



**IN PURSUIT OF TRANSITION:  
SOME ASPECTS OF THE ROLE OF PASSION AND  
MOTIVATION IN THE TRANSITION MOVEMENT**

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## Executive Summary

This paper explores participation in the Transition Movement, a collection of grassroots community Initiatives seeking to build more resilient and self-reliant communities in response to resource descent and climate change. It examines this movement through the lens of the notion of passion and the Reasonable Person Model (RPM), using the following questions to guide the research and analysis process:

- Is passion a strong motivator for active participation and continued involvement in the Transition Movement?
- What are the implications of Harmonious vs. Obsessive Passion, as defined by the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand, 2003)?
- Is it possible that once involved, members find that they derive satisfaction, motivation and fulfilment from Transition Initiatives that provide a structure in which they can *Build Models, Be Effective* in their approach, and create *Meaningful Action*, prompting continued engagement in the Initiative and larger movement?

The findings in this report are based on 96 completed survey responses representing members of current Transition Initiatives across the US, and 14 subsequent phone interviews.

The survey results show a statistically significant connection between Obsessive Passion (but not Harmonious Passion) and active participation in Transition Initiatives. However, this study's results also show that an individual's level or type of passion is not necessarily the most important contributor to continued motivation and participation in the Transition Movement. The results suggest intrinsic motivation for a high quality of life is the strongest predictor of high participation levels in this sample. This finding, supported by the interview responses, indicates that the Reasonable Person Model (S. Kaplan & R. Kaplan 2009) may be a strong contributor to successful Transition Initiatives in which people are energized and motivated to continue as an active participant.

Furthermore, interview findings indicate that there is no single type of person nor a single motivating factor that draws people to the Transition Movement. In fact, there may be an advantage to having a balance of interests and personality types within an Initiative to encourage diversity of ideas and active working groups. This research suggests that Transition Initiatives would benefit from intentionally integrating the three components of the Reasonable Person Model (*Building Models, Being Effective, and Meaningful Action*) in the way they structure meetings, projects, and events.

Finally, while passion is not the primary driver of participation in existing Transition Initiatives, there is an opportunity to recognize and build on the passion of members who strongly identify with certain causes and activities, or the movement in general. Individual passion for different activities or topic areas among members can lead to the creation of new working groups, more diversity of ideas and projects, and encourage people to spend more time engaged with the Transition Initiative through those projects. Thus, Transition Initiatives can benefit from identifying members' passions, and encouraging them to engage with those passions within the construct of the Transition Movement.

## 1 Introduction

This paper explores participation in the Transition Movement, a collection of grassroots community Initiatives seeking to build more resilient and self-reliant communities in response to resource descent and climate change. It examines this movement through the lens of the notion of passion and the Reasonable Person Model (RPM). The research started with the broad question of what motivates people to join, and subsequently stay involved as active participants in the local Transition Initiatives that constitute the broader Transition Movement. This led to the hypothesis that active participants in the Transition Movement were likely to be passionate about its goals and underlying activities. The present research builds on established psychology of passion work to understand what role passion plays in motivating people to commit to a lifestyle change implicit in joining (and staying involved in) a Transition Initiative. To test this hypothesis, questions were adapted from Vallerand's Passion Scale (Vallerand, 2003) into an online survey distributed through Transition Initiatives across the United States. The survey results, in addition to follow-up phone interviews, did provide insight into the role of passion, but also revealed the prominence of the Reasonable Person Model (S. Kaplan, 2000; S. Kaplan & Kaplan, 2009) as a motivating force in thriving Transition Initiatives.

First, this paper will provide a brief history of the Transition Movement and its current structure. Then it will discuss the existing literature on the psychology of passion and the Reasonable Person Model, before introducing the present methodology, findings, and discussion. The objective is that Transition Initiatives will be able to use this information and the study's understanding of the motivations of members to help to continue the movement's momentum into the future.

## 2 Background

### 2.1 *Transition Initiatives*

The Transition Movement started as a community-led response to resource descent and climate change. The first Transition Initiative was established in 2006 as a single experiment in Totnes, a small market town in the south of England. Since then, the movement has grown into an international network consisting of over 1,100 Initiatives in over 43 countries. The driving force behind the Transition Movement is a shared goal of shifting behaviors to prepare for a lower energy future through building more resilient communities. The Transition Network, along with published resources like the *Transition Handbook* and *Transition Companion* (Hopkins 2008; Hopkins 2011), provide training, support, and connections for new and existing Initiatives.

Each Transition Initiative (also commonly referred to as Transition Towns) starts with an initiating group. This founding group works to recruit community members, establish norms, and introduce the group to the principles of Transition<sup>1</sup>. However, the initiating group also plans for its own dissolution to give way to an ongoing coordinating council, elected by current members. Transition Initiatives tend to be divided into working groups, each responsible for designing, organizing, and implementing projects and activities that focus on a specific area of interest. Projects and activities may include community gardens, alternative energy installations and seminars, reskilling workshops, and speaker events, among many other endeavors.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/about/principles> for a detailed explanation

While the council and working group structure remains relatively consistent across Initiatives, the Transition Initiative concept can be adapted to fit many different contexts. Each Initiative defines its own projects and may have a different focus (e.g., food, energy, material production, transportation) depending on the interests of the group and the context in which they live. As the number of Initiatives has grown, national networks (e.g., Transition US, New Zealand, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Japan) have emerged to help increase communication, share learnings, and offer support and facilitation to affiliated groups, catered to the cultural context of the country.

Much of the information provided on the Transition Network website ([transitionnetwork.org](http://transitionnetwork.org)) and the handbooks (Hopkins, 2008; Hopkins, 2011) includes useful procedural knowledge regarding starting and running an Initiative. There is also a growing library of academic research catalogued by the Transition Network (<http://www.transitionresearchnetwork.org/>). Review of the papers published on this site uncovered no direct research on the psychology of what motivates people to join and stay involved in a Transition Initiative.

