

Contributing to the future: A letter about giving, happiness and awareness.

The reader is reminded that this is an original letter. It was not written to be published, it has not been edited, it does not purport to be complete, nor have I removed the more personal comments. It is neither perfect English nor organized as a textbook. It follows an outline made specifically to answer a friend. I changed the name only for privacy reasons. The reason for publication is simply that I became aware that this letter and others were circulating due to requests for elaboration and clarification. By publication, with the permission of the recipients, I hope to have met the demand for more information.

Hi Baadaye,

Thank you very much for your kind letter and your questions. It has been almost eleven years since we worked together, and I hope you are well. If I understand you correctly, your impulse to write to me came from reading my letter to Heke Mai, although I have no idea how this letter came into your possession. I assume that your questions are based on the result of your research into new ideas and initiatives and their influence on human behavior. How is it possible that there are so many books, videos and podcasts, that there is so much wisdom and knowledge, that there are so many initiatives and good will, yet the heart of the matter and the root cause of what is happening to and on our planet is barely addressed? In most initiatives, you write, you detect a fair way forward within their own ideas or initiatives, but rarely is it about understanding what lies beneath or the bigger picture. Therefore, you conclude, we change and adapt, but do not transform. Our current approach, with the best in mind, delivers the best of our innovation and change capabilities, but rarely touches the root cause or the whole system. This fundamentally unchanged attitude toward the world's challenges will make it increasingly difficult, you predict. At the end of your letter, you have formulated three questions.

I am searching for the right tone in my response. I am not a supporter of the positivism and other views of life that gave birth to today's scientific and technological philosophy. Not because of science and technology, but because of the underlying assumption that we are smarter than nature and can bend life to our will, rather than understanding nature and cooperating with life. You give the example of pesticides, where none of the people you interviewed questioned the use of pesticides but focused their research on products with fewer side effects. There was not even a small step to question our approach to agriculture, it was taken for granted that we were on the right track because of the results, measured in yield. The effect of the current way of farming on the rest of nature or the future of our groundwater quality, for example, was seen as a problem we had to deal with later, but not really taken seriously. You were shocked by the inability to self-reflect.

To be fair, your report is riddled with similar examples. It takes effort to envision a future beyond a belief system, especially if you are unaware that your worldview is based on a deeper set of beliefs.

Most of the solutions that emerged from your study are based on technological and scientific prospects, which will certainly play a role in humanity's future, but are not

fundamental. Steps forward inspired by the same worldview that created the problems in the first place are incapable of fundamentally addressing current issues. It requires the ability and willingness to see the problems as indicators of the limitation of your worldview rather than the limitation of a specific product or design. Our intelligence is usually too preoccupied with the matter at hand to see beyond and deeper.

I can't say much about what you call spiritual. Partly, of course, because what you describe is your personal belief. Partly also because for me the soul life is a reaction to and not the same as the spiritual life. I don't close my eyes to what is happening in the world, but I see it mostly as the effect of our own approach to life, which as you say may not be very spiritual, but as far as I'm concerned is simply not very fine-tuned. The talent to perceive the subtle seeds of a future opening (willing, beautiful and strong), amidst all the noisy life of our technical age, comes from a vibrant connection to the earth. I practice that every day so that I can see not only the superficial daily events, but precisely what the world is trying to show us. What are all the difficult and problematic things in the world trying to tell us about the cooperation of man and our planet? In what direction do the beautiful and good things in the world point? What is there for us to see? How do we contribute to the future?

I detect an undertone of pessimism in your letter that is more an observation of the undertone in the world rather than a personal emotion. To me, this is a sign that we have reached the limits of our current worldview. I feel strongly that unless we discover and name the flaws in our attitude to life and the nature of man, we will continue to go around in the same circle. With all the very predictable difficulties that arise when, without realizing it, you find yourself in a self-made labyrinth. Young people who are aware the societal circle behavior often exhibit the symptoms of pessimism, despair and helplessness, which are rarely recognized as observations of reality, but are usually seen as personal psychological problems. These experiences are accurate signals of the state of our society.

Transformation begins when we take these symptoms seriously as indicators that we need to step out of our patterns, rather than the very positivistic procedure of symptom management. By trying to control only the symptoms, we send the implicit message to people who are experiencing these symptoms that they are not healthy, but our society, our outlook on life is. Pessimism is a much more realistic view of our world than the kind of optimism that comes from the examples in your study. I am not writing about the emotion of pessimism; I am writing about the perception of pessimism, which is simply a signal that you have taken a wrong turn and you are in a dead end.

