

Offering solutions and hope through film

Posted on August 2, 2016 by Marjolein Baghuis



Meet Renée Scheltema, award-winning film and documentary maker. We met at the screening of her latest film, **Normal is Over**, in Amsterdam. By the time we could both make time for this interview, she was back in Cape Town, where she lives most of the year. Here's what Renee shared during our Skype interview on connections, solutions and making a new future.

Planet earth will be fine – without us



All the talk is about saving the planet, but we need to realize that the planet will be just fine without us. **Once people are gone**, nature will restore itself over time. What we really need to do is to save humanity by creating conditions on this planet in which people can thrive. The existing systems are collapsing; what we considered “normal” in the past, is now over. Renee is inspired by people establishing a new system, rather than those trying to change or fix the current system. She sees local eco-communities popping up all over the world. Their focus is on a change of consciousness, on regeneration and “rewilding” the planet. They thrive on renewable energy and organic food. People are reconnecting to nature and to each other. They are creating a new, sustainable future at the local level.

Connecting talent and solutions for critical mass



In these communities, everyone contributes with their own talents and passion. Within each community there is a strong realization that the group is stronger than we could ever be as individuals. Now, it's time to orchestrate collaboration and sharing of solutions across these local communities. To reach a critical mass and scale up for a new sustainable future. The dominant mindset should be all about collaboration and abundance, rather than competition and scarcity which underline the current economic system. Renee's personal contribution is the film **Normal is Over**, hoping to inspire people young and old to take a different path in their lives.

An independent journey for change

Renee has been thinking and acting “green” for at least 40 years. With the rise of green parties and initiatives, she initially felt things were heading the right way. But after her children moved out, she dug deeper into what was really going on and started worrying that the “green” fad wasn't growing fast enough to create a more sustainable future. So she set out on a personal mission to get to the root of the problem, and above all, to find and share solutions. The format to do so came naturally, she wanted to make a film. She wanted to produce it independently, to be able to really express how she saw the issues and solutions. People were quite skeptical when she launched this idea and wished her luck, claiming she would certainly need it. She set out in August 2011, starting with Wouter van Dieren (Club of Rome), whom she'd met years before when making a series of documentaries for Dutch television about the environment. He then helped her find and connect to the next experts to interview and involve in the movie. A chain of “keystone” individuals helped her get to the root of the problem and to discover many solutions on many levels available today. This chain of people continued for years and in November 2015, the film was launched. It has since then received several awards and has been screened around the world.

Change in consciousness to inspire action



A film is a powerful vehicle for change. It can be hard to find the right information via mainstream media. There is too much and too little information at the same time. Investigative journalists and documentary filmmakers help to make the right information available to inspire change. The right information raises the level of consciousness and that inspires action and change. Communication is key to overcome resistance to change. The problems of humanity are too big to solve with only meditation and small-scale initiatives; we need better communications to generate a critical mass of people creating a sustainable future.

Supporting a movement to make a new future



Renée has put nearly five years of her life and a substantial amount of money into this film, and feels it has not yet reached its full potential. She's now setting up an NGO – Making of the Future – to continue what the journey of the film has started. She wants to increase the impact of the film, ensuring more people understand and act to drive change for a better world.

For more information about Renée and Normal is Over, please check out the [Normal is Over](#) website or follow [Normal is Over](#) on

Twitter and **Facebook**. And of course **watch the movie** (available in English, Spanish and Dutch).

Interested to get involved in increasing the impact of the film? Renée is actively looking for screening opportunities around the world and pro bono translations for subtitles in Russian, Mandarin and other languages. Please reach out to her assistant via info@normalisoverthemovie.com.

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