## 2.2 *Psychology of Passion*

This research is primarily focused on the role of passion in attracting people to the Transition Movement and encouraging continued participation in individual Initiatives. While most research on passion in the field of psychology is focused on the role of passion in intimate relationships (see, for instance, Hatfield & Walster, 1978), Robert J Vallerand (who leads the Research Laboratory on Social Behavior (RLSB) at the Université du Québec à Montréal) seems to be a primary major contributor to the emerging field exploring activity- and cause-based passion. A common theme throughout this work is the role of passion in positive psychology, and how it does (or does not) contribute to living a self-identified 'meaningful life'. Vallerand defines activity-based passion as "a strong inclination toward an activity that one likes (or even loves), finds important, and in which one invests time and energy" (Vallerand, 2008, p1-2). Ideological passion, he posits, has a very similar definition: "a strong inclination toward a loved, valued, and self-defining cause, ideology, or group in which people invest considerable time and energy" (Rip et al, 2012, p574).

According to Vallerand's research, four essential elements of passion include: activity valuation; liking the activity; time spent on the activity; and the internalization process (autonomous vs. controlled). Activity valuation refers to the importance of a particular activity to a person. Liking of the task is also related, as it has been shown to have an association with level of engagement and interest in an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993). Furthermore, time and energy put into an activity demonstrate a high commitment level (Emmons, 1999). Finally, much of Vallerand's research to date focuses on the internalization process, that is, how an activity becomes integrated into one's identity. Whether the internalization of an activity is autonomous and self-directed, or derived from an externally controlled source is a significant determination of the type of passion.

Vallerand's primary framework regarding passion is built around his Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand, 2003). This theory presents two types of passion, Obsessive and Harmonious, distinguished by how the activity or cause is internalized. *Obsessive Passion* (OP),

“Results from a controlled internalization of the activity into one’s identity. Such an internalization originates from intrapersonal and/or interpersonal pressure either because certain contingencies are attached to the activity such as feelings of social acceptance or self-esteem, or because the sense of excitement derived from activity engagement becomes uncontrollable. Thus, although individuals like the activity, they feel compelled to engage in it because of these internal contingencies that come to control them. They cannot help but to engage in the passionate activity” (Vallerand 2003, p757).

Obsessive Passion often results in feelings of conflict because a person is driven to engage with that passion instead of doing other things they need to or would like to do. The activity is so linked to a person’s identity that they cannot abandon it; OP results in a rigid persistence, and a feeling of coerced obligation. *Harmonious Passion* (HP), on the other hand,

“Results from an autonomous internalization of the activity into the person’s identity. An autonomous internalization occurs when individuals have freely accepted the activity as important for them without any contingencies attached to it. This type of internalization produces a motivational force to engage in the activity willingly and engenders a sense of volition and personal endorsement about pursuing the activity. Individuals are not compelled to do the activity but rather they freely choose to do so” (Vallerand 2003, p757).

People with HP accept the activity they are passionate about as important and a part of their identity, but without any contingencies or pressures that conflict with other life activities. This kind of engagement leads to a more flexible form of persistence.

In considering passion as a motivational concept, it is also important to understand how passion relates to other motivational constructs. According to Vallerand et al.’s work, passion incorporates elements of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000), but introduces the additional component of identity association. Vallerand also notes connections with the field of Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentimihaly 2000). Vallerand describes passion as a double-edged sword: “Passion can fuel motivation, enhance well-being, and provide meaning in everyday life. However... passion can also arouse negative emotions, lead to inflexible persistence, and interfere with achieving a balanced, successful life” (Vallerand 2003, p756). He argues that passion toward an activity or cause (particularly *Harmonious Passion*) satisfies basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness that underlie the SDT model of human motivation. Vallerand posits that while intrinsic motivation shares with the concept of passion the attributes of being drawn to and liking an activity, “intrinsically motivated activities are not seen as being internalized in the person’s identity and are best seen as naturally emerging from the person-task interaction at the short-term level” (Vallerand 2003, p10). However, there is also intrinsic motivation research that reveals connections with personal identity (Waterman, 2004), suggesting value in further research on that relationship between passion and intrinsic motivation.

In a recent paper, Magueau, Vallerand, Charest, et al. (2009) suggest that there are several predictors to the development of passion. These predictors correlate with Vallerand’s original definition of passion, that is: identification with the activity, activity specialization, parents’ activity valuation, and autonomy support. “The Dualistic Model of Passion posits that variables that increase activity valuation and time

spent on the activity, identification with the activity, and autonomy-supportive social environments are key variables for the development of passion” (Magueau, Vallerand, Charest, et al. 2009, p.634). Magueau, Vallerand, Charest, et al. (2009) focus on development of activity-based passion in children and adolescents, rather than in adults. Therefore, the role of the parent is considered as of key importance in instilling Harmonious versus Obsessive Passion: “Social environments that provide autonomy support may serve to promote Harmonious Passion at the expert level. Conversely, controlling adults who directly pressure others to pursue an activity or to engage in it in certain ways may set the stage for a more obsessive form of passion.” (Magueau, Vallerand, Charest, et al. 2009, p618)

### 2.3 Reasonable Person Model

The Reasonable Person Model assumes that information processing plays a central role in people’s behavior. The basic premise of the model is that “people are more likely to be reasonable in environments that support their informational needs” (S. Kaplan & R. Kaplan 2009, p330). The RPM focuses on the interrelation between three primary components of human informational needs: Model Building, Meaningful Action, and Being Effective (see Figure 1). The arrows in the diagram represent the continual interaction and feedback that exists between these components. Each component builds upon the other, creating strong reinforcing relationships.

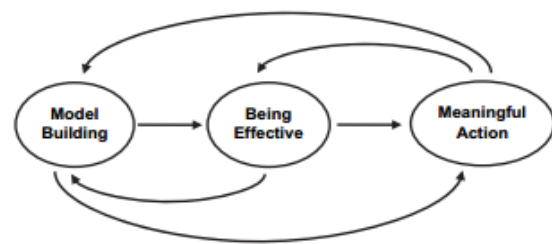


Fig. 1. The Reasonable Person Model.

