

I gaze upon a society of enlightened individuals on January 1st, 2050, as we collectively celebrate the new year and reflect on my role in bringing about this transformation.

Allow me to paint a picture of what I observe:

In Oakland, CA, I witness a population that is both physically and mentally actualized—strong, present, and prepared for the uncertainties of life. Each person optimizes their existence for joy, participating in thousands of Communities of Action (CoA), where members collaboratively engage in various projects. These CoAs yield a plethora of societal benefits, ranging from new art forms and technologies to research projects on rare diseases, innovative exercise routines, dances, and initiatives focused on preserving endangered animals.

Today, we come together to share and celebrate the outcomes of these Communities of Action in 2049.

Before continuing with the descriptions of the celebrations on Jan 1st 2050, let me give a description of a Community of Action.

A Community of Action is a type of club with between 10 and 20 members who meet in person once a week or more to work on projects. Here are some examples.

- a Musical Instrument Creation CoA would meet once a week to build instruments together and play them. They showcase their new creations by creating a concert.
- An Improv CoA gets together twice a week for rehearsals and then does a community show once a week.
- A Garden CoA has a few time slots where community members do various gardening activities together like planting, watering, weeding and harvesting. They have a feast regularly to celebrate the output of their garden.
- A Game designer groups gather three times a week to design and build their game then once a week they play through the game to see how its working.

The CoA has more structure than a normal club has in the past to avoid pitfalls that often happen for normal clubs. They have rotating officers who manage the operations of the club allowing members to focus on the project vs working on administration. Because the officer rotate not just one person gets burned out trying to keep everything running.

Among the achievements are three new musical instruments, seven new dances, ten novel types of physical exercises tailored for different maladies, fifteen protocols to prevent or reverse diseases, 200 fresh recipes, 500 new songs, and a staggering 10,000 new mentees.

Each booth represents a Community of Action (CoA). Booths line the streets of downtown Oakland and the shores of Lake Merritt, inviting members and tourists alike to explore a multitude of innovations. This annual event draws thousands of visitors from China, India, and across North America.

Every street offers a feast for the senses, with new smells, textures, and colors captivating all who attend.

These CoAs have created innovations that help relieve the stresses of new technologies—some designed to enhance the resource efficiency of homes, others focused on new energy sources, recycling methods, or novel ways to communicate and learn from one another.

In a society where one's worth was traditionally tied to a paid career, my manifesto proposed a new perspective. Instead of solely pursuing financial profit, these CoAs are creating that center around maximizing joy. Each person could join multiple CoAs, contributing their unique skills and interests. The young and old alike could find purpose, community, and joy, simultaneously making the world a more joyful place.

Reflecting on it now, it seems obvious. Removing the profit-driven organization blinders revealed the incredible potential of an organization dedicated to a common purpose. An organization focused on joy-driven goals, as opposed to personal profit, brings a different energy, fostering innovation without the constraints of traditional profit-driven or non-profit structures.

Recognition abounds for each person's contribution, providing the status they yearn for through efforts, skills, unique talents, and hard work. The culture of celebration proves more motivating than financial gain.

Starting in 2024, after I published my CoA Manifesto, people gradually formed these Communities of Action as weekend and evening volunteers. As AI shortened everyone's workweek, they devoted more time to these communities. Eventually, when the US Government mandated a 20-hour workweek, everyone embraced these communities more fully while also spending increased quality time with family and friends.

As a result, individuals found meaning beyond their "day jobs." Physical and mental health improved due to exercise, home-cooked meals, and the end of the stress culture associated with lengthy work hours. The focus shifted to health and joy, away from boasting about long workweeks now deemed illegal.

People who lost the bottom rung of the career ladder when many entry-level jobs were automated found ways to build skill sets and a resume that they could use for paying careers. People who didn't fit into or couldn't afford the university system found that they could learn real skills and grow as professionals.

New challenges emerged, and communities thrived around sports, exercises, hobbies, and adventures. Fun activities became avenues for learning and knowledge-sharing. The manifesto outlined basic structures for knowledge exchange, and over time, best practices evolved, leveraging AI to refine and disseminate knowledge globally.

Here we stand, in the first city to initiate the Communities of Action (CoA) trend. However, every city boasts its own action communities, and the world has united to share knowledge across borders and languages. Traveling to witness innovations, taste diverse cuisines, and experience dances has become a tradition, with at least one yearly trip to another city's festivities.

"What did I do?" you inquire. Well, I continued to do what I've always done: instigate, connect, and create.

