

Summer of Peace 2012™:

Rick Ulfik

[0:00:00]

Philip: Hello everyone. Welcome back to the Summer of Peace. This is Philip Hellmich with The Shift Network.

We just had an exciting weekend of people calling in and sharing what they're doing about peace around the world. We had reports from New Mexico, Oakland, and other parts of the world. It's just exciting to hear how we're all part of this larger shift.

We're looking at, in the Summer of Peace, peace from the inner to the international. We're also looking at all these different sectors. At the same time, this larger shift that's happening, it involves all of us.

It's really nice to hear of people picking up the baton. We've heard from Rio who's organizing a large event in Sacramento, the Oneness Festival. We heard from Kennedy who's organizing movement events around the world. We heard from a number of other people.

It's just heartening to know that we -- WE, which is the subject of our call today -- are part of something much bigger than ourselves and that when we really drop in and listen to our own inner guidance, we find our own unique expression of this larger shift. We can synergize with one another and learn from one another.

We had the prayers for World Peace Prayer Society. Prayers for peace has been going on for decades now. We can see that there's quite a bit of global attention to look at how we can create a culture of peace together.

This week, we're starting arts and culture, which is kind of a very broad range of potential subjects, everything from music to art. We're going to have Phil Donahue later today. We're going to have Jack Kornfield talking about fragmentation into creating a culture of peace. This week, we're doubling up on some of the sessions, some of the times, just to bring a representative.

Today, we're really delighted to start this week off with Rick Ulfick.

The session is all about WE. This is a big one, because everything we're talking about, we're moving towards more of a WE mindset, a WE consciousness as some would say.

Let me provide a little background on Rick here.

Rick is quite the Renaissance man. He is the founder and board chair of We, The World which is a nonprofit organization that develops global networks of collaboration and organizes campaigns to build mass involvement in creating a peaceful, caring, sustainable world.

Rick's advisors and supporters include Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Jane Goodall, Deepak Chopra, Daniel Ellsberg, Riane Eisler, Robert Thurman, Patch Adams, Hazel Henderson, and about 70 other visionary thought leaders.

Rick is the founder and a principal organizer of the WE Campaign at WE.net, which is the global campaign of We, The World to unite and amplify the efforts of people, organizations and movements working for the common good. He is also a co-founder and principal organizer of 11 Days of Global Unity, which is September 11 to 21, an annual promotion of peace, sustainability, and transformation that includes as many as 700 associated events in over 60 countries around the world.

Rick's organizations are co-sponsors of the Summer of Peace; and we're happily co-sponsors of 11 Days of Global Unity.

Rick also has other backgrounds, being a co-producer of TV series. He's also a musician. Just quite a range of backgrounds.

Rick, thank you so much for being with us on the Summer of Peace.

Rick: Thank you, Philip. I'm honored and inspired to be part of this Summer of Peace teleseminar series.

I would say that The Shift Network and We, The World are really aligned in many ways, especially in that both organizations promote people and other groups that contribute to having a peaceful, sustainable, transformed world.

Philip: Wonderful, Rick. Wonderful. Yes, we are very aligned.

Rick, I would love to know a little bit more about you and for people on the line to also hear, how did you get to this place where you decided to found WE? What influenced you early on in your life? What was your journey to where you are now?

Rick: Thank you for asking about that.

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I've had a 30-plus-year career in music and that's probably one of the reasons why we're starting off this week about culture. That's something that I'm very interested in, cultural trends and, of course, music is a big part of that.

I've had the opportunity, over the years, to write music for all the networks -- CBS, NBC, ABC -- and for the Olympics and many other kinds of things -- feature films, documentaries. I've worked with recording artists, like a wide range, from Queen Latifah, I was on one of her early albums doing keyboards, to Phoebe Snow and Carlos Santana, also Bernadette Peters, Judy Collins and many, many others.

One of the things that started happening in the 1980s was that I was doing music for commercials quite a bit at that time. I don't know if you remember, but the Reagan administration started relaxing some of the laws about monopolies and other things having to do with mergers and acquisitions.

