect. In six separate studies and analyses,

the smallest involving 20 people and the largest involving 115, the researchers reviewed medical records, conducted neuropsychological tests to measure left- and right-brain abilities, examined the results of MRI scans to provide pictures of the brain at work, and studied the results of sophisticated EEG coherence tests, which provided information on brain structure as well as function. These studies provide evidence of deficient development of the left brain hemisphere in abused patients, so that the right hemisphere may be more active than in healthy individuals. The researchers speculate that the left hemisphere deficits seen in abused patients may contribute to the development of depression and increase the risk of memory impairments.

3. Deficient integration between the left and right hemispheres: The corpus callosum is a major information pathway connecting the two hemispheres of the brain. The researchers reviewed MRI brain scans from 51 patients admitted to McLean's Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Program, and compared them to 97 MRIs of healthy children obtained from the National Institute of Mental Health. In abused children, the corpus callosum was smaller than in healthy children. After reviewing the medical records, the researchers found that neglect was associated with a 24 percent to 42 percent reduction in the size of various regions of the corpus callosum in boys, but sexual abuse had no effect. In girls, sexual abuse was associated with an 18 percent to 30 percent smaller size in the corpus callosum, but neglect had no effect. They also found that abused patients shifted degree of activity between their two hemispheres to a much greater extent than normal. They theorize that a smaller corpus callosum leads to less integration of the hemispheres. This in turn can result in dramatic shifts in mood or personality.

4. Increased vermal activity: The cerebellar vermis is a part of the brain that is involved in emotion, attention and the regulation of the limbic system. The McLean researchers used a new functional MRI technique known as T2 relaxometry, which provides information about blood flow to the brain during a resting state, to measure vermal activity in both abused and healthy individuals. Thirty-two adults participated, including 15 with a history of sexual or intense verbal childhood trauma but no physical trauma. The higher a participant's LSCL-33 score, the greater the degree of vermal activity or blood flow. The researchers theorize that the abused patients had higher vermal activity in order to quell electrical irritability within the limbic system. They hypothesize that the cerebellar vermis helps to maintain emotional balance, but that trauma may impair this ability.

After documenting these four types of brain abnormalities, the McLean researchers examined animal studies to determine how such damage might occur. Such studies show that neglect and trauma increase production of cortisol and decrease production of the thyroid hormone, which affect development of neurochemical and neurotransmitter receptors in the hippocampus, amygdala and locus coeruleus, parts of the brain that regulate fear and anxiety.

Based on these studies, the McLean team theorizes that the stress caused by child abuse and neglect may also trigger the release of some hormones and neurotransmitters while inhibiting others, in effect remodeling the brain so that the individual is "wired" to respond

to a hostile environment. "We know that an animal exposed to stress and neglect early in life develops a brain that is wired to experience fear, anxiety and stress," says Teicher. "We think the same is true of people."

McLean Hospital is the largest psychiatric teaching facility of Harvard Medical School, an affiliate of Massachusetts General Hospital.

Making the Elephant Visible

Social Dysfunction, Violence, and Evil may not be as much a part of the Human Condition as they are a Blight upon it, like Smallpox!

Poet John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887) tells of six men of Indostan who, "went to see the elephant (though all of them were blind), that each by observation might satisfy his mind." The first blind man, feeling the broad flank of the animal, proclaimed an elephant to be "very like a wall." The second, feeling the elephant's tusk insisted, "but an elephant is like a spear!" The third, feeling the trunk, insisted the elephant more "like a snake, the fourth feeling the knee said, "Idiots! The elephant is like a tree!" The fifth, feeling the ear insisted the elephant to be most "like a fan," while the sixth, feeling the tail said, "Any fool can see that an elephant is like a rope." Once one sees other people, oneself, and the world in a new and larger truth, one can never again quite see it any other way.

The Sexual Abuse of Children: Shifting the Paradigm

June 11, 2002 Transcript of Fran Henry, founder of "STOP IT NOW!"

Keynote Speech at Annual Meeting of Centers for Disease Control, CDC, in Atlanta, Georgia.

I am old enough to step back and look into my family history—not the abuse history that I will speak of shortly, but further back. I found a fascinating man—brother to my great-great grandfather. This man lived a long life in the mid-1800's in England. He discovered the link between disease and the raw sewage that commonly ran in the streets and back alleys of cities. He introduced septic systems. Queen Victoria knighted Edwin Chadwick for his discoveries, and he was dubbed a "sanitary philosopher." I imagine him, like Dr. John Snow of Broad Street pump fame, as one of the first public health scientists. I have fallen in love with that term, "sanitary philosopher," for where but in flowery, decorative Victorian England would anyone come up with such a beautiful title to describe someone who looked deeply into the waste products of life? I have wondered, too, as I have thought of great, great Uncle Edwin—was it hard for him to look—to really see--into sewage and to find new ways of protecting health?

Similarly, I imagine that many of you came into public health looking at chronic and infectious diseases. How hard do you think it was for the early public health scientists to look squarely at the disfigurement of small pox, polio, tuberculosis, malaria and the like?

What gave people the strength to look into the heart of illness and the unknown and not blame it on the devil or on God—to not run the other way? We have a challenge just like that today as we look at the seeming imponderables of injury and violence prevention. We have to gird ourselves to look into intentional injury prevention, where the pathogen is a person, not a germ.

To muster that courage we can depend upon the bedrock of the public health approach—looking at the effects, positing the causes, building interventions on data, evaluating, and disseminating findings. I thank the staff at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control for the privilege and opportunity to talk to you today. And I thank each member of the Center’s staff. You have given all of us a tremendous gift in formulating the “public health approach to violence prevention.” And though I don’t have time to publicly mention every one of you who have helped this field, and me, I want to make sure that you do not underestimate the value and importance of your collective contribution.

As I talk to you today during the Tenth Anniversary year of the Center, I will speak of preventing the sexual abuse of children, but I will also reflect on my interactions with the public health system represented by the Center, for anniversaries call out for that kind of thoughtful reflection. So let me go back to a question I asked a moment ago. What gives us the courage and the strength to look into the painful effects of a disease or disorder and look scientifically for clues to cures? Dr. Wanda Jones, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health, tells a story of years ago when she was looking at statistics on sexually transmitted diseases and she heard that data talking to her. As the data came in and it was separated by age and gender, a curious split happened. Girls demonstrated a much higher rate of infection at younger years than boys did. She wondered aloud if the cause was child sexual abuse, but was told, “We can’t call it that.”

She did not let that question die, and it fueled her interest in child sexual abuse as a risk factor for social problems. Sometimes the data don’t speak; they scream. The data we have on child sexual abuse have been screaming for decades. Yet, when it comes to preventing these kinds of injuries, I hear people saying—we don’t know what to do, this behavior is not curable, it is part of the human condition, etc. etc.

The politics of preventing sexual abuse of our nation’s youngest citizens has not kept pace with the data. Who can help to advance a solution based on facts? It is those of you sitting in this room and listening to this talk. You are uniquely positioned to view violence and injury prevention as one of the next great accomplishments of the public health system. You are uniquely positioned to study human volition and combine the results of study with action; you understand that people can both recognize and alter unhealthy behaviors. What a contribution you make to humanity when you do this!

