

6 Practices for a Renewable Life

As we have watched leaders and organizations which are effective, we have seen a few patterns – common practices that shape their work and lives in ways that matter. Building these into the fabric of who you are can help in being more effective and discovering a new sense of vitality in your life. They form the “DNA” of a way of being that can help you start the journey to make all things new.

1. **Asking Purposeful Questions:** Good answers come from good questions. Effective people bring insights that help others reflect about ideas and see new things. It is no longer enough to have the right answers. It is even more essential to have the right questions and to use them wisely to help draw out the wisdom and insights of others.
2. **Using Participative Processes:** Working together with others brings the chance to share insights and expand creativity. Often groups not only get the work done faster, but also better and in ways that none of them would have thought of alone. Plus, the ownership of the outcomes is shared which bring with it a sense of commitment and pride that is only possible when people feel like they have contributed to something in a meaningful.
3. **Working Playfully:** Perpetual work is not only draining, it is actually a waste of energy. The stress and strains of working in ways that were not fun meant that people who want to make a difference in the long haul need to find ways to have fun. Including this in work and in other aspects of our lives can help us to find safe space in which to be creative, enjoy groups and each other to free us to take risks and try new things!
4. **Taking Place Seriously:** The days of one size fits all solutions, if they ever existed, are gone for good. There are often principles and practices that can be transferred across a variety of settings. But the ability to make a good solution work requires customizing ideas in ways that help them work in that context. With different people, stories, histories, resources, and issues in each setting – no outcome will look the same in two different places!
5. **Being [Re]productive:** This work brings two important ideas together. First, most change happens when people DO something. Yes, people can change their thoughts and attitudes. But most new things bring with them new *behaviors*. People DO something. But in a renewable system, not only are participants productive, they become **re**productive and provide the mentoring, training, education and modeling to prepare others to both carry on their work and also to multiply as these new leaders start new work, too!
6. **Seeing Possibilities:** Nothing will stop someone in their tracks faster than losing sight of their options. A lack of imagination limits us to the same things we have already thought up or tried. Our box gets too small and we feel constricted and bound up. But seeing possibilities allows us to brainstorm options, reflect on our choices, and move forward with a hopeful and positive attitude about the future. People only work at things they believe in!

Put these 6 practices into your routine and over time you will see your work and life become more purposeful. And you will begin to feel more passionate about what you do and the people you do it with. And you'll discover ways of living and working that are less likely to burn you out and drain your energy. Instead you will have a chance to discover an abundance of resources – both human and material – that are already available for the work you do!