What started happening is all these giant companies started eating each other up and that included ad agencies. And so, without really thinking about it very much, I was suddenly kind of pushed into thinking about the economy and politics and everything because the clients that I was working with at various ad agencies would start to be fired because when the ad agencies would buy each other up, they would let go of thousands of their employees.

Suddenly, I was losing all my accounts. I had five or six people whose lives were depending on my bringing in income. They were people who worked in my recording studio, and my agent and rep, and assistants, engineers, and all of that stuff. I suddenly became very aware of what was going on in the world.

In the 1990s, it became more accentuated. I used to donate a lot of money to 25 or 30 organizations that I thought were helping to create a

better world, like environmental organizations, peace organizations, Green Peace, Amnesty, groups like that. They're doing that great work and I wanted to support them.

In the 1990s, it seemed like it wasn't becoming a better world and I thought well, maybe I can do something, maybe I can pitch in. I started going to meetings and volunteering for nonprofits.

I noticed that one of the running themes that was happening at meetings was people were saying, "Well, we're doing good work, but why are we so isolated from others who are doing good work? Why is this movement for peace and the environment and social justice, why is it so fragmented?" It gave me the idea to start what eventually became We, The World.

Another big -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Philip: Before we go too far, the music fan in me is just curious, what would be some of the -- before we go too much further -- what would be some of the music that we, listeners, would have heard that you have been involved with?

Rick: Yeah. Thank you for asking.

I've done a lot of music, all different kinds. One thing that I noticed that a lot of people heard over the last 20 years or so is there was an ABC special called "Growing Old in America" with Hugh Downs. It really got a lot of airplay and it was a big documentary special, a three-hour documentary special, they preempted primetime to show that. I did all the music, all the themes for that.

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I also did the "The Fire Unleashed" which was about nuclear issues with Peter Jennings -- nuclear power, nuclear waste, all of that kind of thing, nuclear proliferation. Did all of that.

For a long time I did music for soap operas. For about three or four years, I did about literally half of the music for "All My Children."

Philip: Oh, wow. Okay.

Rick: So that was a whole other thing.

And then many commercials, Delta Airlines -- all kinds of things, very mainstream stuff -- Prudential Insurance -- very, very mainstream, which I'm not doing that stuff these days.

Philip: I was just curious because it sounds like you've already had your fingerprints in the larger consciousness and now you are starting to talk about how to get groups to start collaborating with one another, so it just seemed like there's --

Rick: Exactly.

Philip: -- music and orchestra or symphony and so forth.

What were your next steps then in terms of exploring how to bring fragmented groups together?

Rick: There was one other influence that I thought I would mention, which happened about a year before I started We, The World, which we started doing things in 1998, so been around for a while. About a year before that, I went to a lecture at the Museum of Natural History and I heard someone named Richard Leakey, who is the son of Louis Leakey. You may remember that Louis Leakey found a fossil which was named Lucy, some of the oldest human remains.

Richard Leakey had written a book called the Sixth Great Extinction of the Species, and that was very influential for me because it was the first time I heard somebody with his reputation as a scientist say that within 30 years, if we don't do something, the mass extinction of species that has happened now, created by humans, would become irreversible.

He says it's the sixth great extinction because there are five mass extinctions that apparently have happened on earth in the past. The last one was the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. The current one that we're on the edge of now was started by humans, with development, logging, things like climate change are helping to make the species extinct as well. That was like a wake-up call for me.

Like I said, in 1998 we started doing things that would help to bring groups together. It's been amazing. We have all these supporters, as you mentioned: Desmond Tutu and Jane Goodall. Now, we actually have thousands of organizations in our network and we connect them every year in various different ways.

Philip: Nice, Rick. You also talked a little bit -- I've heard, prior to the call, you were mentioning a little bit about the influence of Riane Eisler. Am I saying that name correctly?

Rick: Riane Eisler.

Philip: Riane Eisler, okay. Thank you.

Could you speak a little bit about that thinking and how that's influenced you?

Rick: Certainly.

