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## Three Sources of Hope

### Contribution to GTI Forum [Which Future Are We Living In?](#)

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The [Great Transition scenarios](#), detailed in the 2002 [Great Transition essay](#), stand the test of time. All six are alive and well, not as scenarios but as realities.

In the two Conventional World scenarios, [market forces](#) still determine almost everything, regardless of the human or ecological costs. [Policy reforms](#) to guide us towards a more sustainable world are in play every day, often to good effect, but usually riddled with lobbyists' loopholes.

In the two Barbarization scenarios, Trump and his MAGA Republicans are working hard to build a [Fortress World](#) that will protect the billionaires and punish the rest, derided as "losers." If you are homeless, burnt out of your home by a forest fire, or flooded out of your village, the [Breakdown](#) scenario is also already happening, as [33 million people in Pakistan](#) know all too well.

In the two Great Transition scenarios, the [Eco-communalist](#) future is happening in a scattered patchwork of initiatives, but with little that approaches self-sustaining communities. On Vancouver Island, where I live, tens of thousands of people want to live this way, but the Conventional World's planning, money, and land ownership rules foil all but the most persistent dreamer. The [New Paradigm](#), which I suspect is desired by 75% of Canadians (all but conservative voters), is probably the furthest away, with very few institutional advances in its direction.

This makes it challenging, as I peer through the tears and the tear gas to surmise our possible future. But during the 1920s, in the United States, who would have predicted the hugely radical changes that happened in the 1930s under Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal? Almost none. Who, during the 1930s in Great Britain, would have predicted the creation of a full welfare state within fifteen years? On the flip side, during the optimistic first decade of the 1900s, who would have predicted the slaughter of World War I that was to come? This line of thought can cut both ways.

Yet I am determined. I hold onto hope, and do whatever I can to express it. My hope has three sources. The first is cosmo-evolutionary. In response to the law of entropy, I believe—along with others—that there is a balancing principle at work called syntropy, a self-organizational tendency that operates through consciousness, giving us agency. The entire Universe is deemed to be panpsychic, enabling syntropy to operate everywhere, as the Seattle neuroscientist Christof Koch has [concluded](#).

Most scientists are mystified by the origins and nature of consciousness, and similarly mystified—or appalled if they are strict materialists—by the notion of syntropy. From this perspective, it is syntropy that causes atoms to self-organize into molecules, molecules to self-organize into organisms, couples to choose to make their marriages work, climate activists to devote their lives to ensuring that the crisis does not become a global catastrophe, and Great Transition Network members to work for a great transition. Seen through this lens, our impulse to build a better world stems from this ancient syntropic impulse, dating right back to the birth of the Universe. That is what I call “deep hope.”

My second source of hope is the strength of “the movement.” Writing as someone who is deeply immersed in the policy world, and working on multiple fronts, I observe a fairly consistent consensus of ideas and proposals for change within the various movements for climate action, biodiversity action, social justice, peace, affordable housing, a living wage, a well-being social solidarity economy, financial and banking reform, democratic reform, Black Lives Matter, Indigenous Land Back, regenerative organic farming, prison reform, and so on. I exclude what used to be known as the New Age movement, and the holistic health movement, where I observe a retreat from progressive advocacy and an advance into unhinged conspiracy theories.

I observe, however, that most people, in most of these movements, are not well-briefed on what is happening in the other movements. The days are just too short. The climate activists and affordable housing advocates don't know about public banking, or how central banks could contribute through Quantitative Easing (QE) for People. The biodiversity activists don't know about community land trusts. The peace activists don't know about the housing solutions. And yet we need each other. No one can get elected on a climate platform alone. The strength of the Green New Deal is that it recognizes that climate action needs climate justice, which needs economic and housing justice.

Each of the movements feeds into the river of progressive change. My hope lies in the potential for integrative initiatives that weave the movements together. As the decade advances, we will see a steady increase in climate-induced disasters, debt, evictions, and political distress. The paranoid MAGA movement is going "[Full Caesar](#)," working to replace democracy with authoritarian leadership, blind to the historical reality that this marked the beginning of the fall of the Roman Empire.

We need to counteract this with a stronger opposing force. My third source of hope, therefore, is not to predict the future but to make it happen. If I was to draft a Theory of Change for the whole wide river, it might look like this:

IF leaders can work together who are committed to building the larger movement, the river of change;

IF such leadership can be funded, enabling them to reach out to leaders in the many contributing movements;

IF they (we) can develop a cohesive platform for progressive change that will excite and unite most people in the contributing movements;

IF we can develop self-organized study circles that will enable people learn what unites them, and contribute to the platform for change;

IF people promote the platform in their various initiatives and protests, spreading awareness to the public and media; and

IF we can inspire political parties to embrace the platform, people to run for political office, and all of us to campaign to help them win,

THEN we will be able to achieve transformational change at the depth needed for the great transition,

BECAUSE this, or something like it, is what it will take.

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## About the Author



Guy Dauncey is an author and ecofuturist working to develop a positive vision of a sustainable future, and to translate that vision into action. He is the founder of the British Columbia Sustainable Energy Association and the author or co-author of ten books, including *The Climate Challenge: 101 Solutions to Global Warming* and *Journey to the Future: A Better World Is Possible*. He is an Honorary Member of the Planning Institute of British Columbia, a Fellow of the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland, and a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts.

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## About the Publication

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