

Potential

Common Ground - The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal

Developing human potential—
Building human capital

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www.commongroundcenter.org

Autumn: A Time of Reflection and Transition

Autumn is a time for reflection and transition at Common Ground. This is the time when we move from abundant light to pervasive darkness. A question for those seeking balance in mind, body and spirit might be, "How do we balance darkness with light?" At times, we tend to focus on and to fear the darkness...in our lives, in ourselves. Instead, what if we looked at the darkness as a place of silent nurturance, a place where the slow, steady gestation needed for soul's growth can happen? If you're a gardener, think about when you plant a bulb in the fall or start plants indoors in the dark. They need that time in the dark to grow and fully flower. And so, it seems, do we.

Autumn is also a time for letting go. In nature, the leaves fall for a reason. Trees let go of their leaves as

they lighten their load in preparation for winter. The fallen leaves nourish the soil beneath them while the bare branches allow for new growth in the spring. Nature's cycle is perfection, working since time began. What if the leaves wouldn't fall? There would be no room for new growth and the trees would eventually die. By getting out of the way, the leaves support transition and growth. How can we get "out of the way" in our own lives, and make room for the budding of new life that comes in the spring?

Autumn reminds us of the impermanence of everything. The budding of life in the spring and profusions of growth and beauty in the summer are but lovely memories. As we contemplate fall's changes, we should grow more appreciative of all the beauties that surround us and abound in

our lives. After all, they will not be around forever to enjoy, nor will we be around forever to enjoy them. Another thought inspired by this concept of impermanence is the importance of living each day to the fullest and being fully present in our lives. Don't look back with regret and don't keep planning to fully live when you get that promotion, when you've paid off the house, when your daughter graduates from college. Enjoy today's beauty, for it is fleeting.

Common Ground—The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal provides an exceptional context for contemplation, reflection, and renewal. Our 21-acre campus is open weekdays and you are welcome to enjoy the grounds as you consider nature's cycles and the significance of the changing of the seasons in your own life.



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Focus On....Attention

—excerpted from Christina Feldman and Jack Kornfield

The secret of beginning a life of deep awareness and sensitivity lies in our willingness to pay attention. Our growth as conscious, awake human beings is marked not so much by grand gestures and visible renunciations as by extending loving attention to the minutest particulars of our lives. Every relationship,

every thought, every gesture is blessed with meaning through the wholehearted attention we bring to it. In the complexities of our minds and lives we easily forget the power of attention, yet without attention we live only on the surface of existence. It is just simple attention that allows us truly to

listen to the song of a bird, to see deeply the glory of an autumn leaf, to touch the heart of another and be touched. We need to be fully present in order to love a single thing wholeheartedly. We need to be fully awake in this moment if we are to receive and respond to the learning inherent in it.

Leading From Within

Leadership development can generally be defined as, "Any activity or strategy that seeks to enhance the quality of leadership in an individual or organization." Traditionally, leadership development approaches attempt to both help individuals increase self-awareness and develop skills that relate to leadership. **Holistic leadership development** recognizes the importance of integrating the various dimensions of self (mind, body, and spirit) as a way of maximizing one's leadership potential.

Many strategies consider the mental and emotional components of leadership, but rarely do these strategies consider the soul or spiritual component of leadership. This component can often exist in paradox to the mental or emotional aspects of leadership.

For example, communication skills training and teaching active listening to developing leaders are common areas of focus in traditional leadership development programs, whereas their counterpart in the soul dimension involve developing one's ability to "quiet" the external environment as a method of "listening within." This "place" of inner wisdom and clarity is often overlooked by more traditional leadership development programs.

"Holistic leadership development recognizes the importance of integrating the various dimensions of self (mind, body and spirit) as a way of maximizing one's leadership potential."

What are you doing in your life to "quiet" the noise of the external world around you? What discipline have you developed in your life (journaling, meditation, yoga, hiking, etc.) that creates space for you to connect to your inner wisdom and guidance? Do you find your work or life goals are not as meaningful to you as you would like them to be? Do you find yourself putting off those things in life that you keep saying to yourself are the most important to you?

