

Values for a sustainable future



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Introduction

While reading «Plan B 3.0. Mobilizing to save the civilization» by Lester R. Brown I was triggered to start writing this book. Mr. Brown has estimated an annual budget for the development of global sustainability - 190 billion USD (77 for basic social objectives and 113 for the restoration of the Earth). Meanwhile, the worldwide military expenditure is 1.235 billion USD.

Consequently, 15% of the military spending would be enough to finance a sustainable development.

The figures are from 2006, and 2008 the percentage figure dropped to 13% according to the book «Plan B 4.0. Mobilizing to save civilization» due to increased military spending.

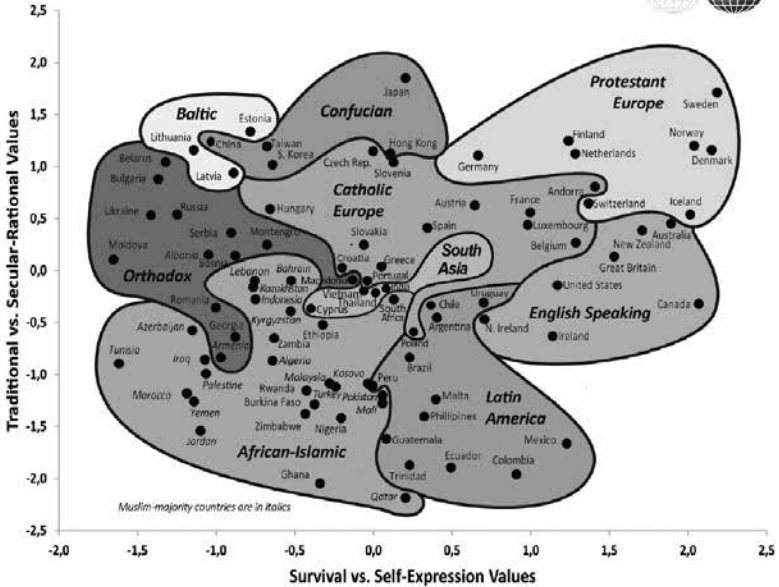
Aha, I thought. Then it is «only» our values, we need to change.

My friend Göran Dahlberg and I started a dialogue about the values that need to permeate humanity in order to save our civilization. We arrived quite quickly at seven values. After that I have, with the kind assistance of Göran, written the text, presented in this book. Each chapter contains an introduction and then a section «How can I think? What can I do?» My thought is that you, dear reader, should be able to ponder these issues and come to conclusions that are relevant based on your experience and your way of being.

Values should be seen as a guide to long-term orientations. I have e.g. selected the text «strive to treat others, as you would like to be treated» in the first chapter. A more direct wording had been «respond to others as you yourself would like to be treated» as my friend Mike Brown suggested. However, I

preferred to include «strive», because this is about a life-long journey, where you need to have the values as such in the back of your mind all the time.

I have a great respect for our global cultural differences, when I look at the following cultural image of the «World Values Survey». I realize of course that it is difficult to assimilate the values of this book, if survival issues are a big part of everyday life (more on this in connection with Maslow's staircase in Chapter 2, which my grandson Oscar Svanberg in a meritorious way has created for me along with the other homemade pictures). Apparently my native Sweden at the top right of the picture is not representative of «cultural mean value». A country located in the center of the image is India. I have during the writing of the book had a fruitful dialogue with my friend Premasagar Chhabra from India and I have included several comments from him in the text. He agrees that the values as such provide a correct feeling from a global perspective. His heaviest comments have centered around how we should expand our thinking also to animals. I agree with him. Today's low cost driven factory-based treatment of living animals must change, if we are to move in a direction of compassion with Mother Earth and her inhabitants. There is fortunately a clear tendency to greater consideration for animals among humans. 500 years ago it would, e.g. in Western Europe, have been considered ridiculous if someone claimed that even animals have rights. I have the hope that sometime in the future a UN declaration covering animal rights will be a reality.



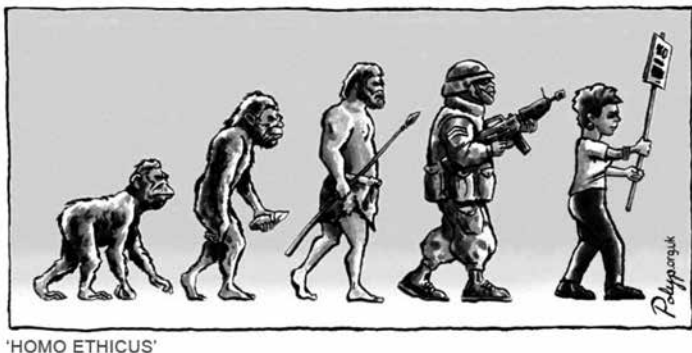
This book is a non-profit project. I want to spread the word and hope especially that young people will benefit from the values for themselves and for the future of the planet. The book is therefore free to copy and distribute online. The e-book can be downloaded free of charge from www.savecivilization.se.

There is no logical order between the seven chapters and much of the content might as well be at another place in the book. As a reader, you can therefore start with any chapter. Chapter 3 is mainly a factual chapter as regards sustainable development. Chapter 7 describes our evolution, and what «degrees of freedom» it has given us. This section also discusses happiness research, including practical advice on how you can experience greater happiness. Other chapters are largely

philosophical and spiritual and give you examples on how you can think and act (I have not commented upon different religions or political orientations).

Within us we have both a skeptic, relying on common sense, and a spiritually minded creature who would like to believe. If someone asks us to choose between these seemingly opposing aspects, we should stick to both, and realize that they are inalienable parts of a whole. This book is for both believers and skeptical people. There is so much that we cannot grasp with our brain. How tangible is the light? Or love? Our brain can handle four dimensions (three of space and one of time). At the same time the so-called M theory, which is a development of the string theory, is based on eleven dimensions. So there is reason to take on a humble attitude relative to matters of beliefs. Believe in what you want, but do not impose your beliefs on others. It is in this context that the values in this book should be viewed.

The theme of the book is that we will face the paradigm shift, illustrated in the figure below, provided that we have time to change our thinking in the direction outlined in the book. The climate conference in Paris in December 2015, is a sign that the paradigm shift is coming.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

I have read many books on different aspects of the seven values associated with the writing of this book, and refer to a number of these in the text. This ensures that you, if you desire, are able to immerse yourself in the subject of interest. There are many quotations in the book. The most cited person is Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov. If you find that his quotes are good, you can without cost subscribe to these on <http://www.prosveta.com/thought-of-the-day.phtml>.

Known sources of information and suggestions in the book have been acknowledged. In many cases I do not even know myself if it is something I have heard, read, seen on the TV Science programs or found out myself. If there is anything in the book, you have views on, you are welcome to contact me on agne@svanberg.net.

Why are our values so important? Well, we all look at life through a filter of our values. A task for our brain is to constantly produce thoughts (otherwise we would evolutionarily not have survived as a species). This flow of thoughts is influenced by our values. By amending the values in a more loving direction, you can gradually change your thought patterns and experience greater harmony and peace in your life.

This book was originally written in Swedish. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my friends Ann Hällberg, David Cameron and Mike Brown, who have corrected my Swenglish to English. The next translation is likely to be Esperanto.

1. Strive to treat others as you would like to be treated

In this chapter:

Do not judge others

Truth

Wisdom

Intellect and intelligence

Equality

Androgynous personality

Inner development

Kindness and gratitude

«Live your life as though your every act were to become a universal law.»

Immanuel Kant

Yes, this serves as a good mindset for almost all people (most likely also for you, since you're reading this book). Kant's words, do not work for humanity when religious fundamentalists or individual mentally disturbed people, apply the mindset.

It may also be that another human for cultural or other reasons does not want to be treated, as you want to be treated. We are different and we need to respect this. It is therefore important to complement this value with a large dose of common sense and empathy. If at any time you are in doubt, you can ask. «How do you want to be treated»?

Value number 1 is in itself a life project. Turn to yourself and think about how you would like to be treated. Be satisfied and make a note in your mind when you succeed, and rejoice every time you see that this mindset will change your action or your choice of words in a loving direction.

For a period I thought about changing
«Strive to treat others as you would like to be treated»
to «Strive to treat others the way they need to be treated».
This would demand that I needed to put in more empathy in my thinking and to imagine how the life of the other person really was. At the same time I asked myself: «Who am I to judge what another person needs»? The result was that I did not change the text.

Think about how you express yourself! Speak positively and in a constructive way and avoid gossip. Words are like seeds and the seeds germinate. They produce flowers and fruits or prickly poisonous plants.

Living together should be a school subject. Honesty, kindness, generosity, patience, serenity and harmony are values for the future, but do we get grades or diplomas for those? No! Possibly a small award as «best in class comrade».

I avoid in this book to comment upon individual political ideologies and religions (with the exceptions of the religious primary teachings below, the dilemma of democracy in chapter 6 and some citations, anecdotes and satire drawings). I strive instead to describe the values that should gradually be embraced by all people and integrated into politics and religion. Thus, I mean that the book has a spiritual message.

«Spiritual and religious: The spiritual is a personal experience of what is greater than ourselves. Religions are human interpretations of the spiritual, made to collective standards.»

Jackie Bergman the book «Fear or Love? Your choices.»

Primary teaching of some large religions:

- Jainism:* *«One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated.» (Mahavira, Suttrakritanga)*
- Buddhism:* *«Do not treat others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.» (Udana-Varga 5.18)*
- Christianity:* *«In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.» (Jesus, Matthew 7:12)*
- Taoism:* *«Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.» (T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien, 213-218)*
- Islam:* *«Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.» (The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith)*
- Hinduism:* *«This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.» (Mahabharata 5:1517)*
- Zoroastrianism:* *«Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.» (Shayast-na-Shayast 13.29)*
- Judaism:* *«What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary.» (Hillel, Talmud, Shabbat 31a)*

*Sikhism: «I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.»
(Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1299)*

A theoretical model, which I use myself regarding religions is that God is the hub of a wheel (I prefer to say the «cosmic consciousness», because everyone has a personal picture of what God is and is not, and thus limits their flexibility in thinking). The different religions are spokes in the wheel. All spokes in the wheel leads to the hub. To reach the hub, you need to interpret religion in the manner mentioned above, and it is in this context that the values of this book should be considered.

How can I think? What can I do?

Do not judge others

Below is a good example of that it makes sense to avoid judging others.

Sexual organs of man develop in the fetus at about two months of age. The brain develops later. Scientific studies have shown that transsexuals can have one sex in the genitals, while they identify with the opposite sex in the brain.

Transsexuals therefore might need help to arrive at the sexuality, with which they best can identify. Not pointers, punishment or taunts !!!

In this case, it was possible with scientific evidence. How often is that the case? Scientists got death threats after the publication by religious fundamentalists! So we have a long way to go.

The ancient Indians had a saying that you should not speak about anyone else before you have walked in their moccasins. Something to think about!

Truth

«A liar is not believed even though he tells the truth.»

Cicero

«A liar should have a good memory.»

Quintilian

«It takes a wise man to handle a lie, a fool had better remain silent.»

Norman Douglas

Yes Douglas, who was a famous writer, was certainly intelligent, but he was definitely not wise. Then he would have realized the fact that the truth has an intrinsic value.

If you make a virtue of sticking to the truth, you have laid a foundation for a happy life.

Douglas hardly had a happy life. He changed country because of scandals and was accused of being a pedophile.

If he had realized that the truth has an intrinsic value and applied the self-discipline to stick to the truth, his life would certainly have been different.

You should always stick to the truth. The only exception is in cases, when love says something else (e.g. if you hurt someone). Then you should choose to remain silent and to lie only if it is deemed absolutely necessary. Little white lies, I personally have long ago eliminated, and I feel that this has been a very good decision

When do you lie? Why?

Wisdom

«Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much; Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.»

William Cowper

«I know that I am intelligent, because I know that I know nothing.»

Socrates

«Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens.»

Jimi Hendrix

*«Wise men speak because they have something to say;
fools because they have to say something.»*

Plato

The Swedish author Stefan Einhorn gives a good idea of what wisdom is, and he sums it up in the following criteria:

- ☐ Human interest.
- ☐ Broad knowledge and experience.
- ☐ The ability to distinguish between what we know and what we do not know.
- ☐ Open mind.
- ☐ Compassion and tolerance.
- ☐ Ability to formulate the right questions and find the best answers.
- ☐ Humility.
- ☐ Self-knowledge.
- ☐ Ability to give good advice.
- ☐ Ability to act.

Analyze yourself. Which of the points above, can you improve?

Do you overestimate your own ability? Studies show that people have a general tendency to do that. One example that Einhorn mentions, is that 82% of respondents said that they belong to the 30% safest drivers! At the same time, we should not underestimate ourselves. You have to have a good balance.

Do not get stuck in your own opinions. Welcome discussions and see them as opportunities for innovations. A fanatic sees

everything in black or white and cannot be affected. We all have our areas where we are more or less fanatical.

In what areas are you fanatic? Try to analyze. What can you do to change this?

Individuals who have developed their wisdom, are characterized by the fact that they can be friendly, flexible and open to the opinions of others, while they are insightful and exhibits a high degree of personal integrity. To achieve this you need to develop a good balance between your mind/thoughts and your heart/emotions. If the feelings tend to overwhelm you, your thoughts need to be activated and influence and vice versa.

The following little anecdote illustrates wisdom from an odd perspective:

A 57-year-old woman suffered a heart attack and was transported to a hospital. While she was laying on the operating table she had a «near death experience». When is it my turn, she asked, when she saw God, and was told that she had 42 years, 7 months and 13 days left to live. The woman then decided to have a breast implant and a facelift, as well as to dye her hair and whiten her teeth. When she left the hairdresser, she was dead run over and killed by a taxi. When she met God she asked indignantly why he had not saved her and got the answer. «I did not recognize you».

Conclusion: God loves you, the way you are.

«The trouble with the world is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent are full of doubt.»

Bertrand Russell

Yes, Bertrand Russell is right. When someone is very sure about what he declares you should be on guard. Wise persons see the issues from different perspectives, and then it is rare that something is completely obvious.

«Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.»

Viktor E. Frankl

«As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison.»

Nelson Mandela

Can you find a better example of wisdom than the above quote by Nelson Mandela?

Intellect and intelligence

Intellect is to operate independently of the emotions. Intelligence is the ability to both feel and think in a harmonious balance, which means that the mind/thoughts and heart/emotions function as a unit.

In today's education the intellect is prioritized. Intellect is satisfied with all scientific explanations, while the intelligence is not.

I once had a colleague who was extremely intellectual. He knew that he technically, logically and analytically was right and drove his line hard, resulting in a lack of humility and empathy. He looked after his own staff and treated them well, but could simultaneously call staff in other departments idiots, which led to unnecessary conflicts. He is a typical example of a person with a high intellect, but with deficiencies in intelligence.

The development of intelligence goes hand in hand with the development of wisdom.

How can you get your intellect and your emotions to work in better harmony?

Equality

Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett have in the book «The Spirit Level» compiled academic reports on social inequalities in rich countries.

It turns out that the less social divide a community has, the better the quality of life is experienced by its inhabitants. This is also valid for the richest. It's really not so strange if you think about it. To e.g. surround the house with walls and barbed wire and having to worry that children will be kidnapped must be terrible. Strong positive correlations with increased equality is found in other areas such as lifetime and mental health. It also reduces infant mortality, crime, drug use, violence and teenage pregnancies.

Why is it like that? Well, through evolution when we lived as hunter-gatherers, we humans have been focused on justice and cooperation (this is explained in more detail under value number 7). It is only the last 10,000 years, in connection with the agricultural society and later the industrial society, that inequality existed. Thus we have «equality in our genes», and that is why inequality is divisive and socially harmful. So we «only» need to get people to return to their basic values.

Research shows that the frequency of depression increases when equality decreases. It is due to increased activity in the amygdala (the part of the brain that signals danger of predators, etc., and evolutionary been a necessity for the survival of our species). Increased activity in the amygdala increases stress levels, which in turn increases the risk for depression. Studies of indigenous people in Tanzania who live in groups with high level of equality, show a very low stress and depression levels.

One problem of inequality is that it fuels our desire for status, making us more materialistic. Above a certain level, we are not made happier by more gadgets, but rather trying to influence other people's image of us. It is not the amount of belongings that is most important, but family, friends and social relationships.

Wilkinson and Pickett notes that there are two routes to greater economic equality and that both works. One is via taxation, as in the Nordic countries, and the other is a smaller pay gap, as in Japan. Regarding wages, Plato said, 2400 years ago that the maximum ratio should be 6: 1. Banker J.P. Morgan stretched to 20: 1. In the current situation, ratio can reach a level of 500: 1, and in extreme cases, 1000: 1, which of course leads to destructive social gaps.

And globally, it may look like this



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

Another important aspect regarding the equality is that of the sexes. This is a big question, dealing with such diverse things as equal pay for the same work as everyone's right to go to school, in other words basic human rights. Personally I believe that equality for women in developing countries, dictatorships and young democracies is one of the things that is absolutely crucial for a sustainable development of our planet.

Equality does not mean that men and women are equal in everything, but that they are of equal worth. We who raised children, see e.g. that girls and boys prefer different toys. Brain research shows that women have more connections

between the brain halves while men's brains weigh more, and that this in turn results in that women are better at certain things, while men are better at other things. Because the differences are small, it should be stressed that this applies to averages. Personally, I think a good approach is to look at men and women, as on an anode and a cathode. Both have equal value, they are different but they attract and need each other.

We talk and discuss equality a lot, which children pick up from several perspectives. Here are three quotes from a book where Mark Levensgood is interviewing children:

«It's very typical for parents to blame their children for example, if a catastrophe has happened in the apartment.»

Oliver, 6 years

«Equality means that the mother and father produce children together. In the past it was only the mother who gave birth to the child, while the father went back and forth to the bank.»

Anette, 7 years.

And my personal favorite:

«Being an angel is a typical female profession.»

Louise, 7 years.

I wonder what the angels Gabriel and Michael think about that quote.

Androgynous personality

Sandra L. Bem has investigated this in «The measurement of psychological androgyny».

The myth of the androgyny (Man and Woman) was presented in Plato's «Symposium» in which Aristophanes tells us

about our original nature. The gods were concerned about the abilities of the androgynous and therefore they decided, with Zeus in charge, that they would make them weaker by cutting them in half. Since then, man and woman sought each other to reunite and once again become a whole.

There are long-term studies, which show that androgynous boys and girls are more creative and achieve greater professional success in adulthood. Other studies show that people with an androgynous approach often shows a greater maturity when making decisions based on moral considerations. As a man, there is thus a reason to embrace their femininity and as a woman, there is reason to affirm their masculinity. What can you do to develop yourself in this context?

«The soul has no sex.»

Queen Kristina

Inner development

Inner development is a lifelong journey. I therefore choose to cite some quotes, which I think raises questions on how to realize this trip.

«Everything we can see in the outer world is simply a reflection of our inner world. So, do not expect to meet with, say, love, wisdom, purity or truth, either, if you have not first made the effort to find them and develop them within yourself.»

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

«All our knowledge is, ourselves to know.»

Alexander Pope

«If you go deeper and deeper into your own heart, you'll be living in a world with less fear, isolation and loneliness.»

Sharon Salzberg

«Be gentle first with yourself if you wish to be gentle with others.»

Lama Yeshe

«A single event can awaken within us a stranger totally unknown to us.»

Antoine de Saint Exupery

«Do not let the behavior of others destroy your inner peace.»

The Dalai Lama

«Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.»

CG Jung

«Two truths approach each other. One comes from inside, the other from outside, and where they meet we have a chance to catch sight of ourselves».

Tomas Tranströmer

«So many of us invest a fortune making ourselves look good to the world, yet inside we are falling apart. It's time to invest on the inside.»

Iyanla Vanzant

«The longest journey of any person is the journey inward.»

Dag Hammarskjöld

Kindness and gratitude

«If you are very strong you have to be very kind.»

Pippi Longstocking

I quote the following from my old classmate Håkan Meyers newsletter «giving is rewarding»:

As you read this newsletter, I am on my way to Peru. There I engaged in two years humanitarian aid activities targeted at poor women and children in a village high in the Andes. It is a long journey, but I do it with great joy and happiness. It's about giving and gratitude.

The moral dimension of being kind, generous and open-handed, cannot be questioned. We also know that kindness will give joy to those who get help. But it is not only those we serve who earn something. Also the one who helps is rewarded. Kindness and goodness may require sacrifices. To be kind and good does not need to be linked to an expectation of getting something in return. Research shows that generous and bountiful people also become happy. The researchers concluded that an increased number of good deeds is an effective way to become happier. «Without kindness there can be no true joy» as Thomas Carlyle expressed it.

By being kind and generous you become more positive and sympathetic to other people. Kindness alters our perception of self. When you do something good, you often begin to think of yourself as a compassionate person. This new identity can foster self-confidence and make you feel more confident and less inept. Some scientists even argue that good deeds can make your life felt more meaningful and valuable. When you think about it, you realize that sometimes it is enough to have witnessed a good deed, or heard of one, to be warm inside, touched or impressed.

Good deeds will trigger a deluge of positive social consequences. Helping others satisfies a basic human need to connect with others while, in return, receiving more smiles, more gratitude and more friendship. The researchers show that you become happier by helping others on the basis of the realization of how much the recipients appreciate these good deeds.

My Peru Project is also based on gratitude - gratitude for having been allowed to live a good life. This gratitude is used to give back to others who have not had the same opportunities to create a good life. It is shown by the happiness researchers that gratitude creates happiness. You will be happier if you understand to cultivate an attitude characterized by gratitude. Gratitude helps us to enjoy the good life. Self-esteem is improved. Gratitude is a good antidote to stress and trauma.

Gratitude can help to build social ties, strengthening existing relationships and helping new along. Gratitude works well as countermeasures against the negative comparisons with others.

