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## What will it take to provide real hope for young people?

Andrew Gaines

Schoolchildren learn about Antarctic ice shelves and global warming. Disturbing stuff.

On current trends they will certainly experience traumatic societal disruption as global food supplies collapse and ever more violence emerges. Many young people already experience acute despair, and some young women and families do not want to bring children into the world because they fear what is coming. It was like this when the threat of nuclear war was on everyone's mind.

Despair destroys the spirit. What might possibly give young people realistic hope?

I think there is **only one thing**. Young people will have hope when they see that ***society as a whole is passionately committed to reversing global warming and other trends (including arms build-up), and successfully transitioning to a life-sustaining society.***

### How would they know that this commitment exists?

Just as in wartime everyone speaks about the war, so people everywhere would be talking about ***transitioning to a life-sustaining society.*** Politicians would affirm this as our goal (rather

than economic increase). They would justify policy decisions on the basis of their contribution to the transition to a life-sustaining society.

Both NGOs and businesses would frame their work as a contribution to the Great Transition to a life-sustaining society. Some would advertise their commitment. The media would regularly report on improvements in environmental indicators (while noting how much more we have to do).

Since a profound cultural shift is required, more resources would go into fostering personal creativity, inner well-being and community connection. Collectively we must become the kind of people who can create and enjoy a life-sustaining society,

Cultivating inner resources of well-being and joy in life would greatly reduce people's dependency on material things for a sense of satisfaction and self-worth, and thus reduce compulsive excess consumption.

In time, CO2 levels would start to decline and environmental statistics improve. The mass media would report that we are making progress in transitioning to a life-sustaining society. At this point hope would seem realistic.

## **The ultimate test of effectiveness**

Ultimately, the test is: *are we living within planetary boundaries?* Have we evolved a society that does is best to take care of people, communities and the environment? If so, we would have, not a new world order, but simply a new world. It will be much more loving than the world we now experience.

## **How might we act to make hope realistic for young people?**

By masses of us communicating through our networks to inspire mainstream commitment to transitioning to a life-sustaining society.  
[www.GreatTransitionInitiative.net](http://www.GreatTransitionInitiative.net)

Each of us can do this through our own initiative. Ready-to-use communication tools are at [www.mahblogins.org](http://www.mahblogins.org) (aka Inspiring Transition).

It's time to think big. Although the MAHB network is not huge in absolute terms, our combined connections reach a broad and global audience.  
<http://mahb.stanford.edu/blog/realistic-hope/>

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