Consider the spiritual or soul-based dimension of your life as a place and a way to begin developing into the holistic leader you were meant to be. A healthy and holistic leader recognizes that true change and transformation begins with a focus within.



Mural Arts Project

What started on the drawing board in June ended up on 19 unique and distinct panels bordering the cafeteria at Lorain Admiral King High School in August. Common Ground's **Mural Arts Project** had a busy summer working with 8 talented young men to create a beautiful art installation for the school. Unveiled on August 23rd, the mural was a collaboration between Common Ground, Boys and Girls Clubs of Lorain County, and Lorain Admiral King High School and was funded in part by the *Closing the Gap Initiative*.

The Mural Arts Project has received funding for the 2008-2009 year from the United Way of Greater Lorain County. The next mural project will be announced in the fall of 2008.



What if **Common Ground** earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Or how about if a percentage of every purchase you made online went to support our cause? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall which donates up to 37 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, ebay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting your favorite cause.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter **Common Ground** as the charity you want to support. And, be sure to spread the word!



Youth Arts & Common Ground—Where’s the Connection?

Where does a youth arts program “fit” within the mission of Common Ground?

Common Ground’s mission is to provide innovative, holistic, educational experiences for youth, adults and organizations fostering human potential—body, mind and spirit. All of the programs we provide support the expansion of human potential in youth, adults, organizations, and the community at large. Arts-based youth programs provide virtually unlimited opportunities for supporting youth as they develop and expand their growing potential.

Another attractive feature of the Mural Arts Project is its portability. Many of the programs and services we offer take place at our 21-acre retreat center located 5 miles west of downtown Oberlin. While this is an ideal location for youth programs like Earth Camp and Pathfinders, it can be challenging for youth to participate in our on-site activities from a transportation perspective. We wanted to create a youth program that would take the mission and work of Common Ground out into the community.

Is there any evidence that art-based programs for youth are effective?

There is across-the-board evidence that youth arts programs help kids to improve academic achievement, strengthen cultural and personal identity, and avoid risky behaviors. It could be said that all youth are “at risk” at some level. Youth arts programs provide the supportive and caring environment that is essential to minimizing risk during a child’s development.

The Commission on Children at Risk reported on effective strategies to reduce the high numbers of youth suffering from emotional and behavioral problems such as depression, anxiety, attention deficit, conduct disorders, and suicidal thoughts. Its findings suggest that children need 1) close attachments, 2) meaning, and 3) social connectivity to experience healthy development. In the last decade, a significant body of research and practice has emerged demonstrating that sustained involvement in the arts provides significant benefits for at-risk young people, and that best practices in the field combine and address the three elements of attachment, meaning and social connectivity. The arts provide a dramatic portal for young people to encounter the possibility of transformed lives (*The Power of Art*, The California Endowment, 2004).

What are the goals of Common Ground’s Mural Arts Project?

In the broadest sense, the goal is to expand the potential of our youth participants by providing opportunities for them to *experience* themselves as creative, capable, responsible, connected members of their community. Specifically, the program goals are for participants to:

- develop an increased sense of connection to the community
- increase and strengthen social competencies in communication, decision-making, teamwork, goal-setting, responsibility, and respect
- enhance employment skills through an increased understanding of project management including timelines, scheduling, problem-solving, and collaboration
- gain an increase in self-esteem and positive self-identity through sense of accomplishment and community recognition

For more information on Common Ground’s Mural Arts Project, visit our website at www.commongroundcenter.org and click the “Mural Arts Project” tab or give us a call at 440-965-5551.

Program Impact

How do youth participants feel about the Mural Arts Project? These are just a few of the comments offered by participants following individual mural projects:

“The Mural Arts Project...helped me think about certain things/areas I need help on.”

“This program was truly something that I’ll remember for the rest of my life. It is an accomplishment that I will look back on...and a (completed) goal I will look back on at all times. It was a great experience!”

