

A MODEL OF TRANSITION FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING: SEBASTOPOL

by

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Date

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Abstract

Climate change, resource depletion, and economic instability are conceivably the most pressing issues facing the world at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. These challenges and their respective magnitudes are compounding faster than the level of the activity being implemented toward their solutions. While climate change is now well documented and becoming more visible in the media, there is less public awareness around the issue of declining resources, especially fossil fuels. The imminent convergence of the decline of resources coupled with economic instability may well delay the extent of adaptations necessary to mitigate the threats posed by climate change.

Government thinking on mitigation includes massive plans of adaptations, infrastructure, and investments. Business thinking on mitigation includes the manufacture of green technologies and environmentally friendly products and services to provide for the growing consumer demand to participate in the solutions. These solutions, while an important aspect of raising public awareness of these challenges, do not solve the problems. Moreover, some of these solutions actually require more of the declining resources that are already in short supply and do not necessitate critical timeframes equal to the speed and scope of the endeavor.

One resource that is growing and exists in abundance is that of population. Mobilizing even a portion of this vast population toward sustainable living habits has the potential to shift the entire dominant paradigm at the speed and scope required. Education and change of behavior will provide direction to a population, which is already aware of the environmental challenges and is already motivated for action, into focused sustainable methods of living that will leverage their daily habits and purchasing decisions into a potent and measurable demand in the marketplace. This project provides a practical

educational model that facilitates behavioral change, cultivates growth of the sustainable business community and significantly lowers carbon emissions, while fostering social responsibility and environmental stewardship.

The focus of this study has been the exploration and integration of three related aspects of sustainable living. The first has been to explore practical means to conserve energy and resources, while seeking sustainable alternatives. The second has been to explore straightforward methods that facilitate behavioral changes. And the third has been to explore methods of integrating the previous findings into the daily lives of people, and their local communities. If the results of the study are implemented, a way of life will be created that rouses demand in the marketplace for sustainable goods and services, stimulates commerce, and promotes the development of a strong local resilient community. The intention of this project is to provide a model for this transition that can be put into effect as quickly and efficiently as possible.

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I am truly grateful for the life I have lived, for having been born at this time in history, in this particular country. The opportunity for a higher education for a female born to a family of cane-field, blue-collar, and domestic workers of the lower economic stratum is truly a marvelous privilege unique to this time and place. It is ironic to consider that the likely credit for this opportunity is owed to industrialization and the abundance of fossil fuels, and that changing this way of life and moving away from the use of fossil fuels, is the subject of this project. I give thanks to all the working class people that have taught me the work habit that has allowed me to realize many of my dreams and ambitions. It is due to this gratitude, that I now focus my dreams and ambitions in the direction of future generations, so they too will have the opportunity to know the incredible joys that life brings.

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Part I ~ Context and Execution

Review of Literature

The research for this thesis reflects a multidisciplinary exploration of both social and applied sciences, specifically from the disciplines of environmental studies, psychology, and economics. This selection of disciplines offered a wide-ranging collection of literature with diverse perspectives to examine, learn from, and draw upon. The vast foundation of knowledge and expertise represented by these authors provides an immeasurable wealth of resources relevant to the area of inquiry. The following review of literature is a selection of the accumulated information from these disciplines, which have guided and informed this thesis through its philosophical framework to the project.

Introduction to Sustainability. The original inquiry for this study began through researching sustainability. I discovered that the concept of sustainability in the context of this project produced numerous definitions and degrees of sustainability, and that this concept was arrived at as an outcome or conclusion to various problems that began to develop as a result of industrialization and its negative impacts on the environment in the 1950s (Abrahamson, 1992).

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA, 2010a) stated that the common use of the word “sustainability” began with the 1987 publication of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development Report, *Our Common Future*, which is also known as *The Brundtland Report*, based primarily on the needs and interests of humans. *The Brundtland Report* said that sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of

future generations to meet their own needs. Further, sustainable development marries two important themes: that environmental protection does not preclude economic development and that economic development must be ecologically viable now and in the long run. The report also stated “the principles of sustainability can stimulate technological innovation, advance competitiveness, and improve our quality of life” (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987, p. 43).

The literature broadly defines sustainability as does *The Bruntland Report*, and it also specifically defines the term as an evolving concept, which creates a context for its use. The following is an example:

Sustainability may be defined broadly or narrowly, but a useful definition must specify explicitly the context as well as the temporal and spatial scales being considered. Although societies differ in their conceptualizations of sustainability, indefinite human survival on a global scale requires certain basic support systems, which can be maintained only with a healthy environment and a stable human population. (Brown, Hanson, Liverman, & Meridith, 1987, p. 1)

The literature suggested that the definition of sustainability was evolving as a consequence of both increasing pollution and climate change, and the words and ideas used to define sustainability became more pragmatic and less theoretical. Brian Kermath, Director of the Center for Rural Sustainable Development at the University of Maine, in *What is Sustainability?* said:

The essential conceptual elements of the ‘sustainability’ idea have been around for a long time. The term in its present context did not become a significant item of academic discourse across a range of disciplines until the 1980s following a few seminal publications, and it did not become popularized until a decade later after the release of *Our Common Future* by the WCED in 1987. Since then, a veritable flood of publications has defined, redefined, and scrutinized the idea and applied it to most human endeavors. Although its charge is undeniably needed for forging a quality and durable future and comes with nearly universal appeal, some commentators have argued that sustainability is conceptually too vague to

have much practical value. Others have suggested that the idea became so diluted and misapplied as to be meaningless in most forums. (Kermath, 2005, p. 1)

In 1995 *Aquatic Ecology* presented a journal article by Robert Costanza and Michael Mageau who stated that when something is referred to as sustainable, what is meant is that “it has the ability to maintain its structure (organization) and function (vigor) over time in the face of external stress (resilience)” (Costanza & Mageau, 1999, p. 105). Later that year in a commentary entitled “Defining and predicting sustainability,” Robert Costanza and Bernard Patten, from the International Institute for Ecological Economics, suggested that “what passes as definitions of sustainability are often predictions of actions taken today that one hopes will lead to sustainability” (Costanza & Patten, 1995, p. 194). They posited three required characteristics to determine sustainability that stated: “a nested hierarchy of systems over a range of time and space scales must be considered (the metasystem). Within the socioeconomic subsystem, a social consensus on desired characteristics which are consistent with the relationship of these subsystems with other subsystems in the hierarchy, (notably ecosystems) must be arrived at. All systems are limited longevity, so sustainability cannot mean “maintenance forever,” and finally that the assessment “can only be done ‘after the fact’; so that the emphasis shifts to methods that enable us to better predict what configuration will persist” (p. 196). Sustainability then, in this context, narrows the use of the concept to an outcome or a conclusion from an observation and/or evaluation. It also indicates that its use as a term for a claim (prediction) of sustainability, in advance of these required characteristics, would not be the appropriate use of the term (Costanza & Patten, 1995).

John Ikerd, a professor at the University of Maryland, wrote in *Toward an Economics of Sustainability* in 1997, “the question of sustainability has become an important economic, political, and social issue” (Ikerd, 1997, p. 194). Social issues are those which directly or indirectly affect everyone in society. They include conflicts among different interests in communities and bring moral values into the topic of discussion (Social Issues, 2010, p. 1). Ikerd attempted in this article to provide a foundational first step at defining a new theory of economics in relation to sustainability, however he clearly stated that the first step by him was not an attempt to develop the theory itself, which he speculated would probably require different scholars writing books over a period of years to develop, which is consistent with the concept of sustainability being arrived at through a process, over time (Ikerd, 1997).

Connections between Sustainability, Pollution, and Climate Change. For purposes of clarity and understanding by the general population, the relationships between the definitions of sustainability, pollution, and climate change, are often contradictory, and the issues are difficult to separate and understand. The literature used for this study suggested that the reason why people are confused about climate change, whether it is real or not, if it is truly urgent, and specifically if it is caused by human actions, may in part be due to the complexity of the definitions of these terms and the opposing perspectives in which they are presented in the media, which adds to even more confusion. Sharon Beder, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Wollongong, in *The Hidden Messages within Sustainable Development*, said regarding the definition of sustainability, that some of the misunderstanding stems from the definitional ambiguity that is common when single terms represent complex ideas and from the concept's

youthfulness (Beder, 1994). Art Sussman, Ph.D., of the WestEd Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Science and Math Education said, “We read statements from opposing Ph.D. experts, one who says that global warming is a serious problem while the other tells us we have nothing to worry about. In the twenty-first century, we find ourselves in a new world. Without meaning to, we can change the way our planet works” (Sussman, 2000, p. 17).

