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MBS ([00:00](#)):

How are politics going in your country? Terrifically Well? No, no, don't tell me. You're just delighted with how your version of democracy is currently showing up. It is a heavy time. Your vision of the future is what? On the bleak side perhaps. I am truly feeling the pain and the confusion and gosh, I guess, the inadequacy of just not knowing what to do about it right now, but what if in the future the good guys win? And if you knew that and if you knew that you were one of the good guys and I think you are, well, what would that call forth from you?

([00:53](#)):

Welcome to two pages with MBS, the podcast where brilliant people read the best two pages from a favorite book, a book that has moved them, a book that has shaped them. Today, I'm talking to Rob Hopkins and I set the interview up this way because on his website there is a photo of him holding a sign that says, "I've been to the future. The good guys won." You can see that at [robhopkins.net](http://robhopkins.net). It is a great photo. He's a father, he's a husband, he's a speaker,



he's an author, he's an artist and he's a gardener and perhaps central to all of that, he is an activist. Rob co-founded the Transition Network and also Transition Town Totnes, the town in which he lives.

Rob ([01:39](#)):

Which was intended to be something we would start in our community that was like a community-led response to climate change. What can we do here without waiting for anyone's permission, without waiting for anyone's funding? What can we do with the people we have, the resources that we have, the passions that we have? And we started something that we call Transition Town Totnes and it took off like wildfire and you can now find transition groups in 50 countries around the world, thousands of communities, and they are reimagining their food systems, their local economies, their energy systems.

MBS ([02:13](#)):

Now I can't imagine how Rob has time for any of this, and actually, it turns out he doesn't, at least not really. Like many in the role of activist, Rob feels a deep frustration not just with the way things are, but why they are like they are.

Rob ([02:31](#)):

If the people in charge of everything, who are the worst people to be in charge at this period of time? If they could only stop making the stupidest decisions on the list of options, which ranges from the right thing to do to the really stupid thing to do, and they keep going for the stupidest things to do on the list. If they went at the other end of the list, me and all the other people I know who are doing this kind of stuff, we could do something else. I could go to printmaking school, which I've always really wanted to do. I would have time to do all sorts of nice things and actually I spent all my life working on this.



MBS ([03:06](#)):

You can probably hear this, I can certainly hear the frustration in that answer, but I also hear a deep sense of responsibility and integrity. This is the work that needs to be done, but change happens not just through small things. They're important as well, but also through structural shifts and Rob is thinking about that in terms of imagination.

Rob ([03:32](#)):

We need to build what I like to think of as being an imagination infrastructure. It's like I think of myself increasingly as an imagination activist who is trying to get people to really think beyond what's in front of them because the climate emergency is now so severe and so urgent that it's only a complete reimagining of everything that's going to mean we survive and actually reimagining everything sounds amazing.

MBS ([03:56](#)):

There's been a long history where activism and music converges. Musicians throughout the years have produced social commentary and political protest and raising general awareness of what affects our world and doing it in a way that people love. I'm a big fan of Billy Bragg, have been ever since I was introduced to his music by a girlfriend. I think I even quote him in my most recent book. Now, music was a touch paper of activism for Rob.

Rob ([04:25](#)):

I think I would probably take that back to when I was about 14 and a punk band called Crass who were an incredible anarchist punk ensemble based in the UK who were a band, but they were also almost like a political, philosophical, educational. I was a generation for whom school was so atrociously bad that we were the generation that had to educate itself through fanzines and books and music and every record that Crass put out came with a foldout sleeve with essays and I learned so much. There was a record they released that meant that



I became vegetarian when I was 14. I've been vegetarian ever since. They were very outspoken on issues around... But it was my first immersion in feminism and in different political approaches. So I'd say it was punk in general, but crass.

[\(05:33\)](#):

And then also when I was 21, a guy called Bill Mollison who was the Australian guy who was one of the co-creators of the permaculture approach, I saw him give a talk in a hall in a place called Stroud in the southwest of England, and it completely blew me away. He had this amazing ability that half of the hall wanted to kill him and the other half of the hall's life was totally transformed and I was one of those people and he gave me a kick up the backside that has been propelling me forward ever since, I think.