Next week there will be no newsletter due to my journey to Peru. Therefore, I suggest that you instead use the time to write a gratitude diary. Try one day a week to write down five things that made you grateful during the week and do this for ten weeks. The researchers have shown that writing a gratitude diary makes you more grateful, appreciative and above all happier. I myself have tried to write a gratitude diary. My experience is that the effect will come long before the ten-week period has expired. And I can also promise that kindness and generosity are also good ways to create a happier life.

So far Håkan Meyer and his thoughts.

In chapter seven you can read about happiness research findings. There you will get more ideas on how to become a happier person.

2. Think globally

In this chapter:

Unity

Cells

Ego

Fundamentalism

Future hope for the civilization

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Conscience and psychopaths

«There is hope for anyone anywhere the day we understand that there is only one earth and that it is for all of us. Take care of our hope.»

Beata Tornesel, class 5B Björkhagens school.

«Life is so wisely established that no one can seriously try to help another without helping himself.»

Ralph Waldo Emerson

At young age, we are egocentric. As we grow up, we identify ourselves with different groups and make great efforts in order to belong to and be accepted by the group.

Groups of teenagers are examples of this.

This is a natural development and the important thing is which kind of groups we identify ourselves with, because many groups are good/constructive while others are evil/destructive.

In reality, the most common groups, such as local sports associations are neither bad nor good by nature. They become

what you make of them. If one implements the values in this book, they will be good. On the other hand, if they for example allow bullying in any form, or if they point out other groups as their enemies, the group will take on an evil character.

The comedian Soran Ismail had an interesting example, when he did a summer talk on the radio. He lived in Knivsta and had friends who were native Swedes. They fought a gang of immigrant boys from Märsta. When he discreetly pointed out to his friends that he also was an immigrant, he got the answer. «Yes, but you are one of us.» This shows how completely stupid division into us and them can be.

One of the most important tasks as a parent, is to try to help the children to join good groups and to actively influence groups to follow a good direction.

If parents do not succeed in this, the risk is imminent that the kids, when they get a little older, will enter groups with distinctly evil character, e.g. motorcycle gangs, football hooligans or religious sects with a charismatic egocentric leader. Unfortunately these evil groups are often good at capturing young people by exploiting their need of belonging, and when they are trapped it is very difficult for them to escape.

A frightening example regarding vicious circles is the destructive development of the civil war in Rwanda between primarily Tutsis and Hutus. When parents were from different groups, some mothers killed their children because the father was from the other group. How strong is the pressure and the need for group solidarity to make a mother kills her children??? Never underestimate the need for group solidarity! More of this in chapter 7 in connection with the evolution of homo sapiens.

When Yugoslavia collapsed, it was not uncommon that Serbs and Croats, who were old friends and lived in other countries, suddenly became arch-enemies, even though they just stood at the «sidelines».

As we grow up, we identify ourselves with more and larger groups. Carl Bildt wrote «Hallander, Swedish, European» (Halland is a Swedish county), as an example of this. Value number 2 takes this a step further and could be addressed as «Swedish, European, World Citizen». This means that we identify with all people, nature and other living beings, in short with Mother Earth. Enlightened «collective egos» will have a vital role if we are able to save civilization or not.

The current perception of psychologists and sociologists is that most conflicts in human history were due to the division between «we» and «them».

My mother glued a note on an old birthday card to me, with the following quote:

«Remember that you unconsciously and involuntarily exert influence on all those you come in contact with, through your words, your behavior, your smile, and even your silence, your whole personality.»

P Benoist-Hanapier

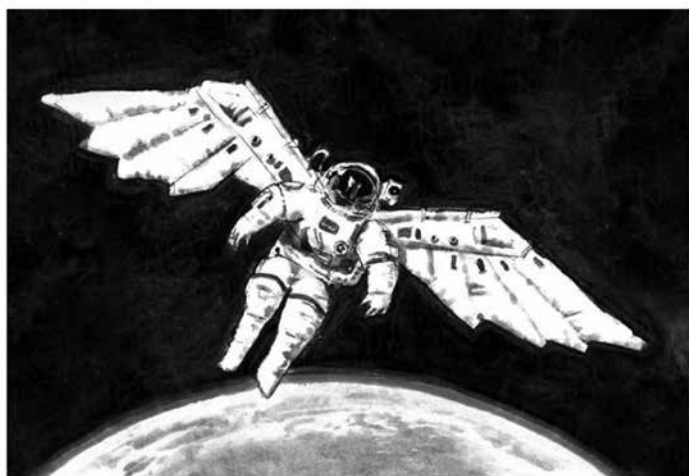
The use of external threats as a national unifying force, is something that those in power through the ages have exercised. Now we have a chance to «turn the tables». If we have enough energy and skill, the climate threat can become a cohesive force uniting humanity. Education, information, demonstrations, etc. about the threat of climate change are vital, to achieve that enough people are actively engaged. As shown in the next chapter, it is urgent!

«True power is based not on force but on unity, on harmony. Never lose sight of this truth. Think of the family you are all to become, despite all that could keep you apart. All details such as your character, level of evolution, race, religion, social background or profession should be put to one side when you come together. They are only of secondary importance.

In any case, they have no part to play in the spiritual life. Simply strengthen in your heart the conviction that despite all your differences you are brothers and sisters coming together to do work – to pray, meditate and sing with the aim of awakening consciousness throughout the earth. Then you will truly be a power for good.»

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

Space travelers, who have been able to watch Mother Earth from their craft, have described a sense of unity and love for our planet. For example, the astronaut Edgar Mitchell said that he experienced a mystical sense of oneness with all of creation, when travelling back to the earth, after having walked on the surface of the moon. He felt that he was connected to a comprehensive reality beyond rational explanation.



'ANGELNAUT'

Source www.polyp.org.uk

«You are the universe, expressing itself as a human for a little while.»

Eckhart Tolle

How can I think? What can I do?

Unity

The world is big and you can feel hopelessness, when you hear about all the problems. It can be good to have two pictures in mind. The first is to see yourself as a drop in the ocean - it gives a sense of humility about how small you are and at the same time a sense of unity. The second picture is to see the earth as a single «individual», which you hold in your hand and send love to. When millions of people mentally perceive the earth in this way, it will have impact. Young people are heading in this direction, so there is hope.

«No one can be perfectly free till all are free; no one can be perfectly moral till all are moral; no one can be perfectly happy till all are happy.»

Herbert Spencer

«Each man a half-open door leading to a room for everyone.»

Tomas Tranströmer

Cells

When I was a little boy, I once experienced that every cell in my body was like a separate living creature. My body was like a little universe of its own, and so it was me who constituted the unit for this universe. If you consider that I have since been told that we have approximately 100 000 billion cells in our bodies and that there occurs about 10 000 chemical reactions per second in each cell, perhaps this experience was not so unrealistic after all.

«You all know the commandment Jesus gave: <You shall love your neighbor as yourself>. Even if this is considered hard to put into practice, it is generally thought easy to understand. But I ask you this: how do people love themselves? They overindulge in all kinds of

ways, abuse their stomachs, their lungs, their hearts, their brains... If you were to ask all these organs what they think of human love, they would tell you of their suffering and their discontent.

Human beings too often forget that their physical body represents a whole population, millions of cells with well-defined functions: there are soldiers, doctors, cabinet ministers, architects, bishops and chemists among them, just as in society. And human beings, who rule over all these populations, don't give them much thought. And so their cells complain endlessly about how unfair, ignorant and lazy their monarch is, who feeds them badly and leaves them without light, warmth and fresh air. So, how much love can humans have for others when they are so bad at loving themselves?»

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

Ego

The ego's main motive is that of always being right and finding fault with others. For the ego, ownership is to be. I have, hence I exist. The more I have the more I am.

There are different levels related to the ego's need to be right. These are:

1. Words of abuse, which you cannot argue against, such as jackass and dumb head.
2. Screaming and roaring.
3. Physical violence.

Think about what drives you. If it e.g. is to be liked, it is the ego that is in control. It is, however, not always wrong, e.g. if you want to be liked for a good cause.

The ego is recognized by wanting more and more. One way to mitigate the ego is not to satisfy these desires. Try to observe your ego, because it weakens every time you pay attention to it. When you manage to go beyond the ego, you experience a sense of harmony and tranquility.

In the West there is a huge identification with the body. As we age, this leads sooner or later to suffering. The solution is to accept your body as it is and give it good nutrition and care. One can compare this to a car as a means of transportation for the body. It should be maintained in a good manner, but it's functionally not so important if the paint is polished and looking good. Similarly, the body is a «means of transportation» for the soul.

When observing people who are driven by their egos you should try to disregard their behaviour. Try to see through the ego to the human core.

A counterforce to the ego is all the national and international organizations, which are now springing up like mushrooms, fighting for global issues such as the climate, protection of species threatened by extinction, elimination of hunger and poverty, the establishment of human rights etc. This bodes well for the future, and personally, I regard it as the «paradigm shift of the heart».

«The heart of humanity is now coming to life.»

Alice Bailey

Fundamentalism

Fundamentalists equate truth with the world of thoughts and identify themselves with their thoughts. They then claim to be in possession of the truth and are cut off from the spiritual dimension of their innermost.

Many religious people are stuck at this level. If you do not believe/think as they do, you are wrong. It can in extreme cases go so far that they feel entitled to kill people who do not share their belief.

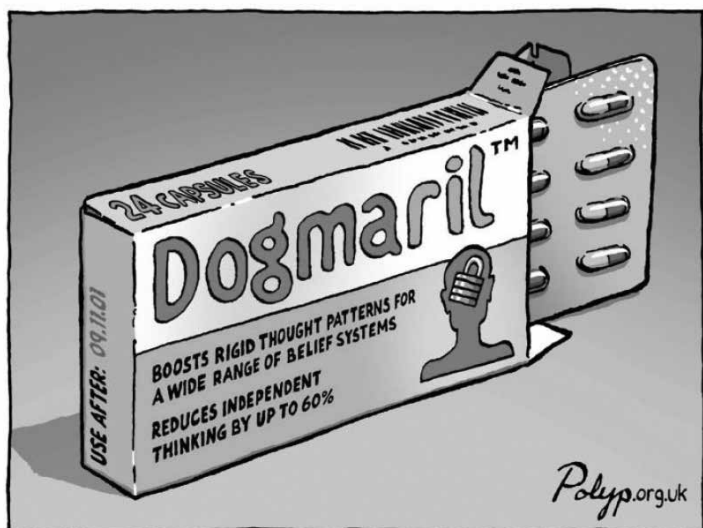
Fundamentalists have no contact with social norms. They find their identity within a group, which is characterized by values, which in their imagination are divinely sanctioned.

«Nothing is more terrible than to see ignorance in action.»

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Yes, fundamentalists are energetic, but lack wisdom, humility and flexible thinking.

A pronounced fundamentalist sees the world in black or white and has no sense of humor. Do you have any area where you have a fundamentalist attitude? Examine yourself.



'OPIUM OF THE MASSES'

Source: www.polyp.org.uk

Future hope for the civilization

The UN Deputy Secretary Jan Eliasson pointed out four future areas of hope for the civilization:

- Adolescents
- Women

□ Research/Development

□ International cooperation

I agree with him and have the following comments:

Today's young people are more educated and have a better overall view than we had in my generation. In addition, they have access to the Internet and its applications as well mobile phones. The Arab Spring is an example of this. In this case, however, we need to have a very great deal of patience. Lack of respect for human rights means that there is a long way to go. We must get used to a long-term process characterized by two steps forward and one step back and manage to patiently accept this.

Women do not start wars and are better than men in taking care of their families. Micro-loans helping women to start-up small entrepreneurial businesses have been successful. Men showed inferior self-discipline regarding the repayment plan and implementation of their undertaking as such. It is a crucial issue for the survival of civilization that an increasing number of women worldwide get better and better education.

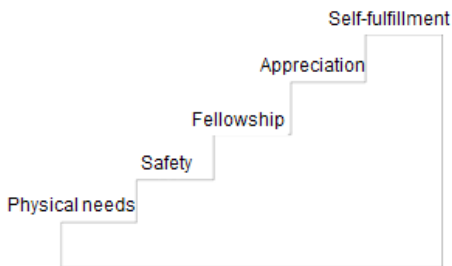
Science/development concerning ecology, renewable energy, water etc. needs a lot of support in the future. I'm definitely optimistic with regard to future innovations in areas such as energy.

This chapter is about identifying with our planet and obviously this cannot be achieved without international cooperation. The UN declaration of human rights is comprehensive, but as long as the Security Council can block necessary measures (Syria is a deplorable example of this), I think, unfortunately, that we must be satisfied with good examples of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Abraham Maslow (American psychologist 1908-1970), developed this hypothesis, which is envisaged as a staircase where each step can be reached only when the steps below are fulfilled. The theory is not scientifically verified, which has led to that psychologists and psychiatrists are not using it to any greater extent. However, marketers have understood to use it to create needs, which boost consumption.

For it to be possible for a person to identify with a holistic view and strive for unity, that person must have climbed up the stairs. If you do not have food for the day, or are deficient in some other basic security, this is what occupies all your thoughts and all your energy. The issues that are brought up in this chapter can therefore only be met if hunger, poverty and illiteracy are eliminated (this is discussed in chapter 6).



Step 1. Physical needs.

Primary needs such as food, drink, sleep and to stay warm and dry. Even created needs such as drinking alcohol belongs to the first step.

Step 2. Safety.

Protection, financial security and basic security in our environment.

Step 3. Fellowship.

To meet and communicate with other people (even animals). Love and friendship. Knowing that you mean something to someone.

Step 4. Appreciation.

Here we have the need for achievement, respect, status and even self-respect and self-confidence. To feel that you mean something because of the person you are, and that you contribute something.

Step 5. Self-fulfillment.

The highest stage means that you can begin to embark on your dreams and visions and deal with things that you find meaningful. Education for education's sake and a freer use of your potential. For example, art and music belong to this step.

What benefit can we have of this theory? Well, it can be a means to know and understand where you and others are at the moment. If you e.g. sense that you are high up on the stairs and are attacked by anxiety, depression or anxiety disorder, it is good to realize that you have slipped to step 2, and that it is safety and security that you need for the moment. Once this is over, you can climb the stairs again.

You should of course consider this model with a pinch of salt. You can e.g. sense that you are on the top step, but at the same time that step 1 is broken (e.g. food scarcity during childhood)

or step 2 is torn (e.g. assault). If you can identify and accept such «needs to repair» of the lower steps, you can eliminate or at least reduce them by using appropriate therapeutic help.

Conscience and psychopaths

Conscience is something that we all have in common and that tells us what is right and what is wrong. The voice of conscience is clear, provided that we listen to it.

Psychopath is a general term for a person with disturbed emotions and will to follow social norms. Brain researcher and professor of psychiatry James Fallon claims that you can recognize it in children if they have psychopathic traits because they «look through» you instead of at you. A typical psychopath does not listen to the voice of conscience, lacks empathy, knows what is right or wrong, but overrides these rules for the benefit of their own will. Psychopaths are often charming and social and therefore give a positive first impression. Since many psychopaths have entrepreneurial qualities and often a medium or high IQ score, they are over-represented in senior management positions. During my career I have personally identified five senior executives with psychopathic traits. I have intuitively, in a way that I cannot explain, from the beginning minimized my contacts with them and thank my intuition, for this insight.

If you have a psychopathic boss, my advice is to change workplace if possible. If you want to deepen your knowledge about psychopaths, I recommend the book «11 ways to Spot a Psychopath at Work» by Bernadette Eichner.

Which individuals with psychopathic traits do you have in your life? What can you do to minimize your contacts with them?

3. Work for a sustainable development.

This chapter deals with the areas that are important for a sustainable development, i.e. population growth, planetary boundary conditions, oceans, forests, grain and hunger, meat consumption, greenhouse gases, probability and climate, economy, circular economy, ecological footprint and energy.

It also addresses:

Actions.

Quality and quantity.

Change and resistance to change.

Comfort.

Self-discipline.

Tipping point.

Resilience.

Consumer power.

Stupidity.

Jevons paradox.

Join a network that you sympathize with.

What do you feel most passionate about?

Motivation.

Lester R. Brown defined «sustainable development» in 1981 as follows:

«Work for a development that meets the present needs without jeopardizing the prospects of future generations».

This concept was fortunately used later by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 and became known and used in a broad sense.

Lester R. Brown sets up the following overall objectives for a sustainable development:

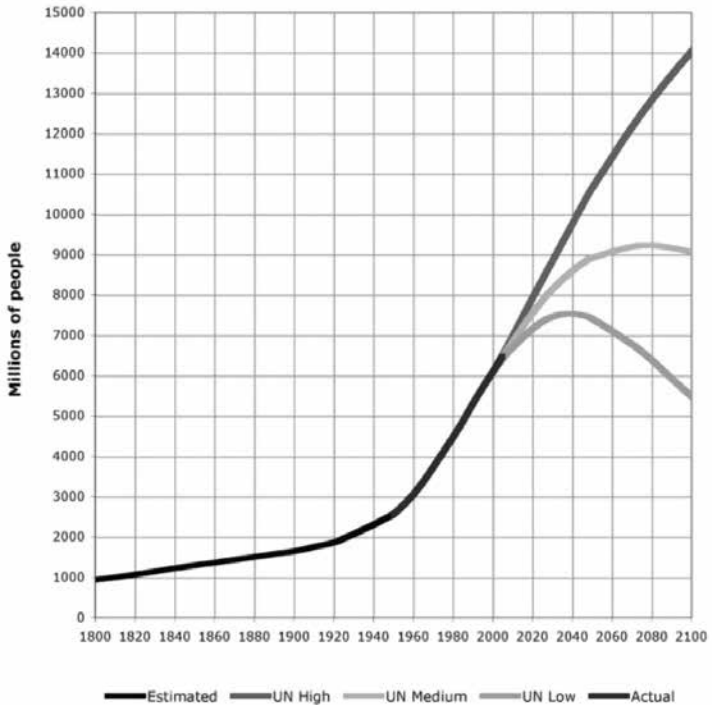
- Stop population growth.
- Reset the earth's ecological systems.
- Eradicate poverty.
- Stabilize the climate.

Personally, I would add a fifth goal on human rights (HR). The UN Declaration on Human Rights needs to permeate mankind for a sustainable development. I engage personally in Amnesty and consider human rights issues as the «heart» of sustainable development.

Sustainable development therefore means that complex systems need to be optimized, since both the environment and the economy and social systems must be considered. This means that the relationships or dependencies between different systems are important areas of research.

Population

The world population is growing exponentially as shown in the curve below. The three forecasts show different scenarios, of which the middle levels out around 9 billion.



Source: United Nations

«The formula» to halt the growth is really quite simple, namely: ensure access to food, health and education.

In country after country this has been proven. Hans Rosling (www.gapminder.org) shows in a creative way, how over time you can follow the development in different countries and at the same time compare the countries. You can get a picture of how the number of children born follows income etc..

Nowadays, the population growth is driven primarily by the fact that we live longer and longer. By 2050 two billion people will be over 60 years old. Greater demands will be

placed on health care. As an example, the Melbourne Hospital in Australia only expected to survive until 2015 without the benefit of immigrant medical staff. It is only in limited areas in the world, mainly Africa, where the birth rate is well above two children per woman. An example of a high birth rate in the Middle East is Yemen, where the number of children per woman is just over five, and where 51% of women have an unachieved need of family planning, while one third of Yemeni girls do not attend primary school.

The proportion of the population living in cities is, since 2009 higher than the proportion who live in rural areas. Since the entire future population growth is expected in urban places, great demands on sustainable urban development is an important research area. A good example of how transport and housing sustainability is adapted is Seoul in South Korea.

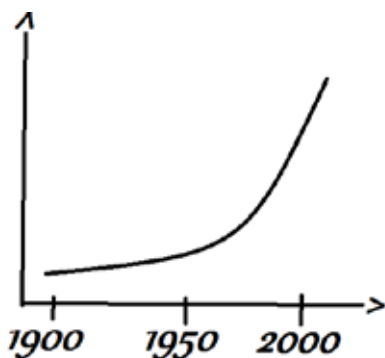
Assuming we manage energy and food supply and add powerful measures on education and health in the remaining countries with a high birth rate, we should be able to feed a global population with 9-10 billion inhabitants.

«Hello God! Have you not created too many people?»

*Eric (from the book «Hello God - letters
from children of all ages»)*

Growth

There are unfortunately many curves, which have the following hockey stick-like appearance (scale for the y-axis obviously vary greatly for the examples given below, but the rampant development since 1950 is the same for all).



Here are some of them:

Overfishing of the oceans (here, however, the curve has already topped, because the stocks have fallen sharply)

Extinction of species

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita

The amount of synthetic organic chemical compounds

Meat production

Carbon dioxide concentration (and the total amount of greenhouse gases) in the air

Global average temperature

The decrease of the surface covered by ice in the Arctic area

The number of international environmental agreements!

The number of natural disasters

Intensity of natural disasters

Is there anyone who believes that this growth can continue indefinitely !?

Is there anyone who believes in infinite growth on a finite planet?

When will politicians understand this? Actually, I think many politicians realize this, but if they promulgate this message, they will not be re-elected! Thus we get the politicians we deserve. Herein lies the dilemma of democracy. It is only when a sufficient number of people understand these relationships, that we can achieve a sustainable development. Therefore we need something of a revolution in people's minds, for this critical mass of knowledge to be achieved. Can we achieve that? How much time do we have?

It is difficult to absorb and understand how quickly an exponential function (such as the «hockey stick» above) skyrockets. A rule of thumb is to use 70 to figure out an approximate doubling. For example, if a country like India has an average economic growth of 7% over a number of years, the economy doubles in about $70:7 = 10$ years.

The Swedish author Stellan Tengroth, starting from natural biological processes, describes three possible scenarios as a result of «hockey stick curves». These are:

1. The killer snail.

First a substantial increase. Then a decrease and finally a relatively balanced level (varying from year to year depending on how hard the winter was).

