Good Stories Movement
Planting Seeds of Goodness

We change the story of the world,
When we change the storyline.

Background

Much of what happens in this world, probably 99.9%, is not bad. It is neutral, and much of it is good. So much good is being done by so many people from all walks of life - ordinary citizens, and public servants alike.

But why do we hear only of the 0.1% that is bad? Why do we see and hear only bad news on TV, radio, newspapers and now, in social media? Is it because bad news sells? And is it also because people like to hear of bad news? Maybe, this is called the negativity bias.

All this bad news is causing us all to suffer stress and depression. What is even worse is that we are feeling helpless and hopeless.

So how can we change the story?

Simple: We will just turn around the narrative -- from negative to positive.

We can change the story of the world if we change the storyline.
New Pathway

“We will have peace on Earth when we have peace *with* the Earth.

From now on, we will search for good stories of people making peace with the Earth. From now on, we will shun the bad and the sad. From now on, we will shine the spotlight on the good, the right, and the bright.

Law and Science try to change the mind – a very difficult task. And even if you can change the mind, it can change tomorrow. But when you change the heart, it is forever.


The greatest human hunger is not the hunger for food. It is the hunger of the human heart for approval and recognition. Stories of the good, the right, and the bright are the best teachers. Good stories can inspire and set the hearts of the world on fire.

*Dramatis Personae (Players in the Drama of this Journey)*

This is a movement of people who share the common belief that we can change the story of the world by changing the storyline. We share this vision and mission. We will join this happy journey to highlight the strong, instead of the wrong.

Everyone is invited. Please share with us and with the world good stories of good people who are caring for the Land, Air, and Water (LAW) of Life.
We will enter into a covenant of cooperation with like-hearted individuals who will joyfully join this journey. Together, we will seek the good stories, and shine the spotlight on the good, the right, and the bright.

**Timeline**

*Anything that is worth doing cannot be done in one lifetime.* But in this lifetime, we can plant seeds of hope to grow in the garden of goodness.*

This movement started in the central Philippine island of Cebu last March 2017. It was then called the *Pasalamat sa Katauhan* (People’s Gratitude) Movement. It was launched by a handful of thoughtful people, some of whom are world-renowned for their work in Environmental Law enforcement.

After all their wounds or war and bruises of battle, they finally realized that the best form of law enforcement is when the law does not need to be enforced.

That happens when the people behave according the meaning and the spirit of the Law.

Throughout the three past years, this modest initiative found kindred hearts in some parts of the world. Some of our spirit siblings hold positions of influence.

Focusing on the bad makes us feel helpless and hopeless. To focus on the good will inspire us for courage, hope, and happiness.

Changing the narrative from bad to good will not take one week, one month, or one year. But within one week, one month, and one year, we can begin to change the storyline.

Maybe it is true anything that is worth doing cannot be done in one lifetime. But in this lifetime,
We can plant
Seeds of hope and
Grow a garden of goodness.

‘The World is a Stage’

All around the world, there are countless stories of good people doing good things for the greater good of the Land, Air, and Waters (LAW) of Life. We will search for these good stories, we will identify the people behind them, and we listen and learn from them. More important, we will highlight their stories to the whole wide world. Their stories will inspire and set the hearts of others on fire.

Inspiration is the most powerful form of leadership.

Process

Step 1. We will search for good stories of people who are caring for the Earth.

Attached as Annex B is a sample nomination form.

Step 2. When submitted to the Secretariat of the Good Stories Movement, we will review and vet the story. And then we will send a letter of congratulations and commendation to the people behind the making of this good story.

Examples of the letters from the Normandy Chair for Peace (NCP), International Council for Environmental Law (ICEL), Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development (IGSD) and others attached as Annex C.

Step 3. These letters will be sent to our global partners for them to share widely on social and mainstream media. When you tell of the bad stories, say it in a whisper. When you have a good story to tell, let it be heard by the whole wide world.

We will hold conferences in the six regions of the world (Europe, Asia, North America, South America, Africa, and Oceania). These conferences, physical and/or
virtual, will showcase the good stories in the region. The highlight of the event will be a recognition and awarding ceremony to parade the good stories and recognize the people who are making it happen. If physical conferences are already allowed, this awarding event can be held during the usual dinner reception for delegates.

The initial list of the fields and categories of efforts to focus our search are the good stories in the fields of:

1. solid waste management
2. marine conservation
3. coastal governance
4. road sharing and non-motorized mobility.
5. edible landscaping and food gardens
6. eco-governance
7. environmental legislation
8. environment education
9. arts for the earth
10. environmental jurisprudence
11. youth leadership
12. women leadership
13. environmental diplomacy
14. marine enforcement
15. renewable energy
16. cultural heritage
17. lifetime efforts
18. beach restoration
19. rain gardens
20. environmental litigation
21. others

From ridge to reef, so much good is happening all around the world.
The recipients of the awards will receive a recognition from very prestigious international organizations such as from the Guardians of Future Generations, ICEL, NCP, IGSD, and possibly, the United Nations.

To add more prestige to the awards, some of them can be named after men and women who have made significant contributions in the field.

For example, in Environmental Jurisprudence, the awards can be named after the former Vice President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Christopher Weeramantry and former Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide.

For marine conservation, the award can be named after the phenomenal Sylvia Earle. For Environmental Litigation, it can be named after the living environmental litigation legend – the Earth Advocate MC Mehta of India. And so forth, with their permission of course.
Annex A

COVENANT OF COOPERATION

*We change the story of the world*
*When we change the storyline.*

Almost everything that happens in the world is not bad. It is neutral, and much of it is even good.