Figure 1: RPM, Kaplan & Kaplan 2009

People use mental models to simplify and store information to then use in order to make sense of the world. *Model Building* is a central concept of cognitive psychology, and allows people to understand and explore. Humans seek familiarity, but are also motivated to learn, test their knowledge, and make new discoveries. Understanding is primarily gained through experience, but also through formal knowledge and storytelling. Kaplan & Kaplan explain *Model Building* in relations to evolutionary preferences and benefits:

“For an information-based animal, survival requires the mental capacity to recognize what is going on and to figure out what might happen next while there is still time to take appropriate action. This requires a high priority on exploration to learn about the environment, while at the same time ensuring that the animal not stray beyond where it is comfortable and competent. As a result, while humans are eager to explore they are also quick to retreat to the familiar. They want to make sense of what is going on and have a strong aversion to being confused. At the same time, however, they prefer and benefit from acquiring information that is relevant to their concerns as well as being at their own pace. Exploration provides a potent means of achieving understanding that meets both criteria.” (S. Kaplan & R. Kaplan 2009, p331)

*Being Effective* refers to the human desire for competence and clear-headedness. Competence (i.e., having relevant skills and knowledge of how to use those skills in a given task or situation) builds confidence and internal satisfaction. Beyond a sense of competence, *Being Effective* requires attention. In order to achieve this necessary clear-headedness, one needs to reduce distractions and restore the capacity for directed attention. Directed attention is an effortful form of attention that fatigues due to

everyday mental strains and distractions. Directed attention is necessary for solving complex problems, as it supports executive functioning such as setting goals, making and carrying out plans, reflection, contemplation, and self-monitoring, as well as social functioning, such as listening, collaborating, and helping others (see R. Kaplan & S. Kaplan, 1989 for more detail on Attention Restoration Theory).

Finally, people are motivated by *Meaningful Action*. Participation is central to this concept. However, people must feel that their participation has an impact and makes a difference at some level. Achieving *Meaningful Action* requires that people feel their efforts, skills, and knowledge are both needed and appreciated. People are motivated when they feel that they are being listened to and respected by others, regardless of scale.

### 3 Research Questions

The following questions guided the research and analysis process, and are addressed in the sections below. First, is passion a strong motivator for active participation and continued involvement in the Transition Movement? If so, what are the implications of Harmonious vs. Obsessive Passion relating to participation in Transition Initiatives?

Finally, is it possible that once involved, members find that they derive satisfaction, motivation and fulfilment from Transition Initiatives that provide a structure in which they can *Build Models, Be Effective* in their approach, and create *Meaningful Action*, prompting continued engagement in the Initiative and larger movement?

### 4 Methodology<sup>2</sup>

A Qualtrics survey was distributed via email to active Transition Initiatives with email addresses listed on the Transition US webpage ([www.transitionus.org](http://www.transitionus.org)). The survey was then forwarded by Initiative leaders to individual members.

The survey consisted of six blocks of closed-ended questions focused on identifying level of passion and sources of motivation, in addition to an optional open-ended section probing on past, current, and future participation in Transition Initiatives. Respondents were asked if they were willing to share more information about their experiences, and selected individuals were contacted to set up a 45 to 60 minute phone interview (see Appendix A for a copy of the introductory email, survey instrument, and interview guide). The findings reported below are based on 96 completed survey responses representing members of current Transition Initiatives across the US, and 14 subsequent phone interviews.

To analyze the results of the survey data, factor analysis was used to understand the relationship between variables. The results from the factor analysis were analyzed using linear regression methods, described in more detail below. Finally, the qualitative interview data and free-response questions on the survey instrument were used to identify themes, anecdotes, and additional insights to better understand the survey findings, and provide a more robust discussion.

### 5 Findings

This section will present the quantitative findings from the survey results, as well as a review of qualitative findings derived from the phone interviews and open-ended survey responses. The

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<sup>2</sup> University of Michigan Institutional Review Board (<http://www.irb.umich.edu/>) Study ID: HUM00089363



quantitative findings summarize the key variables used, identified through factor analysis, and the results from linear regression analyses. The qualitative findings section addresses the variety of people attracted to the Transition Movement, what motivated them to become involved in a Transition Initiative, and observed ties to the Reasonable Person Model.

A factor analysis of the survey data resulted in 11 distinct variables (a full list of these 11 variables and their descriptive statistics can be found in Appendix B, and comprehensive results from the factor analysis can be found in Appendix C). Coefficients were set at a minimum of 0.45 for loading and double-loading elimination. The extraction method used was Principal Component Analysis, and Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was the rotation method used for all factor analyses. Table 1 summarizes the primary variables used throughout the analysis.

**Table 1.** Primary Variables

Category name and items included	Mean [a]	S. D.	Alpha
<b>Participation Level (CATPL)</b> Invest significant amount of time/energy in Transition On at least one committee or subgroup Consider myself involved member Actively participate in my Transition Initiative	<b>3.75<sup>a,b</sup></b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>.90</b>
<b>Obsessive Passion (CATOP)</b> Emotionally dependent on Transition Cannot fully live without participating in Transition My Transition Initiative sometimes conflicts with other aspects of my life	<b>2.18<sup>a,c,d,e</sup></b>	<b>.82</b>	<b>.72</b>
<b>Harmonious Passion (CATHP)</b> Involvement in Transition is in harmony with other aspects of my life Reflects qualities I like about myself Just one of the many things in which I am involved	<b>4.15<sup>b,c,f</sup></b>	<b>.61</b>	<b>.45</b>
<b>Intrinsic Motivation for High Quality of Life (CATIMLifeQual)</b> Hope for the future keeps me involved in Transition Participating in Transition adds to my quality of life Derive a feeling of contentment from participating in Transition Moral values drive my involvement	<b>3.90<sup>d,f</sup></b>	<b>.80</b>	<b>.76</b>
<b>Motivation for Environmental Change (CATMOTEnviroChange)</b> Motivated by climate change Motivated by environmental activism Motivated by passion for environmental change	<b>4.03<sup>e</sup></b>	<b>.93</b>	<b>.80</b>

[a] Means based on a 5-point Likert rating scale with higher values denoting higher endorsement for the category.