2. Eradication.

A tumor in which cancer cells kill the individual.

3. The body length growth

Rapid growth during adolescence and then stabilization at a constant level.

I sincerely hope that we choose Scenario 3. For population growth, there are clear signs indicating this. Regarding issues such as overfishing, we can handle Scenario 3 if politicians act together. Oil, which is a limited non renewable resource,

will sooner or later follow Scenario 2, so fortunately we cannot avoid to invest in renewable energy sources. For Scenario 3 to become a reality we need the international networks that promote global thinking for Mother Earth, to expand in such a way that the pressure on the politicians for global solutions passes a mental tipping point. The number of such networks is rapidly increasing. Good examples are Avaaz and We Dont Have Time.

The biggest threat for Scenario 2 to become our reality, is if we do not succeed in a global disarmament and the transfer of resources to sustainable development. Then we will position ourselves country by country. That is why it is so important to give the United Nations authority and power to really follow the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

There are military think tanks, which believe that Scenario 1 is the most probable and draw up strategies for how the country in this situation should «build a wall» around the nation and isolate themselves and survive to the greatest possible extent.

*«Mankind must put an end to war before war puts
an end to mankind».*

John F. Kennedy

Which of these three scenarios, will we humans have followed in the next 100 years? What do you think? The choice for the future of our planet is ours.

The planet's boundary conditions

In autumn 2009, an article about a framework/ game plan for global sustainable development was published in the scientific journal, Nature. It specified limits for us to be on the safe side regarding threshold effects and other undesirable consequences.

This framework defines ten different risk areas. In three of these areas, we have already exceeded the safe limit. These are:

- How quickly we lose biodiversity (here the Y-axis for the curve above is logarithmic!).
- Overuse of nitrogen cycle.
- Climate.

In addition to these three, ocean acidification and freshwater supply are the areas that look most critical.

If you want to read more about this, I recommend the book «The great denial» by Anders Wijkman and Johan Rockström.

The oceans

The situation for the oceans shows both how complex and serious the situation is.

Without the oceans the carbon dioxide content in the atmosphere would have been much higher. Carbon dioxide is absorbed into water, which in turn lowers the pH. So far, the pH has been lowered by 0.1 units. This does not sound so much, but is something completely unique in the history of the earth. During previous periods of carbon dioxide increase the pH value was not affected in the same way, as these increases occurred at a much slower pace, so that the oceans buffering capacity (there are large reserves of limestone in the deep sea) had time to adjust to the changes. According to Professor Ken Caldeira of the Department of Global Ecology at the Carnegie Institution, the current rate of carbon dioxide uptake is almost 50 times higher than normal, which means that the pH of the oceans within the next 100 years could drop from 8.2 to 7.7. The effect of the pH reduction is that the fauna of the oceans will undergo significant changes, and that the coral reefs will disappear. Shellfish will not be able to absorb calcium.

As the temperature rises, the oceans become warmer, which in turn reduces the absorption of carbon dioxide. Therefore we will gradually get smaller «impetus» of the seas to restrain the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Regarding food security, more than 75% of the oceans are overfished or are on the verge of being over-fished (FAO, The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2006 - Rome 2007 p.29), and in 50 years we have reduced the number of fish larger than half a meter by about 90% (report of the Canadian-German research team published in Nature in 2003). According to the FAO (UN Food and Drug Organization) the catch of wild fish has decreased from the peak year of 1988, with 17 kg of fish per capita to 13 kg per capita in 2012. Meanwhile, the production of farmed fish has increased. The sum of all fish peaked in 1996 with nearly 94 million tons. In 2012 it had gone down to 90 million tons. When the supply of cod outside Newfoundland collapsed, (it had been one of the world's richest cod areas for more than 400 years), the fishermen protested loudly against restrictive fishing quotas. This is natural, since it was their livelihood. Everybody became losers. In other places, such as Iceland and New Zealand, a constructive dialogue between fishermen, scientists and authorities has taken place, and in this way they have managed to introduce effective restrictions in time. A serious problem in this context is when countries buy up other countries' fishing rights. So, for example, The EU bought fishing rights in several African countries. The local fishing industry has died out, resulting in poverty and crime, while mostly Spanish ships, with their large subsidized fleet have emptied the fish resources. Homo sapiens - the «wise» man - is about 200,000 years. Eels are as a species about 200 million years, i.e. 1000 times older than us. That is why they still migrate to the Sargasso. They have simply mm after mm followed the continents' movement since the super-continent Pangea began to split up. We, the «wise» man, have almost eradicated this ancient species in 50 years!

The measure, that Lester R. Brown proposes in his book «Plan B 3.0 – Mobilizing to Save Civilization», is to set aside 30% of the world's oceans as marine reserves. Experience of marine reserves is that the local fishermen first protest, but after a few years usually change their minds, as the catch on the borders of the reserves become rich. Kenya is a good example of this. Other necessary measures are restrictions on fishing nets and the maximum allowable catch. If this is implemented, there is good hope. Australia advertised in June 2012, that the number of marine reserves of any kind shall be increased from 27 to 60, which means that 30% of Australia's waters are protected.

Sea levels have risen by 10-20 cm during the 1900s and the trend presently is 5 mm/year. A melting of the Greenland ice sheet is equivalent to just over 6 m sea level rise (6 m is also valid for West Antarctica). This will of course take time, but in this context it is important to consider that when talking about temperature increase, it is normal to refer to average values. The increase, however, is not the same everywhere. With e.g. a global temperature increase of 1.5 °C, the increase is 0.5 °C at the equator and 6 °C in the Arctic (Al Gore - An Inconvenient Truth). In addition to this we have the melting of glaciers around the globe. Of these, the Himalayas (100 times more ice than the Alps), sometimes called the third pole, is the most important, since the Himalayas in addition to the effects of sea water rise, accounts for more than 50% of the drinking water for 40% of the world population.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

A tragic result of our throw away society is the plastic garbage in the Pacific. This flows a bit below the water surface, which makes the problem hidden and as such does not receive the attention that it deserves. This trash covers an area similar to that of the United States (up to double the US according to other sources), and creates major problems for the marine wildlife. Shipping has known this for a long time and many boats avoid the area. How quickly would we have reacted if something similar occurred onshore?

A major problem in this context is that national interests directly counteract global optimization. Unfortunately, Sweden is an example of this.

Greenpeace writes the following:

*Too many, and too large fishing vessels are chasing fewer and fewer fish in our seas. It is **one of the greatest threats to both the marine environment and the fishermen's survival**. But the medicine that the Swedish government prescribes for this now turns out to have serious side effects. Instead of solving the problem, it is moved to Africa. There the Swedish fishing vessels now increase the problem with overfishing and the fishing is also in conflict with international law.*

Greenpeace's investigation, *Exporting Exploitation* show how Swedish ships are exported to Western Sahara, a territory occupied by Morocco, where they contribute to overfishing of already over-exploited fish stocks. At the same time this fishing does not violate international law, because the people in Western Sahara either approved it or get a significant portion of the profits. We have also seen evidence of how fishing sometimes derails completely and that hundreds of tons of fish are dumped into the sea, dead. This is possible and legal because of a regulatory framework introduced by the government. The rules mean that **fishermen can earn millions of crowns by selling their fishing quotas in Sweden and then continue fishing** in the waters of third countries.

We have traced the vessels taken from the Swedish fishing fleet. Of the 39 vessels officially removed over half - 21 vessels - still fish, but in other waters. Only four ships have been scrapped. A total of **eight ships have begun fishing in occupied Western Sahara**. The work is led by Swedish fishermen and with a partly Swedish crew, but formally it is carried out by Moroccan companies. There are examples of fishermen who earned about 60 million Swedish crowns (6.6 M USD) to sell their fish quota in Sweden and then moved its fishery to the Western Sahara.

In other words, Sweden today exports over-fishing and exploitation to the occupied Western Sahara. This is despite the fact that Sweden, in other contexts, strongly opposes EU fishing in Western Sahara.

This problem is from a global point of view summarized in the book «Plan B 3.0 – Mobilizing to Save civilization» by Lester R. Brown, as follows:

Ultimately, governments must put an end to subsidies to fishing. There are now so many fishing trawlers that their catch potential is nearly twice as large as the sustainable catch in the sea. Managing a network of marine reserves covering 30% of the world's oceans would cost only 12-14 billion - less than the 22 billion USD of harmful subsidies, which governments distribute today to the fishing industry.

Forests

According to the Earth Policy Institute, we had in 2014, a forest area of four billion hectares, equivalent to 31% of the total land area. Since 2000, we have annually lost 12.8 million hectares, while regrowth accounts for 7.6 million hectares, which means that forest cover decreased by 5.2 million hectares per year. Before the industrial era, there were almost 6 billion hectares of forest, so from this perspective almost 1/3 of the global forest area has disappeared.

Forest decline in one year is equivalent to 1.5 billion tons of carbon dioxide, which is about 25% of emissions from fossil fuels. It is therefore a very important climate issue.

South America is the region where the largest forest loss has occurred in the period 2000-2010. Although Africa shows a gloomy development. A contrast to this is Asia, where the trend has reversed. China e.g. conducted strong measures after the floods 1998 on reforestation. Meanwhile, China is the world's largest producer of processed wood products and operates on both legal and illegal logging in other countries. Indonesia has been particularly hard hit by this. There, the forest area has decreased from over 80% in 1960 to just below 50% in 2014. Also large areas of native forest have been destroyed for palm oil production, with Indonesia accounting for just below 50% of the world production. At the same time palm oil production shows how complex the situation is, and therefore we need to consider several variables. Palm oil has namely high productivity per unit area and because of its cost efficiency it fills the need of cooking oil for about two billion people, most of whom are poor. It is also an important ingredient in detergents, which are needed for reasons of hygiene. The efforts now being made in cooperation between growers, producers, etc. to certify as large a proportion of palm oil volume as possible, I personally think is the best way to go, when I try to look at this from a holistic perspective.

The annual deforestation of the Brazilian Amazon, the past 10 years gradually decreased from just under 30,000 square kilometers in 2004 to just over 5,000 square kilometers in 2013. One reason for this positive development is that an agreement has been made between large purchasers and environmental organizations. The future is unfortunately uncertain, since it is unclear whether the buyers will extend the deal. Deforestation is driven by soybean production for cattle. We, as individual consumers can therefore make a positive impact by reducing the consumption of beef.

It is thus very important to reduce logging and to increase reforestation. Many good initiatives have been taken in recent years and this gives some hope for the future, the FAO report in 2013 shows that forest decline is lower than before.

Necessary measures will vary in the world. For developed countries, it is important to reduce the amount of paper and increase recycling. South Korea is an exemplary example. There powerful replanting has taken place and the recycling is 91%. For developing countries, it is important to reduce wood as fuel (globally wood as fuel is responsible for more than half of the world's timber consumption). More efficient stoves, solar energy facilities and expansion of electricity supply based on renewable energy is needed. These are very suitable projects for international development assistance. Another measure is the planting of trees, where tropical areas should be given priority due to the higher growth rate.

Personally, I feel a little more hopeful when it comes to forests than in the case of the oceans. We humans are probably a bit more cautious with the forests, where we see what happens as opposed to what is happening below the surface. The solution to pollution is dilution, said a chemist colleague of mine about 30 years ago.

«Hello God. He who invented the hammock was very smart. But you're good too. It was you who found the trees to bind them.»

Patrik (from the book «Hello God - letters from children of all ages»).

Cereals and hunger

Corn, wheat and rice are the three main crops in the world and of these corn production is almost double that of rice. Corn plant is very productive, but at the same time sensitive to both high temperatures and drought. Our high dependence on these three crops makes crop failure of one or more of these an event of extensive global consequences. We saw an example in 2008, when grain prices sharply increased with riots and social unrest as a result in a number of poor countries. It is all made worse by the fact that a significant portion of US corn production went to the production of ethanol for vehicle fuel, which meant that a connection arose between the market prices for food and fuel.

In this situation exporting countries reduced their exports in order to hold down domestic prices, while panic arose in importing countries. The importing countries that could afford it began buying up or leasing land in other countries to produce food for their own population. In China, for example, this is a very real and long-term strategy. There are also a lot of companies, which buy arable land areas, and speculation on grain prices have risen on world stock markets. We then go to an era where nationalism and speculation will have an increasing impact on the number of hungry people in the world.

The first UN Millennium Development Goal is that «extreme hunger and poverty will be eradicated.» Specifically formulated so that «the proportion of people going hungry will half from 1990 to 2015». Development was positive to begin with, but in the last few years the curve unfortunately pointed in the wrong direction. A new global approach is therefore necessary, considering the great influences of monocultures, nationalism and speculation. According to the UN (information from October 2012), 868 million people suffered from chronic malnutrition. The number of families that go at least one day a week without food has increased. A study by Save the Children for 2012 shows that 24% of families in India

have done this, while the figure for Nigeria is 27% and Peru 14%. Meanwhile, it is estimated that about 1.3 billion people worldwide are overweight. In Sweden we consume 287 calories more per person per day than we did in 1980. In the US, there is an increase of 500 kcal per person per day since 1970. In September 2015 UN agreed on 17 goals for the sustainable development with a broad majority of the world's countries. There has been criticism that the objectives are too numerous and too difficult to grasp. I do not agree. All 17 targets are needed from a holistic perspective.

More than 50% of the international trade of cereals in 2014 went to animal feed and biofuels. This trend needs to be broken for hunger to be eradicated.

In year 2011, 32% of the US grain harvest was used for ethanol. This could feed about 400 million people. A refueling in an SUV that holds 95 liters gives enough food for one person in India for a year. This, in a nutshell, is the ethical dilemma. Until 1950 increased grain yields were mainly by utilization of new land. Subsequently, the increase in the productivity has given the increase (from 1.1 kg/ha in 1950 to an impressive 3.3 kg/ha in 2011). For the period 1950 - 1990 the yield increased by 2.2% per year. For the period 1990 - 2011 this was reduced to 1.3% per year.

The high utilization rate of fertilizer, pesticides, genetic modification, etc. results in that we cannot count on the same high percentage yield increases as before.

Another important factor is water availability. In 2013, about 175 million people in India and about 130 million in China lived on grain from overuse (deeper wells drilled) of water. Globally, there is water shortage in 18 countries with a total population of 3.6 billion people.

«Depletion of water resources now threatens crops in China, India and the United States. These big three grain producers together deliver half of the world grain harvest. The question is not if lack of water will affect harvests in these countries, but rather when it will do it.»

Lester R. Brown, July 2013

Regarding climate change, the global harvest of cereals falls by about 10% for every one degree rise in average global temperature.

If you want to immerse yourself in the world food situation and how it is affected by various factors, I recommend the book «Full planet. Empty plates» by Lester R. Brown.

An important aspect is that food waste needs to be reduced. There are many good initiatives to reduce waste. The Swedish Federation of Trade published a study (December 2015) that shows that 63% of traders are actively working with sustainability issues and believe that sustainable and profitable trade go hand in hand.

Meat Consumption

In 1950, the global meat consumption was 44 million tons and in 2009 it had risen to 284 million tons. This is more than a doubling per capita. The increase in milk and egg consumption is equally dramatic. This follows increases in income. As mentioned above, the increased meat consumption is threatening the supply of grain. It is, however, a great difference in the need for grain for animal farming as follows:

1 kg of beef requires 7 kg of cereals.

1 kg of pork requires 3 kg of cereals.

1 kg of poultry requires 2 kg of cereals.

1 kg of fish requires 2 kg of cereals.

How many people can the earth feed? The answer is that it depends on how we live. An American consumes more than twice as much grain as an Italian and almost four times as much as an Indian.

One of the major scourges of our time is that the number of antibiotic-resistant bacteria threatens humanity. By adding small amounts of antibiotics in animal feed it is possible to obtain an additional growth to the order of 5%. Using e.g. mixtures of spices, a similar effect is achieved, but this is slightly more expensive. In the EU the use of antibiotic additives in animal feed is banned, but in the US 13,000 tons in 2014 are used for this purpose.

We will, unfortunately, have to read similar headlines as the following in the future:

Antibiotic resistance serious threat to food security in the US. **Approximately 73 percent of all antibiotics sold in the US goes to meat production. At the same time more than two million people every year get sick due to antibiotic-resistant bacteria. According to the US Disease Control and Prevention Institute CDC (September 2014), Approximately 23,000 die of these infections.**

Despite the ban in the EU, Danish pig farmers are classed as a health risk regarding MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*), due to the high medical use of antibiotics in pig farming (three times as high as in Sweden). However, it is gratifying to note that countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands are now taking vigorous action in respect of these matters. In southern Europe, it is unfortunately common with poor husbandry maintained by antibiotic addition. Moreover veterinaries earn money by prescribing antibiotics, which of course results in an overuse. Fortunately, the EU is working on stricter regulations regarding these issues.

South Asia is the geographical area where the problem of antibiotic-resistant bacteria is the largest in the world. For example, in Pakistan it is free to buy antibiotics without prescription. Overuse and misuse is also very big due to poor instruction and low skills.

Professor Price in the US has shown how MRSA has occurred among pigs due to antibiotic additives in the feed, and then it has spread to humans. The EU imposed a ban on antibiotics in feed in 2006. When will the US wake up?

If antibiotics to animals is a moral dilemma, it is small in comparison to the extreme moral indifference which comes in large portions of livestock. Animals are seen as a source of protein and not as living beings, thus driving deeply unethical breeding and slaughtering methods.

«It is difficult to get a man (or a woman: my note) to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it.»

Upton Sinclair

Greenhouse gases

Already in 1824 Joseph Fourier described the greenhouse effect. This means that the gases in the atmosphere absorb a portion of the sun's energy and thus heating the planet. There are many gases that have this effect, such as water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous gases (nitrogen oxides) and so on. The effect of water vapor is particularly difficult to calculate because the clouds height above the ground is very important. Without greenhouse gases, the earth's average temperature would be about - 18 degrees C.

In 1896 (!), Svante Arrhenius, a renowned Nobel-Prize winning Swedish scientist calculated that a doubling of the carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere would raise average global temperatures by 5-6 degrees C.

During the period 1750-2017 the carbon dioxide content in the air has increased from 280 ppm (parts per million) to 400 ppm.

Probability and climate

Laszlo Szombatfalvy highlights in the book «*The Greatest Challenges of Our Time*» the lack of risk assessments for a number of global problems. The risks that we accept with regard to climate change, for example, are many times greater than what we would accept in other areas.

In the period 2001-2008 there was an average of 30 aircraft accidents per year with passenger planes. The number of flights was barely 30 million. One accident in a million flights is a number that impresses me. This is a level that generally does not prevent ordinary people from flying. Consider if we instead had 300 aircraft accidents per year, i.e. one in 100,000 flights. It would have meant that we would have heard in the media, almost every day about an accident. This would lead to our propensity to fly to significantly reduce. This example shows that a rough figure of an acceptable risk at best, lies somewhere on the level of one in a hundred thousand. Even in car traffic the risk of a serious accident is in the order of 100,000 or less.

It is «interesting» to transfer the above reasoning to the climate. Despite all the environmental agreements, emissions of greenhouse gases still increase (after the financial crisis by about 3% per year compared to 1.7% per year for the period 1970-1995). Anders Wijkman and Johan Rockström wrote in the book «*The great denial*» that the risk of a temperature increase of 2 degrees or more is 50% or more with the actions which are being discussed. Personally, I fear a higher temperature rise due to increased methane emissions, mainly from Siberia and the East Siberian Sea (as mentioned above, the temperature increase is higher, the closer to the Arctic we come, and in addition, methane is about 20 times as powerful as carbon dioxide regarding the greenhouse effect). However, 2014 inspires hope. There was no increase of carbon dioxide

emissions, even though the economy grew (the first time this has happened!). The main reason is China's decreased coal production, in favor of solar, hydro and wind power. Hopefully 2014 is the start of a trend. Climate negotiations in Paris in December 2015 fortunately suggests that this is the case. The election of Donald Trump as president in USA and his withdrawal from the Paris agreement, is of course a threat, but hopefully his arrival on the climate scene will not have any major effect, as the market forces are now in favor of renewable energy sources. We should be very thankful that he was not elected earlier!

Why do we not take this more seriously? One reason is that the oil lobby and other stakeholders use the same tactics that the tobacco companies earlier used so successfully to hide the link between smoking and cancer. This led to the fact that the undeniable information about the cancer risks of smoking was postponed for several decades. This tactic can be summarized with the words «Doubt is our product». Another reason is the uncertainty in the figures, which we unfortunately have to live with, because relationships are so complex. Although the uncertainty in figures is large, the trend is very clear, and it is this that we should abide by. A third reason is that we are talking about averages, which are not directly transferable to the different local situations. In the book «Six Degrees - Our future on a hotter Planet» Mark Lynas describes with many examples what is happening in different parts of the world with a temperature rise of 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 degrees. If you consider that the average temperature on Earth during the last Ice Age was about 6 degrees lower than now, you realize that a temperature increase of 6 degrees will give very dramatic effects.

NASA's space agencies present statistics regarding Earth's temperature since 1880. The analysis from 2012 shows a long trend of rising temperatures. The nine warmest years have occurred since 2000.

Another argument that I have met, is that «it does not matter, we will get a new ice age in the future». Yes, it is true, but we are talking about different time scales. The time I am talking about here concerns our grandchildren, while the next ice age is at least 300 generations ahead. Ice Ages are linked to the so-called Milankovich cycles, which occur because the Earth's orbit around the sun is more or less elliptical. The last 600,000 years, we roughly had cycles of 80,000 years of ice age and 20,000 years of non-ice age. If this pattern is repeated, then the next ice age will take place in about 10,000 years. The human impact on the climate, however, increases the likelihood that the next ice age will come later. The researchers in their calculations come to different results as to how long this delay will be. The uncertainties are numerous. How will, for example the Gulf Stream be affected?