MBS [\(06:07\)](#):

That's brilliant. How do you sustain the energy it takes to be an activist? How do you renew yourself?

Rob [\(06:20\)](#):

I think partly because what I do involves... So I wrote a book called The Transition Handbook, that was one of the books that inspired this movement to get started, and then lots and lots of people read that book and then went off and did things. So to be in a position where I get to go and visit places all across Europe, I don't fly, so that's the extent of where I go, who were inspired by that book and by those ideas and then have created things and then are really excited to show me those things because they associate with me with why they started them.

[\(06:59\)](#):

And then to gather those stories and share them round is partly where I get energy from. It's like there is so much happening, you just never hear about it. You'll never hear about it in the papers, you'll never see it on the news, but there is so much happening that people are doing. So I get a huge amount of



inspiration from visiting those places, hearing those stories. I get a lot of energy from people when I go to places and do talks and workshops and just meeting people.

[\(07:29\)](#):

I also make time and space for family and downtime and drawing and art making and reading. And so when you are an activist and you are around the world of people doing things in that way, after a while you see that we lose an awful lot of people out of these movements from burnout. It's rife and we've lost so many brilliant people because we just don't look after them enough and they didn't look after themselves. We'd have a culture that encourages people to look after themselves that says, "You sent me an email at 3:00 in the morning the other day. Are you okay?" Is that right? Is that an expression of someone whose life is in some kind of balance? So for me, I try to make space for other things.

MBS [\(08:29\)](#):

Well, if I may, let me ask you, knowing that you are managing the burnout, but there's still a price you pay for being an activist, I'm wondering what the cost is of committing to activism.

Rob [\(08:46\)](#):

So a guy called Aldo Leopold, who was really one of the first people we would now think of as an environmentalist, he wrote an incredible book called A Sand County Almanac in the 1920s, all about wilderness and how important it is, which is an amazing book I'd really recommend to anybody. He said something like, "To have an understanding of ecology and what's happening in the world is to live in a world of wounds," I think is how he puts it. And it's not something you can turn on and off. For me, it's not like once you've had what I think of as being your climate change dark night of the soul when it's really landed where we are at and what that means and what the implications are, you can't...



(09:38):

Sometimes I go to the pub and there's some people next to me who are saying, "Oh yeah, we just got back from four days in Thailand for someone's wedding." I'm like, "What the actual fuck are you doing?" And you can't turn that on and off. If somebody said, "Ooh, I just drove over here in my car with my two kids in their baby seats in the back and I smoked a cigar the whole way here," people now would say, "Uh, sorry." Or, "Well, the kids wouldn't go to bed, so I slapped them." Now we'd be like, "Oh my God." But it's the same for me. You can't turn this stuff on and off and it's always there.

MBS (10:20):

It feels like That's a nice segue to perhaps ask you about the book you're going to read from us. What book have you chosen?

Rob (10:26):

So I've chosen a book by somebody and I don't even completely know how to pronounce her name properly. So it's either Mariame or Mariame. Have you seen that name before?

MBS (10:38):

I haven't. I looked up the book when I knew that you were going to read from it, and I was like, "I'm not sure how to pronounce that name either."

Rob (10:46):

I saw an interview with her in Democracy Now! where the interviewer called her Mariame, but I always call her Mariame, so I'm going to call her Mariame. Okay, so it's Mariame Kaba and she's an American activist. It says on the back, she's an organizer, educator and curator who is active in movements for racial gender and transformative justice, founder and director of Project NIA, an abolitionist organization with a vision to end youth incarceration. I first came across her when I was starting to research the book about imagination. I read an interview



with her that she did with a project that was gathering different stories from different activists and she said in that interview, "We must imagine while we build, always both." And I was like, "Who is this woman? She's awesome, awesome, awesome."

