

Free, Equal and Together

Pathway to a Human and Earth Worthy Society

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0.1 Check-in

Economy Transformers meetings always begin with a check-in and end with a check-out. This book is also a meeting. You and I, reader and writer, come together for as long as you read my book and perhaps well beyond. You don't yet know who I am and I don't yet know who you are. Now I like to check in with you with an introduction so you know what to expect and how to read the book.

I enjoyed writing the book. The basics came naturally, then it was searching for the right delineation and words. The topics discussed are all books in themselves, and the field of *peer governance*¹ is infinite. This book contains the result of my journey so far, with insights from my own experiences. This is what I have to offer you. It feels vulnerable, my whole heart and soul is in this book, my deepest desire. And it also feels very good and deeply fulfilling.

How do you check in, how and where do I find you? What makes you want to read this book now, what are your expectations and what do you long for? For example, how much room do you have for slowing down and for self-examination, do you dare to take the time and space for deepening, or do you want to have the answers to the many questions you have now, now, now?

A society worthy of humanity and Earth will not come about if I give you the answers and you follow them blindly. But I do point you to a path that hopefully feeds and inspires you, so that you can continue on your way, strengthened and full of new ideas. I like to get to know you, am curious about your questions, choices and new applications and like to walk with you on your journey.

0.2 Rationale

Imagine a big, white, detached house with three horses in the garden, on a wide avenue with beautiful, big oaks along it, in a neighborhood full of white people with big houses,

¹ Organization of equals among equals.

on the edge of the forest. In that house I grew up as a girl, with my own pony in the garden. No classmates lived nearby. There were hardly any children playing in the streets. We were a traditional family of five, I had an older and a younger brother, my father worked hard and my mother took care of us. My parents half-expected me to marry a man who would take care of me. For a long time I thought that I really should have been a man in order to contribute to changing our world. I thankfully stopped thinking that a long time ago, but it did take me some effort to become aware of my qualities. I finally had to turn 38 and be pregnant with my first child before I was ready to set up Economy Transformers: a movement for renewing economic principles in order to shape healthy structures of living and working together, good for people and Earth. But first, back to the big white house.

I distinctly remember as an adolescent once being dropped off at home after a night out. I was dropped off a few houses away, at the smallest house on the street. I was ashamed of our own home. What had I done to be allowed to grow up so prosperous, with sports and music, with beautiful nature vacations that I enjoyed intensely? Why me and so many others around me didn't? How exactly was that? Where was the happiness for everyone? In protest, I refused to go to college among "our kind of people," as my grandmother had taught me. In doing so - I felt - I would lose connection with the ordinary person in the street, and I didn't want that. I wanted to contribute to reducing and preferably solving the great gap between rich and poor. But how? I didn't see that then.

In school, I was faced with the second major theme of my life, the difference between intention and form. How do the two relate to each other? At the free school, there are many beautiful principles, but I was troubled by the elements of form that had become fixed in my experience and determined what did and did not happen. Like the fancy board drawings, the testimonials and the focus on homemade content. Because of the emphasis on content, the relationship with the students was under pressure; there was no time and space left for that. The form felt static and out of sync with the intent. It was an imposed form from which all humanity and flexibility had disappeared, which I felt was unfair. I was frustrated, brash and angry every day. I must have been unenjoyable at the time, poor teachers. But it made little difference, and I don't think I was able to

properly express what mattered to me. Form over intention, form becoming an end in itself, then things go wrong. I experienced that strongly there and became a second leitmotif. Later in college (one year anyway) this issue came back. A professor taught me during one of the first lectures, "Economists work with models, they are not correct, but they work. I was completely in shock. How could science resign itself to this and not take responsibility for what it is doing with this? You make an abstraction, a model of reality that you don't really understand, put in new figures, and then you adjust your policy accordingly, thus influencing the same reality that you didn't really understand to begin with. Again that mismatch between form and intention. I left after a year, again angry and frustrated. My route into economics would be different, at least not through mainstream science.

Another step back: at eighteen, my father took me to a lecture by Lex Bos² and that's when I woke up to my life's mission. From him I heard for the first time the principles "liberty, equality and fraternity" from the French Revolution, understood and applied as organizing principles for the design of a society. How all three have their own place in making intrinsically human organizing possible. I fell like a log for his story about a society as an organism, consisting of three domains: law, culture and economics, each with its own organizing principle. Lex Bos talked about the ideas Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy, had about this over a hundred years ago. Steiner called this the tripartite nature of the social organism. In a vision I saw myself lecturing about it and going around the world with it. In practice back then, I was still miles away from that, as a rebellious young woman. I would go a long way.