A "negative or wrong" emotion is usually a correct observation. But in our current worldview, which is not so set on its own undertone, there is a tendency to interpret the negative in reactions as undesirable and as a problem. When the reactions are negative, dismissive, denialist and even aggressive, we can assume that something is missing to be in balance. What is missing is always deeper than the content of the reaction and thus requires not a reaction to the reaction, but an understanding of what underlies the reaction and that is almost always a deficit.

Being able to see all those negative experiences of man and nature in the world as signals to change our approach to life, rather than as problems we must solve to make the world right, is a very practical attitude that contributes more effectively to a different future. Also, much more effective than classifying observations as personal problems.

Since we have worked together several times and I have become aware of your abilities, I have chosen not to elaborate or explain too much, but simply follow my own path in an attempt to answer you.

While talking and writing, I tend to take the fast track and helicopter view. Therefore, details and many examples will not be part of my response, as these things in writing tend to diminish thinking and feeling. Examples and stories give the impression of better understanding, but over the years I have found that all too often they evoke an inactive or overactive state, which is rarely sustainable.

Giving and receiving

The answer to your question why people almost never seek the root cause, but almost always go for the more superficial cause, is that they are not connected (enough) to their own root cause. They see themselves as superficial, random, a product of evolution and child of God, the follower of a philosophy, a subject, a citizen, a consumer, as a problem and so on. But not as a being with depth and uniqueness. I write they, but it is better to write we, because we all have these moments.

It has simply become our usual reasoning for explaining our existence within the prevailing belief systems about the origin of life: evolutionary, religious or philosophical.

I do not object to those views or beliefs as clarifications for our behavior, as long as we are aware of the difference between the experience of being and the clarification of being.

For me, the misunderstanding of this difference was expressed by Descartes at the emergence of the mastery of our intelligence. It was at the same time the demise of our clear connection with the whole of the living system (or God if you will) and with ourselves as a valuable and integral part of that living system. The boldness of such a bold statement deserves nothing but praise, for the intelligent clarification of our existence as a way of life has given us much. It has also taken much away from us. The problem is that the clarification or explanation of things is itself an effect and not a cause. When we know something does not mean we comprehend it.

Confusing consequences with causes in this way means that we have lost the connection with the root causes and cannot recognize them anymore.

In this case, the confusion between the explanation of being and the awareness of being, gives a very different approach to daily reality of life and us.

We are mostly unaware of why we are here; we view our existence from a certain view of life, a philosophy and that's it. That such a view or philosophy is an effect rather than a root cause we have actually forgotten.

It is not wrong in itself, but it does mean that we are not trained, or have trained ourselves, to work with root causes. The ability to work with root causes comes from seeing our own individual conscious perceptions as equally valid as intelligent scientific facts. When conscious perceptions are seen as subjective and less valuable in today's education, it is much more difficult to find a way into our own creativity and that of the world. Conscious individual perceptions are completely unlike intelligent subjective perceptions.

People today are trained to see existence as a cause-and-effect, rather than a root cause. Connecting to root causes is a very different discipline, requiring a very different approach beyond the capacity of our intelligence, of our thinking and feeling. If you have not mastered the discipline of connecting to root causes, you will never become aware of the true nature

of things. Which in organizational terms means that while you can change and innovate, you cannot transform or enable metamorphosis.

The issue here is not the words, but the ability to effectively affect the world and people in a lasting and contributing way, which requires us to understand the nature or root cause of something we are working with. Otherwise, we remain endlessly concerned with the symptoms, the results.

Over the years, I have come to see the nature, the root cause, of our planet and probably of the universe as giving.

Everywhere 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.

Taking, having and using always seems to produce the kind of behavior that limits, constricts and diminishes life itself. To maintain the having and taking approach, unnatural structures of ownership and boundaries must be erected to keep things in an almost static state.

My property, my land, my business, my ideas, my things as a description of having and keeping rather than being responsible for and sharing, comes from not being aware that all you have is given to you. The ability to realize and receive that life is given to us, donated by the earth, is the root cause of giving and contributing.

People who can still experience that life is given to them naturally care.

Giving is based on awareness of what is outside of me: I am doing something that comes from me but does not refer to me. If, on the other hand, I am still concerned with what I might get if I give, I am still taking.

I cannot give when I am concerned with myself. When I give, I am focused on the other person, the world. It has nothing to do with me and yet it has everything to do with me because I perform the act of giving. But my consciousness lies in what, where and how I give and the most accurate way to give. A giver uses everything he has and is, to contribute to the other.

Giving produces three outcomes: Life, Identity and Future. As a living being, I was given these three basic principles to learn to apply in my life my specific way.