[\(11:35\)](#):

So she's a prison abolitionist, which, for me, is one of the most incredible movements in the world because it's in terms of a what if question, what if we abolish prisons and the power of a what if question to take us into really rethinking everything. For me, how the black community have kept that question alive over a long period of time while the prison abolition complex is being built around them and the doors that it opens to thinking about education and society and compassion and it's just amazing.

[\(12:10\)](#):

When I started doing my podcast, she was the number one person. I've basically spent three years trying to get Mariame Kaba to come on my podcast. So part of the reason for me doing this is so that hopefully she'll listen to this and go, "Yeah, all right, I'll come on Rob's podcast." And I've been trying really hard. I think she is the most articulate person for speaking to how a deep reimagining of things is not something to be terrified of and to shy away from, but is something to embrace and something that can unlock all sorts of hidden jewels that we don't even know are there until we take those steps. And it's a brilliant book. It's called *We Do This 'Til We Free Us*. It was published a couple of years ago and it's published by Haymarket Books and basically, it's a collection of essays and interviews with her and things that she's done in different places and it's just brilliant.

MBS [\(13:15\)](#):

That's fantastic. It's a wonderful setup. How did you pick the two pages?



Rob ([13:23](#)):

So like all books that I really enjoy, there's a lot of underlining going on in this book. This is one of the most underlined books I think I read recently. And this is basically the two pages with the most underlining on it.

MBS ([13:37](#)):

I love it. That's a perfect metric. Rob, I'm excited to hear you read this, so over to you.

Rob ([13:50](#)):

None of us has all of the answers or we would've ended oppression already, but if we keep building the world we want, trying new things and learning from our mistakes, new possibilities emerge. Here's how to begin. First, when we set about trying to transform society, we must remember that we ourselves will also need to transform. Our imagination of what a different world can be is limited. We are deeply entangled in the very systems we are organizing to change, white supremacy, misogyny, ableism, classism, homophobia, and transphobia exist everywhere. We have also thoroughly internalized these logics of oppression that if oppression were to end tomorrow, we would be likely to reproduce previous structures. Being intentionally in relation to one another, a part of a collective, helps not only to imagine new worlds, but also to imagine ourselves differently. Join some of the many organizations, faith groups and ad hoc collectives that are working to learn and unlearn, for example, what it feels like to actually be safe or those that are naming and challenging white supremacy and racial capitalism.

([15:04](#)):

Second, we must imagine and experiment with new collective structures that enable us to take more principled action, such as embracing collective responsibility to resolve conflicts. We can learn lessons from revolutionary movements like Brazil's Landless Workers Movement that have noted that





when we create social structures that are less hierarchical and more transparent, we reduce violence and harms. Third, we must simultaneously engage in strategies that reduce contact between people and the criminal legal system. Abolitionists regularly engage in organizing campaigns and mutual aid efforts that move us closer to our goals. We must remember that the goal is not to create a gentler prison and policing system because as I have noted, a gentler prison and policing system cannot adequately address harm. Instead, we want to divest from these systems as we create the world in which we want to live. Fourth, as scholar and activist, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, notes building a different world requires that we not only change how we address harm, but also that we change everything.

[\(16:11\)](#):

The prison industrial complex is linked in its logics and operation with all other systems from how students are pushed out of schools when they don't perform as expected, to help people with disabilities are excluded from our communities and the ways in which workers are treated as expendable in our capitalist system. Changing everything might sound daunting, but it also means that there are many places to start, infinite opportunities to collaborate and endless imaginative interventions and experiments to create. Let's begin our abolitionist journey, not with the question what can we have now and how can we make it better? Instead, let's ask what can we imagine for ourselves and the world? If we do that, then boundless possibilities of a more just world await us.

MBS [\(17:06\)](#):

Well, that's a stirring call to action, Rob. I'm wondering what rings most powerfully true for you in those pages?

Rob [\(17:17\)](#):

I think she says, "Changing everything might sound daunting, but it also means there are many places to start, infinite opportunities to collaborate and endless



imaginative interventions and experiments to create." It's what I try and communicate in the work that I do. So when I find people who put it so much more poetically and eloquently and powerfully than I do, I'm just like, "Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes." The whole book is a yes, yes, yes, yes, yes book for me. When I speak to climate scientists... So the other week, the United Nations, they published a report where they said, "Any chance of the world staying below one and a half degrees, temperature increase is now gone, unless we can see a rapid transformation of society," is the phrase they use, a rapid transformation of society. So all the headlines in all the magazines, 1.5 is gone, end of 1.5, 1.5 now finished.

