THE HOPEFUL MINDSET

finding hope in nature

by
Terry Findlay

The Hopeful Mindset

LESSONS FROM NATURE
2nd Edition

by

Terry Findlay

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Introduction to 3rd Edition

As I write this introduction to the second edition of The Hopeful Mindset the world is struggling in the grip of a global pandemic. TV News and newspapers are chronicling the spread of the COVID-19 virus and its impact on the world and its inhabitants.

Change is upon us. The coronavirus pandemic is changing our day to day lives in unexpected and significant ways. It's difficult to say, here in the midst of it, what the eventual fallout will be. Will things simply go back to the way they were or will we be forever changed by this global phenomenon? If it's the latter, what changes might occur and how might they affect our daily lives?

The pressures we are now experiencing as a result of the coronavirus pandemic could turn out to be the impetus for social evolution. Throughout history social changes have often been driven by the need to adapt to new circumstances. Social evolution, like biological evolution, occurs when extreme pressures are exerted on what has been the norm. Environmental, political, and technological changes can all lead to social reforms. We are now experiencing significant pressures on our societal status quo from the coronavirus pandemic. In response to the pandemic we are forced to make adjustments to the way we live and participate in nearly all aspects of our our lives including commerce, transportation, education, entertainment, politics, recreation, and so on. In short, we are being forced to shift our priorities in almost all areas of our lives to accommodate the reality of a global pandemic.

Shifting priorities means giving some things greater value than they were previously afforded. For example, when we self-isolate we are acknowledging that our personal well-being is contingent on the well-being of others. Instead of looking out for number one we are choosing to act in ways that benefit everyone. We are recognizing that we are in this together. We may not think of it in these terms but this is an admission to our fundamental interdependence with one another. We are not separate, independent individuals. We are, all of us, interdependent individuals. It is this recognition that may amount to the most significant longterm social effect of the current pandemic. Up until this point we have largely ignored or denied our interdependent nature. We have acted, as individuals and as in-groups, as if we could exist independently; in an "then vs us" as opposed to "them *and* us" mentality.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic our common humanity is being brought to the forefront. We are now having to think in terms of what best furthers the well-being of our global community as opposed to strictly local or personal concerns. We are now seeing that our local and personal concerns are not divorced from global factors. This view of our world tends to result in a different set of values from those derived from the view of the world as consisting of independent separately existing entities.

This essay is about why we need to transition to values arising out of an understanding that we are interdependent beings living in an interdependent world. Along the way we will explore how values arise and how we can use this knowledge to forge a better way of living in the world; one that recognizes and respects our interdependent nature.

"It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it."

Arundhati Roy – The Pandemic is a Portal

The Invisible Culprit

We have been operating on a false assumption.

There is something fundamentally wrong with the way we have been viewing ourselves and our relationship with the world. Evidence that this is so is all around us. Some of the more glaring examples include environmental degradation, climate change, and overpopulation. And of course there are also the widespread social problems such as poverty, disease, violent crimes, intolerance, and international terrorism.

How could this have happened? It would seem, owing to our considerable success so far in dominating the planet, that evolution has gifted us with brains of exceptional effectiveness, and it has. In fact, human beings have been so successful in the survival sweepstakes that our growing population is overwhelming Earth's ability to sustain it.

In terms of what our brains were designed by natural selection to do, they are succeeding spectacularly. But, nevertheless, we have inadvertently created a number of serious problems with which

we are currently wrestling. The problems I am talking about range from commonplace issues such as crime, violence, cheating at cards, cut-throat business tactics, political despotism, and intolerance to a rash of relatively recent global concerns like climate change, increasing economic inequality, international terrorism, environmental degradation and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

When I say there is something wrong with the way we see ourselves in the world I am talking about a fundamental assumption that has gone unchallenged for centuries. This assumption has shaped western civilization and its institutions. But, more importantly, it has dictated the way relate to each other and the world. It has become our uncontested view of the way the world works. The way we have come to see ourselves in the world is predicated on a fundamental but faulty assumption about the nature of reality. Acting according to this erroneous view has brought us to the brink of ecological and economic disaster.

The genesis of this mistaken assumption can be traced back to the emergence of the belief that there is a separation between the natural world and its source. This belief is called dualism. An early proponent of dualism was Rene Descartes.

> Descartes was a substance dualist. He believed that there were two kinds of substance: matter, of which the essential property is that it is spatially extended; and mind, of which the essential property is that it thinks.

> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

This separation of the supernatural mind from the material world was enthusiastically embraced by the Abrahamic religions; Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in their separation of the metaphysical from the physical. Once adopted, this view of reality came to characterize our beliefs about the world and our relationship to it. Our world came to be seen as consisting of separate things; ourselves included. We became independent individuals living in a world of independent objects. This view effectively severed our intrinsic connection to one another and to nature. In this cultural environment it is not surprising that nature came to be thought of as something that human beings could and should dominate.

Western civilization was built on this fragmented view of reality and it pervades every aspect of our lives to this day. It is so foundational to our way of thinking and acting that it is rarely even noticed, much less, questioned. Over the past several centuries, with the spread of capitalism, it has become the default view of much of the modern world. The spread of this perspective accelerated and exacerbated the severity of the global crises we face today.

The independent mindset arose out of the processes of cultural evolution. Conditions in western societies at the time of its emergence interacted to produce the belief that human beings were independent, separately existing beings in a world of independent separately existing things.

However, in different parts of the world a very different sort of mindset formed. Indigenous people all over the globe held beliefs based on the idea that they were intimately connected to nature. Some early Eastern Civilizations developed according to the belief that all living things are part of a single system. These are

mindsets based on a belief in an interdependent reality. Cultures that adopted this perspective respected their interconnected relationships with each other and with the environment. They understood their reciprocal dependence on others and nature. Of course, it was largely by necessity that these cultures were acutely aware of their dependence on one another and nature. To survive they needed to cooperate with each other and to be careful not to take more from the environment than it could soon replenish. Nevertheless, these cultures can serve as models for sustainable living. To begin to heal the wounds that we have perpetrated under the independent mindset we will need to adopt some form of the interdependent mindset. Only then can we justify belief in a more hopeful future and to take steps to start building it.

Hope is justified when a realistic path toward a better future exists.

If we are to find a way around the deep conditioning of the independent mindset we must first be very clear about the nature and magnitude of the problem.

You cannot simply wake up one day and decide to be hopeful. If only it was that easy. Hope for a better future is nothing more than wishful thinking unless it is based on a plan of action that has a reasonable chance of success. *Hope is something that we must cultivate by taking specific actions inspired by well considered values in the service of achievable outcomes*. Such a plan must be clear about what a better future is and about the specific ways and means of achieving such a future. Just as importantly, such a plan must meet the needs of the very individuals (you and me) being asked to bring about that better future. We cannot expect others or ourselves to take action in

support of a better future if those actions do not, at the same time, address our own individual needs. To be convinced to make changes in how you live it helps to see clearly how those changes can benefit you as an individual as well as how they might contribute to a better world.

A Better Future

What, then, can be known about a better future? Obviously, it would have to be better than the rather nasty state of affairs in which we currently find ourselves. But better in what ways? If we look at some of the problems we are now facing perhaps we can imagine a world without those problems or in which those problems are more manageable. Some of the more significant problems that we are currently struggling to deal with are:

Population Growth

Climate Change

Environmental Degradation

Population Growth

According to worldpopulationbalance.com the current population is three times the sustainable level.

Global Footprint Network data shows that humanity uses the equivalent of 1.6 planet Earths to provide the renewable resources we use and absorb our waste.1 If all 7+ billion of us were to enjoy a European standard of living - which is about half the consumption of the average American - the Earth could sustainably support only about 2 billion people.

POPULATION OF THE EARTH

Number of people living worldwide since 1700 in billions

Allianz

2048: **9 bln**
2024: **8 bln**
2012: **7 bln**
1999: **6 bln**
1987: **5 bln**
1974: **4 bln**
1960: **3 bln**
1927: **2 bln**
1804: **1 bln**

1700   1800   1900   2000

Source: United Nations World Population Prospects, Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung
For further information please visit: www.knowledge.allianz.com
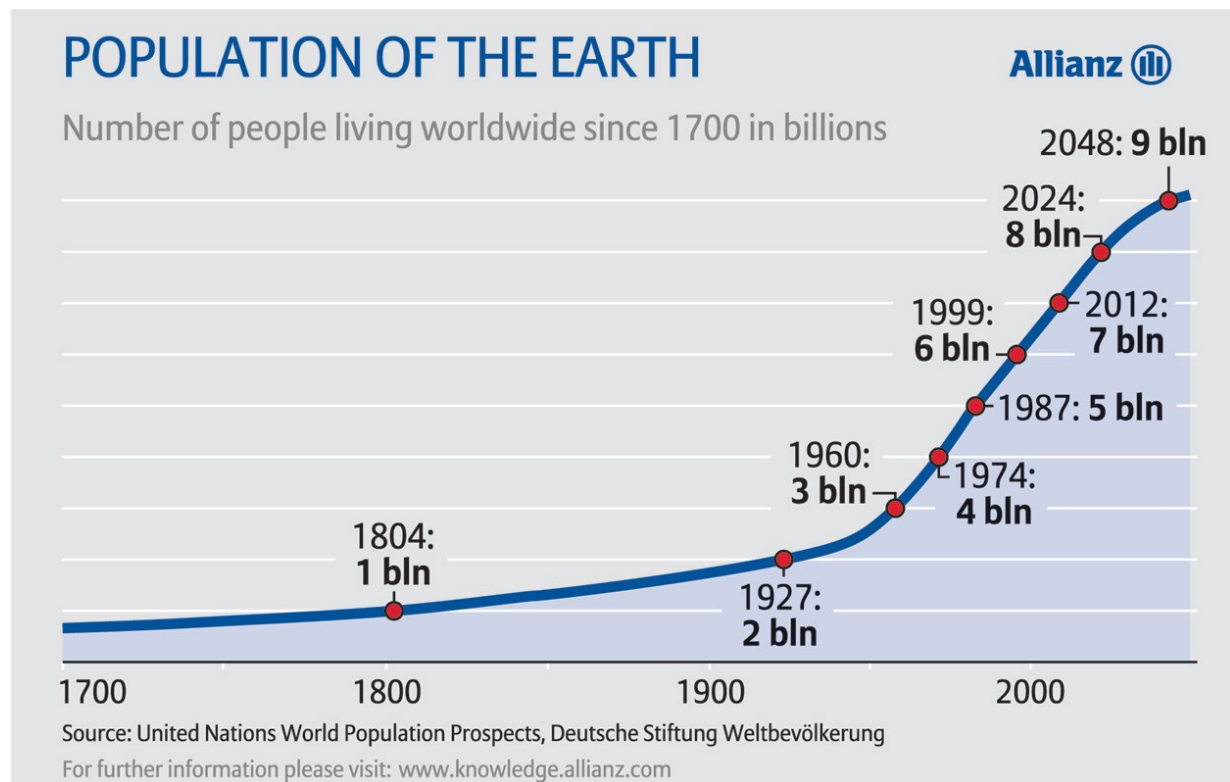
It is crucial to understand that the longer we continue consuming more resources than the Earth can sustainably provide, the less able the Earth can meet our resource needs in the future - and the fewer people the planet can support long-term.

worldpopulationbalance.com

Environmental Degradation

Environmental degradation is the disintegration of the earth or deterioration of the environment through consumption of assets, (eg. water and soil) the destruction of environments, habitats, and the eradication of wildlife. It is characterized as any change or aggravation to nature's turf seen to be pernicious or undesirable. Degradation is the consequence of a substantial and expanding human populace, constantly expanding monetary

The chart shows atmospheric carbon dioxide levels (parts per million) over the last 400,000 years, with labels for "current level", "1950 level", and the note "For centuries, atmospheric carbon dioxide had never been above this line."
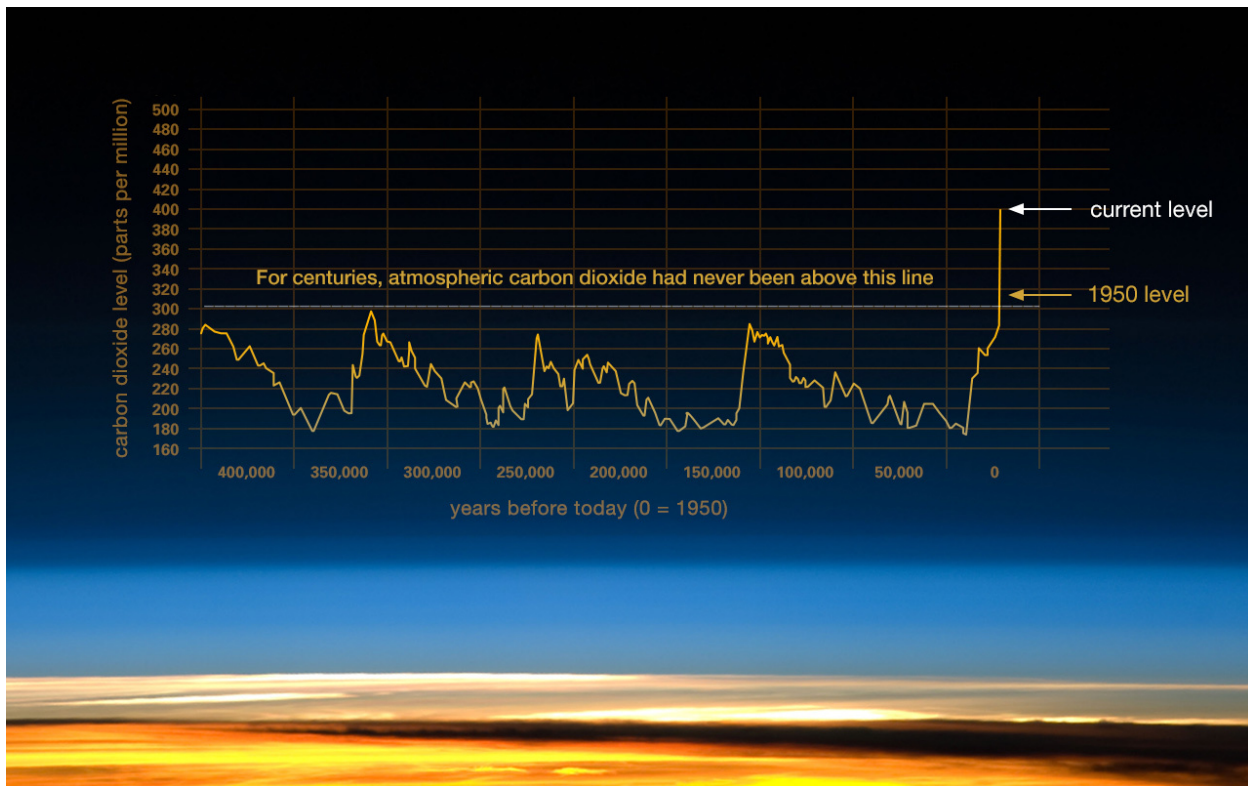
development or per capita fortune and the application of asset-exhausting and polluting technology.

conserve-energy-future.com

Climate Change

Most climate scientists agree the main cause of the current global warming trend is human expansion of the "greenhouse effect" — warming that results when the atmosphere traps heat radiating from Earth toward space.

On Earth, human activities are changing the natural greenhouse. Over the last century the burning of fossil fuels like coal and oil has increased the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2). This happens because the coal or oil burning process combines carbon with oxygen in the air to make CO2. To a lesser

extent, the clearing of land for agriculture, industry, and other human activities has increased concentrations of greenhouse gases.

https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/

It should be noted that population growth is often considered to be the primary issue here. Once the global population exceeded the number of people that the Earth could support environmental degradation was inevitable. Environment degradation, in turn, is responsible for damaging the Earth's atmosphere, resulting in the climate change crisis.

The Need for Change

These and other global problems have resulted in an increasingly fierce competition between groups of people over already limited and ever dwindling resources. It is now painfully obvious that we can no longer continue to live as we have been. A better future requires us to make some sweeping changes in how we conduct ourselves as life-forms living in a limited environment.

> To continue on, our species must garner all of our creativity and insight to improve our efficiency, changing the way we live while utilizing our most practical tools and technologies.
>
> Joseph Stadtmiller - The Nature of Life and Humanity

A path that offers practical ways of dealing with these and other pressing global issues would constitute a route to a better future. Whatever path we come up with to address these global issues

needs to be a path that also addresses individual human needs because it is individuals that must learn to live differently and take responsibility for a better future. A path in conflict with the needs of those who would be walking it would surely be a dead end. To save ourselves and the planet we will need to come up with creative approaches capable of meeting the challenges of modern life while, at the same time, capable of meeting our needs.

Meeting Our Needs

If human needs are to be met by some new way of being in the world, it makes sense to start with a look at where these needs come from and how they operate in our lives. The primary purpose of any nervous system is to promote the survival of the host organism. In humans our survival mechanisms come in the form of some fundamental needs, that is, things we instinctively pursue in order to survive. *We will examine our basic survival needs in the hope that we may be able to find a way forward that not only meets these needs but also supports attitudes and strategies that will solve or significantly reduce the severity of the global problems we now face*. Such an approach could enable the building of a better future and would be a justifiable foundation for hope.

About our Survival Needs

In order to survive organisms must act to secure the resources that their bodies require to continue living and to avoid those things that could harm them and threaten their survival. Even single celled organisms like amoebas have mechanisms that compel them to move toward nutrients and away from toxins in their environment. Lizards pursue prey and run from predators. Humans, being social animals, seek membership and avoid circumstances likely to lead to loneliness or isolation. Like other living things you are compelled to seek out and acquire those things that support your survival and to avoid those that threaten it. You are compelled to do so by experiencing pleasant or uncomfortable physical sensations, urgent urges if you like. The

physical discomfort of hunger compels you to find food and to eat. When you do so you experience the pleasing physical sensations of satiation. Unwanted feelings of rejection are replaced by warm fuzzy sensations if you gain acceptance. You need to seek out and acquire certain things to survive. You and I have *survival needs*.

In his influential paper of 1943, *A Theory of Human Motivation*, the American psychologist Abraham Maslow proposed that healthy human beings have a certain number of needs, and that these needs are arranged in a hierarchy, with some needs (such as physiological and safety needs) being more primitive or basic than others (such as social and ego needs). Maslow's so-called 'hierarchy of needs' is often presented as a five-level pyramid, with higher needs coming into shaper focus once lower, more basic needs are met.

Neel Burton, M.D. In Psychology Today

Since Maslow's time others have adapted and modified his original hierarchy of needs according to the findings of more recent scientific studies. The following is an adaptation of the needs identified by Maslow that we will be using in this book as we seek to forge a way forward to a better future that respects our individual needs while, at the same time, paving the way to a better future for us all.

Survival Needs

1. Physiological - need for resources necessary for life (food, warmth, water, air)

2. Safety - need for a safe environment

3. Security - need for reliable supplies of necessary resources

4. Membership - need to belong to a supporting group

5. Status - need for self esteem, competence, self-reliance, respect, admiration

6. Meaning - need to understand how things work (cause and effect relationships)

7. Purpose - personal significance

Adding to Maslow's needs, this adaptation includes the needs of Meaning and Purpose. These additions are supported by research into human motivation.

The Need for Meaning

We need to make sense of our experience. We need to comprehend how the world works and how we can interact effectively with it. This is accomplished by constructing a mental model in which events and things are connected to other events and things in a way that draws out cause and effect relationships between them. When a pattern is discerned where things are related in time (a sequence of events) or space (a recurring or persistent arrangement of objects) those things acquire meaning because of the context of connections within which they now reside. The formation of mental patterns allows us to make predictions about future events based on past or current patterns. The capacity to make reasonable predictions is crucial to making decisions that are appropriate to specific circumstances. To make choices appropriate to our situations we need to be able to make predictions about the outcomes of our various possible actions.