Please, do not underestimate the power of your contribution. Just as you have seen advances in disease control spread throughout the world, you will come to see the strides in violence prevention spreading globally. *Your work is that powerful, its contribution to planetary well being that inevitable.*

“Many of the truths we cling to depend greatly on our point of view.”
– *Obi-Wan Kenobi, Star Wars character*

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WHITE PAPER

- *Civic Marketing Plan* -

Civic CENTER & Community PEG TV Channels

Increasing the **Sense of Community (SOC)** *In Rapid City, South Dakota*

PARTNERS IN BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER:

- ✓ Effort to be #1 Lowest-Stress & Healthiest Small City in the Nation & Forbes Magazines #1 Best Small City in The Nation for Business & The American Civic Leagues #1 Best All-American City
- ✓ Air a Community, Charity & Social Services Channel
- ✓ Increase Civic Center Community Involvement
- ✓ Present a Strong Leadership Personality: *such as the Mayor*
- ✓ Achieve National Testbed Status to Attract \$10-15 Million in Grants for Cities #1 Healthiest, Lowest Stress Effort

Partners in increasing Sense of Community (SOC) & becoming #1 Lowest-Stress & Healthiest Small City in the Nation:

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Impacting the Bottom Line:

It is hoped that the Civic Center will find some value in the general concept that is the core of this proposal, which is to dramatically increase its involvement and visibility and take full advantage of its pre-eminent and singular ability to positively affect our Sense of Community (SOC) here in Rapid City. However, the purpose of this proposal is NOT to perform a social service that will greatly benefit the community, although that will hopefully occur, the purpose is to:

Revitalize, Re-package, Modernize and Re-Brand the Civic Center Concept to Increase Revenue

- ❑ Increase Out-of-State Visitation of Conventions & Trade-Shows
- ❑ Increase Out-of-State & Local Patronage of Events & Entertainment

It is **NOT** being suggested that the Civic Center should be the instigator or primary sponsor of the effort to increase our SOC and be the #1 Lowest Stress & Healthiest City - *this can only be a community-wide effort.*

However, the Civic Center **IS** the physical representation of our community's ability to gather, to come together, to work together, and in both the abstract and real sense it is the single most significant physical, concrete representation of our Sense of Community. Each of the ideas herein proposed have one thing in common, they all make the fullest possible use of the area's greatest asset – *our community.*

By enlisting the aid of the community at-large a number of truly novel and innovative marketing opportunities become possible. A definite plus is that Rapid City would also stand to see a significant social benefit as well. This would be because although the major focus will be on increasing out-of-state visitation, a primary means of accomplishing this will be by increasing the local involvement of the community.

Should the Civic Center find value in any of the ideas within this proposal, or kinship with the spirit of the proposal, then any of numerous options might be considered at that time. This might include creation of a joint venture, or of a wholly owned Marketing and Promotions Company, could simply involve signing on as a client, or none of these. The Marketing Company, if that is the route taken, could be for-profit or not-for-profit. It would specialize in providing services to smaller civic centers and arenas. Although it would service clients nationwide, its first mission would be to increase the revenue from conventions and trade shows here in Rapid City.

In pursuing these efforts the Civic Center might opt to help in the creation of an exciting new business venture that will be able to apply for up to \$100,000 in grants/funds from the Value Added Tourism Sub-Fund, or it might prefer to make use of the ideas contained herein and apply itself directly and then consider hiring the author in the capacity of employee or consultant.

These proposals involve the effort to make Rapid City the #1 Healthiest, Happiest, and Lowest Stress Small City in the Nation. It is also proposed that to secure the aid and support of the seven largest Federal agencies in this effort to be #1 that we promote ourselves as a “national testbed community.” These various efforts will be considered newsworthy by trade magazines and media at a minimum, and could well receive national press. Our community efforts to increase our SOC will be a significant marketing tool to get the attention and interest of trade shows and conventions, especially those in the private and governmental medical, health, and social services sectors.

Apply for \$100,000 VAT Sub Fund: The Civic Center might wish to avail itself of additional funds through the Value-Added Tourism (VAT) Sub Fund (Senate Bill 58, 2003 SD Legislature). It could apply directly or do so in some arrangement with a start-up Marketing and Promotions company proposed herein. The VAT Sub-Fund will begin evaluating proposals this September 2003. Requests cannot exceed \$100,000, a primary focus must be on attracting out of state visitors, the funds are not to cover facilities or equipment, and a 10% match is required. Funds can be applied for by a cooperative, private, governmental, not-for-profit, or for-profit entity.

To summarize:

- ❖ The Civic Center might want to consider adopting one or more of the ideas herein, or pursue the goal of dramatically increasing the Civic Center’s community involvement and re-branding how it is perceived in the community so as to be a powerful new means of increasing our Sense of Community (SOC). This could be accomplished either by direct hire of the author of this proposal and implementation of some portion of the proposal entirely in-house, through a consultancy, by contract with a wholly separate new Marketing venture, or in joint venture with, or full ownership of, said new Marketing venture.
- ❖ The Civic Center might want to consider taking advantage of up to \$100,000 in VAT Funds by application itself or jointly with the new venture, or contract or consultancy relationship.
- ❖ The Civic Center may be able to use a focus on increasing the SOC and desire to see RC as the #1 healthiest community as a powerful marketing tool for attracting conventions, trade shows, and even entertainment venues. This would prove especially effective for those meetings, conventions, and trade shows related to health and medicine, both government and private, medical research, health care, social work, and other related interests.

- ❖ A re-branding of the local perception of the Civic Center could be accomplished by promoting its involvement in these community efforts. Also, without any additional expenditures or funding it might be possible to make minor changes in the accounting arrangements and practices between the City and the Civic Center that would dramatically assist in and bolster this change in perception.
- ❖ Presuming a successful re-branding of the local perception, it then becomes possible to directly employ the participation of the citizens of RC in the effort not just to patronize local events, but to directly assist in the marketing effort to attract conventions, trade shows and entertainment venues through use of conventional and E-marketing that make use of a powerful and innovative scale-free database network technology.

CAUSE FOR EXCITEMENT AND OPTIMISM

Mathematical computer scale-free simulation models indicate that reducing the pathogenic contagion of dysfunctional behaviors in a community by as little as 5-15% might potentially, in from 3-5 generations, bring about a “*phase change*” in the system. These models indicate that smaller communities are especially at risk of a runaway cascading chain-reaction occurring if the level of dysfunction rises above a certain “critical point.” Such a runaway reaction might result in 30-40% or more of a population being affected. *This same potential for exponential increase means there is potential to cause an exponential decrease.* It is hoped that targeting *both* direct familial and “*secondhand*” social exposure of children and adults to dysfunction and employing a new awareness of “*behavioral hygiene*” might cause the self-inflating, self-perpetuating “*puff-pastry*” of myriad inter-linked dysfunction to “*fall*” and decrease *as a group* – this is the “Holy Grail” of social spending and social service efforts.

THESE SOCIAL PROBLEMS WILL NEVER GO AWAY, THEY ARE PART OF THE “HUMAN CONDITION”!