[\(18:23\)](#):

I haven't seen any headlines that went, "Hey, cool, rapid transformation of society." Why don't we do that rapid transformation of society bit rather than the, hey, we are finished and that's the end of us bit? Shouldn't we at least give that a go before we just go to the, it's too late and we're basically about to boil ourselves in our own soup kind of thing? So for me, that's what I try and do in the work that I do, is to try and bring that alive for people. What are we so terrified of? And the only reason we're going to do it is if we're able to talk about what that radical transformation of society would be like in a way that it's so irresistible and delicious and magnificent that of course we want to do that rather than it feeling like that we're being dragged away from something irreplaceable.

[\(19:17\)](#):

And what I love about her work is that she talks about something which is huge. What if there were no prisons? What? Really? It would be just mayhem and chaos. And that's completely unimaginable. And the way she says, "Actually the biggest source of violence in America at the moment is our prison and our incarceration system and our policing system. The worst sexual abuser of people, the worst rapist in the country is our prison system." And of course, no one is saying, "Let's just shut all the prisons down and let everybody out." What



she's saying is this stuff doesn't just happen by accident. The fact that the vast majority of people in prison are young Black men is not because somehow they're inherently more badly behaved than everybody else, it's because that's the way the system is designed and that's how it works. And it's a private prison system and it's brutal and it's violent.

[\(20:16\)](#):

And wouldn't the world be better without it? And how would we get there? And what are the implications then in terms of how education works and how housing works and how parenting works and where money goes and how society is redesigned and how we manage conflicts and how we design in restorative justice and different kinds of approaches than just locking people up and destroying their lives. And so for me, I'm always looking for people who are exploring this idea of, well, what does it mean to be an imagination activist in the world? What does it mean to be someone whose work unlocks different possibilities and different ways of thinking about the future? And most of the inspiration that I get from that work comes from women of color at the moment, Adrienne Maree Brown, Walidah Imarisha, Mariame Kaba, people who are writing, I think, from such an incredible place of compassion and kindness, and it doesn't have to be like this. Why are we settling for this? Really?

[\(21:29\)](#):

It's like we're just going to allow the prison industrial complex to grow and grow and build and build and build and that's just the inevitable direction we're going in. Really? So for me, she writes with such compassion and kindness and rage and she speaks so beautifully and so powerfully about injustice in a way that as a privileged white guy, I really have nowhere near that experience or understanding of, but I feel like she takes my hand and takes me into that world in a way that is not... Yeah, I feel-

MBS [\(22:19\)](#):

I hear you. You're slipped away by it.



Rob ([22:21](#)):

Yeah, she's extraordinary. And I think that whole movement and all of that movement that came through Black Lives Matter that so many white people became so defensive about and all that white lives matter rubbish, it's actually for me, Black Lives Matter was such a compassionate movement. It was extraordinary. I love everything that she does.

MBS ([22:53](#)):

I'm picking that up. It's subtle, but I'm picking it up. Let me ask you, the first of the four challenges she laid out in the pages you read were, this is my paraphrasing, but to change the world, we must first transform ourselves. How have you transformed as an activist and as a man?

Rob ([23:17](#)):

I guess I've learned a lot over time about how to present these things to people. There are certain people who during my time with all of this, there's a few, I can count them on one hand, but people who I've been to talks by that just rewired my brain completely and gave me a huge boost to refocus what I'm doing. And so I feel like part of my duty is to try and pay that back and to offer that to the next generation who are coming through. And part of the interest for me in Mariame's book is, again, as a privileged white person, it's like I have a duty to be doing some of this work and to be reading what people's reading voices and hearing voices who don't get so much exposure. So the podcast that I do, from What If to What Next, there was a very, very conscious decision when I started that to never do any episodes with two white male guests on.