For my first study Multi Ethnic Welfare Work³, I did a nine-month internship in Suriname with the Stichting Jongere Vrouwen Centraal (JOVROC). I supervised teenage mothers who were no longer allowed to go to school and there I came into contact with

² Lex Bos is an organization expert and has worked in that role at van Berenschot and was involved in the founding of NPI, institute for social organization development. He is the author of several books including *Judgment Making*, *Social Reflections*, *about society as a reflection of one's own inner self*, and *Beyond the limits*, *about the human scale in organizations*.

³ At the social academy de Horst in Driebergen, then I studied economics at the Free University Amsterdam for a year anyway.

real poverty that touched me deeply. Also around that time, from the International Monetary Fund, an international financial institution with 188 members whose objectives include assisting countries with temporary balance of payments problems financially, a structural adjustment program was rigged in exchange for money. It was based on selling Suriname's state-owned companies and throwing open markets internationally: in other words, on privatization and liberalization. The Surinamese people were angry and frustrated about so many demands in exchange for aid. I realized then how much we export our Western economic thinking model around the world and force its implementation in exchange for financial support. A model that doesn't work for ourselves either.

I saw the economy and current Western society as a steamboat propelling unchanged. At the front, people fall off the boat into the water, people who fail to join the rat race. And back on the deck, aid workers like me are fishing people out of the water to put them back on the boat. But for how long? Nothing has changed, after which they actually fall back into the water just as easily. An endless self-repeating process. Aid workers are necessary, of course, but I could see myself doing something else. I want no people to fall off the boat at all, why do we accept this? So I made two directional choices in Suriname:

- I will quit counseling and focus on the economy. Because how we treat each other in it determines whether we grant each other a dignified existence or not.
- I am going back to the Netherlands, no matter how nice I have it in Suriname, to help renew Western thinking. And to contribute to sharing with the world fruitful and meaningful ideas and thoughts about economy and living together.

In these choices, as a 23-year-old, I encountered all my fears. It terrified me and I was locked in for a long time. I had never taken economics at school, I didn't understand the financial page of the newspaper, and my father informed me often enough that I couldn't tell a ton from a million, which was somewhat true with my dyscalculia.

But what I understood very well is the issue that we have to solve together. We are subjecting the world to our market laws and they are wrong. The question really is: how

do we live and organize ourselves so that we are good for all people and the Earth? That there is no longer a yawning gap between rich and poor, and that we are able to take good care of our nature, instead of exploiting and destroying it in every way possible?

The key to this is how we organize the exchange and allocation of land, labor and capital.

0.2.1 The issue: exchange and allocation of land, labor and capital

Professor Bas van Bavel of Utrecht University⁴ describes the core of the problem already in the first sentences of his book *The Invisible Hand*: "Everything necessary for human life comes about through an interplay of the production factors of land, labor and capital.⁵ Whether - and to what extent - people have access to resources, food and wealth is irrevocably determined by the way a society organizes the exchange and allocation of land, labor and capital. (...) Thus, the way in which constitutes the foundation of any society.

He also says that this allocation and exchange of land, labor and capital determines social relations. And how we as a society deal with ecological and climatic challenges and dangers, how we develop technical resources and generate economic growth.

For that exchange and allocation of the means of production, only a few dominant ways remain in the present day. In his book, he examines three economies in which the allocation and exchange of land, labor and capital were accomplished through the market and thus through the price mechanism: market economies of the early to late Middle Ages such as the early medieval heyday of Iraq; Italian cities such as Florence and Venice; and Amsterdam and Antwerp in the Golden Age. Bas van Bavel shows that these free-market economies all came crashing down after a period of great prosperity. Indeed, this form of exchange allows small groups to accumulate more and more private

⁴ Dutch economic historian, faculty professor, Department of Humanities, teaching assignment Transitions of Economy and Society.

