The following extract is from *Introduction to Permaculture* (Mollison 1991:30).

**EVERYTHING WORKS BOTH WAYS**

Every resource is either an advantage or a disadvantage, depending on the use made of it. A persistent wind coming off the sea is a disadvantage for growing crops, but we can turn it into an advantage by building a wind-generator and placing our garden within shelterbelts or in a greenhouse.

Disadvantages can be viewed as “problems” and we can take an energy-expensive approach to “get rid of the problem”, or we can think of everything as being a positive resource: it is up to us to work out how we may use it as such.” (Mollison, 1988:35)

Within traditional agricultural systems weeds are considered a problem to get rid of. In permaculture weeds are a resource (i.e. the problem is the solution). A major ‘weed problem’ in the Townsville / Thuringowa region is Chinee Apple (*Ziziphus mauritiana*). This would not be a problem if you want to raise goats, but would rather be a hardy self-reliant species suitable for browsing.

Weeds can be an indicator of nutrient deficiencies in the soil. For example bracken grows in acidic soils low in fertility.

Weeds are a useful resource when accelerating succession and evolution (see Principle of Accelerated Succession). Fast growing weeds can be slashed and used as mulch or composted to increase soil fertility and smother new weeds.

A heat pump works both ways...A heat pump for heating water works like a refrigerator in reverse. Warm air enters, the heat is transferred to the water, and then cold air is expelled. In Japan heat pumps are available where the cold air is used for air conditioning. In contrast, in Australia this cold air is usually vented outside and wasted.

**EXERCISE**

Think of one current waste product in your household that could be used as a resource

____________________________________________________________________________________

Think of a ‘problem’ in your own life that could be turned into a positive

____________________________________________________________________________________

**16. Positivity Principle**

**Exercise 1**

“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder”

By taking the time to engage with nature we can design solutions that suit our particular situation.

**H1. Observe and Interact**

“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder”

By taking the time to engage with nature we can design solutions that suit our particular situation.

**EXAMPLES**

**Heat Pump**

1. Sun heats air
2. Evaporated air is induced into heat pump
3. Evaporated air transfers to heat cold water
4. Cold air is expelled

**Exercise**

Think of one current waste product in your household that could be used as a resource

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Think of a ‘problem’ in your own life that could be turned into a positive

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**WEEDS**

**EXERCISE**

Think of one current waste product in your household that could be used as a resource

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**PRINCIPLES**

H1. Observe and Interact

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**Holmgren**

**Mindmap 16.**

**Examples**

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