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Awakening is not a conventional organization. We view ourselves more as a movement, or a community with a same quest. If you also share these values, we’d welcome you to become our comrade:

**Our vision:**

*Realize* a world where everyone could preserve the goodness in human nature, and address the needs of the world by self-actualization.

**Our mission:**

*Become* the cradle of ideal societies by collective self-exploration and systems thinking.

**What we’ve been doing in the past:**

--An award-winning documentary *If There is a Reason to Study*

--An online magazine *Awakening*

--A grassroot campaign “Design your own education”

**What we’re doing now:**

--An “Education bypass surgery”

**What we’re planning to do:**

--An online world problem database which aims to enable the culture of “everyday problem based learning”.

**The dos and don’ts:**

-We experiment and explore ways to align values of individuals with the needs of the world TOGETHER, but we DON’T provide solutions.

-We DON’T promote what we think is right, but invite people to examine the effect that any initiative may lead to, practicing the role of a ‘responsible changemaker”.

(Ask us if you want to know more ☺)

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Self-Changing Handbook

I am a

The system that I want to change

My role in the change

The systematic problems that Awakening is determined to change:

A failing education system and the four crises of humanity

The innate drive of any organism is to survive and succeed. Thus, organisms change their behaviors, habits, and even value or belief systems to adapt themselves into different environments.

Under a test-driven education system, students are filtered by the predetermined standards of “usefulness” into different tracks, schools, professions, and even social classes, where different quantity and quality of resources are allocated to each. The more people a student out-compete, the more choices, power, and rights s/he has. For those who cannot suffice, not only could they obtain the leftover options, they were also deprived of the right to criticize the present or call for a change, as people would not listen because of their perceived indolence, incapability, ignorance, etc.

In order to win more choices for future, we consciously or unconsciously gave up exploration and our conscience to defeat our competitors, in order to satisfy the expectations from the system. But when the choices are finally in hand, we lost the confidence and clarity of who we really are, what we really need, and even the sense of what the world ought to be like.

Just as one of the founders of the modern education system, Johann Gottlieb Fichte has famously said, “If you want to influence him at all, you must do more than merely talk to him; you must fashion him, and fashion him in such a way that he simply cannot will otherwise than you wish him to will.”

Such process of "alienation" not only provides a hotbed of selfishness and indifference,  but also often sacrifices students’ path toward self-actualization, and pushes a whole generation toward four crises of humanity:

**1 An economic crisis, and risk of creating a “lost generation”**

As designed to distribute people into appropriate social ranks, our current education system is facing an increasing difficulty to guarantee employment as the social pyramid is getting increasingly saturated. Such problem is especially obvious in a time of recession, as "youth employees are not only the 'last in' but also the 'first out', since it is more costly for employees to lay off older workers." Millions of youth are under the risk of becoming the "lost generation", which has already occurred in several societies, such as Japan.

However, in a time of severe inequality of wealth, the common solution by promoting higher academic achievements and admission rate to college seems to be favoring only a few, or even inefficient. In fact, in economies such as Tunisia and Taiwan, the unemployment rate of university graduates are higher than people with lower education attainment. And in developed countries, especially in the United States, college graduates under the burden of debt do not fare too well, compared to those who didn't pursue such degree.

Therefore, in order to "look better” to get a job, millions of students are pursuing artificial performances and decreasingly valuable degrees at the cost of exploration and the learning of authentic knowledge and skills, which eventually caused the inflation of credentials that adversely affected the employability of youth, and thus piles up the pressure to obtain a higher degree in order to stand out.... Such rat-race not only sacrifices young people’s time and effort, but also undermines the solid grounding of economic growth, which may eventually lead us into a collapse.

**2. A political crisis and the increasing inefficiency caused by its internal friction**

In a time which changes are increasingly expeditious and unprecedented, the current system which we select the "brightest people" to become leaders, and filter the "disadvantaged/disabled" to be taken care of (or simply rejected), has also become ineffective, costly, and even burdensome.

Not only polls and surveys showed people's discontent towards their political leaders, frequent political unrests against governments all around the world in the past few years also show the inability of a few to take care of the welfare and interest of the whole. On the other side of the coin, the cost of taking care of such "disadvantaged" people - such as those who are mentally/physically disabled, criminals, homeless, even the elderly, are also significant. But are those "disadvantaged" really disadvantaged? Or, is it largely due to the narrowness of our "filter system" that stifled their values to flourish? What if Stephen Hawking got paralyzed by ALS far before he entered Cambridge?

One of the most important phenomenon I observed, is people’s tendency to blame and protest against a few for the system failure, while unaware or ignoring our own responsibilities. Such tendency is increasing expenses in eliminating tension rather than solving real problems. How could a system ever exist if nobody played with it?

**3. An environmental crisis**

Therefore, the environmental crisis should definitely be taken into account. Before human, it is perceived that the world was a sustainable place, where every life was the beginning of death, and every death provided the source of life. Resources were abundant in a sustainable cycle, and there were hardly any waste.

 However, human society since agriculture has been based on the allocation of (tangible and intangible) resources. People naturally obey to rulers as they rely upon the resources that the rulers control. Therefore, humans from individuals to empires have been competing for the power to obtain resources throughout history, especially after the ideology that “resources are limited while human desires are unlimited” was established.

With the explosion of population, added the ideology of consumerism, which encourages people to never stop buying, the linear process of resource competition - occupancy - allocation - consumption - waste has been accelerating at an exponential speed to undermine the sustainable cycle of the nature, and it seems to be inevitably leading the ecosystem on earth into perish.

**4. A health crisis, as we are undermining our health in our own hands**

I believe these crisis themselves aren’t that inevitable. However, the most terrifying issue lies in our lack of awareness of the world and ourselves.

Even living in a society way more affluent than societies centuries ago, a prominent portion of people are either having mental or physical health issues. In school, students are largely unmotivated or unhappy. And when they grow up, nearly 90% employed people around the world are “emotionally disconnected” or even “hate” their jobs.

Throughout lots of people’s life, basic needs such as safety (including its emotional side), love and belonging, and esteem according to Maslow were hardly addressed, not to mention self-actualization. Therefore, the pursuit of those fulfillments often has been steered into demands in external recognition, material satisfaction or sensual excitement, at the cost of people’s own wealth or health (such as obesity), which leads us to debt. As expenditure/debt raises, people have to work harder in order to increase his/her income. By working harder, the exhaustion and discontent that follows are likely to encourage more pursuit of material and sensual pleasure…

Such a cycle eventually drains not only people’s health, but also their willingness to take responsibility of the society, even causes unnecessary exploitation of the environment and tremendous waste. Ultimately, the employers and product/service/healthcare providers may all benefit from such cycle, increasing the inequality between the rich and poor. Having ourselves being the accelerator, the vicious cycle of the four crises are worsening in an ever increasing pace…