Perhaps the first place to begin is with an understanding of some of the connections between sustainability as it relates to pollution and climate change and the overall ambiguity of their respective definitions in the literature. Global warming and climate change, for example, are terms that are sometimes used interchangeably. The literature explains the difference between them for clarification purposes:

Global warming and global cooling are natural cycles that have been occurring since our planet’s beginnings. They determine the overall warming or cooling of the entire planet, which are based on average temperatures across the surface. We are currently in a warming cycle. Greenhouse gases are a natural occurrence as well, keeping our planet from being too cold for the existence of life on it. Climate change refers to changes in temperature, humidity, severe weather events, etc., that occur across the planet, in different ways, in different regions, in response to global warming or cooling. Although human-caused additions to greenhouse gases are natural, along with other additions, human-caused additions to greenhouse gases are increasing so quickly that it’s causing the average temperatures across the planet to increase more quickly than it would naturally. The result of more rapid warming is leading to a variety of negative effects both the melting of glaciers and mountain snowcaps and the rising of sea levels, along with all the severe weather events in the works across the globe, producing negative consequences. Pollution adds to greenhouse gases. (Jeantheau, 2007, p. 1)

Bill Kovarik, Ph.D., professor of Communications at Radford University and co-author of *Mass Media and Environmental Conflict*, which includes *The Environmental History Timeline*, wrote “pollution is not a new phenomenon” (Kovarik & Neuzil, 1996,

p. 201). He detailed a history of pollution dating back to the times of ancient and medieval cities (Kovarik & Neuzil, 1996). According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, the word *pollution* dates back to the fourteenth century; however, its current context, and the context for this study, the externalized costs of the manmade waste products of industrialization, has only become commonly used since the 1970s (Pollution, 2008). Dean Abrahamson, professor of Public Affairs and Planning at the University of Michigan, noted in an article on Energy Policy Studies that pollution a century ago was “primarily a matter of trash in the backyard”; during his parents’ lifetimes, however, “pollution began to impact large areas, river basins, and entire air sheds,” and that “the 1950s saw the first serious efforts to address these insults” (Abrahamson, 1992, p. 116).

The definition of the word pollution, for example, was as ambiguous to people at that time, as climate change is today. Pollution was a word that could be used interchangeably with the word contamination, for example. Pollution in the current context distinguishes itself by the degree of detriment it has on living organisms: The degree of detriment is greater than living organisms can endure, the pollutant is added faster to the environment than the environment has the ability to adjust to without damaging effects, and some of its detrimental effects are known to be harmful (Maduka, 2005). This combination of criteria subsequently determines a degree of detriment that not only indicates through its definition that it is not sustainable, but also, due to the deleterious effects it has on the environment, that it is a matter of urgency and necessitates mitigative action. Pollution and climate change, in the context of this paper, have the criterion above in common, that is, the degree of detriment that climate change

presents is having detrimental effects on living organisms, the detrimental effects are happening faster to the environment than the environment has the ability to adjust to, and some of these effects are known to be harmful. Moreover, the deleterious effects indicate urgency and necessitate mitigative action.

The vast majority of scientists agree that there is no ambiguity concerning the scale at which climate change is occurring. They have stated that climate change is unequivocal, which means that it is indisputable and undeniable, and that there is no precedent for the rapidity at which the levels of carbon dioxide have risen and are rising. The carbon dioxide levels are acting as a pollutant and are having deleterious effects on living organisms and the environment. Based on conclusive evaluations throughout years of study, the degree of deleterious effects have been determined to be unsustainable, urgent and require immediate mitigation action (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2007).

As public awareness grows, the literature indicates that a growing number of people are responding to the information they receive, to the extent that they perceive climate change as urgent. For example, on one hand Lester Brown asserts in *Plan B 3.0 Mobilizing to Save Civilization* that “saving civilization is not a spectator sport,” and that “saving civilization will take a massive mobilization, and at wartime speed... [and]...decisive action of a global scale” (Brown, 2008, p. xiii). On the other, the media, which has a tremendous influence over the perception of the average person, is still debating over whether climate change is a hoax, created by Al Gore to make money (Mediamatters, 2007). The people that agree with and believe the information of the latter as presented through the media, appropriately perceive no degree of urgency. The people

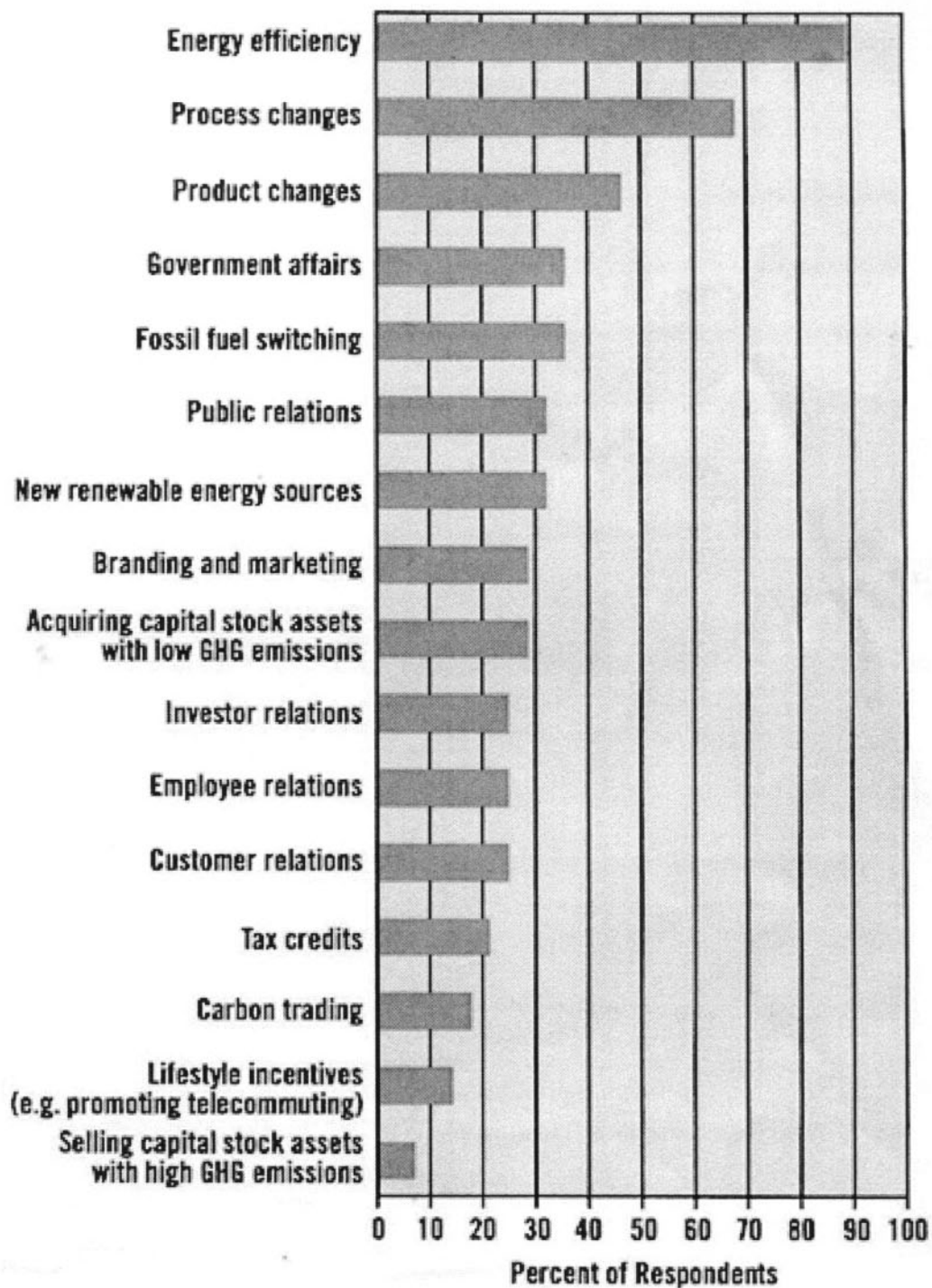
who agree with and believe the information as presented by Lester Brown appropriately perceive a high degree of urgency. It is this population; those that perceive a high degree of urgency that are the primary focus of this study.

The Motivation for Change. Tim Kasser, Ph.D., (2008) described this perception of degree in urgency as one of an “internal crisis” in his article, “Values and Ecological Sustainability: Recent Research and Policy Possibilities.” He said “this internal crisis is not one that will be easily addressed by switching our light bulbs from incandescent to compact fluorescents or by driving hybrid automobiles, for it is a crisis of values ... psychological representations of what we believe to be important in life” (Rokeach, 1973, p. 1). Kasser referred to this value based population as voluntary simplifiers, with roots dating back as early as the Puritans and Quakers, and stated, today, those who strive for simplicity are known under various labels, including “downshifter,” “cultural creatives,” and, probably most widely, “voluntary simplifiers” (Kasser, 2008, p. 1). Their increasing numbers and visibility has been a subject of “consumer resistance studies” (Gopaldas, 2004). Gopaldas, of Boston University, referred to voluntary simplicity as “a relatively invisible form of consumer resistance” and noted “unlike other consumer resistance behaviors that target an element of the production, marketing, or consumption process (e.g. brand boycotts), it is a rejection of consumerism *en masse*” (Gopaldas, 2004, p. 291)...they do not think the “doctrine of ever-increasing consumption of goods and services forms the basis of a sound society” (Business Dictionary, 2010).

According to Paul H. Ray, Ph.D. and Sherry Ruth Anderson, Ph.D. in their book *Cultural Creatives*, this population is estimated to be approximately 50 million people or 26% of the United States population (Ray & Anderson, 2000, p. 4). They are changing

their ways of life on their own, without “massive mobilization” by government, media support or any other leadership other than their “distinctive beliefs and values” (Ray & Anderson, 2000, p. 4).

