



NDG Project

Transforming our community through love

Q: What is your background?

My background is varied. Here is a webpage with my CV: <http://rossg3.yolasite.com/>

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I was first and foremost an athlete, competing in hockey, baseball and football as well as skiing, racquetball and golf. With much practice I became quite adept at racquetball and golf and by the time I was 16 was the Eastern North American junior racquetball champion and a low handicap golfer. In 1984 I won the world championships in racquetball. I got my BSc. Biology at Concordia in 1984, then went to Ontario Veterinary College where I graduated with my DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) in 1989. I came back to Montreal at that point and rather than going into veterinary medicine, I followed my heart and became involved as a squash and racquetball professional and a golf professional. For the next ten years I worked at some of Montreal's finest golf and racquet sport facilities, including Elm Ridge, Pinegrove and Hillsdale in golf and Nautilus Plus and Sporting Club de Sanctuaire in racquet sports. In the late 90's I was involved in two really big projects - NuVo - an initiative to really grow people's personal health/fitness and to get them involved in racquet sports worldwide and G3 Golf - aimed at growing the game of golf across the world. As President and CEO of NuVo, I took our group from inception to NASDAQ in a short 11 months. In my business life since graduation in 1989 I have also owned 2 bar/restaurants (in large tennis/racquet clubs) and worked as a Special Projects Manager (working with the President and VP of the firm) for a large veterinary laboratory service. I got involved with the veterinary company for my Mum - so that she could finally say her son used the degree he spent five years of his life pursuing!

What prompted you to start this movement? Three main reasons:

- I. John Lennon's song Imagine. I feel like this is the blueprint for our society and that if we can realize the ideas mentioned in this song our world will be a real 'heaven on earth.'
- II. One of my favorite quotes of all time is Mahatma Gandhi's; 'Be the change you wish to see in the world.' In my 58 years on this planet I have learned one thing - the one real thing we can change is ourselves. For the last 15

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odd years I have made a conscious decision to **be** love - and have seen the amazing manifestations in my life as well as in all the lives I have touched. To my very core I believe that if every person could commit to being love in every instance, all of the world's problems would vanish. So, that is my quest. *To change the world (through love) one person and one community at a time.*

III. My desire to make a difference in this world. The primary objective of NDG Project is to make a profound, positive and long term difference in the life of every person the program touches and to touch every person in every community the program enters.

Q: What has been the response so far?

The initiative is very new. While the idea had been brewing for several years, I only really pushed forth with the website on Jan 1, 2019. Everyone who hears about it thinks it is great! I just got an email from a friend who is the most intelligent person I know. He was floored by the website, saying it is beautiful and powerful. I am just printing up cards to be given out to people with Love Your Neighbors on one side and a beautiful smile poem (and a girl with a beautiful smile) on the other. You can see the smile poem here: <http://ndgproject.com/join-us.php>

Have you met anyone through this project that really sticks in your mind? What was that encounter/moment like?

I have met several/many. Francine Jarry is an amazing musician. A friend of mine who is not a professional musician wrote a poem/song about NuVo - inspired by my goal to change the world, creating a NuVo world one person at a time. He called the song 'The Nu Dream.' Francine heard it and wanted to record it. The song has become the Theme Song for NDG Project. From that time, Francine and I have become very close, getting together regularly to chat about life and how we can do our part to make this world a better place. Here is that song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aj9fkGLK4aI>

I have known John Jordan for several years now as he lives on Sherbrooke, a street I walk along twice daily. He only recently became my friend on Facebook, and, through this I have come to know and appreciate his great talent and big heart. He is the creator of a beautiful space known as The Alley Cat Gallery just beside Esposito on Sherbrooke at Wilson. Very recently John penned a song named NDG - Neighbors Doing Good - inspired by NDG Project and my efforts. <http://osmosisunlimited.bandcamp.com/track/neighbours-doing-good-ndg>

I have seen Natasha Luttrell on the streets for the last two or three years and we have exchanged smiles, hellos and brief conversations for the entire time. It is only lately that I have come to know more about her. She floored me when she told me that she was completely deaf and that all the time she was reading my

lips! Through talking about NDG Project and my desire to make a difference, our relationship has got deeper and she has told me more about herself. She has been in the news recently - in the summer she advocated for having a sign language interpreter for a Walk Off The Earth concert at the Montreal Jazz Festival and more recently she taught Justin Trudeau sign language: <https://twitter.com/JustinTrudeau/status/1091515905715126272> She is yet another person I have met who was born outside of Montreal and yet has made NDG home.

One of the most astounding people I have met recently is Miles Krol. He owns a personal training studio on Monkland named MilesFit. We had spoken several times over the last five years and finally got together in the fall of 2019. While his business is personal training, his interest is in helping every person in the community to live their best lives. Do you see the parallel?! Miles and I will definitely be working together towards achieving this objective!

For me every day is incredible! I never cease to be amazed and awed by the new and interesting people I meet on my walks - twice a day around the NDG neighborhood. If it is not someone new, I find out something new and special about someone I already know. NDG has some of the most gifted, talented and brightest people in the world!

Q: Your site lists a programs section - do you plan to offer various community building programs? What would some of these look like?

NDG Project is about community building, both locally and globally. Love is at the heart of all this positive growth.

