

Food Resiliency
What was my workshop all about?
Why should you care or want to teach this?
To find out, read below!

Background

Why is building resiliency important? Well...first of all – what even is resiliency?

In general terms, resiliency is “the ability of groups or communities to cope with external stresses and disturbances as a result of social, political and environmental change” (Adger 2000). Food resiliency is the ability of a household to keep within a certain level of well being (ie. being food secure) by withstanding shocks and stressors. It includes both actions that reduce the risk of food crisis and the coping techniques after a shock/stressor. I think of power outages, living in the Northeast from snowstorms, how would I keep my food cold or how would I change and prep for a new diet for a few days? Or if my car broke down, how would I get myself to the store to pick up food?

It is important to think about food resiliency in terms of well-being – of thinking for the long term and for the future. (For example: A person with a savings account or with money saved up will not be hit as hard if they were to lose their job...the same could be said of someone who has a vegetable garden in his/her/they yard.)

There are two theories that I use to provide a deeper understanding of resiliency and the current (climate) on food: Ken Wilbur’s Integral Ecology and Manfred Max Neef’s Human Scale of Development. Although I did not specifically reference Integral Ecology...the theory has helped me to understand the ways in which our values have shaped the present day food system and can reshape our future food system. Our food system is currently in the hands of a very powerful few...and is increasingly becoming more and more consolidated (Check out the Brand Name Handout!) What’s will all the theories? I learned about food resiliency through the lens of these theories as I spent a week in England the summer of 2015 as part of a study abroad trip.

Learning Objective 1: Explore the values that shape our capitalist consumer based food system (through Ken Wilbur’s Integral Theory)

The US food system is large scale and centralized industry of which focuses on the need for profit and maximum efficiency and convenience to consumers. The system is very complex – and there is not much transparency as to who is growing/making our food, how it is being made, where it is coming from, etc. There is inequality of access within our food system privileging the wealthy and the able-bodied over the ‘other’ – those who may not have enough to feed into this system. We are taught via American social values that capitalism works and that cheap is good and that nature is commodity to be conquered – and that if something happens, our technology will save us. We think we should be able to make a personal choice getting to decide what food goes into our bodies – and these, these are the values that shape our food system. It is

through new personal choices that we can begin to change our food system and to transfer the power of the few in industry to the thousands of hands (and mouths of the people).

Learning Objective 2: Engage with your own needs in a society (Manfred Max-Neef's Human Scale of Development)

The Chilean economist Manfred Max-Neef once saw a poor man on the side of the street and he noticed that when he looked deeply into the eyes of poverty, that he had nothing to say...that his academics had not taught him how to connect human to human. The capitalist rationale assumes that humans are driven by a limitless craving for material possessions...in thinking about this, Max-Neef developed a concept that what human beings are driven by is fundamentally different; if people in power made decisions based on his theory, our world would (could and does) change dramatically.

Max-Neef theorized that are human needs are few and finite. "Not only that but they are constant through all human cultures and across historical time periods. What changes over time is the way these needs are satisfied" (Max-Neef). Our human needs are subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, leisure/idleness, creation, identity, and freedom. I found that through my own experience, learning about this theory in the context of the Transition Town Totnes movement in southern England, provided me with the framework to take action in changing my food system – not for my individual needs but my needs as a human being living in a global world.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

I have highlighted the ones that are particularly useful from this resource list provided to me by those at Growing Good Lives, the organization in England that taught me these theories. (Check out the link to their organization here!

<http://growinggoodlives.com/>)

Beyond the Usual Suspects

Utrecht, May 2015

Resource list

The following list is a brief set of links to topics we touched on in the course. I hope it serves as a reminder of what we covered and a starting point for further exploration. There is of course so much more out there than I can cover in a few pages, so I hope you will feel inspired to look further. If there is anything missing please let me know.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND CHANGE

<http://www.kenwilber.com/blog/show/505>

This piece gives a brief explanation of Integral Theory which inspired the quadrant exercise we did in the morning. Don't worry if you get lost towards the end – so do I!