One of our deep needs is simply to be able to understand what is going on around us. If we understand the world around us, then we have a far greater chance of controlling it. Even if we cannot control it, we can make informed choices about what we might do next. The brain helps us do this by giving us a little squirt of dopamine whenever we learn something, creating that satisfying 'aha!' or 'eureka!' experience.

When we lack understanding, we feel extreme discomfort or confusion, which motivates us to gain understanding. This, perhaps, is one of the main driving forces that has led to the enormous developments of mankind.

http://changingminds.org/

The Need for Purpose

As human beings we have a need to see our lives as being for something, to have a reason for existing. In secular society no reason for living is supplied. If we do not subscribe to a belief system that provides such a reason for being we are tasked with the job of coming up with a worthy purpose for our own lives. We will see in the coming pages that it is possible to arrive at a common purpose that is both practical and hopeful.

> Victor Frankl, a psychiatrist who survived the concentration camps of WW II, came to several realizations about what motivated him to live. Among them was sharing his food and providing emotional comfort to other prisoners, focusing on the love of his wife and family who were also prisoners, and imagining he would be with them at the end of the war. He also was inspired by envisioning the book he would write about why some people survive the most dire of conditions and some don't. His conclusion was that a person's discovery of meaning for their life allowed them to have hope and this helped them to be resilient.
>
> *Bob Edelstein L.M.F.T., M.F.T - The Need for Authentic Meaning*

While Victor Frankl used the word meaning here, the kind of meaning he is referring to is analogous to purpose as the term is used in this book. When we ask, "What is the meaning of a life?" we are really asking about its purpose, what it is for.

> "The life of the individual has meaning only insofar as it aids in making the life of every living thing nobler and more beautiful."

Albert Einstein

Programmed to Survive

The biological goal served by survival needs is to keep us alive long enough to procreate. Biological evolution is a process whereby organisms adapt over time to become better at fitting into the ecosystems that they inhabit. For adaptation to occur organisms need to produce offspring in such a way that the offspring may acquire beneficial adaptations to their environment. In the case of human beings this is accomplished through sexual reproduction. So, yes, on a biological level, it is all about sex. In sexual reproduction the genetic dice are tossed whenever a new human life is conceived. Genes from both parents are combined. In the process an offspring may wind up with an attribute or modification not present in the parents but which may enhance the survival fitness of the offspring. This modification occurs if there has been a mutation in a parental gene which is then expressed in the offspring. If such enhancements propagate throughout the population of a species we call them adaptations. Biological adaptation is the means by which homo sapiens gained survival advantage over other contenders for territorial dominance. It was a long, slow, gradual process.

The purpose of the survival instinct, then, is to keep organisms alive long enough for procreation to take place making it possible for the species to continue to evolve and thereby adapt to changing environmental conditions. Your survival needs help you fulfill this evolutionary imperative. Survival is, then, the prime directive of natural selection with regard to living creatures and the stakes could not be higher. Failure to do so leads to extinction. This is, of course, to be avoided.

From the perspective of human beings with survival writ large in the depths of our being we cannot help but value life. If anything may be said to be sacred to humankind it is the existence and continuance of life. Life is considered by many to be the highest human value.

> "Life is sacred, that is to say, it is the supreme value to which all other values are subordinate."
>
> *Albert Einstein*

We will be examining these subordinate values and the survival needs from which they arise in some detail.

Meeting Our Survival Needs

Nature has supplied us with a simple but effective feedback system for knowing whether or not our needs are being met. If a need is not being met we will experience some degree of discomfort in the form of unpleasant physical sensations. Sometimes these sensations are quite subtle but at other times they can be quite intense. I may barely notice my cat licking my arm with her sandpaper-like tongue in an attempt to get me to pat her. However, should she become impatient with me and sink her claws into me I will definitely notice the resulting physical

sensations. On the other hand, when we do something or something happens to us that results in one or more of our needs being met we experience pleasurable physical sensations. If you are feeling bored and a friend invites you to go skydiving you might suddenly feel exhilarated. Personally, I would be more terrified than exhilarated but that's just me.

Fundamental to our survival is a hard-wired preference for pleasant sensations over unpleasant ones. This may seem patently obvious and hardly worth mentioning but it is crucial to the understanding of what follows. You probably prefer warm water to cold when it comes to going for a swim. Natural selection has made it so because it serves your survival and the survival of your species.

Because we have this fundamental preference for pleasant sensations we come to like those things that meet our needs and stimulate pleasant sensations. In other words we *value* those things that satisfy our needs directly or lead to the satisfaction of our needs. In this way needs-based values arise.

Need	Value
Physiological	Access to Physical Requirements - food, water, air, warmth
Safety	Strong Protective Boundaries
Security	Wealth - resource accumulations
Membership	Tribal Membership - strength in numbers
Significance	Status within groups, Power, Respect, Admiration
Meaning	Personal Meaning - relative to self concerns
Purpose	Personal Success - relative to others

These values form without your knowledge. They arise out of needs instilled in you by natural selection. For example, the physiological survival need compels us, through sensations of pleasure and discomfort, to seek the things our bodies need to survive (such as warmth, food, water, and air). Over time we begin to recognize the kinds of things and situations that satisfy our needs and to value them over other things and situations. While we can usually meet our survival needs temporarily and to a degree, we can never completely satisfy them once and for all. Our survival needs are insatiable. We can never really get enough once and for all. This is as it should be from a survival perspective. Clearly, you would not last long if you could simply feed once from your mother's breast and never again feel compelled to seek nourishment. Our needs must be met over and over again for us to continue to survive. This explains why you ate that entire box of chocolates last Easter.

Whenever we become aware of a need that is not being met we are compelled by unpleasant sensations to do something about the situation. We are compelled to take action to satisfy the need. We must find a *means* of meeting that need. To meet our physiological need we must find sources of food, water, air, and warmth. Likewise, to meet our need for safety we must employ methods to remove physical threats from our environment or to prevent such threats from arising.

Putting it all together we arrive at a naturally occurring *mindset*.

What's a Mindset?

In her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Carol Dweck explored two mindsets that are predictors of success or

the lack of it. A person with a Fixed Mindset believes that such things as intelligence and athletic ability are fixed and cannot be improved. On the other hand a person with a Growth Mindset sees these things as amenable to change through personal effort. As you might expect, both mindsets tend to be self-fulfilling prophecies. If you believe you can't improve your abilities you probably won't and if you believe you can you probably will. A mindset, then, is a group of assumptions or beliefs about the way things are. It is a personal or collective view of the nature of reality.

> "The most profound insight in the history of humankind is that we should seek to live in accord with reality. Indeed, living in harmony with reality may be accepted as a formal definition of wisdom. If we live at odds with reality (foolishly), we will be doomed. But if we live in proper relationship with reality (wisely), we shall be saved. Humans everywhere, and at all times, have had at least a tacit understanding of this fundamental principle. What we are less in agreement about is how we should think about reality and what we should do to bring ourselves into harmony with it." ~ Loyal Rue

The crucial point is, as we will see, that the mindset ("tacit understanding") you have makes all the difference.

A Brief History of the Western Mindset

The dominant feature of the mindset of Western Civilization is an assumption that the world consists independently existing things. This view is so ingrained in us that we scarcely notice that it is there. Even when we do notice it we do not think to question its validity. A bit further on we will be looking at reasons why we

urgently need to do so. First, however, it will be helpful to understand how this assumption came to dominate other mindsets over the course of the history of Western Civilization.

Plato, the Greek philosopher who lived from around 428 BCE to around 348 BCE, claimed that existence was split into two worlds; the seen material world and the unseen non-material world of forms. According to Plato's theory of Forms, the apparent world is the constantly changing world of concrete objects, grasped by the senses while the unchanging and unseen world of Forms consists of abstract objects, grasped by pure reason. Plato so loved this idea that he raised it, in his own estimation at least, to the level of absolute truth.
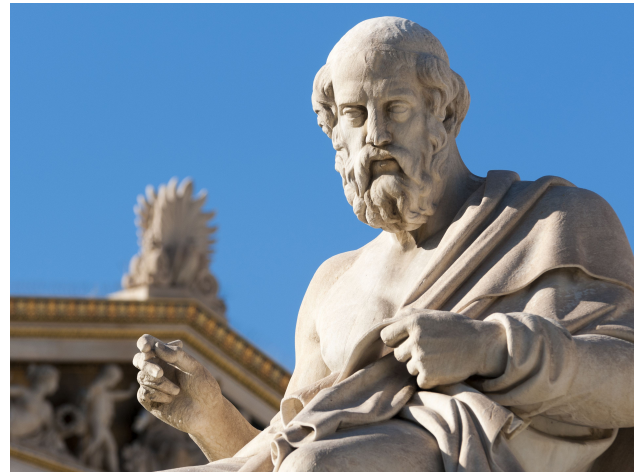
> The world that appears to our senses is in some way defective and filled with error, but there is a more real and perfect realm, populated by entities (called "forms" or "ideas") that are eternal, changeless, and in some sense paradigmatic for the structure and character of the world presented to our senses.
>
> Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Plato's philosophy

What is important here, in terms of understanding mindsets, is that Plato believed that reason alone could work out the nature of reality. Since only humans possessed the capacity

to reason, humans were now seen to have special status in nature. Here we see the beginnings of a separation of human beings from the rest of nature.

Plato didn't see any need to prove his theory of forms. Indeed, such a theory is impossible to prove empirically. To Plato, and many other philosophers since, a well reasoned conception of reality that explains why the world we live in is the way it is, is a valid theory of the nature of reality. No further proof is necessary.

A critical point to notice in all of this is the creation of a non-physical realm of ideals that is distinct from the material world inhabited by living things including humans. Reality has been split in two.

A few hundred years later we see this use of reason and imagination utilized to explain the world in the formation of belief systems. One-god religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam took Plato's idea of a non-physical realm that was separate from the physical world and tweaked it slightly to become a separation between heaven and earth. But these monotheistic religions added a significant new idea. Humans were now seen to be a special kind of creature. Humans, and only humans, were endowed with immortal souls that needed to be made worthy of ascending to heaven at the time of the death of the physical body. Critically, in this

view, nature is not thought to be sacred. The world is merely the setting for humans to prove that they deserve to be admitted into heaven. Only humans have souls so animals and nature, in general, were seen to be disconnected from the spiritual reality and as such had no real value. Devaluing nature in this way and seeing it simply as a storehouse of resources to be used by humans without need for restraint has contributed to the environmental problems we see today.

Whereas Plato had split reality into two separate domains, the monotheistic religions further divided reality resulting in a spiritual realm, a special realm of humans with souls, and the rest of the world as a purely material realm. This view of humanity's place in reality has persisted in various forms for over 2000 years.

As Western Civilization progressed the mindset of separation continued to evolve. French philosopher, Rene Descartes, who lived from 1596 to 1650 did not dispute the separation of an immaterial soul from a material body. He proposed that the mind is separate from the body, thus placing mental activity in the non-physical realm along with the soul. As a result of this maneuver mental activity was elevated to divine status. Plato had seen reason as humanity's greatest faculty but, thanks to Descartes, thought, and reason in particular, was given supreme validation by way of inclusion in the realm of the sacred. This development helped set the conditions in which

the thinkers of The Enlightenment would carry the mindset of separation forward.

The Enlightenment was a late 17th- and 18th-century intellectual movement emphasizing reason, individualism, skepticism, and science. Emerging as it did in the context of monotheism and its separation of heaven, humans, and the earth, this period was heavily influenced by the idea of things having individual existence that was independent of other independent things. It was in this era that the separation of humankind from nature along with an inflated idea concerning human mental activity began to take on the shape of a conflict between human beings and the natural world.

Since the natural world had no spiritual currency and it was the source of many hardships such as floods, earthquakes, storms, and other circumstantial mishaps, Enlightenment thinkers tended to see nature as something to be conquered. Francis Bacon declared that the human race should, "recover that right over Nature which belongs to it by divine bequest". He spoke of controlling and conquering Nature. There could hardly be a more revealing example of the belief that humans and nature were disconnected. The emergence of science a a way of gaining dominance over nature flourished during The Enlightenment.
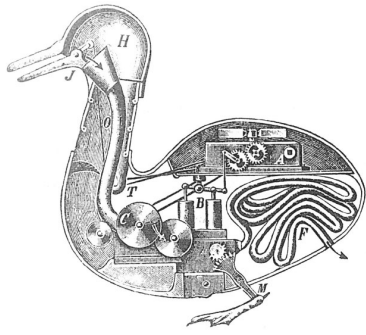
As science progressed during and after The Enlightenment the idea of separately existing objects continued to prevail. In this context the idea of reductionism was born. Scientific reductionism is the idea that complex systems can be reduced to their constituent parts making them easier to understand. Up until quite recently, reductionism was assumed to be the best, and perhaps the only, way to figure out how complex systems work. It gave rise to a mechanistic model of the universe consisting of independently existing things interacting with one another.

This history has led to the separation of humans from one another. We see ourselves as being separate minds (or souls) that are tethered to bodies that are separated from one another. We also see the things in the world as being independent of one another. We think of ourselves as separate from and superior to nature. We are unconnected individuals living in a world of unconnected, separate things. We are largely on our own when it comes to surviving and making our way in the world. This is the basic assumption underlying the dominant mindset in the world today.

It should be noted that in recent times a growing number of people have abandoned the worldview of the monotheistic religions eliminating the spiritual realm from the picture of reality altogether and leaving humans without souls. In this secular world humans are seen as material objects physically separate from one another and from the things in the world.

We have seen that, as western civilization progressed, reality went from being a single unified phenomenon to being split into two realms, then three realms, then four realms and, finally, into innumerable disconnected objects careening around, colliding with one another according to unchanging mechanical laws.

The mindset that is predominant in the world today began to really take form during the Age of Enlightenment when humans first felt that they might be gaining the knowledge necessary to tame nature. At this point nature was seen as the cause of many of humankind's woes: unpredictable weather could ruin crops, floods could wipe out towns, vegetation could overgrow property, diseases decimated populations. As the scientists gained more and more knowledge they began to hope that they could learn to control or even eliminate nature's ravages. Humans were not thought of as being part of nature. Humans were superior to nature. Nature was valued only insofar as it could supply us with useful resources. In this conceptual climate our current global mindset was born.

The Fearful Mindset

The mindset outlined in the table below is the default mindset of the western world. It is a mindset based in the assumption of independently existing selves. This mindset often justifies aggressive and even abusive behaviours. *It is essentially a Fearful Mindset because it sees the world as separate from the individual and, therefore, a source of possible threats and dangers*. As a result it emphasizes pessimism over optimism; better to be safe than sorry where survival is on the line. It is this

inherently biased mindset that leads us to horde resources, expect the worst, overestimate possible threats, seek comfort in exclusionary in-groups, and strive to control other people and external circumstances.

The Fearful Mindset (Default Mindset)

Need	Default Value	Means
1. Physiological Needs	Access to Physical Requirements	Acquisition of food, warmth, water, air (hunting, gathering, constructing)
2. Safety Need	Rigid boundaries and categories	Fortifications Hyper-vigilance Removal or prevention of physical threats Exclusion
3. Security Need	Wealth (ensured resources)	Accumulating resources by taking, acquiring, hoarding
4. Membership Need	Tribal Membership	Vying for inclusion by seeking approval, submission, pleasing others, showing off

Need	Default Value	Means
5. Need for Status	Dominance	Popularity Manipulation Influence Power Exploitation Control
6. Need for Meaning	Personal Meaning	Valuing people and things in terms of how they make you feel about yourself and how they affect your status
7. Need for Purpose	Personal Success	Social Hierarchy (comparison with others) Competition Expediency Achieving superior status relative to others

Underlying the default Fearful Mindset of modern civilization is an assumption about our way of being in the world. The assumption is this: *We are independent, separately-existing entities living in a world of other independent, separately-existing entities and, as such, we are painfully vulnerable.* Evidence supporting this assumption seems to be all around us. We appear to live in a world of things such as trees, rocks, houses, coffee cups, lamps,

buses, roads, etc. We, ourselves, are things separate from other things. We interact with other people and other things. I pick up a ball and throw it for my dog to chase. I am not the ball that I throw and I am not the dog that chases it. Having an existence separate from other things I am subject to injury and vulnerable to emotional trauma. Other people and things can cause me harm. My survival is always at risk. Our survival needs have evolved to compel us to take actions to help us deal with or avoid "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" constantly being flung at us by other people, things, and events.

From our perspective as separate and vulnerable life forms our needs can be seen to be protective urges. We are urged to seek food, water, air, and warmth. We are urged to seek safety, a stable source of resources, membership in groups, status, personal meaning, and personal success. And always there is the underlying fear that we may not be able to satisfy one or more of these needs. We live our lives with the background suspicion that things can go horribly wrong at any time. This is the way of the Fearful Mindset. Much of the time it's not a whole lot of fun. But don't despair, hope is still an option.

The Downside of Default Values

Looking at the means we employ in order to satisfy our instinct for survival (as outlined in The Fearful Mindset table above), it becomes apparent that these means are primarily self-centred and short-sighted. They are methods used to enhance the chances of individual survival now and in the immediate future. They pay little heed to the survival of those outside our tribal affiliations (unless their survival somehow enhances our own chance of survival) or to the health of the environment that

supports us. These means tend not to consider any long term consequences of actions taken according to their prescriptions.

The means we use to satisfy our need for security may include taking and hoarding resources. Another word to describe this behaviour is greed and it plays out in the world when individuals, corporations, or governments seek to accumulate more resources than is necessary for their survival. When one percent of the population controls most of the wealth of a nation, the resulting economic inequity is unsustainable. The problem with "trickle-down" economics is there is little or no trickle-down.

Those at the top tend to horde the wealth while those at the low end of the economic spectrum become increasingly less able to meet their physiological needs let alone their higher survival needs such as meaning and purpose.

INCOME GROWTH
Over previous 34 years

But now, the very affluent
(the 99.999th percentile)
see the largest income growth.

The poor and middle
class used to see the
largest income growth.

99.99th percentile

In 1980

99th percentile

In 2014

5th percentile

99th percentile

0   10th   20th   30th   40th   50th   60th   70th   80th   90th   100th

← *Lower Income*   **INCOME PERCENTILE**   *Higher Income* →
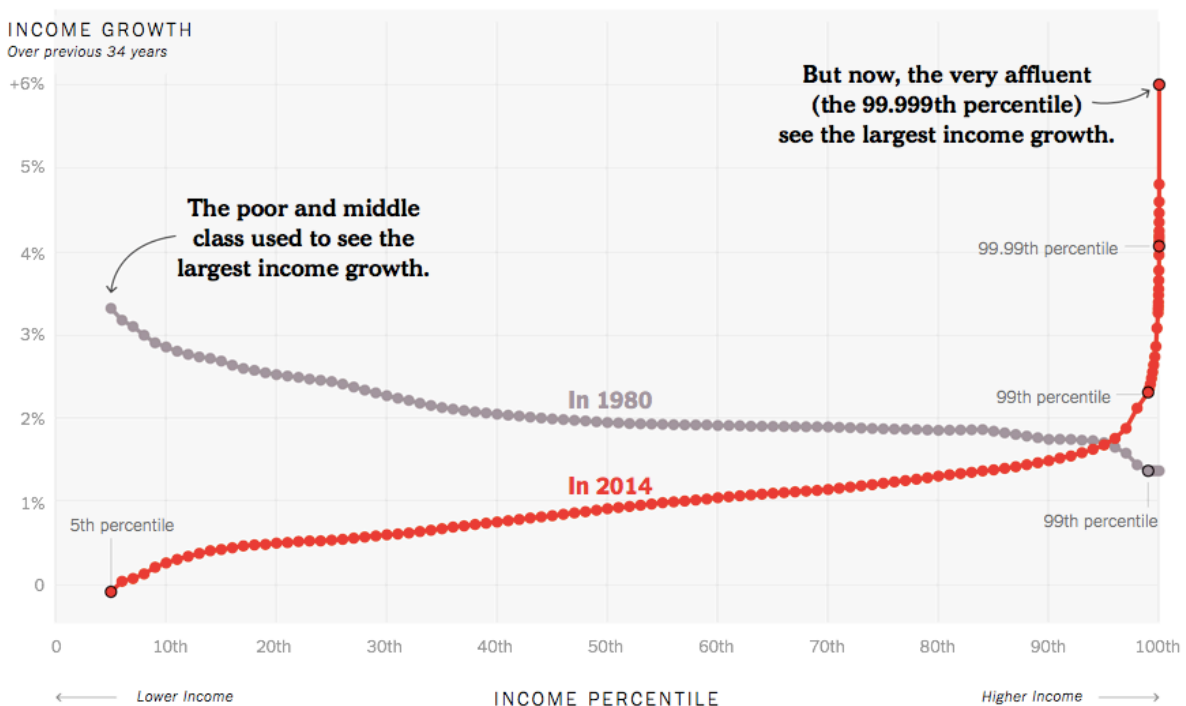
Note: Inflation-adjusted annual average growth using income after taxes, transfers and non-cash benefits.