Almost all scientists agree that humans have affected the climate, and it is «interesting» to see how much attention the scientists who claim otherwise get in the media. Therefore, it feels good when you come across honest scientists who admit they were wrong and change their minds. The renowned American climate skeptic Richard Muller, professor of geology at Berkley, now indicates that the earth, according to his own research has become 1.5 degrees warmer since the 1750's. Credit to such a person.

*«It often takes more courage to change one's
opinion than to keep it».*

Willy Brandt

In November 2012, representatives of nearly 200 countries met in Doha, Qatar on the follow-up meeting of the UN's climate agreement. A week before, the World Bank report came, which warned of a 4-point increase in average global temperatures. The result of the Quatar meeting was lean. This shows the need for greater pressure on politicians from

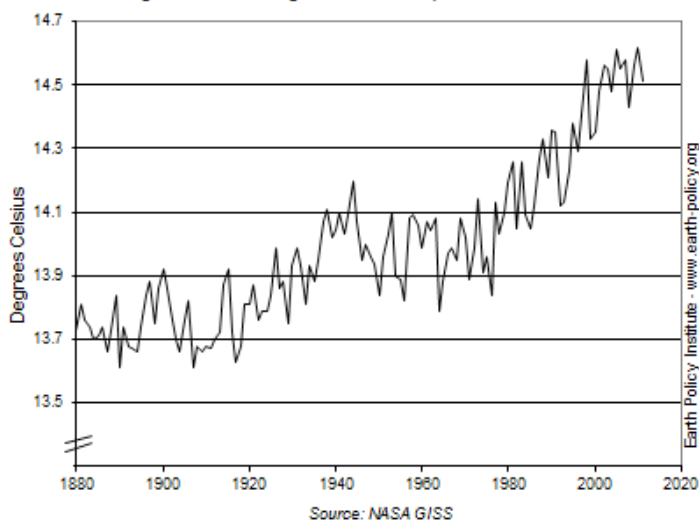
environmental organizations etc. It is necessary to influence development both top-down, with policy initiatives, and bottom-up with folk activities. Hopefully 2015 was the year in which a trend can be noted with regard to the awareness of politicians. This year, three climate meetings (Addis Ababa in June, establishing the United Nations 17 global sustainability goals, in September and December, Paris) took place during the same year, which is unique.

The organization, Friends of the Earth estimates that 400,000 people die each year due to climate change and that the annual cost is 700 billion USD.

The number of climate refugees by 2050, due to flooding, land degradation, natural disasters, deforestation, dam expansions or industrial accidents is estimated at between 50 and 500 million people (the large spread indicates the degree of uncertainty). There is no international law or aid for these people and there are no immigration countries which are willing to receive them.

I heard in a debate, a Swedish politician, who argued that the risk of an attack against Sweden is very low, and therefore we should see defense spending as a kind of insurance premium. If we were to transfer this reasoning to the risks linked to sustainable development, I am convinced, however, that all the insurance money would be spent on this, so that there was nothing left to increase defense costs. Our risk analysis is thus obsolete. With this global situation it is very worrying that Russia and USA (stands alone for 41% of the global military costs 2008 - Lester R. Brown «Plan B 4.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization»), both increased their military budgets substantially 2017. How can we establish a global tax on military expenses that is used for a sustainable development?

Figure 8-1. Average Global Temperature, 1880-2011



On <http://www.poodwaddle.com> you can follow how high the carbon dioxide content in the air is. In January 2017 it was 406 ppm. Here you can also follow the world's population etc.

Economy

«Socialism collapsed because it did not allow the market to tell the economic truth. Capitalism may collapse because it does not allow the market to tell the ecological truth».

Øystein Dahle

«We must do the right things. The economy may well be what it is.»

Johan Rockström

The two quotes above highlight that we do not measure the right things. Gross domestic product (GDP) increases for example in Brazil when Amazonian forests are felled. Any

cost for deforestation is not recorded. Production of nuclear weapons and manufacture of energy-consuming battle plans increase GDP. The list of the GDP steering errors can be made very long.

The petrol price in the US was in 2007 about USD 1 per litre. The price takes no account whatsoever of climate deterioration, the costs of respiratory diseases, military spending to ensure oil supply or costs of tax subsidies to the oil industry. A study by the International Center for Technology Assessment estimated these costs to be USD 3.17 per liter. Consumer prices should therefore have been at the level of USD 4 per liter. What effects would such a price have given?

For companies and so on, we look carefully at the balance sheet, but for the earth as a whole, we have no balance sheet! The need for economists who are also knowledgeable in ecology is a critical factor for the future of the earth.

The above shows that the tax system needs to be changed and globalized in certain areas. Flying needs to pay a fair share of carbon dioxide emissions (I become afraid, when I see slogans like «the more you travel the more you save» or «earn and burn cashpoints from day one»). Tax changes from wages of labor to raw materials and consumption are other examples of measures needed for a more sustainable direction.

Ecological economists use the term «steady state economy», which has the following three criteria:

1. We cannot use resources faster than they renew themselves.
2. We must not create waste faster than it can be absorbed.
3. We need to find replacements for non-renewable resources.

This is common sense, and yet we are so far from these three points in reality.

Since the criteria are obvious in the long term, they should be used when it comes to convincing politicians of ecological objectives.

Progress/ «growth» should instead be encouraged within for example art, science and medicine.

Strive for quality instead of quantity.

Economy can be a powerful tool in the fight against climate change. Taxation is a method of setting this in the right direction, and a good example of this is CCL. www.citizensclimate-lobby.org/. They are working for the following tax exchange:

Background

Climate change is caused mainly by a sharply increased level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This level in turn depends mainly on emissions of carbon dioxide resulting from the burning of fossil fuels.

If climate change is to be halted, we need people to stop the use of fossil fuels. There is a simple method, which lasts indefinitely.

What is needed is to make fossil fuels more expensive and more and more expensive ...

Without increasing the tax burden.

Is it possible? - Yes, and for at least half of the population, it is even economically viable.

The proposal

We advocate a new type of taxation, where a steadily rising carbon fee is compensated by the entire income immediately distributed to the public, in equal parts to every adult citizen.

The proposal has many advantages. It is cost effective, easy to implement and apolitical - it should be accepted by all parties that wish to contribute to solving our greatest problem.



Source www.polyp.org.uk

*«I'll be financially independent even if I have
to borrow every cent.»*

Max Eastman

If you want to read more about economy and sustainability I recommend the book «Prosperity without growth» by Tim Jackson.

Circular economy

A synergistic concept concerning economy and sustainability is to work with so called circular economy. This means a regenerative system in which resource input and waste, emission, and energy leakage are minimized by slowing, closing, and narrowing material and energy loops. This can be achieved through long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, re-manufacturing, refurbishing and recycling.

Here are four examples:

Wissington is a beet sugar plant established in 1925, as part of British Sugar. The plant supplies 420,000 tons of sugar a year

in various formats, extracting it from the sugar beet grown around the East of England. However, for those who have visited it, describing Wisington simply as a «sugar factory» immediately feels like something of a misnomer. This is a story of diversification. The team at Wisington have continually evaluated their operation to valorize previously wasted energy and material flows. The result is a factory that doesn't just produce sugar, but 12 different saleable products, from valuable chemicals to food for animals and humans. Some of the co-products are more obvious than others, and the approach shows an open-mindedness to new ideas. Out of 3,5 million tons of raw material just 100 tons leave for landfill – mainly canteen waste.

In Australia, about 5,100 metric tons of plastic waste is generated annually from dialysis treatments. But an innovative recycling project led by Deakin University structural engineering lecturer Dr. Riyadh Al-Ameri is repurposing that waste to create more durable concrete. Because the waste is potentially infectious, it must be either burnt or sterilized before being thrown away. This not only costs a lot of money, but also causes significant harm to the environment. Initial testing by Al-Ameri's team added the plastic waste in shredded form to concrete mix, resulting in a product that was both more durable and significantly more waterproof.

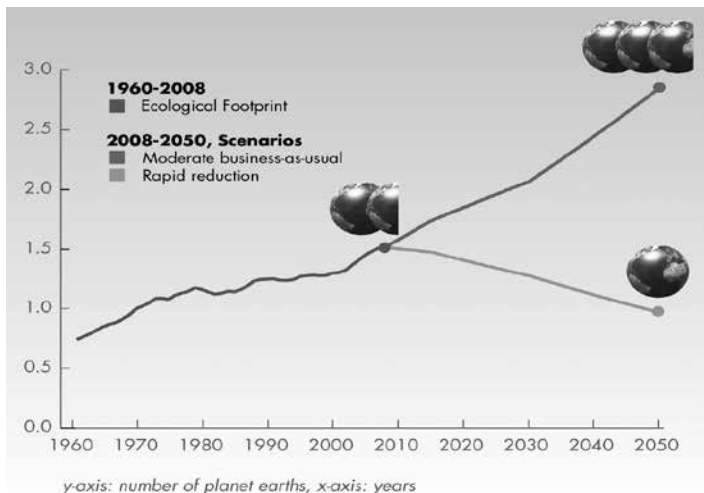
Swedish Stockings produce stockings made of old fishing nets.

The Procter & Gamble Co. (P&G; Cincinnati, OH) has launched the Fairy Ocean Plastic bottle made from 100% post-consumer recycled (PCR) and ocean plastic. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the issue of plastics in our waterways and what can be done to prevent plastic waste from reaching the ocean.

Overshoot Day/ Ecological footprint

Overshoot Day can be translated into «ecological debt day» and is a calculation of the date we have exceeded nature's

budget for the year, in other words how much we nibble on our children and grandchildren's future. The graph below is from www.footprintnetwork.org and shows that we now would need 1½ earths for our current consumption.



The difference between countries is of course great. For example, we would need 4.2 planets if everyone lived like the USA. The corresponding figure for Russia is 2.7, 1.2 for China and 0.5 for India.

When I look at this, I get the feeling that today's society can best be described as an ADHD society. ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Ecological footprint is to measure the surface area needed to retrieve natural resources and to deal with emissions. The globally available biocapacity was 1.8 hectares per capita in 2007 according to the World Wildlife Fund. The global average was 2.7 hectares per capita (that is why we need 1½ earths according to the curve above). In Sweden, the footprint is 5.9 hectares per capita. Since Sweden has relatively large natural resources (9.8 ha / person, according to Ewing et. Al., 2010),

we are one of the few industrialized countries that can cover the footprint. However, it is only of academic interest to talk about national levels, because the impact is global.

When we grow when we are adults, it's either cancer or obesity. If we apply this analogy to a global perspective, we need to undergo cancer treatment or a diet.

Energy

You often hear in debates that coal and oil are necessary for our energy supply. This is true in the short term, but in the long term (do we have time enough?), with the right efforts we can and must eliminate this dependency. One progressive movement concerning time is <https://wedonthavetime.com/> - a social media to save our planet.

Fortunately the cost of solar cells has decreased lately. In China the cost decrease is 80% (!) for the period 2013-2017. The corresponding figure for wind energy is 50%. In both China and India the investments in solar and wind energy have replaced planned investments in coal power plants. Germany has played a major role in the research and development that has resulted in this amazingly increased cost efficiency.

We are currently facing an energy paradigm shift. Regarding China the breaking point when wind becomes cheaper than coal is 2018. The Chinese figure for sun compared with coal is estimated to 2020. The breaking point when sun becomes cheaper than wind is estimated to 2023 (also China).

A total of 54 percent of Europe's 619 coal power plants operate at a loss today (December 2017) - a figure estimated to increase to 97 percent by 2030, according to a new report from Carbon Tracker.

Twenty countries including Britain, Canada and New Zealand have joined an international alliance to phase out coal from power generation before 2030.

The Powering Past Coal Alliance was unveiled at the COP23 climate talks in Bonn, Germany, which were stipulating the technical details of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

«I think we can safely say that the response has been overwhelming,» Canadian Environment Minister Catherine McKenna said.

«There is so much momentum, there is so much ambition in this room.»

The alliance, which isn't legally binding, was launched days after a pro-coal presentation by the Trump administration jarred with many ministers who wanted the talks to focus on cleaner energy sources.

Another good example is companies that cooperate and announce initiatives in line with the Paris agreement.

The situation in December 2017 is as follows:

Nearly 1200 companies aim to align their emissions reduction plans with the Paris Agreement goals by 2019

118 companies are now committed to sourcing 100% renewable electricity – generating demand for enough renewable electricity to power Ukraine

A ten-fold rise in companies committed to bold climate action since the Paris Agreement was signed

Brussels – Wind energy is set to become the leading source of electricity in the EU soon after 2030. This is according to the latest report from the International Energy Agency (IEA), 'World Energy Outlook (WEO) 2017,' released 14.11.2017.

The IEA attributes this to the rapidly falling costs of renewables. They predict continued strong growth in both onshore

and offshore wind and see renewables as a whole accounting for 80% of new power generation capacity in Europe between now and 2040. The WEO is consistent with WindEurope's recent 'scenarios for 2030' report which shows that, with the right policies, wind could provide 30% of Europe's power and reach a total installed capacity of 323 GW by 2030.

WindEurope CEO Giles Dickson said:» Wind energy is now firmly established as the cheapest form of new power generation. The World Energy Outlook shows wind is on track to become Europe's leading electricity source soon after 2030.

In addition to the exchange from fossil fuels to renewable sources, we need to increase savings in buildings, industries and lighting systems, reconstruct the transport sector and invest in infrastructure. For example, a vision has been developed by Algeria, ABB, Siemens and others, showing how the infrastructure for Europe's part can be built with solar power from the Sahara (an area of 70x70 km in the Sahara could provide solar power for the whole of Europe's energy - the global insolation from the sun for one hour is equivalent to the entire planet's energy need for one year), hydropower from northern Europe and wind power along the coasts. This form of infrastructure improvement can also be made at a local level. In Germany, a multitude of small producers of wind and solar energy cooperated and made the grid smarter. Together, these are a virtual power plant.

Small things can make an important difference. Last year, LEDs achieved a 570 million tons carbon dioxide emission reduction - a figure equivalent to closing down 160 coal-fired power plants. In total, LEDs instigated a 1.5 percent decrease in global carbon dioxide emissions 2017!

Regarding nuclear energy, the global priority is important. The first priority is for climatic reasons to eliminate dependence on oil and coal. The second priority is to make us independent of nuclear power.

The transition to a sustainable energy society will also create jobs. The report «Green Jobs – Employment Effects of the transition to a sustainable energy system» by Greenpeace calculates that the number of jobs in 2020 would increase by more than 60,000 from 2012 (37,000-100,000), only in Sweden. World energy demand is projected to increase by 56 percent from 2010 to 2040. The increase comes primarily from countries not members of the OECD. Developing countries, where demand is driven by strong economic growth. This figure comes from the American independent statistical agency EIA's report, the International Energy Outlook, 2013.

«It's freezing and snowing in New York--we need global warming!»

Donald Trump

Not all the fossils are in the fuel!

How can I think? What can I do?

«You must be the change you wish to see in the world.»

Mahatma Gandhi

«How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.»

Anne Frank

Actions

Try to choose activities that contribute to moral and spiritual development. A good option is to do it when you are celebrating something. Then it also feels good to celebrate successes, large and small.

One wish I have is that TV programs will have more and more of this as a starting point. Not to mention the commercials!

Quality and quantity

Search quality not quantity. Quality is spiritual. Quantity is material.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

Change

Keep your heart open. Accept honest feedback from all directions. The best feedback can come from strangers. See it as an opportunity with great potential.

Comfort

Many people believe that a life of comfort and pleasure are ideal. However, this is unnatural and destructive. Strive instead for meaningful employment, with comfort in the form of short and enjoyable breaks.

Self-discipline

This word sounds boring. In reality it is just the opposite. The more you practice your self-discipline to follow the good and the true, the better you feel and the happier you feel. This is done by gradually becoming the master of your thoughts and by controlling your instincts and passions. It is a biological fact that you can only have one thought at a time. Try it, you'll see. You can choose to change your momentary thought, or not. A good conscience is the best pillow.

Concerning evil thoughts, it is in our animal nature to react immediately. As humans, we have the possibility, however, and the choice to instead stop and think. A good trick is to take a deep breath, move one leg and fill yourself with light. Then you can create a basic response in a loving way.

In the case of external enemies (here I mean words, gossip, attitudes, etc.) you should endeavor to use love, kindness and patience. Regarding internal enemies such as destructive instincts and immoral passions, you should instead use firmness and authority. Most people do exactly the opposite!!!

One can put it in this way:

Action = Thought x Feeling

Since thought is easier to influence than feeling, you should change your behavior patterns, by working to change your thinking towards more and more good thoughts. This is a process and you should be pleased and happy and also gladly celebrate, when you notice that you have taken a step in the right direction.

«The emotions always win over reason.»

Albert Einstein

Children and grandchildren

Suggested letter to the Swedish Parliament, cross-party group of children, 10012 Stockholm.

CRC, Article 6, states that children have the right to life and survival, but nothing about the actual conditions, i.e. that they have a right to a future of sustainable development, ecological as well as climatically. Therefore, I urge you to pursue a clearer description of the UNCRC.

A good example of what senior persons can do is the initiative of Grand Panthers, who have the following agenda:

Welcome to Grand Panthers

We love our children and grandchildren. Climate change threatens their future. The climate change in Paris in Dec 2015 established a basic framework. Now we can build on this. We want our leading politicians and decisionmakers to elevate climate change above party politics. They must work together on important issues to stop climate change and safeguard a sustainable future for all children. At any cost!

This is a platform on which we all agree. In other matters, our opinions may vary.

We see ourselves as a leaderless people's movement. We meet the last Wednesday of every month (except for June and July) presently in Bagdad Café at Medelhavsmuseet on Fredsgatan 2, first floor, at 2:00 pm where we discuss the plans for the day. Then we stroll, two-by-two, carrying our posters outside Riksdagshuset for approximately one hour. We then take another break at Bagdad Café before going out again for a shorter period between 4:15 and 5 pm. Sometimes we succeed in securing a meeting with a politician. Check our home-page to see whom we have met so far.

We carry posters expressing a demand for a stop to climate change - the poster preferably personalized with a picture of

a child or children and a text message. Our home-page will show you examples of posters, as well as suggestions how to make one yourself.

www.grandpanthers.se

Tipping point

When does a system collapse? Which straw breaks the camel's back? When does the river turn into a waterfall, that breaks the canoe?

To ensure sustainable development, we need to change our perspective and behavior. This is happening, but is it fast enough? Will we reach a «mental tipping point» in time? The power needs to come from below, for the politicians to act. It needs an «ecological spiritual revival» and therefore committed young people and the Internet are critical as to how the current human balancing on a sharp knife-edge will end. The Swedish author Folke Tersman brings up the problem «tragedy of the commons». This concept illustrates situations where the action, which in the short term is best from an individual perspective is bad from the general long-term perspective. Biology professor Garrett Hardin described this in a profile article in 1968 in Science. The example he used was a number of livestock owners, who jointly exploited a grazing area. In practice there are many examples of this dilemma. One negative aspect is the deforestation of Easter Island, which led to starvation and cannibalism. One positive aspect is Iceland's agreement on fishing quotas, which the authorities, fishermen and scientists agreed.

It is difficult to motivate individuals to change their habits, because your own effort is like a drop in the ocean. However, if you consider that as a good role model you are spreading ripples, and that these ripples may be the straw that allows the camel's back not to be broken, it may give motivation help.

This is how I personally look upon this book and that is the reason why it is a non-profit project.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

Resilience

Resilience is a measure of a system's ability to cope with change and move on. How many species can we eradicate without serious consequences? How far can we push monocultures in agriculture before parasites can cause famine? How far can we reduce a fish stock before it collapses? These are very complex issues and we need a good safety margin. In the examples above, we do not have it!

Consumer power

There are many good examples. I choose the French nuclear test trials in remote islands far from France, which took place

41 times in the 60's and 70's. President Chirac's ideas in the mid-90's to resume tests, was met by massive protests. It was not enough to protest! What gave power was that consumers worldwide boycotted French wines. This was of course unfair to wine producers, but very effective to get the militant farmers on the anti-nuclear cart.

Swedish shrimps are peeled in Africa, Norwegian salmon is processed in China and pork from the south of Sweden is cut in Poland. For our food there are no longer any borders, but it is obviously not sustainable to transport food back and forth across the planet. Here we consumers should be better able to show our power, when we buy food!

Stupidity

«The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive.»

Donald Trump

Jevons paradox

«The Stone Age did not end because of lack of stone». No, we left the Stone Age because we found something else that was better. Did we stop using stone because of that? Today, the annual consumption of stone material is approximately 10 tons/capita in the whole of the world. Most of it is used to build and maintain roads. The phenomenon is known as the Jevons paradox: if we increase the efficiency of a certain use of energy, the demand for that technology increases. If we construct more efficient car engines, we buy bigger cars, or run more.

The entire growth era that we have seen over the past 150 years, has been entirely driven by an ever increasing extraction of stored fossils.

A study of how much a wage increase influences the energy consumption, gave a result that was in line with the Jevons paradox, since 10% wage increase gave 9% increase in energy consumption as an average. When looking at the individual level, it turns out, however, that the spread is very large. Some people even reduced their energy consumption. You therefore have the choice of contributing to sustainable development or not to do it by letting your money go to energy-saving rather than energy-consuming actions.

Join a network that you sympathize with.

There are many associations, organizations and networks that you, within the frames of these seven values, can join and act through. Make your own priorities and select.

Some that I recommend are:

www.citizensclimatelobby.org

www.greenpeace.org/international

www.foei.org

www.wwf.org

www.avaaz.org

www.unpacampaign.org

www.gapminder.org

www.amnesty.org

www.gcint.org

www.icanw.org

www.wedonthavetime.com

www.inforse.org

www.unglobalcompact.org

www.iisd.org

www.wbcsd.org

My recommendation is that you look at these sites and some more, and then answer the question below.