Large Organizations like the Climate Protection Action Fund and the United States Environmental Protection Agency maintain that what an individual does alone or as citizens will not be enough to meet the scale and demands that climate change presents at this time and that serious change and reduction in carbon emissions, i.e. CO₂ levels, will come only through governmental and corporate adaptations and change in infrastructure. They indicate that what consumers should focus on are conservation activities like changing light bulbs, recycling and buying from the more energy efficient solutions available through new market technology (USEPA, 2010b). However, based on the findings of the survey, *Getting Ahead of the Curve: Corporate Strategies That Address Climate Change* from the Pew Center on Global Climate Change (2006), when you rank climate-related programs that increase companies’ profits, it is interesting to note that the list of suggestions that are recommended for consumers rank highest in order of profit to corporations (Figure 1). There were 16 categories where 90% of the respondents (corporations) indicated that energy efficiency was the most profitable category to companies. The lowest profits were lifestyle incentives (e.g. promoting telecommuting). The questions this raises is to what extent might profit influence the decisions by these large companies to advertise what benefits them most over what benefits the climate most?



Source: Based on findings of survey in *Getting Ahead of the Curve: Corporate Strategies That Address Climate Change*, Pew Center on Global Climate Change, 2006

Figure 1. Ranking of Climate-Related Programs that Increase Companies Profits.

The urgency of the impending crises will require all of us to re-think our way of living. “We are going to have to adopt new ways of thinking about the decisions we make today” (Ikerd, 1997, p. 1). Sustainable solutions to climate change address the issues of urgency, confusion and the contradictions surrounding solutions to climate change. Regarding sustainable solutions to climate change, Art Sussman, Ph.D., author of *Art’s Guide to Planet Earth*, said that we need to use a “science-based, systems thinking approach to solutions” (Sussman, 2000, p. 109). He pointed to scientists Brower and Leon, from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), who model nature and analyze different parts of our “consumption system” and study how these parts connect with each other and include how they are a part of the larger environment (IPCC, 2007, pp. 870–873). According to Sussman, people need to focus on the “three kinds of activities [that] account for most of the environmental impacts from the average person: transportation, food and household operations (heating, cooling and lighting)”, and further, he also said “seventy-five percent of the impact on global warming — air pollution, water pollution and alteration of habitat — is from OUR consumer activities” (Sussman, 2000, p. 110). The question of whether what we do makes a significant difference is distinctly addressed through this perspective. The literature for this study clearly indicated that the change begins with education, rethinking our lives and taking the necessary and urgent actions of lifestyle adaptation (Ebi, Mills, Smith, & Grambsch, 2006, pp. 1318–1324); however, it also noted that “the solutions to climate change and pollution are diverse and abundant. The challenge is that we lack the basic knowledge and information on how to make sustainable lifestyle decisions” (Motavalli, 2005, p. xiv).

There seems to be a general consensus that efforts for the solutions to our challenges will largely come from two approaches: new technological fixes and/or lifestyle changes (Hinrichs & Kleinbach, 2006). Although this study will present some technological approaches, the primary focus of this project is a course of study for the necessary lifestyle changes and conservation methods that will optimize the use of resources, lower the carbon footprint, have the ability to be utilized by everyone and can be implemented immediately with little and/or no financial expenditures. Moreover, the intention of this study has been to explore what habits, mentally or physically, we need to change that will achieve these goals. This will be no easy task: “There are powerful forces working to move us toward local self-reliance. But there is no inevitability that we will achieve that goal. Institutions change slowly. Habits and customs change even more slowly” (Morris, 2008, p. 12). The IPCC stated, through evidence gained from over 2500 independent scientists from around the world, that climate change is unequivocal (IPCC, 2007). There is concurrence on the need for sustainable solutions. Even the question of urgency seems clear enough to the population that agrees with and believes that climate change is unequivocal and that sustainable and science-based systems thinking approaches are necessary; however, what further prevents our vast population from responding to the challenges we face?

Ecopsychology, which is becoming a separate academic discipline according to the Ecopsychology Institute, and is distinguished from psychology, is one area that is exploring the behavioral responses to the environmental challenges we face, and specifically what may be preventing appropriate response. It “seeks a fuller understanding by environmentalists of the psychological dimension of their work,

especially with respect to winning the attention and support of the public and to finding more effective ways to encourage healthy environmental behavior” (Roszak, Gomes, & Kanner, 1995, p. 1). *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind*, by Roszak, Gomes, and Kanner (1995), included an assemblage of papers and excerpts from their writings, as well as those of other authors with an ecopsychological point of view. It provided an inquiry into the potential reasons for the decline in interest and respect for the environment and our historical roots in it. The book posed methods of exploration, exercises, and inquiry into the causes of the decline, as well as provided a different lens for examining how we are affected by the Earth and how we affect it. Mary Gomes, Ph.D., (1998) wrote that “ecopsychology...seeks to understand and heal our relationship with the Earth. It examines the psychological processes that bond us to the natural world or that alienate us from it.” She offered ecopsychology, as an “explicitly moral psychology with the goal of discovering how people can connect with the natural world in ways that are healthy and sustainable both for people and the planet” (Gomes, 1998, p. 7).

According to Catherine Honora Kineavy, a writer/editor for the San Diego Earth Times, who presents environmental articles from the local, national, and international community, ecopsychology “is attempting to heal the planet and its inhabitants by delving deeply into core personality issues, in an attempt to understand environmental behavior” (Kineavy, 1997, p. 1). Kineavy defined ecopsychology as a combination of ecology, “the science of the relationship between organisms and their environments,” and psychology, “the science of mental processes or behavior” (Kineavy, 1997, p. 1).

Last Child in the Woods, Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, a book written by Richard Louv, contrasts the differences between children experiencing nature with those removed from nature and the conclusions being raised and about the loss of imagination and creativity by those removed from nature. This relatively new area of exploration, which is finding ways to encourage healthy environmental behavior, is growing, highly regarded, and holds a strong promise of being instrumental at finding ways to integrate people's lives more fully with their roots by the ways they live (Louv, 2005). What can people as individuals do now in the face of defined urgency and the call for immediate action?

Thinking for Change. Psychologist Shad Helmstetter, Ph.D., in his book *What to Say When You Talk to Your Self*, wrote that mastering one's future must surely start with managing one's "self". He talked about people who really want to make changes: "some believe that whatever we create in our lives, we can change. But changing it has been the hard part." He wrote that even when someone really wants to change, and makes up their mind to change, it is still difficult, because of the types of pictures that are continually being shown to their mind. He says that the way around it is through self talk (Helmstetter, 1982, p. 147).

Self talk is based on research into how the brain works. What you hear, either from what you say out loud or to your self and/or from what you hear others say, has a greater impact on how we think than we had thought before. What we hear programs us in a particular direction. Helmstetter wrote about reprogramming the mind in the direction of where we want it to go, and discussed the impact of being told over and over that we can not achieve something, and the negative impact it has on the brain (Helmstetter, 1982, p.

20). He also discussed how programming sets up our beliefs and that there is a “logical progression [that] what we believe determines our attitudes, affects our feelings, directs our behavior and determines our success or failure” (Helmstetter, 1982, pp. 70–71).

Ernest Holmes, in *How to Use the Science of the Mind*, describes this “logical progression” of how the mind works in a different way. He called this progression the “Mental Law of Cause and Effect”:

The mental law of cause and effect, like all other laws of nature, is a neutral, impersonal, creative force always operating mechanically and mathematically, always right where we are and ever ready to respond...[and that] we are using this law at all times, whether or not we are aware of the fact, and it is always responding. When we look at our environment and see many things not desirable, instead of thinking of them as conditions which fate has imposed on us, we should recognize them as the orderly procession of the law of cause and effect moving in logical sequence to definite form. (Holmes, 1948, p. 92)

Could it be, that the challenges we face today, are the logical progression of our collective thinking which have directed our behaviors into their particular form?

The ecopsychologist, Richard Louv, said that our minds are affected by the modern day world and that we spend less time in the natural world in activities that allow us to physically engage our bodies and minds, which affects our judgment and creative abilities. And further that typical activities like watching television and surfing the internet funnel into our minds information and ideas, that do not require us to think, while exposing us to thoughts and ideas of others that influence us (Louv, 2005).

The importance of good thinking is paramount to our lives and future. Ralph Waldo Emerson said “Life consists of what a man is thinking about all day.” James Allen said, in *As a Man Thinketh*, “All that a man achieves and all that he fails to achieve is the direct result of his own thoughts” (Allen, 1902, p. 49). The challenge is, according to

Anthony Robbins, a recognized peak performance consultant, that “most people think about the wrong things. Whatever someone focuses on, they feel, whether it is true or not. What a person focuses on then becomes reality, whether or not it’s true; however, this can be used to an advantage, by focusing on what we want to be our reality” (p. 29). He also said; in a transcript from *Get the Edge, A Seven Day Program to Change Your Life*, that “95% of the time has to be spent on the solution and not the problem. The challenge is learning to refocus our brains on the solutions to the challenges in our lives 95% of the time, rather than on the problems (Robbins, 2002, p. 7).

Neuropsychologist Rick Hanson, Ph.D., said that we do not know how to use our minds effectively, and that “if a critical mass of people became more skillful with their own brains, we could literally remake this world in a single generation” (Hanson, 2010, p. 1).

John Maxwell, in *Thinking for a Change*, said that “focused thinking harnesses energy toward a desired goal” (Maxwell, 2002, p. 80), and used a quotation from Al Ries’ book, *Focus: The Future of Your Company Depends on It*:

A laser is a weak source of energy. A laser takes a few watts of energy and focuses them in a coherent stream of light. But with a laser you can drill a hole in a diamond or wipe out a cancer.”

