



S CARS
E FUTURE

ECONOMY IS CARE

(NOT) A WALK

IN SURSEE, FOR EXAMPLE

GIVE US THE
WHOLE OF LIFE!

POLITICS WAKE UP.
THE WORLD IS
FALLING APART!

ECONOMY
IS CARE!

WELCOME!

THIS IS (NOT) A WALK THROUGH SURSEE!

Dear Participant,

The Economy is Care themed trail invites you to explore what economic activity is and should be. In Sursee, in your local community, in your parish, in your life. This brochure has been created to accompany you on this walk.

What do we mean when we use the word 'economy'? Economic activity is all about satisfying people's needs, i.e. providing for oneself, for each other and for the world. The broader term for providing for oneself and for others is 'care'. It's a word that has become assimilated into German and has been adopted by feminist economists and movements such as the Swiss Women's Strike or the Care Revolution in Germany.

Both terms, Economy and Care, mean basically the same thing: both are about providing for oneself, for one another and for the world. Background information on this simple thought can be found in the easy-to-read comic booklet Economy is Care, which you can order on our website or read online.

The trail takes us to 15 stations. At each one, it will become clear to you that (and how) people here provide for themselves, for others and for the world. And as you will see, in days gone by, people practised an economy that was worthy of the name: the word 'economy' comes from Ancient Greek and is derived from two terms: oikos and nomos. Oikos means 'house', nomos means 'doctrine'. In other words, oiko-nomia is the doctrine of 'managing our house well', which is summed up in the word 'good stewardship'.

We will get to know places where it becomes evident that Sursee has always been and still is an oikonomia shared by all the people who live alongside each other here: Economy in Sursee is Care. And not only in Sursee, but also in many other places, in local communities, many churches, teams, organisations and projects. That is why our themed trail is easily transferred to other places and recreated over and over again.

You have the materials for this in your hand. If you need more information, visit our website:
www.frauensynode2021.ch.

Oiko-Nomia:
The doctrine of
good stewardship

We invite you take a fresh look at your home town and discover all the many places where Economy is Care already, and all the others where it can become so again! Create your own themed trail where you live!

The walk through Sursee is a kind of 'Sunday stroll': it shows and celebrates what an Economy can achieve. At the same time, it is not 'a walk in the park', because everywhere it takes us, it also becomes clear what is going wrong and how much still needs to be done so that the whole world can be preserved as a joint household: as an economic system in which everyone can be born, live and die well and safely. Today and in the future too, and together with countless other living beings.

The Team of the Women's Synod
and Sursee Guided Tours

Thanks

Sincere thanks to the Swiss Women's Synod Association for their generous support!

We thank the organising committee for their efforts on behalf of the event scheduled for 5 September 2020 that was cancelled due to the pandemic. We would also like to thank the Protestant Women of Switzerland (EFS), the Swiss Catholic Women's Federation (SKF), the Economy is Care (WiC) association, the municipality of Sursee, the Catholic and Protestant parishes of Sursee and the fra-z association.

Our thanks to all our sponsors! They are listed individually on the website.

Many thanks to our proofreaders for their constructive criticism!

Legal notice

Economy is Care – (Not) a Walk

The themed trail is a joint project by the Seventh Swiss Women's Synod and Sursee Guided Tours.

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Publisher:

Swiss Women's Synod 2021
www.frauensynode2021.ch

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GETTING HERE

Impulse question

HOW CAN WE SHAPE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY SO THAT THE FOCUS IS ON CARING AND NOT ON PROFIT?



Sursee

You probably arrived here by train. Sursee has been connected to the Swiss railway network since 1856. With 800 metres or so between the railway station and the old town, a new district was created in the space between, known as the 'railway suburb'.

Today Sursee has excellent train connections to Lucerne, Olten and Bern. They are one of the reasons that Sursee has become an attractive place to live and work.

Starting at Bahnhofplatz, a place buzzing with arrivals and departures, the trail of 15 stations invites you to take a critical look at the question of what Economy is and what it can achieve.

Economy is Care – what does that mean?

If Economy were never Care, then you who are reading this text right now would no longer be alive. There have always been people there to make sure you got what you needed: older people fed and cared for you when you were a child. Farmers, bakers and supermarket workers provide us with food every day. Teachers pass on knowledge, plumbers lay water pipes and computer scientists programme computers. Many people make their daily contribution so that we can live well, whether we work in our home or as train drivers, journalists or carers for the elderly. And we all live together on the generous planet earth, which provides us with everything that we turn into goods and services: air and water, rocks, microorganisms, plants, animals and much more.

Although, there are also problems: on the first pages of most textbooks on economics it says that economic activity is about satisfying people's human needs, which is Care. From about page two on, however, something else comes to the fore: the exchange of goods and services for money. This is problematic, because now the focus is no longer on our needs, but on the profit that is made by individuals or companies. As a result, people can lose sight of the true purpose of economic activity, i.e. the fair and appropriate distribution of available resources: instead of providing for everyone, the economy fulfils the wishes of those who have money – and have all they need already. Which is why the world looks as it does: few own much, many own ever less or have nothing at all any more, and nature is exploited. If the future of this planet is to be liveable for our grandchildren, we need a different understanding of the Economy!