But why do we hear only of the bad and the sad? Because bad news sells? This has made all of us stressed, depressed, hopeless, and helpless. No, we are not helpless!

We can change the story of the world if we change the storyline -- from bad to good, from the negative to the positive.

Together, we will cooperate to search for good stories. Together, we will shine the spotlight on the good, the right, and the bright. Together, we will gift them with kind words of appreciation and recognition.

Together, and today when it is most needed, We will spread happy energy. A good story will inspire, And set hearts on fire.

*“The seeds of goodness*
*Live in the soil of Appreciation for goodness.”*

“Kind words do not just praise the goodness of others. Kind words have the power to change the story of the world.”

This Covenant opens for signature on the 18th of August 2020, a memorable moment in the story of the world.

I Join the Journey

Please send your name, and if possible, copy of your signed Covenant, by email to goodstoriesmovement101@gmail.com.

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Seeds of goodness – Dalai Lama; Kind words – Dogen
Dear Friends:

Greetings from _____ (town and country).

I, _______________________, am a concerned resident of the Earth, with address at _______________________________ (full address house/apartment number, street, city and country). It is my pleasure to respectfully invite your attention to the good story of:

__________________________________________, resident of __________________________
And a __________________________ (cite occupation, e.g., fisherman, street sweeper, farmer, public official, etc. with email address ____________________, cellphone number ____________, or name in FB messenger, if any. This is necessary for us to be able to contact the nominee.)

For

___________________________________________.

Please write a 2-3 paragraph narrative describing the story that deserves to be told, the story of the good, the right, and the bright.

To make it easy for the nominator to express him/herself, the brief description of the story can be written in his/her native language. But please translate it into English (you may use Google translate).

___________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your kind attention. Good luck to our efforts to change the story of the world by changing the storyline.
Submitted by:

Name ________________________
Address: _____________________
Email Address: _________________
Mobile Number: ____________
(Pls. advise if on Viber or What's App)
Facebook Messenger, if any ____________
We may contact you to confirm your nomination.

If possible, please put a picture here of the person being nominated, and a picture of his/her work. This is the picture we will put on the congratulatory letter that we will send to the good person/s in the good story.

Please submit to the volunteer Secretariat of the Good Stories Movement. Please note we are all doing this as volunteers. And it should not raise the expectations of a full-time staff. Any person who wishes to join us in this journey is most welcome and needed. ‘There is no heart stronger than a volunteer.’

Email address: goodstoriesmovement101@gmail.com
Copy furnished: tonyoposa1024@gmail.com

Guidelines for nominating a good story:

1. The person/s doing the good work must be clearly identified. Please also send his/her/their email addresses and other available contact details. We will send the letter directly to the person/s concerned.

2. Please avoid nominating commercial activities. Good social enterprises are OK. But our letters must not be used to endorse any commercial activity.

3. People in Government, especially ordinary citizens, may be nominated. Please try to identify his peers or superiors, including the president of his/her/their country. We will send them a copy of the congratulatory letter, to multiply the goodness.

4. No self-nominations.
Annex B-1

Nomination Form (example as filled out)

Secretariat
Good Stories Movement
___ Address.

Re: Good Story of Edible Landscaping and Rain Gardens

I, Juan de la Cruz, Filipino, of legal age, Filipino, resident of 123 Lapulapu cor Magellan Street, Barangay Guapa, Municipality of Magagaling 1234, Province of Magandang Asal, hereby nominate:

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Rodolfo Trumpo, resident of 321 de Vera Street, North Reclamation Area, 4321 Cebu City, and a street sweeper employed by the Cebu City Government,

His initiative to put up and maintain the urban edible garden right on the center island and small spaces along the sidewalk of the De Vera Street is most laudable. This center island and sidewalks were once used as a dump site for garbage. Now, it is a showcase of how easy it is to be self-sufficient in food. It also shows one man’s dedication, creativity, and perseverance can serve as a spark to self-reliance, food sufficiency, and to restore dignity and spirit of community and cooperation.

Picture here of the urban garden. If possible, also a picture of the person nominated for recognition.
For Marine Conservation

Jaime Agustin Bolingki, resident of 126 Bulawanon Kasingkasing Street, Bgy. Ki-at, Municipality of Alegre, and the Mayor of said town.

For:
His initiative and efforts to enforce the rule of law in the arena of marine conservation and for putting up a network of marine protected areas and fish sanctuaries covering an area of 500 hectares. By doing so, he has implemented a long-neglected provision of the Fisheries Code requiring that at least 15% of municipal waters be set aside as a fish sanctuary. By his efforts, he has ensured the food security of his people and the integrity and sustainability of the marine ecosystem of his town. As such, he is a shining example for other local chief executives.

Another example for Environmental Jurisprudence

Gloria Labandera, resident of 789 Gandang Kalooban Street, Bgy. Maayong Tao, Bulawanon City, a judge of the Municipal Trial Court of Ampingan.

For:
her innovative approach to sentencing blast fishermen convicted of violation of the Fisheries Code. In a unique decision, Judge Labandera sentenced the convicts to 6 years imprisonment for dynamite fishing. But in a supreme example of restorative justice and creative penology, she suspended the sentence of the convicts, placed them on probation, but required them to put up a marine protected area that they will protect for at least the duration of their sentence.

This act of compassionate and innovative justice is an example of the truth that “Life is about redemption. While all of us commit mistakes, we must be given the chance to
redeem ourselves, restore our self-dignity, and to once again become productive members of society by restoring the very LAW of Life that we destroyed.

Submitted by:

Name ________________________
Address: ______________________
Email Address: ______________________
Mobile Number: ________________ (Please indicate if available on What’s App or Viber)
We will contact you to confirm your nomination.