

## About Joseph Schaeffer

Dr. Joe Schaeffer's work offers a unique point of view about ways to build community and practical approaches in communication and the management of conflict.

As Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Communication at Marlboro College in Vermont, he became a respected authority on interpersonal communication specializing in problem-solving and decision-making processes.

He has travelled throughout Europe, Russia, Latin America, and North America to study community building, creativity in communication, and conflict transformation.

Dr. Schaeffer is the author of several books including "The Pebble Game: Achieving Creativity in Human Interaction," "The Stone People: Living Together in a Different World," and, most recently, "Living Community: Thirty Think Pieces for Moving from Dreams to Reality," which is available from Amazon.



*Joe Schaeffer, more than anyone I know, understands the essence of community and the qualities of character of living community. He has spent the better part of his life teaching the qualities of character and creative communication to help people understand community as a way of living that "we carry with us all the time."*

*If you are a community developer and want to understand how to make community useful in creating better cities, restoring our environment, or making our neighbourhoods safer, this book is for you. If you head a charity, faith community, or are a business owner shepherding a team, the ideas expressed in this book will make you a much better leader.*

*The world needs this book. On behalf of the Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement, I can say that we are honoured to be part of the team that is bringing it to you.*

– Paul Born



For more information write or call:

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## LIVING COMMUNITY:

*Thirty  
Think Pieces  
for moving from  
Dreams to Reality*



Communication  
Cooperation  
Creativity

Joseph Schaeffer Ph.D.  
Educator & Consultant

## Think Pieces on Community

*Living Community* is a collection of Think Pieces inspired by conversations with more than fifteen thousand people over the last twenty years. The majority of these people attended seminars with me. Others participated in dialogues with me when I travelled the world to talk with the people I most admired. And others include professional colleagues, family members, and friends.

Living community is not tied to place, time or circumstance. It does not depend on definitions of categories like gender, age, ethnicity, or culture. When people live community they are responsible as individuals and respectful of others as a matter of course. They carry community within them wherever they are. When they meet others who do the same they feel community instantly.



## People Share Community Values

*What would people be like within and with each other if they "lived community" this way—in families, schools, places of work, neighborhoods, gatherings of any kind?*

I have asked those thousands of people this question—women and men of all ages from many parts of the world, people with dark and light skin, wealthy entrepreneurs and unemployed people living in the streets, aboriginal people and recent settlers in new lands, police officers and convicted felons, single parents and couples in their seventies with, in one case, fifty-four grandchildren

They all give the same answers I have summarized in six *qualities of character*.

*Genuine Interest*  
*Acknowledgement*  
*Deep Empathy*  
*Altruism*  
*Mutual Trust*  
*A Sense of Oneness*

These are the subject of the first part of the book.

## Creative Communication

*Creative Communication* is the focus of the second part of the book. Creative communication emphasizes mutual creation and discovery of meaning no matter what the subject of discourse. The first implication is that we can converse as partners without attempting to have power over each other. The second is that we can celebrate our equality as human beings without losing the treasure of diversity. Openness to novelty is automatic in this approach. Both unique experience and shared meaning live side by side. Decision-making is transformed.

*Living Community* explores the possibility that basic human characteristics and creative communication can be a foundation for finding ways to be truly cooperative and creative with each other all the time everywhere.



## Toward Healthy Communities

The objectives of The Program are:

- to discover key characteristics of “healthy” communities;
- to explore core values and beliefs, our own and those of others, as a basis for higher levels of mutual respect and greater cooperation;
- to develop a clear understanding of difficult issues and conflicts and useful ways to think about and transform them;
- to learn new ways to communicate with care and creativity all the time, everywhere.

Upon completion of The Program, participants feel a sense of responsibility and personal power. At the same time, they acknowledge and support each other.



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## LIVING COMMUNITY



Communication  
Cooperation  
Creativity

a workshop  
facilitated by

Joseph Schaeffer Ph.D.  
Educator & Consultant

Diversity is the Foundation of Creativity  
Our Common Humanity is the  
Foundation of Peace

Differences in values and beliefs can lead to misunderstanding, judgment, and discord. Learn to develop stronger relationships and foster creativity by thinking about and experiencing community and communication with others.

In Living Community Dr. Schaeffer engages participants in discussions and activities to find and nurture “qualities of character” at the heart of community.

Individuals discover language that promotes understanding and collaboration. They learn how to work through difficult issues carefully and effectively.



## Thoughts on Living Community

“I have a new sense of what communication is and what we can accomplish with each other.”  
(First Nations Social Worker)

“It will take time to learn to live together. But we can change if we want to.” (public school student)

## The Building Begins

Dr. Schaeffer offers a two-day workshop focusing on Living Community and Creative Communication.

Although workshops vary in content to meet specific needs in institutions and organizations, the overall objectives and format are similar. Workshops are divided into four sessions:

### *Session One:*

A discussion of thoughts and insights about community.

### *Session Two:*

An exploration of skills in personal and cultural learning.

### *Session Three:*

A study of communication skills needed to achieve true cooperation and creativity.

### *Session Four:*

The application of learning from Sessions One through Three to issues and challenges in the “real” world.



## People are Alike in What Really Counts

Fundamental qualities of character make it possible for us to create community.

- Self-understanding and genuine interest in others;
- Self-worth and an appreciation of others;
- Openness and honesty within and with others; A willingness to feel empathy;
- Celebration of our own gifts, talents and abilities;
- Respect and support for others;
- Trust of self and a willingness to trust others.



## Thoughts on Living Community in a Diverse Society

“After building community for five days, we were able to resolve our issues in ten minutes.” (Sikh elder and legionnaire)

“Misunderstanding would end if everyone took this workshop.”  
(police officer)