GLOBAL CRISIS GUIDE

ON THE ART OF LIVING IN TIMES OF TURBULENCE

relationalism as alternative to post-modern neoliberalism in the anthropocene

Universal Declaration of Human Direction

An ideology for the 21st Century

In what world do we want our children to live?

Welcome to the first printed edition of the Global Crisis Guide. The Guide might provide you with insights on how to live in times of converging global crises. An intellectual quest for wisdom in times of turbulence, connecting ideas by Jeremy Rifkin, Slavoj Zizek, Frans de Waal, Viktor Frankl, E.F. Schumacher, Gregory Bateson, Ken Robinson and others.

Why? In our complex 'end times', humanity is destroying its habitat. Ideology is seemingly obsolete, but since its demise advice on how to live is scarce. We try to fill that gap.

The Global Crisis Guide is written and published online (www.globalcrisisguide.com) and yearly offline in hard copy, in four editions, starting on December 21st 2012. It is written by Sven Jense in close cooperation with a group of advisors and as part of the CMPLX documentary and knowledge network.

We start from a new vision of a good life; the Declaration of Human Direction. Beyond analysis we strive to find direction, and to be as independent, factual, concise, interdisciplinary and passionate as possible. We look for both problems and catharses. This is a work in progress. It legitimizes us to lay hands on everything that provides insight on how to live in this present moment, and that we feel is really, really valuable. This is work in progress. Please feel free to connect and think along.

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To Nichon

How to use this printed copy? On the left there's references to the Universal Declaration of Human Direction. As chapters on the right side pages are built on its foundations, they refer to the declaration from time to time.

Many chapters make use of (documentary) video to underline the argument. Links to online video content are provided through QR codes, also on the left pages. Sometimes links to sources are provided this way.

Since you are reading this the world didn't end on 21st December 2012. Keep your good spirits. Have fun!

1. Introduction

How to Live in Times of Turbulence?

Unprecedented global change is happening. Economic, environmental and social crises are tumbling over one another. Some people will profit, more will suffer, most are uncertain. Results are both positive and very bad: tremendous new chances for change go together with huge human suffering especially for those already poor. The victims are given very little attention.

How to prepare for imminent disaster? Buy candles and matches? Change your money into gold? Grow crops on your rooftop? Read Thoreau? Or find wisdom, think, connect and meditate; be as graceful and mindful as possible? To get an idea of what to do, you need a bigger picture. In this book we try to show links, relations, facts and well-informed visions.

We start from a Vision for the 21st Century. The guide follows with two main sections, devoted to analysis (Converging Crises) and solutions – guidelines and proposals offering direction in chaotic times. In between the main sections you find some crisis indicators; how bad is it? Where do opportunities emerge? Who are being left behind?

Big History is our frame of reference. "… what big history can do is show us the nature of our complexity and fragility and the dangers that face us, but it can also show us our power with collective learning. We may have to survey the whole history of the Universe. So let's do it!" The presentation by David Christian shows why the period we live in now can be labelled the Anthropocene; for the first time in Big History humanity is significantly changing the planet. Christian explains how conditions for life to evolve are special; parameters have to fall within 'Goldilocks' boundaries, that can be surpassed. It might well be we are in the process of crossing some of these boundaries.

The guide is being written for the practical intellectual: those who feel they want to think and listen before acting. For those who want to inform their instincts. Crucially, I am convinced that acting doesn't mean to 'do less' like in less travel, less eating, or turning down the heat in your house. Changing old habits can best be done by embracing new ones and by seeing the world in other ways. Our focus will be on what to do instead of on what to stop doing, in order to survive, live, prosper and thrive.

This guide builds on the arguments by (social) scientists like Tony Judt, Zygmunt Bauman, Gregory Bateson, visionaries like Jeremy Rifkin, philosophers like Slavoj Zizek, and documentary makers like Ross Ashcroft, Adam Curtis and Charles Ferguson. Foundational ideas include (complex) systems theory. We will try to close gaps between academic disciplines, and the arts, but still write for normal people. Although I am indebted to the work of others, all opinions and mistakes remain of course my own.

Finally, the Arts. I think wise answers come from that side. Science has not been too good at predicting complex social issues. Art lies the truth, as Picasso has put it. Umberto Eco wrote The Name of the Rose because he had discovered that some things – like the workings of power – are hard to grasp scientifically. After years of studying Political Science as well as working as a theatre director, I can do nothing but agree with them.

2. Relationism as Ideology

Why Ideology? Why Relationism?

Allan Greenspan has been the chairman of the American Federal Reserve Bank for almost twenty years (until Ben Bernanke took over in 2006). One of the most influential people in the American financial and political world. After hanging after Ayn Rand for decades, the 2008 crisis made him severely adjust his ideology. His underlying idea of how the world works changed. The video is shocking.

Why is ideology here so important? Because this powerful man's flawed ideology can reasonably be related to human suffering, like U.S. slums called Tent Cities. Behind every tent lies the story of a person or family losing jobs and housing, and even more importantly losing prospects of living a good life.

Photo: www.theunionews.com

Ideology informs our underlying assumptions about how the world works. Not everything is what it seems to be; as Plato has put it, we might all be living in caves and only see the shadows on the wall before us. We have ideas about what the world and what truth is, but we might easily be misguided. Not too long ago the world simply was flat. Even more recently, and still, kings were simply appointed by God almighty, women were not deemed fit to vote, and communism was the holy grail of social organization. In our days, neo-liberalism dictates that individual freedom is and should be our highest value.

But we might be wrong - as we have been before. Effects can be devastating and far reaching. And this is why ideology matters. Especially for those who exert power over others, it has to be exceptionally clear what their ideological stances are. Powerful people should be asked for and willing to share their ideology. Then ideologies can be contested. It's a pity it needed hundres of thousands of jobless and homeless families to get the message through this time…

Relationism is a simple answer on market-oriented neo-liberalism, the ideology that has since the days of Reagan and Thatcher increasingly governed Western society - spilling over to the South and East increasingly. Relationism is about what defines people, about what makes people happy: relationships. Relations not only between people, but also between people and the planet. Relationism works for complex societies: where processes are strongly interrelated, focusing on their relationships is a necessity. This new ideology is based on a Vision: the Universal Declaration of Human Direction.

Video: Phillip Blond on Ideology for the 21st Century.

Relationist Manifest

Most chapters in this Guide refer to this Universal Declaration of Human Direction. Its preamble and ten Visions inform the relationlist ideology. In this booklet appropriate Visions are restated on the left side.

Universal Declaration of Human Direction

An ideology for the 21st Century

Relationist Manifest

PREAMBLE (concept of humanity)

Whereas:

Man is a social being. Individual development is always dependent on social development. Man is empathetic and able to love. This is the basis of human community;

Every human being is capable of destruction. Living together means constant vigilant teamwork to deal with our own destructive properties. This process will never be completed, and is perhaps our biggest challenge;

Economic growth is unlimited, innovation means the emergence of new ideas so that with the same amount of resources more can be done. Economic growth is not an end in itself, striving for balance and well-being is the ultimate goal of economic development;

Universal Human Rights address the effects of inequality and injustice but do not solve the systemic causes. Solutions lie in a restructuring of economic, political and other social events. The processes that lead to these solutions require direction;

The declamation of an unambiguous and generally accepted way for the establishment of a society is impossible. However, starting from the Universal Human Rights a directive desirable for the vast majority can be deduced. This statement is a precipitate;

Now, therefore we proclaim this UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN DIRECTION as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations:

(continued on next page)

Vision 1.