EXISTING AND CHANGING

Impulse questions

WHO DECIDES WHICH AREAS
OF SOCIETY DIGITALISATION
IS APPLIED IN?
CORPORATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS
OR CIVIL SOCIETY?



Sursee

Before us we see the remains of the former Sursee stove factory. Of what was once a vast factory, only the administration building from the 1880s still stands today, a reminder of the Sursee's industrial heyday. From the end of the 19th century until well into the 20th century, the famous Sursee cast-iron stoves were manufactured here, among other things.

The little town of Sursee on Lake Sempach was founded by the Counts of Kyburg, inherited by the Habsburgs and finally conquered by the people of Lucerne in 1415. The favourable location on the north-south trade route fostered the prosperity of the town for centuries and made it the most important centre in the Lucerne region.

Today Sursee is a small town with a population of 10 000 and even more jobs. The many historical and modern buildings, including the late-Gothic town hall and market building, the parish church of St. George and the former monastery courtyards, bear witness to the old and new prosperity. Sursee was awarded the Wakker Prize for its many new architectural developments in recent years. Sursee is also very attractive as a centre of education. A grammar school, several vocational training centres and the Campus of the Swiss Association of Master Builders have eager students flocking in droves to Sursee. The cultural diversity in the town is similarly broad: the municipal theatre with its 200-year tradition, the St. Urbanhof Museum, the small *Somehuus* theatre and, for the younger generation, Kulturwerk 118, to name but a few.

Economy is Care

The administration building is all that remains of a huge industrial plant. All the halls where workers used to produce quality stoves under harsh conditions have gone. After all, production conditions are constantly changing.

Today, everything revolves around the digitalisation of all areas of life and work. Its presence is being felt everywhere, transforming and influencing the nature of work and social communication. It can destroy gainful employment and enable comprehensive surveillance, or it can be a supportive and democratically regulated element for an emancipated society.

A Care-centred economy takes a critical view of the digitalisation process. It decides in each individual case when technology is destructive, unnecessarily accelerating or exclusionary, but also when and how it can help to make life easier and better for all.

AGRICULTURE AND SOIL CARE

Impulse questions

WHERE IS THE SOIL IN WHICH
MY FOOD GROWS?
WHO WORKS IN THE FIELDS AND
UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS?
WHO CAN AFFORD WHAT FOOD?



Sursee

The proud building of the former Agricultural School in the neo-Renaissance style was designed to give worthy expression to the farming community of the time in the Canton of Lucerne. The Agricultural Winter School, which had been housed in the town hall since 1885, was able to hold its first classes here in 1901. Six years later, the Farming School for Women was added. Due to the high enrolment numbers, the school was extended with the addition of a residential building in 1938.

Today, the Vocational Training Centre for Nature and Nutrition is housed here. It offers training courses in home economics, dairy farming, horticulture and floriculture.

Economy is Care

Everything we need to live comes from nature: mangoes and mushrooms grow by themselves, water gushes from springs. What nature produces then mostly passes through many different hands before it ends up in the daily lives of individuals, such as on the dining table, for example: farmers grow and harvest crops, raise animals and have them slaughtered. Then the food is transported, traded and processed into meals. However, by no means all people everywhere have safe access to healthy and sustainably produced food.

Industrial agriculture in its current form is destroying the basis of all our lives in the medium term. Plantations are displacing primeval forests, monocultures are destroying biodiversity. The causes of this lie in profit-centred economic activity.

Care-centred agriculture produces food for all people under fair working conditions. Many initiatives are already committed to ensuring that soil, animals and food are not exploited as commodities from which a few people make a profit, but as a necessary part of our lives that we treat respectfully so that the earth will remain fertile in the future. Water quality and biodiversity are necessary prerequisites for this. Farming the land is caring and providing for humanity. When we humans respect nature, we also respect ourselves, because we are part of nature.

BEING BORN AND GIVING BIRTH

Impulse question

HOW WOULD IT FEEL IF WE WERE TO REFER TO ALL PEOPLE AS BEGINNERS THAT ARE BORN INTO A WEB OF UNIQUELY PROMISING RELATIONSHIPS?



Sursee

Midwife Marie Steiger lived in this house at Dägersteinstrasse 5, from 1927 until the 1970s. There were two sitting rooms in the house: one, the 'parlour', was reserved for the examination of pregnant women. When the midwife was called to attend the birth, her husband took her to the woman in labour, perched on the luggage rack of his bicycle with her little case. In this way, Marie Steiger helped to bring over 1,000 children into the world.