What do you feel most passionate about?

Think carefully about this question and then decide. When you work for something that is important for our planet, you will find joy in this, which in turn makes you feel happy.

«It is important to feed our physical body wonderful fresh food not highly processed, but living food, and organic where possible. It is important to feed our emotional body (energy body) good emotions, supportive, positive, and aware of the blessings in each day. It is important to feed our mental body uplifting and powerfully spiritual thoughts, for this way the mental body becomes connected to our spirit and soul, and at a certain point all these» bodies «or energy fields become one, and we become the cosmic butterfly, full of colors and ready to fly»...

Keith Surtees

Resistance to change

It is not that people do not know what to do, they simply do not want to do it.

It is a generally accepted truth that we humans are afraid of change. But is it really about fear? A.J. Schuler, Psy.D., has identified the ten main reasons why people resist change.

Ten Top Reasons why people resist change:

1. The risk with change is seen as greater than the risk of continuing as it is

2. People feel allied with others who identify with the old model
3. People have no role models in the new business
4. People are afraid that they do not have sufficient expertise to transform themselves
5. People find it burdensome and stressful to change
6. People have a healthy skepticism and want to be sure that new ideas are sound
7. People are afraid that the reformers have hidden agendas
8. People feel that the proposed change threatens their self-image
9. People expect loss of status or quality of life
10. People think that the proposed change is a genuinely bad idea

Causes number eight and nine above can be very important, yet overlooked often.

Analyze the probability of these 10, if you want to make a change, and think of how you should respond.

Motivation

I do not do anything until I'm motivated enough. Whether it is to watch TV or go on an environment meeting. Motivation can be described as an emotionally driven process and it is the feelings that control.

The thoughts are of course important! They develop strategic paths to the goal. When I have found the path that seems to provide the greatest yield relative to the sacrifice, I am motivated to act. Either I put on the TV or I go to the environment meeting. The choice has been made, the motivation distinct. The climate issue is basically not a logistical issue, but a psychological challenge! It's about the emotional stand it takes to achieve sustainability.

4. Think before every action. What would unconditional love have done?

In this chapter:

Love yourself

Love and truth

Love and fear

Guilt and shame

Emotions

Prayer

Upbringing

Relationships with others

Ethics and moral

Revenge, hatred, punishment and justice

Capital punishment

Bullying

Peace

Give and take

Greek and Latin distinguish between different kinds of love.

Eros (Greek) is romantic and passionate love.

Agape (Greek) is unconditional, self-giving love and has no sexual undertone.

Caritas (Latin) is unselfish love expressed in action (caring love).

Philia (Greek) is love of relatives.

Libido (Latin) is sexual and physical love.

This chapter is about agape and caritas.

«One who acts with love is right, even if he does not get it right.»

Peter Egge

«The main driving force of democracy is love.»

Henri Bergson

«Love and do what you will.»

Augustine

*«When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world
will know peace.»*

Jimi Hendrix

*«Do what you feel in your heart to be right -
for you'll be criticized anyway.»*

Eleanor Roosevelt

*«It is your love that will save you, and love can be expressed in all
the small, seemingly inevitable gestures you do every day. So do
your best to always find something new to do, with the knowledge
that every small gesture you make with diligence, honesty and
love, as a creature of light, will always be with you.»*

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

«Life is the flower for which love is the honey.»

Victor Hugo

In order to practice unconditional love it is important that you stop, take a few deep breaths or count to twenty before you act.

Personally, I have found that grandchildren are excellent to practice value number 4 on. With my children, it was, for me, much more difficult, because I had a demanding job and, above all, less experience of life. Moreover, it is imperative for children to be given limits. This need is not the same with grandchildren. They can be sent home to their parents when they become insufferable ☺, which in itself is a good boundary.

The idea behind the act is crucial. Is the idea good or evil? Choose good thoughts, because you always have a choice. A paradox in this context is that the same action can be based on a good thought from one person and an evil thought from another person. A certain punishment, for example, can be based on love from one person, because it was considered necessary for the development of the child, while it could be based on evilness from another person. Therefore, be humble and careful when you judge other people's actions. You often do not know what their motives are, nor the reason for their actions.

When the choice is between two evils, a person's behavior is often perceived as evil by the surroundings. One more reason not to judge too quickly.

When you are practicing, developing and spreading unconditional love and its strength, you will also encounter difficulties and sorrows. You must welcome this, and see these troubles as challenges for you to do your very best.

True humility is not saying «I am nothing» or «I'm useless.» It is to act on bright ideas and unconditional love. It is to act in accordance with the virtues and riches that this entails, and to put yourself in second place.

«Everything can be taken away from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way».

Viktor Frankl

«Those who have worked for others and in one way or another been of help to them, find it only fair to receive something in return. Yes, it is fair, but love, the kind that encourages us to give without expecting anything in return, is beyond justice. Justice already dwells naturally within people, but not yet love. Even criminals can have a sense of justice in some form – animals too. And how many crimes are committed in order to restore so called justice! You have helped someone, and in the name of fairness, you think that person owes you something. But if you persist in expecting something that may not happen, you are unhappy, annoyed; you even feel a slight wish for revenge. And what is the reason now for your mulling over those hostile feelings? It is because of the good you have done! Is that intelligent? Why not try to preserve the joy you felt in doing good?»

Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov

«Love does not consist of gazing at each other, but in looking together in the same direction.»

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

One of the most powerful things you can do, is to change the way you look at other people. You can practice empathy by not focusing on how life should be, based on your own preferences. Try to let go of your wishes and try to open up a broader and more generous view. From empathy sprouts compassion, and out of compassion blossoms love.

Learning to move from your own perspective to another is a key to finding happiness. By opening your perception of the world to encounter a different experience, you take away

your own blind spots and expand your perspective. This in turn leads to more loving, more open relationships with all the people in your life.

The basis of truth and affinity is love as revealed by conscience. When the fear is greater than the love we are cowards. When love is greater, we are brave. And when love is much bigger, we are passionate. Will the courage in you and me be enough to choose love's leading light?

Unconditional love is to accept anyone as they are, without judging. It's like a mountain to climb. Who needs your love today?

True love is when you stop thinking of it as a feeling. Feelings are necessarily subjected to variations, but authentic love is a state of consciousness, independent of people and circumstances. To love is to do everything with love. To talk, walk, eat, breathe, study and so on. Love arises when our organs and cells reach a state of harmony, so that they vibrate in common with light and peace. Everything is then a melody.

Some words from 4 to 7 year old children on love:

«When someone loves you, she says your name in a different way. You just know that your name is safe and protected in her mouth.»

Billy four years

«Love is what's in you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen.»

Bobby seven years (A future philosopher?)

«If you want to know love better, you should start with a friend you hate.»

Nikka six years

(With a few million Nikkas on the planet, the good ripples will save civilization).

At a competition for the most caring child a 4-year-old boy won. His neighbor was an old man whose wife died recently. When he saw the old man cry, he went to him and crawled up in his lap. When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, he answered. «Nothing. I just helped him cry».

The scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg said that without love we are nothing. In the long run, according to him, it is only merciful deeds that matter.

How can I think? What can I do?

Love yourself

«Loving yourself has nothing to do with being selfish, self-centered or self-engrossed. It means that you accept yourself for what you are. Loving yourself means that you accept responsibility for your own development, growth and happiness. When you love yourself, you pave the way for all you want and need to come to you at the right time in the perfect way.»

Iyanla Vanzant

When you love yourself, you follow your conscience and trust your integrity and discernment. Internal development is becoming more important while external things get less and less important.

For those who want to learn more about this, I recommend the book «Love yourself» by Wayne Dyer.

«What is the point of preaching love for our fellow man, if we do not find out what it is, that we should love in others? When we see how many people behave in daily life, we can possibly avoid hating them, but we cannot love them; it is useless to even try.

When someone is selfish, cruel or terrible, and you are told to love him it's impossible! So impossible that you will actually experience him as even more unbearable, if you try to love him. To be able to love him, you need to project yourself beyond his behavior and focus on the divine flame that lives in all people. At the present moment, this flame is buried under layers of grime, but it's there. The problem is that we can only see the divinity in others if we have learned to cherish it in ourselves.»

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

Love and truth

The only situation in which the truth is to be avoided, is when it comes into direct conflict with love, for example that the only effect of the truth is that a person will get hurt. This may involve difficult ethical dilemmas. In such situations, you are guided by asking yourself the question «What would unconditional love have done?»

Love and fear

Kay Pollak argues in the book «No chance encounter» that in meeting other people you only have two things to choose from - love and fear, and that they can never coexist. Jackie Bergman asserts the same thing and claims in the book «Fear or Love? Your choices!», that we have two basic emotions - love and fear - and that these control everything we do, and that we ourselves are able to choose which of these two basic emotions we want to start from.

I have tested their claim on myself and come to the conclusion that it is true for me. Secondly, I have found that it is impossible to have two thoughts simultaneously, and I have seen that I can gradually learn to choose more and more of the loving thoughts. This is not an easy process! The brain's job is to produce ideas (more about this in Chapter 7) and

sometimes the most remarkable and destructive thoughts turn up. However, there are tricks to change the thought pattern, but one has to accept that this is a slow process that requires patience. One such trick is to practice to feel gratitude. By settling down and repeating to yourself that you are grateful for that and that and that and that, you fill yourself with love. Another way is to focus on breathing and filling yourself with light.

Guilt and shame

Feelings of guilt = I did something bad

Feelings of shame = Something is wrong with me

We feel guilt, when we have done something that is not in line with our values. That is painful, but it is also a feeling that can help us to grow as a human being. When we apologize or change such behavior we can hopefully leave the guilt behind. For shame it is different. Our nature is to feel that we deserve to be loved as well as having a sense of belonging and that is not compatible with shame. When we feel shame the risk is that we give rise to destructive behavior and try to attack and blame others. It is very destructive to use shame when raising children. Then they get the feeling that they do not deserve to be loved for who they are.

For a deeper understanding of this and other interesting themes I recommend Brene Browns book «The Gift of Imperfection – Let Go of Who You Think You’re Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are».

Emotions

The link thought/ action is easy to understand. The link is not strong. It is e.g. easy to think that I should stop writing while

continuing writing. You can always choose whether to let the idea become action.

The link feeling/action is stronger. For example love.

Feelings lead to gestures. Gestures lead to feelings. Gestures can thus be used to achieve certain emotions and vice versa. Pushing back emotions create long-term stress. Try to get in touch with your feelings. What do you withhold? Allow yourself to feel it. To consciously limit the destructive emotions create momentary struggle, but shortly thereafter calm and clarity.

Having good ideas is not enough. Good ideas need to come from the heart, where they, with help of the will, can manifest as feelings and then in good deeds.

Prayer

Ask for light, love and wisdom.

Ask to be able to help save civilization.

Do not ask for personal possessions. Make sure that the ego does not control your prayer.

A very interesting study on the effect of prayer can be found in the so-called Spindrift experiments. There, they prayed for germinating seeds (!) in various ways and could show that the prayer had power. Especially great was the effect, when the prayer was not specific about what should be achieved but left this to the cosmos and «thy will be done».

You have to have patience as well, which this story highlights: A female journalist heard about a very old Jewish man, who for a long time had gone twice a day to the Wailing Wall to pray.

She went there to check this. She went to the Wailing Wall and found him slowly walking to the holy site.

She watched him pray and after 45 minutes, leaning on his stick, he turned around to go, she walked up to him.

Excuse me sir, how long have you come to the Wailing Wall to pray?

Roughly 60 years.

60. It's amazing and what are you asking about?

I pray for peace between Christians, Jews and Muslims.

I pray that all the wars and all the hatred will disappear.

I pray that our children grow up safely and be responsible adults, who love their neighbor.

I pray that our politicians should tell the truth and put the people's interests above their own interests.

And how do you feel after doing this for 60 years?

As if I'm talking to a wall.

Unfortunately, the good forces have not been able to solve the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis. Why?

*«Hello God. Yesterday I was afraid and then I prayed to you.
Otherwise, I can manage well anyway».*

*Jonas (from the book «Hello God -
letters from children of all ages»)*

*«Hello God. Why is the Christmas Eve service in the church in
the midst of the Donald Duck film. Can't you and Donald Duck
agree about time?*

PS. I want to be a rally driver.

*Hans (from the book «Hello God -
letters from children of all ages»)*

Sometimes I feel both sad and pathetic, when I hear prayers controlled by ego or group ego.

What do you e.g. think about this ancient prayer, which in its time was read in the church of Torekov in Sweden:

«Dear Lord, hear our prayer,

Shut down the lighthouse upon Väderön

so that ships from distant lands

Founder may on our beaches
- But save our own men»

A similar message, however more sophisticated, I found when I heard a speech by Ronald Reagan where he, at the expense of other countries, in an actor's way proclaimed «God Save America». As Reagan is only a national egoistic gust compared to Donald Trump, I unfortunately have some worries about the future. I used to say that in the USA you have the best and the worst, so the polarization with Trump as president, will be very strong.

Upbringing

«Children need role models rather than critics.»

Joseph Joubert

*«A torn jacket is soon mended, but hard
words bruise the heart of a child.»*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*«Before I got married I had six theories about raising children.
Now I have six children and no theories.»*

John Wilmot

*«One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the hap-
piness of the child.»*

Maria Montessori

Relationships with others

«Fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.»

English proverb

I have seen several cases where siblings become enemies for life, when they are to share the legacy of their parents.

If you have a sibling who bullies and always asserts his or her right, tries to avoid responsibility or has psychopathic traits, it is important to set and maintain clear boundaries.

Regarding relations with people other than siblings and the immediate family, it is easier to choose which one you should associate with or not, so be active in the choices you make. Remember that everyone has their own agenda and their own mental block. It may even be that someone instinctively dislikes you even if you are genuinely nice, friendly and helpful to him or her. That's because he/she, based on their own perspective, supposes suspicious motives on your part. For you it is important to be able to identify situations like this, so you do not take offense, but instead choose to distance yourself from that person as much as possible. And above all - do not stop doing good things because of this experience, but see it as a lesson that will help you better study the behavior of others.

Ethics and moral

The original meaning of both ethics and morality is what is right and wrong, good and evil.

In practice, many people perceive that ethics describes the theory and science of morals and what is right and wrong, while morality describes how a person behaves.

Wisdom means understanding that gives awareness of ethical issues. Philosophy means love of wisdom (from Greek *filos* = friend and *sofia* = wisdom).

SOCIETY ETHICS is summarized in the UN Declaration on Human Rights of 1948. These interpersonal ethics can be followed and supported by every democratically minded person. Many countries have chosen to sign this declaration, which implies a commitment to follow it, but not a legal requirement. In order to be legally binding a convention is required. This has been done within the EU, which means that all EU

countries have integrated this declaration into their national legislation.

In a future UN Declaration I hope and believe that there will be a global holistic perspective, where even animals and nature are covered. Ecuador is a good example, because they have already written into the constitution that nature has rights.

Ethical dilemmas often occur. Then it is important to discuss and evaluate different aspects with a mind as open as possible. An example of such a dilemma is whether active euthanasia for a seriously ill person should be allowed or not. In Sweden, more than 50% of the population is in favor of active euthanasia, while a majority of doctors and nurses are not. Lawmakers have so far accepted the stand of the health professionals. Is that democratic? The Netherlands and Switzerland are examples of countries where euthanasia (different criteria) is allowed. Another example of an ethical dilemma is the issue of abortion, where legislation varies from country to country.

Revenge, hatred, punishment and justice

«An eye for an eye, only ends making the world blind.»

Mahatma Gandhi

The natural human reaction is to want to punish someone who behaved in a bad way of any kind. This is because the human species, through evolution, survived by cooperation and putting up limits. This reaction has thus been evolutionarily necessary for the small group. In today's society there is reason to rethink this genetic reaction.

I myself have experienced thoughts of revenge. When I was 12 years old I and five others in the class were bullied by a teacher (he proclaimed that all who previously came from four different schools were idiots). I fantasized about revenge for example by throwing a stone through a window of his

apartment. Fortunately, there is a big step between thought and action. When I eventually induced me to forgive him and let go of all thoughts of revenge, it felt very liberating. As if a weight off my shoulders had been lifted.

«Forgiveness liberates the forgiver».

Iyanla Vanzant

Many believe that a person who has done something wrong, is taught a lesson if imprisoned and that this reduces the risk of these errors being repeated. However, experience shows that most only get worse. Punishing someone who has done wrong, without giving them opportunities for improvement is revenge - not justice. We must dedicate ourselves to justice, not to revenge!!! Imprisonment without rehabilitation is therefore destructive. In some extreme cases, unfortunately, society must be protected from a criminal and then the perpetrator has to be kept behind bars. It is e.g. not fair that a person who has sexually assaulted other persons is allowed to be set free, if the risk of repeated sexual offenses is deemed likely.

The victims of offenders need to have substantial support priority in the community in order to move on and, wherever possible, eliminate feelings of fear, hatred, etc., incurred in connection with the crime. According to Magnus Lindgren, Secretary General of the Foundation Safer Sweden, it is more important for victims to be noticed and taken seriously, than to see the perpetrator apprehended and convicted.

In media close relatives of the victims are often interviewed. They are naturally full of pain, hatred and revenge feelings and often demand long prison sentences. In such cases, unfortunately, the media does the society a disservice by promoting hatred and revenge.

A good measure of how civilized a society is can be judged on how the children and the elderly are treated. At the same

time aid to victims and rehabilitation of criminals is a good measure of the level of civilization.

A clear example of when the demands for revenge and justice undermine human values is Guantanamo. Many countries see the United States as a democratic reference and limit setter. When the United States manipulatively and blatantly violates the UN Declaration on Human Rights it will have serious global consequences. Developments after the horrific terrorist attacks on the United States 11.9.2001, unfortunately shows that Guantanamo and other action-oriented measures without reflection have resulted in a strengthening of the recruitment base for terrorists. As the search for new terrorists is most likely to be successful among poor and uneducated young men, of course, stories about Guantanamo, etc. are excellent sources for recruitment. An even better option is the recruitment of people in the geographic vicinity who have been affected by attacks, e.g. by drones.

Gerhard Andersson, professor of clinical physiology, claims that our need for revenge can be explained from three biological areas. First the biopsychological, which means that there are areas in the brain that are linked to gloat, that we do not control. The second is the psychological, which means that we get disappointed if we lose something. The third is social, which is about what is acceptable in relationships with other people.

It is therefore inherent in our evolution to insist on revenge. In Swedish society, we have fortunately been able to include factors that suppress the demands of revenge. An early example is that we teach small children not to hit a friend, who takes a toy. We encourage them instead to try to find other solutions, which are more long term beneficial and develops the frontal globe of the brain at the expense of the amygdala. The most important reason for the declining revenge culture in our society is however that we have built a society governed by law. This means that the responsibility of administe-

ring justice has gradually shifted from the individual and the family to the community. In the US, for example, this shift in responsibility has been significantly weaker, which is an important reason for the liberal gun laws, and the large number of fatal shootings.

Even if brooding on revenge is common, it takes a lot for most people to actually harm another human being. Here we have, fortunately, a high threshold. A shining example of this is Ben Kfir in Israel. His daughter was killed by Palestinians, which meant that he was filled with grief and hatred. His anger turned against politicians and God, and he thought of revenge. He had two guns and started planning to kill five Palestinians, who worked on a building site nearby. Gradually his insight grew that revenge leads to revenge and revenge is not the answer. The hopelessness within him caused him instead to think about suicide. One phone call changed the situation. He was called to a meeting with about 70 Palestinians and Israelis, all of whom had lost one or more children. This meeting gave him the desire to continue to live, and now he goes along with others in the group to schools and tells his story. Examples like this can hopefully resolve the situation with regard to Israel/Palestine. Although we rarely hear about it, there are several other good examples.

Community Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom (WAS-NS) is a community of Palestinians and Jews dedicated to building peace and equality in Israel and the region. Situated equidistant from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv-Jaffa, the village was established in 1970 by Fr. Bruno Hussar on land of the Latrun Monastery. The community is a model of equality, mutual respect and cooperation that challenges patterns of racism and discrimination as well as the continued conflict. The community has established educational institutions based on its ideals and conducts activities focused on social change. Many of the community's members work in peace and reconcilia-

tion projects. The village has 60 families and will grow to 150 families.

The schools «Hand in hand», the largest of which is in Jerusalem, with more than 600 students, are based on similar principles.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

Death penalty

Inhumane

Unnecessary

Irreversible

«Why do we kill people who are killing people to show that killing people is wrong?»

Holly Near

«Both my husband and my mother-in-law fell victim of a murderer, but I stand by my conviction that the death penalty is wrong. An evil act cannot be undone by an act of revenge. Justice is not promoted because another human life is taken. Morality cannot be maintained through legal murder.»

Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King

«It is said to be deterrent. I cannot agree. All the men and women I have faced at that final moment, convince me of what I have done. I have not prevented a single murder.»

*Albert Pierrepoint, Britain's last executioner,
who hung around 500 prisoners.*

Deterrent is given as reason to retain the death penalty. In 1988 (updated 2002) UN did an overview of the link between the death penalty and homicide. The conclusion is that there is no greater deterrent to capital punishment compared to life in prison.

The number of crimes has generally not increased in countries that have abolished the death penalty. In the US, the number of murders in the last 20 years has been 48-101% higher in states that retain the death penalty compared to states without the death penalty (New York Times, September 22, 2000).

«Those who have the capital don't get capital punishment.»

Kirk Bloodworth

Bullying

Nearly one out of five children (17%) say that they have been violated by another student in the past year. The violations are most common in grades 3-6, where one out of four children (23%) have been exposed. Seven percent have been mistreated by someone in the staff, and only every second student in high

school experience that adults protest if they get to know that someone has been mistreated.