We are born into a safe and secure social environment in which we will live in full participation and balanced harmony with each other and our natural environment, and in which we will enjoy respect and dignified old age benefits.

Vision 2.

Food and shelter are available to everyone.

Vision 3.

Health care and health insurance are affordable and accessible to everyone.

Vision 4.

Education is generally accessible and offers maximal opportunities for exploration, development and growth within the social context of a learning environment with well payed and valued teachers.

Vision 5.

Natural resources are available for us and future generations. Resource taxes are raised so prices will reflect the real costs of products and the depletion of ecosystems is prevented. Finite energy sources will also be taxed so abundant renewable energy will become universally available.

Vision 6.

High salaries and profits will be taxed in order to avoid excessive socio-economic inequality. Tax revenues are used to fund common expenses like culture, education, research, public transport and government.

Vision 7.

The value of money is tied to some fixed value, so that excessive speculation and inflation are avoided. The monetary system is under strict control and regulation of state-owned but independent central banks.

Vision 8.

Culture and art are societies' main goals; economy is the most important means. Subjective and sustainable wellbeing is the ultimate desired policy outcome. Meaning and shared experiences make a healthy life valuable. Art and culture are accessible to everyone.

Vision 9.

Inherent imperfections of (free) markets will be checked and balanced by domestic and international law. Inequality is constantly contested through progressive taxation and anti-trust laws. Mixture of commercial and corporate interests is avoided by strict rules and regulations. Public goods for which free competition holds no obvious collective benefit (public transport, education, defense) are operated by the state.

Vision 10.

Government is responsible for organizing the aforementioned aspects of society. Government and parliament are democratically elected and then govern independently according to the principle of representative democracy. The nation state is the principal unit of (global) society. Boundaries of the nation state are semi-permeable: there is enough security for its inhabitants to guarantee work, possessions and a sense of safety, but also plenty of opportunities for mutually beneficial trade and exchange of ideas.

3. Converging Crises

Resources *are* ecosystems, financial crises *are* social inequality

Multiple systems supporting human life on earth are threatened. We are running into a number of boundaries in the natural and social worlds. First, natural resources like oil and a stable climate are running low, which holds a crisis in energy supply. Other natural resources like fish, fresh water and minerals are increasingly scarce. Second, social inequality is soaring, bringing many negative consequences. Third, probably as a result of the resource crisis, financials systems partially collapsed.

Before exploring ways of dealing with these phenomenal challenges, in this chapter the converging crises are explored. Both their individual impacts and combined risks are evaluated.

Complex systems theory is used to explore combined risks. Natural and the social systems have equilibria that can be seriously disturbed. Changes that used to come gradually then speed up and the results become utterly unpredictable. What will happen when we cross systemic boundaries? We do not know. But the outcomes for ourselves may depend on the wisdom of the quick decisions we make in the process.

With Jeremy Rifkin (Rifkin 2011, The Third Industrial Revolution, p 31) we conclude that it is not a financial crisis that leads to higher oil prices, but rather "oil is the crisis"; first oil prices started rising, only after that the housing bubble started bursting. People simply couldn't pay their mortgage with the cost of gas rising. With the financial crisis a social crisis follows that has been mainly ideologically caused. As Naomi Klein analysed in her Shock Doctrine (2007), financial crises often result in redistribution of wealth favoring the haves. Neo-liberal market ideology resulted in soaring inequality - problematic because of status issues. But the financial crisis, with the crisis in social inequality following in its trail, has been triggered by a resource crisis.

The Big History picture holds that we are simply hitting the boundaries of the fossil fuel economy, that has been uptil recently incredibly succesful. Within decades the fossil fuel based first and second Industrial Revolutions enabled an incredibly fast growth of human population - a growth however that as we will see will stabilize at around 9 billion people in 2050. In the meanwhile however we are reaching the end of abundant oil; the success of the industrial revolutions is reaching limits of the natural resources it is depending on.

Is this a crisis of resources, energy, or ecosystems? Those are intimately related. Energy as fossil fuels was formed by the ecosystem, and burning them influences ecosystems in the form of climate change, ocean acidity and so on. We need ecosystems for breathing, food production, and oil again is needed to produce fertilizer. Meat production produces gasses influencing the climate. It is all related. The current human use of the ecological systems we depend on is unsustainable. Not even we will have to change - our natural resource use *will* change eventually.

Change holds opportunities. Possibilities range from mass suffering and death to emergence and establishment of new values, juster societies, secure well-being and unexpectedly rewarding social bonds. This booklet is dedicated to enabling the latter. And, if all fails, you'll still know where best to store your rubber boat (not in the basement!).

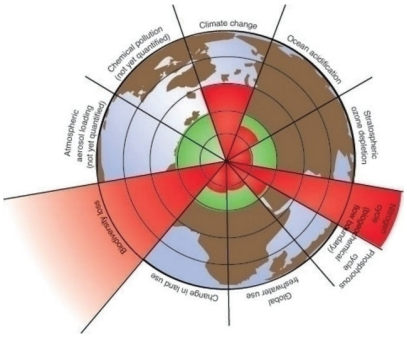
Resource Crisis – introduction

We are running out of natural resources. Limited resources for more people means trouble. What are we running out of exactly, how do these relate and what does it mean? Opinions vary, which is not suprising given the interrelated quality of the ecosystem and what we antropocentrically call ecosystems services.

Zizek, with Ed Ayres, sees four spikes of environmental threat: population growth, consumption of resources, carbon gas emissions, mass extinction of species. (Zizek 2011: 327, quoting Ed Ayres (2001), quoted in Rolston, "Four Spikes, Last Chance", Conservation Biology 14:2, pp. 584-5.)

Bloomberg recently turned things around; it's not that humanity is threatening the earth, but the earth treats humanity. That is, they distinguished nine boundaries that will threat human living conditions. From their perspective (see image), it's first and foremost declining biodiversity that will render the planet uninhabitable.

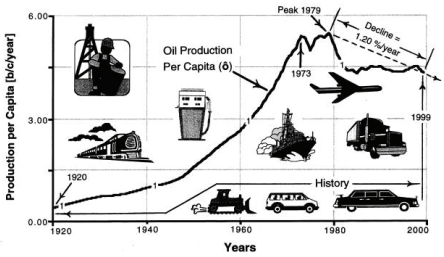
Main conclusion for now is that systems that support human life are being depleted rapidly, with unpredictable effects. Food will be probably prove to be the ultimate resource. Some of the effects we are experiencing already quite forcefully; high oil prices, rising food prices, atmospheric instability.



The End of fossil Energy

Why is energy supply in a state of crisis? Simply because there is a decreasing amount of freely disposable energy to meet the demand of a growing global population. The chapter on Guidelines for Energy will show that this is not a reason for despair. There is one virtually infinite nuclear energy source and of course it's called the sun. The past century has been spent by burning a condensed form of solar energy: petroleum. Using solar energy directly can be a solution.

This is not a peak oil debate. The peak oil debate is over; oil production simply is in decline. The basics. Is oil finite? Yes. When will it be finished? We don't know. Will it finish at once? Of course not; prices will rise and demand will gradually diminish. Is oil supply already declining? Very probably. (International Energy Agency (2010). World Energy Outlook 2010: Executive Summary. Paris: Author, p. 6. In Rifkin 2011: 15.) But what really puts all who question the peak-oil thesis at bay is per capita peak oil.



Duncan, Richard C (November 2001). "The Peak of World Oil Production and the Road to the Olduvai Gorge". Population and Environment (Springer Netherlands) 22 (5): 503–522.