From *Our Broken Economy, In One Simple Chart* by David Leonhardt - New York Times, August 7, 2017

As the number of people in this situation increases so does the potential for civil unrest. Marie Antoinette famously quipped, "Let them eat cake." when starving French peasants complained of not have bread to eat. Today there are ridiculously wealthy billionaires who are equally scornful of the poor. Occupy Wall Street was a reaction to the economic inequities existing today. I doubt it will be the last such demonstration as that inequity shows no signs of waning. The rich continue to get richer and the poor continue to get poorer.

In seeking to satisfy our need for status we may think that the manipulation and dominance of others is required in order for us to control our own destinies. Climbing a corporate ladder may require us to step on a few fingers to reach the next rung but so be it if that's what it takes to succeed.

Personal success, measured by comparison to others either in social or financial status, requires us to compete and win against others. While competition is not inherently dangerous, it becomes so when we see winning at all costs as a necessity to achieving personal success. And then there is the question of playing fair. The news informs us regularly of people who have been caught lying or cheating in their mad quests for financial gain. You may remember Bernie Madoff.

The Madoff investment scandal was a major case of stock and securities fraud discovered in late 2008. In December of that year, Bernard Madoff, the former NASDAQ Chairman and founder of the Wall Street firm Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, admitted that the wealth management arm of his business was an elaborate Ponzi scheme.

Wikipedia

Thus pursuing our survival needs in the context of our default Fearful Mindset can lead to problematic outcomes. Because the needs, values, and means of our Fearful Mindset are so ingrained in the cultures of the world, such problematic outcomes are not restricted to interpersonal interactions. Our need to belong to a group makes perfect sense from a survival standpoint. There is, after all, strength in numbers. The downside to meeting the need for membership from our default mindset is that as we identify ourselves with a particular group (family, nation, religion, race, etc.) we tend to see the survival of the group as being crucial to our own survival. We may then become willing to defend our groups at all costs, even to the death. This is known as tribalism and it is often couched in such positive sounding ideals as "loyalty" and "patriotism". Tribalism is characteristic of international socio-political interactions and can be observed all over today's world. International competition for control of territory, resources, or ideology continues to result in violent conflicts in many parts of the world. Robert Wright in *Why Buddhism is True* states, "I consider tribalism the biggest problem of our time." He contends that moving beyond the

constricted concerns of tribalism to a more global perspective is crucial to the survival of our species.

Scott Atran and his research colleagues interviewed captured ISIS fighters, Kurdistan Workers Party members, and other fighters who are battling against ISIS. They wanted to understand what drove the fighters to be willing to attack and die for a cause.

> The researchers discovered that three crucial factors motivate both ISIS fighters and those fighting them: a deep commitment to sacred values, the readiness to forsake family for those values, and the perceived spiritual strength of the group or community that the fighter represents.
>
> *What Motivates ISIS Fighters - and those who fight against them by Jacqueline Howard, CNN*

These fighters were meeting their needs of membership, meaning, and purpose according to their inherent default values. Tribal Membership is the default value for meeting the need of membership. The fighters would have valued being part of a tightly unified and devoted group. In addition, they would have felt their lives had personal, even sacred, meaning. An exceptionally strong sense of purpose would have also been supplied by fighting and even dying for a noble (to them) cause.

Like our need to be members of groups, our other survival needs also have global implications. When your primary concern is personal survival within a tribe that must be defended no matter the cost, conflicts with other individuals or groups attempting to

meet their equally compelling needs are inevitable. In a world with devices capable of destroying the planet such conflicts could be catastrophic.

Our survival needs could paradoxically drive us to extinction.

Natural selection was not anticipating international terrorism or the existence of nuclear weapons when it cobbled together our neural survival programming.

Because our Fearful Mindset is instilled without our being consciously aware of the process, it is only natural that we tend to view it as just the way things are. It seems perfectly normal. We have seen how values and means arise to serve meeting our survival needs. These values and means conspire to keep us unwittingly trapped in the Fearful Mindset's view of ourselves as separate, disconnected individuals. How, we wonder, could it be otherwise? The answer is that without a fundamental shift in how we perceive our selves in the world, things will never be any other way. It is precisely this kind of shift in how we view our place in the grand scheme of things and the means to accomplish such a shift that we will be exploring in the coming pages.

Pros and Cons of the Fearful Mindset

The default values of the Fearful Mindset are concerned with the survival of individual humans and the continuance of our species. If the underlying need of a default value is not met we experience some form of fear or discomfort which evolved to motivate us to take action in the service of meeting that need. In situations _where there really is an immediate threat to our lives_, our fight-or-flight reaction is entirely appropriate and necessary. We need to take action to stay alive and the unpleasant

sensations of discomfort compel us to do just that. In such situations it makes sense to be concerned with basic survival skills, safety, belonging (availability of physical support by others), status and personal understanding because these are things that can keep us alive in emergency situations. A failure to meet one or more of our needs can put us in mortal danger.

Need	Threat if need is not met
Physiological	Illness
Safety	Physical Danger
Security	Risk
Membership	Isolation
Status	Over-dependence, control/domination by others
Meaning	Confusion
Purpose	Lack of direction, personal failure

Each of these threats can potentially lead to a failure to survive. They are literally *life* threatening. We are justified in calling them *survival* needs.

Even though most problems we face today are not life threatening emergencies our nervous systems still invoke Fearful bodily sensations in an effort to motivate us to avoid imagined or possible mortal threats. This is our default problem solving response but in cases where no immediate physical threat is present it may not be the most appropriate response.

The human instinct to survive is our most powerful drive. Since animals climbed out of the primordial muck and our early ancestors rose from all fours to walk upright, natural selection

has produced adaptations that help us survive and reproduce. Just about everything that humans have become — how we think, what emotions we experience, and the ways we behave and interact with others — serves that essential purpose.

> Daniel Kahneman, a psychologist who won the 2002 Nobel Prize for Economics, has demonstrated that how we think has clear evolutionary value. The way we process and remember information, solve problems, and make decisions, what he calls "cognitive biases," don't always result in the most accurate or best outcomes, but they are most efficient in terms of time and energy expenditure and "good enough" for our survival.

> *By Dr. Jim Taylor in the Huffington Post*

Default values are concerned with protecting a separate, independent organism. If all we have is our Fearful Mindset it is likely we might adopt a Fearful outlook and suffer from some level of persistent anxiety. Cynicism tends to see threats almost everywhere. There is an expectation that things are going to go wrong sooner or later. The world is a hostile environment full of uncertainty, risk, and danger. It is little wonder that anxiety related mental issues are so widespread in the modern world. Our Fearful Mindset predisposes us to anxiety.

It should be obvious by now that our Fearful Mindset is not something we want to get rid of entirely. Whenever we face real danger it may serve us well. It may actually save us from harm. In these situations our Fearful Mindset is a useful feature of the brain, not a bug. It's in non-emergency situations that we have some wiggle room. When our lives are not immediately at risk,

we are not necessarily trapped in our default Fearful Mindset. In these situations some flexibility is possible and herein lies a chance for hope. I don't have time to think when a harried driver runs a red light right in front of me. My reaction had better be instantaneous. There are times for default reactions and there are times for more flexible thinking.

Turning To Nature:
A Hopeful Mindset

The Fearful Mindset is predicated on the assumption that we are separate, independently existing creatures, but if we look closely we find that this is not actually true. The fact that we have survival needs is an indication that we depend on things in our environment and are therefore not completely self-sufficient, independent organisms. Like all living things we depend on other living and non-living things for our existence.

A more accurate term than *independent* to describe our conditional existence is *interdependent*. Observing nature with an interdependent perspective we observe webs of life forms interacting with each other and their environments to sustain their existences. From this interconnected viewpoint it becomes obvious that our survival as individuals and as a species are dependent on the wellbeing of the ecosystems in which we exist. A threat to the ecosystem is a threat to our individual lives. *Understanding the truth about our interdependent nature forces us to re-examine what is important to meeting our needs*. We are forced to question our culturally inherited Fearful values with respect to our more

enlightened understanding of the nature of our interdependent lives.

> The reality today is that we are all interdependent and have to co-exist on the small planet.

> *Dalai Lama*

Our culturally inherited Fearful Mindset predisposes us to arrive at some negative assumptions about the nature of existence. The life of an independent individual is a life of continued uncertainty leading us to frequently experience some level of unease or anxiety. Were there no alternative possible, ours would be a very bleak existence. Fortunately, an alternative mindset is possible. However, because it is largely overshadowed by the dominant independent mindset it requires a thorough understanding of its features and some serious effort to bring about.

It has been noted that our primal survival drive expresses itself in particular needs. These needs are fundamental to the wellbeing of ourselves and of our species. As such they should not be ignored. They are fundamentally necessary. Thus, when we speak of an alternate mindset to the Fearful Mindset it should not be thought of as a replacement for our default mindset but as an auxiliary mindset that can be employed when the situation is not an emergency and there is time for thoughtful decision making.

In the case of the Fearful Mindset it was demonstrated that for each need there is a default value. These values arise without conscious thought. No effort or even understanding is necessary for any of this to occur. In contrast, any alternate mindset will need to be consciously established and will require an understanding of its workings along with prescribed strategies for

creating it. Most crucially, it will need to be based on a different understanding of the nature of individuality. The Fearful Mindset rests on the unexamined assumption that we are each independently existing selves living in a world of independently existing things. All of the values of the Fearful Mindset are predicated on this belief.

A viable alternative mindset will need to proceed from a different view of the nature of individuality. The mindset that I am proposing in this work is based on the view of the individual as a phenomenon that arises out of interdependent relationships with other interdependent entities. This view of individuality is an ecological perspective and is in line with environmental concerns regarding a sustainable planet. In the ecological view, living things exist in webs of interdependent relationships mutually sustained in a supportive environment. In such an ecosystem disturbing the delicate balance of any part of the system affects the entire ecosystem. All life forms are dependent on other life forms and on their environment for their existence.

It is obvious to any observant person that her physical existence is dependent on her environment and on other living things for her wellbeing. What may be less obvious is that these dependencies are in direct conflict with the assumption that we are each separate, independently existing selves. And yet, this is precisely the situation that the Fearful Mindset assumes. Could it be that our culturally inculcated Fearful Mindset is not in line with our actual circumstances? I will argue that this is indeed the case.

Evolution works to enhance the suitability of lifeforms for an environment. In the case of human beings it has produced a life-form that is very well adapted to survive in Earth's various

environments. The cynical Fearful Mindset with its emphasis on being constantly on the lookout for possible threats to our wellbeing is an important element in the survival of our species. In fact, this is all evolution "cares" about. It has no interest in how such a mindset makes you feel. And it has no interest in whether or not the Fearful Mindset aligns with the facts of our interdependent existence. All that matters, in evolutionary terms, is whether or not such a mindset results in the continuing survival of the species. In this regard evolution has done its job. We are surviving (so far) as a species.

This being the case it is unlikely that evolution will produce an upgraded default mindset in the foreseeable future. Without the hope that natural selection will come to our rescue we are forced to recognize that it will be up to us to design a mindset that takes into account the reality of our interdependent existence. Our primal survival needs are not negotiable so we must turn our attention to the values and means associated with satisfying them. Any new values that we come up with should be in alignment with the facts of our existence, that is to say, with the interdependent, ecological view of living things and their supporting environments.

> Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it.
>
> *Laudato Si' by Pope Francis (2015)*

The Hopeful Mindset - An Enlightened Point of View

Enlightenment is a term with many definitions. It is sometimes used to refer to a state of mind that transcends the material world. It can also refer to a state of oneness with all creation. However, there are other less metaphysical understandings of what it means to be enlightened. The type of enlightenment I would like to propose might be called *empirical enlightenment* because it refers to an understanding of reality that is grounded in observable facts. Fundamental to this understanding of reality is the recognition of the interconnectedness of all things. In this view an enlightened person is someone who is aware of the interdependence of existence and who lives according to the implications of this realization. In terms of our discussion of mindsets an enlightened person is someone who has internalized the interdependence-based Hopeful Mindset (see table below) and, as a consequence, lives a life consistent with the values of this mindset. *An enlightened person acts hopefully in the world because hope is justified within the Hopeful Mindset.*

The Biological Mind

By perceiving virtual barriers between our brains and our bodies—and by extension between our brains and the rest of the world—we see people as more independent and self-motivated than they truly are, and we minimize the connections that bind us to each other and to the environment around us.

In upholding the brain-body distinction, *the cerebral mystique* also contributes to chauvinistic attitudes about our brains, minds, and selves, such as the egotism of successful leaders and professionals and the "us versus them" attitudes of war and politics.

Jasanoff, Alan (2018). The Biological Mind: How Brain, Body, and Environment Collaborate to Make Us Who We Are.

Because of its tendency to result in cynicism, fear, and anxiety the Fearful Mindset may be thought of as a mindset of despair. An antidote to despair is hope. A mindset designed to offset the biases of the Fearful Mindset might be called a Hopeful Mindset. Such a mindset would include hopeful values based on an interdependent ecological view of life. Because these values are in line with the facts of our interdependent existence we will refer to them as hopeful values to differentiate them from the Fearful values of the default Fearful Mindset. Hopeful, in this sense, simply means that these values, because they are consistent with the interdependent nature of existence, have a real chance of promoting the creation of a better future.

Need	Hopeful Values
Basic Physiological Need	Vitality
Safety Need	Resiliency
Security Need	Sustainability
Membership Need	Inclusive Connection
Need for Status	Personal Responsibility
Meaning Need	Humility
Purpose Need	Personal Contribution

"The change of mind I am talking about involves not just a change of knowledge, but also a change of attitude toward our essential ignorance, a change in our bearing in the face of mystery. The principle of ecology, if we will

take it to heart, should keep us aware that our lives depend on other lives and upon processes and energies in an interlocking system that, though we can destroy it, we can neither fully understand nor fully control. And our great dangerousness is that, locked in our selfish and myopic economies, we have been willing to change or destroy far beyond our power to understand."

Wendell Berry

The values of the Hopeful Mindset shown in the chart above support the interdependent ecological view of living things as opposed to the view of living things as independent, separately existing entities. The values of the Hopeful Mindset are hopeful because they are indicative of realistic and practical means by which we can work to build a better future. If individuals make choices based on the values of the Hopeful Mindset, outcomes will tend to contribute to a future more in line with the facts of interdependent existence and therefore a future more supportive of life and a hopeful future.

The capacity of interdependent values to affect these kinds of outcomes is not only because they are supportive of an interdependent world individually but also because they function interdependently. Looking at the Hopeful Mindset Values Hexagram* below it can be seen that each individual value is interconnected with five other values.

The values shown in the hexagram are not the only values associated with the interdependent perspective of The Hopeful Mindset. They are representative of the kinds of values that arise from the interdependent worldview.
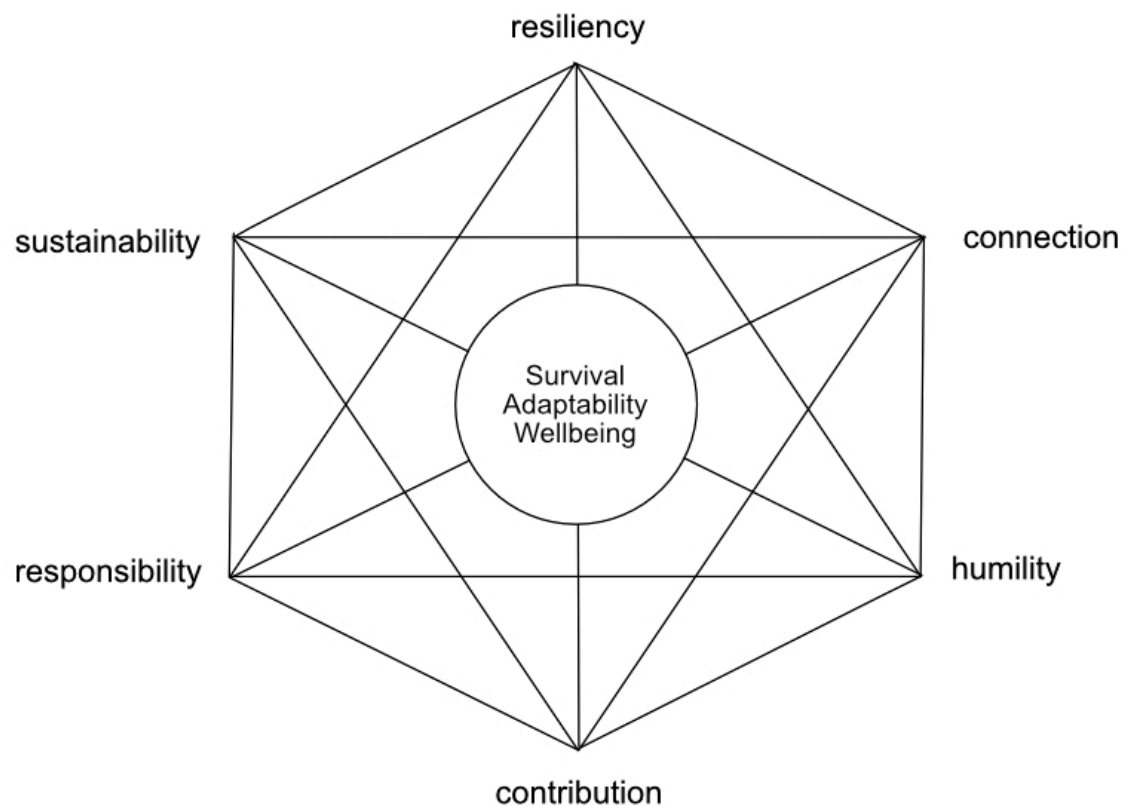
Hopeful Mindset Values Hexagram

For example, the sustainability value is connected to each of the other 5 values.

sustainability +

resiliency	To be sustainable a system must be able to recover from perturbations.

connection	Sustainability depends on interdependent interactions.
responsibility	Sustainability requires that humans take responsibility for the choices they make.
humility	Humility includes understanding that we are not masters over nature but just a part of it.
contribution	We must all participate in establishing and maintaining sustainable systems.

Because of the interactions between the values of the interdependent perspective, these values are not merely a set of individual values but are actually a *system* of values. The interactions between the individual values create an integrated dynamic that has more power to bring about desirable outcomes than any of the individual values on their own.

This is good news in these days of uncertainty and turmoil. Here is something we can rely on. Living life on the basis of the The Hopeful Mindset's values system provides a trustworthy footing for making decisions and taking actions. Moreover, do so contributes to the creation of a better world.

> If we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously.
>
> *Laudato Si' by* Pope Francis (2015)

I think it is fair to say that in Pope Francis' use of the term "sobriety" he is referring to something similar to the hopeful value of personal responsibility.