I guess that kind of gets to the whole conversation about culture because there are many aspects to culture, as you can imagine.

One of our thoughts now is that -- there's all this talk about the millennium development goals to end poverty and help create a safe environment and all of those kinds of things. It occurs to me that even if we were able to get all of the funding to realize the goals for the UN Millennium Development Goals, we still have not changed the culture that has brought us to this brink of catastrophe where we have half of the world's population living in poverty and 15 children die every minute from preventable diseases and malnutrition and, during that same minute, the world is spending about \$2 million on weapons and war.

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We have all of these things going on. We have 65,000 people in the United States alone dying of air pollution from human-caused problems and -- say it again?

Philip: I'm sorry, Rick. I hadn't heard that statistic before, 65,000 people in the US alone dying from air pollution?

Rick: Yeah, it's incredible. That's one of the things that Ralph Nader has talked about over the years. In fact, there's currently something called the Clean Air Act which is under attack. This is something that's happening over the last few weeks in August.

The Clean Air Act alone, if it was passed, would save the lives of 34,000 people; and it's under attack with part of what's going on in this country

and around the world -- austerity, cutbacks on all kinds of things, trying to shrink government. All of these things have real effects and that's one of them. Tens of thousands of people die just because we're allowing coal-fired plants to continue without as many regulations as there could be. There's all of these things.

Getting back to the culture. The idea is that even if we somehow came up with funding to deal with poverty and things like that, we still have the kind of culture that allowed us to get to this point where we have all these issues and these problems.

What we're trying to do, what the underpinning philosophy is, is to create a shift. Of course, The Shift Network is right in the middle of this, which is wonderful. We're so happy to partner with you guys.

We want to make a shift towards what Riane Eisler calls "partnership culture."

Now, on the other side, where we've been at for the last few thousand years or maybe ten thousand years is what she calls "dominator culture" or you could call it coercion culture or culture of hierarchy.

That culture is characterized by having winners and losers. It has tremendous social and economic inequality, cutthroat competition, corporate globalization that seeks to expand and dominate markets everywhere on earth. It's characterized by massive damage to our ecosystem and other parts of the commons, exploitation and commodification of all forms of life and the environment, patriarchy, extreme fundamentalism in religious groups.

What is very important for me is the norms in culture, media and communication that emphasize "power over" rather than "power with." Of course, that has many effects on our culture.

On the other hand, what we're working towards is partnership culture and another way of putting that is WE consciousness. That model has a core of concern for the common good and is characterized by mutually beneficial social, economic, and environmental practices; the public sphere imbalance with the private sphere; localization of regional economies; self-sufficiency and sustainability; imbalance with the global economy; women fully equal in all aspects of society; interfaith movements creating bridges of understanding; norms in media that emphasize "power with" rather than "power over;" nonviolence from

personal interactions to international relations; democratic governance; and that kind of thing.

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Philip: Rick, before we get into the details of your just incredible work, just a couple of reflections.

One is on the Summer of Peace, one of the intentions, just like the 11 Days of Global Unity, is to highlight and celebrate the tremendous good that's happening. With the Summer of Peace, we've been purposefully taking different themes so we can see, like there's so many people moving towards what you're talking about in different expressions, in different contexts, whether it's working with gangs or whether it's the spirituality and peace series we had on Sunday, whether it's scientists who are looking at the quantum field of consciousness, and so forth.

It's been interesting. It just really seems like there's a rising out of the human collective a WE consciousness and it seems like it's happening. It's just organically happening.

Also, it's interesting to hear that the bridge between the scientists and then the mystics. The mystics more easily go to that WE consciousness because of going into transcendence states. They hear the scientists starting to overlap with the mystics in this.

I heard a physicist down in Gainesville, Florida once said, "Something's happening, I don't know what it is and it's big and it deals with consciousness." It was interesting to hear a retired scientist say this.

I just was wondering about, from your experience of all these years working, just reflect upon a little bit of what I just mentioned there.

Rick: You mean the combination of science and spirituality? It is part of the whole thing, yes.

