

# Front Matter

## Participatory Sustainability

Notes for an emerging field  
of civilizational engagement

by

Tom Atlee

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Dedicated to

**Iris Atlee**

my granddaughter  
who has the challenge and opportunity  
to participate  
in making a world  
so much better  
than the world she was born into

.....

*We make the road by walking.*

Paulo Friere and Myles Horton

*This ain't no party,  
this ain't no disco,  
this ain't no foolin' around.*

Talking Heads

*The Grand Challenge is global unsustainability.*

*National security and the bridge to resilience have just as much to do with food, water, the built environment, transportation, education, health care, and the physical solvency of our nation as some bad guy sitting in some dark corner plotting whatever deed he's going to do.*

Marine Colonel Mark Puck Mykleby  
former Special Strategic Assistant  
to the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff

*The development of a worldview which will respond to the challenge of our times requires an imaginative recognition of humanity's fundamental participation in the natural world, a recognition of the way the human person, mind and body, is engaged in a co-creative dance with the primeval givenness of the cosmos.*

*In this vision humanity is nature rendered self-conscious, one part of the cosmos capable of reflecting on itself, which has evolved so it stands on the threshold of conscious participation in the unfolding of the whole.*

Peter Reason

*The way we'll hold it together is to hold it – together.*

Sarah Crowell

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## About the author

Tom Atlee is founder of the Co-Intelligence Institute and author of four books including The Tao of Democracy and Empowering Public Wisdom as well as the first version of The Wise Democracy Pattern Language. He has collaborated on numerous other books and written dozens of articles for alternative journals and hundreds more for his blogs and websites, all accessible through [co-intelligence.org](https://co-intelligence.org). He can be contacted at [cii@igc.org](mailto:cii@igc.org).

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