**Note:** Means that share the same superscript are significantly different from one another at  $p \leq .05$

Overall, the data shows that people who associate their identity strongly with the Transition Movement (responding more positively to the question “The Transition Movement is part of who I am”), and thus indicate a passion for the movement, have a higher level of participation. This is consistent with Vallerand’s definition of passion which includes an element of time commitment. The survey results

showed a statistically significant connection between Obsessive Passion (but not Harmonious Passion) and active participation in Transition Initiatives. However, this study's results also show that an individual's level or type of passion is not necessarily the most powerful contributor to continued motivation and participation in the Transition Movement. The results suggest intrinsic motivation for a high quality of life is the strongest predictor of high participation levels in this sample. This finding, supported by the interview responses, indicates that Reasonable Person Model (RPM) may be an effective framework for explaining the conditions under which people are energized and motivated to become and continue as active participants in a Transition Initiative.

Finally, while one might expect this sample to be comprised of only active members of their respective Transition Initiatives, based on an assumption that the survey respondents had a self-selection bias, the results showed a more balanced picture. The mean Participation Level was 3.75 (on a scale of 1 to 5, with higher scores signifying higher endorsement), indicating that even within this self-selected group of respondents, there is room for increased participation in the Transition Movement.

### 5.1 Linear Regression

In order to distinguish the effects of the two types of passion, a linear regression was conducted with Participation Level (CATPL) as the dependent variable, and Harmonious Passion (CATHP) and Obsessive Passion (CATOP) as the only independent variables (see Tables 2 and 3). This analysis indicates that Obsessive Passion is the strongest predictor with an R squared change = .237. When Harmonious Passion is added, it is a significant predictor along with OP, raising the R squared by .041, but is not a significant predictor alone.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis Summary (Harmonious and Obsessive Passion)**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.487 <sup>a</sup>	.237	.229	1.06221	.237	29.173	1	94	.000
2	.527 <sup>b</sup>	.278	.262	1.03902	.041	5.242	1	93	.024

a. Predictors: (Constant), Obsessive Passion

b. Predictors: (Constant), Obsessive Passion, Harmonious Passion

**Table 3: Regression Analysis (Harmonious and Obsessive Passion), Coefficients**

Model <sup>a</sup>		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.187	.309		7.066	.000
	CATOP	.717	.133	.487	5.401	.000
2	(Constant)	.622	.748		.832	.408
	CATOP	.660	.132	.447	4.984	.000
	CATHP	.408	.178	.206	2.290	.024

a. Dependent Variable: Participation Level

A second linear regression was conducted using a larger set of predictor variables. In this analysis Participation Level (CATPL) was the dependent variable and all other variables were included as independent variables (see Tables 4 and 5 for results). This analysis indicated that internal motivation related to quality of life (CATIMLifeQual) is the strongest predictor of Participation Level (R squared = .398), followed by desire to create environmental change (CATMOTEnviroChange, change in R squared = .031), and finally, Obsessive Passion (CATOP, change in R squared = .025). When compared with the previous regression analysis, this second analysis has Obsessive Passion remain as a statistically significant predictor, but much less powerful than intrinsic motivation for a higher quality of life.

**Table 4:** Regression Analysis Summary (all variables)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.631 <sup>a</sup>	.398	.392	.94345	.398	62.133	1	94	.000
2	.655 <sup>b</sup>	.429	.417	.92379	.031	5.045	1	93	.027
3	.674 <sup>c</sup>	.454	.437	.90791	.025	4.281	1	92	.041

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Motivation for High Quality of Life
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Motivation for High Quality of Life, Motivation for Environmental Change
- c. Predictors: (Constant), Intrinsic Motivation for High Quality of Life, Motivation for Environmental Change, Obsessive Passion

**Table 5:** Regression Analysis (all variables), Coefficients

Model <sup>a</sup>		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.014	.484		.029	.977
	CATIMLifeQual	.958	.122	.631	7.882	.000
2	(Constant)	.541	.529		1.023	.309
	CATIMLifeQual	1.084	.131	.713	8.243	.000
	CATMOTEnviroChange	-.252	.112	-.194	-2.246	.027
3	(Constant)	.520	.520		1.001	.319
	CATIMLifeQual	.919	.152	.605	6.052	.000
	CATMOTEnviroChange	-.240	.110	-.185	-2.170	.033
	CATOP	.281	.136	.191	2.069	.041

- a. Dependent Variable: Participation Level

## 5.2 Qualitative Findings

The 14 phone interviews conducted, as well as the open-ended survey responses, indicate that while there is no one path, activity, or interest that leads people to a Transition Initiative, something does generally prime people to be intrigued upon discovery of the movement.