As the chart shows, oil production per head of the global population peaked already in 1979! So is oil a finite resource? Discussion closed.

Chris Martensons adds that we should be looking not at barrels produced or price, but at the *net energy that is needed for extraction*. In the video he simply shows how in the 1930's one barrel of oil was needed to extract 100 barrels, while now one barrel delivers just enough energy to extract just about three; oil as an energy source is very quickly simply running dry.

There are other forms of fossil energy, like coal and natural gas. Oil companies point out that natural gas emits less than coal, that there is enough coal around for another two thousand years, and that environmental effects of coal can be countered by new technologies like capturing CO2.

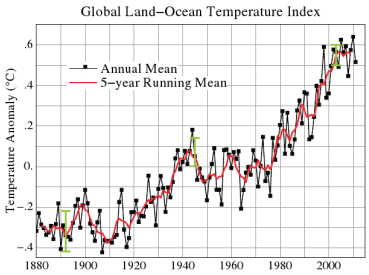
But at what cost? Fossil fuels already are getting more expensive (see Chapter 4). What if future costs of climate change would be incorporated? What if costs of oil-related wars like the recent wars in Kuwait and Iraq would be accounted for? Whatever angle you take, fossil fuels are just a way too expensive way of using the sun's energy. Other ways of harnessing solar energy (also in derivative forms like wind and biomass) and their political and scientific viabilities will be examined in the chapter on Proposals for Energy.

Proposals that are needed because fossil energy, apart from being finite, also causes climate change.

Why Climate Change is Happening and Catastrophic

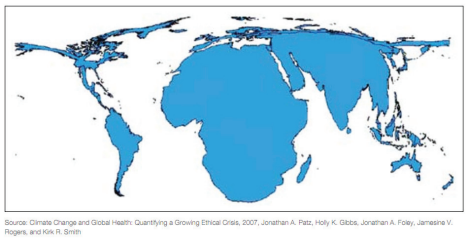
For the first time in human history we are altering the climate of the planet in a way that is threatening our own subsistence. Global warming can make the earth uninhabitable – at least for the nine billion people that could be alive halfway the current century, and certainly for the poorest part.

The climate crisis is interlinked with other crises. Biodiversity is threatened by global warming because forests can't cope and die, taking the animals for which they are the habitats with them (Rifkin 2011: 25). Floods, droughts, hurricanes, rising seawater levels and disappearing glaciers affect the poor in developing countries the most, so social inequality is increased as wel



http://data.giss.nasa.gov/gistemp/graphs_v3/

This is not a global warming discussion. Looking at very simple facts, global warming is happening. Doubt is created by strong energy lobby groups (Oreskes&Conway 2010. Merchants of Doubt. How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming). The potential effects are so devastating that a certain state of denial is not at all strange – from a psychological point of view. "Millions of people are already suffering because of climate change. [...] Climate change is happening more rapidly than anyone thought possible. [...]" (Human Impact Report 2009 cited in Huntjens 2011: 1). Defining are more extreme climate events like floods, droughts and hurricanes. For the rich this might be inconvenient, but many people in developing countries will simply die or suffer tremendously.



Geographic distribution Mortality from Climate Change. Source: Human Impact Report 2009.

What causes greenhouse gas emissions? When the numbers are broken down according to human activity, the top three sources are: (Rifkin, 2011) 1. Buildings (concrete, heating), 2. Meat (mainly methane from droppings), 3. Transport.

This offers clues on measures to counter climate change. So much has been said on climate change and so little has been done. Politicians haven't been able to provide solutions to what might be the biggest threat to human life in history.

It is clear: Guidelines for living agreeable and sustainable beyond this global crisis just have to include solutions for human induced climate change.

Food – the Ultimate Resource?

Is food the ultimate crucial resource? Its production is highly dependent on the availability of ecosystems services like water, clean air, biodiversity and a suitable climate. Food scarcity means hunger, too much hunger means people die. When people can't feed their children wars may result. Food is crucial.

Lester Brown compellingly makes this point, by showing that civilizations have a tendency to collapse when running low on food, and food production is dependent on the natural ecosystems we live in. The (Matt Damon narrated!) documentary Journey to Planet Earth sums up his position.

Jared Diamond in his book Collapse also analyses how population growth and their impact on the environment is worsening ten fundamental and interrelated areas of resource depletion: (Diamond 2005: 486-500)

1. destruction of habitats
2. overfishing
3. biodiversity loss
4. soil erosion
5. energy source shortage
6. fresh water shortage
7. photosynthetic ceiling
8. toxic waste
9. alien species in ecosystems
10. global warming

When analysing these areas, they do all relate to food production. Brown explains how seventy percent of fresh water is used for food production. While on average we drink 4 liters a day, the water we 'drink' through food intake adds up to over 2000 liters. So it is a problem if fresh water becomes scarce.

Lester Brown explains himself further in his books Plan B (2009) and World on the Edge (2011). He considers the following factors as the most important – again in the context of their role in food production: water, soil, climate, energy. Chris Martenson, largely inspired by Brown, let's it burn down to energy, minerals, soil, water and fish. In a simple but clear video Chris shows how population and resources are related.

We might be approaching tipping points on some or all of these resources. Some solutions will be found in chapter 5. But first the social effects of the resource crisis will be explored. Social-economic inequality seems to be the most important.

The Spirit Level – Why Inequality Kills

More equal societies are much healthier that inequal ones; in other words, inequality within a country makes people sick and can even be leathal. This chapter is based on ground-breaking research by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (Wilkinson and Pickett (2010). The Spirit Level. Why Equality is Better for Everyone. London: Penguin). For poor countries health and life expectancy is related to income levels. Interestingly, when income levels reach about $10.000 per capita, extra income does not increase life expectancy that much.

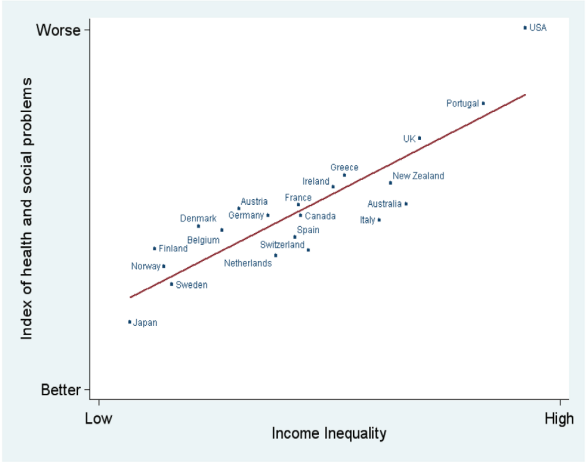
All conclusions can be found on www.equalitytrust.org.uk.

In rich countries it is equality that determines health and life expectancy; high inequality levels are strongly correlated to a number of social health issues (see image).

Status anxiety seems to be the best explanation. When people find it harder to compete with their neighbours, stress levels rise incredibly fast. Most health problems in the research can be related to social stress, or status anxiety. Most staggering, inequality also seems to lead to consumerism, as buying more status goods offers temporary relief from status anxiety. When this leads to increased lending, inequality could well be a cause of the financial crisis. This crisis will be explored next.

Health and Social Problems are Worse in More Unequal Countries

Index of:
- Life expectancy
- Math & Literacy
- Infant mortality
- Homicides
- Imprisonment
- Teenage births
- Trust
- Obesity
- Mental illness – incl. drug & alcohol addiction
- Social mobility



Source: Wilkinson & Pickett, The Spirit Level (2009)

www.equalitytrust.org.uk

Finance = Trust?