The newest scientific evidence that dysfunctional behaviors are behaviorally transmitted indicates otherwise. There is at least a theoretical chance over time (multiple generations) of seeing a decrease across-the-board of suicides, spousal abuse, alcoholism, teenage pregnancies, juvenile crimes and numerous other societal dysfunction’s because they are all linked together and stem from one perpetuating core root – *exposure to familial and societal dysfunction and imprinting of this pattern during childhood* through specific types of neurological damage caused by toxic stress.

This linkage is how these ills spread: it is what maintains them, and there is hope that this can be the means by which these social ills can be reduced en-mass as a group within our communities. At one time, prior to the advent of “sanitary hygiene,” frequent deaths from childbirth and severe trauma was similarly also considered just part of the “human

condition.” *Social Dysfunction, Violence, and Evil are not as much a part of the Human Condition as they are a Blight upon it, like Smallpox!*

Historically the major focus of prevention efforts has been “after the fact” to help those victims directly affected by familial dysfunction and actual child abuse or neglect. This latest information in fact shows clearly that these past efforts are even more hugely important than we realized because these will be the “Typhoid Mary’s” of social dysfunction in the future. But this type of intervention measure is only half of the picture, *no matter how stable your own, or anyone’s household, no one is completely unaffected.*

Secondhand Behavioral Transmission and Being Fractionally Abused

For example, when twenty to thirty percent (or more) of a population are affected then this means that almost every other person your child befriends throughout his or her life will expose them to certain types of related behaviors and there is the possibility of “*fractional abuse*” and of “*secondhand transmission.*” While this secondhand *social* exposure certainly does not result in the same degree of alteration of brain morphology and necrosis as actual direct *familial* abuse, it just as certainly has some effect, possibly significant, in altering your child’s behavioral development and future susceptibility to social dysfunction, hence the usefulness of the term, “fractional” abuse. In fact it appears from computer behavioral models that this peripheral secondhand exposure may be the fuel that keeps the cascading cycle of dysfunction going within a community every bit as much as the “direct” transmission of dysfunctional behaviors that occur generation to generation within families. The concept of a fractional abuse scale has application not just as a means of facilitating useful discussion in regard individuals however, it applies equally usefully when one seeks to characterize social groups, communities, cities and societies. What does it mean if 20, 30, or 40 percent of everyone in a community has been exposed to some degree of fairly severe dysfunction? How much of a factor are secondary modes of behavioral transmission in the continued transmittal of social dysfunction within such a blighted community? Might such a community then be said to be 20, 30, or 40 percent fractionally abused?

DISTURBING FACTS AND TRENDS

“Using new fMRI brain-imaging techniques the size of the corpus callosum, hippocampus, and amygdala of abused children have been found to be as much as *thirty percent* smaller.” ***Scars that Wont Heal: The Neurobiology of Child Abuse***, *Scientific American*, **Martin H. Teicher**, March 2002.

“Nationwide a 7% increase has been seen for rapes in small and mid-size communities in the past few years – many are statutory rapes of children under 14.” - ***National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect***, 2003

“Before the age of 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will experience sexual abuse.” - ***U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect***, 1996.

A Strong Sense of Community (SOC): ***A Powerful Protective Factor***

A strong *Sense of Community* may be a powerful *protective factor* against the violent stressors of “natural dysfunction” (illness, disasters, accidents to individual, family, community), “societal dysfunction” (**terrorism**, media violence, violence in schools, violent crime, bullying, racism, prejudice/bigotry, wars, social pressures, shame, endemic poverty) and “familial dysfunction” (abuse; emotional, sexual, neonatal, chemical, physical & neglect).

A new awareness of “behavioral hygiene” in regard the need of treating children like gold is hoped will also be a powerful protective factor. The power of the innovative concept of “sanitary hygiene” in the early 18th century was that it enabled an awareness of simple actions and changes in behavior that could be taken, such as the washing of ones hands with soap, that lead to dramatic improvements in the public health. An awareness of behavioral hygiene also means making simple changes in our behaviors and actions; such as by seeing to it that the SOC is maintained at an adequate level.

*If a city, community, or region
can be said to have a personality,
what is ours ?*

A logical consequence of exposure to natural, societal, or familial dysfunctional stress as a child is that the behavioral responses of the child are then re-set to be more mistrustful of new situations and more focused on self-protection and narcissistic, self-serving behaviors. These behaviors will then be incorporated as a part of the social culture of the community at-large if a high enough percentage of that community is similarly symptomatic. In this fashion dysfunctional behaviors can become self-reinforcing and a cascade effect can occur. A strong SOC is a protective factor, especially in children, against this undesirable result. The SOC is both a protective factor against social dysfunction and an indicator of the level of social dysfunction in a community. When the SOC is low there is an increased probability that a community is experiencing a high level of social dysfunction.

“Social Marketing:” Inoculating the Population

Horrible disfigurement occurs, inside and invisibly. Externally only psychological behavioral personality disorders and dysfunction show. **The physical scars are all on the inside of the victim.** We didn’t know this before, now we do – and it is time to act. The enemy has now been given a face in the form of a functional MRI brain image that shows these internal scars. We now know this evil to be a contagion and that proper “behavioral hygiene” methods employed in the care of our children may be capable of fully eliminating it. There is no reason to expect the results to be any less dramatic than those that were seen for childbirth are, when basic sanitary hygiene methods were applied earlier this century. We have ample cause for optimism; the depth of the love we have for our children will be our guarantee of success.

The Need for A Community Response

Synergy of Positioning RC as a National Research Testbed & #1 Healthiest Happiest Small Community & How a Community Channel & involved Civic Center & Museums Pull it All Together By Increasing our Sense of Community (SOC)

That just having a Community Channel, involved Community Civic Center, and Museums will really make that much of a difference in and of itself seems highly unlikely. It is hoped that the Civic Center's increased community involvement and the Channels airing will act as a seed, an enabler, and a nucleating agent. This degree of cooperation will also serve to further discussions with Federal agencies to secure funds for the community. The Channel and Civic Center are concrete, real, easily understood manifestations of our commitment as a community that will hopefully demonstrate that we are deserving of funding.

This involvement can provide a focus and reason for communication with the over 100 local social service organizations in our Hills communities to help them see how DEEPLY linked each and every single one of them is through the core issues of childhood stress, familial abuse, and dysfunction. Involvement of the Community Channel and of the Civic Center will be powerful tools for increasing the SOC.

Increasing the Sense of Community (SOC)

- ❑ *Become the #1 Lowest Stress and Healthiest Small City in the Nation*
- ❑ *Attract \$10-15 Million in Additional Grants to the Region*
- air a **Community Channel**;
- encourage gatherings through an involved **Civic Center**;
- present a strong **Community Leadership**, such as the Mayor;
- push effort to become **#1 Lowest Stress & Healthiest City**;
- promote as **National Testbed** for \$15 MM Fed grants/research.