“I honestly believe this was an amazing project. We started off with a blank wall, then put forth lots of effort and accomplished making a beautiful mural. It looks like it was professionally done! I’ve learned a lot through this experience, and I appreciate everything.”

In this day and age, many people get their information exclusively from the web—if they’re interested in news or finance or politics, they may subscribe to blogs on those topics. If they’re committed to social causes, they may sign up for newsletters or email alerts. If they want to connect with friends past and present, they may join a social networking group, like Facebook.

Now, find Common Ground on Facebook! Common Ground has its own page and although the page is in its infancy, you can become a fan, receive the news feed, be kept apprised of events and happenings, view pictures and post pictures from your own visits to Common Ground, and so much more! We want to see your face....on Facebook!



Friends of Common Ground

Like all nonprofit organizations, Common Ground—The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal relies on a variety of funding sources to support our work. We are fortunate to have developed a supportive network of individuals who believe in our mission, participate in our programming and support our efforts to develop human potential and build human capital in Lorain County, Ohio. We'd like to formally recognize and thank our 2008 individual donors who have made gifts to Common Ground through August 31, 2008:

<i>Anonymous* (multiple gifts)</i>	<i>Andrea Schlenkerman</i>	<i>Wolf W. Greiffenhagen</i>	<i>Regina L. Smith</i>
<i>Robert & Lori Campana</i>	<i>Bruce & Sue Simonson</i>	<i>Mary Hurley, HM</i>	<i>Jim & Kris Gilland</i>
<i>James & Patricia Stephens</i>	<i>Jeffrey T. Zink</i>	<i>Kathleen Kordeleski</i>	<i>New Warrior Mens Group</i>
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<i>Maude de la Porte</i>	<i>James & Cheryl Piper</i>	<i>Sherrill M. "Cookie" McLoda</i>	<i>Chris & Denise Colovich</i>
<i>Terri & Vasile Sandu</i>	<i>Sharon Tenaglia</i>	<i>John & Christine Smith</i>	<i>Adam & Heidi Freas</i>

**The wishes of donors who have asked to give anonymously are always respected.*

Every attempt has been made to publish the most accurate list possible to adequately acknowledge our donors, funding partners and business supporters. If your name was inadvertently omitted, please accept our sincere apologies and make us aware of the oversight. We are always striving to improve our data collection and reporting processes.

Funding Partners

Common Ground is proud to receive grants, funding and other support from the following public and private foundations, organizations and individuals in support of our programs, projects, and operations:

The LandAmerica Foundation
 The Sears-Swetland Family Foundation
 Community Foundation of Lorain County
 Nordson Corporation Foundation
 The Stocker Foundation
 Sisters of the Humility of Mary
 Mission Endowment Fund of Christ Church
 Oberlin Student Philanthropy Club
 United Way of Greater Lorain County
 Oberlin Student Cooperative Association
 Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, Lorain County
 EMH Regional Healthcare System
 Lorain County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Hasbro Gift of Play Program
 Ronald McDonald House Charities
 Cindy W. Nord



George Bent, a Board member of the Community Foundation of Lorain County, visits Common Ground to make a grant check presentation to Board Chairman Dr. Robert Callaway and Executive Director Rick Grahovac

Business-to-Business Connection

In addition to individual donors, Common Ground is fortunate to have made a connection with local businesses, whose generous support is deeply appreciated and truly valued.

<i>LandAmerica Lawyers Title</i>	<i>Gardenfocus, Inc.</i>
<i>The Chronicle-Telegram</i>	<i>Panther Press, Inc.</i>
<i>Lakeland Health Care Corp.</i>	<i>Community Cancer Center</i>
<i>Palmentera & Associates, Inc.</i>	<i>Green Circle Growers, Inc.</i>
<i>Rent-A-Center</i>	<i>NASA Glenn Research Center</i>
<i>Lorain County Metroparks</i>	<i>The Diversity Center of NEO</i>
<i>LorMet Community Federal Credit Union</i>	



The Value of Your Gifts

Putting the Pieces Together

What does your support mean to Common Ground and the people we work with? Here are some examples of the ways in which your support makes a difference:



- \$175 Provides one week of Earth Camp summer day camp for a Lorain County child*
- \$500 Provides an Outdoor Education program for one middle school classroom*
- \$1000 Underwrites partial cost of a Renewal Retreat program for one local nonprofit group*
- \$1250 Provides a full summer of Earth Camp for a Lorain County child*
- \$2500 Sponsors an experiential community program including professional facilitator(s)*
- \$4000 Underwrites the cost of one Mural Arts Project*
- \$5000 Provides a 9-week Pathfinders program for a youth group (at-risk youth, youth leaders, school groups, Scouts, faith-based groups)*

Your gifts DO make a difference! It is only with YOUR help that Common Ground is able to provide the high-quality programming for which we are recognized. You help us to develop human potential and build human capital for residents throughout Lorain County every day! Thank YOU for all you do!



Ways To Give

- One of the easiest ways is through our *WEBSITE*, which securely processes donations through PayPal.
- Another way is by supporting us during our *EARTH CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND* appeal or our *ANNUAL FUND* appeal.
- Contributions to our *ENDOWMENT FUND* at the Community Foundation of Lorain County are welcome at any time.
- Many employers offer *MATCHING GIFT* programs and we will be happy to process the paperwork required by your employer, often-times doubling or tripling the value of your gift.
- *TRIBUTE DONATIONS* and *NAMED DEDICATION SITES* provide a memorable way to remember and/or to recognize those we care for.
- *PLANNED OR DEFERRED GIVING* options are also available.

We invite you to visit Common Ground to learn about our facilities, programs, and plans for the future and to explore meaningful ways that you can partner with us to develop human potential and build human capital for Lorain County and its residents. Contact Zoe Metcalf, Development Coordinator, at 440-965-5551 to arrange a personal visit and tour.

Endowment—What It Means for Nonprofit Organizations

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law defines endowment as “The property (as a fund) donated to an institution or organization that is invested and producing income.” *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary* defines *giving* endowment as “The act of bestowing a dower, fund, or permanent provision for support.” The beauty of endowment is just that—it provides a permanent provision for support for an organization. Usually established with one or more large lump sum gifts, many endowments are “open” and additional contributions from other donors can be made at any time. Income distributions are disbursed on a predetermined schedule and are often set at a level below the annual investment return rate; in this way, the endowment fund can grow annually, providing (hopefully) increasing income distributions over time. However, the key is the preservation of the “principal” gift or gifts—endowment is not like a savings account or a rainy day fund and should not be “invaded” unless no other alternative exists. By giving to an organization’s endowment fund, a donor should feel secure that they are not simply supporting the organization today, but also helping to ensure the organization’s future.

Did you know that Common Ground has an endowment fund which is open to additional contributions from interested donors? Our endowment fund—the Common Ground Executive Director’s Fund—is in the care of the Community Foundation of Lorain County. The fund was established in 2001 with a generous gift from noted philanthropist and former local resident Cindy Nord. If helping to ensure Common Ground’s future is of interest to you, consider making an endowment gift. For more information, contact Zoe Metcalf, Development Coordinator, at 440-965-5551 or via email at zmetcalf@commongroundcenter.org.





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Visit us on the web!

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Developing human potential ~ Building human capital

Common Ground—The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization registered in the State of Ohio. Our funding is derived from program revenues, corporate and foundation grants, and the generous support of businesses and individuals

Need to "wine" down after work? Join Common Ground for our 1st Annual Wine Tasting Event!



Savory hors d'oeuvres!

Reds, Breads and Spreads

A Wine Tasting Event

Proceeds to benefit

Common Ground—The Cindy Nord Center for Renewal

Fabulous Raffles!

Thursday, October 23, 2008

5:30 pm—8:00 pm

Delectable desserts!

Atrium Lobby

LorMet Community Federal Credit Union

2051 Cooper Foster Park Road ~ Amherst, OH 44001

\$25 per person in advance; \$35 per person at the door

Must be 21 years old to purchase a ticket or attend the event

For more information, contact Common Ground at 440-965-5551

