

THE TRANSITION – COMMUNITY

transition |tran'zi sh ən; -'si sh ən|

noun

the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another

The Transition: Community

As we have discussed, it is past time for us to consider the inevitable collapse of the current, globalized system that came out of the industrial revolution. Based on the abundance of cheap ancient, stored solar energy in the form of fossil fuels, our entire infrastructure has been built in such a manner and mode that assumes an infinite availability of materials and energy. Our planet cannot sustain the linear economic growth, including uninterrupted technological advancement of one species to the detriment of all others. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on how you choose to perceive it, we live on a unique planet. This planet has produced the conditions for life, as we know it, to flourish, which took billions of years of evolution to create. Now, within just a few generations, we have pushed the planet to more than 30% beyond its carrying capacity. Despite this fact, we continue to propagate a lifestyle that would require 4-5 planets to support, if everyone lived the “American Dream”. The dream of selfish, rugged individualism is finally disintegrating and a new ethos of cooperative integration is emerging.

Because infrastructure is the physical manifestation of relationships, it's time that we evaluate the nature and fundamental assumptions of how we interact. We have chosen a system that focuses on the economy to the exclusion of everything else; not realizing that the economy is the management of resources and thus, a whole-owned subsidiary of the environment. Our form of Capitalism is an extractive economy that benefits the few at the expense of the many. We often referred to the tension between business and the environment, but this is a false choice. They are not even on the same level of perspective. The environment, or ecology, is in no way dependent on the economy for its value, but the economy has no existential validity without ecology.

We have become so differentiated in our modern society where less than 2% of our population works to provide food for the other 98%. So, of course, our relationship with the land has lost the sanctity that informed culture and spirituality every generation prior to those living today. That's right, it's only been within the lives of those still on the planet that we have so drastically transformed our food system and the health of the environment. Our sacred relationship with the land has become a chemically driven, energy intensive, military-industrial by-product experiment. Our fascination with technological development, only possible through this extreme specialization, has driven artificial increases in agricultural yields and brought us to the brink of global collapse.

So, what does this mean for community? It's really simple. What is our relationship to the environment? What is our relationship to our basic needs? And how do we interact in the process of producing and distributing these needs? Unfortunately, modern society disproportionately focuses on the dynamics of competition, where people struggle against one another for access to natural resources. This system creates winners and losers, beliefs of entitlement, and justifications for constant warfare among Nation-States. Will we discover a sense of peace and our profound place within the universe? Will we realize a

global awakening in time to save the very ability of this planet to provide for life, as we know it? Or, will we consciously choose the path of global destruction? The self-organizing force of the universe has evolved to the point of complexity where we are able to behold consciousness and witness our choices and their impacts. “This is no longer or simply about resources, infractions, or injustice. This is fundamentally a civil rights movement, a human rights movement; this is a democracy movement. This is the coming world.” - Paul Hawken, Blessed Unrest, YouTube, April 20, 2007. It is up to us collectively and each one of us individually to decide what kind of world we create.

Evolution takes place in and through our creativity. Following our bliss, discovering our passions, and the journey of becoming our purpose, is our direct participation in evolution at whatever level of consciousness that we participate in this process. Structures cannot stand in the way of conscious planetary evolution or this crisis of either global destruction or awakening. While a democratic, civil society transforms the Middle East, economic emergency power over local governments are legislated by State Governors (MI) in the U.S. A balance will be achieved over space and time. It is up to us what that process looks like.

The focus needs to be on reducing risk through creating RISC: resilient integrated sustainable communities. Rather than focusing exclusively on high-tech sustainability, low-intensity “low-tech” solutions have positive synergistic effects. The allure of crony & corporate capitalism is being replaced by regional awareness of local issues and opportunities for true community. We are waking up to the “threat multipliers”, such as Climate Change, identified by the Pentagon. And, the continued financial collapse that has rippled around the world has spurred the collective response of Occupy Everywhere to the economic injustices increasing throughout the Western World.

“As I studied cosmos genesis, we could see reoccurring patterns every time a major crisis arrived in evolution, the species that was undergoing it either went extinct or learned to cooperate. Learned to participate with nature, with one another and I could see there is a pattern. Crisis precedes transformation. And when the transformation occurred, it was a jump in consciousness and freedom through more complex order. The only difference in our crisis from all the crisis of the past is that we are aware of it. And we are the first species on planet earth that could render itself extinct by its own actions and know it was doing it. And I saw that was the design for the awakening of our species to the next stage of its evolution.” - Barbara Marx Hubbard, Birth 2012 Activation Call 1, March 22, 2011

There exists today the movement that Paul Hawken refers to in his quote above and his book, Blessed Unrest, but more specifically there are a plethora of organizations bringing fulfilling, just, sustainable, and thriving communities to the forefront. Some examples include: the regional sustainability collaboratives spreading across the country. Plus, there are papers like the American Communities Movement, Guide to Conscious Living, Healthy Communities Initiative, and the Regional Civic Movement in CA, all which can be found online. We will evolve through whatever challenges face us by reestablishing networks of cooperative and collaborative community infrastructure centered around the provision and distribution of basic needs.