Money is power. It is a social construction. In fact, all media of exchange are. As soon as you start putting something in between trading bread for fish, you rely on a belief that the 'something in between', like gold or shells, will in the end get you something else that will roughly equal the worth of the thing you traded it for.

Money – in whatever form – also is a means of power; it can buy you stuff from others (increasing your status, fun and ensuring your survival) and it can buy you people – if not as slaves, it can at least buys you their time. This power exists as long as you can reasonably believe your money still has worth. As soon as you have anything of value, including money, you are exposed to the volatility of losing it.

As long as the dispersal of money is balanced, it is very useful since trade is incredibly simplified. You wouldn't want to go without money, and when abolished new forms of it will immediately be invented.

Because money is a social construction, it must be socially managed. Managing money has tremendous impact, since the power to control money effectively constitutes huge power over other people. The value of money therefore should be a common good.

Money is a good like any other, in the sense that if there is more of it it's relative value will shrink. Creating more money shrinks it's value. Controlling the amount of money in an economy is crucial. If the money devaluates, everybody loses – except for them with debt.

So how has money been created? In other words, how did the believe that money constitutes value grow? At first, something limited available and durable was used, like gold. When stored in banks, the paper saying you owned it became a medium of exchange. As long as you believed the paper could be traded back for gold, it's value would hold. In 1971, in the US the link between gold and money was abolished. More money could be created – as long as people still believed in its worth.

Banks not only store money. What would you do if you were a banker and had all that money lying there? Why not lend it out and ask some interest? This is what happens. Banks have to lend their own money, but can do so at lower interest – with central banks. They can re-lend it, as long as about ten percent of the loans are kept as collateral. It's only trust that not everyone will come back to get their savings that enables banks to lend out more than they actually have.

Europe has a central bank in Frankfurt, which is owned by the national governments (through their respective government-owned central banks who all have non-transferable shares). The US central bank, the FED, is not owned by the government, but by private corporations. (In theory the FED is a private-public partnership, but in practice most power and all stocks reside with private shareholders, mainly banks. See for a not exceptionally well documented but quite clear summary of the structure of the FED: http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=10489).

I consider the private ownership of the American central bank a systemic problem in maintaining a trustworthy monetary system.

Trust has to be nurtured. While finance, with it's numbers and calculations, may look like hard science, its ultimate basis is belief and trust. This also holds for loans; a bank typically lends out money if and only if it believes you will be able to re-

pay it. With a mortgage, through your salary, and in the case of business investments through the revenues that can be expected. But business revenues are never certain. However well risks are assessed, there always is a matter of trust involved.

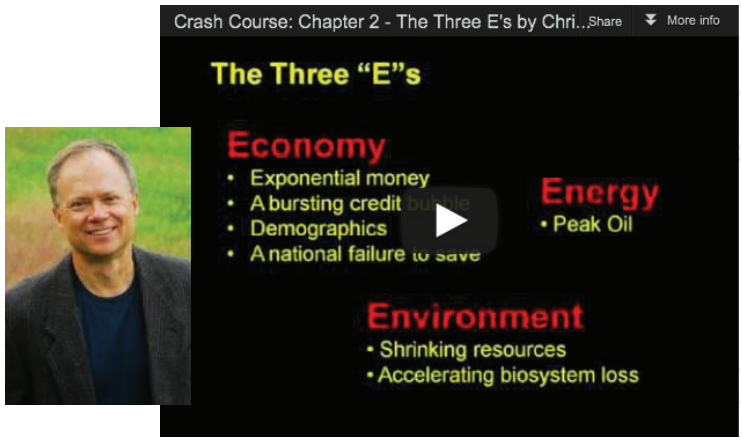
This trust is perhaps the ultimate common good. If this trust is violated, the financial system collapses and with it trade systems responsible for crucial aspects of society like food distribution.

The question is: how can this essential trust be maintained against the tremendous powers that come with having and controlling money?

Understanding Finance and Economy

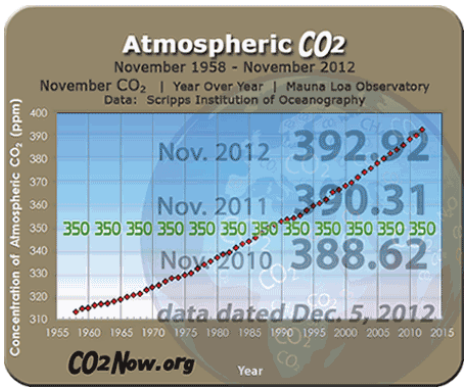
Economy is complex. A basic understanding of the big picture in crisis times is found with Chris Martenson. Chris, a somewhat peculiar but original and profound thinker, constructed a crash course explaining core concepts like money, rent, banking and resource depletion. Somewhat debatable, cataclysmic and US-centred but highly insightful.

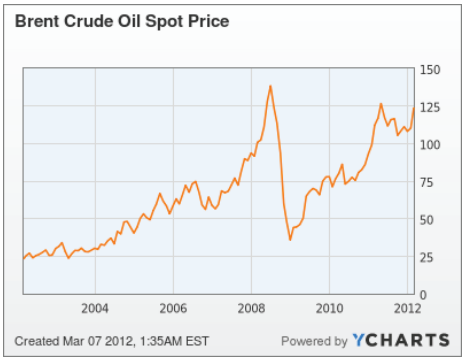
They offer perhaps the easiest insights in the true causes of the current crisis in finance and economy, and how that relates to other aspects of society.

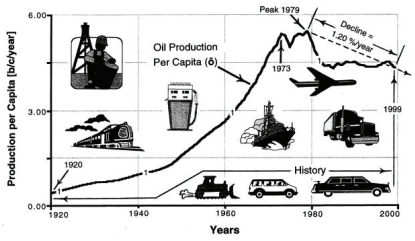


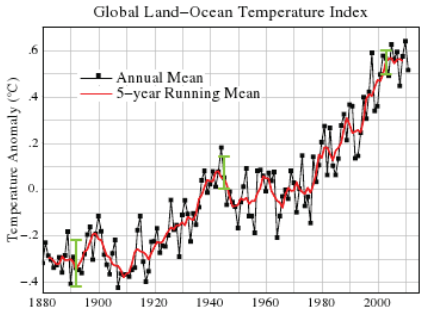
Chapter 4. Indicators

On this page some crisis indicators. They include the amount of CO2 in the air, the oil price, food price indices, the gold price, and some others. Actual and current values can best be found online.









Chapter 5. Guidelines

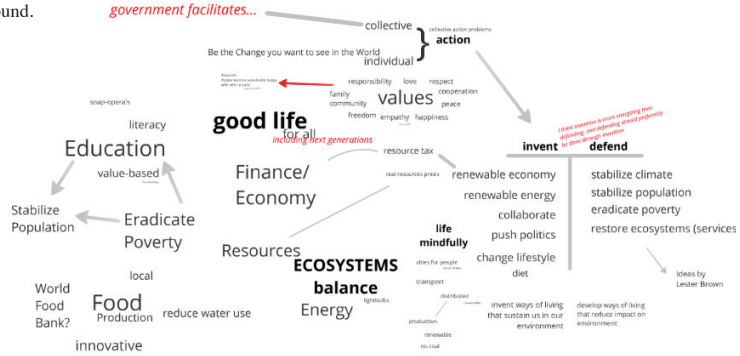
Guidelines – on Guiding

Now we get an idea of what's wrong, what can be done? Go with the flow – like a good taoist, or Be the change you want to see in the world – like Mahatma Gandhi used to say?