Economy is Care

Every single human being begins their lives with birth. It is no coincidence that the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights refers to birth as the place of the assurance of inalienable rights: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Especially as babies and children, we are totally dependent on other people: older people have to feed us, teach us the language for us to be able to communicate, show us how to relate meaningfully to other people and to the world we share. If nobody took care of their progeny, there would be no people. And without people there is no need for an economy.

In the patriarchal economy, childbearing and child-rearing are seen as fringe activities. People treat this whole area as a 'private matter' and overlook the fact that it takes work to bring people into the world and guide them all the way into adult life. Giving birth is seen as unproductive and detrimental to the smooth functioning of the main occupation, that of gainful employment: it is even necessary to take parental 'leave'.

For Care-centred economics, it is crucial that people can give birth to their children in a safe place that is not profit-oriented. Since we all go through the process of being born, birth and everything related to it deserves due attention and support from society.

DYING

Impulse questions

WHAT DOES 'DYING WELL'
MEAN TO ME?
WHO WOULD I LIKE TO BE
ACCOMPANIED BY IN THE FINAL
FEW DAYS OF MY LIFE?



Sursee

Dägerstein Cemetery, which dates back to 1636, was originally only a secondary cemetery in which strangers, the poor and children were buried. It has been the town's general burial place since 1803. The cemetery is especially worth a visit for its many grave monuments, which were designed by the Amlehns, a family of artists.

In the Maria Dägerstein cemetery chapel, the 14 Holy Helpers are venerated. Five of them are 'in charge' when it comes to dying and death: Saint Barbara is considered the patron saint of gravediggers and the dying. Saint Cyriacus helps in the hour of death, Achatius in the fear of death, Eustace stands by the relatives and Christopher is said to protect from an unprepared death. A whole Care team that can be called upon in the hours of dying and death.

Economy is Care

Dying is inevitable. There have always been people who died 'old and full of life', surrounded by caring fellow human beings, reconciled with their own finiteness. That is 'dying well' and it is still possible today.

However, many people die from preventable diseases or accidents, as a result of famine, war, violence or while fleeing from such. Others live longer than they would like, hooked up to highly complex machines. Or they cannot die in their familiar home environment because their relatives lack the time and money to care for them at home. Deaths are often accepted as a necessary sacrifice for higher purposes, such as for nationalistic goals or for a smooth-running market. Or for the profit of a few, who don't care if, say, activists in Latin America give their lives to defend the rainforest against illegal logging.

Clearly, death and the way we die are always in relation to the society we live in. Allowing people to take time to grieve or care for a terminally ill person is one aspect of a Care-centred economy.

Everyone has one irreplaceable life. Care means preventing violent suffering and dying, and accompanying the dying, when their time has come, peacefully to the end; and beyond.

LOVING

Impulse question

IF I LOVE LIFE, I HAVE TO SAY NO
TO A LOT OF THINGS.
WHAT EXACTLY DO I SAY NO TO
OUT OF LOVE?



Sursee

Ehret Park lies on the edge of the old town, named after the couple who donated the space after the renaturation of the River Sure. The idyllic green space is a place where young and old in Sursee enjoy spending time. The grassy area is framed by the arms of the Sure and the walls and towers of the former town fortifications. Cultural events also take place in the park, such as the open-air cinema, the Blauring and Jungwacht's *Chäferfescht*, church services and public Tai-Chi.

Economy is Care

To love means to say yes: to a job, a place, a person, to life. Saying yes is not self-evident, because there is no proof that life makes sense. It's a decision I have to keep on making all over again: love needs to be practised daily.

Mostly, love takes the concrete form of special forces of attraction between people and the world: in political or research projects, for example. It can also express itself in the feeling of wanting to embrace the whole world. Love is the foundation and the beginning of everything: "Love, and then do what you want!" as St. Augustine puts it.

The patriarchal order and the economic system associated with it have reduced the act of loving to monogamous romance. In countless films, dramas and sentimental motifs, a human togetherness is celebrated that is, strictly speaking, a relationship of possession: the strong man conquers the beautiful woman, who worships him and then 'bears him children'. The resulting heteronormative nuclear family is the ideal and norm of the capitalist economy. It embodies a too-narrow understanding of love and makes the largest economic sector of unpaid Care work invisible and thus exploitable.

In the outgoing patriarchy, we free ourselves from the norm of the heterosexual couple and find our way back to the diversity of ways of living and loving. The more different life and family constellations are, the clearer it becomes that Care in the household is also work and not simply a selfless service of love.

patriarchal order:
The patriarchy (literally paternal rule, father's right) is a form of society in which men have a privileged position in the state and the family: the adult 'free' man who 'owns' and controls a household and a family stands as the norm in the centre of it all.

heteronormative:
based on this, the term 'heteronormative' refers to a culture in which the monogamous, heterosexual couple relationship is regarded as the ideal. With the help of laws and traditions, this norm shapes society, labels other ways of life as abnormal and devalues them. The patriarchal and heteronormative social order makes many people, regardless of gender, unhappy and unfree.

outgoing patriarchy:
Today we are living in the outgoing patriarchy, because with the transformation of society and economy, the hierarchy between the sexes is dissolving.