In light of recent discoveries, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) of the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have taken the position that abuse, violence, and dysfunction are a matter of Public Health falling under their jurisdiction that can best be dealt with as a community. An increased Sense of Community (SOC) is a protective factor against early childhood stress. The goal is to combat both the Direct (familial, multigenerational) and Secondhand (social) Behavioral Transmission of Neurotoxic Childhood Stress. Attracting an estimated \$10-15 million in Federal and Private grants as a National Testbed Community will be made possible by having an active and involved Community Civic Center, Community TV Channel, and strong presentation of Community Leadership by the Mayor. These things will make it possible for Rapid City to become the number ONE lowest stress and healthiest small

town in the nation with the support of City and County governments, and all broadcast, cable TV, radio, print, and billboard media.

Protecting the Golden Goose

After its annual meeting in November, the National Governors Association concluded that cities and states are facing their worst budget crisis since World War II. The result is a kind of triple whammy for the hospitality industry. The lower hotel occupancies of the last two years have reduced revenues, cutting, sometimes deeply, into occupancy taxes — the lifeblood for most convention and visitors bureaus. Meanwhile, many expanded or new convention facilities, conceived during an economic boom, are coming online in a post — 9/11 climate. The competition to fill these facilities has severely hampered convention centers' ability to recoup lost revenues by raising rates and fees.

Civic Centers and CVBs Under The Gun

Heightened touchiness over public spending has put CVBs and Civic Center's around the country under public scrutiny. "I think that CVB budgets are subject to a lot closer scrutiny than just about any other enterprise in the convention industry," says Michael S. Olson, president and CEO of the American Society of Association Executives.

Michael Gehrisch, president and CEO of the International Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus, says many outside the business don't understand what's required to get business on the books. "If a bureau goes to a trade show and spends \$15,000, that might seem like a lot of money, but that might bring a piece of business worth \$5 to \$6 million in the future." CVBs, Civic, and Convention Centers understand the need to cultivate meetings and convention business as it is their area of expertise, and one can only hope that the City and City council governing authorities understand and value tourism and conventions. The availability of the Value Added Tourism Sub Fund by the State Legislature is a strong demonstration of their understanding of the high value of tourism and conventions.

It is unclear how these trends might eventually affect smaller Civic Center meeting, convention, and trade-show planners. The smaller Civic and Convention Centers especially, because so many are government-backed at the municipal and State level, will almost certainly be looking for alternative ways to pay their bills.

Some options:

HikeTaxes

Bed taxes are popular sources of income, especially in politically and economically sensitive times. "A potential increase in bed tax is something we're watching very closely," says Lisa Block, director of meetings for the Society for Human Resource Management and the outgoing Professional Convention Management Association chair. "It's a very popular kind of thing to raise because it doesn't affect local constituents." Convention centers may try to raise rates to recoup some of the subsidies they have lost from state and local governments, but that doesn't seem to be a realistic solution.

Shift Costs

“The only way to pass on [costs] is if everybody does it,” says Eugene Dilbeck, president and CEO of the Denver Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau. “We’re seeing the opposite — cities giving away space to get more business or capture delegates. As long as there is more supply than demand, we will see continued aggressive pricing to lure meetings into communities.”

- To the CVBs

Carl Thompson, executive director of the Society of Government Meeting Professionals in Alexandria, Va., says he has seen convention facilities bend over backwards to attract government business. And Julia Richardson, senior director of conventions and meetings for the Association for Career and Technical Education, Alexandria, Va., says some CVBs have stepped in to help defray the costs of shuttle services or work on ways to reduce convention center meeting room costs.

- To the Exhibitors

Another problem, at least for the short term, is that many costs, such as printed materials, have already set fees for future conventions. “We might do some upselling to counter that,” explains Lou Pavledes, director of Detroit’s civic center department, which includes the Cobo Conference and Exhibition Center. That would entail asking exhibitors to spend more on electrical services or food and beverage to boost revenues.

- To the Businesses

Some cities are hoping that the local business community will help them ride out tough times. “You have to count on the private sector dollars to increase, through special membership rebate programs and that kind of thing, but also through general support of the industry from the corporate community,” according to H. Scott Phelps, president of the Greater Hartford (Conn.) Convention and Visitor Bureau. “Most corporations here realize the importance of conventions and meetings to Hartford,” he explains. “It’s really pure economic development.”

- To the City

The Dallas CVB, with a budget hurt by declining occupancy tax revenues and facing a need to get business on the books, even borrowed money from the city to help promote its newly expanded convention center properly. Unfortunately, that move backfired and resulted in overzealous media scrutiny of the bureau’s spending habits.

Proposals to Re-Brand the Civic Center by Making it a Primary Focus for Rapid City's Sense of Community (SOC)

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS:

1. What is meant exactly by Sense of Community?

“Sense of community” might also be translated into “sense of group” or even “sense of family,” each of these is a related emotional state. It is the difference in “feel” between being told you are to have lunch with a stranger you have never met, and being told are to have lunch with a stranger you have never met that is also a long-lost cousin. There is no functional difference between the two scenarios, other than an intangible sense of group belonging, of inclusiveness, of a shared, core familial affiliation and common interest.

Do people have a “sense of community” in regard the Civic Center? Are there specific actions that can be taken that will encourage and elicit a stronger “sense of community” or “sense of group” in peoples minds and hearts in regard their feelings and thoughts about the Civic Center, and its role their community?

How do people currently feel about the Civic Center and its connections to the community? When they purchase a ticket do they have any awareness or sense that they are supporting a part of their communities culture or recreational activities? If asked, how many would think the there is any involvement of the City, or of the Civic Center, in supporting human needs, social services, charities, the arts, and culture? If asked what the City does in these matters, how many would think to mention the many pools, golf courses, playgrounds, bicycle paths, and recreational activities, or would think to mention the Library and free access to the internet? Many would mention some of these surely, but how many?

- ❖ Do people get a “warm-fuzzy” when they purchase an event ticket? Or is their experiential perspective that of a typical client/customer relationship where they feel themselves to be just a typical customer patronizing a nameless company with which they have no affiliation with in a standard financial transaction? Can the purchase of an event ticket be made to provide the same warm-fuzzy had from attending a charitable event, or purchase of a rubber duck or raffle ticket?
- ❖ Even if people don't attend an event themselves, can they be encouraged to get a “warm-fuzzy” just from knowing their community is hosting, and has such events available?
- ❖ We should get a “warm-fuzzy” when we pay taxes but typically don't, for numerous reasons. We should also get a warm-fuzzy when we purchase an event ticket, but typically don't. ***What can be done to encourage patrons of the Civic Center to get a warm-fuzzy-feeling from their participation and attendance at Civic Center events?***

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

Trade Tourism & Business Tourism

1. **Using Interest in our Communities Social Efforts to Lobby for Business:** The intent is to attract *outside* visitors and conventions as the direct result of focusing on increasing *local* Civic Center attendance and participation in the community. The more the #1 Healthiest and Lowest Stress Small City project moves forward, the more the SOC increases, the more newsworthy our efforts become and the more opportunities will then be available for targeted marketing, promotion, and national exposure opportunities especially to the medical, social and health service sectors.
2. **Civic Center as Charitable Fund-Raising Entity:** A change in accounting and in emphasis as to the Civic Center's status and role in the community might be considered.