⁵ Capital is a comprehensive concept and ranges from an idea in your head to credit, money and means of production (from converted land/raw materials to machinery, data, knowledge and a business itself). See also the key Property in Part 2 on page xxx.

property in the form of financial (business) capital, land and natural resources. In time, this leads to a sharpening of social antagonisms, a decline in the prosperity of ordinary people, and eventually to insurrection. This is followed by increasing inequality in the political sphere and a growing grip of the market elite on the rules of the game in the marketplace, to their advantage. Eventually stagnation and even decline of the economy occurs and finally decline. He calls this the of exchange through the market the hallmark of capitalism.

Besides the market economy, two other systems have become large and dominant in history. The planned economy (communism) where land, labor and capital are owned by the state. Here the state determines who why should make what from what and for whom. This is another form of society whose bankruptcy has been demonstrated by history.

And the society in which a combination of the two previous systems has come about: the state-market combination. Here there is a free market for land/raw materials, labor and capital, but this free market is channeled, constrained, curbed, or if you will, restricted, by laws and regulations from the government. We know this situation in Europe. This model is called the Rhineland model. It consists of an ever-increasing government to regulate the markets, which itself is held back by the power of the market elites. You can already easily observe this development in our society, with social inequality and growing protest.

All systems eventually seem to be moving toward the latter model. China is increasingly embracing the market; the United States is placing more and more power in the hands of the government. This seems to be the only alternative to the damage done by the free market, or a completely state-regulated society, and is also called the third way.

But even this state-market combination ultimately leads to nothing. The struggle for property and self-care continues with ditto winners and losers. On the one hand, securing your own family with building wealth through home ownership, saving, investing and speculating, retirement provision and insurance properly arranged. And the urge to inherit enough to pay for your children's tuition. On the other hand, the enormous regulatory burden and bureaucracy by a government that is supposed to

provide "equal competition," a *level playing field* and equal opportunities for all. Society comes to a standstill. Sustainable (agricultural) initiatives can no longer obtain agricultural land because its price has become prohibitively high due to the market, speculation and subsidy flows for a particular sector⁶. Hospitals get paid per operation, making medical intervention "good" for the hospital. An ever-shrinking elite acquires most of the available resources they extract from society. A participant in our basic training in the Art of Living Together once expressed very nicely the feeling he got from this scenario of the state-market combination: "the Kafka feeling, confusion and chaos. You don't know where you stand. You matter and you don't matter. How are we really going to take care of each other? That remains the big question. People keep falling out, even if more gently than in a pure free-market society, all good intentions notwithstanding.

The essence is that we need to examine for society how we deal with land, labor and capital and what the consequences are. If we do not want the above consequences, how do we want to deal with land, labor and capital?

From the perspective of Economy Transformers, only the renewal impulses that seek alternative forms of allocation of land, labor and capital beyond this form of state-market exchange make a structural contribution to building a humane society. Many critical thinkers, who do make a sharp analysis of what is wrong with neoliberalism, still continue to cut and paste - as I call it - within that existing force field of state and market, such as tax equalization or more laws and regulations for sustainability, when looking for solutions. Similarly, initiatives that bring in the community as a third player alongside government and market do not yet address the exchange and allocation issue of land and capital beyond the market and state, and thus do not yet get to the heart of the problem, no matter how nice the agreements may seem.

0.2.2 The fourth route, the promise

⁶ A good example is the subsidy streams in the energy sector that are driving up land prices to extreme levels in Flevoland, thereby driving farmers out of the area.

There is an alternative! From the perspective of Economy Transformers, there really is a fourth route to dealing with land, labor and capital and shaping a healthy economy and society. A route that fortunately more and more people worldwide are also finding. On this route we look for systems where land, labor and capital are owned by you and me, by us, the community. This is where you end up with the movements of the *commons*⁷ and *peer governance* that are going on around the world, and which connect to a current in history that has always been there as well. Land, labor and capital, managed, used and allocated from, for and by people. Strictly speaking, of course, the state and the market elite are also people. But here I mean people who coordinate with each other as equals among equals and arrive at exchange and allocation. Then the big question is: how do you organize that? If these are no longer assigned to the highest bidder (market) or imposed (state), how do you arrange this with people among themselves? This requires the art of living together and this book deals with this issue in detail.