PROTECTING

Impulse question

WHEN AND WHERE DO I FEEL REALLY SAFE?



Sursee

The Upper Gate stood here until 1873. This is where you entered the town, coming from Lucerne. The gate was part of the town's fortifications, consisting of the inner wall, the moat, the outer wall, a drawbridge and the town gate. In other words, a huge effort to protect the town from unauthorised entry or from an enemy attack.

The town trumpeter and night watchman lived in the tower of the Upper Gate. From here he called out every night and every hour for over seven centuries: "Hear ye what I have to say, the bell has struck twelve, take care of fire and light." This was an apt warning, as Sursee was ravaged by various town fires four times over the centuries.

Economy is Care

Because people are vulnerable, they protect themselves and each other: from fires, floods, diseases, accidents, from aggression against themselves and others. Night watchmen, walls, hiding places, laws, asylums, vaccinations and insurance can offer protection.

To protect without destroying is a challenge that humanity has yet to solve. A start could be that we explicitly acknowledge to each other that everyone, not only 'our own' and 'the weak', are vulnerable, needy and mortal, that there is enough for all and that we have learned to speak and listen in order to understand each other and resolve conflicts.

If the economy is organised in such a way that everyone gets what they need to live, this signifies protection for all. The sustainable enjoyment of nature gives wild animals the space they need so they don't escape into humans' living spaces and, as in the COVID-19 pandemic, transmit viruses to humans. Pharmaceutical companies then do not insist on their right to monetise their patents, but provide medicines and vaccines to protect everyone. When all people have a secure existence, they don't have to steal to survive. A Care-centred economy that produces only the weapons needed most will save lives. If we can shape our own working conditions and have enough time for ourselves and our loved ones, we are better protected against workplace bullying or illnesses, such as burnout. If no-one feels threatened for economic reasons, might this possibly result in a decrease in xenophobia, fear of the 'foreign'?

CREATING CULTURE

Impulse questions

HOW IMPORTANT
IS A COOKED MEAL TO ME?
HOW IMPORTANT
IS A FULL-TIME JOB TO ME?
HOW IMPORTANT
IS FOOTBALL TO ME?



Cultura:
Many people enjoy the classic 'cultural scene' with theatres, museums or cinemas. What is often forgotten, however, is that culture in this narrower sense is only accessible to well-off people. At the same time, many musicians, for example, who make really good music and thus enrich the cultural scene, can't earn enough to live on.

Sursee

In 1979, twelve dedicated young people founded the little Somehuus playhouse in Harnischgasse in Sursee, after slaving hard to convert the property they had been given into a theatre. Since then, the Somehuus has offered a platform for guest performances in a very diverse range of cultural nuances and directions.

Besides this, it is a venue where culture itself is also created and presented: the theatre's own productions and the Chinderbühni theatre workshop offer to anyone interested a chance to indulge in their love of acting.

Economy is Care

Many centuries ago, in ancient Greece, influential thinkers constructed a strict divide between culture and nature. This dichotomy of human existence still influences Western societies today. At that time, human civilisation was contrasted with supposedly 'raw' nature and assigned greater value. In civilisation, progress is understood as a detachment from nature. Intellectual work was thus assigned value, physical work devalued. In the Greek *polis*, free men spent their time in endless debates to determine the fate of the city states, while slaves and women back home in the *oikos* performed the more natural and supposedly menial tasks, such as giving birth, cooking and cleaning.

The Latin word *cultura* is derived from the verb *colere*. *Colere* means 'to cultivate' or 'to care for', so it is another word for Care. In a broad understanding of the term, culture is everything that people do to make the world habitable and understandable: from learning their mother tongue in the first years of life, to lunch recipes, all the way to Gothic cathedrals, football and social media.

This broad understanding of culture is a clear rejection of the alleged superiority of intellectual work and enables us to understand human culture as something that can be shaped: human, i.e. cultural, activities can only take place in cooperation with nature and not in compulsive separation from and exploitation of it. Behaviours or attitudes that have been practised over the centuries can be changed and redefined.

SHARING RESOURCES

Impulse questions

DO I KNOW WHO MANAGES
THE TAP WATER I DRINK EVERY DAY?
THE LOCAL COUNCIL?
A PRIVATE COMPANY?



Sursee

Here we are standing at the Inner Sure, which was piped into the town in the Middle Ages as a channel for industrial water and wastewater. The businesses along the Sure were arranged in such a way that the 'clean' trades tended to be located upstream, where the river entered the town, such as the public washhouse, the bathhouse and the municipal mill. Further downstream followed businesses that caused more pollution to the water: the dye works, the slaughterhouse, the tannery and the horse trough. In addition to the waste water from the factories, sewage from some households and toilets also flowed into the river Sure.