****The first step:****

In 2024, I published a manifesto titled "Communities Of Action (CoA) Principles," outlining the 10 principles for the optimal functioning of such communities. The people of Oakland embraced the concept, particularly as the looming challenges of artificial intelligence necessitated a shift from traditional career-focused thinking. They also share the principles that avoid common pitfalls of organizations that later become cults or other toxic environments.

****The Manifesto, as shared in 2024:****

"Communities Of Action (CoA) Principles" by Bett Bollhoefer

Communities of Action (CoA) help individuals develop into their most joyful selves by allowing them to find a role and grow into their fullest potential and mentoring others doing the same.

A CoA is a community somewhere between a hobby club and a nonprofit. It has more structure than a hobby club and less structure than the currently (2024) defined US 501-3(c). It has a governance structure with a charter, bylaws, and officers. It does have the ability to manage financial resources, rent buildings, buy food for its members' banquets, and fund itself (in some way to be determined one day.) But its main purpose is to provide its members with projects to do together. These projects can innovate but aren't required to have any type of measurable Return on Investment (ROI) as traditionally measured. Instead, the project should have a JOI (Joy on Investment).

Somehow, the project should be joyful, maybe fix a problem or innovate a new art. Even as "products" can be 3D printed for pennies, these communities could focus on woodwork even though there is no "market" for their output. Their output is joy.

As each member works on these projects together, they grow as people. They self-actualize. They build skills, confidence, and a network of close friends. The output of these communities is more than some innovative projects. It is a strong community where people find meaning and happiness.

The values of a CoA:

Respect- We treat each member as we would want to be treated.

Integrity- We act as if anything we do will be headline news tomorrow.

Excellence- We do our work with excellence.

Service - We look for ways to serve each other.

Ten principles contribute to the success of CoAs:

1. **Organizational Blueprints:** Each CoA adopts and follows one of many blueprints for governance. There are many different kinds of blueprints that can be adopted by an individual CoA, but once it is adopted, then those who join it will use that blueprint. This blueprint is incorporated into the bylaws and the constitution of each CoA. The list of blueprints for CoAs is as varied as the types of CoAs that can exist. This blueprint allows for voting purposes and allows members to focus on the roles that they want inside the CoA. It brings order to the community and fairness to its operations.

The blueprint includes financial procedures that allow transparency in how funds are collected and allocated. This allows everyone to feel trust in the CoA.

2. **Supportive Environment:** Each CoA creates a safe and supportive environment for members to work together on projects, create practices, and improve their abilities. Mentoring and constructive feedback are key aspects of this supportive atmosphere. Every member has a mentor who helps them grow down their chosen pathways. Each member should feel totally welcomed no matter their starting point.

3. **Peer Learning:** Members learn from each other through constructive evaluations, feedback, and shared experiences. This collaborative learning environment fosters a sense of community and camaraderie. Even experienced members know that keeping a beginner's mind is critical to keep learning. The mentor learns as much from the mentee.

4. **Regular Meetings:** CoA typically meet regularly, allowing members consistent opportunities to work on their projects, practice, and refine their skills. Regularity in meetings helps establish momentum for the projects.

5. **Leadership Opportunities:** CoA offers members various leadership roles within the community, providing hands-on experience in leading projects and community activities. This allows members to develop leadership skills in a practical setting.

6. **Positive Reinforcement:** CoA encourages a positive and encouraging atmosphere. Celebrating achievements, both big and small, contributes to a positive learning environment and motivates members to continue their development.

7. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** CoA clubs can adapt to the needs and preferences of their members. If needed, they can change their direction, projects, and themes. This flexibility allows for a diverse range of projects. They might split into two or more communities if their projects get too large.

8. ****Networking Opportunities:**** CoA provides an excellent place for networking and building relationships. Members often come from diverse backgrounds, providing opportunities for collaboration and mutual support. The friendships built while working together on a passion project will last the members' lifetimes. This builds stronger overall cities, countries, and global communities.

9. ****Global Community:**** Being part of CoA means belonging to a global community. Members have the chance to connect with other CoA worldwide, attend local cities' showcase festivals, and participate in international events, expanding their perspectives and networks.

10. ****Freedom to move:**** Being part of a CoA means that a member can leave whenever a member sees fit. Other members will not use any tactics such as shame or rejection to try to compel a member to stay within one CoA. Members can come and go and also revisit. The freedom of movement allows leadership of a CoA to learn if their culture is one that is attracting members or pushing members away.

