Building a Transition Town

Some lessons learned in Being Effective

Martin Pepper, July 2017.
Introduction to Transition Town Media

- Founded in 2009 – First Transition Town in PA
- 2011 – Created the Media Timebank
- 2014 – Started to receive grant from Media Borough – several joint projects including Strategic Plan and Borough Composting program
- 2014 – Started the Media Freestore
- 2016 - Ran Solarize Media campaign – 42 households and 300 KW of generation installed
- Annual turnover of $30K, hundreds of events over the years and thousands of followers through various social media groups
- Influenced many more people in many more ways than the numbers show
In the beginning…

• Founded by 7 enthusiastic people with very little experience
• Lots of people have joined and lots have left
• Plenty of initiatives have failed or been only partly or temporarily successful
• There were major challenges over direction and approach in the early days and some tough conversations and decisions
• But lessons were learned….
In the middle…

- We learned to celebrate success and NOT beat ourselves up over our failures
- We learned to get good at critical things like understanding our community and where we fit in, and putting on events
- We built a culture of support especially with holding events and providing input and advice
- Our groups meet regularly and we learned that an ‘annual planning’ session was an important thing for us to attract new members and to grow
- We started to get good at having an online presence
- We woke up to the importance of our individual journeys and personal growth of our members
The personal and interpersonal stuff
Or what *REALLY* matters

- We have ‘doing’ and ‘being’ meetings so that we can ‘get things done’ but also ‘sharpen the saw’ to keep on going
- We work hard *and* have fun with what we do
- We don’t feel we have to do things, we do what our membership and our community has energy and excitement for
- We have got good at developing our skills based and social capital and using those skills.
- We form partnerships with other organizations for ‘win-win’ projects
In Summary:

- Do what excites you, gives you joy and flow
- Understand your community and actively seek to form partnerships that benefit all parties
- Create positives around change for your members and your community
- Be prepared for (a lot of!) personal change and growth along the way and embrace it even if some of it is hard to take at times
- Do what your members have energy for, not what you think you ‘should’ be doing
- Celebrate success and learn from failure – keep doing the successful initiatives and events and walk away from the ones that aren’t working
- Become efficient at logistics and use technology like social media and other software to your advantage
- Re-energizing yourself and your ‘peeps’ is the most important thing to do and enjoy doing
- Be present – go out there and have FUN !!
Questions to start discussion:

1) What is your Transition down doing Critically Well to make it successful?
2) How well do you really know your community?
3) How well do your members really know one another?

CONCLUSION:
DO WHATEVER WORKS

OUR ASK TO YOU: Take this back and discuss within your Transition Town