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Prof. Karen O'Brien (University of Oslo) writes, in *The Adaptive Challenge of Climate Change*, that climate change “is much more than a technical problem; It represents what Heifez et al. (2009) call “adaptive challenge,” a challenge that draws attention to the mindsets, including the assumptions and the beliefs that underpin individual and shared understandings of change” (2). In her 2018 seminar at the Stockholm Resilience Centre: Taking climate change seriously: from adaptation to transformation, offer your point of view on her approach to how we should address sustainability challenges overall based on your learning in the PSP assignment?

My chosen Personal Sustainability Practice is #15, which is to use the stairs instead of taking the elevator. In my previous reports, I talked about why I chose this particular PSP, how it related to me specifically, and an iceberg model with analysis.

The main point of Karen O'Brien's talk is that education can empower people to create collective change through active engagement and collaboration. I think that this is the message of the Personal Sustainability practice. While it is not collaborative, we are able to see how our consistent efforts can make a difference. It also inspires us to share with others what we have

learned or to challenge others to do the same. I like the fact that she makes a distinction between technical and adaptive problems. Typically people say that their actions are a drop in the bucket; however, by addressing this, we can start to shift the mindset in which we frame problems. The questions then becomes, “how do we collectively organize, or how do we arrange society in a way that works for everyone?” O’Brien gives a great example of communication and why it is important. One city department dug up asphalt for new pipes and then one week later they ripped up four months of work to do wiring on the other side. This indicates that there is no dialogue between the agencies and these agencies sit in the same building with each other. By coming up with a plan, they could have avoided dragging out the project longer than it had to be. This principle can be applied to the PSP because without a plan, it is hard to stick to a habit. We are wired to stay in our routines that we have built up instead of disrupting them for the better. Instead of giving responsibility to others and placing blame on them, we are able to start with a personal, non-hypocritical change. Another interesting point is that it forces us to look at our individual and shared values and beliefs. If we question them, we can be more receptive to opinions and ideas. Before the PSP, I don’t believe I ever questioned certain things about the way I lived life but rather took it at face value. We can build a pathway together. In some ways, this is idealistic but if we start with education at a young age, it starts a different value system from the ground up. I do think that this can seem slow, however. If the goal is that we need to create a significant change by 2050, transforming the education system through governmental policy is the way to go. Even if the current administration will not get behind the Paris Agreement goals, education is a completely separate matter. If businesses are addressing the Paris Agreement goals already, this shows that the societal voice is powerful.