Here at the lower end of the Sure, the old City Hospital stood and still stands, founded by four beguines in the 14th century as a home for the sick, the poor, orphans and destitute travellers.

Economy is Care

When I make my first cup of coffee in the morning, I sense how strongly my life is embedded in a greater context: water, electricity, coffee, milk and sugar don't fall from the sky, but reach me through a complex infrastructure.

Public infrastructure is indispensable for good human coexistence. It is the daily practice of sharing goods that are and must be available to all.

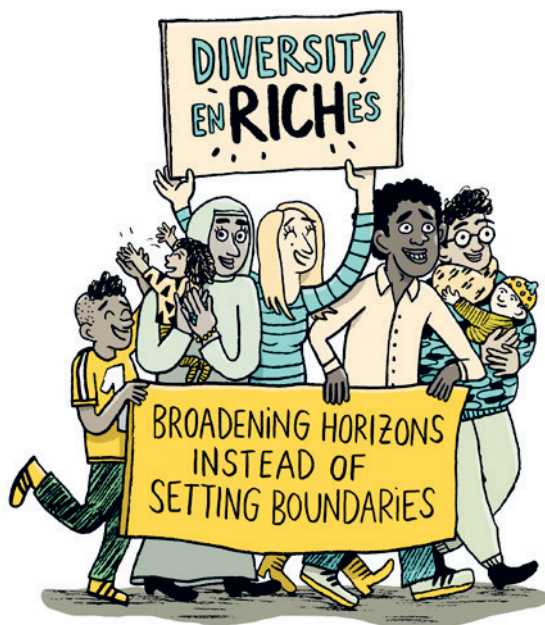
A public water supply, electricity grids, roads and public transport are commercial services that over a hundred years ago led to a huge increase in the quality of life. Nevertheless, since the neoliberal shift that occurred about thirty years ago, these areas have also been increasingly opened up to the profit-oriented market and subjected to the logic of competition. For example, it is a political decision to privatise the public water supply, that lies in cantonal or municipal hands. It is true, too, that privatisation can also be reversed.

Organising the material infrastructure to make it collective (again), such as on a community or municipal level, is an important step on the way to an economy that is committed to the basic and sustainable satisfaction of needs for all. The financial prerequisites for this today are above all taxes. Taxes are tools to finance public goods and steer the local community in a liveable direction. That is why we need tax justice: those who have more can pay more in solidarity.

EMIGRATING AND IMMIGRATING

Impulse question

WHAT WOULD HAVE TO HAPPEN
TO ME TO MAKE ME
LEAVE HOME PERMANENTLY?



Sursee

The Capuchins had been present in Sursee since 1605/06 and enriched local life with their own particular style of popular spirituality. In their simplicity and practicality, the 18th-century monastery buildings are consistent with the poverty ideal of the mendicant orders.

After the Capuchins moved away, the parish acquired the monastery in 1998 and turned it into a house for meeting, education and reflection. Today, the premises are used for a variety of purposes, including by the music school and the *freiraum* of the town of Sursee.

All the many social and cultural activities, such as the Missione Cattolica Italiana, food distribution for the needy, German courses for migrants and much more, make the monastery an open and vibrant place of encounter today.

Economy is Care

Every person is born in a specific place at a specific time. None of us can decide where and when we are born and who gives birth to us. From a certain age, most people are able to move around on the surface of the earth. Many want to travel and get to know the world. Others look for a place where they can be better off than where they are now: somewhere they can find enough food, shelter and purpose.

From time immemorial people have always migrated – as nomads or refugees, out of curiosity or to find work. The more unequal the living conditions on earth, the more mobile people become, out of necessity or desire: trendy global players jet around the world, while people trying to save themselves and their loved ones from war, poverty or natural disasters freeze to death, drown or suffer endless hardships. Here the one influences the other: the prosperity of the Global North is based on the exploitation of the Global South and means that people can no longer earn a good living in their home regions. The climate crisis, which is caused by industrialisation in the Northern countries, also threatens the livelihoods of people in the Global South in particular.

Travelling, emigrating or immigrating is normal. Organised fairly and openly, encounters and exchanges with people from other parts of the world have always enriched our human coexistence. Care means that residents, newcomers, those leaving or just passing through all listen to each other, discover liveable perspectives for each individual person and work together to ensure that human existence remains worth living everywhere in the world.

LEARNING

Impulse questions

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME I
LEARNED SOMETHING REALLY NEW?
DID I FIND THAT EXCITING?

Learning:
"Economics is [...] the mother tongue of public policy, the language of public life, and the mindset that shapes society. [...] What if we started economics not with established theories, but with humanity's long-term goals, and tried to develop an economic mindset that would enable us to achieve those goals?"