MBS ([24:52](#)):

Right. I'm going to interrupt you if I can, Rob, because I believe this thoroughly that part of the transformation is learning to talk about this in a way that is compelling and inviting and engaging rather than-



Rob ([25:09](#)):

Heading for the hills.

MBS ([25:10](#)):

Yeah, head for the hills. And I want to push a little deeper into how you have transformed more of the being of who you are rather than the doing. This may be an artificial separation, but for me, learning communication is part of doing, but what's different about how you are wired, how you're showing up in the world, how your heart has changed?

Rob ([25:41](#)):

So when I was 20, no, when I was 19 and I was a bit of a bewildered, lost 19-year-old, I didn't really quite know what I was doing.

MBS ([25:55](#)):

Unlike every other 19-year-old.

Rob ([25:57](#)):

Exactly, it's part of the terrain. I ended up living in Italy for three years in a Buddhist monastery in the Tibetan Buddhist Center. It was like my life university. It was an extraordinary instructive time. And I've always been very inspired since in the Buddhist idea of the Bodhisattva of somebody whose expression of their compassion practice is of being of service to other people. It is one of the things that distinguishes the Tibetan tradition from other ones, other ones, which are you get enlightened. The point of it's to get enlightened like the Buddha. In the Tibetan tradition, they say, "That's not good enough. Actually, there's no point doing that until you've freed everybody else." So it's that idea that you live your life of service to other people. So I've always tried to bring that into the activism that I do.



[\(27:02\)](#):

So for me it's an expression of that and it's something that has always underpinned... So I have four sons. My eldest son is now 29, my youngest is 20. And they've grown up in a world where living as sustainably as we can is fundamental to their experience of growing up, so that's their normal. So we've always grown food, they've always cooked fresh food. We've never been on airplanes. We cycle, we separate everything. It was like a deep commitment as a family that that's who we are and that's what we do. So if I'm answering your question... So my wife is very involved in Extinction Rebellion. So we both have different ways of manifesting our concern about this. So hers is more around trying to block the things that are making everything worse. And mine is about trying to kickstart and fire the things that are going to make things better. But it comes from a deep concern about things which has been central in our relationship since we first met, really.

MBS [\(28:27\)](#):

How does grief inform your work?

Rob [\(28:33\)](#):

I think it's a pretty constant companion. I always have to be very realistic about the fact that we started the transition movement in 2006 with this very ambitious goal of relocalizing the world. And actually during that time since then, 30% of all the carbon emissions ever produced by humanity have been produced in that period of time.

MBS [\(29:04\)](#):

I haven't heard that before.

Rob [\(29:06\)](#):

We're not winning. None of it is winning. Extinction Rebellion isn't winning, Just Stop Oil isn't winning, the 350.org isn't winning, the Sierra Club isn't winning,



Greenpeace aren't winning. It's like everybody's trying different things and there isn't one silver bullet. It's like there's all kinds of different things that are going on, and the more we can talk to each other across movements, the better. So I think grief is something where, for me, there's a healthy cycle, which is that you have the moments of grief. At the moment, the direction that we're on, there's many, many reasons for grief and when we see lots of things that are happening, but I feel like there's a healthy cycle where we experience that and then we use that to motivate us to do things. And then it's the doing things that then gives us the energy and the connection and then we go back. It's a loop.

[\(30:11\)](#):

But sometimes I think when we just focus on collapse and extinction all the time, then we can get stuck in the grief bit and we don't move through that. And Peter Kalmus, who's an amazing climate scientist based in the US, someone asked him what gives you hope? And he said, "The fact that we've barely tried yet." I love it. The fact that we've barely tried yet. I tell you, it's like, "Okay, give me 30 years, give me the resource and we'll try all this stuff. And if at the end of that it hasn't worked, then fair enough." But we can't say it's too late. There's no point in doing anything when all the stuff that we know we have to do, we've barely done any of it. So I think it's a mixture of grief and frustration and rage that actually this is caused by a relatively small number of people who are holding us back from what could be the most extraordinary transformation in human history.

