

PRACTICAL STEPS TO A CARING ECONOMICS

1. Buy only from companies that have caring policies, let those that don't know why you are no longer patronizing them, and encourage your organization to incorporate caring practices and policies by showing them how support for caring is good for families, business, and the economy. For example:
 - In Northern European nations that have more caring policies there is less personal stress and crime, higher educational performance, and a better general quality of life
 - The return on investment for U.S. companies on childcare and paid parental leave is huge in terms of employee retention and productivity

2. Ask your elected representatives to allocate funding for caring
 - Programs that give tangible support to new parents, such as the Ontario “Healthy Babies, Healthy Children” program, has resulted in accelerated child development, services for parents, and less family violence.
 - Studies show that investing in high quality childcare results in enormous economic savings (for example, in the costs of crime and prisons) and is essential not only in human terms but for the “high quality human capital” essential for the postindustrial economy.

3. Phone call-in shows, write letters to the editor, and post comments on blogs about how we can solve seemingly intractable problems by shifting to an economic system that gives visibility and value to caring for people and nature. For example:
 - Worldwide, the mass of the poor and the poorest of the poor are women and their children, and this is the direct result of the failure of policies to give value to the “women’s work” of caregiving.
 - Even in the wealthy United States older women (most of whom were caregivers) are twice as poor as older men.
 - The failure to include the life-sustaining activities of the household economy and the natural economy in measures of economic health such as GDP results in distorted economic and environmental policies.

4. Form a group using *The Real Wealth of Nations* in your community, church, or school to discuss caring economics and decide on specific actions. For example:
 - Ask your state legislators to introduce a bill to provide paid parental leave along the lines of the first such U.S. bill in California
 - Highlight the enormous economic value of caring and caregiving as shown by a recent Swiss government survey documenting that the unpaid work in households (still performed mainly by women) is 70 % of GDP.

5. Send copies of *The Real Wealth of Nations* to your elected representatives and ask them to support tax credits, training, and social security for caregivers.

6. Organize a community forum on the Caring Family Policy Agenda posted on www.partnershipway.org or a university forum to talk about the link between a higher status of women, more caring economic policies, and a generally high standard of living, highlighting how:
 - nations where women have greater representation in government, such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway, have pioneered policies that are more environmentally responsible and more caring, such as universal healthcare, childcare, and generous paid parental leave.

For more information, go to www.rianeeisler.com or www.partnershipway.org
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