

Transition Centre Steering Groups

Ahimsa, February 27, 2010

Getting Acquainted

Lunch

Introduction

What this is all about

It all starts off when a small collection of motivated individuals within a community come together with a shared concern: *how can our community respond to the challenges, and opportunities, of Peak Oil and Climate Change?*

***Transition Initiatives Primer: Becoming a Transition Town, City, District, Village, Community or even Island* by Ben Brangwyn and Rob Hopkins**

Underpinning the Transition Model is recognition of the following:

- Climate Change and Peak Oil require urgent action
- Life with less energy is inevitable and it is better to plan for it than be taken by surprise
- Industrial society has lost the resilience to be able to cope with energy shocks
- We have to act together and we have to act now
- Regarding the world economy and the consumptive patterns within it, infinite growth within a finite system (such as planet earth) simply isn't possible.
- If we plan and act early enough, and use our creativity and cooperation to unleash the genius within our local communities, then we can build a future that could be
- Far more fulfilling and enriching, more connected and more gentle on the earth than the lifestyles we have today.

Working Documents

Rob Hopkins, *The Transition handbook*

Transition Initiatives Primer

Transition Initiative Response form

Twelve Steps: Getting Started

1. Set up a steering group and design its demise from the outset with the aim of getting through stages 2 – 5, and agree that once a minimum of four sub-groups are formed, the Steering Group disbands and reforms with a person from each of those groups. Ultimately your Steering Group should become made up of 1 representative from each sub-group.

2. Awareness raising

- Identify your key allies, build crucial networks and prepare the community in general for the launch of your Transition initiative.
- Screenings of key movies (Inconvenient Truth, End of Suburbia, Crude Awakening, Power of Community, etc.).
- Talks by experts in their field of climate change, peak oil and community solutions. Articles in local papers, interviews on local radio, presentations to existing groups, including schools to get people aware of the issues and ready to start thinking of solutions.

3. Lay the foundations

- Networking with existing groups and activists,
- Make it clear to them that the Transition Town initiative is designed to incorporate their previous efforts and future inputs by looking at the future in a new way.
- Give them a concise and accessible overview of peak oil, what it means, how it relates to climate change, how it might affect the community in question, and the key challenges it presents.
- Set out your thinking about how a Transition Town process might be able to act as a catalyst for getting the community to explore solutions and to begin thinking about grassroots mitigation strategies.

4. Organize a Great Unleashing

- This stage creates a memorable milestone to mark the project's "coming of age", moves it right into the community at large, builds a momentum to propel your initiative forward for the next period of its work and celebrates your community's desire to take action.
- In terms of timing, we estimate that 6 months to a year after your first "awareness raising" movie screening is about right.
- Peak Oil and Climate Change but in a spirit of "we can do something about this" rather than doom and gloom.
- It could include music, food, music, dancing, whatever you feel best reflects your community's intention to embark on this collective adventure.

5. Form sub groups

- Tapping into the collective genius of the community by setting up a number of smaller groups to focus on specific aspects of the process. Each of these groups will develop their own ways of working and their own activities, but will all fall under the umbrella of the project as a whole. Examples of these are: food, waste, energy, education, youth, economics, transport, water, local government.
- Each of these sub groups is looking at their area and trying to determine the best ways of building community resilience and reducing the carbon footprint. Their solutions will form the backbone of the Energy Descent Action Plan.

Scale

- **Local Transition Initiative.** Typically with communities of up to 20,000 people.
- **Local Transition Hub** based within a large congruent / contiguous area with its own identity (e.g. a city). This group's role is to fire up Transition Initiatives in the surrounding area and maintain a role of inspiring, encouraging, registering, supporting, networking and possibly training those Initiatives
- **Temporary Initiating Hub** made up of a collection of individuals / groups from separate locales in the same region who are accustomed to working with each other in some kind of capacity. This group helps each other to fire up Local Transition Initiatives in the region and then dissolves, with the original members moving into their own Local Transition Initiatives once they've achieved some critical mass to form a local steering group.

Other Business

Training <http://www.meetup.com/transitionpgh/calendar/12644157/>

Tina Clarke Visit

Plan of Action

Becoming a Transition Initiative

An understanding of peak oil and climate change as primary drivers and the intention of writing them into your constitution or governing documents
A group of 4-5 people willing to step into leadership roles
At least two people from the core team willing to attend a two day Transition Training course
A potentially strong connection to the local/district council
An understanding of peak oil, climate change and the 12 steps of Transition across the entire core team
A commitment to ask for help from the Transition Network and other Transitioning communities if/when needed
A commitment to keep the wiki updated (collaborative workspace on the web that we'll make available to you <i>or your own webspace</i>)
A commitment to write up something on the Transition Towns blog <i>periodically</i> (the world will be watching...)
A commitment to network with other TTs
A commitment, once you're into the Transition, for one of the group to give a presentation to at least two other communities (in the vicinity) that is considering embarking on this journey
A commitment to work cooperatively with neighboring Transition Initiatives
Minimal conflicts of interests in the core team
A commitment to work with the national coordinating group for Transition in your country
A commitment to strive for inclusivity across your entire initiative.
A recognition that although your entire county or district may need to go through transition, the first place for you to start is in your local community. It may be that eventually the number of transitioning communities in your area warrant some central group to help provide local support, but this will emerge over time, rather than be imposed. In exceptional situations where a "Local Coordinating Hub" or "Temporary Initiating Hub" needs to be set up, that hub will have certain responsibilities. See the Primer for current details.
We recommend that one person (preferably more) on the core team should have attended a permaculture design course... it really does seem to make a difference