The interviews highlighted several common concerns and interests that led people to discover and become engaged with the Transition Movement. These included concerns about the environment, the economy, and a general feeling of helplessness, despair, and fear over the current state of the world. Several respondents also talked about not living up to his or her own values, concern for the next generation, and feeling unhappy and insufficient given his or her career. For example, one person decided to forego college because he could see no *“way to make a reasonable amount of money while also having integrity, and not toxifying the earth, or hurting people and planet. So college just seemed like a real waste of time.”*

These negative feelings, however, were balanced by positive interests and activities such as permaculture, gardening, bicycle advocacy, do it yourself (DIY) projects, and spending time in nature. One respondent described himself as *“an active member of the community, looking for local solutions to these huge problems that will affect me and my kids. My belief is that there are plenty of things we can do together that we can agree on, before we have to work on a bunch of things that we don’t agree on. I don’t think that’s all that radical.”*

Discovery of the Transition Movement was reported to have happened primarily through personal networks (e.g., friends, other groups, traveling), or reading environmentally oriented websites, blogs, or other media publications (specifically about subjects like peak oil). It is plausible that this moment of discovery sparked involvement because the person was already on the lookout for a way to engage in Transition-oriented principles. As one respondent described his discovery of the Transition Movement, *“I had somewhat of a desire to do all the energy efficiency stuff all along, it became more of an ‘I want to get this done right now’ because of information from being involved in Transition. It intensified an already existing feeling or way of thinking.”* Another respondent reported feeling dissatisfied with her job, her lifestyle, and her options looking forward, and felt a strong need to make a change after having a baby. She described her discovery of Transition as follows:

*“A mutual friend was going to meeting and asked me to come. So I go there, the first meeting was freakin’ fantastic, it was my tribe. The chairs were arranged in circle, there were maybe forty people there, and you said why you had come. And in 30 seconds per person, these people just blew me away. It felt very authentic. I learned that Transition is much more integrated than just environmental. I had always seen this as one movement. I’m more into connections than differences. Environment, social justice, peace movement, to me it’s all the same. It goes deeper to the root of our story about ourselves in the west. Transition seems to address it at a deeper level and recognize several things discussed separately in press are all related: peak oil, economy, climate change. That really appealed to me. That’s how I got involved.”*

Respondents also referred to a number of challenges to continued participation and motivation in their Initiatives. Top among these were feeling a lack of impact or action, issues with getting people to work well together, the need for support (and the potential for burnout), the difficulty initially capturing people’s attention, and limits to time availability.

Rather than identifying one unifying focus, the interviews identified an attraction to a variety of activities and topics in which Transition Initiatives engage. Some respondents reported being motivated to help people become more resilient, some are passionate about facilitating connections and building communities, others are interested in alternative economies, and still others are driven to build sustainable energy or water systems. Respondents clearly expressed a passion for community building, facilitating personal transformations, and establishing resilience. Sometimes passion was expressed through a strong connection with the work being accomplished:

“This is where my heart and soul is, helping people on the scale of small community, helping people to reconnect with ecosystems upon which they depend. Helping people remember and understand that on a deep level that they depend on each other. That’s what I do, that’s who I am. I feel pretty confident I’m on the right track, I just have to figure out how to do better.”

Another respondent discussed the personal transformation brought about by the Transition Movement, and the desire to facilitate similar transformations for other people:

“I just have that personality where I get really fired up about stuff. I’m interested in transformation. What’s needed now, we need to transform our entire society, and nothing less...I am passionate about transformation and people’s ability to manifest it themselves. I always felt like I had to do something big. And in last two years I’ve completely changed on that. I thought I had to start a company or be CEO, big top down solutions. And now I think that that’s not how nature works. I think that it is that kind of thinking is symptomatic of the way our cultural mythology is. The small is just as important as big. Transformation we’re seeking starts with personal transformation. Nature is fractaled. Each person needs to occupy niche that is there. Need to shut out crap that is around you to make space to hear what that is for you.”

A systematic analysis of the interviews, focused around why respondents were initially drawn to the Transition Movement, revealed three primary types of people. Initiative members that were interviewed loosely fit into the following categories (described in Figure 2): *Artistic*, *Scientific*, and *Spiritual*.

Artistic	Scientific	Spiritual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Values creativity</li> <li>•Tends to look at things from a unique perspective</li> <li>•Wants to create something new and innovative</li> <li>•<b>Example:</b> <i>One Transition Initiative member interviewed described her past as an artist. She explained that her drive to seek out new challenges, her desire to engage in new experiences, and her ability to develop strong communities all attracted her to the Transition Movement.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Fixated on solving specific problems</li> <li>•Wants to really understand how things work</li> <li>•Can be obsessive</li> <li>•<b>Example:</b> <i>One research participant described himself as someone who gets easily fixated on things. His obsession with renewable energy solutions, his love of do it yourself projects, and reading about undeniable evidence pointing to energy descent and systemic economic issues influenced him to join the local Transition Initiative.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Seeking personal transformation and connection</li> <li>•Driven to live up to personal values and ideals</li> <li>•Values community</li> <li>•<b>Example:</b> <i>Several respondents referred to a love of nature and spiritual connection with the environment. These people felt compelled to join a Transition Initiative to better live their values, and found that the community allowed them to develop on a personal level, become more compassionate, and live a more balanced life.</i></li> </ul>

Figure 2: Member typology

These categories suggest that no one “type” of person is attracted to the Transition Movement. Instead, the Transition Movement attracts a balance of personalities. Each is attracted for a different reason, and brings a different skill set to the movement. These categories are not mutually exclusive; they simply represent dominant aspects of a person’s interests and tendencies, and demonstrate that passion for a variety of different activities or subject matters can predispose a person to the Transition Movement. While these passions (whether fully articulated or not) attract people to the Transition Movement, satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with a particular Initiative stems from a sense of mutual understanding, effectiveness, and action illustrated in the Reasonable Person Model.

## 6 Discussion

### 6.1 Ties to the Reasonable Person Model

Respondents implicitly referred to elements of the Reasonable Person Model (RPM) as they discussed their motivations for staying involved with their Transition Initiatives. This suggests that, once involved, members derive satisfaction, motivation, and fulfilment from Initiatives that provide a structure in which they can *Build Models*, *Be Effective* in their approach, and create *Meaningful Action*. Each of these elements is further explained in the context of the Transition Movement below.

#### 6.1.1 Building Models

The Transition Movement may provide the template for a new *mental model*. It may allow people to explore new ideas and experiment in a safe, accepting environment. One respondent talked at length about how joining the Transition Movement shifted the way she thought about daily tasks and activities:

“The other thing is to learn everything that we do you can do in many different ways, I always had the idea that there was a best way or only way, and if you can always plug something in you don’t have to come up with how to do it another way... It’s nice to have this view point of anything you do, even if it’s getting groceries, what do you do if you can’t freeze things? We have more to learn, it opens your eyes to see what your weaknesses might be.”