[\(31:10\)](#):

I read a great book at the moment by a guy called William MacAskill, which I can't remember what it's called. It's about the future. And he says in there, "Rather than thinking that we are somehow coming to the end of humanity, that so much narrative is about extinction collapse. These are the last days of humankind." He says, "Actually think of this as being a troubled adolescence before the most incredible prolific future." So that's what I try and get people



thinking about, really. But I think if you do this work then grief is pretty ever present, really.

MBS ([31:52](#)):

Rob, how do you find the scale of the work to do? The last call to action in the section you read out was around change everything. And you're like, "That does feel quite daunting." And it feels to me that sometimes when people have ambitions to be a force for change, their scale is either too big because when you say change everything, that's overwhelming. You can't change everything. But often the reaction to that is to play too small, which is like, "I'm trying to do my recycling." And that's a thing, but it's not as significant a thing as it might be. I'm wondering how you figure out how to calibrate the scale at which you want to play so you can decide where you want to turn your attention.

Rob ([32:49](#)):

So one of the things that I try to share with people is stories of things that changed in quite a short period of time. There's so many examples of... We talked about Rosa Parks earlier on. From when she refused to give up her seat, within 10 years the Civil Rights Act was passed. It took 10 years from the first international sanctions on South Africa to a new constitution being passed in South Africa. Five years ago, I don't know very many people who drank plant-based milks, for example. The growth of plant-based milks, it must be close to 50% of milk sales now are plant-based milks. That's happened in a really short period of time. When I was 18, all the vegans that I knew back then wore black and were angry and the food was dreadful and they all looked really unhealthy and it was a very unappealing thing. Now they're all gorgeous and the food looks amazing.

MBS ([34:05](#)):

My wife is a vegan, so I'm going to tell her that.





Rob ([34:07](#)):

Well, I think you should, yeah. And the food's amazing and it's really appealing, which is why that shift is happening so fast. And all around the world, renewable energy now costs about nine times less than new oil and gas infrastructure and it's just exploding all over the world, new forms of energy. There's so much that's happening in terms of reimagining the food system. And so I think yes, can we change everything? Well, the fact that things have moved at a certain pace so far... We saw during COVID that we could reimagine everything in a really short period of time because we saw that it was an emergency. We changed the economic model, we paid people not to work. We introduced all kinds of different things in a very short period of time. Climate change is a way, way, way bigger emergency than COVID ever was.

([35:07](#)):

And if we were to actually embrace it as such and respond as such, then we could change everything, maybe not absolutely everything, but we could change enough to start changing that direction in which we're going. So Walidah Imarisha, who's an activist in the United States who co-edited a book called *Octavia's Brood*, all about Octavia Butler's work and legacy and a new generation of Black storytellers using speculative fiction as a way of exploring issues around race and gender and stuff. She wrote in her introduction to that book, all organizing is science fiction.

MBS ([35:51](#)):

I love it.

Rob ([35:52](#)):

All organizing is science fiction because it's about sharing a different story. And there's an organization called The Center for Artistic Activism in the United States who use this term imagine winning, imagine winning. And that's what I get partly again coming back to this book is she talks about imagine winning in a



way that not that many people do. What would it be like if the prison abolition movement was actually successful? How would the world smell differently? How would it taste differently? How would it feel differently?

[\(36:27\)](#):

And one of the things that I've started using in my work is in the climate movement, there's so much focus on collapse and extinction and inevitability, and there's a very famous graphic which is called the climate stripes, which anybody who's seen the front cover of Greta Thunberg's new book would know. There's a vertical band showing the average temperature of every year and it shows the warming that's going on and in everybody's mindset, that trend continues and it's just going to get redder and redder and more and more awful. And so I've created a version of that where it goes the other way and it starts to cool and get bluer. And in that spirit of imagine winning, that's what feels should be our pendant, should be our flag, should be our symbol. It's like we have to be a movement that cultivates longing for a different world. And if we are going to change everything, we have to start by cultivating longing for that. And that comes back to storytelling and art and music and books like this.

