

My Calling

I woke up this morning thinking about my calling and feeling thankful I finally had one. My calling is to carry out my mission or vision: By the year 2030, when my grandsons will be 19 and 22, to create a world or place where most people can sit around their kitchen table with loved ones eating locally grown, wholesome food, and where there are no garbage trucks because people have become masters of unwaste.

I'm helping to build this new world by looking for seeds of change that can grow into this vision. Most of these seeds are in the people I meet or know.

My friend admires Ralph, whom I've heard many stories about, and who I've met a couple of times. Ralph is probably one of the richest people I know. He's impacted a lot of people with his financial deals, including me. I wondered what motivates him. I hardly know him, and guess that he is more conservative than I am and probably has a stronger need for order than I do. I wonder what he would think of the vision I just painted.

I also wonder where my calling came from. When I was 44 (in 1985), I had been following my calling for a few years, even though I didn't know it was my calling. And then for a year or two, to try to earn enough to cover the expenses of raising a family, I turned away from my calling. The immediate results: I made much less than before and felt awful. I felt like a train wreck. Toward the end of that struggle, an old friend said, architecture's not so bad, and I went back to it.

Working as an architect was practicing my professional skills. I didn't have a sense of where I was going with it. I worked hard to succeed. Had some successes and lost a number of jobs. I didn't see any signs of my mission/vision until a few more steps happened in the next few years.

Landmark Education > I said yes, I want to make a difference in the world. Where did that come from? Though being Jewish isn't a big thing in my life, a Jewish value that is very meaningful to me is repairing the world. Other Jewish values I hold: Education and lifelong learning. Doing mitzvahs (i.e., being of service to people and doing good deeds).

My mission came to be when I declared I had one. Which is what I did during the New Adventure Warrior Week-end (with the Mankind Project), which I did along with my two sons. My mission took its present form when I found inspiration first in an article about food, which surprised me given that I didn't cook or garden. The vivid movie I have of this vision, along with people becoming masters of unwaste came from reading a novel recommended by younger son called *The Fifth Sacred Thing*.

There are three steps I've been taking now in building this vision:

- Building this website, HomesAndBuildings.com. And building this section of the site on resiliency.
- Working on resiliency with a very talented architect who is a client of mine. We're offering architectural services to help people design and build local resiliency. Some stepping stones: proposed to a Chicago Alderwoman a map of local assets for her Ward. The completed map was a gift to the neighborhood and intended to help them welcome visitors into their area. Another stepping stone was receiving a request to suggest a keynote speaker which, in turn, led to connecting with a Mayor who had a vision of greatly enhancing the local resiliency of his city. That work is currently going on. And this, then, led to conversations in another city with a Museum about enhancing local resiliency in their area. Next, we'll be talking with a local college whose ambitious plan to strengthen their campus, I believe, could be enhanced by incorporating a local resiliency approach.
- And right now, as I talk and interact with people, I keep in mind that anybody can be that next person who helps strengthen the vision. I hope you are that next person. If you are, please connect with me. More as it develops.