HUMAN SCALE DEVELOPMENT

MANFRED MAX-NEEF (I have separately attached a brief intro to his work, as well as two case studies):

You can download a pdf of Max-Neef's 1991 book Human Scale Development here:

http://130.233.249.11/courses/sub12/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Max-neef_Human_Scale_development.pdf

Max Neef speaking on youtube about **Barefoot Economics**:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-FCy2y8Eiw>

<http://www.rainforestinfo.org.au/background/maxneef.htm> --> provided here is a list of the human needs and examples!! (Source: Maria Fallavollita)

INDICATORS

The indicator page I handed out was inspired by a chart designed by **Chris Spies**, a specialist in the field of conflict transformation, development and community building processes.

<http://www.change-management-blog.com/2007/02/short-portrait-of-chris-spies.html>

There is a link on this page to a pdf which looks at fundamental needs in relation to conflict resolution.

Bhutan's New Development Paradigm (NDP) initiative is part of the worldwide effort to help define a new and more viable post-2015 global development agenda.

<http://www.newdevelopmentparadigm.bt/>

OECD Better Life Index allows you to compare well-being across countries, based on 11 topics the OECD has identified as essential, in the areas of material living conditions and quality of life.

<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>

VALUES AND FRAMING

Much of the discussion around framing has been informed by the work of cognitive linguist **George Lakoff**. You can read a summary of the main points of '**Metaphors we live by**', a book

he co-wrote with **Mark Johnson** here: <http://theliterarylink.com/metaphors.html>

This book is also available to download as a pdf.

We discussed intrinsic and extrinsic values. **Common Cause** makes the case for understanding and working with values. You can find their Common Cause handbook here

<http://valuesandframes.org/>

The Century of the Self - This series is about how Freud's theories have been used in propaganda and advertising.

<http://topdocumentaryfilms.com/the-century-of-the-self/>

Michael Sandel, American political philosopher and professor at Harvard University, is the author of '**What Money Can't Buy**'.

Below a few links to his work:

- <http://www.tannerlectures.utah.edu/lectures/documents/sandel00.pdf>

The Tanner Lectures on Human Values

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00kt7sh>

Reith lectures 2009 - Markets and Morals

I mentioned the writer **Charles Eisenstein**. His book '**Sacred Economics – Money, Gift & Society in the Age of Transition**' is available to read online.

<http://sacred-economics.com/>

NETWORK THEORY

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consequential_strangers

This Wikipedia entry explains much of what we discussed about **weak ties** and **consequential strangers** in relation to both our personal life and network development.

<http://research.gigaom.com/2013/03/cultural-change-is-really-complex-contagion/>

Article on changing culture in business which I believe applies to all cultural change.

COMMUNICATION FOR CULTURAL CHANGE

Reflect-Action's core principles and methodology are grounded in the work of Brazilian liberation theologian and educator **Paulo Freire**.

<http://www.reflect-action.org/node/37>

FOR INSPIRATION AND CONTEMPLATION

Curitiba: A Global Model For Development by Bill McKibben

"The first time I went there, I had never heard of Curitiba. I had no idea that its bus system was the best on Earth or that a municipal shepherd and his flock of 30 sheep trimmed the grass in its vast parks..."

<http://www.commondreams.org/views05/1108-33.htm>

Article about a city in Brazil that recruited local farmers to help do something U.S. cities have yet to do: end hunger. **Yes! magazine** is published by David Korten and is full of inspiring stories.

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/food-for-everyone/the-city-that-ended-hunger>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lp29wq5F4Fw>

Ted talk by **Tim Jackson**, author of Prosperity without Growth, dispels the myth of decoupling and explores the dangers of the consumerist paradigm.

Living with just enough: Lots of great stories on this site, but this one feels relevant to the subject of satisfaction

<http://www.globalonenessproject.org/library/articles/living-just-enough>

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Some Small Holding: This is my blog where I write about anything and everything relating to economics, ecology and the everyday.

www.somesmallholding.wordpress.com

The following is a post based on the talk I gave on Friday night:

<https://somesmallholding.wordpress.com/2014/12/04/from-dismal-science-to-language-of-beauty/>

Growing Good Lives: This is our webpage where you can sign up to keep up to date with our work.

www.growinggoodlives.com

You can also like our facebook page here <https://www.facebook.com/growinggoodlives?fref=nf>

Or follow me on twitter: @inezaponte