Anthony Robbins who said, “even when circumstances seem impossible, if you have an excellent model of how to produce a result, you can discover specifically what the model does and duplicate it and thus produce similar results in a shorter period of time” (Robbins, 1986, p. 28). John C. Maxwell in *Thinking for a Change, 11 Ways Highly Successful People Approach Life and Work* also noted how we can consciously create models in our lives through the simple choices we make every day. He suggested that

change has to do with whom and what we expose our minds to. It's our association with the world as we choose it that takes our thinking in a particular direction, like when we "read books, review trade magazines, listen to tapes and spend time with good thinkers" (Maxwell, 2002, p. 49). These are models that influence our decisions and thinking that can be consciously chosen, so that they will produce models to help us make the simple everyday choices that over time will make a huge difference in our lives.

Engaging our bodies as well as our minds in focused activities facilitates learning even further. Frank Wilson, a clinical professor of neurology at Stanford University School of Medicine, was nominated in 1998 for a Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction *The Hand: How Its Use Shapes the Brain, Language, and Human Culture*. He wrote that "we are creatures identified by what we do with our hands," meaning that our learning comes from doing (Wilson, 1998, p. 268). It's the power of physiology. Body patterns determine how you feel. How you feel determines what you do. And what we do, determines our destiny (Robbins, 2002).

Changing the Course of our Destiny through Day-to-Day Activities. If body patterns determine how we feel, and how we feel determines what we do, and what we do determines our destiny...then according to this line of thinking, if we change the patterns of what we do, we can also change how we feel, and how we think. Therefore, we can also change our destiny. Helmstetter, Holmes, Allen, Maxwell, Louv, Hanson, and Robbins all assert that our lives are the result of how we think. Einstein may have said, "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them" (Quoteworld.org, n.d. a), however if we change our thinking, we can solve the problems. Can we change our thinking by what we do? Perhaps we can, with the day-by-day

activities that will lead, one day a time, to a different way of thinking, and a different future world — a world constructed by the choices we make individually, that we learn from other models. Margaret Mead famously said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has” (Quoteworld.org, n.d. b).

Suzanne W. Morse, who wrote *Smart Communities: How Citizens and Local Leaders Can Use Strategic Thinking to Build a Brighter Future*, remarked, “Success does not happen by chance. It can occur for different reasons. Sometimes it is the right place at the right time phenomenon, but most time it is a combination of forces. Good decisions at critical times carry the day for the future. They can be headline catchers, but more likely they are day to day actions of people in the community that reflect a value system and a way of working” (Morse, 2004, p. 2).

The time for change is now. In the introduction to his book, *Sufficient: a Modern Guide to Sustainable Living*, Tom Petherick (2007) says that “the word ‘sufficient’ reflects the willpower to say, ‘That’s enough’” (p. 7). He talked about being a farmer for years and observing not just the way attitudes began to change in the ‘realm of food’, but in all “things ‘environmental’.” He said that “the media tells us we are at a crossroads, a turning point, that a paradigm shift is imminent. But most of us don’t need any telling; we know, and we know that now is the time to act like never before” (Petherick, 2007).

Many methods for “action” exist in the literature. For example, relocalization. Lyle Estill provided a variety of perspectives in support of the argument for relocalization through day-to-day activities. In a readable literary style, his book, *Small Is Possible, Life in a Local Economy* (2008), provided a case in point of a small town, and of its history

and journey to self-reliance. It outlined examples of “feeding, fueling and financing” themselves (Estill, 2008). *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, by Barbara Kingsolver (2007a), provided a very relevant example of her family’s transformational journey from their industrial city lifestyle to one of rural farm living on food produced only by themselves or from their own neighborhood. Kingsolver says, “this is the story of a year in which we made every attempt to feed ourselves animals and vegetables whose provenance we really knew . . . and of how our family was changed by our first year of deliberately eating food produced from the same place where we worked, went to school, loved our neighbors, drank the water, and breathed the air” (Kingsolver, 2007b, p.1).

There were documented commentaries on yearlong experiments on one form or another of sustainable living. What they all had in common was that they were all positive transformational experiences. One such book, *No Impact Man*, is a family’s direct attempt at zero waste and achieving carbon neutrality over the course of a year in New York City. They got rid of their TV, rode their bikes everywhere, ate only local, organic foods, and were surprised how much better their quality of life. What had originally motivated this family was the conflict in values between what they knew about climate change and what was needed for change, and the modern consumerist lifestyle that they were living was (Beavan, 2009). The accounts from these types of experiments, while indicating that the changes were neither mentally or physically easy, by any means, still had a positive impact and result on their families’ lives.

The efforts of all these individuals, and families, are examples of “voluntary simplicity”, of “downshifting” and the willingness to change from a population that needs no leadership to tell them what they need to do, because their motivation is being driven

by their “internal crisis”, the “crisis of values” that Tim Kasser, Ph.D. talked about. These are just a sample of the values motivating a very substantial portion of the United States population. A population whose size has the power to change the dominant paradigm at the speed and scope required to mitigate the threats posed by climate change, impede the demand for declining resources and stabilize our economy by focusing on sustainable economics at the local level. This way of thinking, called localization or relocalization, focuses spending at the local level, stimulates the local economy, and fosters the growth of small, locally owned environmentally sustainable businesses. It compels the market to respond and turn in the direction of the demand, and supply it in kind. Localization reduces carbon emissions and dependence on foreign interests and creates resilience through independence from outside sources and global suppliers.

Finally, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (2006) in *The Future of Environmentalism: Re-thinking Sustainability for the Twenty-First Century*, compelling the market to respond is a key aspect to include in a comprehensive strategy for change:

Sustainability needs to be made the basis of a new understanding of human aspiration and achievement. The market is a human institution of unique power and efficiency. It is capable of driving massive changes in environment and human opportunity on a scale and at a speed that dwarfs the regulatory powers of citizen, state or global organization. Human aspirations, and subsistence, are inextricably linked to the performance of that economy. The market is central to the way the world works, but sustainability needs to be understood as a fundamental cultural idea: we need to plant a culture of sustainability. The planetary future depends on what kind of culture of consumerism we build. (p. 20)

Consumerism has been the basis of our economy. How will relocalization impact our economy, the GDP, and economic instability? It has the likelihood of making it better. According to the GPI, the Genuine Progress Indicator, our economy has been on a

downturn since the 1970s. The GPI is a relatively new alternative to the GDP, the Gross Domestic Product, which simply measures the total sum of all our country's spending. The GPI, on the other hand, distinguishes between the transactions that add to well-being and those that diminish it (Talberth, Cobb, & Slattery, 2006). The GPI, which was created in 1995 as an alternative to the GDP, enables policymakers at the national, state, regional, or local level to measure how well their citizens are doing both economically and socially...and is used by governmental and nongovernmental organizations worldwide. According to the advocates of the GPI, on a year-to-year basis since 1950–2004, when plotting economic growth of the GDP along with the GPI, the data indicates that the United States has been in an economic downturn since the 1970s (Talberth, Cobb, & Slattery, 2006). Therefore, the population that is rejecting consumerism en masse has no bearing on the economic instability we are currently experiencing (Gopaldas, 2004). Choosing relocalization/localization as a more sustainable economic plan, without doubt is a viable alternative to the dominant paradigm, and economic downturn that has lasted well over 30 years, which takes into account many other factors; including income distribution, crime, pollution, changes in leisure time, etc. rather than simply the sum of our country's spending.

Changing our way of life, as the literature has indicated, will be no easy task, however to do nothing will be even harder, because the end of our way of life, is now in sight. People all over the world no longer have to look very far to see the evidence of mounting pollution and the effects of climate change. It really makes no difference whether we agree that the origin of climate change was caused by human activity, natural occurrences or the unveiling of foretold prophecies. Life as we have known it is over.

We have the choice to participate in mitigation activities. Our children will not have that privilege. It is our generation that holds the power to delay the inevitability of the future of our planet, so that there can be slower change and easier adaptation.

Part II ~ Content

Methodology

The intention of this project was to provide a model of transition for sustainable living as a solution to climate change, resource depletion and economic instability. The exploration of the solutions to these challenges involved extensive research into the existing literature on these key themes, as well as internet research on people, organizations and their work.

This investigation, as well as the ideas and information learned through the coursework, motivated the pursuit of an even greater foundational knowledge of the subject areas involved in sustainability, which led to the completion of both the Green Building and Sustainable Landscape certificate programs through Sonoma State University's Extended Education. These programs not only presented the most current thinking and education regarding sustainability in these two vast subject areas, but they also offered the opportunity to exchange ideas and network with both the speakers and the attending professionals. For example, one of the speakers, Graham Irwin, a sustainability consultant from Essential Habitat for zero energy buildings and passive house design, made a statement, regarding an observation he had made, that significantly highlighted the importance of behavioral change to the project. He said that we had the technology to create zero energy buildings, and that we could control the emissions from our homes and buildings, however, the one thing that we could not control was occupant behavior (Irwin, 2009).

