

## TRANSFORMATIONS

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Both of the editors of this issue of *Scope* have at one time worked to lead our institution in terms of the development of sustainability - integrating the operations of the campus, research, and in developing sustainable practitioners. In that role we have both sought to encourage a transformative change - changing the lightbulbs is necessary, but insufficient.

Mann *et al.* (2017) developed a model of a Transformation Mindset as a means to guide practitioners in becoming a sustainable practitioner as part of their professional framework of practice. The Transformation Mindset is a way of thinking that leads to transformational acts resulting in socio-ecological restoration. The Transformation Mindset can be used to frame the papers in this issue of *Scope Learning and Teaching*.

This transformational focus came from Leach *et al.* (2012) who argued that "what is now needed is nothing short of major transformation – not only in our policies and technologies, but in our modes of innovation themselves – to enable us to navigate turbulence and meet the Sustainable Development Goals" (p.2). While some avoid a problem formulation, preferring a positive framing of opportunities (e.g. a baby is not a problem, but something precious to be nurtured), the challenge posed by unsustainability can be usefully considered as a wicked problem. This means it involves complexity, uncertainty, multiple stakeholders and perspectives, competing values, lack of end points and ambiguous terminology. It means dealing with a mess that is different from the problems for which our current tools and disciplines were designed. As individuals and disciplines we are ill-equipped to cope with the messy complexity we now face - and on top of that, many of us are struck with the nagging feeling that we might not be doing enough - that we might be fiddling while Rome burns.

1. Socio-ecological restoration over economic justification
2. Transformative system change over small steps to keep business as usual
3. Holistic perspectives over narrow focus
4. Equity and diversity over homogeneity
5. Respectful, collaborative responsibility over selfish othering
6. Action in the face of fear over paralysis or wilful ignorance
7. Values change over behaviour modification
8. Empowering engagement over imposed solutions
9. Living positive futures over bleak predictions
10. Humility and desire to learn over fixed knowledge sets

The Transformation Mindset that the authors in this edition have demonstrated, consists of a set of paired items that are activity statements arranged such that while we value the second element, we value the first more. So, for example, **Socio-ecological restoration over economic justification**, makes clear that the point of sustainability is socio-ecological restoration. Economic development is not dismissed but should be seen as a means to achieve benefits in social, cultural and environmental aspects – a vehicle for sustainability, not a goal in itself (this aligns with Daly's Strong Sustainability (Daly, 1996). Boyle, O'Brien and Sellar's article presents a case study that embraces socio-ecological transformation through the potential for an integrated approach to organic waste management. It is widely argued that making small improvements, while maintaining the status quo, is unlikely to result in the required changes for a sustainable future. **Transformative system change over small steps to keep business as usual** means looking for leverage, for things that multiply to create positive system change. Collins recognises that in order for obesity patterns to change, the nursing profession has to take a different role, and to change that system, nursing education needs to change. Also in the nursing profession Ross, McDiarmid and Burkett explore how the profession of nursing is transforming, with the capabilities to lead, delegate and coach emerging as critical elements. In this they illustrate the **Empowering engagement over imposed solutions** item of the Transformation Mindset. In exploring how we engage with interactive art, Kean takes a different approach to interactivity - they challenge us not to interact. This challenges us to think about the nature of the Transformation Mindset item of **Empowering engagement** - sometimes we are empowered by not engaging.

Karetai's reflective journey illustrates a life lived according to another element of the Transformation Mindset- **Living positive futures over bleak predictions**. We take an optimistic frame. It is easy to become negative about the reasons for change. To do so, however, is to miss the point. The focus of transformations is on the solutions, not the problems. Orr (1992) argued that "the study of environmental problems is an exercise in despair unless it is regarded as only a preface to the study, design, and implementation of solutions" (p. 94). This is not to deny the problem. Rather, we would argue for demonstrating positive alternatives: transition towns, or co-housing initiatives, or, in Karetai's case, a relentless belief in a positive outcome.

The Transformation Mindset values **Equity and diversity over homogeneity** and most of us would accept that. But, sometimes we can be blinkered by our own insulated communities and worldview. Fogarty describes how a pivot in understanding was brought about by attendance at an international conference and the sharing of practice around equity of access to education.

The Transformation Mindset **Values - based change over behaviour modifications** means that in order to make meaningful long-term changes, there needs to be a values-based shift, rather than just addressing harmful behaviours. Intervention that achieves behaviour change without corresponding values is likely to not be as effective due to dissonance felt by the individual. Thompson explores these ideas with a study of the relationship between experiencing a place, caring for that place, and taking action. In testing these relationships, Thompson demonstrates a humility- **Humility and desire to learn over fixed knowledge sets** which is also inherent in the rethinking of paradigms, processes and beliefs highlighted by Mann and Montague-Gallagher's featured Sustainable Lens guests.

Each article in *Scope: Learning and Teaching- Sustainable Practice* in turn demonstrates how the authors, as sustainable practitioners in their own field, have embraced Sustainable Practice through curiosity and questioning – a desire for knowledge, but a firm belief that we can never know all the answers.

We invite the reader to enjoy *Scope: Learning and Teaching - Transformation*, to adopt a transformation mindset, and to take positive restorative action in their own world.

## REFERENCES

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