MBS [\(37:36\)](#):

I love that. Rob, it's been such a rich conversation. Thank you. A final question, what needs to be said that hasn't yet been said between you and me?

Rob [\(37:52\)](#):

I think that I would like to thank you for the spaciousness of this conversation. I feel like sometimes I come to do things like this and there's a very prescriptive set of questions and we just bash our way through them. And I love the way that you've allowed this to be an emergent, generative conversation. I think I would say that also being asked to find two pages from one book for me, as you can see behind me, I don't know if people who are listening will be able to see,



but my house is full of books, So being asked to just choose two pages is a bit like being asked who my favorite child is. It's not quite that straightforward.

MBS ([38:42](#)):

We know it's your second son. I've picked that up in the subtext.

Rob ([38:50](#)):

And I love books and I think it's an incredible medium. I think maybe just the last thing is that I would say, you mentioned at the beginning about how you were involved in activism when you were younger and not so much now. I think what I would really say to everybody who's listening is Extinction Rebellion have this saying where they say, "We are all crew. We are all crew." We need you in this. We need everybody and everybody has something to bring to this. The kind of activist that each person listening to this can be is entirely something that they shape themselves and is a reflection of what they're passionate about and what they care about and what they grieve for and what delights them. And of course, we all have to live and survive and manage in this world.

([39:55](#)):

And I've been in a very lucky position that I've been able to get to a stage where my activism is my work and I love doing what I do and I'm able to make a living doing it. But that activism, it can be an hour a week, it can be an hour every two weeks, it can be whatever, it can be a little bit of your weekend or something, but this is a crucial, crucial window, a crucial juncture in history when we do have to change everything. And to be able to change everything means that we need everybody on board. And even if at the beginning you don't think it's possible, just give it a go. Just find a place in it and do something, chip in and see where it takes you.

([40:49](#)):

And when I was a permaculture teacher, which I was for a long time, and I taught people how to grow their own food, how to build buildings, how to



generate energy, practical sustainability stuff, nobody ever came to me afterwards and said, "My life was doing really well until you taught me how to grow lettuce. And then the wheels fell off and everything went to shit." It's like there is, at the very least, you will get to meet new people you didn't know before. And in a time which sociologists call an epidemic of loneliness, that's really important, but there'll be much, much more that will come from that.

[\(41:24\)](#):

So books like Mariame's book, I think, we really need because every time we open the newspapers, every time we turn on the television, every time we open our social media channels, we just get an endless stream of stuff telling us why we shouldn't believe that change is possible and why capitalism is completely irreplaceable and nothing could ever happen apart from this. And we need books like this that pull that apart and say, "No, no, no, actually we can do anything. We can be extraordinary. We can be bold." And I would much rather live through a time where we believed we could reimagine everything and we gave it a really good go than that we just sat there and watched everything just go down the tubes and then afterwards regretted that we hadn't acted when we could have done

MBS [\(42:21\)](#):

If we're all crew and I love that as an invitation to remember that we're all on this same craft together. Well, what's your thing to do? Clearly being an activist doesn't have to mean chaining yourself to trees or disrupting tennis games, although these are powerful acts of protest. But being an activist does ask something of you. And if your crew and if you are active, not passive, what's your next thing to do? Maybe it's just to listen to some more podcast episodes. That's okay. I hope there might be more, but that's okay. I've got two to suggest for you, number 161 Stuart Semple. That's called Arts Real Superpower. He's an activist in his own way. And number 63 from DeNora Getachew, which is Rebooting Democracy. See why I'm suggesting those two?



[\(43:17\)](#):

If you want more of Rob and at the very minimum, go check out his great website with his the good guys win in the future. Robhopkins.net is his website. His books and podcasts are linked on the website, along with some of the films he's made about who he is and what he does. If you want him on Twitter or X as it's now stupidly called, it's Robintransition or Rob in transition is how it should be. And on Instagram, it's @Rob Hopkins5085. Thank you for listening. Thanks for loving the show. Thanks for passing the episodes on, for giving it a review. If you've done that, I'm grateful for that. You're awesome and you're doing great.