As with the Fearful Mindset there are typical strategies employed by individuals to meet their needs. But, in contrast to the means of the Fearful Mindset, the activities engaged in by someone with a Hopeful Mindset work to create circumstances that are in accordance with the interdependent nature of existence and are therefore supportive of life in general and of human beings in particular.

Hopeful Mindset - Hopeful Means

Need	Hopeful Values	Hopeful Means
Basic Physiological Need	Vitality	- exercise - diet - yoga - relaxation - meditation
Safety Need	Resiliency	- learning skills and knowledge - learning about the Hopeful Mindset - courage - determination - self compassion
Security Need	Sustainability	- choosing sustainable solutions with interdependency in mind - conservation of resources - big picture/long term planning

Need	Hopeful Values	Hopeful Means
Membership Need	Inclusive Connection	- compassion - acts of kindness - supporting others - giving and seeking help - respect - humility - empathy - connection
Need for Status	Personal Responsibility	- responding mindfully - self awareness - facing fears - learning - understanding interdependency - taking value-based action to build a better future
Meaning Need	Humility - our interdependent place in nature	- gratitude - appreciation - respecting the limitations of interdependent existence - valuing things in terms of their relationships to the well-being of the systems within which they exist - acceptance of natural vulnerability
Purpose Need	Personal Contribution	- contributing to wellbeing of others and larger systems by applying personal skills and knowledge. - long term planning - big picture perspective

An examination of the means employed in the Hopeful Mindset to meet our survival needs reveals ways of behaving that can contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful future. These behaviours have the capacity to create a better world. Overall the Hopeful Mindset presents us with an alternative to the default Fearful Mindset that is true to the facts of our interdependent existence while at the same time providing us with effective ways of meeting our individual survival related needs.

> "Man's mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions."
>
> *Oliver Wendell Holmes J*r.

Ecomorality

Ecomorality encompasses our relationship with the rest of the planet and is informed by our understandings of the natural world. The Hopeful Mindset takes our relationship with the rest of the planet seriously. Ursula Goodenough, author of *The Sacred Depth of Nature* and president of the Religious Naturalist Association (religious-naturalist-association.org), has posited three key components of ecomorality: interrelatedness, interdependence, responsibility. The Hopeful Mindset encompasses these components of ecomorality. The values of the Hopeful Mindset are in complete accord with the values of eco-morality.

What About Individuality?

Because it recognizes the interdependent nature of existence the Hopeful Mindset may seem to downplay the importance of individuality but this is not the case. At the heart of

interdependency are the interactions between individual (but not independent) phenomena. Individual atoms interact to produce molecules, molecules interact to produce more complex compounds, species interact to form ecosystems, people interact to create societies. At every level natural phenomena emerge out of the interactions of individual entities. The perspective of the Hopeful Mindset focuses on the interdependent nature of individual (but not separate) things within interdependent systems.

Within this perspective an individual human being is seen to exist through interdependent, interacting systems from the cellular level, to bodily systems, and all the way up to the level of the entire organism. And the interdependency does not stop there. Human organisms exist in interdependent interaction with each other and with their environment. Far from being just a cog in some universal machine a person is seen to be continuous with and inseparable from the whole of all existence and yet still an individual of significance who can be of real value in the world. Once this reality is fully understood the difficulty comes in trying to live according to this new understanding of our place in the world.

Comparing the Mindsets

In their book, The Wise Advocate, authors Art Kleiner, Jeffrey Schwartz, and Josie Thompson include a simple, clear diagram to distinguish between unconscious reactions to circumstances and conscious deliberate responses to the same circumstances. In as much as operating from The Fearful Mindset is largely a case of reacting habitually according to unconsciously acquired values,

this way of living in the world is analogous to the Low Ground
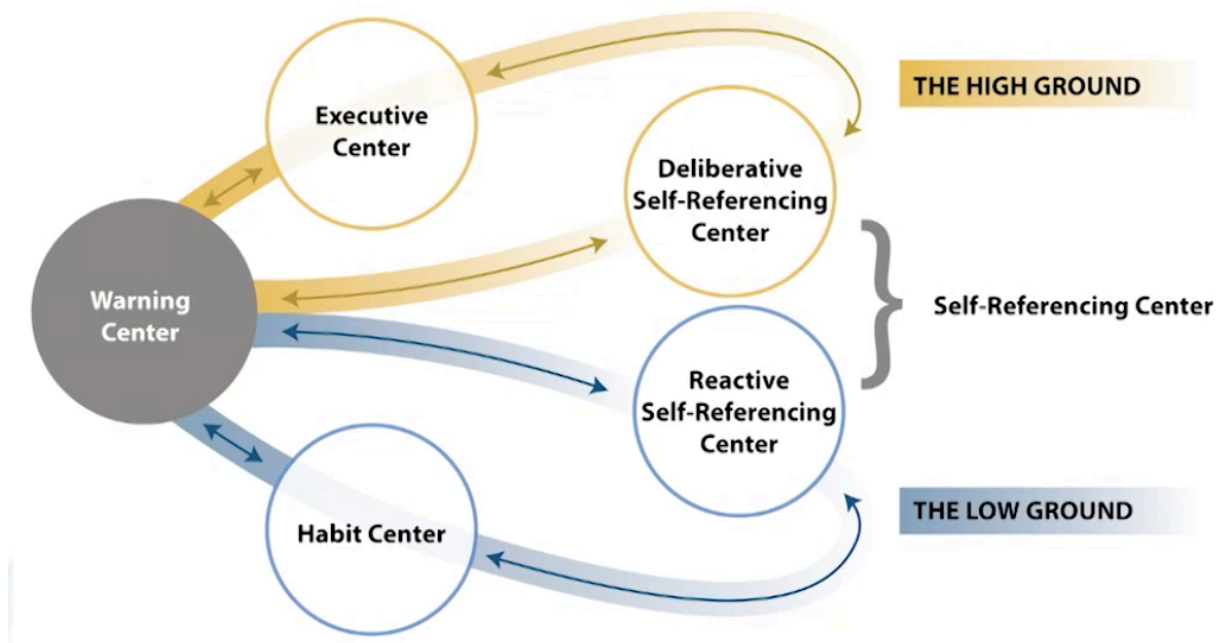
circuit shown in the following diagram.

https://vimeo.com/313416611

The circuit of the High Ground in the diagram corresponds closely with acting in agreement with The Hopeful Mindset's values. The brain's "executive centre" gets involved in responding to a situation making it possible to consciously choose a thoughtful rather than reactive response to the circumstances. The double ended arrows in both the Low Ground and High Ground circuits emphasizes the circular nature of being involved in one or the other of these mindsets. Without being consciously involved we will usually gravitate to the Low Ground circuit. It takes conscious awareness and effort to elevate our perspective to the High Ground circuit. The good news is that the more consistently we remember to respond from the perspective of The Hopeful Mindset the more habituated responding in this way becomes.

Creating a Hopeful Mindset

Your Fearful Mindset was installed without your conscious knowledge by the culture in which you grew up. It influences all aspects of your life. Decisions and choices you make are predicated on it. Your reactions to situations are automatically determined by it. In other words, it is the path of least resistance. Acquiring a Hopeful Mindset will take some work. The question then is how to build a Hopeful Mindset while at the same time being constantly accosted by our primal survival urges and our Fearful Mindset's values. As I have said all along, it is not possible or desirable to delete the Fearful Mindset or the needs it was designed by natural selection to meet. What we need is something in addition to the Fearful Mindset. We need to build a robust mindset capable of overriding the Fearful Mindset whenever doing so is appropriate. We need The Hopeful Mindset.

> The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones, which ramify, for those brought up as most of us have been, into every corner of our minds.
>
> *John Maynard Keynes*

Implementing The Hopeful Mindset

We can only choose from options that we know exist. As members of Western Civilization we have been operating under the sway of The Fearful Mindset, largely unaware of its pervasive influence over nearly every aspect of our lives. The choices and decisions we have made have most often been made according to its values. Fortunately, there is now another option on the table

and we have an opportunity to get out from under the oppressive shadow of The Fearful Mindset.

Awareness, Understanding, Commitment, Practice

We have already taken the first step: becoming aware of a workable alternate mindset capable of meeting our needs in sustainable and compassionate ways. Hopefully, we have covered The Hopeful Mindset and its values in sufficient detail in these pages to come to an adequate understanding of the ways in which it can guide us to a better future. Understanding The Hopeful Mindset is one thing but committing to live your life according to its implications is another. Making such a commitment involves changing the way we live in the world. It means taking the values of The Hopeful Mindset into account in day to day choices and decisions. Take transportation as an example. Will you go by bus, bike, foot, or car? The hopeful values can help make a choice such as this. Of course, situational factors must also be considered such as distance, weather, and which options are actually available. But the inclusion of the hopeful values in the process means that whenever it is appropriate to the situation, responsible, sustainable, and compassionate choices will likely be made.

Living according to The Hopeful Mindset's interdependent values is a practice, much like a spiritual practice. We must be consistent in our practice if it is to be effective in creating a better future. Any successful cultural change begins with an idea of a new way to live in the world. If the idea is seen by individuals as a better way forward they may make the leap and begin living according to the implications of the new way. For The Hopeful Mindset to catch on in a meaningful way the considerable

inertia imposed by The Fearful Mindset must be overcome. For this to happen there needs to be a mounting groundswell of individuals and groups adopting this different way of being in the world. If we can reach a critical mass of individuals and groups practicing the principles of The Hopeful Mindset a tipping point could be achieved that would greatly accelerate the cultural transitions that so desperately need to be made.

Uncoupling From The Fearful Mindset

To begin living from the values of The Hopeful Mindset it will be helpful to have strategies in place that we can turn to when we recognize situations where The Fearful Mindset is not our best option. Learning to become more mindful of our mental processes is crucial in this endeavour.

A strategy used by some for managing the default mindset's inappropriate influences is meditation. In the west, meditation has become quite popular in recent times. An aim of some schools of meditation is to encourage awareness of three troublesome aspects of human existence: impermanence, suffering, and an assumption about the nature of the self. I should point out here that the problems related to these aspects of our experience are direct consequences of our Fearful Mindset and its underlying assumption of a separate independent self. Some meditation practices aim to illuminate unconscious assumptions about these issues and thereby loosen their grip on our lives. I suspect that meditation can indeed promote the internalization of the implications of interdependency.

It's important to remember that to begin living the interdependent viewpoint does not require fully internalizing

every aspect of interdependency or years of practice. *It requires only a familiarity with the basic concept of interdependence and its implications along with a willingness to engage in informed ways of meeting our human survival needs.*

The Hopeful Mindset as I have outlined it in this work is intended to provide a simple, easily understood framework for arriving at a sound understanding of the interdependent nature of existence, particularly as it applies to our inherent survival needs. The Hopeful Mindset supplies immediately actionable ways of starting to build a better world today. It is my hope that, by reading this book, you will gain sufficient insight into the misconceptions of the Fearful Mindset and that you will arrive at an internalization of the fundamental principles of interdependent existence. As a result of arriving at this this new perspective it is hoped that you will suffer less from the negative consequences of holding a Fearful Mindset perspective and be moved to contribute to creating a better future.

> Destiny is not a matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for. It is a thing to be achieved.
>
> *William Jennings Bryan*

Mindfulness and The Hopeful Mindset

While meditation may be helpful in instilling the Hopeful Mindset there is a practice that I think is absolutely essential for living in accordance with hopeful values. I am referring here to *mindfulness*.

I believe there may be some confusion over the distinction between mindfulness and meditation. This is probably in part due

to the term Mindfulness Meditation so frequently seen in the media. However, mindfulness and meditation, while often practiced together, should not be used interchangeably.

Meditation is a practice that involves sitting still for a period of time while focusing attention in some way. It is often used to calm the mind and may be enlisted as a means to achieve certain spiritual goals. Mindfulness, on the other hand, can simply be defined as the state of being consciously aware of something. Since being aware of something involves focusing attention on the object of awareness, various types of mindfulness may be included in a meditation session as a way to focus the mind. The most common mindfulness technique used in meditation is mindfulness of the breath. The meditator attempts to focus exclusively on his or her breath. Anyone who has ever tried this knows that it is deceptively difficult to maintain a focus on the breath for an extended period of time.

Mindfulness can be used to focus awareness at any time and in almost any situation. In terms of making a shift from the Fearful Mindset to the Hopeful Mindset it will be necessary to learn to become aware of when default Fearful survival values are urging you to satisfy your needs. If you are aware of these urges and the underlying default values they represent you can choose between your default reactions to them and more thoughtful responses based on the values of The Hopeful Mindset.

Mindfulness involves

noticing urges without fighting or judging them. The urges of the survival needs manifest themselves in the form of physical sensations. If we practice being mindful of urges as they arise, with a curious approach rather than an evaluative one, we can then choose Hopeful Mindset value related means to satisfy our needs when circumstances permit.

Mindful awareness can be used to intervene in the otherwise automatic, often unconscious default reactions to survival urges. It can do this, for example, by using the time available in non-emergency situations to contemplate the long term consequences of default reactions as well as their short term efficacy and comparing them to mindful responses based on the values of The Hopeful Mindset. By suspending automatic default reactions the option to engage in more hopeful means of needs satisfaction becomes available. If these means are then used to meet our survival needs the pleasure and satisfaction of doing so will be experienced, thus helping to reinforce future uses of the hopeful means of needs satisfaction. This virtuous circle can then result in the formation of *hopeful habits*; responses based on interdependence that we habitually engage in when meeting our survival needs.

Practicing mindful awareness of thoughts and feelings allows the possibility of strengthening The Hopeful Mindset to the point where it is capable of consistently overriding the Fearful Mindset.

> *...our wisdom is the point of view from which we come at last to regard the world.*

> *Marcel Proust*

Mindfulness of Interdependence

Mindfulness is generally thought of as the practice of focusing awareness on something presently available to one or more of our senses. What we focus on may depend on what we are drawn to notice or on something we intentionally direct our awareness toward. However, another aspect of mindfulness essential to understanding The Hopeful Mindset involves bringing to mind certain aspects of the interdependent context in which we exist.

The Religious Naturalist Association or RNA (the pun is intended) (religious-naturalist-association.org) was formed to bring together people from around the world who see themselves as religious naturalists and to introduce this concept to those who are not familiar with it. A religious naturalist is a naturalist who has adopted the epic story of the evolution of the universe and life as a core narrative and goes on to explore its religious potential, developing interpretive, spiritual, and moral/ethical responses to the story. In a paper titled "Mindful Virtue, Mindful Reverence" by Ursula Goodenough and Paul Woodruff, the authors identify aspects of our biologically interdependent existence. Being mindful of these features of nature promotes a broader understanding of interdependence in general and the values of the Hopeful Mindset in particular.

In the broadest and deepest sense, the "naturalism" part of religious naturalism is all about mindfulness. Scientists, trained in a particular kind of "pure observation," have provisioned us with stunning understandings of the natural world, and these understandings then provision the religious naturalist with countless substrates for mindful apprehension.

The religious naturalist is called to be mindful of the following understandings from biology:

- Mindful of our place in the scheme of things

- Mindful that life evolved, that humans are primates

- Mindful of the dynamics of molecular life and its emergent properties

- Mindful of the fragility of life and its ecosystems

- Mindful that life and the planet are wildly improbable

- Mindful that all of life is interconnected

- Mindful of the uniqueness of each creature

- Mindful of future generations

Being mindful of the interdependent nature of our existence is essential to understanding the values of The Hopeful Mindset.

Making a Habit of The Hopeful Mindset

If we really want to make operating consistently from the interdependent perspective of The Hopeful Mindset a way of life, this way of life must become our "goto" way of being in the world. To this end we need to establish it as a habitual response to situations where it can be effectively employed. The process by which enduring habits are formed is the subject of The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do In Life and Business by Charles

Duhigg. The author explains that habits are formed when there is

Routine

Cue *Click*

Reward
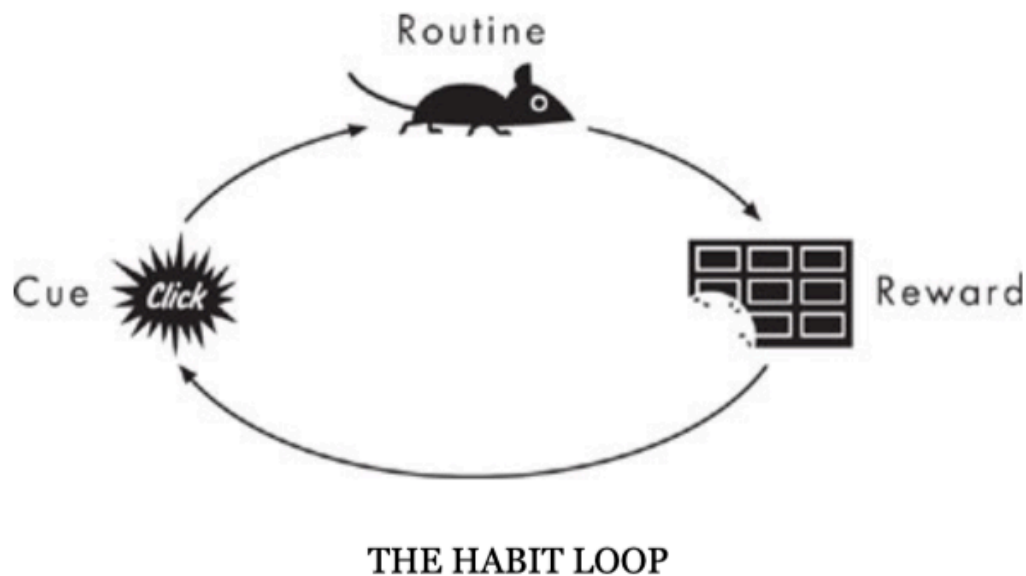
THE HABIT LOOP

a
repetition of a pattern of events he calls The Habit Loop.

In the above diagram the Cue signifies an event to which a response is required. The Routine is the behavioural response to the Cue and the Reward is something that is received for a correct response. This view of establishing habits is not new. Most people will recognize the mechanism as being the process that Ivan Pavlov explored in his classic experiments with salivating dogs. When it comes to the basics of habit formation people are not that different from dogs. Cue -> Routine -> Reward. Repeat as necessary. However, as powerful as this process is Duhigg points out that there is an even more important component to habit formation. This component is craving. If an individual craves a reward that only a specific routine can supply then the probability of the routine being

triggered by the cue increases dramatically which greatly enhances the formation of that routine as a habit.

How, then, can we utilize this pattern in establishing the habit of responding to circumstance from the perspective of The Hopeful Mindset? What will constitute the Cue, Routine, and Reward in this pursuit?

The Hopeful Mindset Habit Loop

The Hopeful Mindset Habit Loop is not complicated and can be applied to a wide variety of circumstances. As we have learned, people are likely to engage in specific behaviours when they crave an outcome that those behaviours can guarantee. In this context, the desirable reward is the satisfaction derived from knowing that you are contributing to a more sustainable and compassionate world. The Cue, in this case, is any situation where a choice needs to be made and where the outcome of the choice is of some importance to you. The situation might be as mundane as choosing what kind of coffee to buy or as critical as making a career change. The Routine will be to use the values of The Hopeful Mindset as criteria for making the choice.

In order for the use of the values of The Hopeful Mindset to become the habitual criteria for choice-making it will be necessary to follow this pattern as often as possible. Repetition is key. Habits are formed by repeatedly responding to cues with the same routine.

Cue -> Routine: choice-making using the values of The Hopeful Mindset -> Reward: knowing you are contributing to a better world. Repeat forever.

The Hopeful Mindset in Practice

The Hopeful Mindset's value corresponding to our need for Status is Personal Responsibility. We must each make the effort to bring about the promise of the Hopeful Mindset. We must learn to act according to the hopeful values of The Hopeful Mindset. Fortunately, there are endless opportunities in our day-to-day lives to fulfill this responsibility.