- The most important thing is that adults who become aware of violations act and take hold of the problem. To do so requires knowledge of these issues and that the schools have the right conditions for long-term work against bullying. Safety in schools is essential for children to learn, says Lars Arrhenius, Secretary General of Friends.

Note.: Friends is a non-profit organization that works to combat bullying.

Peace

Peace is an inner state. This condition is a victory of all physical conflicts that pull us in different directions. To achieve peace, we need to establish the connection between our consciousness and our spiritual centers of the brain, heart and solar plexus.

External changes cannot bring peace.

Give and take

Try to be as a source. Give. A source quenches the thirst of animals, plants grow and people settle down. You become rich if you give.

5. Strive for a world that does not allow violence to solve conflicts.

In this chapter:

War

Redefining security

Courage

Karma, or what you sow, so shall you reap

Model

«The strength of a civilization is not measured by its ability to fight wars but rather by its ability to prevent them.»

Gene Roddenberry

15% of military spending would be enough to finance sustainable development (Lester R. Brown in his book «Plan B 3.0. Mobilizing to Save Civilization»), was what triggered me to start writing this book.

I am a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and his way of handling the non-violent principle. However, I also realize that the moral and ethical level of humanity has not yet reached a position where it is possible to apply this principle in all situations. Therefore value number 5 starts with the words strive for. One may ask why the Czech Republic and Slovakia managed to divide Czechoslovakia without violence, while the division of the former Yugoslavia broke all the moral principles that we want humanity to cover.

The events in North Africa and the Middle East show similar patterns. In Tunisia, violence has been contained and the road ahead looks hopeful. In Egypt, violence has been greater,

but still limited, while the future development is insecure. In Libya and Syria, we see no path today that can lead to an end of the misery.

The international community must be prepared to intervene in some way, even militarily, when dictatorships violate the population. Only if the firm emphasis that human rights apply to the world, is it possible to move towards a development in which violence is not allowed to settle conflicts.

Looking at individual countries, Costa Rica is a model, in the sense that the army was discontinued in 1948 and the money was used for education, health and culture instead.

Pakistan is unfortunately an example of the opposite of Costa Rica. Money has been spent on the military, while education and health care have deteriorated. The result is that the country has placed itself as number 14 on the list of fragile states (see chapter 6). As the country has access to nuclear weapons, the development is particularly worrying.

The United Nations must become more effective at restricting the world's weapon arsenals. Below is an example from the Amnesty Swedish newspaper «Insert», August 2012, which clearly highlights the unacceptable situation:

Weapons as merchandise.

As you may have heard in the media, the world's countries gathered in the UN building to negotiate an Arms Trade Treaty. Amnesty International has been present with a delegation in New York. The reports of the negotiations have been optimistic and we had high hopes that countries would agree on an Arms Trade Agreement, that could prevent gross human rights violations. Amnesty International has, for nearly 20 years, with other organizations, campaigned for such a treaty. What has driven us all these years is the need to stop and control the irresponsible arms trade because millions of civilians are dying, injured, subjected to rape and forced to

flee their homes as a direct result of sales from weapon exporting states to governments that use them against civilians. There was no agreement. The major powers China, Russia and the United States demanded more time for documents and some other countries were not interested at all, such as North Korea, Algeria, Egypt and Iran. All who fought for an agreement, however, remain optimistic that it will eventually become a reality, since a large majority of UN member countries have expressed their support for a strong treaty that protects human rights. More than 90 countries issued a joint statement in which they said that they would continue the process, as soon as possible, until an agreement was reached. If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again. On 03.06.2013 the international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was signed at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. It is a historic step towards a better global arms control. Every year 750,000 people die due to armed violence.

«The UN has not been created to bring humanity to heaven but to save it from hell.»

Dag Hammarskjöld

UN in general and the Security Council in particular, have unfortunately proven their inability to solve critical situations, as in Syria. More and more, but still too few, voices are heard now for the establishment of a world parliament in the UN, for the globalization of democracy. One such proposal was supported in 2014 by over 1,300 parliamentarians from more than 100 countries. Information on this is available at www.unpacampaign.org.

Whether such a world parliament will become a reality in the foreseeable future or not, we need to prioritize two overriding issues from a global perspective:

- # Ensure peace and provide an international legal system.
- # Establish a long-term sustainable approach towards the environment and natural resources.

Research shows that even hostility between groups can be transformed to collaboration if the groups find a common task that can lead to fulfill a common goal or collective destiny. This can also be facilitated by the fact that we usually have many overlapping group identities. Climate change is a clear example of a common collective destiny. The same applies to the CFC (chlorofluorocarbon) problem, that we managed to solve. Of course, the CFC problem was much easier to solve than the climate issue. Attitudes at the climate conference in Paris in December 2015 makes me hopeful for the future. We are on the right track, but backlashes, such as the election of Donald Trump as president in USA, have to be handled and surmounted.

«Hello God. Some things you have written about in the Bible are about war and murder and such stuff. Is not that worse than video violence?»

Johan 11 years (from the book «Hello God - letters from children of all ages»)

«Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding.»

Ralph Waldo Emerson

How can I think? What can I do?

War

«Mankind must put an end to war before war puts an end to mankind.»

John F Kennedy

«When it comes to war, humanity asks for the result, not the cause.»

Seneca



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

The US has gradually increased the number of drone attacks. Four former defense workers with 20 years experience, wrote in November 2015 that they participated in the killing of innocent civilians, and that they suffered from post-traumatic stress. The aim is obviously to kill suspected jihadists, but the effect can also be the opposite. These attacks facilitate the recruitment of especially young boys. If a friend or relative is unjustly killed by a drone, the desire for revenge is an outstanding tool for the recruitment of terrorists.

Redefining security

We are accustomed to think of national security in military terms. Now it is high time to change that, and, depending on which country you live in, to instead prioritize climate change, water scarcity, increased hunger, crumbling states, etc.

After escalating Russian provocations against Sweden in recent years, there has been a debate in which a majority of politicians demanded more money for defence. It is a very unfortunate development. Russia has a lot more immediate problems than Sweden. My belief is that if we reach a situation where Russia attacks Sweden, we have globally reached such a low level that there is, in any event, no hope for civilization.

Courage

«If you really want to live your life to the fullest and realize your greatest potential, you must be willing to run the risk of making some people mad. People may not like what you do, people may not like how you do it, but these people are not living your life.

You are!»

Iyanla Vanzant

Stanley Milgram conducted, in the 1960s, a now classical study. The subjects were instructed to ask questions to volunteers. In reality, these volunteers were actors who only simulated pain. If the victims answered incorrectly the subjects gave them increasingly strong electric shocks (in reality there was no electricity connected). Then the experimenter, in an authoritative way, pointed out that he was responsible and that increasingly higher electric shocks should continue to be given. The result was that 65% of the subjects were willing to increase shocks to very painful or deadly doses. In this case, the subjects themselves are not threatened, but obeyed nonetheless the interrogator. Why are there so few who have the courage to say NO? How would you have acted?

Philip Zimbardo, in the 1970s, experimented with prisoners, guards and volunteers in a mock prison. Almost immediately the guards began committing abuses. The experiment had to be stopped prematurely, since several of the prisoners collapsed. This study was in line with the sadistic abuse that Iraqi detainees were subjected to 2003-2004 by American soldiers in

Abu Ghraib prison. The pictures that were cabled out across the world generated excitement and horror. This shows that ordinary people under certain conditions can become very aggressive and sadistic. We therefore need to understand this aggressive side within us, so that we can work with it and control it.

«I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.»

Nelson Mandela

Think of Nelson Mandela's words and be aware of this when someone tries to stop your heart's voice by playing on the strings of fear. Religious fanatics and terrorists are trying to do just that. Global impact through media was for instance obtained by the Taliban attempt to stop education for girls by blowing up buses, but also fire and brimstone preachers threats of hellfire are examples of controlling through fear. Fear is also the tool of the lobby for arms, just as doubt today is the tool for climate change deniers, the oil lobby and earlier for the tobacco industry.

A great way for people afraid of conflict, such as myself, for strengthening courage, is as follows:

1. Find out what you want.
2. Practice saying no.
3. Begin with yourself.
4. Listen.

Karma or what you sow, so shall you reap

If you send out negative energy in the form of thoughts (your body language reveals you most often), words or deeds, this negative energy will sooner or later somehow turn back on yourself. Even positive energy will come back. Therefore it is in your own interest to be good and empathic.



Model

Avoid criticism and moralizing if you honestly want to help others. Work to improve yourself. By your example, you can show them.

Lead by example.

6. Work to eradicate hunger, poverty and illiteracy for everyone.

In this chapter:

Focus on a high ideal

Money

Advertising

Food and meals

Health and longevity

Leadership and management

Sympathy

«If you do not know how you would be born rich or poor, man or woman, black or white. How did you feel that the world would look like?»

Martin Lönnebo

«Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.»

Nelson Mandela

Slavery, as Mandela mentions above, is a good example of how moral and ethical thinking can ultimately defeat oppression, power needs and greed. This was shown in Britain, where more than half of Manchester's male population signed a petition against slavery, and where hundreds of thousands of badges with an African face with the text «He is your

brother too» was worn all over the country. Advocacy of this nature finally resulted in the British ban on the slave trade in 1807. The Swedish professor in practical philosophy Folke Tersman makes a comparison with how we now treat animals, where rational factories optimize profitability without regard to dealing with living creatures.

Professor Christian Azar points out that there are similarities in today's debates about fossil fuels and slavery. Not morally, but from an economic perspective. Plantation owners sat in the Parliament of England and the oil lobby in the United States is very strong.

I repeat what I have written earlier, namely that the UN Declaration of Human Rights in one way or another needs to be expanded to cover nature and animals.

European «civilization» shipped 10 million slaves across the Atlantic. Slave traders, planters and colonial masters made their fortunes. The activities were integrated in the economy (compare with today's fossil fuels) in the form of shipbuilding, production of foot- and handcuffs, thumb-screws etc. An ethically almost unimaginable invention, was a surgical instrument called *speculum oris*, used to pry open the mouths of slaves who tried to commit suicide on the slave ships by refusing to eat.

The good «news» is that the eradication of hunger, poverty and illiteracy goes quickly, once the development is on track. For example, Japan did it largely during one generation.

Halting population growth is one of the four pillars of sustainable development (see value number 3). This is apparent in country after country that this happens when people have

- Food for the day
- Functioning health care
- Adequate education

This also applies to sections of the population within a country. For example in Brazil, where educated mothers have, on an average, two children, while illiterate mothers have an average of six children.

The countries that need international help to cope with the value in this chapter, are primarily the ones on the list of «fragile states». Here, international solidarity and compassion is needed to stop and reverse the decline, because most of these countries, unfortunately, also show a negative trend.

The 10 worst affected fragile states in 2016:

1. Somalia 114,0
2. South Sudan 113,8
3. Central African Republic 112,1
4. Sudan 111,5
5. Yemen 111,5
6. Syria 110,8
7. Chad 110,1
8. Democratic Republic of the Congo 110,0
9. Afghanistan 107,9
10. Haiti 105,1

This is followed by Iraq, Guinea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Niger and Kenya.

The Fragile States Index (FSI) is created by the Fund for Peace and published by Foreign Policy. The index is based on 12 indicators based on 130,000 official sources. Each indicator can receive a maximum of 10 points. A country that is fragile

from all angles gets 120 points. In comparison, Sweden has 22,6 points and USA 34,0 points. Finland is best with 18,8.

The consequences of a fragile state is that the country's problems are passed on to the neighboring states and gradually to the whole world. Corruption and criminal activity is spreading like a cancer and refugee flows increase. Infectious diseases cannot be effectively tackled and the use of addictive drugs increases. It is therefore in every country's self-interest to help these countries.

No country can cope with any of these problem areas. Here «an enlightened despot» with unlimited power is needed. We therefore need a global democratic parliament based on the Declaration of Human Rights with such an authority. How do we create such a change? How long will the Security Council be allowed to block decisions needed to save civilization?

Let's take Somalia as an example, because this country is top of the list. It is obvious today that the country has collapsed, because the impact on neighboring states and in some respects the whole world is commonplace. Sea Pirates take ships and hostages. This is now so common that companies insure themselves against piracy. The large ransoms, the pirates manage to get, in turn affects the prices of goods in the local market, which facilitates recruitment of new pirates (talk about a vicious circle!). Refugee flows escalate. Famine is spreading. The Central Government is in many areas replaced by local clans. Religious fundamentalists rule the roost in large regions. The efforts now being made to alleviate the famine is obviously empathetic, but the effect is only short-term. It's like pee in the bed - it only heats a little while.

The only solution I can see to the overall problem is that all nations together (a global democratic parliament) establish and enforce a «strategic plan» for how Somalia should be saved. This plan needs to include the following components:

- Ensuring that law and order is maintained.
- Establishing food security.
- Structure of basic education.
- Structure of health care.
- Military efforts to eliminate piracy at sea.

The situation in Somalia is an example where the international community needs to intervene in «a country's internal affairs.» The development in Somalia shows clearly that the term «internal affairs» becomes absurd when a certain level of collapse has been reached, because the problems are «exported». It is wise to carry through these activities in one country, and learn from the experiences, before dealing with the next fragile state. I believe that the signals to dictators all over the world of such a powerful process will be very beneficial.

Democracy means that the people have the power and the responsibility. As of today we do not know any better functioning system.

«Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.»

— Winston S. Churchill

During the period 1816-1991 a democracy never started an armed war with another democracy. Jack Levy examined the 70 wars between nations that took place during this time period. According to current definitions of war and democracy, it never happened that two democracies were involved in an outright war (two skirmishes occurred).

At the same time, we have a large number of countries where democracy for different reasons is more or less cut off. Examples of slightly cropped democracy are Greece with its client systems and Italy with its media moguls. Considerably more serious cropped democracy is found in countries where

the religious majority, in seemingly democratic elections, oppresses the religious minority.

That people have the power and responsibility means that we get the government we deserve, which in practice may mean that the politicians who promise simple and short-term budget-friendly solutions are often rewarded with our votes. A characteristic of these politicians is that they often blame their problems on others. This has been seen for example in Greece, where politicians often blamed the country's problems on Germany. However, it is not prudent to drive a large part of the population into poverty, because a group of politicians have acted dishonestly (for instance faked figures to EU), as has happened in Greece. I think it is high time now to help get the country back on its feet, in the same way that the Marshall Plan helped Germany after World War II.

The developments in the elections in early 2013 in Italy illustrate this dilemma and it is an example of a potential democratic crisis. Public debt in Italy was 123% of GDP. Then 29% vote for Silvio Berlusconi's pledge policy, even though he had a documented history of mismanagement. The developments in Italy are serious for the whole world, since Italy is Europe's 3rd largest and the world's 10th largest economy.

A more serious case than Italy is the election of Donald Trump as president in the most powerful country of the world. As he is actively working against the first six values in this book, he is an obvious threat to our civilization.

In the early 1900's there were only 55 sovereign states. None of them were full democracies and voting rights were often limited to men with a certain income. Today, about two-thirds of the world's countries are democracies, so the development looks hopeful. It is precisely this hopeful development that makes the dilemma of democracy so vitally important.

Democracy is a living concept that has evolved over time. Initially, it was a majority rule. Today, a demand is that the country in question lives up to human rights, such as freedom of expression, in order to be called democratic.

The magazine «The Economist» has defined a democracy index, where the world's countries are classified into four groups based on the following four criteria.

1. Whether the national elections are free and fair.
2. The legal rights of voters.
3. Influences from foreign powers on the Government.
4. The ability of citizens to influence policy.

The Democracy index, rounded to one decimal place, determines the classification of the country, as follows:

1. Full democracy (19 countries) - 8 to 10 points.
2. Flawed democracy (57 countries) - 6 to 7.9 points.
3. Hybrid regime (40 countries) - 4 to 5.9 points.
4. Authoritarian regime (51 countries) - Less than 4 points.

In first place is Norway in 2016 with 9.80 points and the 167th and last place is North Korea with 1.08 points.

The above-mentioned countries Italy and Greece are in 21st and 44th place and thus flawed democracies. Italy has improved its position in the last years. Congratulations! They are now on the same level as USA, which unfortunately slipped down from a full to a flawed democracy 2016.

The relationship between corruption and the index for both «fragile states» and the democracy index is strong. Combating corruption is therefore a very powerful tool for the assessment of value number six. As 40% of global corruption is linked to weapon trade, peace work is extremely important also from this point of view.

Transparency International (TI) annually publishes a list with a corruption index between 0 and 100. On the list for the year 2014, Denmark is in first place with 92 points, while North Korea and Somalia come in last with 8 points each.

How can I think? What can I do?

Focus on a high ideal

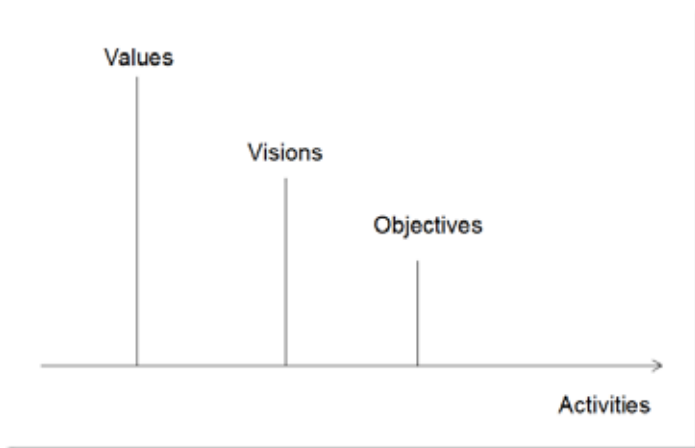
Use your imagination and your creativity on how you want to help to reduce hunger or poverty or contribute to education. Of course, your higher ideal can focus on something else such as something related to any other need for a sustainable development.

Think carefully about what you consider to be a high ideal, and place this ideal in your heart. If you do not believe it is achievable, think of it as a vision, and nourish it.

Once you have decided, be consistent and focused on that ideal. Be happy that you move a little bit in the right direction. This is about more and more people moving and pulling together.

It is advantageous if you can set goals you can strive for as you go along, although the vision itself is not achievable. It gives your life a direction and working for a high ideal makes you happier (more details are to be found in Happiness Research, in chapter 7). You help yourself by helping others.

NOTE: The above paragraph is the most important thing in the whole book. Read and ponder it again!



«He who has a why to live can bear almost any how.»

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

«When you put yourself in the service of heaven, do not expect that people will come and show you respect and gratitude. They are not even aware of what is happening inside you. Be content to work. When you feel this work filling you with new life, do you think you will need others to applaud and congratulate you?»

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

Money

Money in itself is neither good nor bad. It's about what you do with the money.

The relationship with money is crucial to your spiritual development. If you are the master of money, it will obey you and do some good.

If money is your master, you become its slave, and you will treat others badly to get more.



'THE SAME BOAT'

Source www.polyp.org.uk

Advertising

I am saddened, when I see all the poor and superficial advertising on TV. I try to avoid it as much as possible. It operates on materialism and excessive consumption, but worst of all is that it creates a brand of hysteria among young people. This is dangerous, especially for people with low self-esteem, because the need for group affiliation is so strong that they can do «anything» to qualify in the gang. I realize, of course, that advertising is needed to sell new useful products, so the question becomes:

How do we get a higher level of ethics in advertising? Advertising makes me ,unsolicited, to repeat the following quote.

«It is difficult to get a man (or a woman: my note) to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it?»

Upton Sinclair

The Swedish author Fredrik Linde means that advertising is a form of mental violence, where the public is exposed. It manipulates and disturbs us. The combined turnover of advertising and PR is more than 700 Million USD annually in Sweden. This naturally increases consumption, which in turn aggravates the climate situation.

Linde suggests a reduction in advertising by taxes or bans, as well as a change of system characterized by greater possibility for the consumer to seek clear unambiguous information.

The destructive power of advertising is that people working in the industry know that in order to sell things that people do not need, they have to make efforts to convince them that it will be positive for the way they look at themselves and especially for how others see them. It allows the focus to move to things instead of how you are as a person. It appeals to the ego, and because ego satisfaction is short-lived, one continues to buy and consume. Be vigilant if you e.g. see an advert entitled «Greener grass than your neighbor.» It is useful to examine your own relationship with gadgets. Observe yourself. Do you identify with some of your items? Do certain things make you feel superior or important? Is your perceived self-worth tied to material things?

Food/meals

Be grateful that you have food for the day. Eat and enjoy and feel when your body becomes harmonious. Take your time and eat happily in silence, so that the meal is experienced as relaxation. Imagine a world where everyone has enough to eat. Send light to this image.

This does of course not exclude a happy meal with the chatter and songs of good friends. Be flexible, enjoy and be happy.

Health and longevity

10 research tips for better and longer life compiled by Henrik Ennart

1. *«Do everything your mother told you. Use scarves, eat your vegetables, do not smoke, do not drive fast.»*

*James Vaupel, a professor
at the Max Planck Institute in Rostock.*

2. *«Eat only to 80 percent saturation.»*

*Craig Wilcox, a professor at Okinawa
International University.*

3. *«Influencing politicians so that they allocate funds for research into the aging process so that all diseases are postponed at the same time.»*

*Aubrey de Grey, GERONTOLOGIST, SENS
Foundation, California.*

4. *«Older: Eat healthy foods, exercise, maintain weight, stay socially engaged. Young: Keep up with the research. Those who quickly assimilate all the new knowledge in the coming years have enormous potential to extend life by five to ten years or more.»*

*David Gems, director of the Institute of Healthy Ageing
at University College, London.*

5. *«Short-term fasting.»*

*Mark Mattson, head of the Laboratory of Neuroscience
at the National Institute of Aging, Baltimore.*

6. *«Give blood and use floss. For men and older women keep down the iron content (pro-oxidant that triggers free radicals).»*

Thomas Perls, the New England Centenarian Study, Boston University Medical Center.