Kate Raworth (2017):
*Donut Economics.
Seven Ways to Think Like a
21st-century Economist*
New York: United States,
Random House



Sursee

Herrenrain was Sursee's 'school mile' in the 19th century. Classes were temporarily held in the Prebend Houses, in the Monner House and finally in the lowest house, the 'Haus zur Spinne'. The latter housed the kindergarten, the primary school and, from 1820, the Latin school. This building was used for teaching until well into the 20th century and has been the home of Sursee Regional Library since 1983.

Economy is Care

Learning means orienting oneself in the world: a toddler learns to sit, crawl, walk, talk, distinguish yes and no, me and you and we. He or she learns the basics of morality: respect, empathy, responsibility. Later, people also learn foreign languages, technologies, science and art. In this way, people gradually become capable of making their own contributions to a good social coexistence for everyone. Learning takes time, patience and also humour to deal constructively with failure and mistakes.

However, in schools, universities and other teaching institutions today, the highest value is attached to that which can be turned into profit on the labour market. Thus, education becomes training, learning becomes compulsion, and the focus is no longer on cooperation, but competition. This results in selection and injustice: the economic and social conditions that each person starts life with still determine their educational achievements, their social position and generally, what opportunities will be available to them in life.

The climate youth are leading the way in this respect: learning that is oriented towards the good survival of all people in the Earth's fragile space deserves the title of being future-viable or fit for grandchildren. We need competence-oriented learning environments that enable people to meet the challenges and crises of the 21st century. Plus, we need the supposedly 'useless' learning that is done out of curiosity and joy. The latter helps us to become who we are and contributes to creatively shaping the world.

WORKING

Impulse questions

WHAT DOES MY DAILY ACTIVITY
BUNDLE CONSIST OF?
HOW LONG DO I WORK FOR MONEY,
HOW LONG FOR FREE?
WHAT DO I DO WITH THE REST
OF MY TIME?



Sursee

We're standing in front of the Lower Gate and the adjacent 17th century *Schützenhaus*. The Lower Gate is the town's only remaining gate. Anyone leaving the town in the Basel direction passed through this gate.

Much older than the gate is the *Wilder Mann* restaurant next door, first mentioned in 1495. Guests have been welcomed and entertained here for over 500 years. Running a restaurant means an enormous amount of work for everyone involved. For the guests to be able to eat well here in peace and quiet, others have to shop, prepare, cook, set tables, serve, clear away, wash up, clean, dispose of waste; and that from early in the morning until after one o'clock at night.

If we look around, we see that there is also work going on in the curtain studio next door, as well as across the street in Café Surchat, in the electrical shop and in the Ludothek toy library, in the apartments all around, in fact all over Sursee ...

Economy is Care

Work is the bundle of activities that is needed to ensure that human coexistence endures, succeeds and renews itself in the fragile living space that is our Earth. Some work requires special skills; often work is routine: a plate is made once and washed a thousand times. Being pregnant means about nine months of patient, steady work. Anyone who builds houses must have a good knowledge of structural analysis. Waste collection is an important part of the public infrastructure and yet is often looked down upon as a profession. Raising children requires no end of patience. Working at the supermarket checkout requires you to sit for a long time and have a thick skin. Work is made up of many different contributions, each at the right time.

Today, the activity bundle of work is split into paid wage labour and unpaid care work. Paid work is structured in 'workplaces'. Employers who own the manufacturing plants dictate the division of labour and the wage levels. Wage labour is considered the 'real' work; unpaid and underpaid care work is often made invisible with words like 'mothering' or 'voluntary'. However, above all, many people want work that involves a sense of purpose. They don't want to have to do any old job simply because they need money to live.

In a Care-centred economy, the issue of who gets to decide what work is necessary will have to be revisited. Care means organising the division of labour in such a way that the focus is on caring for each other. Work is well-organised when it is possible for each person to contribute their own distinctive skills and wishes for a good, peaceful coexistence of everyone together.

LIVING

Impulse questions

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME
WHERE I LIVE?
WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE IF
EVERYONE COULD LIVE
THE WAY THEY WANTED?



Living as a business:
"If you simply tear down a neighbourhood and rebuild it, it takes one or two generations before it really comes to life. Moreover, new developments usually lack niches, i.e. places where something new and unexpected can emerge, where things can be tried out. But it wouldn't actually be a problem to plan niches on purpose. There would just be a little less return on investment."

Barbara Buser, Architect,
<https://architekturbasel.ch/barbara-buser-bauen-ist-nicht-wie-im-supermarkt-woman-3-fuer-2-bekommt-monatsinterview-4/>,
last accessed
21 March 2021.

Sursee

In 2003, Sursee was awarded the Wakker Prize for exemplary townscape protection for the Renggli House, the Stadthof by Luigi Snozzi and other new buildings with which the town upgraded the residential area between the old town and the modern neighbourhoods.

The Renggli House stands simultaneously on and over the Sure, inside and outside the old town. The integration of timber construction and watercourses references the old urban commercial zone. The house is energy-efficient, socially responsible and sustainably built, and serves both business and residential purposes.