The Transition Movement may offer a framework that appeals to people who are looking for a way to understand and process concerns and anxieties about the state of the world, and are seeking meaningful ways to engage with people and pursue their interests. As one respondent put it, “*I’m finding a lot of joy in the work that we’re doing.*” And another described the personal benefits of the Transition movement in this way: “*I knew when I heard about the Transition Initiative that this would be my opportunity to create a close-knit family and I have gotten that. They’re my family, and I know that whatever happens we’ll be working on making it work together.*”

Transition takes a long-term view of both the problem and the solution, offering actions that can be taken immediately, but recognizing that results will be gradual. Its focus is on building resilient communities, and understanding how behavior in these communities fits into larger issues of resource descent and climate change. Several respondents referred to the stages of grief (Kübler-Ross, 1969) as a mental model for dealing with the current state of the world. Transition was especially appealing to them because it is engaged in the acceptance phase:

“I went through stages of grief to acceptance. And now I’m at that point of acceptance, and wanting to dig in and keep. Transition helped. It seemed like an intelligent, systematic way to approach these problems. And the other thing is cheerfulness. This may not work, it may not be

the best way to push things, but I'm not going to just lay down and die. I'm not going to just party like it's 1999. I could just forget about it and just keep living life until the shit hits the fan. I decided I'm going to do what I can at local level, to make life here a little bit better. It may not work, we may not succeed, but I'm not going to give up."

In this case, the stages of grief provide a particular mental model that allows people to understand and process the reality of energy descent and other environmental issues.

#### 6.1.2 Being Effective

The procedural knowledge provided by the Transition Network<sup>3</sup> and the Transition Handbook (Hopkins, 2008) provide a sense of *Being Effective* from the start. Their structure, and the explicit focus on reskilling, builds competence, and thus confidence, in the approach. Members learn not only from their own experiences, but have the benefit of learning from other groups and members, and can adapt and replicate what works well. The Initiatives provide a way to organize and implement ideas. Additionally, many Initiatives include a *Heart and Soul Working Group*<sup>4</sup>, which can serve the function of helping members maintain a clear head and mental vitality by restoring fatigued Directed Attention, which is integral in engaging in challenging tasks and new projects (see R. Kaplan & S. Kaplan, 1989 for more detail on Attention Restoration Theory).

#### 6.1.3 Meaningful Action

Finally, respondents who felt most encouraged and fulfilled by their Initiatives spoke about active projects, personal development, and strong connections to other members. These are all components of *Meaningful Action*. Successful Transition Initiatives build strong communities that connect people by having them work toward a common goal. They also provide opportunities for people to lead or contribute to concrete projects. Active engagement allows people to see progress and feel a real contribution beyond just attending meetings and contributing to discussions. As a result of one Initiative's active working groups and supportive community, one respondent reflected, "*I don't worry about the future like I used to... I'm pretty satisfied our group of people is doing everything we can possibly do to change the way we're living and live lighter. It's a pretty joyful organization we belong to.*" Conversely, those who reported being dissatisfied tended to mention the lack of local recognition, ineffective meetings, and absence of real progress. This absence of meaningful action was often mentioned as a source of frustration with the group, and led to a search for alternative paths forward.

Within the framework of the Reasonable Person Model, discontent expressed due to a lack of impact or action is clearly related to *Meaningful Action*. Without a sense of progress and being heard, people end up feeling unfulfilled, and become less motivated to continue participating in the group. These are primarily organizational challenges and also relate closely to the notion of *Being Effective* by providing support that builds competence, enables clear-headedness, and reduces burnout. Finally, as the respondents' comments indicate, time is an ever-present issue for organizations, causes, and movements of any type. But wanting to put time into something is also an element of passion, and so if Transition Initiatives can provide a way for members to pursue their passion, it may be that they will make more time to actively participate.

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.transitionnetwork.org/support>

<sup>4</sup> Heart and Soul working groups address the spiritual and psychological change implicit in Transition. These working groups share tools for personal growth, reflection, and maintaining a healthy, thriving community.

## 6.2 Survey Implications

The regression analysis, which incorporated all variables in this study, found that Harmonious Passion alone is not a statistically significant predictor of participation in Transition Initiatives. This could be explained in part by the less rigid nature of Harmonious Passion. Harmonious Passion does not prompt conflict with other life activities or interests, thus allowing people to “engage in the activity in a flexible and mindful manner” (Vallerand 2003, p. 604). Therefore, Harmonious Passion is consistent with having interests and engagements with other activities or groups outside of a particular Transition Initiative that might also contribute to ongoing satisfaction.

In contrast, Obsessive Passion indicates a singular and dependent relationship with the Transition Movement. This may explain why Obsessive Passion is a significant indicator of Participation Level. Consistent with this interpretation is the finding that Harmonious Passion and intrinsic motivation related to quality of life have conceptual overlap in the minds of the respondents, confirmed by a statistically significant positive correlation ( $r=0.54$   $p \leq 0.001$ ) between these two variables.<sup>5</sup> While the purpose of the present research was not to examine the relationship between Harmonious Passion and intrinsic motivation, further research on how these two inform one another would be a meaningful addition to understanding motivations and active participation in the Transition Movement (or other similar movements).

Additionally, the survey data suggests that Obsessive and Harmonious Passion together are better predictors of active participation in Transition Initiatives than is Obsessive Passion alone. This result may, on first glance, seem counterintuitive, as the definitions of Obsessive and Harmonious Passion are easily imagined as opposites. However, it is conceivable that elements of each type of passion are supported by a Transition Initiative because of the complex nature of such a movement. As previously suggested, Transition Initiatives are comprised of a collection of activities, relationships, and objectives. Obsessive Passion creates a more dependent relationship with the Transition Movement that may lead to higher participation levels such as those indicated in these data. However, elements of Harmonious Passion derived from a person’s relationship with his or her Transition Initiative might lead to more positive affect and healthy persistence toward its underlying activities (Vallerand 2003).