You might say: I can change, but the others won't so why should I? It's a classic collective action problem. The solution is simple: determine your own course of action and then connect, search others who will join or who you can join. That way you can find the flow starting from yourself.

It isn't simple, where to move from here. The world already was complex, and approaching or meeting boundaries of resources and growth makes things far more complex even. How to deal with this complexity?

Right now, to focus our thoughts, we work with a mindmap that covers directions and dimensions of change. Click to zoom and pan around.



The dimensions of the mindmap are explained in the following pages. What is one man? What is our image of humanity? What makes us happy? What to value? How to deal with increasing complexity? Where to (re)establish borders and boundaries? And how to find a goal in life even under the most difficult circumstances? Thinkers and scientists like Slavoj Zizek, Viktor Frankl and Sonya Ljubormisky will lead us the way.

One crucial name is missing. It is E.F. Schumacher. His Guide for the Perplexed is an important inspiration for everything in this guide. His exploration of what is valuable in and about life is without precedence, and implicit in each and every page. It's a must read.

Image of Humanity – What is One Man?

The image of what a human being actually is has been narrowed down by science. Schumacher argued that man is considered to be a machine more than a living being. The dominant scientific paradigm, what Schumacher calls materialistic scientism, has deaf ears and blind eyes towards non-materialistic qualities of life thereby stripping it of most of its meaning – meaning that seems to be experienced by individuals as crucial.

A consequence is that the social aspects like relationships to peers, ancestors and offspring are neglected; we need both a latitudinal and longitudinal extension of human image.

Maslov's hierarchy of needs is an example of what happens when human beings are considered to be singular machine-like creatures. The hierarchy, often depicted as a pyramid of needs, implies that the top needs are most important; self-actualisation would be the highest goal of a human being. But is this universally true? For one single individual it might be, but humanity doesn't function as a collection of individuals. Maslov's needs in reality are only being met in patterns of collective behaviour and collective growth. As research on well being shows (Lyubomirsky 2007: 23. The How of Happiness: A Practical Guide to Getting The Life You Want. London: Sphere), being connected to others might be at least as important as self-actualisation. As a model for building a society, Maslov is too much focused on the individual. A model of society should have groups of people as building blocks.

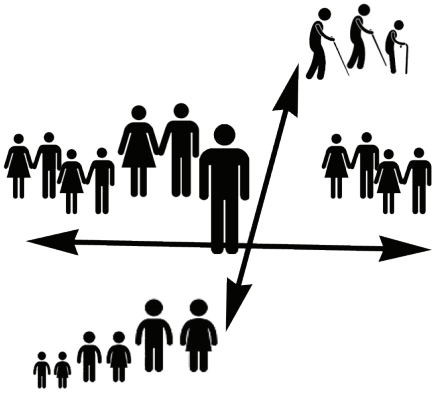
So what is a human being? To what extent is his or her context part of the individual? What does latitudinal and longitudinal extension of the human image look like?

Latitudinal (peers) and longitudinal (ancestors and offspring) extension of human image

A consequence of increasing specialization in science is that categories and descriptions of singularities are abundant but relationships between objects go largely unseen. Our theoretic lenses of science do not put relationships in focus, while relationships are defining what and who we are to a large extent.

Research into subjective well being shows that happy people have in common that they spend a lot of time with others and cherishing relationships (Lyubomirsky 2007: 23). Research into innovation and trade shows that prosperity and wealth only come from trust based exchange with other people.

Not only we literally do not exist without others; we need others to be happy, to prosper and to thrive.



Universal Declaration of Human Direction

PREAMBLE:

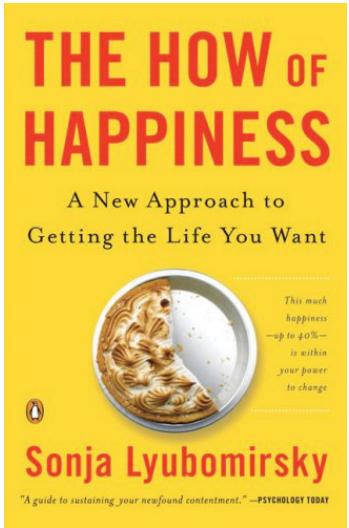
Man is a social being. Individual development is always dependent on social development. Man is empathetic and able to love. This is the basis of human community.

Lyubomirsky (2007). The How of Happiness

Based on years of research about happiness, Sonja Lyubomirsky concludes that:

- 60% of differences in (personally experienced) happiness are due to external and genetic circumstances
- 40% of happiness can be explained by specific thinking and behaviour patterns.

So the good thing is: almost half or your well-being can be somehow influenced, and the other half of it just asks for acceptance. It will be useful to teach yourself to think and live in ways that make most people happy. What are these patterns in thinking and behaviour that seem to make people happier?



Lyubomirsky writes:

"Below is a sample of my observations, as well as those of other researchers, of the thinking and behaviour patters of the happiest participants in our studies.

- They devote a great amount of time to their **family and friends**, nurturing and enjoying those relationships.
- They are comfortable expressing **gratitude** for all they have.
- They are often the first to offer a **helping** hand to co-workers and passers-by.
- They practice **optimism** when imagining their futures.
- They savour life's **pleasures** and try to live in the present moment.
- They make physical **exercise** a weekly – and sometimes daily – habit.
- They are deeply **committed to life-long goals** and ambitions (e.g., fighting fraud, building cabinets, or teaching their children their deeply held values).
- And, last but not least, the happiest people do **have their share of stress, crises and even tragedies**. They may become just as distressed and emotional in such circumstances as you or I, but their secret weapon is the pose and strength they show in coping in the face of challenge."

Living by Values or Survival by Defence?

Survival in times of turbulence requires adaptation; living requires a radical rethinking of the world as we see it, and doing the things we do in life quite differently. Where are we flawed and what should we be doing?

First and foremost: human beings came out of evolution as social animals. Therefore, the neo-liberal axiom that people will and should maximize their own interest is dangerous. Free markets working from neo-liberal ideals seem to be the prevailing ideology (Kolsek (2010) in Zizek 2011: 412). The problem is that common interests and needs are severely underrated.

Common interests like breathable air, clean drinking water. A safe social environment (and not the false security of gated communities). Accessible education and science (so they will not serve to widen the gap between rich and poor). Accessible natural resources, well managed (so we don't burn everything and then perish on an excess of CO2). Common interests like hard currencies (and not wildly speculative loose scraps of paper, or just heavy coins of gold). Public transport. Arts and cultural expression (instead of mind-numbing diversion). Time to meet and love (in stead of de facto slavery).

Common interests need nourishment. They need to be defended. They need to come first. Markets are great but just as totally free human beings (what happens when you feel like killing and just do?) markets can not prosper for human societies without some boundaries. Believing that free market capitalism will solve all our common problems is just stupid. What then should we believe?

Just economizing nature is another error; that of putting core values of life on a second level. The reduction of 'natural resources' and 'ecosystem services' to just economic terms introduces a gap between the common goods and their financial representation, whereby – in the end – the financial representation will always prevail over the the intrinsic, perceived value of the actual *stuff* they represent (Zizek 2011: 426). In this reduction, this stuff like nature, friendship et cetera looses crucial aspects, that are widely recognized but impossible to capture in financial terms.

