

People, Partnerships and Possibilities Event for Climate Action

By Heidi Schaeffer

This November 10th the Aron Theatre Co-op is hosting a new kind of highly interactive event. This event includes an information fair, an expert panel and small group conversations exploring climate action. Over ten environmental organizations and groups will share information and opportunities throughout the theatre. For example, the Lower Trent Conservation Authority programs and Peterborough Greenup's home energy audits, the Municipalities active transportation planning process, and grassroots groups working on sustainability in the food system and land stewardship.

Following the information fair, subject matter experts will join a panel to share initiatives that are helping to grow more sustainable green communities in Cobourg, Peterborough, and Kingston. After the panel presentations, community members will be invited to explore their priorities in small group conversations. Topics came out of local people sharing what a flourishing future means to them. People can either join a conversation of interest or propose a topic of their own. Some of the topics include:

1. **Environmental leadership:** environmental awareness and educational activities to learn to care for our environment.
2. **Consumer activism:** No more single use plastics, biodegradable/non-toxic products, zero waste and recycling.
3. **Resilient food systems:** Healthy clean soil, fresh water, regenerative farming, protecting farmland, buying local food.
4. **Climate action:** Reducing greenhouse gases, energy conservation and climate change planning, building sustainable housing and biking infrastructure.

The people, partnerships and possibilities event is funded through a grant from the Campbellford Seymour Community Foundation. The Whole Learning Alliance (WLA) partnered with Innresponse on this grant project. The Alliance is about growing a network for learning, collaboration, and leadership for a flourishing future in Trent Hills. Behind the idea of whole learning is a belief that our collective culture is gradually shifting away from colonial, mechanistic, technical and transactional mindsets toward reconciliation, relational and interconnected understanding, complex adaptive systems science and traditional concepts from the ancient world.

Whole learning events are opportunities for inspiring our leadership for living in a deeply interconnected way with nature, and with each other. To do this we have to nurture a shared worldview and mutual commitments. The closest that non-Indigenous western people come to a shared worldview is scientific materialism. This common worldview implies that the only reality is physical and that the only way we can understand and control this reality is through the scientific method. Closely related is consumerism which encourages us to collect as many material goods as possible. Our lack of consensus as a society is crystal clear when we deal with issues like protecting old growth forests or banning toxic pesticides. However, we can learn together and move beyond polarizing viewpoints and partisan politics toward shared understanding of our fundamental connectedness and shared commitments as a community to the future we want.

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