By adhering to these principles, CoA creates an effective and empowering environment for individuals to enhance their own abilities and increase the level of joy in the world.

Here is an example of one Organizational Blueprint.

Officers are the executive committee for the CoA:

President- oversees overall management, strategy, vision, mission, works with treasurer to create a budget, signs checks, runs monthly executive meeting.

VP Program- Program manages projects. Reports on progress, blockers, and requests for budget allocation.

VP Recruiting - Shares with the wider CoA communities wins and opportunities, documents wins.

VP Membership - Collects membership applications, does regular check ins with members to ensure they are on track

VP Mentorship- Runs mentorship program: assigns mentors, follows up, re-assigns as needed

VP of Facilities - Ensures that the space that the members use is prepared for each meeting.

Treasurer- Manages all financial matters, creates budget with President.

Secretary - Manages all documents, meeting notes, action items, program manages executive team's high level projects.

Each of these officers may have sub teams that help them do their duties.

The paperwork should be kept to a minimum.

Finances:

- Any monies collected must be used only for valid expenses for running the CoA. No gifts over \$25 can be purchased for anyone. No giftcards can be purchased with CoA money.
- On Dec 30th, the CoA can not have a balance over 10% of their balance of Jan 1st. Any member can ask for an audit at anytime of the budget and cash flow.

- If any output of a CoA is sold for monetary value, that money should be put into the CoA bank account and only used for valid expenses.
- No member of the CoA can collect a salary or hourly wage.
- If a member makes valid expense on behalf of the CoA they will be reimbursed within 30 days of the expense date.
- Monies can not be used to donate to a political party or candidate or used to fund a campaign.
- Monies can not be used to donate to a non-profit or another CoA.

Abuse of power:

No officer can gain from their position. Gain can be defined as financial, sexual, property or similar other stores of value. Their position should only have the thanks of the members of the CoA.

Terms of office:

The president can be president for only 2 years in a row. Exceptions can be made for extreme circumstances.

Elections:

Once a year a communication should go out to the membership to let them know that an election will happen 30 days from the communication date. Any member in good standing should be allowed to nominate themselves to any office role. The candidates will run an orderly campaign. One event will be held to allow the candidates to share why they should be elected. During this event each candidate should be allowed 2 to 3 minutes to speak. A debate can be held if the candidates want to. On election day quorum must be established.

Each member in good standing is allowed to a private ballot. Each candidate can have a referee in the balance counting room.

Candidates must win 51% to win. A re-vote will be done if there is a tie or if one candidate does not win 51% of the vote.

Once the election is called it is final until the next year's election.

Recall:

If a quorum signs a petition for a recall on an officer, a new special election will be held 30 days after the official submission of the signatures of members in good standing. See election rules for how to run the election. Only the officer being recalled will be voted on.

****In the second step:****

I started one CoA to be the template for all other CoAs to model. We started with a community garden in my neighborhood. The first to join were the retired residents, then the kids started coming after school, and then the working-aged folks joined in the evenings and weekends. We turned an empty lot into our first garden. Then, people started to transform their yards into

gardens. We visited different gardens on different days, helping weed, fertilize, and plant. When the gardens yielded carrots, tomatoes, and basil we had a feast. Some children had never known how food was made. The local news came out and covered our feast, interviewing the young and old alike. The news spread around Oakland and then 10 more neighborhoods created their own gardens.

Once I saw that this was working, I then turned my attention to the large empty corporate real estate. I talked to the owner of the building downtown. I told him that we would keep the floors that were empty looking occupied while he searched for tenants. He agreed. I then created several Meetups for a variety of new technologies: Write Apple Vision Pro Apps- Mondays 5 to 7, Build AI Games- Tuesdays at 5 to 7, Make a Movie - Wednesdays 5 to 7, Sew your clothes from thrift store scraps - Thursdays 5 to 7, Cooking Meetup Fridays 12 to 1 pm.

The first year, hundreds joined and I delegated the running of each group to the most enthusiastic. I then helped each group form a governing model using my 10 principles. Then, I started ten more groups.

Make your own furniture from Recycled items- Mondays 8 am to 10 am, Swing Dancing workshop- Tuesdays 11:30 to 1:30, Build mobile apps - Wednesdays 12 to 2 pm, Build your own solar farm - Thursdays 12 to 3 pm, Water purification systems workshop - Fridays 2 to 5 pm, Micro Grids innovations - Saturdays 9 am to 2 pm
And so on....

Each one I started and then delegated to others.

