The Future of Sustainable Business
What we’ll cover:

The evolution of my thinking

9 ways to make sustainability more sustainable

9 things business must do

The business case
A note about me and my experience

- Founder, CEO and Chairman, *Seventh Generation*, 1988 - 2010
- Adjunct Professor at *New York University*.
- Author of seven books on the environment and Corporate Responsibility including 2010's *The Responsibility Revolution*.
- *Greenpeace* US Board of Directors.
- Co-founder and Board Chair of the *American Sustainable Business Council*. 
Sustain Condoms: Who we are

- Business as a force for equity, justice, and resilience
- A model of new possibilities
- A platform for challenging the status quo by:
  - Disrupting industry
  - Creating a net-positive business model
  - Radical transparency
- A community committed to personal development and growth
- A family business
Sustain Condoms: What we do

• Sell condoms marketed toward women.
• Cultivate healthy attitudes about sex and reproductive health care while fighting shame and fear.
• Make safer products by removing carcinogenic chemicals.
• Protect workers rights and preventing child labor through fair trade practices.
• Create a more equitable world through employee ownership and fair compensation practices.
• Regenerate our environment through sustainable agriculture, the reduction of greenhouse gases and slowing population growth.
• Fight hunger while improving education opportunities and access to health care by enabling women to better plan their families.
• Provide thought leadership on business, sexuality and...
9 ways to make sustainability more sustainable

1. What is a sustainable, responsible business: we need a better definition
2. Aligning social vs. environmental initiatives.
3. Differentiating between “good” and “less bad”
4. Full cost accounting
5. Net positive may be the only metric that matters
6. Unilever vs. the rest of the world
7. We can’t let business off the hook so easily
8. Business must commit to solving problems it does not know how to solve
9. Ending a crisis of morality and ethical
Sustainable business must be guided by 6 principles

1. The purpose of the corporation is to harness private interests to serve the public good.

2. Corporations can earn reasonable profits, but not at the expense of the interests of other stakeholders (including the environment).

3. Corporations shall distribute their wealth equitably among those who contribute to its creation.

4. Corporations shall operate in a participatory, radically transparent, ethical, and accountable manner.

5. Responsible/Sustainable business is “net-positive.”
A snapshot of the challenges we face

• 1% of the US population owns 50% of the wealth in the US
• Globally, the richest 85 people have the same wealth as the bottom 3.5 billion
• Greed - Hedge Fund Managers making $4 billion in income
• 15% taxes, Warren Buffet
• Companies like Starbucks, Apple and GE avoid paying corporate taxes: Starbucks story
• Payday lending that charges low income Americans annual interest rates of over 100%
• A minimum wage that ensures poverty
  • 1 out of every 6 Americans now rely on food stamps
  • 46 million Americans now live in poverty
    • the highest number in the 52 years
  • 1.6 million homeless children in the United States — that’s one in 45 kids living in shelters, cars.
What’s wrong with America

Compared to other nations in the industrialized world, the US has:

• the highest poverty rate
• lowest rates of science & math capability
• the lowest social mobility
• inequality is worse than Egypt, Tunisia or Yemen
• the U-6 unemployment rate for native-born blacks with less than a high school education is 42.2 percent.
10 Imperatives for Sustainable Business

1. Stand for something
2. Become a Benefit Corporation
3. Comitt to radical transparency
4. Ownership & compensation
5. Make the #1 CSR goal becoming “net positive as a company.
6. Build your values into corporate culture
7. Engage in public policy
8. Build the sharing economy into your business model
9. Teach systems thinking and meditation
10. “What does the world most need that my business is uniquely able to provide?”
The Business Case

• Attract & retain the best talent
• Build consumer loyalty & trust
• Protect brand equity & manage reputational risk, 75% of corporate value
• Effective innovation on the major challenges facing humanity creates better long term ROI
• More dependable supply chains
• More dependable raw material costs
• More predictable & consistent profits
• License to operate
• Reduced regulatory risk & cost
• Board and employee diversity improve financial performance

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Acupressure Points to Effect Systems Change

Full cost accounting

The Wal-Mart Effect

The sharing economy & other disruptive business models
For more information:

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