I got involved with an emerging international organization, which promoted community relocation for the reduction of carbon emissions in response to climate change and declining fossil fuels, called the Transition Network and attended their Transition Training at Dominican University. I also joined their local initiating team, Transition Sebastopol. This work allowed me to meet and/or speak with local, national and international representatives from different locations who shared ideas and methods that they were using in their local communities, which opened valuable dialog about what was and was not working in various places around the world. Increasing group attendance and the subsequent emergence of working groups, in a variety of subject matters relative to relocation, has allowed this group to gain greater visibility in the community and to increase connections between other groups involved in similar activities, unifying their efforts, and bridging connections between hundreds of different citizens, the business community, and the local government. I attended numerous classes, workshops and seminars during the investigation on a variety of subject areas relative to sustainability, including rainwater harvesting, native plants, natural pest control, and Permaculture.

I also completed a case study on the Sonoma County Climate Protection Campaign Plan, a model toward sustainability for countywide application, infrastructure and the reduction of GHG (greenhouse gases) emissions. Both the project, “A Transition Model for Sustainable Living (MTSL)”, and The Climate Protection Campaign (CPC), have community sustainability and the reduction of GHG emissions in common, however each coming from a different theory of change. The CPC focuses on policy level, systemic change; a top-down approach. The CPC finds the given decision makers and leaders in a

system, who are sometimes elected officials, but not always, and then finds the leverage points in that system. They put pressure on those leverage points to shift it, so that the whole system will shift. The MTSL theory of change focuses on systemic change through leveraging the cumulative power of the average citizen through the everyday choices they make, which puts pressure on the system, so that the whole system will shift as well. Although the CPC is a dynamic and vitally relevant organization to the community, has had tremendous success at the creation of tracking and evaluative mechanisms for Sonoma County's carbon emissions, and has done phenomenal advocacy work, county emissions have, in fact, steadily risen, even with all their efforts. This does not imply that their work has been ineffective. To the contrary, it may well be that emissions would have been much greater without their efforts. What it did indicate, is that in order for effective, timely change to occur, the entire population must participate. This transition... from a limited way of thinking, which has been based on infinitely available abundant resources, without thought given to their waste or impact on living organisms... to a way of living that balances its impact with the life around it, allows everything to prosper sustainably. Rather than trying to control the environment as if we are separate from it, we need to integrate *with* the environment through a shift in consciousness. This realization has motivated the idea for a curriculum that could be taught in a pilot program and eventually become a model for other communities if it proved successful. Success in this light would mean that this curriculum would act as the missing link, removing resistance to existing programs, such as the CPC, the Transition movement and other environmental efforts. An illustrative analogy would be a tandem bicycle representing our culture, whose riders are dragging their feet. This shift would

allow all the people on board to lift the drag of their feet and peddle together. When consciousness changes all the mechanisms of our culture can align themselves toward a positive outcome. Lester Brown's urgency about the need for "wartime speed" in mitigative efforts was based on the historic dynamic shift that occurred in American production over a one-year time period, from domestic goods to war supplies, during World War II.

The question then became, could a large enough population, (the potential force of an S curve in the marketplace) shift the entire dominant paradigm to produce the changes needed to mitigate the effects of climate change? The overall study clearly indicated that it would take a combination of all our combined efforts, on every level of society, accomplished as quickly as possible, to mitigate the affects of climate change. The case study of the CPC highlighted the importance of a model that could be directed at large groups of people in communities, which led to the educational format of a curriculum.

The review of literature revealed that particular group of people who would be the focus of the curriculum: the voluntary simplifiers, the downshifeters and/or the cultural creatives. Once the particular population was targeted who would be the focus for the model, then the decisions for how to design the curriculum were determined through this population's unifying criteria. The predominant features of this target population were the ethics and values enunciated by Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson in "Cultural Creatives" (Ray & Anderson, 2000, page xiv), which align themselves with those of the Permaculture movement. This led to the addition of both Permaculture Ethics and Design Principles (Figure 2) and the support of the twelve Permaculture Strategies and Techniques (Figure 3) that easily corresponded to the twelve months of the year.

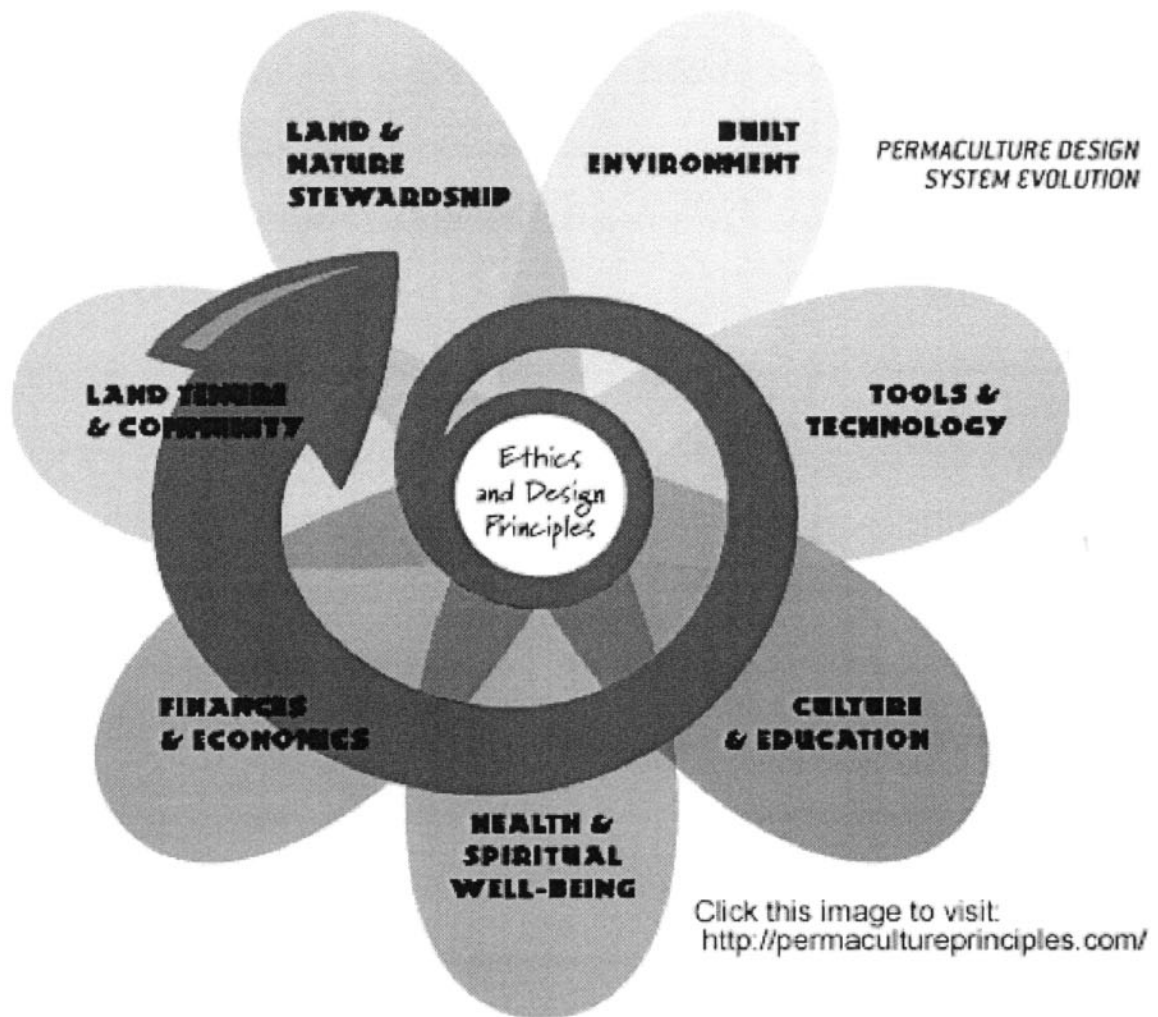


Figure 2. Permaculture Ethics and Design Principles.

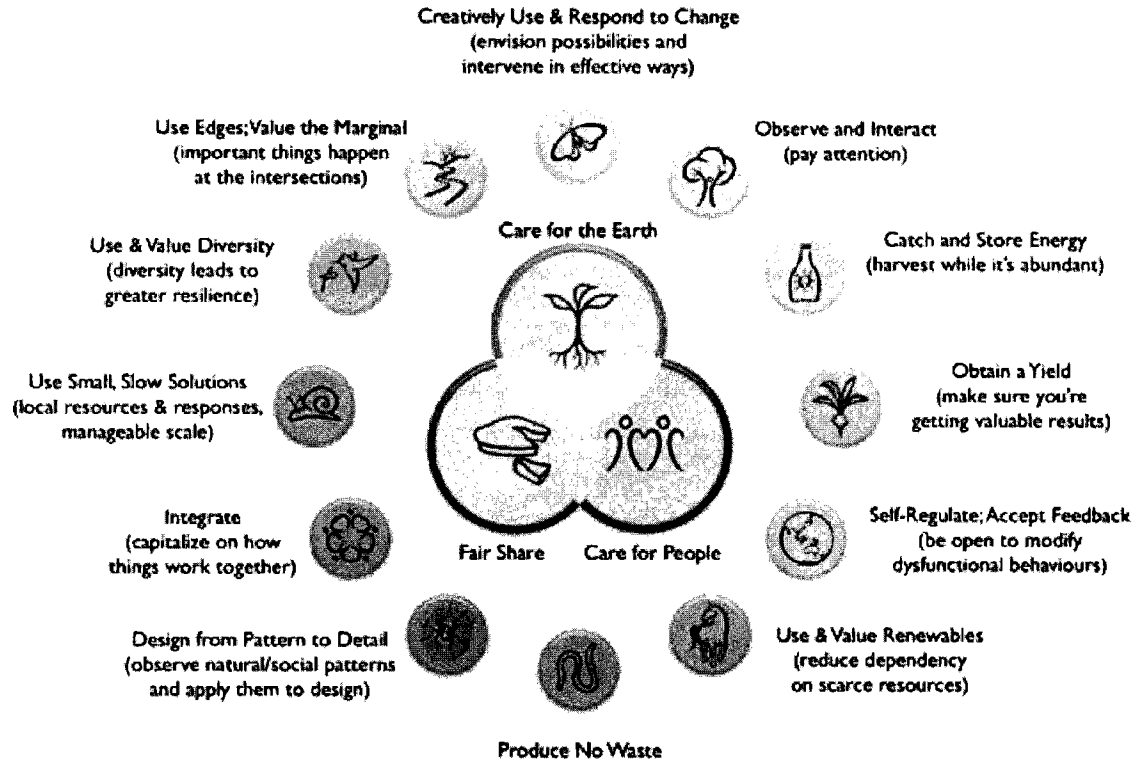


Figure 3. The Twelve Permaculture Strategies and Techniques.