Life itself presents us with endless opportunities to deepen our awareness of the workings of interdependence and to reorient our daily interactions and experiences accordingly.

> We do not actually need a book to learn about interdependence. Interdependence is happening all around us all the time. It is pervasive. We can easily educate ourselves by simply observing our own experience. Everything we do and sense can become a reminder of the value of interdependence.

> When we sip our tea or coffee, start our car, enter a shop, or exchange greetings with someone while out for a stroll, we are enjoying those experiences as a result of interdependence. All these moments bear direct witness to the workings of interdependence. Such daily occurrences are a continuous procession of opportunities to recognize that others are indispensable to our well-being. They can inspire us continually to appreciate what others are contributing to our happiness, to feel grateful for them, and to treasure them.

> We can use such moments to further our cultivation of humility, confidence, and any of the inner qualities we have determined to deepen. These moments can

transform interdependence from an idea into something we feel and value highly. It is the course of our everyday lives that we can awaken to the reality of our interdependence and begin to live according to the basic underlying principle. When we are fully experiencing interdependent - living it - it is no longer an idea. It has become a way of life - a principled way of life.

Interconnected by Ogyen Trinley Dorje

With an understanding of the Hopeful Mindset we are equipped to focus on its hopeful values as guiding principles as we act to create a better future.

Addressing Global Issues With The Hopeful Mindset

At the outset of this work three global issues were raised as indicative of the challenges we face in the world today. To truly be considered as a means of building a better future, the Hopeful Mindset must have the capacity to address these problems. Its hopeful values should provide guidance toward sustainable solutions to these challenges.

Population Growth

Applicable Hopeful values:
Sustainability
Vitality
Personal Responsibility

The current world population is over 7 billion. It is estimated that the Earth is capable of sustaining a population of around 2 billion people.We have long passed that limit. Population growth is a primary cause of environmental degradation and, therefore, climate change as well. It is essential that as responsible citizens

of the Earth we deal with overpopulation. As interdependent individuals we understand that this is not somebody else's problem. In terms of sustainability it is obvious that we must stem the current population growth rate and perhaps even lower it to a negative value. Many factors such as economic and educational considerations play into this issue but with the guidance of an interdependent perspective afforded by the

hopeful values we have the means to begin to work toward achieving a sustainable population.

Environmental Degradation
  Applicable Hopeful values:
  Sustainability
  Personal Responsibility
  Humility
  Resiliency

Any movement toward a sustainable population will have significant, positive effects in terms of controlling the rate of environmental degradation. The values of Sustainability, Personal Responsibility, and Humility can significantly contribute to environmental stability. Conservation practices are particularly important in this regard. With a focus on sustainability instead of resource accumulation in meeting our Security Need much can be done to steer resource management toward shared resources rather than the hoarding and control of resources by the wealthy and powerful. Humility

encourages us to understand the value of things in terms of how they affect the overall wellbeing of the systems
that support our existences. The means of sustainability as outlined in the Hopeful Mindset are some of the ways we can begin to pursue this goal. To interdependent individuals a healthy environment is supremely meaningful and important.

Climate Change

Applicable Hopeful values:
Sustainability
Personal Responsibility

Improvements in how we understand our interdependence with the environment that sustains us will naturally lead to increased efforts to control the factors contributing to global climate change. Sustainable environmental policies should limit greenhouse gas emissions and reduce other factors involved with climate change. For example, efforts to curb population growth will reduce carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. A reduced population means a reduced demand for cattle which means a reduction in the amount of methane released into the atmosphere. Also, eating less meat can help with this. With an interdependent mindset we can better recognize and address the web of interwoven climate change causes.

In all three areas discussed above Personal Responsibility must play a key role if change is to occur. Population Growth, Environmental Degradation, and Climate Change are everybody's problems. With the interdependent perspective and the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset each of us has the motivation and the means to begin the shared task of confronting these global problems.

You and Me Building a Better Future

There are so many ways we can each make a difference. So many, in fact, that you might be feeling a bit overwhelmed about now. You are not alone. The phenomenon of feeling swamped by too many choices is explored by Barry Schwartz in his book *The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less.* Schwartz contends that being confronted with a large number of options is often counter-productive and can lead to decision-making paralysis. He recommends using some method to narrow the choices down to a comfortable number.

When considering your options for contributing to a better world you may have something already in mind or you may be looking at a variety of possible activities. If you are in the latter category you may want to narrow your options down to a comfortable number that could then each be looked at in more detail. This does not have to be a daunting undertaking. You can do something as simple as picking one that, for whatever reason, appeals to you the most. Or, you could use a more structured approach. For example, you could examine activities that you are considering undertaking and ask yourself how strongly they support each of the seven hopeful values. You could even give each option a score from 1 to 5 for each value. This would result in each activity getting a total score out of 35. Then again, you could also pick one out of a hat.

Regardless of how you come up with an idea it is hoped that the structure of the Hopeful Mindset will provide you with enough security and confidence to do what you can to contribute to a better future for us all and for generations to come.

> Let no one be discouraged by the belief that there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills -- against misery and ignorance, injustice and violence... Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation... It is from the numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man (or

> a woman) stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he (or she) sends a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.
>
> *Robert Francis Kennedy*

Effective Choices

With an understanding of The Hopeful Mindset we can make real choices. By "real" I mean choices that we choose consciously as opposed to choices made for us by automatic and unconscious brain activity. We do not choose the values of our western culture's default Fearful Mindset. They become ingrained in our psyches without our ever knowing it. When we react to situations from our default mindset its default values are the criteria by which our choices are made. It may seem to us that we are doing the choosing but, in fact, our choices are prescribed but the values we have unconsciously adopted. On the other hand, when we consciously apply the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset as choice making criteria in real life situations we are actually making *conscious* choices. We are then making choices in support of a better future.

Advantages of the Hopeful Mindset

Adaptability

The values of the Fearful Mindset are self and/or tribe centric. Applying them in inappropriate situations can be a source of violent conflicts. For example, in meeting the need for security by accumulating resources, little or no recognition is given to the interdependent nature of the world. One party hoarding resources can result in resource shortages for others. While meeting personal or tribal needs, resource accumulation ignores the needs of others and is likely to lead to hostilities. An individual/group that is lacking a particular resource may launch an assault on an individual/group that has an overabundance of that resource, especially if the former individual/group is severely lacking in a resource that is seen to be crucial for survival (physical, social, political, or economic).

The values of the Hopeful Mindset, in contrast, provide guidance that is flexible and that can be applied in a wide variety of circumstances. With the value of Sustainability providing guidance in meeting the need for Security, more thoughtful approaches to resource distribution can be pursued. When successful, such approaches diminish the potential for conflicts arising out of inequities in resource allocation. Peaceful coexistence is supported.

Sustainable Solutions

Hopeful Values foster actions that are appropriate to longterm solutions rather than temporary quick fixes. On the other hand, actions based on Fearful Values often ignore the long term picture in favour of immediate and temporary results. In the above example the hoarding of resources is unlikely to provide stable ongoing relationships between stakeholders. Whereas, some method of fair distribution of resources is more likely to establish

and maintain longterm, respectful relationships between affected parties.

With the rate of change we are experiencing in the world today adaptability to change is more crucial to the survival of our species than it has ever been. The flexible values of the Hopeful Mindset, based on interdependence, can illuminate options for adaptation not available within the narrower scope of the less flexible values of the Fearful Mindset. Also, the choices available in adhering to the values of the Fearful Mindset are primarily restricted to achieving temporary needs gratification while the options stemming from adopting the values of the Hopeful Mindset are more conducive to longterm, practical solutions. Lacking the interdependent perspective, strategies and plans proceeding from Fearful Mindset values will be vulnerable to unforeseen circumstances and unexpected changes in the interdependent relationships that have been ignored. Conversely, planning according to Hopeful Mindset values will naturally take the interdependent nature of existence into account and will, therefore, be inherently more robust and resilient.

The Hopeful Mindset In A Nutshell
The fundamental difference between The Fearful Mindset and The Hopeful Mindset can be boiled down to a simple formula:

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survival needs + assumed place in nature -> values ->
individual behaviour -> society
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The factor that determines the specifics of the values that arise is the assumption regarding our place in nature.

Default (unsupported) Assumption - separate, independent existence

Enlightened (empirical) Assumption - interdependent existence

Need	Default Value	Enlightened Value
Physiological	Access to Physical Requirements - food, water, air, warmth	Vitality
Safety	Rigid Boundaries and Categories	Resilience
Security	Wealth - resource accumulations	Sustainability
Membership	Tribal Membership - strength in numbers	Inclusive Connection
Status	Power	Personal Responsibility
Meaning	Personal Meaning - relative to self concerns	Humility - our place in nature
Purpose	Personal Success - relative to others	Personal Contribution

Since the assumption of an independent existence does not reflect an accurate description of the actual nature of existence, acting on the basis of this assumption always involves the potential for conflicts with reality. The Fearful Mindset is inherently flawed. When we behave as if we were independent individuals we are acting in ways that could be incompatible with

the realities of the interdependent world in which we exist. Consequently, we may suffer and cause the suffering of others.

However, as emphasized throughout this work, we cannot and should not attempt to eradicate our Fearful Mindset. We need it to respond to emergency or time-limited situations. *Thus there will always be a basis for a degree of suffering in our lives*. It is through the mindful application of the hopeful values of The Hopeful Mindset that our suffering can be mitigated. The Hopeful Mindset gives us hope for a better world and the practical means to pursue such a future. The implementation of this mindset constitutes a life-long project for each of us. Because we are interdependent individuals it is a project we all share. It is a gravely necessary undertaking and a supremely worthwhile one.

> A civilization able to envision God and to embark on the colonization of space will surely find the way to save the integrity of this planet and the magnificent life it harbours.

> *E. O. Wilson*

Because they promote greater flexibility and adaptability, hopeful values are actually *more supportive of survival* than the Fearful default values pervading our global society today. Making choices based on hopeful values whenever possible makes sense biologically, environmentally, socially, psychologically, and morally.

> The values of The Hopeful Mindset provide the guidance we need to build a better future. *We must take our interdependent nature to heart and act according to the hopeful values that arise from it.*

Spreading the Word

If you feel that The Hopeful Mindset can contribute to creating a better future please help spread the word by:
- sharing this www.hopefulmindset.com with your friends, family, and acquaintances
- posting the www.hopefulmindset.com to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.
- letting members of any groups you belong to know about it
- using any other way to share The Hopeful Mindset you can thing of

An idea is only as good as it is practical. But even a practical idea is useless unless it is put into practice. If The Hopeful Mindset is to make a difference in our lives we will all need to start living by its values and spreading the message as widely as we can. You

can begin practicing The Hopeful Mindset right now simply by sharing it using the methods listed above. This, in itself, is an act of hope, or; as defined earlier, an act of *justified* hope.

Please help create a better future.

Appendix I:

Practicing Hopeful Values

**NEED: PHYSIOLOGICAL
VALUE: VITALITY**

Our bodies send us signals constantly but unless we pay attention to them we may wind up ignoring the important information they convey. Our bodies are the vehicles through which we are able to act physically in the world to build a better future. As such we need to respect them and look after them by engaging in a healthy lifestyle.

Primary Means
Exercise: strength, flexibility, stamina
Diet: balanced diet, avoiding toxins, portion size
Yoga: body flexibility, calming the mind
Relaxation: techniques (body scan, progressive relaxation, etc.)
Meditation: breath meditation and other meditation practices

World's Greatest Loser

Mike Smith, 57, was warned by doctors to slim down after his 460.5lb bulk was discovered to be the cause of serious health problems.

The father-of-two, from Beighton, near Sheffield, was diagnosed with deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism - a direct result of his fast-food diet and long hours in his cab.

He joined his local Slimming World group, changed his diet and managed to lose more than half his body weight.

His efforts were rewarded today when he was named Slimming World's Greatest Loser 2010.

He said: "I was living on crisps, bottles of pop and chocolate.

"I tried lots of diets but found them all too hard to fit into my daily routine and odd hours. As the weight climbed, my health suffered.

"I had sleep apnoea and found it hard to get about. I did most of my own maintenance on the taxi but I'd struggle to get up from underneath the car."

Mr Smith's dramatic weight loss resulted in a change of lifestyle.

Shedding 28in from his 70in waist has led to a marked improvement in his health and he now advises others on weight loss as a Slimming World Consultant.

He added: "The sleep apnoea has vanished and nowadays I've got so much more energy.

"When you have a 70in waist you don't get very much choice - these days I can buy clothes off the peg and the only problem I have is keeping my trousers up."

Since shedding the pounds Mr Smith has left his job as a taxi driver and now works as a courier.

He said he sometimes finds it hard to believe he is now advising others on weight loss.

He said: "I love meeting new members, especially seeing their mouths drop open when I tell them how much I've lost or show them my 'before' pictures.

"And now I have a life-size cut-out to show them I'm living proof that what seems impossible is possible."

Slimming World's Greatest Loser title is open to members of Slimming World groups from across the UK and is awarded to the entrant with the greatest weight loss, provided some of that weight loss has occurred within the last 12 months with Slimming World.

Reported in independent.co.uk by BY LIAM CREEDON, PRESS ASSOCIATION

NEED: SAFETY
VALUE: RESILIENCY

Building resiliency is about creating mental toughness. It involves acquiring skills and attitudes commensurate with the Hopeful Mindset that can sustain us in challenging times. Resiliency makes us stronger advocates for the creation of a society based on the interdependent perspective.

> Resilience is an excellence we build. We can practice
> it in the choices we make and the actions we take.
> *Resilience: Hard-Won Wisdom for Living a Better Life*
> *by Eric Greitens*

Primary Means

Courage: acting on hopeful values, facing fears and challenges, desensitizing phobias, therapy

Skills: assertiveness training, communication skills, interpersonal skills

Attitudes: adopting Hopeful Mindset values

Knowledge: understanding interdependency and its support for individuality

Option B - Sheryl Sandberg

Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg was on vacation in Mexico in 2015 with her husband and friends when her husband, tech executive Dave Goldberg, passed away unexpectedly of a cardiac arrhythmia.

Sandberg, 47, was left as a single mother of her two children with Goldberg. She writes about recovering from the tragedy and working through the grief in her new book, "Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy."

Here are three takeaways from "Option B" on grief and recovering from tragedy.

1. What you should (and shouldn't) say to someone who is grieving

Sandberg writes that after Goldberg's death she discovered she was "sometimes the friend who avoided painful conversations" because she worried about upsetting the person who was hurt.

"Losing Dave taught me how ludicrous that was," Sandberg wrote, adding that she often "felt invisible" herself after Goldberg's death and was "shocked" by friends who did not ask how she was doing.

"The elephant is always there. By ignoring it, those who are grieving isolate themselves and those who could offer comfort create distance instead," Sandberg wrote. "Both

sides need to reach out. Speaking with empathy and honesty is a good place to start. You can't make the elephant go away. But you can say, 'I see it. I see you're suffering. And I care about you.'"

Sandberg also said she eventually found the courage to explain that it was more helpful if people asked her the more specific question of how she was feeling today, in the moment.

"I did what proved so difficult to do with friends and colleagues face to face: I described how a casual greeting like "How are you?" hurt because it didn't acknowledge that anything out of the

ordinary had happened," she wrote. "I pointed out that if people instead asked, "How are you today?" it showed that they were aware that I was struggling to get through each day."

2. Empathy is nice but encouragement is better
Sandberg draws upon her own experience of returning to work at Facebook to explain how she actually lost self-confidence when colleagues stepped in to pick up the slack for her.

"As people saw me stumble at work, some of them tried to help by reducing pressure. When I messed up or was unable to contribute, they waved it off, saying, 'How could you keep anything straight with all you're going through?,'" she wrote. "In the past, I had said similar things to colleagues who were struggling, but when people said it to me, I discovered that this expression of sympathy actually diminished my self-confidence even more. What helped was hearing, 'Really, I thought you made a good point in that meeting and helped us make a better decision.' Bless you. Empathy was nice, but encouragement was better."

3. Encourage resilience by avoiding the three P's
Sandberg highlights the work of psychologist Martin Seligman who identified three P's that can stunt someone's recovery.

Personalization: The belief that we are at fault.

Pervasiveness: The belief that an event will affect all areas of our life.

Permanence: The belief that the aftershocks of the event will last forever.

"The hardest of the 3 P's for me to process was permanence," Sandberg wrote about her own grief. "For months, no matter what

I did, I felt like the crushing anguish would always be there …
When we're suffering, we tend to project it out indefinitely …

People also overestimated the negative impact of other stressful events."
Speaking of the resilience that can emerge from moving past the three P's, Sandberg said it is what allows you to "breathe again."

"Resilience comes from deep within us and from support outside us. It comes from gratitude for what's good in our lives and from leaning into the suck," she wrote. "It comes from analyzing how we process grief and from simply accepting that grief ... And in those moments that we're able to summon our resilience, we realize that when life pulls you under, you can kick against the bottom, break the surface, and breathe again."

NEED: SECURITY
VALUE: SUSTAINABILITY

The value of sustainability is fundamental to establishing a world society based on the interdependent view of reality. We must strive to create sustainable economies, communities, political systems, energy, and resource management strategies

Primary Means

Conservation: responsible consumer habits, maintenance, reusing, recycling, reducing waste
Resiliency: building the capacity to absorb and adapt to disturbances in systems

Playing Around With Renewable Energy

Successful entrepreneurs often have an "a-ha" moment, and for Jessica O Matthews, it came at her aunt's wedding in Nigeria. While guests celebrated, the power went out – typical for a country with unstable electricity service. When venue workers brought in diesel generators, the party resumed, but Jessica worried how unfazed everyone was about the toxic smell.

"They'd all gotten used to it," says Jessica, who was 19 at the time and   a student at Harvard University. "And yet I knew a safer, more practical option existed."

Later, when brainstorming with friends, she thought of a renewable energy soccer ball that charges up as users play. Essentially it was an eco-friendly, portable generator that also serves as sports

equipment. Three years later, in 2011, the resulting product, Sockket, helped Jessica launch her company, Uncharted Play (U-Play). Kids from all over and even two former US presidents – Barack Obama and Bill Clinton – embraced the ball and, later, a generator jump rope.

Today, Jessica is expanding her company's reach by integrating the technology – called More, which stands for motion-based, off-grid, renewable energy – into other items, harnessing kinetic energy and turning it into a source of power. Uncharted Play has 15 patents based on the tech for its first two legacy products and is working on renewable energy solutions in Africa, too.

> She has a master's in business administration (MBA) from Harvard, her profitable company's gross margins have doubled year-over-year and she's raised $7m in investments – yet Jessica remains grounded and wants to help others.
>
> " For me, it's not just about what we do, but how we do it. We are trying to democratize technology access."
>
> Jessica, 28, recently moved her company to Harlem in New York City to ensure her team remains exposed to ideas for meaningful products that all people will want.

https://www.theguardian.com

NEED: BELONGING
VALUE: INCLUSIVE CONNECTION
With the realization that we are interdependent beings our concern for wellbeing expands beyond the self and the confines of tribal affiliations. We care about others because we understand that they too deserve respect and support and that our own wellbeing is dependent on the wellbeing of others. We truly are all in this together. Respect for diversity is a natural consequence of this understanding as is regard for the environment that sustains us.

Primary Means
Respect: compassion, trust, listening, recognition, love
Empathy: sensing the feelings of another

The Wrecking Ball: A Story of Inclusion
Posted on February 19, 2016 by Chris Wejr

Following a thought-provoking session on inclusion with colleague Diana Wilk at our district pro-d day (as a follow-up to a memorable day spent with Paula Kluth in the fall), I tried to share a story with her but emotionally struggled to get through it. It is a story of inclusion being modelled by kindergarten students and one that we can all learn from.