Finally, the motivation to create environmental change is another significant predictor of Participation Level in the survey findings, although it is negatively related. The negative beta coefficient indicates a negative relationship between the motivation to join a Transition Initiative based on a desire to create environmental change and active participation. This could be explained by considering the mission of the Transition Movement. The Transition US website explains that “*Transition Initiatives differentiate themselves from other sustainability and ‘environmental’ groups by seeking to mitigate these converging global crises [of peak oil, climate change and the economic crisis] by engaging their communities in home-grown, citizen-led education, action, and multi-stakeholder planning to increase local self-reliance and resilience*” (Transition US 2013). Rather than focusing on changing the external policies or the larger-scaled social environment, or reversing or mitigating climate change directly, the Transition Movement focuses on building communities that can adapt to and exist in changing conditions. It could be that those people who originally joined an Initiative with the primary goal to create environmental

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<sup>5</sup> Harmonious Passion has a relatively low alpha value (0.45) signaling that there is room for improvement in measuring Harmonious Passion



change are not as active in the movement now due to a misalignment of goals. It is possible that these members would not be driven to actively participate due to an initial misunderstanding of the driving force of the Transition Movement.

While passion is prevalent among active members of Transition Initiatives, this research shows that it is not the primary driving factor for a successful Initiative. Transition Initiatives can provide a place for people to direct their varied passions through helping members *build mental models* to understand the state of the world and their communities, *be effective* (that is, competent and clear-headed) in how they adapt to change, and get feedback that indicates that their *actions were meaningful*. The Reasonable Person Model creates a context in which intrinsic motivation will flourish. The findings suggest Transition Initiatives that successfully integrate the components of the three components of the Reasonable Person Model will see higher participation levels and perseverance from members.

## 7 Implications for Transition Initiatives

An overall objective of this research is to help existing and future Transition Initiatives understand what motivates their members to become involved and remain active members, thus building stronger communities. Many Initiatives already integrate the Reasonable Person Model into their communities. This research identifies the benefits of intentionally integrating the three separate components of this framework into an Initiative's projects, working groups, meeting protocol, and other events and engagements. This framework can also inform communication with current members and recruitment of new members, emphasizing the intrinsic motivation inherent in the model's feedback loops.

While passion is not the primary driver of participation in existing Initiatives, there is an opportunity to recognize and build on the passion of members who strongly identify with certain causes and activities, or the movement in general. As has been discussed, prior research provides evidence that Obsessive Passion can result in negative affect, dependence, and a lack of adaptation in behavior. Therefore, despite its being a predictor of higher participation levels, encouraging OP among members does not complement Transition principles of positive visioning, resilience, or inclusion and openness very well. However, encouraging a balance between Obsessive and Harmonious Passion could be a strong motivator for members.

Referring back to the fundamental elements of passion – activity valuation; liking the activity; time spent on the activity; and the internalization process (autonomous vs. controlled) – it follows that a person who is passionate about the mission and activities central to the Transition Movement will be an active participant under the right conditions. Individual passion for different activities or topic areas among members can lead to the creation of new working groups, more diversity of ideas and projects, and encourage people to spend more time engaged with the Initiative through those projects. Thus, Transition Initiatives can benefit from identifying members' passions, and encouraging them to engage with those passions within the construct of the Transition Movement.

## 8 Appendix

### *Appendix A: Recruiting Email, Qualtrics Survey, and Interview Guide*

#### *Recruiting Email:*

Hello,

I am a graduate student studying Environmental Psychology at the University of Michigan. I am very interested in the Transition Network, and am currently researching what motivates people to become involved and remain active in Transition Initiatives.

I would like to invite you and your Transition Initiative's members to participate in a short online survey that will contribute to building a better understanding of the strength and attraction of the Transition Movement. By understanding what motivates people to join, we hope to encourage more widespread change in the future.

I am more than happy to share results from this survey, as well as any final outcome of the research with you if you are interested. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [jlask@umich.edu](mailto:jlask@umich.edu), or my research adviser, Raymond De Young at [rdeyoung@umich.edu](mailto:rdeyoung@umich.edu).

I very much appreciate your help in distributing this survey.

Many thanks,

Jill Kiepura

Link to the survey: [https://umich.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_7Wf3rfEqx9sPkjj](https://umich.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_7Wf3rfEqx9sPkjj)

#### *Qualtrics Survey:*

As someone familiar with the Transition Movement, you are invited to participate in a research study about what motivates people to become involved and remain active in Transition Initiatives. This online survey will take about 15 minutes of your time, and will contribute to developing a better understanding of the strength and attraction of the Transition Movement. By understanding what motivates people to join, we hope to encourage more widespread change in the future.

Please feel free to share this link with others familiar with Transition Initiatives.

If you have questions about the study, you may contact Jill Kiepura ([jlask@umich.edu](mailto:jlask@umich.edu)). Thank you for your time and thoughtful responses!

Many thanks,

Jill Kiepura

Graduate Student

School of Natural Resources and Environment

University of Michigan

1) Please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements

	Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
My Transition Initiative is very important to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transition leaves space for me to have a variety of experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I belong to a Transition Initiative but don't actively participate right now	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Transition Movement is part of who I am	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I derive a feeling of contentment from being part of a Transition Initiative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My desire for high quality goods attracts me to the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2) Please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements

	Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
I am passionate about the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My involvement in Transition is in harmony with other activities in my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My involvement in Transition reflects qualities I like about myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My hope for the future keeps me involved in my Transition Initiative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am emotionally dependent on my Transition Initiative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My previous lifestyle choice seemed to leave me adrift	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3) Please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements

	Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
I cannot fully live without participating in the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see the Transition Movement as a way to pursue my passion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I invest a significant amount of time & energy in Transition activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Transition Initiative sometimes conflicts with other aspects of my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-reliance adds a source of satisfaction to my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Transition Movement is just one of many things with which I am involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4) Please indicate to what extent you agree with each of the following statements

	Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
I am on at least one committee or subgroup in a Transition Initiative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Frugality drives my involvement with the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider myself an involved member of the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in a Transition Initiative adds to the quality of my life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I invest a significant amount of time & energy in Transition activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moral values drive my involvement in the Transition Movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent did the following motivate you to become involved with the Transition Movement?