The subject matter of the curriculum was separated into modules. Each subject module was arrived at through investigation and coursework, and was specifically chosen for the particular human activities that contribute to the reduction of CO₂ emissions. The subject modules were organized into twelve months of coursework, or one year of time. My experience with many of the courses I attended while in graduate school, including agroecology, led me to understand the appropriateness of timing. This led to the courses being grouped seasonally so that specific subjects can be taught just prior to the season during which they could be utilized. For example, the Waste module is taught in January, when students will learn about composting, worm bins, and graywater use. The Water module is taught in February, when students will learn segments on how to catch, harvest

and store water, as well as select and install drip irrigation. This will be followed by the Food Production module, which includes a food and landscape design segment, and an organic and sustainable gardening segment taught in March. The Energy module, for example, which includes segments on optimizing energy use and the introduction to insulation materials, duct taping, and window and door sealing, is taught in October just as the demand for heating, lighting and cooking energy normally increases to its greatest demand, in winter.

During my time of study I also noted materials that were helpful, such as the class readers I had received from a number of professors. I also created a list of the materials I learned would be useful, and wished I had been provided with, such as a journal for noting significant changes in perspective, or a pre-programmed planner to keep organized and save time, which will now be provided as curriculum materials. These associated materials: the workbook/planner, reader, resource directory, the seasonal menus and shopping guides, the journal and the visual aids, are all designed to be used in conjunction with the program and the program modules, to educate through their use, to provide understanding through performance, to save the participant time, and to facilitate the learning experience.

All the materials are designed to connect the student with their local community. The resource directory, currently under development, will have pre-arranged resources from their community of participating businesses and organizations associated with the Model of Transition to Sustainable Living (MTSL) program. These businesses and organizations will provide discounts and savings on purchases made by the MTSL students, which keep profits in the local community and provide both the businesses and

the MTSL program with a means by which to assess the program and evaluate its performance. Bar coding and/or specific register keys will have the ability to isolate profits, so their sales will assess the profitability of the program. The curriculum also provides training in time management, community organization and communication skills.

The Workbook/Planner will act as a daily guide and planner of check-listed things to do each day. It will contain suggested times for performing various activities, times and dates of the classes and events they will attend, and shopping lists for each week. The meals and shopping lists are based on the season, their program membership with community sponsored agriculture (CSA), and the local farmer's market MTSL participants. Since my motivation is to create interdependency within the sustainable economic community, as well as creating actual practices, each student will receive a recipe book providing seasonal recipes that teach the student "the skill of how to eat from the garden," as the farmers say. Students will learn to eat from and utilize what they are receiving in their weekly CSA boxes, the farmers market, and the market stores participating in the program. The workbook/planner and the recipe book allow for assessment and evaluation by the participant and program, as well as the organizations associated with the program by pre-arranged means of differentiating their regular clients from participants in the MTSL program. For example, at the grocery store, particular keys will be assigned to the program category, so that at the end of a particular cycle, profits can be isolated for profitability assessment purposes by a business.

Along with the workbook/planner and recipes, the program will provide a reader and a journal. The reader will be a valuable resource document with a compilation of articles,

readings, handouts, as well as other information about the subject modules and the skills they are learning. The journal-keeping part of the program was created as a learning tool for the student, based on the guidance of background research, which suggests the importance of quiet time for reflection, especially in nature. The journal supports the creation of the habit of taking time for reflection, twice daily, away from activity, and preferably outside, to reflect on what they are learning and experiencing, and to keep them focused on why they are doing what they are doing, and what they hope to achieve from doing so.

Definition of terms. Two specialized terms — *localization* and *relocalization* — require specific definition in the context of this project; these definitions follow.

Localization — Localization is a process of social change pointing toward localities. It is not, however, only about locality, nor is it globalization in reverse. Rather, as overextended economies and resource extraction efforts exhaust themselves, industrial societies will experience a shift from the centrifugal forces of globalization—cheap raw materials and energy, intensive commercialization, displaced wastes, concentrated economic and political power—to the centripetal forces of localization—diminished energy and materials, greater need for personal proficiency and distributed authority. Localization entails increased attention to the tangible and to place-based community as well as to the natural world, especially that which provides physical sustenance and psychological support. At the same time, it has regional, national and international dimensions. Localization is a logical outgrowth of the end of a historically brief period—the age of plentiful raw materials, abundant and highly concentrated energy (especially liquid fossil fuels) and costless waste sinks (e.g., atmosphere, oceans). How societies and

individuals adapt to this changed reality becomes one of the defining questions of our time. We will all be asking not if localization occurs, but how localization will proceed, and how it should proceed. We will intuitively see that localization can be a force for good (e.g., healthy food, less anxiety, more neighborliness) or a force for evil (e.g., anarchy, warlords, and backwoods survivalists). Contrary to the prevailing approaches to environmental problems—global management and technological innovation, which attempt to maintain the status quo, only greener—localization accepts that a fundamental transition is occurring and asks how it can be peaceful, just, psychologically enriching and ecologically resilient.

Relocalization — Relocalization is a set of strategies that seek to redesign local communities to be more energy independent and sustainable, to produce more food locally, and to rebuild a sense of community. Relocalized communities are based on the production of food, energy, and other primary goods at the local level. Other strategies include the growth and nurturing of local forms of exchange, governance, and culture. According to relocalize.net, “the main goals of relocalization are to increase community energy security, to strengthen local economies, and to dramatically improve environmental conditions and social equity” (Relocalize.net, 2010). The concept of relocalization strategy emerged primarily as a response to the devastating impacts of dependence on inexpensive carbon-based energy. This dependency has led to global climate change, the erosion of community and society, geopolitical resource conflicts, and global economic instability.

Purpose. The purpose the Transition Model to Sustainable Living curriculum is twofold: the first is to empower the participants through information, skills and support that

will engage them in activities that lead to sustainability, both in the home and in their local communities. The second is to help the participants create daily habits and purchasing decisions that leverage demand for a supply of sustainable solutions, that reduce carbon emissions, mitigate climate change, and build economically strong, viable, and resilient local communities.

Scope. Since this project deals with the future of life on this planet, it seems that, apart from a few distant galaxies, there is virtually nothing outside its scope. The concept of sustainability or sustainable living, as I understand it, is a method of living in the world today that can be maintained for hundreds of years without having any negative effects on the environment (WCED, 1987). The principles and methods for sustainable living outlined in the curriculum project are not necessarily new. They are sourced from a vast and diverse body of knowledge, both contemporary, and the accumulated wisdom evolved from the trials and errors of our predecessors.

During the course of life on Earth, people and other life forms have either evolved to live in a sustainable manner with regard to the limits of the available resources of the environment, or they have vanished. The predicament in which we find ourselves today is one that has repeated itself many times. A Carthaginian soldier and rabble raiser, Tertullian, put it nicely around 200 AD:

What most frequently meets our view is our teeming population; our numbers are burdensome to the world, which can hardly supply us from its natural elements; our wants grow more and more keen and our complaints more bitter in all mouths whilst nature fails in affording us her usual sustenance. In very deed, pestilence and famine and wars and earthquakes have to be regarded as a remedy for nature, as a means of pruning the luxuriance of the human race.

Regarding Tertullian's observations, it appears our predicament is a position of choice. We will either continue the error of our ways, choosing to wait for the disastrous impacts of climate change, exhausted resources and economic ruin, or we will modify the type of thinking and activities which elicited consequences similar to those described above. Rather than experiencing "a remedy for nature" for motivation, as in Tertullian's observations," we could create a mutually beneficial future together and begin by imagining a world with the solutions to our current day challenges already in place, right now.

Significance. The significance of this work continues the efforts of far-seeing visionaries, whose work is reflected in the references. This accumulated research clarifies the reality and dispels the confusion about the direction we must take to resolve the causes of global climate change and create a more sustainable way of living. The predominant motive behind this body of work has been the exploration, assessment and understanding of our planetary dilemma. In light of this body of work, which reveals the continuing and accelerating degradation of the natural environment and the simultaneous increase in CO₂ levels, the timeliness and importance of this project is made evident, especially considering the relatively ineffective results of current solutions, such as buying green products. This work not only adds to the conversation, but it also offers a simple yet comprehensive strategy that can be effectively implemented without large budgetary demands from government or its participants. It seeks to solicit the widest possible audience and provide not just more information and things to do, but a complete and comprehensive methodology of implementation for doing them. It has the potential

of achieving its primary purpose, the reduction of carbon emissions, while at the same time lowering the demand on resources, and creating strong, stable local communities.