These efforts each provide a dual benefit in that the same efforts to increase our SOC and promote our efforts to be #1 to the outside world can be harnessed to bring in revenue from out-of-state conventions and visitation. Success will itself serve to increase our SOC and make us even more successful at attracting press and interest, which will bring in more revenue from conventions and trade shows; which increases our SOC, which makes us more successful...

There are numerous options available. A separate marketing company might be set up that will develop expertise in providing marketing and promotion services and could eventually offer consulting to small Civic Centers like ours nationwide. We would then clearly be first in line as the beneficiaries of having access to that national expertise, once developed.

- ❑ Some of these suggestions may be discounted out-of-hand but it is hoped a few may warrant further interest and may spur new ideas.
- ❑ Each of the scenarios provided center around the active enlistment of the individual members of the community and their involvement in a national marketing outreach to attract conventions and meetings.
- ❑ Whichever scenarios spark the interest of the reader, from the most simple, such as participation on a board, to pursuing none, a few, or all of the ideas in this proposal, and regardless of whether done through a new business venture or pursued entirely in-house; *This document will be a success even if all it accomplishes is to provide the reader with the inspiration to see a larger future than could be seen prior to its reading.*

PROPOSAL ONE: Increase Trade and Business Tourism (conventions, events) by creating national interest in our communities efforts to increase its SOC and becoming the #1 Lowest Stress, Healthiest, and Happiest Small City in the Nation. National promotions would target health, medicine, and social services sectors.

A Matter of Community Involvement and Engagement

It might at first seem farfetched to seriously imagine enlisting and involving an the entire town in the effort to market the Civic Center to the outside world – but this would be a hoped-for secondary result of everyone’s participation in our community effort to be the number one healthiest, lowest stress city in the nation. It will not happen overnight, and will take multiple generations, but the driving motivation that can make it happen will be our desire and commitment as a community to put an end to child abuse and familial dysfunction. And remember too, the effort to see this happen, and the degree to which it does, are each significant factors of our *current* Sense of Community, it all works together. The Civic Center has a singular ability to positively affect our Sense of Community (SOC) here in Rapid City because it is the physical representation of our community’s ability to gather, to come together, and to work together. It can be a focus that will make possible a degree of coordination and effort that could not be achieved otherwise.

It is better to get a crack in the wall going than to pound ineffectually up and down the walls entire length in tandem with numerous other Civic Centers across the nation little different from our own. It is better to focus marketing efforts on one cohesive and large industry/area such as health, medicine and social work that ties in with Rapid Cities strongest area of business growth and that can be cross-targeted effectively in conjunction with our efforts to be #1. As we come to have a success or two in landing the first few conventions as the result of this effort to engage the town we will promote those successes aggressively and this will attract even more people. In regard the potential effectiveness of any such marketing effort and its support by the community; the world truly is connected by six degree’s of freedom, and Rapid City has more than enough of a baseline from which to reach out to the entire world in a highly effective way, if it could be tapped. Previously such a thing was functionally impossible; the available tools of direct mail and phone were not up to the job. By enlisting the aid of

technologies only recently available the community at-large a number of truly novel and innovative marketing opportunities become possible

Our community's efforts to increase our SOC will be a significant marketing tool to get the attention and interest of trade shows, conventions and even entertainment venues. The Civic Center would focus on advertising and promoting the effort to increase our SOC and to make Rapid City the #1 Healthiest, Happiest, and Lowest Stress Small City in the Nation. It is this that will provide the proverbial "foot in the door" national access to develop the relationships and to hold the interest of new convention and trade show clients. It is also proposed that to secure the aid and support of the seven largest Federal agencies in this effort to be #1 that we promote ourselves as a "national testbed community." All of these various efforts will be considered newsworthy by trade magazines and media at a minimum, and could well receive national press.

PROPOSED NEW BUSINESS VENTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Civic Wealth Venture Partners, LLP.

SERVICES & SOLUTIONS FOR SMALLER CIVIC CENTERS

Presuming a successful re-branding of the local perception, it then becomes possible to employ the participation of the citizens of RC in the effort not just to patronize local events, but to assist in the marketing effort to attract conventions, trade shows and entertainment venues through use of scale-free database networking using direct and E-marketing technologies. It is worthwhile to consider creating a new business to pursue this that could also set up a national marketing and consulting company. For promotional purposes, it might even be considered to have tens of thousands of RC citizens literally become employees of the *for-profit* or *not-for-profit* new business entity if they wish.

The Value-Added Tourism (VAT) Sub Fund under Senate Bill 58 passed by the 2003 SD Legislature will begin evaluating proposals this September 2003. Requests are not to exceed \$100,000; must focus on attracting out of state visitors; are not to cover facilities or equipment; require a 10% match; and can be applied for by any private, governmental, not-for-profit, or for-profit entity.

- ❑ **Specialized for the Small Civic Center - Marketing, Promotion, Events, & Consulting:** This new entity could specialize in medium to small civic center provision of marketing, promotion, event packages, and other services. It might offer consulting and evaluation. It could do evaluation for setting up new Civic Centers or Arena's and do economic impact studies and provide turnkey set-up needs.
- ❑ **YearLong Event Packages:** Develop seasonal and year-long totally inclusive packages of entertainment that can be provided ready-made to save small Centers the expense and difficulty involved in bookings and contract negotiations in essence provide a specialized booking agent service. This would provide the benefit of buying power because an entertainment venue need only deal with us to potentially be dealing with large groups of medium and small venues. Entertainment packages would be provided specialized regionally, by taste and preference, and by price. This could simplify and take pressure off of smaller Civic Centers especially, and reduce their costs. When a Center selects such a package and a City or CVB approves it, then there is less squabbling over individual choices and expenditures. Everyone is happier.

Establishment of an in-house or independent Marketing firm would benefit RC because RC would get first dibs on the expertise and on the results and fruits of the expertise gained in marketing. It would also increase our ability to access and employ latest in scale-free E-marketing technologies. By specializing in small and mid-size civic centers and arenas and servicing clients nationwide the marketing company would avail itself of world class expertise that would prove invaluable in accomplishing its first mission of increasing the revenue from conventions and trade shows here in Rapid City. Its success

would depend on its making the fullest possible use of the area's greatest asset – *our community*.

A. Promote the Splitting of Large Unwieldy Meetings – A Two-fer

Package: Many of the larger conventions are under downsizing pressures so it is doubly-sensible to encourage mid-size to large conventions of 5-10,000 persons to consider special packages that split their single large meeting plans into two separate meetings. Some costs will be doubled from this, and there can be some savings. The package could emphasize our efforts to minimize any additional costs incurred from such a decision and up-play the considerable benefits. When too many special meetings are held at a convention everyone loses. A core program can remain so persons who can't make one date can have a second opportunity or choice. Risks of unrealistic expectations and changes in world events or the economy could be dealt with easier because more options will exist to respond appropriately when the venue size and expenses are broken up in this fashion.