For these reasons, **life, social ties and connectedness of nature need to be leading, core values**. We should unite – in national democratic governments like we do, but also on more global levels – to cherish, nurture, foster those values, because they are more real in our experience than money can every be. Acknowledging the importance or these values will automatically lead to a common goal-orientation towards well-being in stead of welfare, quality of life in stead of standard of living.

How now to make life, nature and social ties core values? Now they prove so important for people to be happy and for life to be sustainable, how to arrive at a frame of thinking and a mode of living that will keep them central anyway?

Should ecosystems be economized or do we have to look for other ways of perceiving values? When did a bee actually send you an invoice? Pavan Suhkdev asks whether evaluating the economic value of natural resources help averting crisis. He argues how for the coral reefs it's too late – and how this will influence millions of people dependent on these ecosystems for their food. How to deal with rapidly declining biodiversity, threatening livelihoods worldwide? Economics is the language of politics; perhaps we should move the ecosystems' value into the equation. I think this will help but only in addition to strengthening a core-value based discourse.

Why Complexity necessitates trial and error but With a (minor) Plan

Why did complex systems theory become important? Because complex systems like changing climate and financial economy are increasingly influencing our dayly lives. What are complex systems, and how to deal with them?

To make things simple, let's break the world apart in two. The Simple and the Complex. In the simple world, the position of the sun in twenty and two thousand years can be predicted. If we can do that, then predicting the weather is a matter of making better models, right?

No. Why not? There are too many variables influencing the weather. In predictions, variables have an increasing level of uncertainty. You just can't precisely say what the temperature of the water will be in the middle of the Channel in ten days from now. And a slight difference in temperature might just cause a cloud to form. Small uncertainties can grow larger can make big differences. It's not that we do not have enough information, it's simply that we can not now because tiny differences in initial conditions can have huge impacts on the results.

Physicist Michael Berry found that when predicting the outcome of colliding billiard balls, after the ninth collision you would have to take into account the gravitati0nal force of each person standing next to the table, and at the 56th collision you would have to know the position of each particle in the universe to accurately predict the position of the balls. So even if the process is entirely deterministic (no random influences are interacting), it is sooner than later impossible to have enough data to predict the outcome of chaotic systems.

Let alone what would happen if something unpredictable like human behaviour enters the equation.

So we don't predict or plan and just see what happens? This is where complex systems theory enters. It implies a different way of thinking. Even when you can not precisely predict, you can still come to grips with complex processes.

Complex systems show properties of life. Things grow and emerge out of them; one moment there's just water vapor, the next moment there's a cloud. Complex systems learn and show evolution. They show feedback and grow in cycles or iterations. One really interesting theory, by the late Gregory Bateson, rolls out a definition of mind from system theory.[1] The idea that mind could be made up of information, forming a layer of reality that does influence the material world but exists in its own domain seems very helpful and more like truth than the still prevalent idea that mind can always be reduced to physical properties ("no you don't feel depressed, it's just a chemical substance in your brains").

How does this help in coping with complex systems like global climate and economy? First, be **modest with predictions.** Second, be **generous with blueprints and proposals** but **incorporate learning cycles**, **feedback loops** and **tipping points**. Acknowledge that **change is a process**, not a project. Use **networks** and stimulate and recognise **self organisation**.

And don't use extensive planning with strict targets. Just look at this documentary by Adam Curtis to get an idea of where this has taken us.

Zizek's Nose or Need for Borders

Slavoj Zizek touches his nose exactly 365 times during this 76 minute lecture. Once for each day of the year. I discovered it totally accidentally. Is he so boring that I am so easily distracted? Still it was gripping; from a psychological point of view he has a point, claiming that people in our globalised world might be needing more borders and boundaries, in stead of less. He makes the argument at nose-touch 188. The title of the video work: Distraction 188 (Sven Jense, 2011).

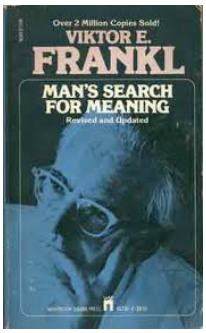
Touching the nose is a classic gesture of untruth, or hiding. And it's never a bad idea to distrust a self-acclaimed communist. Turning towards his latest book though, Living in the End Times (Zizek, 2011), it makes more sense.

And wouldn't you think that the nationalistic movements in many Western-European countries can be related to open borders and resulting feelings of insecurity? In terms of job-insecurity, these feelings are not at all unjustified.

This is why we argue for a healthy and partially closed nation state as basis for national governance and international cooperation; vision 10 of our Declaration of Human Direction.

Universal Declaration of Human Direction
Vision 10.
... Boundaries of the nation state are semi-permeable: there is enough security for its inhabitants to guarantee work, possessions a sense of safety, but also plenty of opportunities for mutually beneficial trade and exchange of ideas. International bodies promote cooperation and stability based on consensus.

How a goal saves your life (according to Viktor Frankl)



Let's see… when in recent history did the shit really hit the fan? Viktor Frankl has seen it all. As a psychiatrist – and prisoner - in Auschwitz he learned to see when a man would break. So what was the psychological difference between life and death? It is in the story of one man Frankl new, who believed war would end on a certain date: 30 March, less than a month into the future. When the 30st day came, he fell into a coma. One day after learning that his believe was wrong, he died.

While – barely – living in the camp for several years, Frankl experienced that people need a goal in order to live. Nietsche already said it: He who has a reason to live, can bare almost all circumstances (Nietsche, F., quoted in Frankl (1978), Man's Search for Meaning, Rotterdam: Kooyker, p. 98 (translation this autor). Nothing can give a man more strength to survive than the knowledge that his life has meaning. Meaning can be found in creative work as well as in love. But with both lacking – nothing to accomplish, no one to love – where do you turn?

Going against Sartre, Frankl found that people do not invent their meaning but rather find it; in responsibility, he claims (Frankl 1978: 136). His logotherapy, that has developed into a large mainstream of psychology labelled the Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy, postulates the commandment: live like it's the second time, and like you are at the point you are going to make the same mistake as you did the first time. This confronts you with the finiteness of life and the irrevocability of your decisions.

Meaning can be found in three places: by doing, by perceiving, and by suffering. By doing, like in doing creative work. Through perceiving, experiencing values like culture, nature or love. But by suffering? Isn't that quite biblical?

But what if suffering is your only option? If your snowboard breaks and you find yourself downhill alive but torn in peaces, to live the rest of your life in excruciating pain? Or if you suffer from ALS and your motoneurons break down while your senses remain painfully intact? This is what Tony Judt painfully describes in his last book, the Memory Chalet. Tony had the luck he was able to carry out some last meaningful creative endeavour; writing – dictating – a book. But if you can't do that? How do you find meaning in suffering?

Some find it in their minds.

"If a prisoner felt that he could no longer endure the realities of camp life, he found a way out in his mental life– an invaluable opportunity to dwell in the spiritual domain, the one that the SS were unable to destroy. Spiritual life strengthened the prisoner, helped him adapt, and thereby improved his chances of survival." (Frankl 1978: 123).

So, when can suffering have a purpose? First, when it is absolutely unavoidable. Second, ultimately: in the way you carry your fate. In taking responsibility over how you suffer because this ultimately is your dignity. Finding a goal to believe in – within or outside yourself – might be the key to survival in turbulent times.

Chapter 6. Proposals

Proposals for Crisis Catalysed Change

Proposals for how to deal with converging crises will be based on both the image of humanity and the ten visions set out in our Universal Declaration of Human Direction. We will focus on catharses; new narratives with the power to clean the soul and replace old ways of doing, thinking, because austerity is virtuous but human beings are much better at doing more in stead of less.