As in the majority of kindergarten classes, we have some students that struggle with personal space and can demonstrate some behaviours that can be looked at as being socially not acceptable. One student in one of our classes, Justin (not his/her real name), has some challenges and loves to wreck towers, buildings and other things that students have built with blocks, lego, and other items.

Our teacher, who cares deeply about Justin, decided that while Justin was learning that this was not acceptable to wreck other students buildings, she would take a picture of the students' completed tower/building before it was dismantled. As students in kindergarten are often so accepting and patient, this temporary

solution seemed to be working while Justin learned the necessary skills.

A few weeks ago, two girls had created a rather large structure with blocks. They were beaming with pride and asked their teacher to take a photo of their work. While the teacher was going to grab her camera, she heard, "Justin….NO!" and then turned to see Justin run over and smash the structure to pieces. The teacher comforted the two students and then took Justin to a calmer area of the

classroom to once again talk to him and remind him about respecting other people's work and personal space.
After a few minutes of working with Justin, the teacher was interrupted by the two girls asking if they could talk to Justin. They

then brought over Justin to their newly created structure and said, "we built this tower but we need someone to take it down… **will you be our wrecking ball**?" Justin then turned into his own version of a wrecking ball and dismantled the structure as the girls cheered him on. The smiles in the faces of all three students, and the tears in the eyes of the teacher said it all. These students had come up with this inclusive solution on their own. Justin continues to cherish his role as a wrecking ball and is learning to wait until the timing is right to do "his job". This role has enhanced his sense of belonging and created a more positive experience for him and his friends.

Inclusion does not just benefit those who struggle. By creating the conditions for moments like this to happen more often in schools, we can teach and practice the skills of empathy, understanding, and care and support our students in teaching so many of us that inclusion brings out the best in ALL of us.

http://chriswejr.com/2016/02/19/the-wrecking-ball-a-story-of-inclusion/

NEED: STATUS
VALUE: PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
Personal responsibility involves the ability to respond mindfully. We need to take responsibility for being mindful of our mindsets and to operate from the interdependent Hopeful Mindset whenever it is appropriate.

Primary Means
Mindful Responses: being aware of responding thoughtfully
Understanding Interdependence: applying hopeful values
Assistance: offering help, support, contribution

Cleaning Up Our E-Waste Mess

By [Colleen DeBaise](#)

Discarded consumer electronics are clogging landfills, fast-becoming a worldwide environmental calamity. One woman in Tulsa, Okla., is trying to make a dent.

Traci Phillips, 42, started a recycling company, [Natural Evolution](#), more than a decade ago, after realizing the hazards associated with electronic waste. Dead cell phones, dilapidated computers, broken video-game consoles and other thrown-away gadgets are laden with toxins like lead, mercury and arsenic. The United States alone produces three million tons of e-waste a year, a figure that's expected to rise as tech companies churn out new products and consumers snap them up.

Phillips is one of only 66 businesses in the country to be recognized by [e-Stewards](#), a certification program for recyclers that adhere to stringent environmentally and socially responsible practices. Ms. Phillips' company stands out both because it is one of only five e-

Stewards-certified companies to be led by a woman and because it is the only certified company led by a person of Native American descent.

Part Osage and Cherokee, Ms. Phillips worked a variety of jobs, from selling copiers to managing technology projects, before starting Natural Evolution in 2001 in Tulsa, Okla. "My tribe, many years ago, believed we had a responsibility and we were actually stewards of our surroundings and our earth," she says. "It feels like I am fulfilling that."

But collecting e-waste is not a pretty business. "Margins are thin, the work is dirty and the value of material is constantly changing," she says. Inside her 30,000-square-foot facility, workers "de-manufacture" the scores of electronics that come in by the pallet

from clients, including public schools, local hospitals and government agencies. Her employees strip away valuable commodities — steel, aluminum, brass and copper — and minute amounts of precious metals like gold, silver and iridium. Phillips' company charges corporate clients a small fee for dropping off used CRT monitors and televisions, but makes the majority of its money on the back end, selling scrap metal to big recyclers like ECS Refining in Santa Clara, Calif.

Phillips' 13-employee facility takes everything from used printers and keyboards to the occasional coffeemaker and microwave. An average pile of e-waste, Phillips says, might contain about 60 percent metal, while the rest is material that contains toxic components or plastic. For every ton of e-waste, her company can collect about 45 to 58 cents a pound, totalling about $1 million a year in revenue.

Phillips pledges that none of the e-waste that comes her way will wind up in a landfill or be shipped to a developing nation. "Since inception, we have been diligent about where our material goes,"

she says. After a worker collects the valuable metal from say, a used computer, leftover glass is sent to a lead smelter in Texas. Plastic goes to Tulsa's waste-to-energy facility, where it is converted into fuel.

E-Stewards, which is based in Seattle and run by the nonprofit Basel Action Network, certified Phillips' company in 2010. There are an estimated 3,600 recyclers in the United States, and some of the unscrupulous ones ship materials to developing countries in Asia and Africa, where workers are paid sweatshop wages to smash and burn electronics, says Mandy Knudtson, business manager with e-Stewards. "It ends up poisoning people and the environment," she says. Others simply reclaim the more valuable assets from the waste and then send the rest to landfills or incinerators.

Phillips says Natural Evolution suffered a setback early on, during a period of high growth, when she contracted with another company to help with the volume. She paid to have 23 loads of material recycled but then learned that the partner didn't share her standards. To prevent the waste from going to a landfill, she took all of the material back. "It was the right decision environmentally," she says, although it took years for her company to recover financially.

The company also struggled after the 2008 financial crisis, when the price of commodities dropped. Even today, the uncertainty of metal prices remains a challenge, Phillips says. "I've never been in a business where you never know what is coming in the door, and you never really know what it's going to be worth when it goes out the door," she says. "It's like managing quicksand."
More recently, she says, Natural Evolution has been doing better and making a profit. And she hopes to open a second facility with a partner, the Pueblo of Isleta tribe of Albuquerque, N.M., in the second quarter of 2014. About 60 of her nearly 400 clients are

tribes. "Our working relationships are built of mutual respect," she says. "It's a good match."

Phillips estimates that Natural Evolution recycles about three million pounds a year, making "a really small dent" in the global e-waste problem. She does not make as much money as she did working for someone else, she says, but she gets "to get up every day and protect our Mother Earth. For that I am really grateful."

NEED: MEANING

VALUE: HUMILITY

An understanding of interdependence leads naturally to humility. We realize that we are dependent on others and our circumstances. We recognize that we have personal limitations and imperfections. As interdependent individuals we are not solely concerned with ourselves. We respect others and the environment and treat them as we would like to be treated. Mahatma Gandhi is attributed as suggesting that attempting to sustain truth without humility is doomed to become an "arrogant caricature" of truth. In the Hopeful Mindset interdependence is regarded as a truth of existence.

> …intellectual humility… implies the lack of intellectual pretentiousness, boastfulness, or conceit, combined with insight into the logical foundations, or lack of such foundations, of one's beliefs.
> *The Foundation for Critical Thinking*

Means

Meaning - valuing things and people with respect to their significance to the wellbeing of the world.

Understanding: recognizing the implications of interdependence in terms of both the possibilities and limitations of personal agency

The Eagle and the Crow
The Book of Fables: Selections from Aesop and Other Authors

It is considered that the eagle is the king of birds. It is impossible to imagine any thing in the form of a bird more beautiful than he is. His beauty does not consist in gaudy colours, like the jay's nor in a huge train, like the peacock's, which, though nature has

painted it with an exquisite pencil, must after all be allowed to be somewhat disproportioned and monstrous. The colours of the eagle are a deep and a tawny brown, mottled like those of the partridge, sober, yet highly gratifying to the eye.

His form is made for strength and action. His eye is lively and piercing; and the sight of it is so strong that it is said he can gaze without blenching at the brightest rays of the noontide sun.The eagle builds his nest in the crags of the rock. It hangs over the sea, and remains unharmed by the most furious tempests.

He is a bird of prey, and his scream is terrible to such animals as he is accustomed to devour. He feeds upon serpents, harts, hares, and various other animals, which he discerns from an immense distance, pounces upon them from his elevation in the sky, and carries them away in his talons.

A hungry eagle gazed from a distance upon a flock of sheep. With his eye he singled a lamb from the number, and flapping his wings,

came down with immense swiftness, seized the poor animal with his talons, and flew away with him.

A crow, who beheld every thing that passed, was filled with admiration of the action of the eagle. He thought he would do the same, and show himself a bird of spirit. He imitated the king of birds in the sweep he had seen him take, and then lighted upon the back of the old ram, the bell-wether of the flock. Determined to do the business as completely as he could, he entangled his feet thoroughly in the fleece of the ram, and then spread his wings to fly away with him. He might as well have thought to fly away with the city of London.

The shepherd remarked his situation. He was exceedingly sorry for the loss of the lamb that the eagle had carried off, but he was not

at all apprehensive of what the crow would do. He took him in his hand, disentangled his claws from the back of the ram, clipped his wings, and turned him into the garden, for the amusement of his children.

There happened to be a magpie hanging in a cage by the garden-wall. He looked at the crow, and said, as the shepherd's children had taught him to do, "What bird are you?" The crow could not speak, but he hung down his head, and thought with himself, "A very little while ago I mistook myself for an eagle, but I now find I am a very silly crow."

NEED: PURPOSE
VALUE: PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION
With the humility inherent in an interdependent understanding of individuality we have a realistic view of our place in the world. We recognize that we cannot expect ourselves to single-handedly save the world. But we see that we can personally contribute to creating a better world. As interdependent individuals we each have abilities and knowledge that we can contribute to the building of that world. We can make our contributions in whatever roles we may play in life.

> The life of the individual has meaning only insofar as it aids in making the life of every living thing nobler and more beautiful.
> *Albert Einstein*

Means

Purpose - contributing the skills, abilities, knowledge, and attitudes of your interdependent individuality to the building of a better future

If Management is the Only Way Up, We're All F'd
BY RAND FISHKIN • APRIL 26, 2013

Geraldine used to love her job at Cranium (the board game startup in Seattle, prior to the Hasbro acquisition & layoffs). She wrote questions for the board games, and copy for the boxes and marketing materials. She was good at it. But, something weird happened – they tried to promote her. I remember her coming home at night and fretting endlessly. She didn't want people reporting to her. She didn't want greater responsibility for a team. She wanted to write.

It's weird. When we look at the structure of a company, it's easy to see that what's needed are a lot of high quality individual contributors to teams and a small number of high quality people wranglers to manage them. And yet, somehow, our corporate culture and the world of "business" has created the expectation

that unless you manage people, your influence, salary, benefits, title, and self-worth won't increase.

I'm calling BS.

In the past, I've written about the importance of having multiple tracks for progress – ICs and people wranglers – but we've been spending a lot more time bouncing ideas around at Moz lately, and are soon to be implementing a new title/team structure that finally puts this into practice. I'm excited for that.

I worry today when an individual contributor is great at their job and expresses an interest in people management. I worry that some significant portion of that expressed desire doesn't come from a true passion for the responsibilities of people managing, but instead exists because they want to level up their career and/or influence and believe this to be the only path.

I made this diagram to help illustrate the differences between the two types of roles:

(larger version)

Individual contributors have responsibility for themselves and their work. As they get more senior on an IC track, their influence becomes more wide-ranging. A good example of this at Moz is someone like Dr. Pete, who recognizes strategic imperatives at the company and pitches in. He assists engineering and big data with reviews, assists marketing with tactical advice and strategic input, publishes incredibly high quality blog posts and guides, and even designs entire projects from the ground up and executes on their creation. His influence is company-wide, cross-team, and as senior as they come. He lets his influence define his role, rather than the other way around.

On the flip side, great people wranglers are responsible for their team's happiness, cohesion, empowerment, reviews, mentoring, and more. The more senior they get, the less "in-the-trenches" they should be. Many times, they touch on strategy only to help define the strategic problems. These are then passed to ICs who help define scope, research possible answers, and execute on their implementation. A good example of this at Moz is Samantha Britney. She was an IC for a long time, but has moved into people wrangling and today helps several ICs on the product team feel empowered about their work, get the tools/resources/help they need to do it well, and provides the mentoring/1:1s/reviews/HR functions a good people wrangler should. She's almost never in the gritty details of her reports, but always there to help them drive their projects forward.

Basically, if you love getting stuff done and doing a great job at it, you should be an IC. If you love empowering others, and helping them grow and succeed (and you're great at it), you should be a people wrangler.

There's some nuance to all of this IC (Individual Contributor) vs. PW (People Wrangler) stuff:

- As ICs get more senior, they tend to have more overlap with some PW responsibilities. The reverse is true for PWs – as

- they get more senior, they get to do less and less of the real work.
- Senior ICs also have more flexibility with their roles – they can often do that work from anywhere, and, thanks to the recognition that work receives, see more conference/event invitations come their way. Senior PWs are the opposite – their time is more critical in the office, so travel is harder, and they're usually more behind-the-scenes (CEOs being a notable exception to that rule).
- If you have lots of ICs and only a few PWs, you may find challenges with reporting and management. But, if you have

lots of PWs and not many ICs, you encounter the horrifying "too many chefs, not enough kitchen staff" problem (and it usually means your culture and organization have gotten seriously messed up)

- Great ICs are sometimes promoted to PWs and turn out to be mediocre or worse at that role. This sucks horribly. Not only have you lost an excellent contributor to the company, you've put in place bad management, which creates a massively more viral spread of problems. On the flip side, if an IC is underperforming in their role, the impact is not nearly so problematic.
- Compensation is tricky. In my ideal world (and in the salary ranges we're building across the tracks at Moz), the levels are roughly equivalent for both PWs and ICs. Assuming you had 7 levels on each track, level 3 ICs would make what level 3 PWs do. The highest level ICs should be able to make what the C-suite earns.

Much of this seems intuitive when I share it with folks (internally and externally). The biggest question I've gotten relates to a single concept – the ownership of strategy and tactics. A fellow Mozzer and I were disagreeing about this just the other day. This person expressed that historically at Moz, some of the teams have had both strategy and tactics owned by the people wranglers. ICs

didn't define what they do, how they do it, how to measure, and the process for execution, they took orders.
It's true that this can work and has worked. But I disagreed with my colleague that it works as well as if we give ICs greater ownership over the what, when, where, and how, and have PWs own only the who and the why. Granted, more junior managers will have greater overlap with ICs and more senior ICs might even take over the who and why (as noted above). But I believe strongly that long term, we have to go this route. People's happiness depends on it.

When Daniel Pink asked "[What Makes Us Happy at Work?](#)" the answers were clear (and are backed up by lots of other researchers and less-formal investigators of the topic):

1. *Autonomy* – the desire to direct our own lives.
2. *Mastery*— the urge to get better and better at something that matters.
3. *Purpose* — the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.

If ICs don't control their own work lives and have the ability to attain mastery, we're going to lose the good ones to companies where they have those opportunities. We will retain only the PWs, and probably not for long.

Weirdly enough, I'm kind of an IC-style CEO (perhaps that's not all that weird). I'm a high level IC, so I have more overlap with PW responsibilities, but my reports all own their teams, jobs, and details. I'm probably most directly involved in product and marketing, and with both of those, I often tell Mozzers working on those teams to treat me as a resource and a tool. You tell me to

blog about something and I'll do it. You ask me to reply to a customer and I'm on it. You need to chat about how a project fits in

with the broader goals and how that might change how you do it, let's get together. I love feeling like I report to Moz's employees – not the other way around. I think it will always be that way.

https://sparktoro.com/blog/if-management-is-the-only-way-up-were-all-fd/

Appendix II:
Building a Better Future

> Information is not knowledge, knowledge is not wisdom, and wisdom is not foresight. But information is the first essential step to all of these.
>
> *Arthur C. Clarke*

The Hopeful Mindset provides a framework for taking action toward a better future but for it to actually be effective we need specific ways to act on its values. Fortunately, we do not have to start from scratch. There are many initiatives already underway in the world.

We *can all participate meaningfully in the creation of a better world*. There is considerable evidence that the change is already happening and that it is not only growing but accelerating. As Peter Senge, Director of the Center for Organizational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management and author of The Fifth Discipline, The Dance of

Change, Presence, and The Necessary Revolution states in his blurb about Daniel Goleman's book *Ecological Intelligence*,

> "The eight hundred pound gorilla behind virtually all of the 'sustainability challenges' is you, and me, the consumer. The problem is not that we are bad but that we have been blind to the impacts of our every-day choices - which is about to change. [...] new information technologies and growing public concern are awakening our intrinsic desire to do what is right to shape a healthier world for our children and grandchildren."
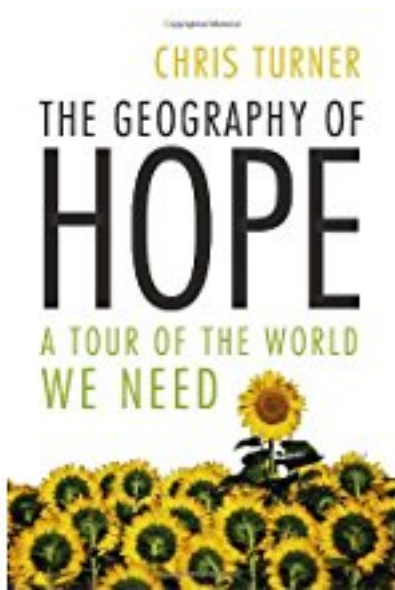
In a book called *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Social Movement in History is Restoring Grace, Justice, and Beauty to the World,* author Paul Hawken says,

"Just as ecology is the study of relationship between living beings and their environment, human ecology examines the relationship between human systems and their environment. Concerns about worker health, living wages, equity, education and basic human rights are inseparable from concerns about water, climate, soil and biodiversity. The *cri de coeur* of environmentalists in {Rachael} Carson's time was the same as that of the Lancashire weavers, the same as in the time of Emerson, the same as in the time of Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathi of Kenya. It can be summed up in a single word: life. Life is the most fundamental human right, and all of the movements within the movement are dedicated to creating the conditions for life, conditions that include livelihood, food, security, peace, a stable environment, and freedom from external tyranny. Whenever and wherever that right is violated, human

beings rise up. Today they are rising up in record numbers, and in a collective body that is often as not more sophisticated than the corporate and governmental bodies they address"

A Geography of Hope

When his wife gave birth to a baby girl Chris Turner, author of *Planet Simpson,* was overwhelmed by a sense of sadness. The source of his melancholy was the generally dismal state of the world at the time. Chris wrote in his book *The Geography of Hope: A Tour of the World We Need*, "I can't even tell her [his daughter] with any confidence that there is a future with sufficient durability to serve as a drawing board for her lifelong dreams. There's a legitimate possibility that she'll face calamity on a scale I can't imagine, on a scale beyond anything humanity's ever seen. This is a prospect that makes it hard to think, makes my vision cross with angry, impotent tears. It terrifies me."

Chris Turner resolved to begin a search for hope. For one year the Turner family traveled the world looking for people living sustainably. Chris was not only seeking the traditional sustainability of our forefathers but, also, any activity that would be "capable of continuing on its present course for the foreseeable future without exhausting the planet's ability to

sustain human life at something like the current population and quality of life".

He describes his visit to Samsø, a Danish island that uses no fossil fuels,

"While most of the world has been spinning in stagnant circles of recrimination and debate on the subject of climate change, paralyzed by visions of apocalypse both natural (if nothing of our way of life changes) and economic (if too much does), Denmark has simply marched off with steadfast resolve into the sustainable future, reaching the zenith of its pioneering trek on the island of Samsø. And so if there's an encircled star on this patchwork map indicating hope's modest capital, then it should be properly placed on this island. Perhaps, for the sake of precision, at the geographic centre of Jørgen Tranberg's dairy farm.