In this book I reach out to you our perspective on the big social issues of how we get rich and poor out of the world and how we restore sanity to our dealings with the Earth and each other. How we come from new starting points to truly new forms consistent with them. A hopeful perspective, starting with how we ourselves, you and I, can contribute to this with our own initiatives and businesses, living from the inside out from our own strength and passion. How we can organize our work differently as *Samenlevenskunstenaar*: in a Participatory Society. How you and I can truly work together as equals on the basis of love and trust, already exchanging and allocating land, labor and capital as a common good. How we can build together, step by step, from the ground up, a new society that 'fits' who we are and brings out the best in us, beyond the cut-and-paste stage we have been in for so long.

'Be the change you want to see happen in the world.' - Mahatma Gandhi

⁷ Commons, aka commons. All input factors to the economy: land, labor and capital that belong to all of us. For further explanation in Part 1, see the key Property on page xxx.

All my insights and experiences of the past decades are now coming together. The journey I made with and within Economy Transformers⁸ has taught me a lot about entrepreneurship in a self-directed organization, about free-equal-together, about the six keys and how the PartnerShip is an answer to the questions I too struggle with. Everything in this book I write on the basis of my own teachings, experiences and insights that I gained, especially during the research I was allowed to do with our participants the training courses and practice groups. And I also thank Rudolf Steiner, who gave the world his practical view of the social use of the great concepts of freedom, equality and fraternity: the Source for all our work.

Free-equal-together and the six keys are gateways to a human- and Earth-worthy society based on love and trust, starting in a PartnerShip. Will you build with us?

0.3 The PartnerShip in a nutshell

'You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.' - Richard Buckminster Fuller

The PartnerShip is our answer to years of searching for a new form of organization that expresses and lives up to how we can best work together as equals among ourselves. Simply put, it is a new, self-created organizational structure and culture based on trust in the passion and power of people. This form fulfills intrinsic human needs to be equal together as human beings and free as persons. It points a way forward for all initiatives that get stuck or no longer fit within the fear- and control-based current (legal) structures. It is a way of working together that contributes to a sustainable future for all life, where we start from trust in people and organize horizontally and self-directed. The

⁸ See Appendix 1.1 on page xxx for a more detailed description of that trip.

PartnerShip invites us all to become who we deeply are. The form focuses on releasing the power of the individual (free) who, in connection with Source, contributes the common intention (equal) to caring for, and enabling, the other (together).

We create our own (legal) space alongside, or if you will on top of, existing legal structures, which we fill in with a structure set up by ourselves. An existing legal entity, such as a foundation, cooperative or corporation, serves here as a bridge between the old and the new world. In this way, we build a new world with respect for everything that is already there.

Any form of trust-based organizing, whether you call it Partial Society or not, is part of a growing movement. We, you and I, are creating that new reality together, here and now.

You can read more about the run-up to and genesis of the PartnerShip in Appendix 1.2 on page xxx, where I explain how Henry, Jac and I came to the same thing from three different directions.

0.3.1 What problem does it solve?

Perhaps you recognize the following: you start something new and build it with people on an equal footing. You all contribute from your own strengths and passion, and that is how you would prefer to continue organizing, as a flat organization, self-managing. But soon you start thinking about a legal form and you have to deal with establishing ownership, control and liabilities in functions and positions. Unintentionally, this also creeps fear, control and hierarchy into your initiative. So what do you do?

Of necessity, you choose a form of organization with which to maneuver the new initiative into the old structures, trying to retain as much of yourself as possible in the process. This does not always succeed. Slowly the fun and cooperation based on equality disappears. There is always someone who has the upper hand. The management draws decisions to itself, and participants slowly drop out.

Or you pioneer outside existing legal structures, but without a clear form you are often rudderless as an initiative. Moreover, you often end up needing an existing legal form anyway in order to meet the demands of our society.

For all the people and organizations who recognize this, there is now the PartnerShip. A lightweight structure for flat organizing from a whole new sense of justice. Thought through on all aspects of organizing. The PartnerShip gives structure to cooperation based on the trust that all people want to contribute to a greater whole out of passion and ability.

Advantages:

- You can start right away, the legal bridge will come when you need it.
- You immediately have a clear structure for "flat organizing" from trust.
- Six keys will help you carry this through on all aspects to make it right.
- The strength is the confidence in the personal commitment and passion of the sharers.

In short, contemporary practicality!

0.3.2 Is the PartnerShip right for you?

First, it is suitable for all people and organizations who feel like (starting) working on the basis of equality and trust. If that is you, I would like to say to you: make a start, experiment and take over from this book what seems meaningful and works for you. Put aside what does not resonate and share your experiences with our network.