- I. **The Art of Neighboring** - this is a program which was started by a group of pastors in Denver, CO. Their focus was on limiting the scope to include people's immediate neighbors. The program I am using is not religious in any way and is based upon loving our neighbors **and** understanding that our neighbors are every person we come across in our days. It implores people to be present and to endeavour to leave every person who crosses our path better for the experience. That is love in action!

- II. **The NuVo Network** - This is about developing a network of people right down to every person across our community - in order to facilitate the flow of information, products and services - and to ensure that no one is left out. I was speaking with someone today and he was saying that person-to-person was the best way for something to spread. I retorted that it can also be the worst! If someone is happy with something they may tell a friend or two, but, if they are unhappy they will tell everyone!

III. **Project Heaven on Earth** - I will address this below.

Q: Have you held any meetings or other events?

My vision for this is that it grows as a ground-swell - sort of like in Pay It Forward. I am not really good at social media, but am already seeing its power. I started a Twitter page for NDG Project on January 17th and by the 20th already had 2 people in the Montreal media business following my page - they live in NDG. Personally I am not comfortable in big groups - I like smaller, intimate get togethers. With that said, I am not closed to anything. I will do what it takes to help to get the word out and to get people in the community growing in the right direction.

Q: How many people are part of the movement approximately? How do people want to get involved and what is their initial reaction?

No more than 1000 at this point, but, the numbers are growing daily. The main way they get involved is by sharing the website - so that others may educate themselves and get on board. Again, the vast majority who I hear from think this is a wonderful idea. I have only had one negative comment. A lady read one of my cards and said; 'Love your neighbors? Who is going to feed them?' My answer to her was; 'Someone who **loves** them!'

Q: What is Project Heaven on Earth? How does that fit into the larger NDG Project?

Project Heaven on Earth is an initiative started by a friend and associate, Martin Rutte - one of many authors of the series 'Chicken Soup for the Soul.' It is about helping people to reconnect with their dreams and to set out on a path towards realization. My belief is that if I am truly going to transform NDG into the greatest community in the world, it is not sufficient to get every community member above the poverty line - I have to be helping them towards living the life of their dreams. This is something personal and different for every person. I have led a very rich life - I have always been someone who dreams BIG - and in most cases I have accomplished and/or overshot my dreams. With this element of the project, my goal is to help every person to allow themselves to dream, to plot out a course towards their dreams and then to set off accomplishing them. One of my favorite shows on TV in recent years was The Biggest Loser - where morbidly obese people lost half and more of their body weight in a year or less. The transformation you saw in these people was amazing! They got their lives back. It wasn't just about losing the weight - it was about finding themselves - and opening up an entire host of new doors to walk through.

Q: Do you know of any neighborhoods offering similar programs?

To my knowledge this is the first of its kind. It will not be the last as once I/we

have 'canned' the process for transformation of a community we will help other like-minded people (those who are **being** love) across Montreal, across Quebec, across Canada and across the world to do likewise, thereby changing the world!

'The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do' - Steve Jobs

Any additional comments?

There is just one point I want to clear up. As related to developing roots which extend all the way down to every community member, I do foresee many events originating from NDG Projects efforts. These include Block Parties like this one by Fiona Keats: [https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEaYexCwcxE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEaYexCwcxE) as well as a host of other events similar to NDG Arts Walk or Porchfest or Shakespeare in the Parl. As culture-rich as we already are, we will be much moreso. The community will be much more organized on a block-to-block basis and as such, this will facilitate the development of new and regular events.

In the two really big projects I developed (NuVo and G3 Golf), a very important component to my strategy was what I called 'controlled network marketing.' It was highlighting a person in a specifically defined market and then giving them all the tools to 'sell' every aspect of our business - transforming them into professionals in the specific area. With NDG Project, the defined market is a block and the 'product' is love (for our neighbors). So, my process in the next days, weeks and months is to identify people who are inspired by my message (all across the neighborhood) and to get them passing on this love to their local community. As to the form I envision, I think that may change with time. I'd love to be able to get Emploi Quebec and/or Ville de Montreal to buy into my project and to open up positions for community workers in gardening, cleanup, assistance for seniors and the disabled etc... As the project grows, so will my leverage.

Recently the Canadian Labour Minister along with Justin Trudeau shared that there will be a time in the (not too distant) future where every Canadian will receive what they called a Basic Minimum Income. One of the elements of NDG Project is to somehow find a way to get every person in NDG (as a start) above the poverty line. I really like the U.S. Democratic candidate Andrew Yang's approach, where every citizen over the age of 18 will receive \$900/mth. What I am suggesting to all levels of government is that we try this program on NDG for starters. As I mentioned in my answers on the doc I sent you, to my knowledge there is no other program like this currently in the world. As such I am taking a three-pronged approach to marketing this.

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1. From the ground up - I will take this to every person, business and organization in NDG in order to get their support and involvement.
2. From the top down - I will take this to the biggest movers and shakers (philanthropists, those with a great capacity to influence people...) in the world in order to 'get on their radar' and to have them know about and hopefully contribute to the program - both in NDG and in the bigger context.
3. In the middle - I will also take this to Montreal's wealthy, the Montreal and Canadian business community as well as all levels of government.

And finally, while my life has been full and I think I have accomplished my fair share, I see this as my life's mission. Like everything else I have done was simply preparation for this. Every day I feel like I am taking one more step in changing NDG, in changing the world. It is exhilarating and very gratifying! The other day my sister said something which I have believed all my life - if you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. That sums me up to a tee!