Philip: We're just also -- and are you also just seeing that this WE consciousness is just emerging, like it's emerging in different contexts?

Rick: Yes, totally. I totally agree that it's emerging. In fact, what we want to do is accelerate it because it's emerging and yet, we still are in this situation where, where are most of the world's resources going? Towards weapons

and war, at this point. It's a very sad fact. There's a tremendous amount of suffering that's happening as a result of that.

Even though we have the emerging consciousness that you and I are talking about, we still have the on-the-ground reality that the suffering is happening. And not only that, there are people, if you were to walk out and go down the street in the city, people who are not on this call and don't know about that emerging consciousness, they don't know about this, and the media isn't really saying much about this.

This is one of the exciting potentials that we have. Do you know who Paul Ray is? Have you heard of him? He's --

Philip: Yeah, but --

Rick: I can tell you a little bit. He and his wife wrote a book about the cultural creatives. He gave some really startling statistics. He's a social researcher who did about 15 years of research to come up with these statistics, and it's continuing. The idea is that in the United States alone, there are as many as 50 million people who, you could say, are beginning to be part of this emerging consciousness. They share values of social justice, environmental stewardship, peace, nonviolence, holistic health and spirituality, indigenous wisdom, global consciousness -- all of that.

The reason that I thought of him -- he joined our advisory board a few years ago. He actually joined We, The World because he saw the potential for us being able to connect them so that they could begin to act collectively. That's what I think we need to do in order that this emerging consciousness will begin to go mainstream.

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The reason I thought of him was because one of the things he found was he would go into companies, corporations and interview people about their values. They didn't talk about their values to their co-workers because they felt like they were unique and they were strange and they didn't go down the path that other people went -- they do their recycling, they mostly vote Democratic, they're into the kinds of transformational trends that we talk about -- but they would not talk to their people about it.

This idea of WE and the WE Campaign is really to not just promote the idea of WE consciousness, but also make it possible for the people who are interested in that to be able to work together.

Philip: Let's get to some of the programmatic aspects, Rick.

How have you been and how is We, The World facilitating these larger nuts-and-bolts aspects of accelerating the WE mindset, WE consciousness? What do your programs look like?

Rick: We've done many programs over the years, many kinds of exciting programs. We did a TV series called "Visual Voices" for a whole year, which was featured on the Dish Network and available to over 15 million people, which was really exciting. We've had video festivals. We do partner collaborations all the time. We've done many teleforums, kind of like what we're doing right now, broadcasts, webcasts.

I guess the biggest thing that we've done and that we continue to do is called 11 Days of Global Unity. I could talk about that a little bit, if you would like.

Philip: Sure.

Rick: Basically, it's become like a platform for linking local awareness and action campaigns into an international movement.

We've had major participants since we started it with our partners in 2004. We've had participants, including Amnesty International, which was a major partner for the launch. We've had Oxfam America, EarthDance four years ago, Roots & Shoots and the Jane Goodall Institute, Pathways to Peace, the Culture of Peace Initiative, Peace Day LIVE is one of our big partners this year with Global Concerts for Peace, the Federation of World Peace and Love from Taiwan, and World Peace Press -- many, many groups around the world.

Desmond Tutu has made videos for us, and Jane Goodall and Deepak has been part of it. One of the original founders of Earth Day was an honorary co-chair of the launch. John McConnell, Hazel Henderson, Irvin Laszlo... Barbara Marx Hubbard was one of the honorary co-chairs of the launch of 11 Days and, of course, she's very much involved with what's going on now with Birth 2012 and The Shift Network and everything. Mary Ann Williamson was an honorary co-chair.

It's an amazing thing that started in 2004 that has kind of taken off on its own to the point where we don't even know all of the things that are happening with 11 Days of Global Unity. It's like holding a tiger by the tail here. It's kind of taken off.

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We're trying to find out all these things so that people can know about them, like the Unity churches picked up on the 11 Days and now they do 11 Days of Global Unity with interfaith celebrations on each day.