You don't have to be familiar with economic theories or legal matters to start a PartnerShip. Indeed, if you do have that knowledge, you will probably have to let go of a lot of fixed beliefs about how economics and law works, to make way for new thoughts and intentions of a business in this day and age. Because everything is pretty much turned upside down in the PartnerShip.

In practice, we see that the PartnerShip is a very suitable organizational form for citizen and resident initiatives in the participatory society that now often seem to be organized in a cooperative or association. Think of the many community and urban gardens that are emerging and all kinds of short-chain and energy initiatives, such as energy and food cooperatives. Many of these initiatives come about primarily through the power of people's voluntary efforts. Because they see something for themselves and want to get it done. They often start from equality and from shared effort, but this can be pushed into a more hierarchical framework by the legal form as the cooperative grows and people suddenly get privileged positions and passionately take on and sometimes even demand this role.

Then it not infrequently happens that the initiative and people drift away from the original intent and purpose that was once there. As the cooperative has more members who are more distant from the operation, things become more complex, and the board takes on more and more tasks out of felt responsibility and accountability, it also draws more and more decisions to itself. Members are slowly losing their energy and commitment. Sometimes the board cannot yet bear this alone in terms of time investment, because the money to do this paid may not yet be there. The level of frustration is increasing among members but now also among the board. Slowly the passion, energy and space to work together in a pleasant way are disappearing. This usually has innocent and unintended motives, but it is a shame and could be prevented with more awareness of the knock-on effects of the current legal structure with the addition of the PartnerShip.

Even for a network, the PartnerShip is very suitable as a form of organization. Networks can transcend national borders, which is not a problem for the PartnerShip. If necessary, you then look for the right legal embedding per country, while you anchor the cooperation across the national borders in a Participant's Society.

There are many residential, work, live initiatives that find their way to the PartnerShip. And for a service organization, it is also easily applicable. A number of examples are mentioned in the book.

For a (manufacturing) company that is already focused on self-organization, but where this is not yet running as you expect, it is interesting to see if the ShareGeneration can still add something to your organization. Are you perhaps not yet congruent with all six keys? You can find a lot of inspiration in this book on how to make your company also legally its own and what else is needed to become truly flat and self-directed organizing.

For whom exactly the PartnerShip is applicable in practice and for whom it is not, I cannot determine. I think the applications are endless and that it also offers tools for all large organizations for new ways of collaborating and organizing. Just tell us when you run into limits and how you overcame them. I am very curious to see all the possibilities and forms of application that arise in practice.

0.3.3 Many flowers bloom

People sometimes ask me how the PartnerShip relates to all that is already happening. They then urge me to start working together to join forces and be stronger in the transition to a new world. The problems are big: climate change, loss of biodiversity, depletion of soil and other resources, the growing gap between rich and poor, loneliness, waste and the pandemic. And there are indeed many organizations and initiatives working on solutions. These include the Economy for the Common Good, the New Economy Alliance, the donut economy, the self-directed organization, collaborative governance, the cooperative society, sociocracy, holocracy, *deep democracy*, nonviolent communication, dialogue, the meaning economy, *steward ownership*, the circular economy the *care first movement*, the sharing and giving economy, the regenerative society, biomimicry, the network society, *social enterprise*, multiple value creation, *true price* and *true cost accounting*, short-chain initiatives, *peer governance*, *Community Land Trust*, and that's just the tip of the iceberg.

In all these organizations and initiatives, I recognize the desire to want to contribute to shaping a better world. But they also all do this from a certain human and worldview, even though they are often not so aware of this. Depending on the underlying principles, they are more or less inspiring to me. Where they do this from the movement from within and based on trust in people, I would like to cooperate. However, I also

experience many initiatives as cut and paste within the current society structure. They do not (yet) touch on the most important change that is needed, the way we exchange and allocate land, labor and capital among ourselves, and they are ultimately still based on a human and worldview of fear and control from which the creation of healthy forms is, in my opinion, never possible.

The movement aimed at shaping new ways of exchanging and allocating land, labor and capital has hardly been born yet. For this transformation, several flowers may yet emerge and bloom, trusting that a few workable forms will naturally emerge from there. Diversity at this stage is important and I welcome it. You will find exactly those people and those forms that suit you. That process unfolds by itself and we don't need to accelerate it from urgency and outside pressure. There again, trust is the key word. People meet and want to do something together, from that energy a fruitful collaboration emerges.

