

CONTRIBUTING TO THE FUTURE: GIVING, HAPPINESS, AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Excerpts from the letter to Badaaye by Peter Paul Gerbrands.

For the past seven years, I have been studying how we can contribute to the future. I have talked to many people, read books, listened to podcasts, and viewed a range of narratives, theories, and other information on websites and social media.

My conclusion: In our current state of being, we are not good at connecting with the future and what it is calling for. We have the capacity but have not put much effort in exploring and training the ability to effectively work with the future. I have written seven letters that will be published on this website in the coming months on ***how to become contributors to the future.***

You can download the full letter on: www.acttobe.com



Quantum leap, oil painting on canvas by Sophie.

How is it possible when there are so many books, videos, podcasts, wisdom, knowledge, initiatives and good will in the world, but still the heart of the matter and the root-cause of what is happening to and on our planet is hardly addressed?

Giving and Receiving

The answer to the question of why people are rarely discovering the root cause but instead go for the more superficial cause is that they are not connected (enough) to their own root cause.

It just has become our habitual reasoning to explain our being within the prevailing belief systems about the origin of life: evolutionary, religious, or philosophical. I don't mind those explanations or beliefs as an explanation of our behavior, as long as we are conscious of the difference between the awareness of being and the explanation of being. The problem is that explanation in itself is an effect and not a cause. Mistaking effects for causes are an indications of both having lost our connection to the root cause and that we are no longer able to recognize a root-cause.

Over the years I have come to perceive the nature, the root-cause, of our planet and probably of the universe, as GIVING.

Wherever I met people in the world, they overwhelmingly found the deepest sense of being in contributing to the living interacting system of the world and in giving to others. Giving brings out the very best in people.

Several things happen if we lose our individual connection to the deepest nature of the world. If we can no longer observe the workings and influences of giving, we take refuge in all kinds of other explanations that justify our being and behavior. Our perspective towards life, other people, and ourselves changes dramatically. I will name a few:

- Since we are inherently not made for taking and using, this creates futures we did not anticipate. We are not designed to have; it causes problems in ourselves and the world around us. It does not make us better human beings.
- Taking, using and having also takes, uses and has us: it has the tendency to become a mind absorbing and addictive habit.
- Taking creates a society that is mainly driven by demands and obligations: mandatory activity is not contributing. We are coerced into activity by several philosophies or religions, by problems we have to solve, but mostly by the fact and the idea that we have to earn our basic needs instead that they are given to us.
- The whole contributing nature of plants, animals and people is suddenly seen as an exercise in survival.
- Life becomes the fulfillment of needs: The orientation of the organization of our societies is currently based on providing those needs.

Most importantly: If we can no longer experience what is given to us, then we no longer look outside to receive, but we look outside to get because we need to find means to live or as we later called it to survive.

We look outside to find what we are looking for, not to see what is there. It means we changed from receiving to taking. Please do not overcomplicate the act of giving, by making is something special, extra or Divine. My point is simply this: taking, having and keeping are

not sustainable a complex system, only actively giving and receiving are. Just try to imagine what it would mean for science or industry to only develop things that contribute to the whole living system of the world, not just in part or for a particular purpose.

Satisfaction and Happiness

Why are people obsessed by the quest for happiness and well-being?
Because they mistake satisfaction for happiness and well-being for being.

Self-interest or self-centeredness is not a bad thing, but that can only bring us the satisfaction and pleasure of the fulfillment part of life, never the happiness part. Although, satisfaction and happiness may seem interchangeable and intertwined, they are of a very different nature.

Satisfaction is temporal, it can only bring about a momentary experience of fulfillment and needs to be renewed constantly.

Happiness does not come from fulfillment of my needs and wants. **Happiness is our awareness of a connection to being, to our root-cause.** It arises in the act of giving, in contributing to the flourishing of others, to the world, to everything outside myself and it becomes a constant in our actions when we are connected to our root cause and realize: I am a gift from the world. I would argue that most of the problems we encounter today in the world are because the things we have developed are without a base in being. They are focused on taking, without a connection that understands and cooperates with the very complex and interconnected being of our planet. And the being of the world is giving, making possible.

