

7 System Conditions Guiding our Work

The foundation of our work at CoCreative is our belief in the need for Shared Prosperity and Ecological Sustainability. Shared Prosperity refers to a world in which everyone has the opportunity to not just live, eat, and have shelter, but to truly prosper and live creative and dignified lives. Ecological Sustainability means that our children's children can enjoy the same prosperity that we do—or even better. In order to make that world possible, we believe that 7 “system conditions” must be met...



To achieve shared prosperity, we support inclusive wealth-building and we work to eliminate our contribution to a progressive concentration of economic wealth in the hands of fewer and fewer entities.
A healthy economy requires that we concentrate capital at times, to start businesses for example, but systematically increasing concentration of wealth and growing income inequality over time leads to an unhealthy economy and society.



To achieve shared prosperity, we support shared political power and work to eliminate our contribution to the progressive concentration of political power by certain segments of society.
While it's healthy for citizens to assign the work of governing to our representatives, our history shows that systematic concentration of political power over time is never healthy.



To achieve shared prosperity, we support shared control over common assets and work to eliminate our contribution to the progressive concentration of control over the common assets which sustain society (for example, water, air, ozone, and genetic material).
We need to agree on how to manage and use our commons assets, and private control of these resources that we all need to survive leads to unhealthy concentrations of power and wealth.



To achieve shared prosperity, we help create conditions that systemically support people's choice and capacity to meet their basic human needs, and address the systemic barriers that people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds face.
People need to work diligently to meet their needs and the needs of their families—that's good for people and society as a whole, but we also need to collectively create the conditions for everyone to successfully meet his or her needs.



To achieve ecological sustainability, we cannot subject nature to systematically increasing concentrations of substances from the earth's crust.
We pull a lot of stuff from the lithosphere (what's under the ground) and put it into our biosphere (where we live), things like heavy metals and CO2 from fossil fuels. We need to find healthy, sustainable ways to take care of both ourselves and our shared home.



To achieve ecological sustainability, we cannot subject nature to systematically increasing concentrations of substances produced by society.
We produce a lot of substances that never existed before, like antibiotics and endocrine disruptors. These provide lots of benefits but are harmful if they keep building up in nature over time. We believe that we can make substances that help us but don't systematically build up in our bodies and planet.



To achieve ecological sustainability, we cannot subject nature to systematically increasing degradation by physical means.
There are some things that, once we break, we can't readily put them back together again, like complex forest ecosystems, marble, or groundwater tables. Let's design ways to meet our needs that don't rely on breaking things apart that we can't put back together.

The last three system conditions are from The Natural Step @ thenaturalstep.org.