Economy Transformers sheds light on human and worldviews from which everything and everyone comes to form. In doing so, it adds a key that is often missing today. We stand for the human being who has the potential to be a loving creative and creative being. We are building forms that bring out and encourage this humanity. New ways of allocating land, labor and capital based on trust and love is the key. We are connecting with others who also think this way and are looking for new forms, such as Foundation Ground of Existence and Sleipnir⁹. And with master companies¹⁰ around us, who show in practice that things can be done differently. This is how we build a healthy reality together and show that the fourth way is a reality. Anyone who wants to join in is welcome!

The PartnerShip itself is one of those new flowers. Most likely you started reading this book because your search is not over. Our way of looking at things may provide you with just that *missing link* to understand what your next step is. Or maybe you decide to look

⁹ Part 2 chapter Property discusses both in detail.

¹⁰ This refers to the apprentice-apprentice-master system where the master is skilled and trains apprentices. I refer here to companies that are leaders in the transition to use land, labor and capital differently.

at how you can transform your organization into a Participatory Society. And all the variants in between.

0.4 Reading guide

A few pointers in advance will help you read the book well.

0.4.1 *Heart drop*

This book is not so much a *mind drop* as a *heart drop*: motivated by my intense desire to help build a society that does justice to our humanity. And thereby makes all life possible. Written on the basis of the pain I experience about the world as it is now and the answers I found in free-right-together and the six keys. I was able to write this book based on experience, because of what I have learned over the years about economics and the commons, from David Bollier and George Monbiot, for example, and because of what I learned from Rudolf Steiner about free-equal-together. My meeting with Arwana Hayashi¹¹ meant a deepening of my own research methodology, allowing me to do even more extensive research with my students on free-equal-together. Not with the head, but with the heart and the body where inner knowing resides, far beyond the thousands of books written on these loose concepts. They became even more my own, I learned to play with them and become creative with them. As a result, they became even more precious to me.

In writing some parts of the book, the "voices of lawyers and economists" got in my way and I felt the fear of making "mistakes. Like perhaps a somewhat sloppy use of the words 'possession' and 'property'. Notary Jorinde Pels helped me on my first steps into this world. I eventually had the legal chapters checked by Justine Tielemans¹² to save me from blunders. But in a way this book is not about that. The new world is being built by

¹¹ Founder of the Social Presencing Theater, developed within Otto Sharmar's Social Presencing Institute.

¹² From JULY notary.

people who want and dare to do things radically differently. By their desire, imagination, determination and belief that things really can be different. Or as Ginny exclaimed during a training, "See, I'm not crazy. I'm an *Economy Transformer!*" That's also how I left the bank where I worked years ago, and that's how I feel again with this book: I'm not crazy and I really do understand the ordinary world, but I just want things to be different! Don't you?

We are making a mess of living together now. As far as I am concerned, we are ready for a radical idea: free-equal-together. We are going to shape society based on who we are at the deepest level. I already had a title way before I wrote a book: *And man created the world in her image*. For the current book, this title doesn't quite fit anyway, but in essence it comes down to this. Creating a society that is fully human-worthy, and therefore Earth-worthy, can only come from our own humanity.

'Man's vocation is to be human.' - Multatuli

I hope with this book to make you aware of your transformational power, to affirm your gut feeling and intuitive knowing about that things are not right now and how they can be different and I want to nurture, empower and honor you in that.

0.4.2 Radical

Working together from trust requires a radical willingness to (self)reflect and the courage to want to (continue to) work together from trust. In fact, that is the most important choice to go for a Partial Society: do you want to work from trust? And to that end, do you want to continue to develop and engage in a process with each other? This book is not a trick that you quickly learn and apply. Nor is it a blueprint, "this is the way to do it. It gives you tools to transform the economy and society from the inside out, you in your place, in your way, as an Artist of Togetherness. Be inspired, but above all, keep thinking and feeling for yourself to creatively work with what is offered in your place.

You will (have to) make the choice to work from confidence every day. A choice that, once you are on this path, will give you much satisfaction and offers new development opportunities every time. And you probably make this choice because you too realize that it is the only healthy way out. For yourself, for others, for the world. The PartnerShip is a training ground and playground for discovering, strengthening and enriching the path to mutual trust, growth, development and care for each other.