There are, I'm sure, any number of images called to mind by talk of ecological revolution and renewable energy and sustainable living, but I'm pretty certain they don't generally include a hearty fiftysomething Dane in rubber boots spotted with mud and cow shit. Which is why Samsø's transformation is not just revolutionary but inspiring, not just a huge change but a tantalizingly attainable one. And it was a change that seemed at its most workaday–near-effortless, no more remarkable than the cool October wind gusting across the island–down on Tranberg's farm."

As it turns out, Chris Turner found many encouraging examples of sustainable practices being carried out with

attributes of the Hopeful Mindset and he now has a
"scrapbook from a year spent living optimistically" to share
with his daughter.

When we begin to really look we find many examples of initiatives
underway that reflect an interdependent perspective.

Think Globally, Act Locally

Almost certainly there will be opportunities in your local area to
act in support of a better future. Keeping the hopeful values in
mind you may be able to find ways to support the Hopeful
Mindset in your own community or in nearby communities. For
the Hopeful Mindset to take hold and become a force for a better
future, all that is required is for individuals with an understanding
of the implications of interdependence to do what they can. Some
people may be moved to organize enterprises at the local,
national, or global level but we don't all have the energy or
resources to do that. What we can all do is make consistent
choices in our lives that are in agreement with hopeful values. In
an interdependent world every action contributes to the state of
the whole. Global improvement requires, not only the coordinated
efforts of organizations, but also the incredible power of the
cumulative effects of individual actions.

The Internet as a Tool for Building a Better World

No one would argue that every aspect of the internet is
entirely beneficial. But in the end it is just another tool
and whether it is a tool for good or evil depends on our
intentions for using it, skill in using it, and understanding
of how to use it. Advocating for the hopeful values of the

Hopeful Mindset is an intention from which great good can come when using the internet with skill and understanding. There are many excellent resources that can be utilized in promoting and enacting the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset.

The Berkana Institute

The Berkana Institute is an organization that exists to support individuals and groups who seek to "strengthen their communities by working with the wisdom and wealth already present in its people, traditions and environment." The Berkana Institute's website explains:

"The Berkana Institute serves people globally who are giving birth to the new forms, processes and leadership that will restore hope to the future. Since 1992, Berkana has gradually expanded its work to reach pioneering leaders and communities in all types of organizations and in dozens of nations.

Each of our initiatives is based on a coherent, in-depth theory of how life organizes in cooperative, generous, and interdependent systems—work we've developed with hundreds of colleagues over many years of dialogue, think tanks and practical applications in all types of settings."

The institute's vision statement clearly reflects a Hopeful Mindset perspective with respect to its recognition of interdependence:

"*Berkana serves the vision of a world where people experience themselves as whole, healthy, sacred and*

free. We contribute to this world vision by focusing on life-affirming leadership."

Visit the Berkana Institute website: http://berkana.org/berkana/index.php

Me to We

When he was a twelve year old Toronto schoolboy, Craig Kielburger founded the Free the Children initiative. Craig is now a grown man and still active in the pursuit of social change.

In a recent book, *Me to We: Finding Meaning in a Material World,* Craig and his brother, Marc, set out a plan for personal and social transformation. Their plan involves the practice of making "one act at time" with the idea that it is through an accumulation of many individual acts that real and lasting change can occur.
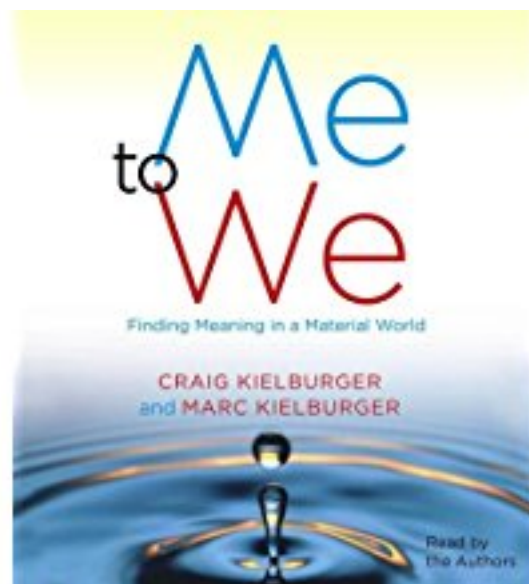
Me to We entreats each of us to re-define our life goals with a mind to the legacy we wish to leave behind us. The book contends that, in doing so and taking action accordingly, the elusive qualities of happiness and meaning are to be discovered. Contributors to the book include Oprah Winfrey, Richard Gere, Queen Noor, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. *Me to We* is a call to action and provides a practical pathway to building a better future.

> Me to We is a new kind of social enterprise for people who want to help change the world with their daily choices. Through our media, socially responsible choices and leadership experiences, we support Free The Children's work with youth creating global change. Every trip, t-shirt, song, book, speech, thought and choice adds up to a fun, dynamic lifestyle that's part of the worldwide movement of we.
>
> Through donations and in-kind contributions, Me to We is designed to help bring Free The Children's already low administrative costs to zero while, at the same time, encouraging people to change the world with their daily choices.
>
> Think we. Join the movement."

Clearly, Craig Kielburger and the Me to We movement are involved with activities compatible with the Hopeful Mindset. Their initiatives are very much about making compassionate contributions to the world.

To participate in Free the Children visit: http://www.freethechildren.com/
To find out more about Me to We go to: http://www.metowe.com/main/

Worldchanging.com

The advent of the internet is a significant factor in the acceleration of global change. In terms of fostering individual and collective awareness of the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset it may be one of the most potent source of encouragement. It offers innumerable resources for those interested in getting involved in sustainable initiatives.

Worldchanging,com describes its mission as follows:

> "Worldchanging is a 501(c)3 media organization that comprises a global network of independent journalists, designers and thinkers covering the world's most intelligent solutions to today's problems. We inspire readers around the world with stories of the most important and innovative new tools, models and ideas for building a bright green future. Our readers are ready to change the world, and Worldchanging links them to the first steps.

> In the five years since its founding, Worldchanging has produced more than 8,500 visionary articles and one bestselling book, and has become a go-to source for forward thinking, solutions-based journalism that takes a big-picture approach to sustainability. Our international network of experts and allies, known on these pages as

"the Worldchanging team" seek out new systems and ways of living from around the world. They report on those ideas with a healthy dose of curiosity and analysis, and ignite discussion and debate with you, our readers, via comment threads on every page.

Worldchanging has brought awareness to innovative responses to concerns like refugee aid and renewable energy, and to cutting-edge solutions for improving building, city planning, transportation, communication and quality of life. By connecting thoughtful people with the boldest new ideas, we have earned a devoted following: a recent Nielsen study named us the second-largest sustainability website on the planet.

If you consider yourself part of that community of intelligent, engaged, optimistic people who are willing to be the change they want to see, and ready to live differently right now, we are your news source. Stop in often, learn what's out there, and join the conversation."

The Worldchanging website provides information organized into categories:

- Stuff: Things we make, buy, use and live with
- Shelter: Building future friendly homes
- Cities: Living green by living urban
- Community: Working together for the common good
- Business: Growing sustainable prosperity
- Politics: Progressing toward a free and fair world
- Planet: Restoring and exploring the earth

There could hardly be a more obvious agreement with the Hopeful Mindset's imperatives of contribution and compassion than can be seen in all but the first of these category descriptions. And clicking on the Stuff link reveals the following explanation:

"Our things define us.

What we buy, what we use, what we keep and throw away, what we waste, and what we save: the stuff that surrounds us and flows through our lives is a key indicator of the kinds of lives we're living. To be an affluent twenty-first-century person is to float on a sea of material objects - each with its own history and future.

They may be hidden from our eyes, but in practical global terms, those histories and futures tend to be the most important aspects of the stuff we own."

To explore this site go to: http://www.worldchanging.com/ There is a wealth of information on this site related to ways of participating in changes compatible with bringing about the sustainable solutions we have been talking about, solutions that are compatible with the interdependent perspective of the Hopeful Mindset

GiveMeaning.com
GiveMeaning exists to reduce the barriers separating people's generosity from the problems that need attention. Their website explains what they do this way:

"GiveMeaning.com hosts fundraising pages on behalf of charities, non-profits and grassroots projects. Founded in 2004, GiveMeaning has provided free online fundraising pages to over 1200 different initiatives around the world.

From grass-roots international development projects to online fundraising pages for walks, swims and rides, you can create your own fundraising page at GiveMeaning.com to fundraise for most any benevolent purpose."

GiveMeaning.com charges nothing for donations collected online and they even cover the credit card costs associated with each donation. They rely on the support of donors and advertisers to provide this service. It is as a labor of love. They get their inspiration from the people who are using their tools and service to make the world a better place.

Find out more at: www.givemeaning.com

Kiva

Microfinance is becoming a popular way to provide financial assistance to entrepreneurs in impoverished countries. Lending funds to these entrepreneurs is called microcredit. Kiva is a website that is set up to facilitate making connections between lenders with borrowers. Kiva's mission is to connect people through lending for the sake of alleviating poverty. The following is from kiva.org:

"Kiva is the world's first person-to-person micro-lending website, empowering individuals to lend directly to unique entrepreneurs around the globe.

The people you see on Kiva's site are real individuals in need of funding - not marketing material. When you browse entrepreneurs' profiles on the site, choose someone to lend to, and then make a loan, you are helping a real person make great strides towards economic independence and improve life for themselves, their family, and their community. Throughout the course of the loan (usually 6-12 months), you can receive email journal updates and track repayments. Then, when you get your loan money back, you can relend to someone else in need.

Kiva partners with existing expert microfinance institutions. In doing so, we gain access to outstanding entrepreneurs from impoverished communities world-wide. Our partners are experts in choosing qualified entrepreneurs. That said, they are usually short on funds. Through Kiva, our partners upload their entrepreneur profiles directly to the site so you can lend to them. When you do, not only do you get a unique experience connecting to a specific entrepreneur on the other side of the planet, but our microfinance partners can do more of what they do, more efficiently.

Kiva provides a data-rich, transparent lending platform. We are constantly working to make the system more transparent to show how money flows throughout the entire cycle, and what effect it has on the people and institutions lending it, borrowing it, and managing it along the way. To do this, we are using the power of the internet to facilitate one-to-one connections that were previously prohibitively expensive. Child sponsorship has always been a high overhead business. Kiva creates a similar

interpersonal connection at much lower costs due to the instant, inexpensive nature of internet delivery. The individuals featured on our website are real people who need a loan and are waiting for socially-minded individuals like you to lend them money."

Visit www.kiva.org for more information.

Fundraising Websites
Individuals and organization seeking funding for initiatives consistent with the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset are turning to fundraising websites like gofundme.com and kickstarter.com. You will find many worthwhile enterprises looking for financial support on these and similar fundraising sites.

Collective Action Through Internet Connections
In his book, *Here Comes Everybody*, author Clay Shirky discusses four forms of social interaction that the internet facilitates: conversations, sharing, collaboration, and collective action. Each of these four kinds of interaction can be leveraged in the service of building a better future and spreading the hopeful values of the Hopeful Mindset.

Conversations: Email is the most ubiquitous example of an internet conversation. Others include instant messaging, web forums, and chatting.

Sharing: Some examples are YouTube.com (video sharing), Flicr.com (photo sharing), and Delicious.com (website url sharing). An interesting thing about sharing sites is that they allow for group formation around any topic. Weblogs (Blogs) also provide a means of sharing content on the web. (see below)

Collaboration: These include sites that allow users to collaborate in various ways. Google Docs allows sharing(viewing and/or editing) documents online. A company called 37signals has created a range of collaboration tools aimed at making group collaboration easy and intuitive. Their offerings include: BaseCamp: management of projects and collaborate with teams and clients
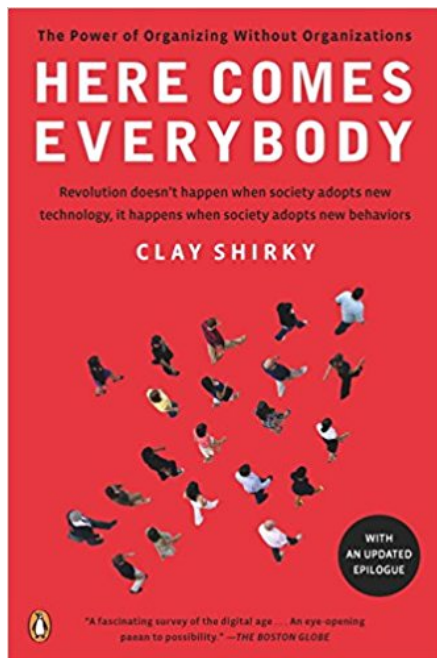
Highrise: tracking contacts, leads, and deals
Backpack: organizing and sharing information across a business
Campfire: real-time chatting, file sharing, and remote teams

Collective Action: Collective action refers to situations where group members cooperate to achieve a common goal.

Clay Shirky makes the point the every url (a web address such as "www.website.com") is a latent community. What he means is that any web address can be the hub of an online community.

Essentially, what Clay Shirky presents is an exploration and explanation of the many ways that groups can form through the use of internet technology. Unlike groups of the past, internet groups can form between members who are physically removed from each other. In fact, there are no geographic limitations imposed on internet group members. All that is required is a common interest and an internet connection.

The social interactions made possible by the internet along with websites dedicated to enterprises that are consistent with the Hopeful Mindset demonstrate the power of the internet to effect the kinds of actions we have been advocating and do so on a global scale.

The internet is changing the world. And it is changing it at a rate never before seen in the history of our planet. As unsettling as this may seem it is also an opportunity to be a part of something grand. If we commit to leveraging this powerful technology in the service of creating a world of more compassion and wisdom there is a very good chance that we might just pull it off. The time is right for action.

From the evidence presented in the preceding pages it is clear that much is already being done to help build a better future. But more is needed. We still need new initiatives to contribute to the overall effort and we still need you. Organizations can only continue to do the good work they are doing if there is widespread support for their vision of a better world. They need us to reinforce their efforts by voting for candidates who support programs that provide them with financial and human resources. Interdependent individuals familiar with the hopeful values of Hopeful Mindset are equipped to recognize programs and initiatives that are based on an interdependent perspective. They are positioned to lend these programs and initiatives the vital support they require to go forward. Buy the t-shirts, subscribe to the newsletters, donate, volunteer; do what you can to contribute to their efforts.

Appendix III:
Carving up Reality

Human imagination is a wonderful thing. With it we can think about things that aren't physically present in the here and now. We can create concepts based on what we know and what we can imagine. But there is a danger in placing too much faith in our imagined ideas. The danger is we may come to believe the products of our imagination and mistake them for the truth about reality.
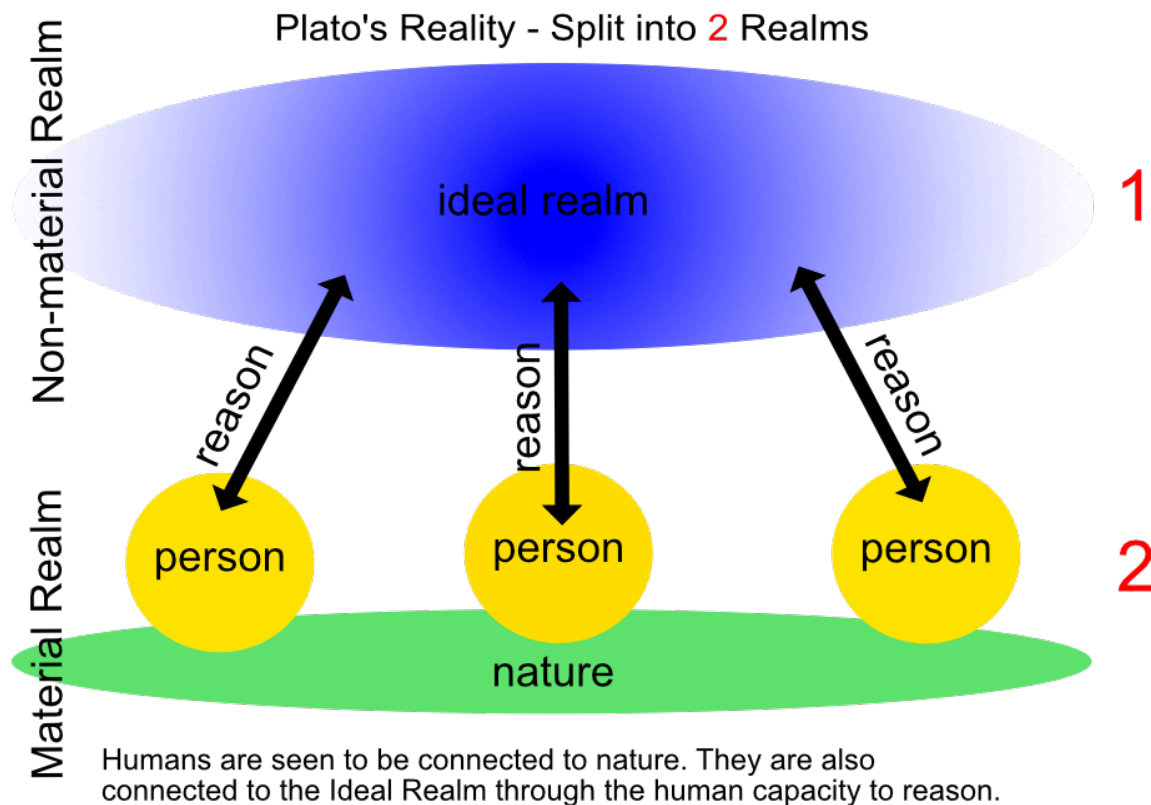
Before Plato imagined his realm of Ideal Forms most people assumed they were part of a unified world. While this world may have included spirit beings they were thought to be part of one reality.

Primitive Reality - Unified
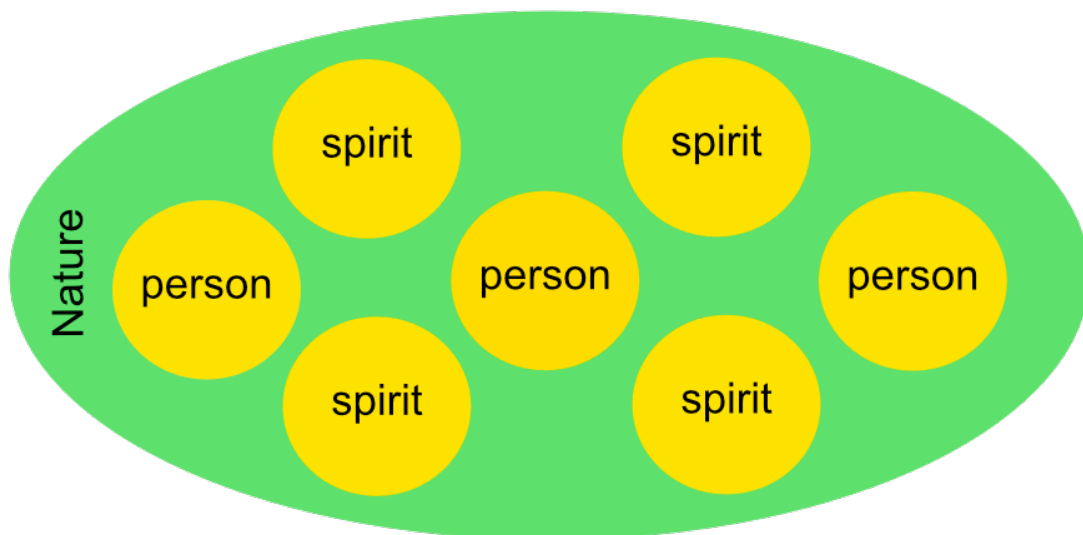
Humans and spirits are all included in nature. Humans are connected to everything that exists. Spirits are part of nature.

Plato split reality into a non-material realm of Ideal Forms and a material realm of people and things. Humans were imagined to be able to know the realm of ideals through their unique capacity to reason.

