1. Challenge the myth that all problems have private, individual solutions.

2. Notice how many of life’s pleasures exist outside the marketplace—gardening, fishing, conversing, playing music, playing ball, making love, watching sunsets, and much more.

3. Take time to enjoy what the commons offers. As the radical Brazilian educator Paulo Freire said, “We are bigger than our schedules.”

4. Introduce the children in your life to the commons. Let them see you enjoying it, and working with others to sustain it.

5. Keep in mind that security and satisfaction are more easily acquired from friends than from money.

6. Become a mentor—officially or informally—to people of all ages you prepared to learn as much as you teach.

7. Think about living cooperatively with housemates.

8. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.

9. Have some fun. The best reason to restore community assets. Let them see you enjoying it, and naturally want to gather.


11. Treat commons spaces as if you own them (which, actually, you do). Keep an eye on the place. Pick up things up. Report problems or repair things yourself. Initiate improvement campaigns.

12. Offer a smile or greeting to people you pass. The commons begins with connecting—even in brief, spontaneous ways.

13. Get out of the house and spend some time on the street, the front yard, the street—anywhere you can join the river of life.

14. Get out of the house and spend some time on the street, the front yard, the street—anywhere you can join the river of life.

15. Create or designate a “town square” for your neighborhood—a park, playground, vacant lot, community center, coffee shop, or even a street corner—anywhere folks naturally want to gather.

16. Lobby for more public benches, water fountains, plazas, parks, sidewalks, bike trails, playgrounds, and other crucial commons infrastructure.

17. Conduct an inventory of local commons. Publicize your findings and suggest ways to celebrate and improve these commons assets.

18. Organize your neighbors to stop crime itself. If you have concerns about your neighborhood or town?

19. Organize a common security club. You are not on your own when it comes to economic woes. (commonssecurityclubs.org)

20. Write letters to the editor about the commons, post on local websites, call or to talk radio, tell your friends.

21. Before buying something online, see if you could get it more coop—eratively—by car pooling or order it locally. That keeps some of your money in the community.

22. Conduct an inventory of local commons infrastructure.

23. Start a neighborhood exchange to share everything from lawn mowers to child-care and home repairs to vehicles.

24. Assess your impact as a captive audience for marketing campaigns.

25. Purchase goods—beer to clothing to sustainable food from small producers as much as you can.

26. Purchase fair trade, organic, and locally made goods from your neighbors, community centers, co-ops, and local farmers market.

27. Watch where your money goes. How do the businesses you patronize harm or help the commons? Publicize your findings and suggest development, rights of indigenous people, and human rights, worker rights, sustainable development, rights of indigenous people, and action on climate change.

28. Start a neighborhood exchange to share everything from lawn mowers to child-care and home repairs to vehicles.

29. Oppose cutbacks in public assets like transit, schools, libraries, parks, social services, police and fire, and arts programs.

30. Support activists around the globe working for debt relief, environmental protection, human rights, workers rights, sustainable development, rights of indigenous people, and action on climate change.

31. Take every opportunity to talk with elected officials and local activists about the importance of protecting the commons. Do the same with citizens groups, nonprofit organizations, labor unions, professional societies, and business leaders.

32. Conceive a public art project for your neighborhood. Let them see you enjoying it, and naturally want to gather.

33. Pick up litter that is not yours.

34. Conceive a public art project for your neighborhood. Let them see you enjoying it, and naturally want to gather.

35. Create or designate a “town square” for your neighborhood—a park, playground, vacant lot, community center, coffee shop, or even a street corner—anywhere folks naturally want to gather.

36. Avoid bottled water. Tap water is generally safer if you have concerns about your water supply, get a filter, then pressure local officials to clean it up.

37. Become a guerrilla gardener, planting flowers and vegetables on neglected land in your neighborhoods. (localcommunitygarden.org)

38. Organize a community garden (commu-nitygarden.org) or local farmers market.

39. Roll up your sleeves to restore a creek, wetland, woods, or grassland, or beautify a vacant lot.

40. Support activists around the globe working for debt relief, environmental protection, human rights, workers rights, sustainable development, rights of indigenous people, and action on climate change.

41. Seek new ways to use less energy and create less waste at home and work.

42. Form a study group to explore what can be done to promote sustainability in your community.

43. Purchase goods—beer to clothing to sustainable food from small producers as much as you can.

44. Patronize and support your public library.

45. Demand that schoolchildren not become a captive audience for marketing campaigns.

46. Contribute your knowledge to online commons such as Wikipedia, open education projects, and open access journals. Form your own online community to explore commons issues.

47. Use Creative Commons licenses for your own writing, music, videos, and other creative pursuits.

48. Organize a community garden (communitygarden.org) or local farmers market.

49. Expose your readers to commons issues. Form your own online community to explore commons issues.

50. Write letters to the editor about the commons, post on local websites, call in to talk radio, tell your friends.

51. Spread some hope around. Explain how commons based solutions can remedy today’s pressing problems.

What you can do, alone and with others, to share life