B. “Make the Fun Last Longer;” A Low-Stress Package Promotion:

Shoot for long-term contracts, focus on inefficiencies and inconvenience factors involved of both the conference planners and the conference attendees. Conference planners on tight budgets can avoid having to research and learn about a myriad of options every year and risk the unknown performance of those new locations. Attendees also can be saved the extra time needed every year to research and learn about the new venue and worrying about trip planning and its outcome, and not knowing what to expect every time such a trip is planned. Getting around is always more convenient and lower stress the second and third time out, and the frustrations of not getting to see and do everything one wants are avoided. We could provide an appealing package where the cost goes down significantly in years two and three, or the reverse, can see 1st year much cheaper if there is a contractual obligation for years two and three. This also makes it easier to set up entertainment theme packages for each of three years. Health and social service organizations especially might elect to focus on one small city or another for a suitable period of time, 3 years perhaps, that has bad statistics as a blue-circle city.

<p>Our community will be achieving something that is of National Importance by its efforts to increase our SOC and be #1. This importance will provide incentive for some convention managers to attempt to use our Civic Center</p>
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if at all possible. Might they then be swayed into considering breaking up a convention that is too large for our Civic Center into two or three parts? Might they also be persuaded to more readily sign on for long-term participation in support of our communities efforts in order to give those efforts a real chance of success?

Use National Attention on our Social Efforts to Lobby for Business

We will attract attention to our community by establishing ourselves as a National Testbed Community. We will lobby governmental institutions of all kinds at the national, state, and city levels to do business with us and show support for our efforts. We will focus on social service and health related companies and institutions.

Developing and Implementing A Modernized City-State Concept

In previous centuries a community became a town when it became large enough to issue permits and to charge Guild membership fee's that allowed vendors to sell goods in its markets. The revenue from this, pumped back into roads and infrastructure to make the market larger and the town even more appealing, enabled towns to grow and become metropolitan cities. The term, "city-state" arose to describe the degree of control that both made possible, and that described, what a city was. It was like a modern corporation in that its interests, the interests of the city's citizens, were represented en-mass as a group by the city and the cities interests. The amount that a city could charge a vendor depended on how successful that vendor could be in that city. Cities competed with other cities, and cities that did not compete effectively would lose vendors to other, more successful cities. The gothic cathedrals of the Middle Ages were the ancient equivalent of promotional marketing that said, "come here, our city is bigger, better, and more prosperous than other cities." To some extent we still do this with our CVBs, Civic Centers, and Golf Courses.

If the Civic Center or City were to want to provide venues of interest to each household, or even just offer free tickets occasionally, it would be extremely beneficial to know which households like country music, which have children, or don't have children, and other such pertinent information. This would also enable less costly and more effective direct marketing and make it possible to better service the needs of that household. There would be costs to the Civic Center in doing this, but there would be benefits that would more than offset these costs financially, plus a huge windfall would be had in that a vastly greater degree of community interactivity and involvement would be achieved. The need exists to develop a database that will enable this. This database could then serve a dual purpose in that it would also enable more efficient marketing of our community to attract more and better performers and conventions to it. For example: has anyone in the household EVER in their life attended a convention, anywhere? Do they know anyone in the last five years, relative or friend here in town that has? Do they know anyone anywhere in the country that has ever attended a convention that they know of? If they are not sure in either of these cases, do they know anyone in the health, medicine, or social work fields, or in government work of any type – or in education, or any other field whatsoever that may have ever had cause to go to a convention?

Such a database would help in attracting more popular entertainment venues to our area because we would not just provide warm bodies in a few seats, as is the usual case. Knowing the interests of our citizens in regard that particular performer or venue we would be able to provide a service to both citizen-patron and venue or performer by enabling the conventioneer, venue, or performer to directly market to the members of our community on an individual basis before, during, and after the performance. Although it is not unusual to make use of such an in-house Advertising Agent, this type of effectiveness is a new thing.

Also a new thing would be the ability of an in-house Advertising Agent to employ the latest technologies such as scale-free network methodologies to partner with convention planners and organizations to cross-promote benefits of the area directly to their potential attendee's outside of our market, nationwide, in the attempt to help them to sign up more attendee's and to increase the percentage of their membership that will attend.

All of this represents a value to any potential entertainment venue provider that goes beyond just the number of tickets sold, for example: When an entertainer has a new release a year later, their fans in our community will be notified. When a convention moves on and is held in San Diego, or an entertainer or event played here and was well received, everyone in San Diego that has a relative living in Rapid City will know!

In exchange for keeping this database current the database participants, the citizens of our community, can be reimbursed for their investment by carefully thought-out provision of tickets and other means, in cooperation with the entertainment venue providers, as our partners in this effort. Keep in mind that a part of the "pitch" in securing said cooperation will include the importance of this to our increasing the SOC and how that fits in with our #1 Community efforts and the goal of eradicating child abuse and major dysfunction in our community over the coming generations.

- **National Press and Television:** Using the promotional benefit of our #1 and SOC efforts we may be able to get high profile and newsworthy people and shows to visit and do shows at the Civic Center. Oprah and Dr. Phil, and Cop=show fellow, and VP Cheney (fan of Faith-Based Initiative) might come to do a show as examples. This would provide the benefit not just of local and regional attendance, but would itself increase SOC. This could be a huge benefit for use in our promotions to

conventions and would also guarantee national press and a huge national viewership! Buying that value of reach and frequency would cost a fortune.

- **University Business and Technology Partnerships:** We can develop a closer relationship with business schools at NAU and Black Hills State University in crafting a new City-State type of effort and entity. We can make use of the software and computing expertise at the School of Mines and Technology that has people fully knowledgeable of everything discussed here regarding the latest concepts and information about scale-free networks.
- **Community Cooperation:** Form an SOC Promotion Board consisting of Civic Center, City, Two City Council, all TV cable and broadcast, all radio, all billboard, all newspaper, all Museums, all Theatres, Schools, Social Service, and Health, Police, Fire, City Services, Chamber?
- **Branding Logo:** Develop a branding label or City-brand logo that the city can apply to everything that can provide improved and more focused branding for Civic Center and all other City-sponsored events, facilities, services, publications, equipment and properties, such as Canyon Lake for example. This can be a powerful and useful tool in increasing the visibility of the citywide efforts and to increase our SOC.

Scale-Free Network Marketing

We will also have another powerful ally, technology: A variety of complex systems share an important property: some nodes have a tremendous number of connections to other nodes, whereas most nodes have just a handful. The popular nodes, called hubs, can have hundreds, thousands, or even millions of links. In this sense, the network appears to have no scale. These networks behave in certain predictable ways; for example, they are remarkably resistant to accidental failures but extremely vulnerable to coordinated attacks. Such discoveries have dramatically changed what we thought we knew about the complex interconnected world around us. Unexplained by previous network theories, hubs offer convincing proof that various complex systems have a strict architecture, ruled by fundamental laws – laws that appear to apply equally to cells, computers, languages, marketing, and sociology. (*Scale-Free Networks, Scientific American, Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, Eric Bonabeau, May 2003.*)

Diffusion theories, extensively studied for decades by both epidemiologists and marketing experts, predict a critical threshold for the propagation of a contagion throughout a population. Any virus, disease or fad that is less infectious than that well-defined threshold will inevitably die out, whereas those above the threshold will multiply exponentially eventually penetrating the entire system. Disturbingly, in a scale-free network the threshold is zero. That is, all viruses or fads, even those that are weakly contagious will spread and persist in the system. Scale-free networks display an amazing robustness against accidental failures. The random removal of nodes will take out mainly the small ones because they are much more plentiful than hubs that ultimately connect to almost everything. As many as 80 percent of randomly selected nodes can fail, or the marketing not be effective, and there will still be a path between any two nodes. Instead of random comprehensive marketing though, what if one targeted the hubs or the most connected individuals. This could be effective even if the marketing reached only a small fraction of the overall population, provided that the fraction contained the hubs. *Identifying the hubs in social networks is difficult, but the rewards would be great if one could figure out a way to accomplish it.*

❖ The solution: A procedure that can locate hub individuals is to market to a small fraction of the random acquaintances of arbitrarily selected individuals within a group. Those hub individuals that are linked to many people will be preferentially selected with a high probability precisely because they are linked to many people.