Limitations. It is important to relate that my background and course work for the Master's degree does not directly involve studies in education. With more background in this area, additional content or value might have been added on this aspect of the project.

The practical rather than vocational nature of the project is in itself a limitation, due to the current economic cutbacks affecting all our nation's programs at the city, state and federal levels, including educational institutions, which might otherwise sponsor such a program.

Another limitation of the project may be the comprehensiveness of the curriculum. It may be perceived as too time consuming, and may take more work or change, than participants are willing to make. People may not believe in our human ability to change, either as individuals or as a species. Some people may lack the ability to see a vision like this for their future or may love their lifestyle so much that they are not willing to make changes. There are a myriad of reasons that will be limitations by individual people including that there will always be people who do not believe there is even a problem.

Implementation of the project may be limited by lack of funding from private philanthropic sources, investment funds, grants, loans or endowments, in light of the contrary nature of its economic strategy to those who are vested in global consumerism. Where local economies are dependent on resources from outside their region, such as desert communities, this curriculum may not be a consideration.

However, there is a strong possibility of its success here in Sebastopol, at Sonoma State or the Santa Rosa Junior College, where its model will be seen by cities, a county

and a state that already supports a certain degree of sustainability, has already set ambitious targets for the reduction of carbon emissions, and has not seen significant lowering of carbon emissions from their efforts. Moreover, the state is already demonstrating a serious decline in water resources and has a high level of economic instability. The timing of the project with these aforementioned challenges may be an instrumental factor in increasing its value for consideration.

Summary. Lester R. Brown (2008), author of *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*, said that he is frequently asked, “given the environmental problems that the world is facing, can we make it?” He says his answer is always the same: “It depends on you and me, on what you and I do to reverse these trends” (p. 285). Through the literature and through the course of study, I have come to agree that it will depend on you and me, and on what you and I do to reverse these trends, and I also think it will depend on how we think about what we do. Albert Einstein said, “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” I was taught that where we are in life is determined by how we think, that what we think determines who we are, and who we are determines what we do. The methodology of this model of transition for sustainable living takes into consideration the scale and urgency of the challenges we face, realizing that change must happen as fast as possible, and that perhaps the fastest way to make the greatest difference in the reduction of greenhouse gases, resource depletion and economic instability is to change our focus from a global community to our local communities and work to relocalize them. I have come to believe in the idea that the redirection of our time, energy and existing resources, into our own local economies

at a smaller scale, will promote resilient, equitable and sustainable communities that are better prepared to handle the potential threats coming our way.

This means that all the elements of our daily lifestyle have to be rethought and balanced to have the ability to be sustained indefinitely, as individuals and, equally as important, in relation to our community and every other aspect of the world we live in.

Robert F. Kennedy said, “Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation” (1966, p. 1). I see this project as a way to change a small portion of events, that change a small portion of events, that in the total of all these acts will be written the history of this generation, and the future for our children.

Part III ~ Reflections: How the Project Illuminates the Three Program Themes

Social Justice

There is a general agreement that the increase in temperature of global warming will likely produce widespread consequences and devastating impacts on the lives and livelihoods of those who are the poorest, most vulnerable and the least able to protect themselves from the effects of climate change. This project specifically focuses on these socioeconomic consequences by optimizing what and how we are already living, by providing more efficient methods of operations, and by means of conservation.

It is designed as a tool for personal and social development. It imposes a requisite to work with others for the completion of tasks. It makes available detailed instruction and teaches skills that normally would have been unavailable and cost-prohibitive. The project also promotes the completion of tasks through neighborhood events that involve the sharing of knowledge, skills, tools and labor. This provides for equal opportunity and benefits from the work involved for both individuals and for individuals together as a community. It promotes self-reliance, community cooperation, and benefits both interests. All the work of this project will be available for free access online.

Ecological Issues

Ecological issues are the specific focus of the project weaving a way from ecological imbalance to solutions toward balance on a foundation of sustainability.

Psychological and Moral Dimensions of Change

The theme of the psychological and moral dimensions of change is the very motivation for this project. This study clearly makes evident that this generation, the decisions we make, and more importantly, the things we do, will have enormous consequences for future generations. If we do not adequately confront the direct causes and conditions of global climate change and the ecological issues that are now unmistakable; every person, every child and every creature will suffer.

The mission of the project is to provide methods that can be rapidly implemented, that will have an immediate impact on carbon emissions. The curriculum provides for a community model of living that leads to self-reliance, resilience and sustainability. The model and methods are both simple, duplicatable and can easily be adopted by other communities.

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Appendix

**A Model of Transition
For
Sustainable Living**

Course Curriculum



A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living Certificate Program

Sonoma State University, School of Extended Education

2010–2011 School Year

Sample Introduction

Welcome to a Model of Transition for Sustainable Living (MTSL) Certificate Program at Sonoma State University. The program consists of twelve required modules. Each module will present both information and training in subject module skills. Together they will provide an overall perspective on current thinking and technology, as well as practical skills for everyday sustainable living. The MTSL program includes a **Workbook/Planner**, a **Reader**, a **Resource Directory**, a **Journal**, a **Recipe Book** and a series of **Visual Aides** for your home and vehicle. The program has been designed to work in concert with local participating businesses and organizations. It imparts a broad and comprehensive understanding of sustainable living through following the Workbook/Planner, doing the check-listed tasks, completing the assigned readings, and participating in class meetings and training workshops.

The mission of the program is to empower you to act; to transition you from wherever you are today, to a lifestyle that is highly sustainable, within the one-year time period of the course. Therefore, the structure of the program is to teach 20% theory and provide 80% practical application. The course, if completed, will change your habits, dramatically lower your carbon emissions, save you money on utilities, and reduce your demand on resources. Additionally, the way you live will cultivate growth of the sustainable business community, assist you in becoming more socially responsible, and help you to become a steward of the environment. Furthermore, your purchasing decisions will be a voice in the marketplace that demands sustainable goods and services and promotes the development of a strong, local resilient community.



A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living

Curriculum Program Modules

Module 1: Introduction to A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living

Module 2: Adaptations

Module 3: Health & Wellness

Module 4: The Home Environment

Module 5: Waste

Module 6: Water

Module 7: Food Production

Module 8: Energy

Module 9: Emergency Preparedness

Module 10: Transportation

Module 11: Food Preparation & Preservation

Module 12: Tools & Technology

Module Content

Module 1: Introduction to A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living

Program Overview and Introduction to Course Materials and Resources:

Workbook/Planner, Reader, Resource Directory, Journal, Recipe Book and Visual Aides.

Course Outline and Requirements. Principles and Ethics of Course Foundation.

Visioning. Time Management. The Identification of the Why. Program Commitment.

Homework: Assessing Carbon Footprint

Module 2: Adaptations

Optimizing Energy Usage: Hot Water, Heating & Lighting. Changing Seasons: Energy Impacts on Health. Understanding PG&E and Utility bills. Economics of Energy. Utilizing Visual Aides. Community Participation. Localization. Farmers Markets. Community Sponsored Agriculture. Identifying Personal Energy Requirements. Setting an Energy Budget. Carpooling, Ride Sharing & Car Share. Utilizing the Kitchen Efficiently. Cooking Instruction & Skill Training. Discussion of Carbon Assessment.

Homework: Health Assessment**Module 3: Health & Wellness**

Maximizing Health. Chemicals & Toxic Load. Detoxification. Holistic Health. Exercise & Metabolism. Quality Choices of Food. Food Miles. Supplementation. Cooking for Nutrition. Relaxation Techniques. Meditation. Preparing for the Unexpected: Stress. Visualizing Health. Holidays on Health: Preparing for the Season, The Green Kitchen. Room Design & Efficiency. Resources, Product Selection & Methodologies. Fabric Choices and Health. Genetically Engineered Food. Discussion of Health Assessment.

Homework: Home Assessment**Module 4: The Home Environment**

Designing Your Way to a Green Home. Introduction to Home Management. Health & the Indoor Environment. Green Remodeling Projects. The Green Bedroom. Where Did the Materials Come From? Living in the House During Construction. Trusted Green

Certificate Programs for Materials. Caulking and Sealing. Lighting. Insects & Rodents. Mold. Salvaging Wood. Being Aware of Asbestos. Looking at Costs in a New Way. Health Risks in Your Home. Heating & Cooling. Insulation & Sealing Ducts. Natural Disasters: Where to Be & Where Not to Be. Preparing the Home for Earthquake. Emergency Supply Storage. Discussion of Home Assessment.

Homework: Essay: Where is Away When You Throw It, Flush It, Recycle It?

Module 5: Waste

Focusing on Zero Waste. Your Ecosystem. Creative Recycling, Renewing & Reusing, Graywater Use. The Why of Composting / Designing a Compost for Your Home. The Why of Worm Bins / Building One That Works for You. Purchasing w/o Packaging. Wastes as Resources. Land & Nature Stewardship. Discussion of Essay: Where is Away When You Throw It, Flush It, and Recycle It?

Homework: Zero Waste Fast.