Economy is Care

Living means having a place I can withdraw to, where I can care for my nearest and dearest and let them care for me, where I can store my belongings, sleep and eat, where I can poop undisturbed, play, start new things. A home can be a movable tent, a house, an apartment, a hotel room, or the portable household of people who don't want a fixed abode. Living can take a variety of shapes: you can live alone, in a house-share or in a traditional family.

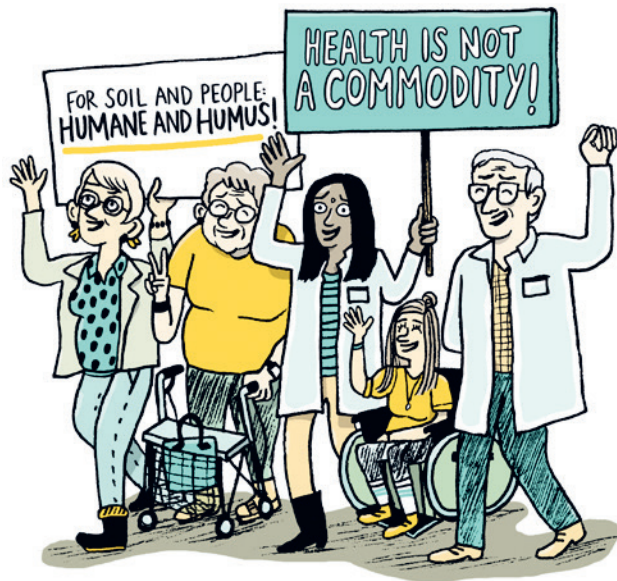
The prevailing social order has seemingly separated living from working: economic activity supposedly only takes place 'outside', at the factory or office. The 'workplace' is considered 'productive' because it brings in the money that is then spent in the separate, 're-productive' residential setting. At the same time, housing has become a business: anyone who can't pay high rents has to move, is uprooted, commutes long distances and cannot afford a good housing location. Many housing owners cash in, often without doing anything in return. Payments in their millions flow from tenants to landlords every day. Wealth is redistributed from the bottom to the top. This leads to the formation of hip, expensive city districts, impersonal 'dormitory towns' without social centres on the one hand, and on the other hand, to industrial or office deserts that cause a lot of unnecessary commuting.

Care means recognising that people live and pursue economic activity both 'outside' and 'inside'. The boundary between 'work' and 'life' becomes blurred everywhere. This life-friendly muddle needs to be reflected in the way we build houses, villages and cities.

NURSING AND GETTING WELL

Impulse question

WHAT WOULD MOTIVATE ME TO BECOME A NURSE?



Increasing pressure, too few carers and an ageing population: Switzerland is slipping ever further into a nursing crisis. According to Jobradar, 11 000 nursing positions were unfilled last year. By 2030, around 65 000 additional nurses will be needed, including 30 000 qualified nurses. At the moment, far too few people are being trained in nursing professions. About half leave the profession sooner or later because they feel emotionally exhausted, are constantly under time pressure and can no longer bear the responsibility.

SRF Echo of Time,
[www.srf.ch/audio/echo-der-zeit/herrscht-in-der-schweiz-pflegenotstand?](http://www.srf.ch/audio/echo-der-zeit/herrscht-in-der-schweiz-pflegenotstand?partId=11840115)
partId=11840115,
last accessed
15 September 2020.

Sursee

Built in 1818/19, the new Municipal Hospital – called the Bürgerheim since 1935 – replaced the old hospital on the Sure and the Kotten infirmary. The building served not only as a hospital, but also as a home for the poor, orphans and the elderly. The house, created in the classicist style, bears the inscription in the triangular gable: *Laborantibus et pauperibus* – for the suffering and the poor.

The main motive for building the new hospital was the widespread poverty and the threat of famine in 1816/17, after a volcanic eruption in Indonesia had severely disrupted the global climate. The able-bodied residents of the new hospital were set to work on the affiliated farm to pay for their own living costs.

Economy is Care

All human beings are vulnerable, from the first to the last day of their lives. They become ill, they suffer accidents, they age. Even those who wish they were James Bond or Wonder Woman and might even be the paragon of energy can end up in a hospital bed from one minute to the next.

Patriarchy has developed a narrow idea of nursing. It says that to nurse means to restore the capable human being so that they can spend all their energy productively 'out there' in hostile life, as a manager, worker or farmer. According to this, nursing takes place in supposedly 'female' indoor spaces: in families, hospitals, in homes for the elderly or for people with impairments. These indoor spaces should function as cheaply as possible, and in the neoliberal regime even yield a profit. Care in the sense of sustainable, relaxed and time-intensive nursing is scarcely possible under such conditions, because nursing is work. It requires resources, skills and public recognition. The people who perform this work deserve to be paid adequate wages and given enough time to provide expert care.

If the whole economy sees itself as Care again, hospitals and homes will no longer have to make a profit, but will create set new standards for what nursing work can look like if it is allowed to take as much time and space as necessary.