I like to talk about radical pioneers and radical choices. With the word radical, I mean that it's about really wanting something and being willing to put it into practice and make sacrifices for it. *Practice what you preach* is radical when it comes to the new economy. It is enduring all your fears because you are going to let go of something without knowing what you will get in return and whether you will be safe. Dying and getting up again. Radical is uncompromising, without hesitation, with no guarantee of the outcome. Stopping cutting and pasting, but following your heart. Simply because you know inside that it is right and put faith in the future and in your own actions. Radical pioneers are entrepreneurs who know deep inside that things really must and can be done differently, who continue to believe in them and persistently search for and experiment with new forms in practice. Are you also such a radical innovator?

Ultimately, that is what this book is about and what it calls and invites you to. I beat the drum for you, for me, for all the frontrunners who stick their necks out and summon the courage to be the first in their environment. Who are declared crazy for making their business unsellable, who endure fears because existing certainties let go. You, courageous warrior, you *creator* of this new world, you Collaborative Life Artist, I look forward to meeting you and being on a journey together.

In the words of Karin Bloemen, "We are not victims of the past, but perpetrators of the future. And so it is!

0.4.3 New language and content

The PartnerShip describes a new organizational and collaborative structure and culture, based on new principles. And that includes a number of terms that I would like to explain below. And who knows, maybe one day they will be added to the Van Dale.

Word Cloud

Choosing words takes care and attention. Words in a book become fixed, and I don't know what associations you get with the words I choose. The idea behind them is much more fluid than the word we have to give them. We often use words in a different sense than in which they are usually used. For example, economics is associated with money, but we want to understand economics again as the term was originally intended: production, distribution and consumption of goods. I try to explain these types of confusing terms, where I am aware of them, as much as possible in the text.

Sometimes I don't choose a word, but use a word cloud with similar words. For example, I do that with the word "principles. What exactly do I mean by this? Behind every form is a starting point, but starting point also feels fixed, a little too "hard. Idea and understanding fits better then. It is the idea behind the form that is meant here, the guiding 'becoming' force behind an appearance, the form. Because for me, behind or under every form is an essence, an intention, an idea or starting point, the sense and meaning. And so a word group of the words 'intention,' 'essence,' 'being,' 'meaning,' 'idea,' 'understanding,' 'intention,' 'within,' and 'starting point' is created. It is up to you to feel which word resonates best with you. Even for the word 'form,' a word group can be thought of. Form, application, appearance. And logically, different names for them arise in the text when I contrast the two. Sometimes I say inside/outside, sometimes idea/form, sometimes starting point/form or application and all the variations in between.

To make it even more complex.

Love and trust

Using the words "love" and "trust" in a book about new economy is not yet common, they are easily too soft and floaty. Damaris, can't that be done differently, because people might now put your book aside when you want to reach them?", I was asked more often. For me, however, it is the starting point. Fear and control has never

produced anything sustainable. For me, it is the only path through which I want to build a society in which I trust. I feel my own potential and see yours. I trust in who we essentially can and want to be, and that we are going to find forms that invite us into a developmental path to also become who we essentially are. Forms that appeal to and encourage our mature selves rather than those that bring out the worst in us, as is often the case now. Hence, love and trust are the first anchor points of everything I write. And I think it helps us to start using these words more and more, because it motivates us. Love is hard work, there is nothing floaty about it, I can tell you. Every day we will also lose confidence and we can put ourselves back on the path of love. Trust and love are verbs.

Human and Earth-worthy society

We express our desire for a better world with the term "humane and Earth-worthy society. In this society, we manage to be good to both people and Earth. For us, a humane society also implies an Earth-worthy society. With our physical bodies we are part of that Earth. But when we only used the term "humane society," many people asked, "What about the Earth? Hence, we now choose to use both terms. It is not a term that defines what kind of economy you end up in, a circular, a giving, a sharing or a donut economy, or in our case in the free-equal society. The term indicates what is the starting point for our future society, the intrinsic dignity of man and Earth.¹³

The free-equal society

So what does a humane and Earth-worthy society look like? Free, Equal and Together! And so we coined the term the "free-equal society. The elements refer to the concepts of "liberty, equality and fraternity" from the French Revolution. To avoid the masculine word fraternity, we use the word "together," and thus "liberty" and "equality" also change to "free" and "equal. In a free-equal society, all three concepts are simultaneously

¹³ 'Earth' I write with a capital letter following Jan Juffermans who started doing that in 2015. He is also the creator of the word 'ecological footprint' that was included in the Van Dale. He received an award for his additions to the Dutch language.