Module 6: Water

The Green Bathroom. Rainwater Harvesting. Passive Rainwater Catchments / Designing a Simple System for Your Home. Water: It's Uses & Optimization. Dishes Done Easy. The Short Shower. Drip Irrigation. Storing Water. Water Filtration. Solar Heated Hot Tubs for Bathing. Discussion of Zero Waste Fast.

Homework: Drawing Your Residential Layout in Relation to Sun, Wind, Shade, Trees, Lot Size & Water Availability.

Module 7: Food Production

Food and Landscape Design. Organic / Sustainable Gardening. Bio-Intensive Habits. Sheet Mulching. Dry Farming. Soil Types. Soil Amendments. Regional Food Growing. How, When & How Much to Plant. Animal Husbandry. Manures. Discussion of Residential Layouts.

Homework: I Energy: 350 Event Signup: Energy Assessment

Module 8: Energy

Energy Literacy. Understanding Home Energy Use. The Green Living Room. Renewable Electric Systems. Lighting. Electricity. Phantom Loads. Refrigeration. Solar Electric vs. Solar Thermal, Understanding Photovoltaic systems. Passive Solar Design. Grid-Tied Renewable Power vs. Non-Grid. Energy Efficient Appliances. Rebates & Incentives. Efficient and Low Pollution Wood Stoves. The Solar Oven. Solar Oven Cooking & Food Processing. Discussion of Energy Assessment.

Homework: Identifying Potential Hazards In and Around the Home in Case of Emergency & Identifying Your Resources before, during & after Disaster?

Module 9: Emergency Preparedness

Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) Training. Basic CPR. Basic First Aid. Discussion of Home Hazards and Your Resources.

Homework: Transportation Assessment.

Module 10: Transportation

The Many Forms of Transportation: Pros & Cons. Public Transportation in the County. Time Management & Planning to Transportation. Kicking the Feet as a Habit. The Importance of Good Shoes. Bicycle Maintenance. Bicycles & Electric Bikes. Scooters / Bicycles Using Bio-Diesel. Traveling. Game Plan for Transition: Powering Down. Discussion of Transportation Assessment.

Homework: The Home Shopping List: What Can You Always Have on Hand?

Module 11: Food Preparation & Preservation

Raw: Cooking the Easy Way. Following Recipes. Planning Your Diet. Design & Preparation for the Winter Season. Herbs & Spices. Canning. Drying & Dehydration. Rehydrating Before Cooking. Seed Saving. Solar Oven Dehydration of Food. Creating Places for Drying Food. Sprouting. Raw Food Diet: Is it Right for You? Gleaning. Harvesting in the Wild. Hunting. Tools for the Tasks. Discussion of The Home Shopping List.

Homework: Technology Fast.

Module 12: Tools & Technology

The Use of Tools & Technology, Hand Tools. Rechargeable Tools. Power Tools. The Home Computer. Cell Phones. Electro Magnetic Fields. The Benefits of Ham Radio Licensing. Consensus Decision Making. Non-Violent Communication Techniques. Living in Community. Discussion of Technology Fast.

Homework: Program Assessment.

A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living

Sample Day Schedule & Course Requirements

8:30 – 11:30 *Full class meeting

11:30 – 12:00 Group planning time

Noon – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 4:00 Classroom observation and participation in *Reskilling Tool Kits

4:00 – 4:30 Debriefing with Reskilling Tool Kit's presenters

4:30 – 5:00 Further planning time

*Full class meetings: During this time, MTSL participants will explore a variety of concepts from the field of Sustainable Living; learning and teaching through seminars, discussions, guest presentations and hands-on activities. Active participation is required, both individually and in groups. Sample class meetings include: *Maximizing Health, Food Preparation & Preservation, Creative Recycling, Renewing and Reusing, Health and the Indoor Environment, Time Management, Visioning and Personal Commitment, Introduction to Home Management, Emergency Preparedness, Water: It's Uses & Optimization, Energy Literacy, Community Emergency Response Training, Student Lesson Discussions, Presentations, and much more.*



*Reskilling Tool Kit's participation: Daily participation in the Reskilling Tool Kits will provide an authentic environment for applying what has been discussed in the full class meetings. MTSL's will not only observe, but also interact with the students and be responsible for part of their instruction.

Course Requirements

MTSL's will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Attendance
- Participation in all activities
- Completion of all reading & assignments
- Completion of a specific % of the workbook, which will be detailed on the first day of class

*Those participants who have registered for A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living's Community Program will be required to complete 80% of the workbook and write a 2–5 page paper, which will provide reflections from journaling, reassessments, carbon footprint, savings, or other benefits received, whether tangible or not, and results from the changes implemented. This is in addition to the course requirements outlined above. MTSL's Community Program participants, upon completion of the course requirements, will receive a certificate of completion, become registered (if they so choose) as part of the local sustainability tours, and receive a custom sculpture, made from recycled materials, for placement outside their home, showcasing the participants and their home as part of the People Committed to our Children in the Future program.



A Model of Transition for Sustainable Living

Program Materials Sample

The **Workbook/Planner** is a daily guide and planner of things to do each day. It is designed to teach a balanced and seasonal approach to lifestyle choices and help you manage your time. The **MTSL** program schedule and activities, the menus and shopping lists, as well as the **Resource Directory**, have all been preprogrammed and included within the **Workbook/Planner (W/P)**. The timing suggestions offered will significantly improve your chances of success for the completion of the daily tasks. However, eventually you will discover what works for your particular scheduling, based on your own individual needs. The **W/P** also contains **Daily Food Logs** to help you keep track of your diet and nutrition.

The **Reader** is a compilation of articles, readings, handouts and other valuable information to be used in conjunction with the program modules. Due to the growing interest in information and resources for sustainable living, the material in the **Reader**, although current at the time you receive it, will always be in the process of changing, and being added to. While the **Reader** is intended to be used primarily as an accompaniment to the modules in the twelve month program, the information contained in the **Reader** will provide you with a quality reference document.

The **Resource Directory** is a list of participating businesses and organizations associated with the **MTSL** program. These businesses and organizations will provide

you with discounts and savings on food, miscellaneous goods and services, events and entertainment in the local area.

The **Daily Journal** is to be used for reflections, feelings, thoughts or ideas. It is an important aspect of personal development. It will gain you understanding and insight into how you are changing during this time.

The **Recipe Book** includes daily recipes that follow the seasons of your journey. Your local community sponsored agricultural farmers (the CSA's) have all made contributions to this wonderful collection. Shopping lists for the daily recipes are included in your **W/P**, along with the locations where you will find menu ingredients that may not be included in your weekly delivery.

The **Visual Aides** are a set of reminder prompts that are either placed on, or alongside, the appliance, light switch, sink etc. that outline recommended use times or procedures for easy reference, until they become your habit. You will be switching the colored prompts out every couple of weeks, so you don't get used to them.



A Transition Model for Sustainable Living

Commitment Letter Sample

I, _____, hereby commit to one year of transition to sustainable living. I will be focused on challenging my abilities in the pursuit of zero emissions, using less resources and promoting a strong, resilient, local economy. In addition, I promise myself that I will faithfully follow the entire transition model, including the health and wellness plan for the entire year. I will communicate to my friends, my family, and most of all, myself, that this goal is important to me. I will be forgiving of myself if I slip off the program in any way, and I will resume the program model without beating myself up, despairing, or quitting. I will be patient with myself and others. I will ask for the support I need to follow the program and plans, and I will support myself by keeping a journal and staying in touch with my emotions. Most important, I will reach out to my fellow transitioners involved in the program, and I will find ways to support myself by getting the nutrition, rest, and exercise I need. I realize this commitment is solely with myself, and that it carries no rewards, penalties, or punishments other than those associated with the reflection of the strength of my character.

Name _____ Date _____



Daily Journal Sample Directions

Your Daily Journal is just for you. The journal is a written record of what you are experiencing throughout your journey of transition. You will be able to observe the outward expressions of your journey through what you have accomplished in your home and community. The Daily Journal is a way to observe the inward expressions of your journey.

Your first task will be to transfer your letter of commitment to the first blank page in your journal. Second, take the time to transfer your vision, in words or picture(s) to the page opposite your commitment. And then, begin the next page by entering the date of your first journal entry, and of each subsequent entry onto the following pages thereafter, every day when you take time to record the day's thoughts, feelings and/or ideas.

Begin and end each day by reading your commitment and seeing your vision as real, reminding yourself why you are doing what you are doing. Follow this procedure morning and night to firmly establish in your mind the conviction for the vision you desire to bring about. The valuable insights gained from doing this procedure twice a day and reflecting on your thoughts, feelings and ideas, will support you by building bridges between where you are now and where you will go with your vision in life. This daily exercise will refuel your motivation, when your tank is empty. When the times come that you don't feel like keeping your commitment, are not focusing on your vision and don't know if you even believe in it, your private journal will remind you of what you set out to do, clear your mind and help turn your thinking around. Albert Einstein said that we

cannot solve the problems of today with the same thinking that created them in the first place. Ernest Holmes said that if you want to change your life, you have to change your mind. And James Allen said that the mind guides our footsteps as we progress along the pathway of life. So we begin our journey by simply paying attention to our mind. We do this by taking time each day to record our thoughts, feelings and ideas.

Now you are on your own, but remember, you are not alone. We, your new family and community have all made commitments like yours. We all have a vision for ourselves and for the future. And, we all are committed to working at changing our lives, day by day, in ways that align our lives with the visions we hold in our minds.