Last year, we initiated this idea of having 11 themes to go along with the 11 days. We did that with United Religions Initiative of North America, Pathways to Peace, and the World Peace Press Society. We created these 11 themes. And already, hundreds of groups have become part of that and selected one of the themes to get involved with.

These themes range from unity, which starts on 9/11 and, of course, it commemorates the tragedy of September 11, 2001; but it also promotes the idea of coming together globally, interfaith movements, and all of those things.

There's interdependence. Interdependence Day happens on September 12. There's a whole interdependence movement that's behind that.

There's the theme of environment, economic justice, health, children and youth, women, human rights, freedom, disarmament, and peace for the International Day of Peace on September 21.

It's really like a blueprint for creating a world that works for all, taking together all of these themes.

Philip: Nice. It sounds like we're dipping from the same well here in terms of Avon Mattison's Peace Wheel and Barbara Marx Hubbard's Wheel of Co-creation and other frameworks. That was beautiful. It's really beautiful, Rick.

Tell us a little bit more about what's going to be happening in those 11 days and how people can participate.

Rick: Okay, that's great.

The best way to find out what's going on is to go to 11daysofglobalunity.org. That's the place where groups can register, select one of the themes and their mission, their goals and their action plans immediately go up on the website for everyone to see.

If you go to WE.net, there's pretty much the whole scope is there. People can also write on the blog. They can open the media link and upload videos there as well.

This year, there's a tremendous number of things happening for 11 Days of Global Unity. I mentioned before Peace Day LIVE is a global concert for peace with major concert partners, including EarthDance and Playing for Change.

If anyone has a musical event that they would like to tie in with Peace Day LIVE, they can go to peacedaylive.org or they can send us an email, and I can be reached at rick@wetheworld.org, either way.

Peace Day LIVE has concerts happening in New Orleans, Australia, Israel, LA, and many, many other places around the world.

PeaceDay.tv is going to be doing a webcast of many of the 11 Days' events and also for the International Day of Peace. You can find them at peaceday.tv.

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Jane Goodall's group, Roots & Shoots, they always do events globally for the International Day of Peace. They're one of our partners.

Interestingly enough, there's going to be a very high profile World Peace Art Exhibition in the Linzhou Province of China. That's going to be a part of the 11 Days celebration this year.

There's Pathways to Peace and the Culture of Peace Initiative. They have all kinds of things happening, which you can find out by going to internationaldayofpeace.org.

There's Pacifica Radio, specifically WBAI is going to be hosting a special broadcast on the 11 Days of Global Unity, and this will be happening on September 10 right before the 11 Days starts at 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon. It's going to be archived as well. That's 1:00 p.m. Eastern time in the US.

We have Push4Peace and the National Peace Academy. They're going to be launching their huge initiative right on the International Day of Peace. The 11 Days is the final countdown to the International Day of Peace, and then we have the launch of Push4Peace right on the International Day of Peace. Of course, the 11 Days coincides with the Summer of Peace activities, which you are very much involved with.

We have Hello, From My Heart which takes place in many cities and countries. It's in 30 countries now. I don't know if you've heard of it. It's during the 11 Days. What they do is they ask people when they see each other or greet each other on the phone or even in emails to start the communication with "Hello, from my heart." They actually have statistics where, in the cities that have done it, the rate of violent crimes has gone down every year for Hello, From My Heart when they've done that.

Philip: Rick, I just want to say it's so fun to see all this synergy. A lot of the groups you're talking with are partnering with the Summer of Peace -- Dot Maver, Pathways to Peace, and PeaceDay.tv. It's interesting, everything you've talked about how all the different fragments, when they come together, there's a much bigger whole.

This PeaceDay.tv broadcast on the 21st, in particular, I know we're both partnering with lots of other groups -- Mayors for Peace, Culture of Peace Initiative, and others -- about that broadcast that CPI and PeaceDay.tv is putting together on the 21st. It's going to be a beautiful way for people to see much of what you're talking about, about these events that are happening around the world and how there are so many people, so many groups, so many cities that are actively involved. It really does give a sense that there's something much bigger than any of us that's emerging.

