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## Transition Network Conference

Ruskin Mills, 31-May-07

### Session Notes

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#### Rob Hopkins: 12 Steps

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I want to tell you a story about George heath. I want to take you back in time in Totnes, in Devon. George Heath was a man who ran a market garden in Totnes. He was one of 4 people who ran market gardens. His garden appears on maps of Totnes back as far as there are maps. He has series of glass houses and the cattle market passed cow manure to him. He grew fruit and veg and flowers til 1980. It's within the urban fabric of our towns til recently.

Until recently all businesses were family owned. Two or one generation back its in the fabric of our towns. When he died land went back to council his land was turned into a car park.

If you go back to when there were the railways Totnes was self reliant for food. Before the railways, some things came up the river on boats. Then we made the cake and the icing and cherries were imported. Now it is the other way round.

Clapham common during Second World War – slide of veggie plots.

New development are usually named over the things that were bulldozed. You can trace the archaeology in the street names of our town. Coppice hill orchard st...

Cuba is astonishing urban agriculture. Here are some productivity comparisons:

- the market gardens around London during second world war produced about 45 tonnes per hectare
- in Paris 55
- in Cuba 250

Continuous productive urban landscapes

There are still places where the localised food systems still going on like Slovenia.

Whole thing has to move from being consumers to being consumers/producers.

Great Expectations (Dickins) Pip goes back to Whemicks house and there's a description of how he is almost self reliant for food.

In terms of doing transition work we have a dual role of being a hospice and a midwife to nurture what is coming through [so it is] sustainable.

#### Lessons from Kinsale

- Avoid them and us
- Create a sense that something is happening it should feel like a historic process the
- Whole thing about Creating a vision of an sustainable future

#### 7 Buts

- We've got no funding – the whole process in Totnes is self funded. Then you hand over the power to other people.
- They won't let us
- There are already green groups in this town and I don't want to step on their toes. Present in the right way it is liberating for them too.
- No one cares about the environment in this town anyway. Well, they do care - more than you realize. There are all kinds of ways people can get involved
- Surely it's too late to do anything – if you think that way then it is
- I don't have the right qualifications - look at the wealth of people we have here today
- I don't have the energy to do that - in my experience the right people and the energy appears and it carries you through.

#### The 12 first steps for a TT initiative

- #1 form a steering group and design its demise from the outset
  - Start small
  - Form group for first 3 stages
- #2 Awareness raising stage
  - Talk and film screenings networking opportunity the opportunity to digest in with other people. Don't info dumping! somehow we expect them to watch End of Sub and then start mulching the next day. We have a responsibility to communicate well.
  - Imaginative facilitation
  - Keep it positive
- #3 Lay foundations
  - Draw in existing groups - who they are and what they do.
  - Value what's already there - Coopted some group in town, make the connection of whats happening
  - Jointly organise events
- #4 official unleashing I love the term unleashing it really doesn't seem to be what its like invite key people

- Propels the project forward
- Inspiration and historic
- Get people talking to each other?
- Timing is crucial has to be a tie when people will remember as the night when it all started, music, food a memory of the journey the town in about to collective embark on. When people stop you in the street and say what is happening next; too late and you miss the point.
  
- #5 form groups
  - Make them happen
  - Self-organising
  - Steering group
  - Training - don't assume that just because they say they want t set up a group that they have the skills to facilitate. Totnes ran a training for people to learn how to do it.
  
- #6 use open space
  - Precede with an event
  - Networking
  - Projects will emerge
  - Live online
  - Title as question
  - bring together all the people in he area who are passionate about the subject. You can have people feeding in from al over the place
  
- #7develop visible practical manifestation of the project
  - Develops a sense that something has happening
  - Enhances willingness to engage
  - Balance observation and action
  - Team building
  
- #8 Facilitate the great reskilling - We have become the most useless generation
  - Draw from oral histories
  - Utilise local skills
  - Where are the gaps in people's skills?
  - Build a sense of 'can do'
  - In past people had these skills by osmosis, we run a whole lot of courses
  
- #9 build a bridge to local government
  - draw them in as much as possible
  - avoid any sense of them and us
  - invite them to events
  - how can your plans integrate with theirs

- do when you are firm enough to know what you are doing and not get co-opted
- #10 honour the elders
  - oral history interviews
  - local history
  - comparative skills inventory
- #11 let it go where it wants to go
  - If you try to control the outcome it will really wind you up!
  - Every one will be different
  - design in flexibility
  - plan for uncertainty
- #12 create an energy descent plan
  - start with the vision and backcast
  - utilise local plans
  - a 20 year plan of how the vision of the future will be and backcast from there. It should be exhilarating to read and illustrated with newspaper articles and photos and a story of how the town can make that descent. Sets out a road map that is realisable from the start.

#### Totnes Projects

##### GETTING BIZ INVOLVED

can only get so far with appealing to their conscience.

Oil vulnerability auditing with univ of Liverpool. Simon works in manufacturing. He is a bottom line business bloke. When he walks into a room on business, he can look at all the things that a business doesn't and work out where fuels are used and look at what happens if oil goes to \$80 a barrel or \$90. We are applying for funding now to create oil vulnerability teams who can spread this out. What would their planning look like if they were basing it on different principles.

We are running a course called skilling up for powerdown – developing a teachers manual. A lot of people who are involved: local gov, café, MP holding fistfuls of totnes pounds

1810 totnes banknote. There are certain points in history where this happened. Will print out 2000 notes for £10 you get 11 totnes pounds. Berkshares greatest historical example of complementary currency. Totnesian head for historical.

Nut tree capital of Britain.

Lewis made a film and showed it before every film in the cinema – u-tube films  
Be great way to communicate between transition towns. One of transition tales: tot times mar 21 2021 – children made up futuristic stories.