7. *«Skip the sugar.»*

Cynthia Kenyon, geneticists at the University of California, San Francisco.

8. *«Select the right parents. A healthy lifestyle can help you pass 80, but never above 100.»*

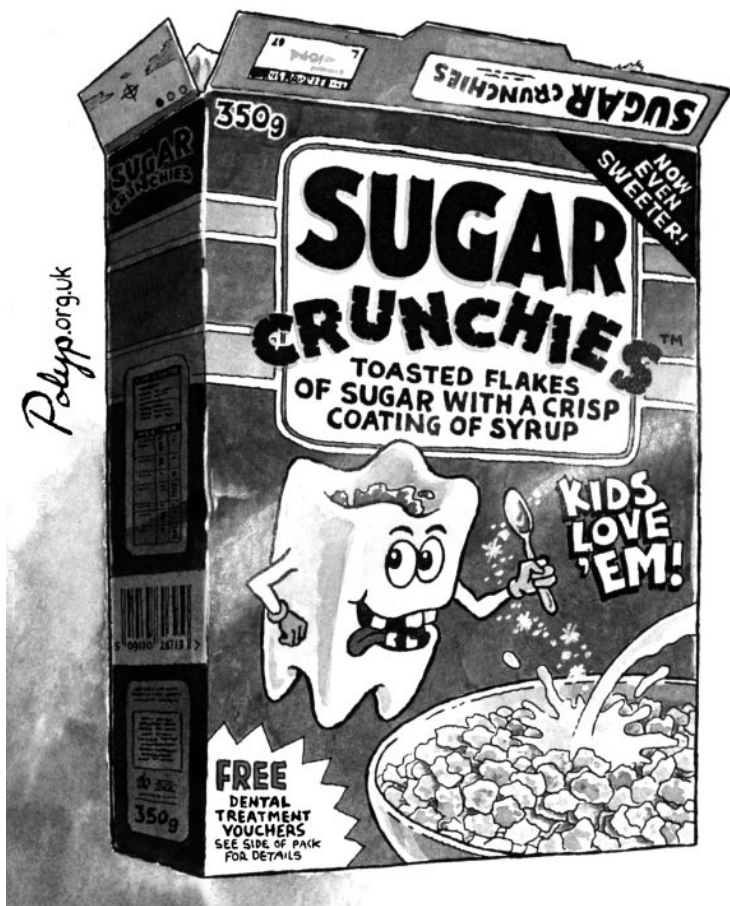
Nir Barzilai, a professor of medicine and genetics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York.

9. *«Go to the doctor. Many are hit harder because they seek help too late.»*

Steven Austad, Professor, University of Texas, San Antonio.

10. *«Eat less meat. Reduce a heavily caloric intake, eat good nutritious food and exercise.»*

Luigi Fontana, a professor, Università di Salerno, Italy, and Boston University, St. Louis, USA.



'SUGAR CRUNCHIES'

Source www.polyp.org.uk

The sugar industry, just like the tobacco industry has successfully used «Doubt is our product,» and has thus succeeded in delaying the reduction of added sugars in our food.

Leadership and management

Poor leadership can be recognized in an atmosphere where enemies are important. Opponents can for example be described as dogs, rats, aliens or terrorists. A milder form of poor leadership is to depict their own group as superior without specifically portraying other groups as enemies. Furthermore, it is common in bullying to show who is superior and who is inferior.

Good leadership is characterized by the power of love. Love is like the sun - it radiate and shares. This generosity is not threatened by others' strengths and qualities. It is rather the ability to empower others. This leadership has a balance of feminine and masculine characteristics and has the ability to see and use the true potential of others.

«A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.»

Lao Tse 2600 years ago.

«Wisdom and power are incompatible. The person that is wise does not command. He teaches, but he forces no one to listen or to change his mind, for he knows that all real listening and all the real change comes from the people's innermost desire.»

Tora Dahl (about growing and oppression)

«There are two kinds of leadership - for dependence and independence. Historically, the only kind of leadership that is easily recognizable and widely visible is the leadership of dependence on authority. When such leadership is successful, it results in the recruitment of loyal followers, who in the statements and behavior confirms on» the great leader «greatness and wisdom. In contrast, the leadership for independence is harder to discern and therefore more difficult to recognize. When such leadership gives a successful result it is not in the faithful followers but independent

individuals, that in their actions and behavior only confirms their own authenticity.»

Thomas Szasz (The second Fall)

«It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.»

Harry S. Truman

There is a difference between management and leadership. A manager is appointed to lead a business, including the people involved in the business. Leadership is more about relationships and can be practiced by people who are not managers. A manager is sometimes forced to choose between «the devil and the deep blue sea.» A good manager is characterized in these modes of having «a cold mind, a warm heart and clean hands.»

The principal chief issues are:

- Motivation of staff
 - # To be able to influence their own work situation.
 - # Communication rather than information.
 - # A holistic mode.
- «We» spirit.
- Positive attitude (open, cooperative, friendly).
- Dare to make demands!
- Multilingual (technology, finance, human resources).
- Ability to manage the balance between decentralization as far as possible so that control is not lost and only centralizing to a level where the initiative is kept alive.

A good basic attitude is:

Assume that man is unique and fundamentally active and creative. That he can and wants to take responsibility for his actions. That he is a resource for the business.

An important part of management is to work with employees to develop the values that should permeate the organization. I chaired a group that worked on draft values. We discussed and discussed and the result was 37 guiding principles we all wanted to follow. These we managed to prioritize into three groups as follows:

Working together

It is our conviction that we must constantly renew ourselves, and that it is beneficial to work in teams and form networks to work together to build global strength.

Acting responsibly

We must always treat each other with respect. We care about the environment and society. We are responsive to our customers' needs.

Improving all the time

We are committed to continuous improvement and are willing to change in a supportive work environment.

The whole organization had training in values and the thoughts which lay behind them. After that, each department discussed and decided (and added a department-specific value if desired) how this could be translated into clearly defined measurable objectives for the department in question.

A good method is to develop measurable goals related to the four stakeholder groups.

□ Customers (e.g. product development).

- Employees (e.g. working environment).
- Society (e.g. pollution).
- Stakeholder/Owner (e.g. profitability).

Sympathy

«The purpose of human life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others.»

Albert Schweitzer

Compassion is defined as «a deep awareness of another person's suffering, coupled with the desire to relieve suffering.» A shared experience is a cornerstone of humanity. If you know how it feels to be hurt, you can imagine another person's pain. If you have the ability to block your own suffering, then it is likely that you too quickly block other people's suffering.

When we went through my mother's drawers, after she had passed away, we found a small yellowed piece of paper where she had written:

«Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep.»
This slip of paper is now hanging on my wall.

One needs to understand that we have three innate motivational systems:

The exploring system, which arouses our curiosity, desire and performance. Reward hormone dopamine.

The threat system, which determines how we manage risk. Evolution has made this the fastest system. Flight or fight. The stress hormone cortisol.

The security system, that makes us calm and focused on taking care of ourselves and our fellow men. The «peace and quiet» hormone oxytocin.

It is therefore important to activate the security system, which gives us access to the frontal lobes. By practicing this long-term, lasting effects can be obtained.

«If you cannot feed a hundred people, then feed just one.»

Mother Theresa

«The true measure of a man (or a woman: my note) is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good.»

Samuel Johnson

To develop an attitude of compassion is like exercising a muscle. The more you use it the stronger it becomes. When a brain research study film about refugees, who were subjected to harsh circumstances was shown, most people reacted by feeling bad or by fleeing / cutting off. For monks, who had, for decades practiced loving meditation, it was clear that other parts of the brain were activated. These monks sent warmth and caring to the refugees rather than feeling bad.

In the magazine Research & Progress is an article (2014/3), which reports on brain research, conducted by Professor Tania Singer at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig. Depending on which parts of the brain that are activated, she works today with a model based on three different ways to empathize with other people, namely:

- The automatic, reflex, which makes e.g. yawning contagious. This includes no awareness, no concern that the other person is tired. Two bodies only mimic each other. This system we have from birth.
- What Tania Singer calls empathy. This requires awareness. I see that others suffer, and I feel it too.
- A sort of refined empathy, that Tania Singer calls compassion. This means no sympathy but only care (see the monks reaction as above).

It should be noted in this connection that in the public debate there is a linguistic confusion regarding the words compassion and empathy. This is investigated in a Swedish book by Henrik Bohlin and Jacob Edlund. The book has 303 pages and comes to the conclusion that there is no consensus on an universally accepted definition of empathy.

When I read it, I am struck by how easily misunderstandings can be achieved in connection with translations from one language to another. I feel really sorry for fundamentalists, who dedicate their life for a few words in a scripture, that might just be a bad translation.

To learn more about compassion I recommend the book «Twelve Steps to a Compassionate life» by Karen Armstrong.

7. Life is music. Play it.

In this chapter:

Relaxation.

Balance in life

Cosmic intelligence.

Death.

Stress, anxiety, thought, and our brain.

Fear.

Ask open neutral questions.

Live in the present / mindfulness / meditation.

Communication and conspiracy.

Sleep

Creativity.

Simplicity.

Patience and hope

Joy.

Harmony.

Happiness.

Belief.

«Hello God. Why did you make all toes to point forwards? It would have been better if some pointed backwards so that you can climb better.»

Stefan (quote from the book «Hello God - letters from children of all ages»)

*«Hello God. You have arranged everything on earth very good.
Yesterday I was late for school and so was the teacher.»*

*Olle (quote from the book «Hello God - letters
from children of all ages.»)*

Homo habilis (handy man), who lived between 2.5 and 1.7 million years ago, is the first representative of mankind. The first distinct species is *Homo erectus* (upright man), who lived between 1.7 and 0.3 million years ago. *Homo erectus* was about 150 cm long and had a larger brain than *Homo habilis*. Findings show that *Homo erectus* was able to show empathy, by taking care of their elderly. Neanderthals, who lived 500,000 to 40,000 years ago originated from *Homo erectus*, just as we do.

We, i.e. *Homo sapiens* (wise man), has been around for 200,000 years. Our brain is 20% larger than that of *Homo erectus*. It is the frontal lobe and cerebral cortex, that have increased the most. For the first 190,000 years, we lived as hunters and gatherers, living in groups and sharing the food we came across. Collective thinking and good cooperation within the group was crucial for survival. Our cradle is located in the northeastern part of Africa. During the last 600,000 years, 80,000 years of ice age have been followed by a warm period of 20,000 years. Right now we are in the middle of such a warm period. These temperature cycles are caused by gradual changes in the elliptical orbit of the Earth, so called Milankovic Cycles of about 100,000 years. Right now, the orbit is almost circular. As a species we have experienced two ice ages. We have survived these, while e.g. Neanderthals became extinct during the last ice age. The reason we survived, is probably because we were better at cooperating and forming communication networks. The extreme climate variations mentioned above have been crucial in promoting our species expansion across the Earth because we followed our prey. The land level increase in connection with the ice

age compared with the culmination of a warm period was about 140 meters.

As gatherers and hunters, we normally had a pleasurable existence, as long as the food supply was sufficient. Lots of time to talk, sing, play music and dance, so group membership was strengthened by this. One can therefore say that the positive feeling derived from music is built into our genes. The desire to belong to the group was essential, and strengthened an altruistic cooperation. Empathy and reward systems have developed and also signals to punish uncooperative individuals, which is why we get feelings of pleasure when an unpleasant person gets into trouble.

Studies of Homo Sapiens remains from our first 190,000 years show very little evidence of violence, however some has been found in an area that is today's Sudan. From this time no large group of people who were killed at the same time have been found. The same applies to weapon collections, fortification walls and fenced villages. Nor do human remains normally show any serious bone damage or traces of caries. We were in good shape and had no remarkable mineral deficiencies.

«Hello God. I would like to meet a cannibal if he had a muzzle.»

Magnus (quote from the book «Hello God - letters from children of all ages.»)

Studies of skulls from different periods show gradual changes. About 50,000 years ago, the skulls and faces were rounder, probably due to a decreased production of testosterone. (Individuals with high testosterone levels tend to have longer faces and more pronounced eyebrow arches). We became more social and cooperative.

Just over 10,000 years ago development took a different turn. We had now spread to all continents. We came to Europe a little more than 40,000 years ago - cave paintings in Spain, have recently been dated to 40,800 years ago using an urani-

um-based method. In various parts of the world our ancestors simultaneously began to grow crops and domesticate animals. Over a period of a few 1000 years we had domesticated dogs, cats, horses, cows, sheep, goats, chickens and pigs. As agricultural society developed we became more sedentary, and established the ownership of property. We no longer shared what we had with the group. Hierarchies were built and power struggles were fought. The necessary stocks of cereals needed to be guarded. The communities grew and law and order had to be maintained. Police officers and guards became professions. Some became rich and others were poor. Human remains from the last 10,000 years show that violence became increasingly common, and that organized violence to achieve benefits for one's own group occurred. It was «profitable» for a settlement to attack another and kill its members.

About 3,000 years ago the first steps towards democracy, based on the right to vote, were established. It became beneficial to behave in a decent way to get elected and re-elected. A new bond of loyalty beyond the family and the clan arose. Contrary to what one may think, when you watch television, listen to the radio or read the newspapers, we have recently become more peaceful. In Roman times lions tore slaves to pieces accompanied by cheers from the crowd. As late as the 1400s it was a popular public amusement to watch as a cat was lowered into a crackling fire and laugh at the animal's frantic screams, as it was roasted to death. In Europe, there are reasonably reliable statistics on the number of murders (war not included). They show that the number of murders per 10,000 inhabitants and year were 41 in the 1400s, while it was 1.4 in the 1900s, which means a reduction of almost 97%! The number of wars have also sharply reduced and the wars that remain today are almost exclusively civil wars.

However a major challenge for a peaceful coexistence on earth is that we succeed in establishing a sustainable development, as described in chapter number three.

Genetically we have predispositions for both warfare, love and empathy. We therefore need to restrict collective egos, such as nationalism, and «fertilize» the values of unity and love, and to «think with your heart,» in order for a peaceful coexistence to be our future reality.

«A person wants to be loved, if that is lacking, admired, if that is lacking, feared, if that is lacking, hated and despised. They want to instill some kind of feeling in other people. The soul shivers in the void and will have contact at any price.»

Hjalmar Söderberg

How can I think? What can I do?

Relaxation

A good habit is to relax several times daily. Try to find the relaxation method that suits you best. If you do not think you have time, you can choose to do it when you go to the bathroom! One minute is enough to give new energy. It provides, in my experience, a greater effect than a cup of coffee. Close your eyes and imagine you are in a location you like. My one minute version looks like this. I close my eyes and imagine that I sit on the patio with a cup of coffee and a newspaper looking out over the ocean while the kids play on the lawn. I then take some deep breaths and gradually relax the body muscles with each exhalation. Then I fill myself with light from top to toe and sit still for a few seconds.

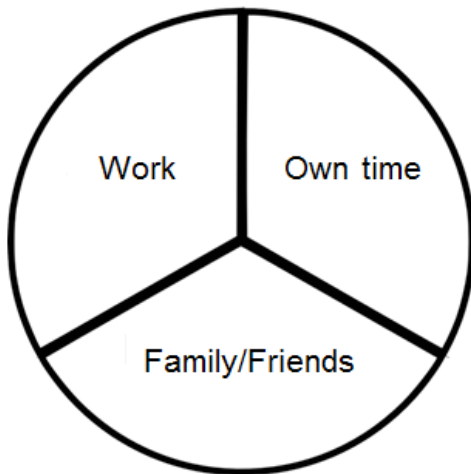
The following story I heard, is a good example of a relaxation trick:

I booked a plumber to help me with the sewer system. When he was about to finish the day's work his electric drill broke and then his car refused to start. He sat quietly, while I was driving him home. When we arrived at his house, he invited me in. As we walked towards the front door, he stopped at a

tree and touched a few branches with both hands. When he opened the door, he had undergone a remarkable change. He smiled with his whole face, hugged his children and kissed his wife. When we, after a friendly chat went back to my car, I could not restrain my curiosity. When we passed the tree, I asked why he had touched the branches, before we went in. Well, that's my problem tree he replied. I know I cannot avoid getting into problems at work. I have to accept that, but I also know that these problems have nothing to do with my wife and children. Therefore, I hang them up on the tree every day, when I come home and ask God to take care of them. Then I pick them up again the next morning. The strange thing is that when I pick them up again the next morning, they are usually not as many as I hung up the day before.

Balance in life.

Strive to experience balance in life. Analyze the three legs/ wedges in this circle:

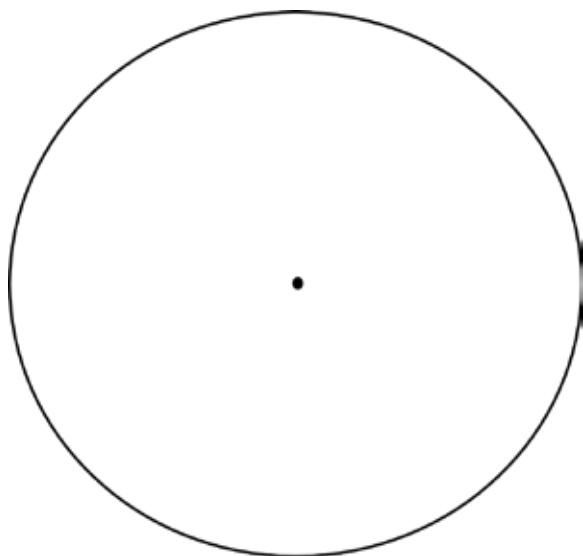


Do you feel that these three elements are in balance with each other? If not, then it's time to do something about it!

It is possible to stand on two legs for a limited period, but to stand on one leg will soon be directly unhealthy.

Personally, my work segment demanded too much of my energy because I had a responsible and interesting job, which, combined with a great sense of duty and «good colleague complex» led to burnout syndrome. It was at the age of 55, that I changed this situation.

Cosmic intelligence



The figure describes cosmic intelligence.

Examples of this are a fruit, an atom or our solar system, where a central point gives life to the universe.

Search (and find) this point in yourself. Take your time. Relax and feel. As long as we are a circle without a center, we are

confused, in a vacuum, in chaos. Once we find the midpoint, we experience peace and creative energy.

Time to reconnect to the text of Chapter 6 of focusing on higher ideals. Have you found any high ideal that you are committed to and that harmonizes with your center?

Death

«He who fears death has no joy of life.»

Mateo Alemán

«He never worried about what was really troubling and did not even bother about going to the posterity.»

Tove Jansson

In the book «Life after life» Raymond Moody has interviewed people who have been declared dead in hospitals, but miraculously returned to life. In many respects, these people have common experiences. E.g. that life passes by, to travel through a tunnel and to meet light and love on the other side. The majority of interviewees experience a reduced fear of death, which feels liberating.

The Swedish (18th century) mystic Emanuel Swedenborg was a prominent scientist during the first part of his life. For example he made drawings of submarines and aircrafts. After a spiritual experience he went on to explore the inner life rather than the outer. At a big dinner in Gothenburg on 17.07.1759 he felt bad and gave as the reason that a large fire had broken out in Stockholm. Many witnesses heard him tell how the fire started and a number of other details. Two days later information about the fire came, which exactly confirmed what he had said. A similar incident occurred when Tsar Peter the third was strangled in Russia.

Swedenborg predicted the year, day and time of his own death. His maid-servant said that he expectantly looked for-

ward to his death, as if he would be embarking on a pleasure trip.

Stress, anxiety, thoughts and our brain

To worry about accidents, etc., and being liked by the group have been survival factors for humans. Those who prioritized fun and laughter with no care about tomorrow did not survive. Most of these worries are not relevant in today's society so there are opportunities to work out approaches on how to reduce anxiety and stress levels.

Distinguish between internal and external problems. The brain is excellent in solving external problems. Because of this, we believe that the brain is also good at solving internal problems. That is correct, but only in the short term. For example, if a person is worried about going out among people, the brain proposes short-term workable solutions, such as to have a drink, so that you relax. In the long term, however, this reinforces the fear.

One way to handle this is to regard the brain as a «thought machine», with a mission to produce thoughts all the time. If the brain had not worked in this way and warned us of the risk of accidents, we would not have survived as a species. It is therefore important to accept that the brain produces good, bad, stupid and constructive thoughts, and then choose which thoughts you want to get on with. The link between thought and action is weaker than one might think. Think, for example that you must lift your left foot and lift your left arm instead. It's as simple as that. Once you have learned to accept the brain as it is, it is easier to get rid of unpleasant thoughts, feelings and body sensations. This is done by separating e.g. «I cannot do this» and «I have the idea that I cannot handle this.» Try this in connection with some examples when you are worried or anxious and feel the relief when you tell yourself that it's just a thought. Try to be present in the moment and let the thoughts pass by without judging or comparing.

As we cannot remove the unpleasant thoughts feelings and body sensations, it is easier to just accept that they exist.

Select some activities that will help you reduce stress or anxiety. It could be a walk, music, prayer, physical exercise, a hot bath, a good book or something else. What suits you?

The book «My Stroke of Insight» by Jill Bolte Taylor covers interesting aspects of the brain and thinking. During the eight years of recovery after a stroke she practiced how to «think about thinking». There is always an alternative way of looking at what is happening - is the glass half full or half empty? Usually she chooses to consider her surroundings with the non judgmental eyes of the right brain. She learned about thought and behavior connections, e.g. to think of her dog, and then to feel joy and start to behave childishly, like a little puppy (multidimensional connection).