Plato's Reality - Split into 2 Realms

Non-material Realm

ideal realm

1

reason   reason   reason

person   person   person

2

Material Realm

nature

Humans are seen to be connected to nature. They are also connected to the Ideal Realm through the human capacity to reason.
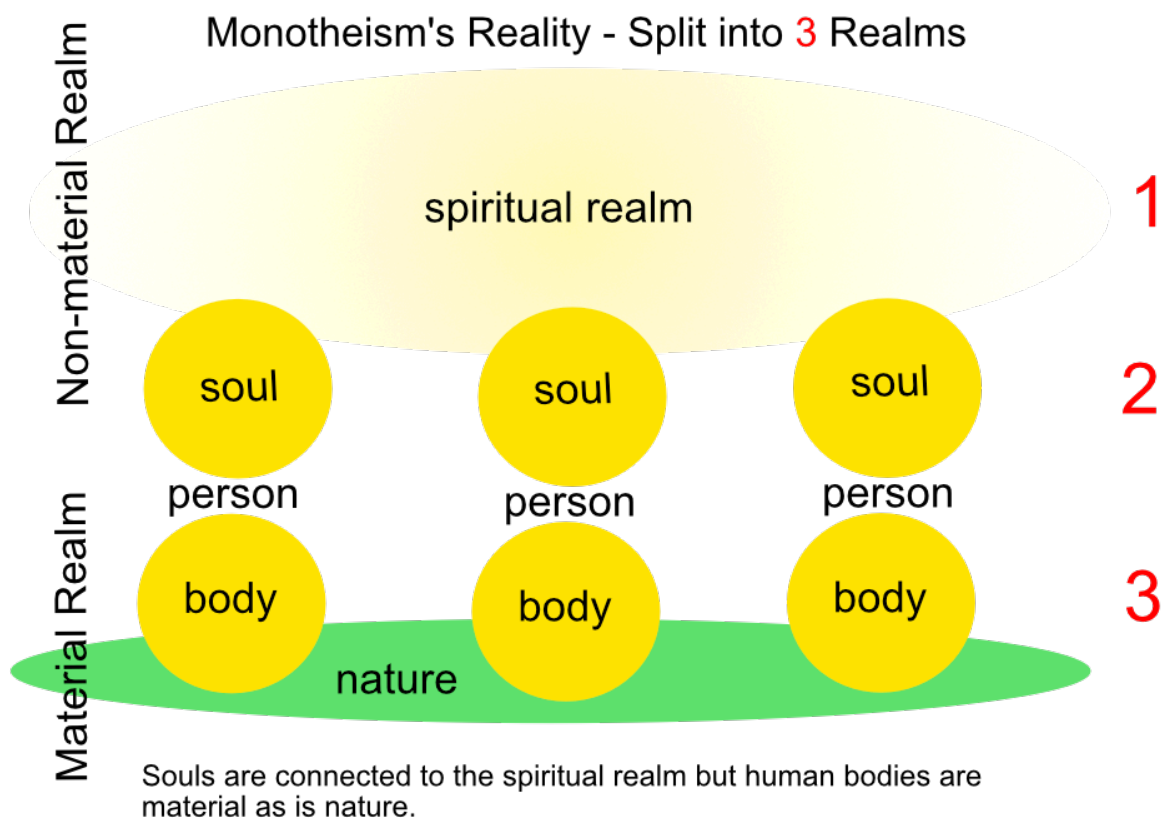
As a result of Plato's splitting of reality into two realms humans were relegated to the ever-changing, impermanent material realm.

This initial splitting of reality in material and non-material realms can be thought of as The Original Sin. Perpetrated in Plato's imagination, The Original Sin creates a superior realm against which humans can commit "sins". In this sense, sin

against a metaphysical reality was not possible before Plato imagined it into existence.

Not long after Plato's creation of a non-physical realm religious beliefs were being transformed from systems of multiple gods to systems under a single, all-powerful god. This monotheistic god was believed to be a non-material being abiding in a non-material world; a metaphysical realm.

Monotheism's Reality - Split into 3 Realms

Non-material Realm

Material Realm

spiritual realm   1

soul   soul   soul   2

person   person   person

body   body   body   3

nature

Souls are connected to the spiritual realm but human bodies are material as is nature.
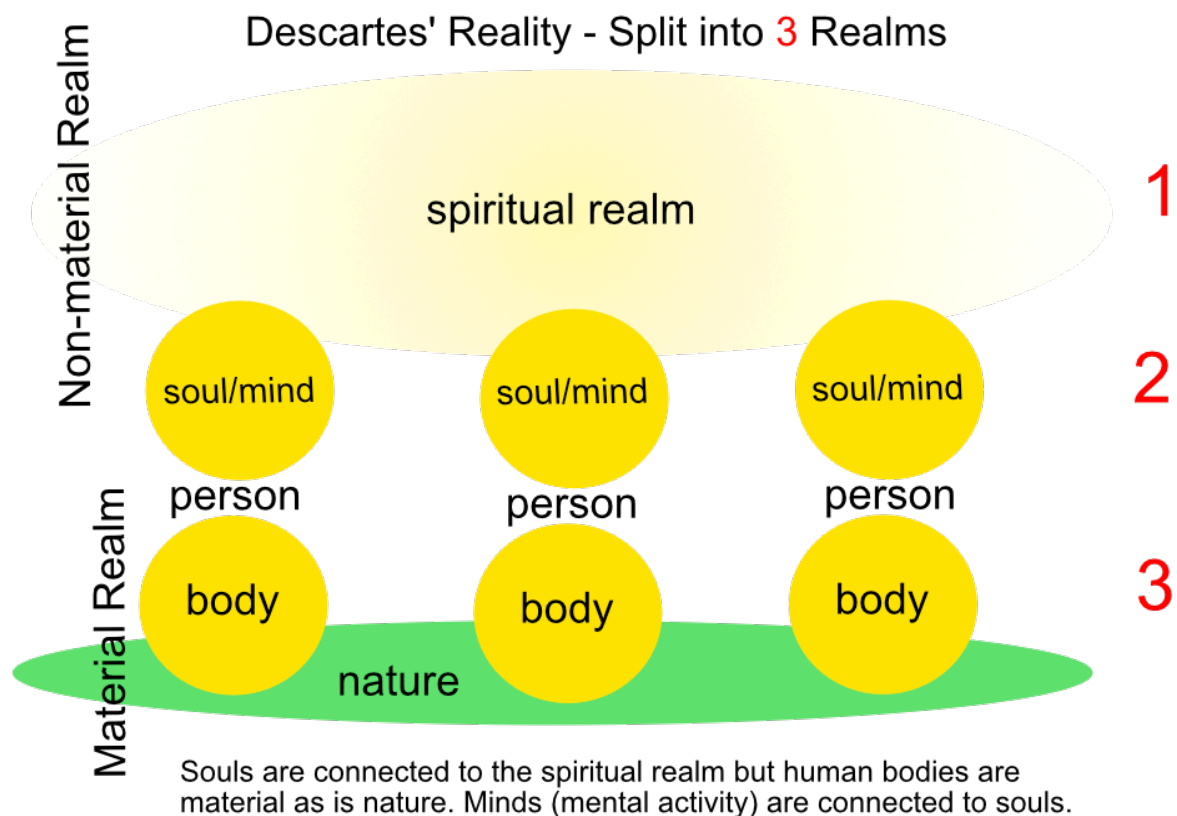
Humans, living in a completely separate material realm, would have been entirely cut off from their god were it not for the ingenious creation of an immortal soul. Along with the splitting of reality into a material and a non-material realm, humans themselves were split into a material body and an immaterial soul. Humans were unique in this and so became
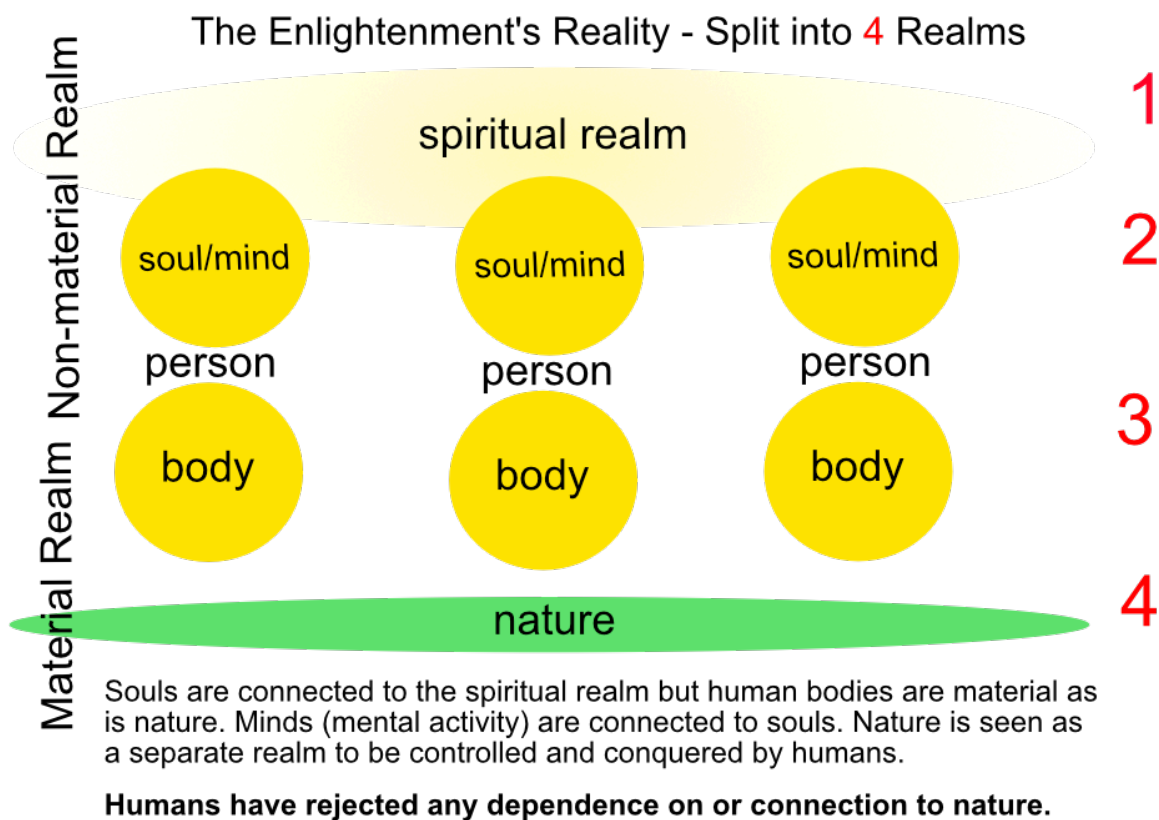
a bridging realm between the spiritual realm and the purely material realm of nature. This idea resulted in 3 realms of reality: the spiritual realm, the soul-endowed human realm, and the rest of the world, the purely material, natural realm.

The monotheistic worldview held sway for centuries without much in the way of significant change. Various religious groups tinkered with the details but the basic structure remained unchanged.

In the first half of the seventeenth century Rene Descartes contributed a seemingly minor, but, in fact, a significant modification to the monotheistic schema.

Descartes' Reality - Split into 3 Realms

Non-material Realm

spiritual realm

1

soul/mind   soul/mind   soul/mind

2

person   person   person

body   body   body

3

Material Realm

nature

Souls are connected to the spiritual realm but human bodies are material as is nature. Minds (mental activity) are connected to souls.

Descartes proposed that thought was a non-physical phenomenon and assigned it to the the non-material realm. The consequence of this seemingly minor adjustment was to endow thought with a sacred dimension. The mind (thought) was a spiritual phenomenon. When properly regulated by reason, the mind could be employed to do God's work.

The Enlightenment's Reality - Split into 4 Realms

1

2

3

4

spiritual realm

soul/mind   soul/mind   soul/mind

person   person   person

body   body   body

nature

Non-material Realm

Material Realm

Souls are connected to the spiritual realm but human bodies are material as is nature. Minds (mental activity) are connected to souls. Nature is seen as a separate realm to be controlled and conquered by humans.

Humans have rejected any dependence on or connection to nature.
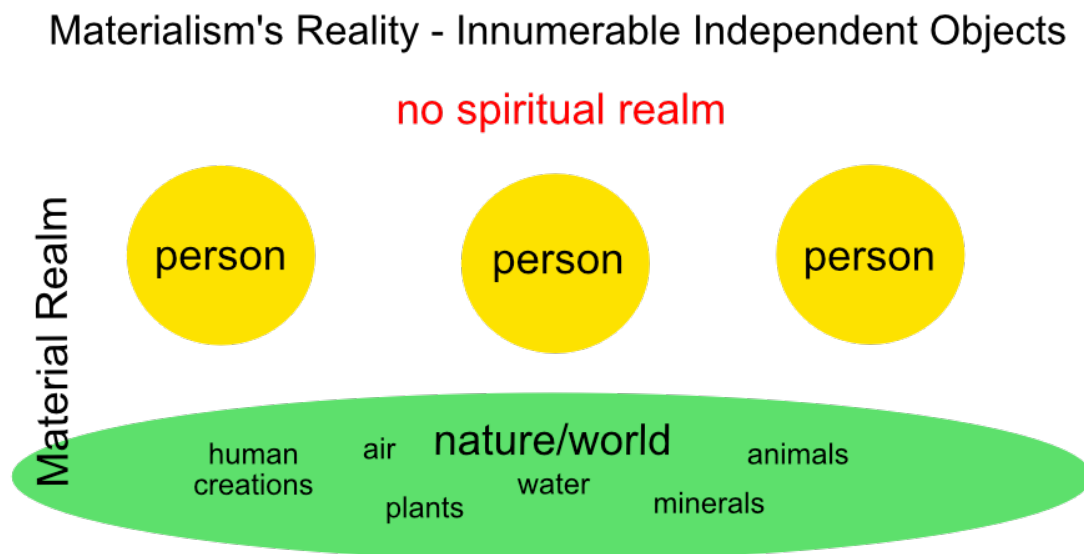
With this perspective in place the material realm of nature was deemed to be of little value. Moreover, nature was seen as a source of unpredictable hardships such as plagues, famines, floods, and infestations.

In the Age of Enlightenment science began to uncover some of the mysteries of the material world. Emboldened by this development scientist began to hope that some degree of control could be exercised over nature, thus reducing its power to determine the quality of human life. The quest to conquer nature began. Humans sought to separate themselves from the forces of nature through science and technology creating, in effect, a schism between humans and nature.

With the advent of a scientific way of exploring the secrets of the material world, some thinkers began to see serious problems between the facts there were discovering and the teachings of the monotheistic religions. A secular way of viewing the world was emerging.

Eventually this movement developed into a worldview which rejected the non-material realm altogether.

Materialism's Reality - Innumerable Independent Objects

no spiritual realm

Material Realm

person   person   person

nature/world
human creations   air   animals
plants   water   minerals

As independent selves individuals have no connection to one another through a spiritual realm. They are spiritually and physically separate from each other. Some attempt to connect with nature. The things in the world are separate from each other and from human beings.

In the Materialistic Reality there is no spiritual realm and people do not have souls. One of the most significant effects of this change was the loss of the sense of connection to something greater than ourselves. Moreover, the connection between individual souls though the spiritual realm was also lost. Humans now had no spiritual connection and had divorced themselves from nature.

In the Materialistic Reality the basic human need to connect with something bigger than ourselves cannot be satisfied. We are adrift in a sea of other objects. People living in this reality have sought to satisfy the need for connection in a number of ways. Some have sought to reconnect with nature, recognizing a degree of dependence on nature, as in the ecological sciences and environmentalism. Others have created social groups based on common interests. The internet has provided a hitherto unavailable means for people to connect. These kinds of connections are satisfying to a degree but, for many, they do not provide the deep and intimate relationships they hunger for. To understand why this is so we need to look at the structure of these connections.

The Nature of Networks

The examples of connections just mentioned are various forms of networks. Networks are formed when individual phenomena (nodes) are linked together according to some design. The nodes maintain an independent existence but become part of a larger pattern when connected to other nodes. Energy or information flows through the connecting

pathways making the network into a coherent collection of independent nodes.

While networking supplies a context within which an individual can be empowered and be interconnected with other individuals and networks, each individual is still an independent, separately existing being with all of the vulnerabilities that go along with independent existence. Despite our best efforts we have still not found our way back to a unified reality.

In 1972 a Norwegian philosopher, Arne Naess, coined the phrase "deep ecology". Naess felt that ecology, as it was at that time, did not go far enough. He claimed that the mainstream ecological movement was primarily concerned with various environmental issues (such as

pollution, overpopulation, and conservation) only to the extent that those issues had a negative effect on an area's ecology and disrupted human interests. Naess contended that the problem lay in the way in which we see ourselves in the world.

Naess argued that the individual is cut off from others and their surrounding world when the self is seen as a solitary and independent ego among other solitary and independent egos. That separation leads to the pitfalls of anthropocentrism and environmental degradation. He believed that a new understanding of the self (called "self-realization") was needed."

According to deep ecology, the self should be understood as deeply connected with and as part of nature, not disassociated from it. Deep ecologists often call that conception of human nature the "ecological self," and it represents humans acting and being in harmony with nature, not in opposition to it. According to Naess, when the ecological self is realized, it will recognize and abide by the norms of an environmental ethic that will end the abuses of nature that typify the traditional self, which is trapped in anthropocentric attitudes. Moreover, the ecological self will practice a "biocentric egalitarianism," in which each natural entity is held as being inherently equal to every other entity.

https://www.britannica.com/topic/deep-ecology

This view of the place of individuals within nature implies a unified reality where the whole encompasses and includes all that exists, including us. From this view of reality we are not independent, separately existing beings but interdependent beings existing in an interdependent reality. This is the view taken by The Hopeful Mindset and its values arise out of this understanding.

Interdependent Reality is Unified

Nature

person   person   person
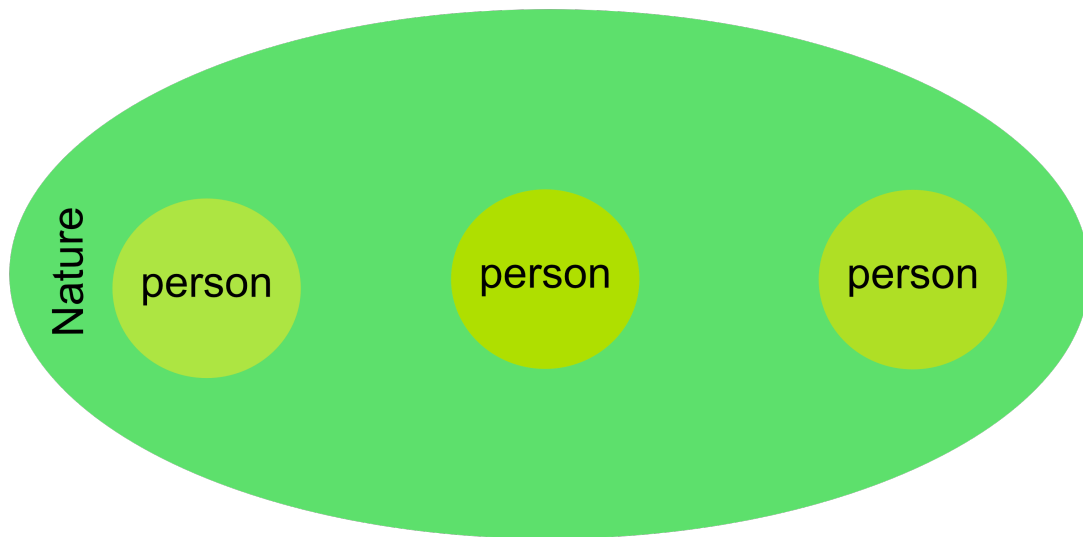
Humans are included in nature. Humans are connected to everything that exists.

The prodigal child has returned home to nature.

In summary, we have seen how reality was carved up, not in actuality, but in the imaginations of human beings. In fact, reality has and never can be divided in any way. We are the world and the world is us. We have only imagined that it could be otherwise.