The image of humanity is the foundation. As concluded in the previous chapter, we are much more social beings than the prevalent Enlightenment idea of the free individual suggests. As Frans de Waal showed (De Waal 2009: 205, 206), we are much more empathic and cooperative than violent, while at the same time violence and destruction are intrinsic human traits. Both the latitudinal (other living people) and longitudinal (kids and ancestors) social dimensions are inextricably part of what people are.

Following, proposals should be based on the notion of Sustainable Aggregate Subjective Well Being (SA-SWB). Why? Because we want people to experience a good life (well being), which is a personal experience (subjective), and this subjective well being should hold across groups of people (aggregate). Finally, it should last across generations (sustainable). Equality – to a certain extent – is a prerequisite for a society with substantial subjective well being (See Wilkinson and Pickett (2010)). Proposals for change should embody a mariage between equality and sustainability.

The changes induced by the current crises offer chances for implementation of the following proposals, bringing them within reach. Partially, and sometimes surprisingly, some are already being implemented. No small plans but Big Ideas. Ideas like those by Jeremy Rifkin, who succeeds in both original thinking and finding commercial and political channels to spread and develop his ideas.

Recognizing that society consists of groups of people who what their children to survive and prosper, we will look into often surprisingly practical proposals, offering direction and guidance on how to live in times of turbulence.

Can we become and empathic civilization - in time?

"Empathic extension is the only human expression that creates true equality between people." (Rifkin 2009, 160)

Will empathic extension grow fast enough for humanity to save the planet – and thereby our species? This is Rifkin's central question. His argument is intelligent and original. Why do wars always make it to the headlines? Why has history mainly been written as a series of confrontations? Why was Darwins' evolution theory – against his own ideas – simplified into the survival of the fittest? ".. historians … wrote little of the psychological changes that transformed human consciousness. … the development of self-consciousness and the extension of empathic expression … has been carefully chronicled and preserved in the literary narratives." (Rifkin 2009, 301)

The Empathic Civilization is a large scale reframing of all of human history. Not wars, but energy and empathy are defining features. Rifkin analyses how the discovery of new energy sources has literally fueled the development of mankind, in both material and psychological ways. Each time new energy sources were invented (like agriculture, coal and steam, or oil), human consciousness also lept into new territory. Our consciousness developed from mythological, to theological, ideological and psychological into what could be seen as an emerging dramaturgical consciousness.

So Rifkin sets out to analyse the development of human consciousness as energy revolutions allowed for more complex societies in different stages of human development. Each energy revolution has been accompanied and enabled by a communications revolution that enabled increasing complexity. Hydraulic civilizations needed script to organize crop growth and distribution; the printing press enabled mass literacy needed to operate railroad infrastructures and the like; the telephone enabled the long distance communication needed for the fast paced and interconnected oil fueled economies; the internet enables smart distribution of sustainable produced energy.

What is the third industrial revolution? It is probably the most bold hypothesis of the book, and he extended it into his 2011 book The Industrial Revolution, which was used for our section on solutions out of the current energy crisis.

Dramaturgical consciousness is developing as we are increasingly able and expected to play different roles. Where the world always has been a Shakespearian stage, omnipresent communication opportunities building upon a psychological consciousness foster the development of a theatrical selve. Rifkin speculates that the ability to play more different roles in turn fosters an even stronger empathic capacity.

Will this empathic capacity grow fast enough among humanity to be able to deal with the consequences of climate change and resource scarcity? How many recent wars have been effectually fought over oil and other critical resources? Will a distributed renewable energy scheme distribute and democratize energy and power so that more global resource wars can be avoided? Will a biosphere consciousness eventually emerge?

Empathy is dependent on our mortality; as we start to realize our lives are volatile we can start recognizing this in other people and creatures. Our primal drive is to belong; an empathic drive. We are ultimately social beings.

I consider this a great book. Rifkin uses a lot of scientific evidence, and dares to both redefine human history but also draw realistic and useful conclusions for the future. He is quite unique in that respect.

Will world population explode? Hans Rosling explains why not.

"There are just too many children in the world. People in developing countries get too many babies. World food production will not be able to keep up, and there will be no space for all those people."

True? No. The number of babies per woman has been overwhelmingly decreased towards two. Two babies per woman clearly means population will grow no further.

So now we are with seven billion, and growing, because there are relatively many young people. But in 2050 the world population will stabilize at nine to ten billion.

Human population is large but not growing out of hand, at all, anymore.

Hans Rosling, Swedish doctor and statistician, brings life into the data in a TED talk of April 2012.

How to deal with dictatorship? Gene Sharp made a guide.

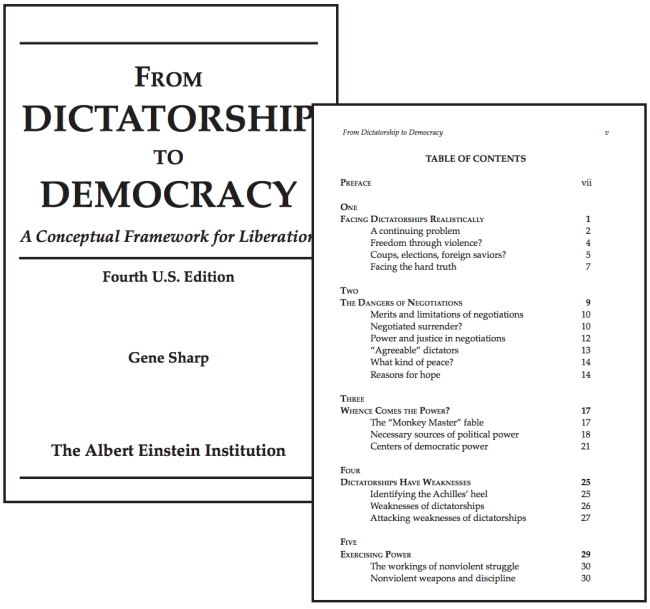
So what if you live under dictatorship? You start a non-violent revolution.

Gene Sharp has already inspired generations of revolutionaries worldwide. His book, From Dictatorship to Democracy (Gene Sharp (1993)), is a guide with over 180 means of non-violent resistance. The book can be read free online at en.wikisource.org/wiki/From_Dictatorship_to_Democracy or downloaded as pdf.

Universal Declaration of Human Direction

Vision 1.
We are born into a safe and secure social environment…

Vision 10.
Government and parliament are democratically elected…



FROM
DICTATORSHIP
TO
DEMOCRACY
A Conceptual Framework for Liberation
Fourth U.S. Edition
Gene Sharp
The Albert Einstein Institution

From Dictatorship to Democracy v

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Educating Values for Life. Ken Robinson sets out a new paradigm.

How to educate ourselves and our children for living in times of turbulence? How to educate starting from the ideas of what a human being is actually is? Education shouldn't just transfer knowledge, it should educate values.

What values do we need? The answer really is a magnificent elephant (in the room). Most kids just know it. You know it. Hold on for the magic answer: Compassion. Love. (Self) Respect. Peace. Sharing. Beauty. Perhaps even: biosphere consciousness (The recognition that all living beings are an inseparable part of a global ecosystem. See also Rifkin (2009)). Most of these are about empathic connectedness.

If our old, prevalent values (like economic growth) lead us to destroy our biosphere, where to start changing? With education, of course. Starting with ourselves, but most hope lies with our children, because we generally love them and they hopefully will outlive us all.

Ken Robinson made one of the most profound arguments for changing education.

