

Thinking Resilience

Introduction

This is the first of a series of 22 short videos that explore the interrelated crises of the twenty-first century, and what we as citizens, students, and community leaders can do to respond to them.

Over about three hours total, we'll do the following:

First, we'll examine the interrelated crises themselves, in four main spheres: energy, ecology, economy, and equity.

Then we'll learn to think in systems. This means understanding the

- boundaries,
- inputs,
- outputs,
- energy and information flows, and
- feedbacks

in whatever system you happen to be studying—an ecosystem, an economy, a community, or an industry.

We'll learn the necessity of reinventing culture—moving from a **consumer** economy to a **conserver** economy. We'll see why deep and lasting cultural change often starts with a shift in our relationship with nature. And we'll see what neuroscience has to teach us about how humans either change, or resist change.

As the title of this series suggests, a great deal of what we will learn has to do with **resilience**. We'll explore the science of ecosystem resilience, and how our understanding of nature's ability to adapt to change can help human societies navigate the rough waters ahead. And we'll look at why it's especially important to build resilience in our **communities**.

Then we'll apply that basic understanding throughout the sectors of society, exploring ways to build community resilience in transportation, food systems, urban design, buildings, water systems, energy systems, and even financial systems. In each case we'll explore at least one example of how resilience thinking is already being applied.

Here are a few thoughts on how to best use these videos. Bingeing on them is acceptable—it's fine to watch the whole three hours at one go.

But you're likely to get more benefit if you stop and think about the material after watching each video. Also, these mini-lectures work well as catalysts for group discussion. If you're not in a classroom setting, consider forming a study group.

From time to time during each video, resources in the forms of websites, or the titles of books or articles, will appear on-screen. All of these resources are also listed, with links, on the website that supports this series. Please search out these additional resources and read as many of them as you can.

You're more than welcome to look for contrasting points of view. Use this course as an opportunity to develop your critical thinking skills. If you disagree with some of what's presented, look for outside materials that support your contrary view—but also look for flaws in your own view by searching out materials that criticize it. We're all in the process of learning, and there's a lot to learn.

We at Post Carbon Institute, the producers of this series, are happy to receive your feedback. You can contact us at the address on the screen.

On a personal note, I'd like to say a few words about why I was motivated to help produce this video series. I'm a baby boomer who has reached retirement age. I've spent the last two or three decades studying, writing, and speaking about the environmental, social, and economic issues confronting humanity. Frankly, I think my generation did a pretty terrible job tackling those issues, and now climate change, economic inequality, and resource depletion are far more serious and immediate threats than was the case when I was a student. I feel I owe it to today's young people to take what I've learned—not only about the problems, but about the best strategies being developed to address them—and to put that information in an easily digestible form, so that viewers can get a head start on the work that will inevitably shape and inform the rest of their lives.

I wish you every success in building a more just, resilient, and sustainable world.

Now prepare yourself for a deep dive into the most important and interesting of topics. Set aside some time for viewing, reading, thinking, and writing. Let's go.