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
Climate change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Environmental activism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Passion for social change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volunteerism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peak oil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal need to take action	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conscious food consumption	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Energy descent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Desire to build resilient communities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sense of personal meaning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
Civic duty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perma-culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Waste management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alternative transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Passion for environmental change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Slow food movement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
Family involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Renewable energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

From this list, please select **up to 3 options** that continue to motivate your current involvement:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climate change                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Sense of personal meaning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental activism                | <input type="checkbox"/> Civic duty                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends involved                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Perma-culture                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passion for social change             | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste management                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteerism                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative transportation       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peak oil                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Passion for environmental change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow food movement               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal need to take action          | <input type="checkbox"/> Family involved                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conscious food consumption            | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy descent                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="text"/>       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desire to build resilient communities |   |

We would love to learn more about what brought you to Transition. Are you interested in sharing your story?

- Yes
- No

Please provide your contact information and briefly respond to the following questions to give us a sense of your story.

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Preferred method of communication

What (or who) initially prompted you to join the Transition Movement?

In a few words, please explain what has kept you involved?

Briefly describe how you imagine your future involvement.

## *Interview Guide*

### **Intro to research**

- Interested in what motivates people to join and stay involved in Transition Initiatives. I am particularly interested in the role of passion and what drives people who are motivated to participate in Transition. By passion I mean what is most important to you, a driving force in what you do, something you would like to spend more time doing, something that you strongly identify with, or people might use to describe you.
- Verbal agreement to participate in interview for research purposes
- Any questions?

### **Introduction/background**

- Tell me your name and a little bit about yourself
  - Where are you from originally?
  - Where do you live now, and how long have you lived in the area?
  - What do you do for a living?
  - Who do you live with?
- What Transition Initiative are you part of and how long have you been involved?
- How did you first get involved?
- What is your role now?

### **Passion**

- What are you passionate about?
- Other ways to phrase this:
  - What do you wish you could spend more time doing?
  - If a close friend or family member who knows you well were to describe you, what would they say?
  - How do you want other people to describe you?
  - What are your core values?
- Has this changed over time?
- How do you think it affects your everyday life?

### **Participation**

- What are the personal benefits you've gotten from being a part of the Transition Initiative?
- Did you have any hesitation in joining this Initiative?
- What have been the biggest changes you've made since joining?
- Are there elements of your lifestyle you expected to change but did not?
- What is your vision for the future of your movement? What about the transition movement in general?

### **Sharing/communication (if time permits)**

- How do you talk about your Transition Initiative to people who know nothing about it?
- Why/when does it come up?
- What is the general reaction you get?

*Appendix B: Full list of variables derived from Factor Analysis*

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Alpha</b>
CATPL	Level of participation in Transition Initiative	3.75	1.21	.90
CATOP	Measure of Obsessive Passion	2.18	.82	.72
CATHP	Measure of Harmonious Passion	4.15	.61	.45
CATIMLifeQual	Intrinsic Motivation for high quality of life	3.90	.80	.76
CATIMGoodsQual	Intrinsic Motivation for access to high quality goods	2.97	.77	.58
CATMOTActivity	Activity/topic oriented motivation to participate in Transition	3.38	.86	.85
CATMOTEnviroChange	Motivated by environmental change or activism	4.03	.93	.80
CATMOTCommConnect	Motivated by a responsibility to the community	2.66	.90	.69
CATMOTPeakOil	Motivated by the threat of peak oil and energy descent	3.86	1.20	.87
CATMOTCommBuild	Motivated by a sense of building community	4.09	.77	.59
CATIMAdrft	Motivated by reaction to previous lifestyle (a sense of being adrift and a desire to change)	2.17	1.09	



*Appendix C: Complete Factor Analysis Results*  
*Passion Variables*

<b>Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>			
	Component		
	CATPL (1)	CATOP (2)	CATHP (3)
PL-Involved member	.897		
PL-Committee	.855		
PL-Active	-.808		
PL-Invest time/energy	.797		
OP-Can't live without		.876	
OP-Dependent		.844	
OP-Conflict		.575	
HP-Harmony			.776
HP-Good Qualities			.664
HP-Active outside Trans			.545

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

*Intrinsic Motivation Variables*

<b>Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>			
	Component		
	CATIMLife Qual (1)	CATIMGoods Qual (2)	CATIMAdrift (3)
IM-Contentment	.823		
IM-Quality of life	.796		
IM-Hope	.683		
IM-Moral values	.657		
IM-Self reliance		.764	
IM-Luxury		.652	
IM-Frugality		.642	
IM-Adrift			.828

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

*Interest/Topic-Based Motivation*

<b>Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup></b>					
	Component				
	CATMOT- Activity (1)	CATMOT- EnviroChange (2)	CATMOTComm- Connect (3)	CATMOT- PeakOil (4)	CATMOT- CommBuild (5)
T-Waste mgmt	.817				
T-Slow food	.753				
C-Perma-culture	.693				
T-Food	.656				
T-Alt trans	.612				
C-Education	.473				
T-Renewable energy	.461				
T-Climate change		.806			
PERS-Passion for enviro change		.692			
C-Enviro activism		.681			
PERS-Social change					
C-Volunteerism			.736		
COM-Friends involved			.722		
COM-Family involved			.659		
C-Civic duty			.550		
T-Energy descent				.836	
T-Peak oil				.836	
PERS-personal meaning					.736
COM-build resilient communities					.707

a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

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