Society is fragmented into clusters of individuals having similar characteristics (such as income or interests). A network can be both highly clustered and scale-free when small, tightly inter-linked clusters of nodes are connected into larger, less cohesive groups. This type of hierarchy appears to exist in a number of systems from cells (in which clusters are teams of molecules responsible for a specific function) to the World Wide Web, containing more than 3 billion documents, with any two Web pages typically only being 19 clicks from one another. In many contexts it is desirable to start epidemics, not stop them. *To accomplish truly effective marketing within a community it would be beneficial expend scarce financial resources to target ones efforts on those persons who are major hubs within that community.*

NUMEROUS MEDICAL AND HEALTH RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

In more than half of the states in the US, physicians are required to pursue Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses for as long as they are in active practice.

In 2001, **3,934,725** physicians participated in courses or regularly scheduled conferences to fulfill that requirement.

According to Medical Meetings' Ninth Annual Physician's Preferences Survey:

- ✓ Respondents earn 63% of their annual credit hours by attending meetings
- ✓ 82% of survey respondents plan to attend at least one out-of-town meeting in the next 12 months
- ✓ 40% of the total hours respondents earn are by attending out-of-town meetings
- ✓ The meeting's geographic location was the number one factor influencing the physician's decision to attend

This represents a huge opportunity for CVBs, sites and other meeting suppliers to tap into the niche medical meetings market.

APPLICATION OF SCALE-FREE MARKETING METHODS

We can apply the latest scale-free marketing wizardry by doing a random query of members of organizations and fields of work, such as physicians. We can locate the subset of the 4 million physicians that have any familial or friendship ties to Rapid City residents to then identify highly connected individual members (hubs). Other examples abound: there are 10,000 members of the Meetings Management Association; rather than promote to all ten thousand, scale-free marketing methods could focus on the key 500 or so to achieve the same or better results. Such a campaign would normally cost a hundred thousand dollars or more but could now be accomplished for five thousand or less.

Areas that might have synergy in addition to the Health, Medical, and Social Services sectors:

A. Political Parties, State, City, County, and Federal Entities: Great promotional pitch to any trade-show or convention Social Service or Government service providers by taking advantage of these concepts. Both Democrat and Republican political interests can be pursued; the tie-in with our community-wide efforts should provide ample opportunity for a useful dialogue and initial interest at a minimum. The issues of

healthcare, lowest stress, healthiest city in nation... all of this a TREMENDOUS plus when one aims to market to health services oriented organizations. By our being a National Research Testbed, or a “red circle” or “blue circle” city that has been targeted as being deserving of special attention and effort by large Federal agencies, or even by self-proclamation, then this can play into a significant promotional marketing opportunity.

B. Church and Religious Organizations and Interests: and religious conventions are another area that is large and cohesive in nature and whose interests align significantly with our own community interests and efforts in regard our #1 and SOC efforts. Those in charge of the Faith-Based initiative in Washington have been contacted with initial queries and have voiced their interest in working with us in any way they can be of assistance.

PROPOSAL TWO: *Encourage patrons of the Civic Center to get a warm-fuzzy-feeling from their participation and attendance at Civic Center events*

A Way to Better Reflect the Status of the Civic Center in the Community;

A Matter of a Few Simple Accounting Changes?

BACKGROUND

The financial status of the Civic Center varies considerably year to year, being in the black by a hundred thousand or more one year, and in the red by a couple hundred thousand the next. Even with the Bed and Booze tax subsidy the Center is not always in the black, nonetheless, overall it might be presumed that it is in the black about \$150,000, on average. When this occurs it typically goes into a maintenance fund (the Center was built in the 1970's and is getting old) and is also saved for use in down years. The City of Rapid City spends an amount yearly on "Human Needs" and on "Arts & Culture" that is roughly commensurate with this amount, \$150,000.

Small Civic Centers across the country typically require some degree of subsidy to operate, such as from a City Bed & Booze tax. Our Civic Center typically operates in the black with the addition of Bed and Booze tax funds. When operations are in the black then the money is put into a facility maintenance/emergency account. Last year \$249,000 of this was needed. The Bed and Booze tax provided about \$131,800 to the Civic Center.

Each year the City of Rapid City provides a total of \$150,000 to two fund categories: a Human Needs and an Arts & Culture Fund.

<u>Human Needs</u>	<u>Arts & Culture</u>
Big Brothers, Big Sisters	Black Hills Children's Theatre
2 Senior Centers	Dakota Choral Union
CASA	Municipal Band
Mission Downtown Center	Ranger Marching Band
Elderly Meals	Pow Wow
Habitat for Humanity	Arts Council
Salvation Army	Storybook Island Theatre
Senior Companions	Symphony Orchestra
WAVI	Archipelago Showcase
Community Health Center	

The 11 Human Needs awardees above total about \$90,000 of which \$36,000 went to the two Senior Centers. A typical grant award is about \$5-6,000 and is awarded by the City and City Council based on an application process. The balance of about \$60,000 is

provided to the Allied Arts Fund, they select the recipients and are responsible for administering of funds. (*rcgov.com, Colleen, 394-4115*)

Helping People to get a “Warm-fuzzy” When They Purchase an Event Ticket

Since, on average, the City spends about what the Civic Center can make in a good year after taking in funds from the bed and booze tax, perhaps a simple accounting change voted in by the City council would be able to change the feeling one gets when handed a ticket at the box office. The idea is to have the Civic Center take over responsibility, on paper, as being the source of money for these funds. Functionally speaking there would be little or no real difference in what is being spent since the City currently spends roughly what the Civic Center might be expected to make on average. The City could even still decide on how to spend the money, the only difference would be that, on the books, the money would now be derived from any Civic Center revenue subsequent to receipt of the B & B revenue.

Hotels and bars should be satisfied to know that their money, although charitably spent, is still going to the effort to see RC become **FORBES MAGAZINE’S #1** best small city in the nation for business & the **AMERICAN CIVIC LEAGUE’S #1** best All-American city as the result of the Civic Centers national promotion of the City’s own #1 Lowest-Stress & Healthiest City In the Nation effort.