Rick: This gets also back to the idea of why are we doing this with having a WE Campaign.

One of the things is that we've had the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the environmental movement, anti-war movement, and peace movement. The thing is no single movement for change has been able to dissolve the globally prevailing systems that keep half of humanity in poverty, pollute our air, spending millions, really billions and trillions of dollars on weapons and war and all these other things.

This is an attempt to bring not just people and organizations together, but movements as well. It's a very simple symbol that -- in fact, Desmond

Tutu, in one of the videos he made, says that the shift from I to We is core to all of these movements and if we can -- you and I and the partners that we have -- if we can create a movement of movements, in a sense, that creates a shift in the culture that we're talking about, then maybe we can begin to prioritize our direction towards peace, sustainability, and transformation.

[0:40:49]

Philip:

Right.

One of the things that I've been noticing from people who are participating in the Summer of Peace -- individuals -- like Saturday we had a call where people called in and is a) being inspired and having hope and inspiration by what's emerging around the world, b) not feeling alone and isolated by being able to connect in with something much larger and then having fellowship to co-create actively together. The third part is knowing whatever effort a person is making, that effort can be part of this larger shift from I or Me to We.

That's been real heart-opening for me to hear people, whether it's from Utah, or Indiana, or Sierra Leone, or wherever, to call and just talk from the heart about how they're concerned about the way the world is today and that they can be part of something much bigger, and to be learning from one another.

It's interesting, Rick, we had a minister, a monk from Los Angeles contact me and he said that he was reaching out to A Better LA, which is Pete Carroll's group in Los Angeles, to help them work with gangs because they had listened to the telesummits. I imagine you've come across stories like this too in your experiences over the years, of the synergies that start to happen and the mutual hope and also the real grounded practicalities of people gaining insights from another person or another group that they can apply in their community.

Also, let me just say here, before you respond to that because I'd love to hear some anecdotes from you.

If there's anyone on the line who'd like to share a question or a comment, please hit *2. If you're on the webcast, please go ahead and type it in.

Rick, can you share a little bit your own experience about the hope and inspiration and the practical synergies that you've seen over the years.

Rick:

We did a program that was the UN Video Conference Series for Students, and it was so exciting. We partnered with the United Nations and was able to use their video conference system to create connections between schools in various cities. We did a few of these.

The one that was the most memorable was where we had seven cities on the line connected with these young people, these teenagers, and young people who were at the UN, each of whom had gone through their early years in a war zone or a conflict area.

There was a young person from Liberia, from Bosnia, from Rwanda, and from the Israel and Palestine area. Each one talked about how their experiences had shaped their lives and kind of propelled them to talk to other young people and get others involved in creating peace so what they experienced would never happen again. They were on the line literally with seven classrooms in seven different cities and schools and they were able to interact directly with the kids in high school and college in those seven cities so they could interact. It was really wonderful.

Later, for that same video conference, Jane Goodall was at the UN and she was able to interact directly with those young people who attended that video conference in cities in different parts of the country. That was very inspiring.

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Philip:

Nice, Rick.

Can you speak a little bit to some of your experience about going from I or Me or Mine to We and just some of the nuances of -- because it's easy. I've worked with Peace Corps and federal government. I've worked with Search for Common Ground.

I've seen at Search for Common Ground this dance between okay, this is our nonprofit and we need to raise a certain amount of money to do what we're doing; and yet, the most effective work we do in countries like Sierra Leone and Burundi and others or Congo would involve 100 radio stations.

Could you talk a little bit about that dance of how individual groups maintain their essence and their practical ways of supporting themselves and yet enter into these collaborative ways of being that share resources and increase impact?

Rick: I think that's a really crucial concept to have both of those characteristics. In fact, we call that "open architecture." The programs that we do, like the 11 Days of Global Unity, we make it possible with these programs. It's also, I think, how it works with the Summer of Peace program and other Shift Network programs.

The idea is you create a program that groups can plug into so they can retain their own identity and exposure for what they're doing and, at the same time, there are ways that they can collaborate and have a bigger presence with the public because they are working together.

