

Dynamical Systems Innovation Lab, July 8-12, 2013



Ryszard Praszkiel

Dr. Ryszard Praszkiel is a researcher at the Center for Complex System and New Technologies, University of Warsaw (www.complexsystems.edu.pl). He is also a consultant to Ashoka: Innovators for the Public, (www.ashoka.org)

Areas of research: (1) The properties of social networks that support profound, peaceful social transitions; the cases of the Polish underground Solidarity and the American Civil Rights Movement. (2) Researching the peace process in the Basque Country: what was the civil society's contribution to the abandonment of violence by ETA? (3) The social change dynamics facilitated by social entrepreneurs through the lenses of complexity theory: how creative bottom-up ideas ignite autocatalytic processes which empower people and societies, leading to the emergence of an immense impact on higher levels.

Areas of interest: (1) Social SYNC: how brains, individuals, groups and societies synchronize. (2) Social Entrepreneurship. His recent publications: Praszkiel, R., Nowak, A. (2012). Social Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice. New York: Cambridge University Press

Dr. Ryszard Praszkiel, an emeritus and consultant of Ashoka, Innovators for the Public (www.ashoka.org), for which he worked over 16 years; joined Ashoka in 1994 as a Country Director to launch Ashoka Poland; since 2000 he has been an international staff training director, and a second opinion reviewer chairing, in many countries, the selection process to Ashoka Fellowship (Canada 7 times, Uganda 3 times, Nepal 3 times, Pakistan 5 times, USA 2 times, Bangladesh, India 3 times, Nigeria twice, Burkina Faso, Senegal 2 times and Indonesia, also doing 2nd opinion reviews in Hungary and Germany).

Prior to working for Ashoka, Dr. Praszkiel was a practicing family psychotherapist, Founding Director of the Community Mental Health Center for Children, and the Polish national supervisor for psychotherapy, authoring several books and articles in that field.

During the 1980s, Ryszard participated in the Polish non-violent, Gandhi-like underground Solidarity Movement. Under a false name, he published an illegal manual for solidarity activists "How to survive police interrogation". He also served as a consultant for Solidarity candidates for the first free elections in 1989 and after the transformation co-founded several grassroots NGO's; he is still on the board of some of them.

Dr. Praszkiel is also a psychotherapist (licensed by both Polish Associations: Psychological and Psychiatric). In the 1980s was the co-founding director of a community mental health center for children, youth and families.