

BETTER TOGETHER

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE PROSOCIAL WORLD COMMUNITY

DECEMBER 2021



ISSUE NO. 24



WHAT'S NEW?

Dear Friends of PW,

With this newsletter, we are resuming our monthly correspondence with you. It is amazing how far we have come from two projects within the Evolution Institute—Prosocial and *This View of Life*—to becoming our own nonprofit organization dedicated to “consciously evolving a world that works for all.” Some of you are primarily familiar with TVOL as an online magazine and community that examines “anything and everything from an evolutionary perspective”. Others are primarily familiar with Prosocial as a method for helping groups steward their cultural evolution across multiple contexts and scales. Some of you are familiar with both and already appreciate their complementarity.



THIS VIEW OF LIFE

We anticipate continuing integration and growth with rich opportunities for engagement. Here is a small sample of what's happening.

Catalyzing conscious cultural evolution in Latin America. A grant from the Templeton World Charity Foundation (TWCF) enables us to work with organizations throughout Latin America to help steward their cultural evolution at multiple levels. The first cohort of organizations include four that already receive funding from TWCF and four that have already received a degree of PW training. The topical foci of the organizations are diverse, ranging from wildlife conservation and habitat restoration, to childhood education, to entrepreneurial startups. A unique strength of PW, of course, is to apply a single theoretical framework and practical methodology across all of these contexts. The first phase of the project, which involves onboarding each organization, is in progress and will be followed by a phase of working across organizations that will start in early 2022, with plans to add organizations and leverage funding during the two-year period of the grant.

Plum Village

PW Partners with Plum Village for a week-long retreat on Spirituality, Science, and Action

We are delighted to announce that Plum Village, France, the monastery founded by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, will be hosting a retreat focused on integrating the fields of science, spirituality, and engaged action, in collaboration with Prosocial World.

This week-long residential retreat will take place from April 29 to May 6, 2022. This promises to be a peak experience for all who can attend and a unique opportunity to align spirituality, science, and action in partnerships that continue after the retreat ends. Mark the date on your calendars and we look forward to sharing details in the near future!

If you would like to learn more, please [contact us](#).



Please contact us [here](#) if you're interested in contributing to this publication.



PROSOCIAL FACILITATORS

Training Update

Prosocial World is undertaking a major 'discovery process' to learn more about the needs of our community. As part of that process, we have used input from our community to rethink our training offerings for 2022.

We will be offering new, free introductory webinars where you can meet colleagues interested in helping groups be more prosocial and learn the basics, as well as more extensive Prosocial Learning Journeys and Action Labs designed to help you learn about, and enact, Prosocial in a context you care about.

Our Facilitator training will be significantly expanded to 6 months instead of 3 and we will be working hard to create opportunities for our Certified Facilitators to gain experience facilitating Prosocial with our global network after graduating the program.

Please see <https://courses.prosocial.world/> for details.

In the meantime, we did want to mention one training that will be commencing in March to help you expand your facilitation skills.

Expand your Facilitation Toolkit – Workshop #1:

We are partnering with Zenergy International to offer a course in basic facilitation skills. Zenergy is famous for their 'whole-body' approach to facilitation which helps you speak to, and utilize, participants head, heart and hands.

Please note that this is NOT a training in Prosocial, but we wanted to put it on because quite a few people doing the Prosocial training wanted to learn more about basic facilitation skills. See <https://courses.prosocial.world/> for details.

If you have feedback or questions about our proposals for training next year, we would love to hear from you at courses@prosocial.world