The civic center will of course still need to fix the occasional leaky roofs, or compensate for a down year, and this will need to be covered by the city. Careful drafting of new operational guidelines would keep the amounts expended by the City equal with that generated by the Civic Center (by averaging over some appropriate period of time, perhaps ten-year increments). Leaky roofs still get fixed, there is no net difference in the amounts of money spent, but now the bars and hotels and the Civic Center can benefit from and get a warm-fuzzy. The hotels, bars, and Civic Center could then all then pass that warm-fuzzy on to their clients and derive promotional and marketing benefits thereof. Money “from” the Civic Center could go to “Human Needs and Arts & Culture,” or to a national promotion of our community’s efforts to be “#1 Healthiest” and to increase our SOC, or both. Either way, this type of arrangement helps to directly increase the SOC by positively affecting everyone’s perceptions of the bars, hotels, and Civic Center’s involvement.

A New Foundation & Promotional Logo to Promote the Civic Center's, Bars, and Hotels Good Works?

Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Foundation

~Increasing the Sense of Community One Ticket at A Time~

The City might arrange to have money go to a Foundation set up in support of the Civic Center. All of the foregoing regarding the City's involvement might be disregarded entirely but the idea of setting up a Foundation retained. A Foundation could raise money independently and would likely be fairly successful at doing so. The Civic Center through its Foundation might be viewed as being much more of an involved charitable civic entity. Either way, hotels and bars should get more benefit and credit from promoting their civic support and donations. The City government should benefit more from promoting its support of the Civic Center. By having everyone receive more their due from what they are providing to the community, the Sense of Community would be increased across the board. A new Good Works logo is suggested to tie it all together by sticker placements everywhere.

It could be pointed out to the Hotels/Motels and Bars paying the Bed & Booze tax that:

- (1) When the Civic Center makes extra it still goes to benefit the city in ways that increase tourism and visitation by the Foundation's national promotion of the cities SOC and #1 efforts, a strategy that is specifically intended to bring in additional convention and trade show business.
- (2) There are no real changes or differences financially. A logo could go everywhere applicable to highlight the many good works that the Civic Center, or its Foundation, or that the City, or the Bed & Booze tax makes possible.

A logo for the Civic Center and hotel and bar tax fund use could be placed on good works and media all over town as the result of these expenditures. This would be to the promotional credit of both the Civic Center and of the hotels and bars. This would be preferable to seeing an equal amount of funds sitting in an invisible maintenance account the existence of which no one knows or cares about particularly.

A BUSINESS-CENTER FOR CHARITABLE EFFORTS?

It is common for charities and not-for-profits to operate an independent business center operation to generate additional funds. A separate Charitable fund could specifically promote our SOC and #1 efforts nationally. The Civic Center and City benefit because this would dovetail with the Civic Centers own promotion efforts to attract health and social service related conventions and trade shows.

CREATION OF AN ACTUAL CHARITABLE OPERATION?

A direct relationship between the Civic Center and United Way or a Hospital-associated charity might also be considered. Going to these lengths would be more than an idle exercise or novelty. National press would be had in specialized trade magazines and media perused by professional convention and meeting planners and CVB, Civic Center, and Convention managers. Such press would be of particular synergistic interest and viewed by social service, government related, and health services related venues and conventions. Entertainment acts not otherwise bookable might also find it appealing to participate in such an innovative effort. There might also be new grant opportunities. Grants might help to subsidize community forums, encourage local attendance of special conferences related to public health, or increase civic participation and in general be applied to efforts that positively impact the SOC

Why Everyone Might Not Get a “Warm-Fuzzy” and How to Increase It

The positive aspect of such a change in accounting would be to see a (hoped-for) majority of patrons get a warm-fuzzy by knowing that they are helping and participating in the community by their patronage when they purchase a ticket to an event or convention.

The degree to which a person experiences a positive emotion in regard their patronage, and the number of persons that feel this way, is itself *actually a very direct and valuable way to measure the Sense of Community!*

- *The higher the SOC* in a community, the more people will respond positively to knowing that some small percentage of their ticket purchase price is going to good works in their community.
- Of course not everyone will feel this way, so that *the lower the SOC* is in a community then the more persons will find argument with paying even a miniscule amount extra for their tickets, even if it does support the Civic Center itself *and* local good causes.

When a portion of a persons ticket price goes to charitable ends, including the Civic Center itself, they may voice concerns ranging from plain not believing the money is really being spent for what is claimed, to its being wasted or misdirected, to not thinking human needs are a valid expenditure. A concern will be that some of these rationalizations derive from a mass-psychology due to there being a higher-than-desired percentage of the populace having suffered exposure to dysfunction or abuse. A higher than “normal” degree of mistrust, narcissism, self-interest, need of control, conservatism,

fear of new situations, and temper management issues is then expected. *Surveys to determine the ratio of persons that are negative compared to positive on this matter can thus provide a valuable means by which to actually measure of the degree of success, or failure, being had by a community in increasing its SOC.*

Access: Building Communities Through Electronic Media

Throughout the country, over a million people -- just like you -- are using electronic media to build a sense of community in their neighborhoods. They've learned how to run TV cameras, set lights, edit videotape, and produce top-notch television programming for their community! And all for little or no cost.

The funding for media access comes from your town or county which receives "franchise fees" from cable television operators and other commercial telecommunications businesses. The payments are compensation for the use of public property. As you know, the streets of your town are public property, managed by your local government. The poles on the side of the road and the conduits below the ground are also managed by your local government. These "rights-of-way" and "pole attachments" are leased to cable television and other telecommunications companies.

Only 10% to 15% of the communities in the country have media access. Every community with cable TV receives franchise fees -- but not every local government uses those funds for providing public, educational, or governmental (PEG) access services. Unfortunately, no federal law requires local governments to fund media access for their citizens -- even though public property is used for private gain. (For more information see the Alliance information on [Laws Affecting Community Media.](#))

Local governments can provide -- or prevent -- media access. The decision for providing your community with media access rests with your local government's contract with your local cable company. All cable companies pressure local governments to give the cable companies total control over the cable channels and programming. Local government officials and staff members often give in to the cable companies, especially if they have not conducted a community needs assessment.

Here are the steps for gaining media access in your town:

Research cable television franchise agreement, ordinances, and compliance. First, go to your town hall and get a copy of the cable television franchise agreement. The critical information to look for is whether (1) the original franchise agreement included PEG access; (2) the terms or conditions for establishing PEG access; and (3) the expiration date of the current franchise agreement. You'll also need to find out if your local government has passed any ordinances dealing with cable television or telecommunications since the agreement was signed. Finally, you should research any reports on how well the cable television operator has complied with the terms of the agreement.

Get to know the people responsible for overseeing the cable TV company. You'll need to find out who is responsible for negotiating and overseeing the franchise agreement in your town. Usually it's a staff attorney under the direction of a cable television or telecommunications commission. Find out how citizens get appointed to the commission -- and when the next seat opens up. You may want to get yourself on the commission -- or support another candidate who is an advocate for community media.

Build a coalition of community organizations. Local neighborhood groups, civic organizations, schools, cultural communities, religious groups, and other non-profit organizations have the most to gain from community media -- and can be powerful allies. Contact the [Alliance national office](#) for partners with chapters in your town.

Encourage your local government to devote funds to community media. Use your coalition to encourage your local government to devote some or all of the franchise fees to community media and to force the cable television operator to provide one or more channels.