Personally, I have an experience of how knowledge of the cerebral hemispheres improves self-awareness. I was on a course where we had to analyze how our four brain quarters (left and right brain were divided into upper and lower, i.e. a total of four parts). I thought I was dominated by my upper left (logic and analytical skills) part, especially because of my education to BSc in Chemistry and my interest in mathematics. It turned out, however, that my upper right part was the greatest, and I knew then that my capacity for visionary thinking and creative product development, were stronger. I might have known that intuitively, but denied it with my logical thinking. This experience changed my way of looking at which future job direction I would prefer. A very interesting result of this course, was that two of my colleagues were given an insight into how different they were. One was heavily dominated by the upper right and the other of the lower left («auditor quartile»). They had cooperation problems, but when they both realized how they complemented each other, their future cooperation improved quite remarkably.

Another book, worth mentioning in this connection is, «The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari» by Robin Sharma. Of all the advices in this book I select the following:

□ Select books that you consider important for your development and make a habit of reading at least half an hour every day from them. Biographies of people who you admire, is a good option.

□ Take time for reflection every evening. What was good and what was bad? What would I want to change? What thoughts were positive? How can I spend more time with them? What thoughts were negative? What can I do to eliminate them?

□ Try to let diligence, compassion, humility, patience, honesty and courage be guiding principles in your life. When your actions are consistent with those you feel harmony and peace. This is the path to life-long education.

□ Do small things every day to build your character. Prioritize what is truly important. Cut down on your everyday needs. Focus on simplicity. Do not live in the eye of the storm. We need to economize our energy. A good way is to ask the question. «Is this something I can influence?» If not, just try to let it pass. (In just a few pages of this book under the headline mindfulness, you will get advice about this).

«There are plenty of opportunities every day to be irritated by the way people around you behave. Well, that is when you should be asking yourself whether it is worth dwelling on being annoyed. If you are honest, the answer will often have to be no. And in that way you dispel the heavy, dark matter that was threatening to crush you. Analyze yourself, and see what usually happens when you give way to irritation because of what someone has said or done. This state automatically attracts the memories of all other negative experiences; you start to remember all the other times

when you felt this person's behavior was unbearable. And often you do not even stop there; you start thinking of all the other people who are disagreeable, unpleasant, hateful even, and you end up feeling you are drowning, stifled, to the point where you can no longer breathe. Tell me: what sense is there in that?»

Omraam Mikhael Aïvanhov

«Change One Thought Per Day: If we change a thought of sadness, anger, revenge, blame, hatred, fear and so on, we increase our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the earth. A modified thought creates a new emotional flow, enhances our lives, reshaping our mood, and sends to the world the invitation to surprise us with more joy, friendship, love, health and wellbeing, but above all it enhances the overall movement of optimism that the world really needs right now.»

Keith Surtees

If you want to dig deeper than this book into spiritual questions I recommend the quotes on www.jkrishnamurti.org, which are free to subscribe to. Here is an example related to our thinking.

«Thought is crooked because it can invent anything and see things that are not there. It can perform the most extraordinary tricks, and therefore it cannot be depended upon. But if you understand the whole structure of how you think, why you think, the words you use, the way you behave in your daily life, the way you talk to people, the way you treat people, the way you walk, the way you eat - if you are aware of all these things then your mind will not deceive you, then there is nothing to be deceived.»

*Jiddu Krishnamurti. Freedom from
the Known, 102*

Fear

Instincts are normal and can be very handy in certain situations. During our evolution fear has been necessary for our survival as a species, but nowadays it can instead destroy us. Now we need to intelligently assess cause and effect. This applies e.g. to overcoming the fear of death. How? Well, with knowledge and love.

Fear drives us towards cowardice, dishonesty and selfishness. Seek help from someone you trust if you feel fear. Do not be ashamed to ask for help.

*«To dare is to lose one's footing momentarily.
Not to dare is to lose oneself.»*

Soren Kierkegaard

If something scares you, start by being absolutely still for a few seconds. Then take a few deep breaths until you feel you regain control of your heart and nervous system. In this way, you regain your inner peace. Practice today to go straight through what scares you and feel that you can handle it. This is a powerful potential for growth. Fear can be illustrated as follows:

False

Evidence

Appear

Real

Ask open neutral questions

I went on a sales course once and the greatest benefit of this was, to my own surprise, that I learned to ask open-neutral questions. This has since been beneficial to my whole life. It means that you start the question with any of the words What,

Why, How, Who, When or Where. This way you widen the horizon of the respondent and avoid getting a single yes or no as an answer. Depending on the response it will often be possible to ask a new neutral question.

*«I keep six honest serving men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.»*

Rudyard Kipling

Living in the present / mindfulness / meditation

*«We crucify ourselves between two thieves: regret for yesterday
and fear of tomorrow.»*

Fulton Oursler

The brain researcher Katarina Gospic sees similarities in how muscles become stronger with physical training, and how the brain becomes more powerful with meditation.

Mindfulness is based on the fact that it is impossible to stop thinking (it's the brain's job!). The aim is to avoid being tangled up by thoughts and the tool for this gradual process is meditation. The most common form of meditation is the use of breathing, because that is something we always have to do. When you concentrate on and think of your breathing, you cannot think of anything else, because we can only have one thought in mind at the same time. Meditation can be described as an exercise that gradually gives you a more open, curious and tolerant attitude to your surroundings. In order to learn more about mindfulness and as a complement to what I have read, I attended a mindfulness course. More than half of the time was devoted to various forms of meditation that can be done lying down, sitting, standing or walking. My

own favorite is walking meditation. I take a walk without a goal and just try to be one with nature. Thoughts come, and I try not to get stuck with them. It is both meditation and exercise at once! I apply meditation as well as weekday training. With meditation training, I mean a specific training such as the walking mentioned above. With daily exercise, I mean to be consciously present during the day, such as when I listen to music or eat. Then I try to be one with the music and to eat slowly and enjoy every bite.

The following attitudes to training and life are affected by mindfulness:

- Non judgmental
- Patience
- A beginner's mind
- Trust
- Non striving
- Letting go

There are now many fields of research regarding mindfulness and its application in several rehabilitation fields. Some examples are cardiovascular disease, stress, social anxiety disorder and alcohol dependence.

The pioneer Jon Kabat-Zinn established a stress reduction clinic based on the so-called MBSR method (mindfulness based stress reduction) 1979. It has been shown to have positive effects on blood pressure, stress level, pain, chronic headache, irritable bowel syndrome and so on.

Communication and conspiracy

«I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots.»

Albert Einstein

Smart phones would appear to open up a world of opportunities for social contact, but instead constant updates on Facebook, twittering and SMS seems to transform us into egotists who care less about others.

The effect is not linked to social media in itself, but the opportunity mobile phones provide for us to be constantly connected. Our relationship with the mobile phone eventually becomes more important than our relationship with others.

Those who have recently used their mobile phone generally care less about others. We therefore specifically examined how this reduced concern for others affect socially beneficial behavior. The conclusion is that they are less likely to support a charity organization, which would have been beneficial for the community as a whole, says Rosellina Ferraro, assistant professor at the University of Maryland.

The experiment in Maryland has similarities with the work on values, conducted at the World Wildlife Fund in the United Kingdom over the last few years. At the workshop held on the report Common Cause in Stockholm, the report author Richard Hawkins spoke about how our values and attitudes are very easily manipulated. It is enough that we are reminded about egoistic values such as status, money and power to make us more selfish. In one experiment, two groups of students sorted words. One group sorted neutral words, the second group sorted words that are related to status and making money. When the sorting was done the test leader asked which students wanted to help him with a simple task. Those who sorted the neutral words proved to be significantly more willing to help than the others.

The stress researcher Torbjorn Åkerstedt says that the Maryland study should be a warning bell for how we use this new technology.

I think there are similarities with other types of addiction, such as gambling. There should be a social debate on how new

technology is affecting us and how it is reasonable to use the technology in the future. It's not just about pointing fingers, because this applies to most of us. I myself sit with my phone, says Torbjörn Åkerstedt.

Facebook makes you unhappy, as shown in a US study at the University of Michigan.

The study states that the more time you spend with Facebook, the unhappier you become,

but there is a bright side. As soon as the participants spent time with their real friends they felt better again!

To study the behavior of the 82 participants the researchers sent a number of questions by SMS over a two week period.

The researchers wanted to know how the participants felt, if they were anxious and alone, how much time they had spent with their family and friends, and also how much they used the social networking site Facebook.

When the responses were compiled the result was unambiguous. Well-being is undermined by the use of Facebook.

The result may seem surprising as one could believe that Facebook is «an invaluable resource satisfying basic human needs for social interaction».

The researchers believe that the outcome is important in helping understand the impact social networks can have on people's lives.

Source: The American news agency AP

The mobile phone is obviously an effective tool, but real conversation between people is a much better way to build relationships. 1st. Century B.C. Roman philosopher, writer and orator Cicero formulated rules for a good conversation, which still work today:

- Speak clearly

- Speak easily and moderately, especially when others also want to talk
- Do not interrupt others
- Be courteous
- Talk seriously about serious things and tactfully about light-hearted subjects
- Never criticize others behind their back
- Talk about topics that are of general interest
- Do not talk about yourself
- Never lose composure

Conversation is a means to put our opinions into words and test them on others. Conversation is a door to deeper discussions and new acquaintances. Conversation is a way to show and confirm our social belonging.

One thing that I cannot really understand, is the need to come up with conspiracy theories of all sorts. The most absurd for me is the documentary film claiming that the World Cup in soccer 1958 in Sweden has not taken place. It gets a little strange, when I was at the Gothenburg Stadium and witnessed the same. What is the purpose of spending time and energy on such things?



'MAKING MOUNTAINS OUT OF MOLEHILLS'

Sleep

For many, sleep is a purely physiological function, much like eating because you are hungry. Sleep (also eating) can, however, be experienced on a higher level than the purely physiological. Avoid doing something unpleasant before going to bed, like for instance watching a horror film. Personally I have noticed that I can find the solution to a problem during sleep, if I relax before I go to sleep and pray that the solution will come to me. A classic example of this is when in a dream Kekule saw the Ourobous snake biting its own tail. That gave him the solution to the benzene ring structure. Another way to fall asleep, which works well for me, is to relax and pray «God help me during the night to become wiser and more loving,» and then go to sleep. Another method I use, is to imagine I am in contact with the planet and its residents and to pray «God protect and guide us, God give us the right understanding and strength, may love and unity prevail among us».

Dreams can teach us a lot if you make the habit of thinking through the content of your dreams. Why did I dream this? What did the dream want to tell me?

Creativity

What form of creativity makes you happy? Music? Painting? Product development? Something else? Creativity can take many forms. Find the areas where you feel joy and happiness and a feeling that time does not exist.

If you can connect your creativity to your higher ideals in any way, you will gradually be happier.

Simplicity

Try to say things in a simple and clear way. The content is the important thing. Not the packaging.

«Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.»

Leonardo da Vinci

Patience and hope

«Patience is a quality of old age, and hope a quality of youth. Yes, youth is full of hope, and if it does not see its hopes quickly become reality it gets impatient. Old age, however, no longer holds high hopes for anything, but it has learned forbearance. Actually, patience and hope must come together. Where there is hope, patience must bring support. And when there is patience, hope cannot be far away: if we do not hope for anything, if there is nothing to look forward to, how can we be patient, and why would we be? But when patience and hope walk alongside each other year after year, the future is wide open.»

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

«Patience works with time. In time, everything you have experienced, even the most difficult moments, can become a source of enrichment and joy. In fact, nothing happens without a reason; there is meaning in everything, but it is up to you to find it. While you are experiencing suffering of any kind, do not allow your mind to remain focused on it, tied up with it! Project it into the future, and tell yourself that soon you will have forgotten what is now hurting you so badly, or if it is impossible to forget it you will see it in a different light.

When we know how much our inner states can alter over time, we can bear so much more!

To develop patience, there are also practical exercises you can do. For example, wash your hands and then touch your ears, gently

stretching the lobes downwards. And here is another one: now and then, massage your solar plexus in a clockwise motion.»

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

Joy

If you have a half-full tea mug. Do you focus on what is left or what has gone? Focusing on what is left gives joy.

This thinking also applies to your body. Focus on what works even if you lose sight, hearing or a limb (I know from personal experience that this is difficult and requires time and training, because I partly lost a limb to post-polio in the right arm), and develop the skills you can. Use your feelings and thoughts for this.

The highest joy is to experience unity.

Harmony

Harmony is achieved when thought, feeling and action are synchronized with each other.

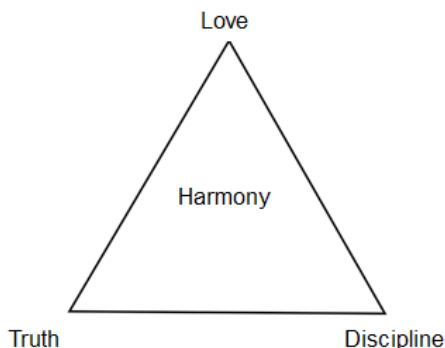
One way to find harmony in a difficult relationship is to examine how you can add a little extra compassion and understanding.

One method of achieving long-term harmony is to plant a Divine idea in your head and work with it and for it. You will be happy and motivated. You strengthen your self-esteem, and once you are confident in your whole being that you are doing the right thing, you do not care anymore about what others think.

Harmony is the basis for creation. Always try to create harmony.

Imagine your physical body, heart, intellect, will, soul and spirit, as strings on a musical instrument. When you play on all the strings, you create harmony. Music and singing

has meant a lot in our evolution. Since time immemorial, we gathered around the campfire to sing and play, thus strengthening our collective spirit.



Maybe it is surprising that discipline is one of the cornerstones of harmony. The reason is that the brain's reward system favors the short term and therefore requires self-discipline in order to act in accordance with its values and thus experience harmony. Alcoholics and drug addicts know from experience what this is about.

Brain researcher Katarina Gospic indicates that those who can wait for the long-term rewards are often more successful in life. One way to help self-discipline is to find small rewards along the road of change and remind yourself why you are making the change. The reason for our difficulties is that our primitive reptilian brain is governed by impulses and emotions and therefore wants the reward immediately. However our frontal lobes, developed later through evolution, dominate the reptilian brain and create long-term values. In order to help the frontal lobes win as often as possible we need to take care of ourselves regarding food, exercise and sleep.

Happiness

«Do not look for happiness outside yourself. The enlightened seeks happiness within.»

Peter Deunov

«I felt so happy that I was not even afraid that it would cease.»

Tove Jansson

Happiness is a complex issue. For example well-known thinkers such as Sigmund Freud and Bertrand Russell argue diametrically opposite positions as to people's opportunities to find happiness. In fact there are a lot of different views when it comes to happiness. For instance secular and religious visionaries of all times have proclaimed that happiness is within reach of every one that follows their doctrines or beliefs. Research, which has taken place in recent decades has been very important in clarifying what is faith and what is knowledge in this context.

«If someone says, <I am happy, because>, well, just the fact that they give a reason for their happiness proves they do not possess true happiness. For true happiness is happiness without a cause.

Yes, you are happy, and you don't know why.

You find it wonderful to be living, breathing, eating, speaking...

Nothing has happened to you – no success, no gifts, no inheritance, no new love... What is making you happy is – for there is a reason all the same – a feeling that something from above has been added to everything you do, a spiritual element that does not even depend on you – like water pouring down from heaven and flowing through you.

For most people happiness is linked to possessions: houses, money, decorations, glory... or else a husband, a wife, children. No, true happiness does not depend on any object, possession or person. It comes from above, and you are surprised to find your-

self in a constant higher state of awareness. You are delighted, and you do not even know why. That is true happiness.»

Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov

«Anyone who is not satisfied with what he has, will not be satisfied with what he would like to have.»

Albert Einstein

If you want to study happiness closer I recommend the book «The How of Happiness. A Scientific Approach to Getting the Life You Want» by Sonja Lyubomirsky.

I recommend this book primarily because it provides practical advice and tools tailored to your personality. Sonja Lyubomirsky has systematically observed, compared and experimented with a lot of happy and unhappy people. The following thought and action patterns are typical for the happiest people in her studies:

- They spend a lot of time with family and friends - and nurturing these relationships
- They express gratitude for what they have
- They are often first to help colleagues or passers by
- They have an optimistic view of the future
- They enjoy the pleasures of life and try to live in the present
- They exercise every week, sometimes every day
- They are deeply involved in their lifetime goals and aspirations, for example to combat cheating, teach values or cultivate a hobby

Lyubomirsky also notes that even these lucky people are affected by stresses and crises, like everybody else. They can be

just as desperate or upset in these situations as you or I, but their secret weapon is a balance and strength that they fall back on when they get into trouble.

Many people spend a lot of time and energy on physical exercise to feel better. Lyubomirsky means that anyone who wants to be happier should proceed in a similar manner. To become permanently happy one must, in other words, make some permanent changes that require effort and commitment for life. It takes effort to be happy, but you can consider this happiness work as the most rewarding job you will ever undertake.

Why make so much effort to be happy? Researchers have shown that increasing happiness not only means that we feel better. Happiness has many other positive side effects. To be happier means to experience more joy, contentment, love, pride and reverence.

Happiness research based on twins has shown that 50% of the differences between people depend on the genetically determined baseline. This we cannot influence and we return to this level after both setbacks and triumphs. Circumstances account for 10%. It surprised me a lot, when I read that factors such as rich or poor, beautiful or ugly, healthy or sick and so on account for only 10%. However, there is much research to support this. The reason is that we humans have great adaptability. It should be noted that 10% is for the long term (one year and more). In the short term we will be happier, for example, because of a lottery win and unhappy due to an illness, but after a year only a little of this effect remains. The remaining 40% of happiness, we can influence ourselves.

In order to prioritize work on these 40%, Lyubomirsky has identified 12 happiness strategies, as well as a test (from Sheldon) to figure out what strategies you as a person should start with.

These are:

1. To develop gratitude.
2. To think positive and be more optimistic.
3. To avoid pondering and stop comparing yourself with others.
4. To do nice things.
5. To nurture relationships.
6. To learn to endure.
7. To learn to forgive.
8. To strive for flow.
9. To enjoy life.
10. To set new goals.
11. To practice religion and spirituality.
12. To take care of your body.

When I scored these 12 points, I got most points for 11, 10 , 4 in that order, while 12 and 8 came in fourth place. Then all that remains is to begin working with the practical advices in the book.

Per Bjelke Bring interviewed 800 people between the ages of 19 and 87, and asked them how they view happiness now and in the future. The result is that older and younger showed equal happiness levels, but they had different views on what happiness is all about. Young people associate happiness with temporary and enchanting experiences, such as parties, trips and so on. Older relate happiness to whole and long-term concepts, such as family and friends.

It is interesting to relate Bjelke Brings research findings with Lyubomirski and others. Such a comparison shows that

what young people think makes them happy is mainly represented in the 10% related to circumstances. It's more about wellbeing for the moment than on long-term happiness. We seem to know instinctively what wellbeing is, while we do not have the same ability regarding happiness. No wonder there are many different opinions in discussions about what makes you happy.

Other good books about happiness if you want to immerse yourself more are:

«The Art of Happiness at Work» by The Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler

«You can learn to be happy» by Tal Ben-Shahar. A fine little book with good advice that I recommend if you feel that Lyubomirskis scientific approach is too heavy.

Happiness researcher Bengt Brölde mentions the following six main criteria to feel good and be content with your life.

1. Close friends.
2. Love relationships.
3. Work.
4. Socially and physically active.
5. The strive for meaningful goals.
6. Non-profit work and good deeds.

Temporary increases in happiness occur thanks to money, shopping, success, beauty, TV watching and passive holidays. This reasoning applies to rich countries and well off communities.



Source: www.polyp.org.uk

A happiness formula in three lines:

Something to do.

Someone to love.

Something to look forward to.

Finally, an anecdote I heard about a happy man's shirt:

There was once a king, who was very unhappy. He had everything. A beautiful castle, all the possessions you could wish for, friends, a beautiful wife, and good children, who loved him. Yet he was not satisfied. The wise men of the court were

very worried about him and came together to develop a plan to make the king happy. One member said: I have heard of a man who is very happy. If we find him and give his shirt to the king, then surely the king will also be happy. The other wise men thought this was a good idea, and they sent off an expedition to locate the happy man. After much searching he was found. Buthe had no shirt.

Note: Maybe it would have been better if the court had had a mixture of wise men and wise women.

Belief

We need to believe in something so develop your faith. Do not restrict yourself. Reflect, study, verify and wander back and forth between faith and science. When we have a desert in our lives, we need water. The water is faith and love. It is right to have a faith and to defend it, but if you try to force it on others, it is not faith..... it is fanaticism.

Closing words

After some time of thinking I took my pen May 30, 2011 and began to write this book. The motivation to start writing came oddly enough at what I thought was my mother's deathbed. She had reached 99 years and the last few years she had many times asked «how long will I have to go on here». She felt that she had lived long enough and was not afraid to die. Everything is calm and quiet. The birds are chirping outside and do not seem to have noticed that the time is 21:40, when I start to write.

Against all odds, she survived. She was alert as long as she could keep her brain active with crosswords, but during the last years, her sight was so poor that she no longer managed to do it. This had the effect that her memory got worse and worse, and several times she could ask me the same thing. When I told her about my book project, she became curious and wanted me to tell her what books I read in connection with this project. When I wrote about focusing on a high ideal (see Chapter 6), I asked her what she wanted for her obituary. What do you mean, she asked. Well, what do you want to be written on your tombstone, was my answer. She thought for a while and then said. I always wished everyone well - I really did. Do you then think that it should be written, «she wished all well» on your tombstone? Yes, that will be good, she replied. Subsequent times, when I visited her, I asked if she remembered what it would be written on her tombstone. Despite the fact that her memory had become so bad, she remembered this!

She died on May 19, 2013 at the age of 101 years. On her tombstone it reads:

SONJA SVANBERG
1912 - 2013
HON VILLE ALLA VÄL
(In English: She wished all well)

On my tombstone it will be written:

AGNE SVANBERG
1943 - 20XX
HAN VILLE RÄDDA CIVILISATIONEN
(In English: He wanted to save civilization).

What do you want it to be written on your gravestone?