Intelligence and Consciousness

Is our intellectual ability enough to get us out of this loop? No, it is not.

I would like to introduce intelligence and consciousness as two very different but, in a healthy situation, aligned capacities of humans.

These are their actions:

- Intelligent abilities require us to concentrate on a topic, an experience I am going through, a sequence of activities, a goal I want to achieve. When we concentrate, we physically, emotionally and mentally contract and exclude all other information that is different from what we see before us, what we are looking for.
- Our conscious abilities require us to expand, open, let go, which create a much larger surface. We are not trying to find an answer, a goal, or a reason. It is finding us. We give ourselves to receive what is given.

I am aware that describing consciousness to the untrained mind makes it sound profound or not of this world. But I am afraid we are all very much influenced by the intellectual naming and attitude of science and religion, to step into the kind of awareness I am describing without feeling weird, lost and even indigenous. But I assure you it is just a matter of practice. That is my experience with most people that we do this work with: They are not aware how their body is a highly sensitive perception instrument. If you use it in that way, information is revealed to you, but only because we do the activity of expanding. It is not

inactive waiting until it comes. It very conscious observing without explaining or arranging. That comes later when we bring all the data to our intelligence.

We have these enormous databanks of personal and collective information in the conscious and unconscious reservoirs of our awareness. Our data storage ability is a well-developed instrument that allows us to store and draw information from our education, experience and background of ourselves and others from any databank. Intelligence is able to work **within** a databank, which it does with contraction and focus. Consciousness is able to work **with** the databanks, which it does with expansion, openness, and the ability to receive. If I look at our lifestyle and basic organizational and societal patterns, we are educated primarily to use our intelligence: the ability to work within a particular databank.

Contraction gives us intelligence and all the miraculous inner instruments and outer applications of thinking and feeling. **Expansion gives us consciousness** of uniqueness and interconnectedness of all there is and the ability to work and communicate with it.

The overuse of contraction has led to a neglect of expansion.



Balanced stones by Paul Harnischfeger.

Consciousness, our instrument to work with and balancing information from many and different sources coming from different databanks, like any capacity we human beings have, needs to be kept in shape by training and feedback.

The training of this ability and the maintenance of multiple databanks is scarcely addressed in our upbringing and sparingly in our education. Actually, education is mainly an upload of information to our databanks of a specific kind, make, model, and belief. With the lack of conscious training, instead of having fit and agile databanks, we have turned them into belief systems and mental models. Beliefs and models which we use to control our existence and inevitably those of others without being very aware of it. We think this is how the world is because we have not been able to detect information that is different to our findings and beliefs. Even worse: we view divergent as abnormal and irregular, and opposite as hostile. The other is suddenly suspicious.

In other words, if we stay in our own bubble, we lack information to create a future that is both unique and contributing to the whole living system of the world.

The essence of consciousness is dialogue. A sort of dialogue where all the senses are receiving the information; and then we give something back. Intelligence likes to classify the information to understand it, but consciousness accepts the deeper, more direct message that the living and material world constantly gives. It is like listening not so much to what someone says, but what it means. **Not content, but cohesion.**

Existence or being, has two basic features: everything relates to everything and all is unique. You cannot find two similar grains of sand on the whole planet, and you cannot isolate something to understand it. We do have the tendency to isolate and level our differences to create security when we are meaning to find stability.

But true stability in life is firmly anchored in being and being is the most diverse and dynamic experience I am aware of. Consciousness gives us an instrument to experience ourselves as a unique valuable part of the cohesion of existence, our base in life.

Future is not provided by anything static, by anything we have or hold on to. It is not provided by a static system or structure: It does not matter much if we believe in science, God, progress, human beings, nature development, or money. If we accept such a single source as our stability, our future will be determined by difficulties we create ourselves. On the other hand, if we consciously keep our databanks agile, to receive all kinds of information, giving becomes a natural gesture and the porthole through which to connect with the future.

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