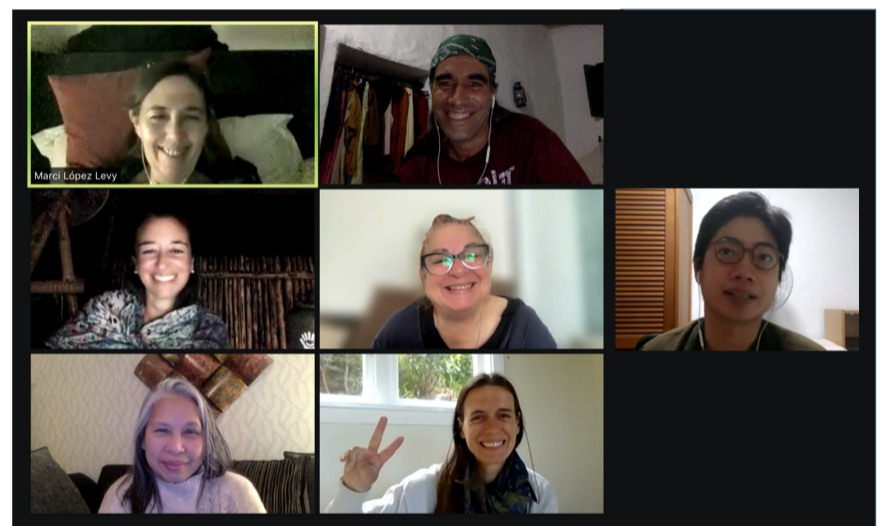
TRAINING NEWS



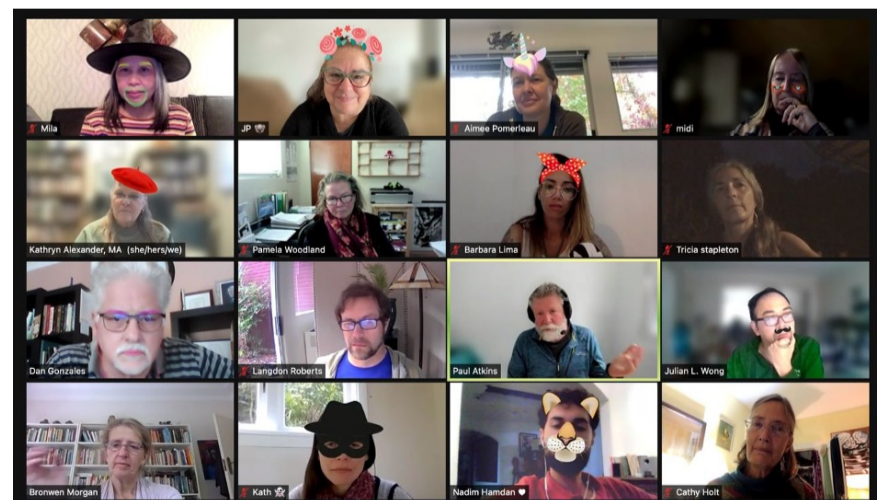
Introduction to Prosocial World

PW co-founders Paul Atkins and David Sloan Wilson are developing a 2-hr "Introduction to Prosocial World" online experience to be offered to groups of 25. The format will allow ample time for participants to get to know each other and explore opportunities for engagement. The first will be offered on January 18, 2:30-4:30PM Eastern US time, which should allow participation in most time zones. Be among the first to get a personal introduction from Paul and David and to explore your own opportunities for engagement! [Sign up here](#)

Facilitator Community Forum



Earth Regenerators Learning Journey: Joe Brewer, JP Parker, Daniel Soo, Mila Aliana, Kathleen Martsch, Eliane Cohen, Marci Lopez Levy



Earth Regenerators enjoying some Halloween fun.





EXAMINED LIVES DISCUSSION GROUP

Status and Recognition

**Date and Time: Thursday, Dec. 16th,
12-1pm ET (4-5pm UTC)**

Link: <https://forms.gle/N2ZWRD4Sxm9Qhj3m7>

Why do we crave status and recognition? Did such cravings confer evolutionary advantages in ancestral times? How? Are these cravings healthy? Or do they consistently foster greed, self-promotion, and unjust accumulations of power? Are there different kinds of status-cravings, some prosocial and others corrosive of prosociality? What light can evolutionary biology shed on this peculiar aspect of the human condition? Can insights into the biology of status help us modulate our worst impulses, or harness the darker demons of the human psyche? How?

Care to explore a bit beforehand? Start here by clicking these titles:

1. The Psychology of Status-Seeking and Extreme Political Discontent

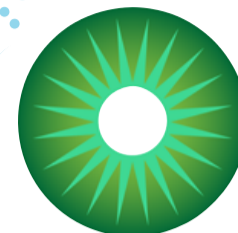
Democracies are experiencing destabilizing events, including the emergence of demagogues, street riots, circulation of misinformation, and extremely hostile interactions on social media. Some of these forms of discontent are commonly argued to be related to populism. In contrast, we argue that the evolved psychology of status-seeking lies at the core of this syndrome of extreme political discontent. Social status constitutes a key adaptive resource for any human, as it induces deference from others in conflicts of interest. We argue that extreme political discontent involves behaviors aimed at dominance through engagement in either individual aggression or in mobilization processes that facilitate coalitional aggression.

2. Prosocial Competence-Based Status Versus Hubristic Dominance-Based Status

3. Status as a Valued Resource

**Hope to see you Thursday, Dec.
16th, 12-1pm ET (4-5pm UTC)**

TVOL



What's New at *This View of Life*?

The Nexus Between Evolution and Climate Change

Over the past decades, it has become clear that climate change presents an existential risk to humanity. We must therefore prioritize climate mitigation and tackle it urgently at multiple levels. It cannot be solved simply with technological breakthroughs and reducing emissions generated by the use of fossil fuels, agriculture and land clearing remain the most important way forward.

The reason we haven't yet come close to meeting the required emission targets can be attributed to 'evolutionary mismatch,' a consequence of Darwinian evolution, which is central to many of the global, long-term problems we face today. Evolutionary mismatch compromises our ability to make rational decisions, whether as individuals, politicians in national or global arenas, or captains of industry.

We will need to leverage cultural evolution to find the solutions that we need. This might involve education, advertising, and media, and will undoubtedly require improving the political process to ensure that it works in the interests of all citizens, including those not yet born. This might be achieved by using a Committee of experts from a broad range of disciplines to set policy, which then faces scrutiny before Parliament or a Citizens' Assembly.

The Anthropocene: A Shock in the Evolutionary History of the Earth System

The Earth System has a long, evolutionary history stretching over 4.5 billion years, characterized by abrupt changes such as the bolide strike about 66 million years ago that led to sudden cooling and the extinction of the non-avian dinosaurs, but the planet has also experienced long periods of relatively little change, such as the 'boring billion' between about 1.7 and 0.7 billion years ago. But one critical feature of the long evolution of the Earth System stands out – the critical role of life in shaping the structure and functioning of the Earth System through time.

[Click Here](#) to read this and other articles on *This View of Life*.