We did this also with something called the Global Water Awareness & Action campaign. We've done that a few years in a row. It culminates on March 22, which is World Water Day. It's a way that organizations that are focused on water issues can come together and support each other and show the public what's going on with a larger group, like a larger coalition than if it's just one group on its own.

Philip: Sure. In a sense, like the Summer of Peace telesummit, is an open architecture then of highlighting and sharing?

Rick: Exactly, because you're featuring representatives of many, many groups. It's a way that many groups can kind of plug in.

We want to go further than that. Up to this point, it's been more of a funding issue. We want to go further in the sense of creating more action-oriented kinds of activities and ways that groups can actually connect with each other directly.

For example, we have many contacts with some of the larger networks in the world, like MoveOn, WiserEarth, Amnesty, and Green Peace. There are many labor organizations that have millions and millions of members. We have a lot of these contacts.

What we would like to do is make it possible for them to connect with each other and actually work together on specific issue campaigns, coordinate their press conferences and press releases, synchronize their calls to action on a global scale. This is kind of the next level that we

would like to take this to. It's just a matter of finding some angel investors out there that are willing or interested in creating a legacy of peace, sustainability, and transformation.

[0:50:19]

Philip:

Sure. That's a beautiful vision, Rick. It just reminds me of Michael Nagler who was talking about nonviolence, the effectiveness of Gandhi to be able to have millions of people doing the same specific, strategic act that was -- like the Salt March that he did and the spinning wheels and the effects that that had. That would be a larger discussion to really think about what would be those strategic actions that would really be able to - - Michael Nagler, we were talking about, he'd be talking about from the philosophy of nonviolence, of how to make a shift in structural violence and so forth or how to move something forward. That would be a different -- would be a longer conversation with the time we have now.

There's a question that I'd love to respond to and also hear you first on. From [Participant] in Los Angeles said: "It seems that violent media images feed the present culture of violence. Are there any organizational peace efforts to bring a culture of peace and nonviolence to mainstream media?"

Do you want to go ahead and respond, Rick, and then I've got a couple of organizations?

Rick:

Yes, totally.

One of the ideas that a few of us who are part of the NGO International Day of Peace committee that we've talked about is using the International Day of Peace to have a media ceasefire -- can you imagine that concept? -- where all the major media for the International Day of Peace decides no violent programming. Actually, we've talked with Link TV about that and they partnered with us to do that last year.

We want to do that in a big way and, of course, not just for the International Day of Peace, but at least getting that going because the International Day of Peace was created as a time when there could be a global ceasefire in conflict areas. To really keep that going, we need a media ceasefire and then, a ceasefire in our neighborhoods where there's no gang violence on that day going forward.

Go ahead, what were you thinking?

Philip:

A couple of different things. The place where I work at, Search for Common Ground is kind of a pioneer of using media to transform conflict. Most of that is less mainstream in the US; it'd be more mainstream across sub-Saharan Africa, places where they've had 89% to 90% listenership of radio programs, and Burundi where they've had Hutu and Tutsi journalists co-producing radio programs within a year of the genocide in neighboring Rwanda.

If you check out Search for Common Ground, they're really perceived in some of the most difficult conflict situations of being pioneers of using radio, television, and print media.

In Sierra Leone where I've been a Peace Corps volunteer and then we had child soldiers literally sack the villages I lived in; and I'll be speaking more about that tomorrow. We had former child soldiers and sex slaves, together with other children and youth, producing radio programs on the air, reaching 89% of the country within a year of up and running within 2000 -- we started 2001, 89% of the country -- and they were modeling the behaviors of disarming, demobilizing, and so forth.

Search for Common Ground is one. I know Odyssey Media also does quite a bit of media work, looking -- some of it gets into mainstream, some of it doesn't. Search for Common Ground partnered with the Hallmark Channel.

This is just an area of passion of mine, Rick, we just stumbled into.