'true' for all people. In Part 1, I discuss in detail the power and meaning of these three concepts.

Living Together

Art of living together is a word we like to use. Living together as art. Art evokes for me the movement from inside to outside, art is about a process of creation. You cannot impose what you have to create, that is a *contradiction in terms*. And in the case of a society that is good for man and Earth, it cannot be imposed either, but must be willed and shaped by people themselves from within. Hence Art of Living Together.

He becomes she

In most cases where it should say he/she, I choose to write she, they or her. Since this book is all about rethinking, I thought it would be nice to rethink this tradition as well. Furthermore, I still change perspective from time to time. Sometimes "we" refers to our own organization, to how Economy Transformers views the world. Sometimes I write in the 'I' form, but more often I find myself describing our *body of knowledge*. When do I say "I," and when do I say "we"? I am not very consistent about it. Where I write from the first person singular, I also often describe a personal experience or advice.

Often, too, "we" refers to "we people" in its generality. Then I want to address not only you, but also myself. Because I too am dealing with the same processes. I do not want to exclude myself from my own text, but to include where it is about us as human beings.

0.4.4 Classification of the book: idea, form and process

In this book I describe ideas and concepts, new principles and explore forms and structures that are consistent with them. I also point out the various processes you can get into.

Part 1: So inside...

As an idea, the PartnerShip is embedded in four basic ideas or principles of Economy Transformers that guide all our work. For us, they are the Source for a human- and

Earth-worthy society and are the coat rack against which, if you will, you can test all forms in the world and in your life. They are:

1. Love and trust.
2. The so-inside-so-outside principle.
3. Pretty-equal-together.
4. The six keys: I Am, Value, Ownership, Organization, Relationship and Earth.

Ideas are timeless, standing above time and space, and thus have a kind of eternal value. For us, ideas are realities. In this section I explore these underlying ideas.

Part 2: ...So outside

This volume describes the Partial Society from the six keys. For each key, I describe the new principles, possible applications of them in the form, including practical examples, and exercises that can help you realize the ideas into the form.

We don't always realize it, but every idea expresses itself in a form, thousands of different forms. And behind every form, therefore, there is always an idea. The form stands in time and space, is temporary and requires flexibility, practice, testing and experimentation.

Idea and form are by no means always congruent. In this book, I look for forms that are consistent with the idea behind them.

Process

Throughout the book you will find exercises to help you not only understand the insights and ideas with your head, but also to be able to feel them with your heart and body. For me it is important that what is taught does not remain a theory for you, because for me it is not. If something is "true," then it is also testable to your own "inner knowing. That is what the exercises are for. But also to work through old concepts and ideas including old forms and to be able and dare to form.

It works best to master the ideas and concepts that are given to you throughout the book. By immersing yourself well in it - perhaps you will take another training course

within our school - you can then also determine your starting points to create forms that are an expression of that. That is always a process of *trial and error* in which you can encounter all kinds of things.

The book ends with a check-out, a thank you, and several appendices with background information on Economy Transformers, questionnaires for your own research, more case studies, and a brief list of recommended literature and useful links.

0.5 My wish for you

In front of you is the first issue. A moment in time, because the PartnerShip as a form is just a baby, still developing and probably never finished. There are not so many examples of existing Partial Societies yet, but there are many elements of them and you will find them in the book. In this book we give a direction to arrive at a society worthy of humanity and Earth. I will tell you extensively about the principles of this new world and the forms that fit it and wish you to be touched and inspired by it. If you then share your experiences with us again, a second printing will already be enriched with new examples and insights. In this way the community of people who want to work, live and live together out of love and trust will flourish and grow.

It will not always be easy. Take the peace and time to let the thoughts that are handed to you sink in and internalize them. I wish you much love and trust so that your soul can show itself and you can hear its call. And then I wish you the courage to shape the change you long for in your work and life. And so together we contribute to a human and Earth-worthy society, for everyone and everything that lives.

AHE