

Watt's Happening? #225

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The Three Shades of Green



The proof that rapid change to a better world is not only possible but beginning to happen right now is all around us, if we have the eyes to see it. Here, we see Dawson Creek, British Columbia's first wind power city, lit up by Bear Mountain Wind Park, which produces in a modest breeze enough clean wind energy to power some 35,000 homes.

The environmental ethic has evolved over the last 50 years. It has now separated into three distinct shades of green: Deep Green, Dark Green, and Bright Green. Which shade of green are you?

Deep Green says: "I am one with nature, I yearn for a simpler life closer to nature, and a return to nature is the only answer."

Dark Green says: "The world is ending! We are all to blame! There is no hope!"

Bright Green, a newer form of green, says: "A

much better world for everybody and everything on the planet is staring us in the face, all we have to do is help make it happen." Personally, I tend towards the brighter shade.

Bright Green points to a better future that is all around us, happening and trying to happen. It focuses on solutions. It is positive, empowering, and brings people together. It motivates with hope, abundance, and the promise of security.

Bright Green says that limits to what we can

change may have been set by technology in the past, but in the 21st century, that is no longer the case. We now have all the information, know-how, processes, ideas and knowledge that we need to transform the world almost over night.

Deep and Dark Green say: “another world is possible.” Bright Green says: “another world is HERE. It just isn’t fully in place yet.”

Dark Green points fingers and lays blame. It focuses on the problems. It tries to motivate people into action with fear and worry, but instead tends to be divisive, discouraging and disempowering. It has been the dominant shade of green for some time, and many now argue that it has worked against itself. It slows change.

Bright Green, on the other hand, is about abundance, not scarcity. About moving boldly ahead, not timidly and fearfully falling back. It’s not about dragging down the old paradigms, it’s about building new ones.

It’s about doing something that has never been done before: consciously redesigning our civilization. A big job, sure, but just look around. We’re already doing it, massively, on a global scale, every day!

Bright Green recognizes that the future is marching ahead and not waiting for anyone, and we have to engage and deal with it, not run away and hide. Massive change is upon us: global climate is shifting in unpredictable ways, affecting everyone and everything; half the people on the planet are under the age of thirty, and a third are under fifteen (that’s 2.2 billion kids!); the

largest human migration in history is moving billions off the land.

Meanwhile, the cost of clean, renewable energies from the sun, wind and earth are making our fossil-fueled economy look expensive, dirty and badly outdated. Everybody, all around the world, has immense quantities of renewable energy at their fingertips. It is the energy of abundance and freedom, not scarcity, control, war and manipulation.

Bright Green guru Bruce Sterling says it well: *“The limits aren’t to be found in the technology anymore. The limits are behind your own eyes, people. They are limits of habit, things you’ve accepted, things you’ve been told, realities you’re ignoring. Stop being afraid. Wake up. It’s yours if you want it. It’s yours if you’re bold enough.”*

It’s tempting to pine for simpler times. The good news is that the sustainable world of the near future will include some of the best aspects of the past, trends we are already seeing: a return to more local production; more land and sea set aside for nature; healthier lifestyles and stronger communities; less pointless consumption; inexhaustible energy from the sun, wind and earth and a cleaner environment.

We know that even a fraction of the world’s military budget could solve world hunger, provide clean water, clean energy, shelter and security for everyone on the planet. It is not a matter of cost, it is a matter of will.

The brighter shade of green I subscribe to says: “In spite of what you may have heard, we actually CAN build a better world. Now. In fact, we already are!”

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