EXCHANGING AND TRADING

Impulse question

HOW WOULD WE REGULATE
OUR LIFE TOGETHER
IF MONEY WAS SUDDENLY
ABOLISHED?



Sursee

With its 48 stores, Surseepark is the biggest shopping centre around Lake Sempach. Products from the region and from all over the world are sold here. Not all of them were produced sustainably or come from fair trade.

Shopping centres like Surseepark have advantages and disadvantages for the town and the region: its supporters say that practically everything for sale can be found under one roof and that the spacious parking garages allow access from outside without burdening the streets of the town. Opponents argue that many long-established shops are put out of business by such shopping centres, that the town centre is turning into a desert or becoming a restaurant zone.

Economy is Care

In the capitalist economic order, money is the ultimate benchmark. Money was never just a simplified form of exchanging things. It has always been charged with quasi-mythical or sacred significance. Today, however, it has virtually become an end in itself. The harm this causes is devastating. So-called economic growth is really only about making as much profit as possible. The external costs incurred for environmental wear-and-tear and caring and maintenance work are hardly factored in. However, these costs affect us all! Since someone has to pay for them, and it is often left to future generations to foot the bill.

Money-mediated exchange and trade are only a small part of the economy as a whole. Both are practical, because a general means of exchange can help to distribute resources efficiently and based on needs between all people, even if they live far away from each other. Money can make it possible to live in line with one's personal preferences. For example, women, who have only recently freed themselves from their housewife status, have gained a greater quality of life through earning their own money. The flip side, however, is new dependencies: no longer on the husband, but on paid jobs and employers.

Fortunately, there are many other ways of organising the distribution of resources besides money: for example, through shared property or collective resources known as 'commons', which ensure that everyone has enough to live on without the flow of money. Strengthening such options for exchange, i.e. intelligently 'remunerating' parts of life, is part of what the Care-centred economy is about.

Commons:

The term originated in the High Middle Ages and referred to a property owned by a village community. Today, it is used under as a general term for a form of communal property that offers a complement to the concept of private property. Commons are therefore resources or goods that can be shared equally by many people.

(NOT) A WALK ELSEWHERE

HOW DO I GO ABOUT IT?

1. Seek like-minded people and connect up with them

If you get together with friends, church members or local organisations, it's not hard to put on your own (Not) a Walk! Is there a local group that organises tours of your town or city? They are usually a great source of know-how about places and walking times!

2. Find places

If I'm planning in a city, I ask: Where could the individual stations be? Where are there progressive places, for example funeral homes, that offer a holistic service? Is the hospital close to the town centre and easily accessible? Is there a birthing centre that can be included on the route? Can I think of other themes and stations for my town?

If I want to set up (Not) a Walk at my school or business: Which places in the building illustrate the themes of the stations? Is there a kitchenette or cafeteria? A break room? A garden to relax in? Can I include the neighbourhood surrounding my company/school?

3. Plan the tour

How big is the place where I want to set up (Not) a Walk? How long do I walk from A to B and how long do I spend at individual stations? How long can people concentrate at one go? Do I want to make it a walking or cycling tour?

4. Writing texts

For a start, I can use half of this brochure. The general text passages are reusable for any setting, but I have to adapt the texts about the town – what information is important for me to mention?

5. Find the right form

How would I like to distribute the texts further? Would I also like to produce a brochure like the one in my hand? Where can I get the money to pay for it? From the local council? Or are the texts on the website enough for me?

6. Get people's attention

Who do I tell about the fact that there will soon be (Not) a Walk in my town? Do we do joint tours with others? Do I hand the texts to individuals? Do I invite the local press? Do I walk the walk with politicians from my community? Do I try to reach school classes?

GOODBYE!

HOW ARE YOU FEELING NOW? WHAT WILL YOU DO NEXT?

We have reached the end of our walk. Sometimes it felt like a 'Sunday stroll', sometimes it was unsettling or even frightening.

One thing is certain: life goes on. Every day is a new day on which you can discover more aspects of Care-based economics. You too can take it further! Perhaps you will discover how you can work in your own unique way for a world that is home to everyone!

Could you be the right person to initiate the creation of a new economics textbook? So that children in the future will learn as early as first grade that economics is Care?

Or might you play a part in ensuring that in future the media will not only report on the latest stock market prices, but also on Care? Furthermore, about the question of how we, the soon-to-be eight billion citizens of Planet Earth, can live together harmoniously in the future? Or maybe you want to restage the 'Economy is Care' walk right now where you live? You will find everything you need on our website: reading tips, links, explanatory films, networking opportunities and more.

Did any additions to the stations occur to you on the trail that you would say are urgently needed? That's quite possible. If you have any questions or need more information, please write to us: info@frauensynode.ch

We wish you and all of us blessings
on the way to a good life for all!

The Team of the Women's Synod
and Sursee Guided Tours





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