At the USC, there's a program that is working with scriptwriters, Hollywood scriptwriters to bring even more of the public health. CDC is partnering with them because violence had become a public health crisis in the United States and the world; so the CDC is partnering with USC. They actually get programming into some of the mainstream, like ER, Scrubs, and others. Sandra Buffington is the champion of that. So that's another one to check out.

This subject, when we started at Search -- and I want to come back for some closing comments from you, Rick. This is such a big topic because one of the creators of Sesame Street -- the senior researchers worked with us in '97-'98 at Search for Common Ground to create the methodologies to measure the impact of peacebuilding media. He told us this was the next frontier of media. We didn't realize it, but he had terminal cancer. He spent the last two years of his life helping us develop

monitoring and evaluation methodologies that we then applied across sub-Saharan Africa and up in the Balkans.

[0:55:30]

This is like the frontier of media.

Sesame Street has done really wonderful work in multiple different places and we partnered with them in Macedonia to co-create -- Search for Common Ground did -- to co-create a children's media program; that's a whole other story.

It's starting to percolate up into more of the mainstream conflict resolution organizations.

The US Institute of Peace has a very good media networking hub. Sheldon Himelfarb, who was my first supervisor at Search for Common Ground, created that. That's a whole network of media groups.

We like to go assemble -- go ahead, Rick.

Rick: I was going to say that we should mention the whole idea of nonviolent communication because they're also involved with the media. The group that we're partnering with is New York Center for Nonviolent Communication, nycnvc.org, and that's a really important component of all of this. I just wanted to get that in there about the whole violence thing.

Philip: Sure.

Just so you know, [Participant] in France echoes your words. She said: "A media ceasefire. What a brilliant idea! I hope it sticks." Thank you from France there with that comment.

Rick: Well, you know, to make these things happen requires infrastructure and support, that's the thing.

One of the services that We, The World provides is fiscal sponsorship. I wanted to mention that in case people have projects that they want to do and want to have nonprofit status for their donors. They can contact us about that. That might be of interest.

Philip: How do people contact you, Rick? What's the best way?

Rick: Quick is rick@wetheworld.org. I'll even give them the phone, 212-867-0846. The best place to go to find out more is at WE.net, the easiest web address to remember, right? WE.net.

People can subscribe to our newsletter by going to we.net/subscribe to keep track of everything.

Philip: Well, Rick, we're almost at the top of the hour. What would be any final comments you'd like to leave with people?

Rick: Well, I guess to keep working on doing what you're doing wherever you are because it's all these elements, all these candles making a giant flame, all these rivers creating an ocean -- whichever metaphor you want to think of -- and then please support those organizations that are bringing it all together, like We, The World with the WE Campaign, The Shift Network, Pathways to Peace, and all these groups four years ago that we didn't spend time talking about them, but they're doing similar kinds of aggregating work.

Get involved. Let's get some major investors out there so we can really create a legacy of peace, sustainability, and transformation.

Philip: Beautiful vision, Rick. Wonderful.

Rick, I just want to acknowledge, first of all, I love the fact that I probably grew up listening to some of your music, without even knowing it. I love that fact. I really appreciate your organic journey of your own life shifting around your profession and then how you picked up the call and started working in a pioneering area.

Thank you for being a pioneer of bringing We into the world and for everything you're doing. Thank you for being with us on the Summer of Peace here, Rick.

Rick: It's been a real pleasure, Philip. I'm so happy to be connecting with you about this and with The Shift Network.

Philip: Great, just wonderful.

For people who are listening, remember, today we have two sessions. Not only did we have Rick talking about We, The World, which is incredible in itself, we also have Phil Donahue at five o'clock Pacific time.

He will be talking about "Body of War: A Shift Towards Peacebuilding," and that's based on his documentary film about the impact of Iraq war on an individual there. That will be hosted by Matthew Albracht of the Peace Alliance.

I look forward to having everyone back with us just four hours from now.

Wherever you are in the world, whether it's morning, afternoon, evening or night, hope you have peaceful rest of the next few hours. We'll talk with you soon.

Okay. Bye-bye.

[1:00:54]

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