San Francisco had also started their own set of CoAs. I spent much of my time mentoring new leaders and helping them learn how to negotiate with empty building owners.

We filled up the first 10 buildings in both cities. The building owners liked that their buildings looked occupied and often, we'd have to move a CoA to another building as paying tenants moved into our space. It was a win-win situation.

When CoA leaders came to me saying they needed funding, I would help them think in new ways to use free resources or very inexpensive resources. We needed to innovate on materials instead of buying brand-new things. We also discussed selling the output of the CoAs if that was something that was being created. It was a divisive discussion, but we finally settled on if anything was sold then the money was used for funding the CoA and not given to members. These critical decisions helped us learn what this new type of organization was and how it worked.

But as time went on the issue that kept coming up over and over was funding.

Another huge issue that we ran into right away in the first year of the CoAs was abuse of power. I saw it over and over that someone would be a leader of a group and take money from the

members. Even worse several people came forward reporting leaders were asking for sexual favors. I realized that even though I had spelled out principles some leaders were doing what they wanted to. I was very concerned about these issues.

I led a council of the CoA leaders during the spring of 2025. Now we had 10 cities all over CA that had joined the movement. All the leaders came to Oakland for our first summit.

On the agenda, we had three items 1) How to create a culture where no one put up with Abuse of Power 2) Funding 3) legal recognition, 4) Creating the first Festival to celebrate each CoA's joys.

We realized that to prevent the abuses of power we had to empower every member with their rights. They had to develop a sense of agency to

1. Say NO when confronted with someone asking for something that they didn't want to give.

2. Let someone they trust know about the situation

3. Leave and go somewhere else. Vote with their feet.

To help each new member feel this level of agency would take time, but we decided to create an orientation program that all new members would attend. We would also create a New Member program to shepherd cohorts through the first year of their membership and teach them to stand up for themselves.

We realized that the world had changed so much in the last year. Many of our members had lost their day jobs and were hungry to start more CoAs and take more of an active leadership role in each.

We decided to get corporate sponsors for each of the CoAs that really required funding. We created a committee to match companies to CoAs and reach out to the company with a pitch of doing the funding as a PR strategy. Funding the CoA would look good for the company.

We created a team of lawyers who could create a non-profit umbrella organization for us to be a member of. Each CoA would be part of the umbrella organization officially called Communities of Action International. This would allow the corporate donations to us to be tax deductible.

We discussed the possibility of paying members of our CoAs but realized that this would be the wrong sign and wrong direction. Each member was there for joy, not financial payments.

We created a schedule for the 10 cities to hold their Showcase Festivals to share the joys of each CoA.

The assembly was a great success. Companies loved the sponsorship model, and large companies boasted loudly about the CoAs that they sponsored. More companies wanted to sponsor and it continued to spread. Soon, CoAs that needed funding were able to get it. They were even able to pay some rent when asked to do so.

****The third step:****

As the president of the Communities of Action International, I led the team that tracked how each CoA was functioning, creating new procedures, codifying rules, and holding meetings with leads to learn what was working and sharing improvement ideas. We met with various governments to ensure that all was above board and the integrity of the CoAs was being honored everywhere. We continue to improve and hone the operating practices to help our members get the most joy out of their lives.

In 2030, we'd grown to have at least one CoA in every city in the US, and we were starting to get some traction in other countries.

In the 2030s, most folks made their income from a Universal Basic Income (UBI) which meant that they could work a few gig jobs and then cover most of their basic expenses from the UBI. This gave them more time to devote to their CoAs and the innovations and number of CoAs increased as the number of hours people could devote grew. UBI is a method for the citizens of a country to have an income even if they do not have a regular full time job. The way a government funds its UBI is by taxing corporations who no longer need as many employees. Corporations still make huge profits by leveraging technology like robots and AI instead of employing as many humans as they used to.

By 2045, pretty much every country had at least one CoA. There was also a shift from corporations directly funding CoAs, and now the government had a CoA grant department that directly funded CoAs from taxes collected from corporations.

The assembly of CoA Leaders in 2047 had 10k people in person and 15k on the virtual platform. We declared that the CoA was a huge win for all of humanity.

By January 1st, 2050, CoA was up at the top with the other bedrock societal institutions. We'd led the world through a huge transition from our identities being totally from a "day job" to the volunteer work we did with our various CoAs. It had replaced the empty slot that the church and "day job" had left empty. Humanity was now full of joy. I stood at the Oakland Showcase Festival full of joy.