In a more recent talk, Robinson quotes W.B. Yeats.

HAD I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

"And every day, everywhere, our children spread their dreams beneath our feet. And we should tread softly," Robinson ends. It brought tears to my eyes. His ideas are really utterly brilliant. In his book The Element (Robinson, 2009: 252), he makes the case why human organisations are more like organisms than like mechanisms. Education should let children grow and flourish in stead of being prepared just for a life as university professors.

Ken Robinson shows both where it went wrong and where education should be heading.

Tex Gunning is member of the board of Akzo Nobel, a multinational with about 15 billion Euro turnover. He argues his company needs more good people who know the art of living because they act from the inside, rather than just being smart. Aesthetics, empathy, storytelling and symphony (the coherence of things) are just as important as facts.

Education should be preparing children for life in a broad sense, rather than just teaching for efficiency. Schools shouldn't only transfer knowledge, they should raise children to become valuable members of society. Eduction should be **value-driven.** What does this mean? **Kids should be inspired to get to know themselves, live consciously, explore, practice social skills and live in coexistence with nature and others** (what Rifkin would call biosphere consciousness), all this in order to be able to **add value to society**. Happiness is experienced in reciprocity, Gunning stresses (A point which is endorsed by an overwhelming body of research; See Lyubomirsky (2007)).

How do we do this? By creating different schools, starting with educating ourselves on how to do that. The good news: value based schools don't have to be invented; there are great

Universal Declaration of Human Direction

Vision 4:
Education is generally accessible and reaches high levels. Teachers are well paid. Classes are not too big, and personal and social development go side by side.

examples like the Dutch primary school wittering.nl, or the educational ideas of Brahma Kumaris. A sound starting point is the Association for Living Values Education International ("ALIVE"), a worldwide community of values educators. Part of our children will engage in professions that today do not even exist. These ideas might indeed, as Ken Robinson, already be revolutionizing education.

Education should start from the question: which values do we want to teach our kids? We need to cultivate the values, empathy, talent and creativity they were born with. Kids should be taught systems thinking, so they will appreciate that everything is interconnected. They idea of interconnection fosters responsibility.

Is education just transfer of knowledge? Education should prepare children for life in its broadest sense. Why is education so important? Education should raise children to lead worthy and meaningful lives. It should foster self confidence and universal values. It should show interdependency of life so they want to live in co-existence with others. Happiness is experienced in reciprocity with others.

Ending the Energy Crisis. Towards a Democratic Energy Supply.

The energy crisis can probably be solved, actually quite easily. There are solutions for how to deal with the two main problems: finding physical sources for acquiring the energy for an increasing global population, and creating political momentum in an arena dominated by powerful oil company lobbies.

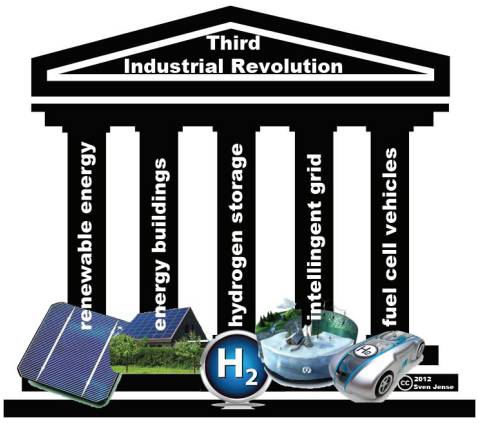
So what to do? Use less energy or find different sources? Probably both, but with food production being dependent on energy in numerous ways finding new sources is a necessity.

Jeremy Rifkin has been pointing out solutions to government leaders ranging from the White House to a number of European, African and Asian countries. His solutions seem very possible and smart. His unique approach lies in joining practical, physical solutions with sound political strategies into a grand narrative of what he calls a Third Industrial Revolution.

Renewable energy is becoming cheap enough, and distributed production is making it accessible. That's his main argument. Just as the internet made information cheap and abundant, an intelligent energy distribution network can disclose renewable energy sources.

Rifkin's narrative is this: both historical Industrial Revolutions happened because new energy technology converged with new communication technologies (These were steam power with the printing press in the first, and electrical communication with oil powered engines in the second industrial revolution. See Rifkin 2011: 35). The next Industrial Revolution is similar: the new technologies of solar, wind, water, geoheat and biomass are converging with the development of intelligent means of distribution in the form of internet-like smart grids.

This transition is supported by five pillars, Rifkin argues: renewable energy, buildings as small power plants, hydrogen and other storing technologies, smart distribution grids and plug-in and fuel cell transport. These pillars are intimately related and reinforce each other in a synergetic way. "When these five pillars come together, they make up an indivisible technological platform – an emergent system whose properties and functions are qualitatively different from the sum of its parts" (Rifkin 2011: 71).



How does Rifkin overcome the power of the strong oil companies' lobby? By proposing buildings as power plants. The construction industry is a strong economic factor that might be "a counterweight to the big energy companies" (Rifkin 2011: 44).

In Europe, his ideas have a strong following. A declaration was signed by the EU endorsing the implementation of Jeremy's ideas.

Universal Declaration of Human Direction

Vision 5: Natural resources are available for us and future generations.
Resource taxes are raised so prices will reflect the real costs of products and the depletion of ecosystems is prevented.
Finite energy sources will also be taxed so abundant renewable energy will become universally available.

Chapter 7. Conclusions

Can relationism be or become an ideology for the 21st century? What will the new ideology be, following neo-liberal market thinking? How will thinking about society evolve after the post-modern era?

It will be an ideology that unlike its predecessors will be rooted in necessity rather than in opportunity. Capitalism and Communism were ideals that came from a desire to either foster individual entrepreneurs or a collective workforce and possessions. Neo-liberalism, nurtured and brought to maturity by Reagan an Thatcher, further strengthened the individual freedoms of capitalism.

This individual liberty was built on the presumption that we live on an infinite planet. This is simply not the case.

The current crisis, now almost five years of age, started not with a housing buble - although greed and credit for consumption did play a role. It is more plausible that raising inequality and diminishing fossil fuel reserves sparked the downfall. Inequality leads to status anxiety and thus increased consumption of status related goods. Social status is, as Wilkinson and Pickett discovered, such a strong driver that it may be held responsible for the increase in consumptional credit. However, these effects will be very hard to prove scientifically.

The rising oil price just before the crisis hit is quite the opposite; it's so hard to miss that it is amazing so few people came up with it as an explanation for the crisis. Between 2004 and 2008 the oil prices have risen *five-fold* (from about $25 per barrel to $125). No wonder people ran out of money to pay down their mortgages.

But rising fossil fuel prices are an indication of something again related; globally resources are running out. That's the bad news.

The good news is that people do not become happier after a certain income threshold is reached (about $10.000 annually). If only status anxiety can be overcome, increasing patterns of consumption are unnecessary to become happy people. Most people in the West can easily do with less without giving in on quality of living, since happiness, or subjective well-being, is dependent mostly on the quality of human relationships.

Now this is the case, the individually focussed neo-liberal ideal is obsolete. Although the liberation of the individual was necessary and still in some places is a prerequisite, now a strong focus on relationships between human beings with each other and the ecosystems supporting us is increasingly important.

The visions in the Relationist Manifest are from this perspective within reach. Relationism can be the name for an ideology that has to be embraced in order for us to merely survive. And if we do so, we might even thrive and prosper, depending on the remaining stability of the climate and other highly contingent factors sustaining human life on earth.

Sources

An actual list of sources with links can be found at globalcrisisguide.com

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