

# THE IN-TIME(S)

Inspired by the future,  
rooted in the past, acting in  
the present

Extracts based on the book "Inventing for the Sustainable Planet" - the inner and outer journey to sustainability.  
<http://porena.blogspot.com> staff@avbp.net

## EXTRA: Debriefing Imagestreams

By Stephen Hinton

### How to debrief imagestreams

I have found debriefing to be extremely valuable. Imagestreaming produces such a rich flow of insights and ideas that things continue to fall into place sometimes years after an imagestream. These notes are my suggestions based on experience. Take what works for you and leave the rest. I encourage everyone to work out their own methodology as they go along. And then break it - you don't want to get into a rut!

It is good to keep an archive of your imagestreams. I recommend after trying several methods, that you always record your streams, even if you do them with a live partner. The best format is a digital voice recorder, and transfer them over to your computer. Always back-up on CD regularly.

Type up the notes, adding as much as you remember to make the meaning clear. A good idea is to succinctly write down the:

- background to why you are doing just this imagestream
- purpose and goal

One reason for doing this framing is that you always get what you ask for. In your attempt to formulate your quest you may ask inadvertently for things that you are not exactly after. This is especially true of restrictions. Say you want to go to a place that has solved a certain problem, if

### ABOUT THE IN-TIME(S)

We are living at the peak of human achievement, but also at the peak of our resources. Sustainable development means handing over to future generations the possibility to create for themselves a standard of living at least equivalent to that we enjoy. This requires fundamentally re-thinking how we use resources, indeed all of the social arrangements we take for granted. And we need to start now. Ideation, imagining, even fantasizing are tools we can all use in this re-thinking process. The technique used to provide the basis of these extracts, Imagestreaming, opens up endless possibilities to explore our ideal future.

you did not specify that the place should have the same societal structure as the one we are living in you may find they have something completely different. If you were looking for a solution that will work in your context you should specify that. I then like to clean the notes up and publish them on my website. This is not necessary, but the discipline of writing for others forces you to take their standpoint and be clearer in your communication. In this context we extend the idea of 'live listener' to a much wider audience.

Keep both the notes and the sound recording. Sometimes I need to read the notes a few times to "get" what the insight is. Re-reading tapescripts often raises questions of what exactly was going on during the session. You can get insights you do not manage to describe - or they come as fleeting impressions. You can always go back to the tapescript to help re-capture the moment. (You can always go back and do a new imagestream as well.)

But that it just the beginning. If you are just going to imagestream and not interact with the world in new ways, you are missing out on what imagestreaming can give you. However, the gap between insight and action is

often very wide. You will need to take small steps towards implementation.

Here is my list of questions I ask myself after having done the first typing up. It is good practice to ask these methodically, and keep them in your notebook for future reference.

- 1) List everything that surprised you.
- 2) Draw diagrams and write descriptions of inventions you found.
- 3) Try to sketch "realia" e.g. information posters, signs, powerpoints – make models maybe. I have never tried it with children but I would love to teach imagestreaming, then do a beachhead session and then point them to craft materials to get them to sketch and make models of their inventions.
- 4) List what is to be verified and go do it. Internet works just fine. Do not just use search engines, there are encyclopedias like Wikipedia and Encyclopedia of the Earth.
- 5) What could you use TODAY and what could be done TODAY? This is a fantastic way to start bringing insights into practice. You can often find small actions that are fun and easy to do. My experience is that insights from imagestreams often work surprisingly well.
- 6) What questions remain– List these as targets for future image streams.
- 7) Notes about the methodology itself – if I can improve it for next time, what I learned..
- 8) Other ways to describe the insights: write an article from the future, a research paper, a power point presentation, do a documentary or build a model.
- 9) Other musings, sidebands etc.

Remember too, that the answer you get is right and WILL work in the appropriate context. However, you may not understand WHY it is right. To convince others you will need to approach the insight again, this time as a

salesman learning a new product to sell. So don't be surprised if you explain your insight and get funny looks, and not be able to answer people's objections. Listen to them and address them. They will help you sell your idea later on.