



The Human\_Powered School



### **Binikou ~ The Human Powered School**

where humans of all ages are supported in learning about, creating, and teaching simple, practical ways to power our bodies and use our bodies for power

**The Challenge** - How do we offer kids, and adults too, all the resources they need to healthfully evolve and grow into the amazing people they want to be?

Possibly the best answer was first offered over half a century ago, when psychologist Abraham Maslow researched the basic needs for humans to become healthy, successful, and even transcendent beings who feel they are a part of a much larger whole and are naturally motivated to contribute great things to the world. Yet a large percentage of humans on the planet still aren't able to regularly get the two absolute bottom line needs that Maslow called the Physiological and Safety needs so that they can be healthy at their very core, and be able to take good care of their world.

And now, with modern research, and what I like to call Maslow 2.0, we can more easily answer this question in even more detail, as we understand those two first levels of needs as:

Physiological Needs -

Access to healthy physical inputs of

1. Whole Food
2. Clean Water
3. Fresh Air
4. Warmth
5. Light

Safety Needs -

The freedom to express physical outputs of

1. Solids (poop, salt, etc.)
2. Liquids (pee, sweat, etc.)
3. Gases (CO<sub>2</sub>, etc.)
4. Energy (movement, sounds, static charge, etc.)

Given this very detailed answer to what resources people need to be healthy, it makes sense to use it as the basic guide for a global educational curriculum. So, the kinds of changes that Binikou - The Human Powered School is looking for are to have more people fully understand what the basic human needs for health are, and to use the educational process itself as a way to dramatically expand the diversity of practical solutions to helping more people get their basic needs met, by intelligently channeling the abundant energy and

creativity of the young people of the world - who generally have more free time, and are nearly always looking for ways to use their personal resources for the benefit of their families, communities, cultures, and even the planet as a whole.

**The Idea** - The primary strategy of Binikou ~ The Human Powered School is to host a simple wiki-based web site that functions something like a virtual global community school, with the focus on learning about and teaching the basic input and output needs for human living. The school will be a welcoming space, for young people and old, to be both teachers and students in the art of raising the quality of life for every individual on the planet (and off!). The user-generated lessons will be "how to" style descriptions of very simple, practical, affordable, and open source ways to get more quality things into the human body, and to more effectively use the things that human bodies produce. The website structure will be somewhat similar to Wikipedia and Instructables.com, with entries categorized by type of resource - the nine different input or output elements of the basic needs listed above. There will also be a social networking component, with the option for profile pages, and free discussion in a forum. The school will naturally be open to all ages to both learn and teach, however, the site itself will primarily be aimed at helping kids and teenagers discover their own awesome power to research, create, and share the simplest and most successful solutions to the world's most common problems.

More poetically, Binikou ~ the Human Powered School, intends to offer young people their own "opportunities to lead and succeed" that 12 year old writer and TED talk presenter, Adora Svitak, calls on us adults to help create:

*The goal is not to turn kids into your kind of adult, but rather better adults than you have been. Which may be a little challenging considering you guy's credentials... But the way progress happens is because new generations and new eras grow and become better than the previous ones. It's the reason we're not in the dark ages anymore.*

*No matter your position or place in life, it is imperative that you create opportunities for children, so that we can grow up to blow you away.*

The name of the school, "Binikou", is itself a playful creation of Japanese words which suggest the ideas: Beautiful Human-Child School. (Local teams are free to create their own names if they choose, or they can use the name Binikou if they wish.)

And, of course, the reason this project will succeed is because it's filling a social need that no other school has ever filled on such a large, directed scale. And that need is to offer kids and teens the opportunity to become skilled at taking excellent care of their world, including themselves, and for them to be able to sooner or later really... blow us older folks away.

**The Place** - The world! Initially, on the web and in the heart of any person who is curious about how to both take better care of their body, and use their body to solve problems. The long term goal is for the virtual school to support teams of students~teachers in face-to-face Human Powered School clubs in local communities, similar to the way programs such as the scouts, the Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots clubs, and afterschool programs of all kinds of work. In some areas, there could possibly even be dedicated Human Powered School Clubhouses built by local teams of powered humans, and mainstream schools could adopt Binikou as a part of the regular school curriculum.

To begin with, Somerville, Massachusetts, will be a starting point for the first local team,

which can meet at a local open-ended community science school called The Sprouts, and eventually will build a portable geodesic dome or similar structure for hosting workshops all over the region.

**The Money** and other Useful Resources - Ultimately, Binikou will be quite literally human powered, so the vast majority of the contributions to the success of the school will come directly from humans all over the world. However, an initial jump-start gift of \$3600 will indeed be useful in helping secure long-term website hosting, website design, and administration. Any additional monetary funding will be used to support local teams of young people with the communication tools they need to document their solutions (inexpensive digital cameras, notebooks, and art supplies, for example), pay for temporary or permanent workshop space, and compensate for some of the costs of local transportation for team leaders, if they need any of these things.

Even more useful will be organizations and individuals who have environmentally safe, extra byproducts from their work to donate to local young people, so that the kids and teens can be more effective in learning how to use surplus resources for creative problem solving. Donations of clubhouse space and volunteer team leaders from local organizations, schools, and businesses are also something that will be extremely useful to the local Binikou teams.

The simplest resource that Binikou could use as start-up support is promotion. The school will need individuals and groups to spread the word about the project, so that the world knows where to go when they want to learn about, create, and teach effective ways to power their bodies and use their bodies for power.

And finally, to put it in the most human terms, what Binikou - the Human Powered School most needs to succeed is your own human passion, creativity, and love!

**Won't you join us in powering our beautiful human-child school?**