

## COMOX VALLEY CLIMATE CHANGE CHRONICLE (16)

### Hope and Winter Wheat

In our part of the world, where the full impacts of climate change are not yet apparent, there seem to be three viewpoints about climate change. There are the Deniers, the Doubters and the Do-ers.

The Deniers do not believe that climate change is happening, nor that it is humanly induced.

The Doubters, in spite of the name, know that that climate change is real and happening. But it is such an overwhelming reality that they doubt that they can do anything about it.

The Do-ers are those who know that climate change is the most serious problem facing our civilization. They are trying to do something about it in their communities. They are particularly concerned about their children, their grandchildren and future generations

In terms of dealing with climate change the Do-ers are the most important group, not only because of what they are doing but because what they are doing will have a significant influence upon the Doubters and perhaps, even the Deniers.

In terms of changing attitudes about climate change most people are not influenced by the science or by political leaders and parties. They are motivated by story—about family members, friends, and community members who are dealing with climate change.

But the Do-ers are not without their own challenges. Chief among these is maintaining a sense of hope even when the results of their efforts are not obvious.

St. Augustine of Hippo lived in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century in the final days of the Roman Empire. The barbarians were banging at the gates of the city. He knew a thing or two about hope. He said:

“Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are Anger and Courage: Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain the same.”

Hope is not some airy-fairy dream about the future. It is about taking action: speaking the truth to power and courageously taking steps to help change things.

So how do we maintain hope? Each one of us has his or her ways of doing it. One thing that helps is coming across something that strengthens us. Here are the words to a song that helps sustain my hope.

Winter Wheat\*

By

Libby Roderick

When I was young I thought that failure was impossible  
All wrongs would be righted in my time  
Now I am old I see that failure is impossible  
I pass the torch to you. Will you hold it high?

For we are sowing winter wheat  
That other hands will harvest  
That they may have enough to eat  
After we are gone

We will plant shade trees that we will not sit under  
We will light candles that others can see their way  
We'll struggle for justice though we'll never see it flower  
Our children's children will live in peace one day,

Each generation passes like the leaves  
On an old oak tree whose roots are strong  
Each new generation bursts out like the spring  
And they will be the ones to carry on.

When I was young I dreamed the Earth was healed  
and whole again,  
Creatures, trees, and rivers free and wild  
Now I am old I dream the planet healed and whole again  
That dream's reborn forever in the heart of each new child

So we are sowing winter wheat  
That other hands will harvest  
That they might have enough to eat  
After we are gone

We will plant shade trees that we will not sit under  
We will light candles that others can see their way  
We'll struggle for justice though we will never see it flower  
Our children's children will live in peace one day.

\* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XiUe0NR2GU>

The Do-ers are adopting the mantra of paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin, "The future belongs to those who can give a reason for hope."

Mike Bell,  
Comox Valley Climate Change Network