And to become a good giver, I need only be aware that life, identity and future is given to me. By comprehending the nature of these gifts, I become aware of those who gave. And since true giving is contributing all that we have, those who have given, whether it be the world, my parents, my friends, the makers of the world, have given and continue to give their lives, their identities and their futures to us.

To me it seems creating is constantly giving and evolving. If I only take and use without any connection, without any awareness that it is given to me, I am not contributing to the life, identity and future of others. Strange as it may seem when we look at the current state of the world, giving, contributing as best as we can, is still the prevailing attitude of the majority of people.

This is not a letter about philosophy, religion, spirituality, science, altruism or politics. I am describing the deepest nature of the world we live in. If you understand the nature of something, you can easily find a way forward. It is not very difficult to imagine the practical applications of a world organized based on giving. It is a practical ability, with the power to

transform, visible in the tremendous power of giving, but also in the destructive power when we do not give.

It's also not about good or bad, that can become part of it, but I'm just talking about what works and what doesn't. Using the world, nature and other people for your own benefit, or for the benefit of something abstract like business or country is not sustainable. To me, those who have created or caused something that is not sustainable have lost the connection to the reality of giving and therefore also create problems and repetitive problems that lead to disasters. When we only take, we are also no longer able to use the skills and awareness developed through the ability to give.

It has been my experience, both with myself and with people I have met, that our built-in will to contribute never leaves us, but is forgotten, submerged, by too much using, having and wanting.

Giving is a very precise and profound activity that requires obtaining information about both the uniqueness of the person, organization or situation and their connection to and influence on the living system of the social and natural world.

In the current state of the world, it is also not easy to give because so much is taken, used and obtained, that most of us are often forced into selfishness by the lack of life, identity and future.

I have found my connection to the root cause of being through talking, reading, meeting, researching and working with other people who have a unique connection to the root cause of being. You can easily tell the difference between a root cause connection and a cause-and-effect connection to the world. Cause connections open your mind and heart, stimulate your activities and honor your uniqueness, give what they can give and invite you to be. Cause-and-effect connections require a tighter focus and adaptation, my actions are determined by the goal and not me.

It becomes annoying when cause and effect is seen or presented as root cause: then it becomes limiting and coercive, and I will have to adapt, compensate and reduce. People are usually forced into such a state of being by lack of basic needs or by predicting or threatening lack of basic needs or by fairy tales it will become better in future. This is how the misuse of power works. By far most of our interventions to change anything are based on cause-and-effect approach.

Several things happen when we lose our individual connection to the deepest uniqueness of the world. If we can no longer perceive the workings and influences of giving, we will have to resort to all sorts of other explanations that justify our existence and behavior. Our perspective on life, other people and ourselves changes dramatically because of user attitudes, I will name a few:

- Since we are not made to take and use, it only creates futures we did not foresee. We were not made to have; it causes problems in ourselves and the world around us. It does not make us better people.
- Taking, using and having has the tendency to take, use and have us too: tends to become an attention-grabbing and addictive habit.

- It creates a society driven primarily by demands and obligations: compulsory activity does not contribute. We are forced into activity by different philosophies or religions, by problems we have to solve, but mostly by the fact and idea that we have to earn our basic needs instead of being given to us. Others take advantage of that.
- The entire contributing nature of plants, animals and humans is suddenly seen as an exercise in survival.
- The interconnectedness and coherence of life on our planet is seen as based on random chance or as a sacred fixed plan.
- Life will be the fulfillment of needs: The direction of the organization of our societies will be based on meeting those needs.

The main thing: If we can then no longer experience being given to us, we no longer look outside to receive, but we look outside to see what we need, 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 that our perception activity has changed from receiving to taking.

Because of our inability to experience the deeper nature of ourselves, in our daily lives, in commercial and social institutions, in education and upbringing, and in our current cultural imagery, we are mostly preoccupied and forced to focus on ourselves. No matter what people or institutions or education or our cultural habits proclaim. I have observed that things usually begin with a focus on ourselves: our needs and wants, our goals, our condition, our emotions or thoughts, our perceptions. In decision-making, personal, institutional or belief system selfishness predominates.

It is clear that there are people obsessed with having and taking, who have removed themselves so far from their essence, that they themselves have become the center of their being. A tendency that is highly addictive and, without exception, creates dissatisfaction and, from it, produces harshness and malice.

But I am just writing here about the ingrained habit we all have, to look at ourselves first when we are not connected to our root cause. Mind you, we are better at giving, but in our current view of life, that only plays a role in the background.

Enjoyment and happiness

Why are people usually preoccupied with even obsessed with the search for happiness and well-being?

Because they confuse pleasure and well-being with happiness and being.

You refer to the commercials in traditional media and most posts on LinkedIn or other social media. The happiness shown there is mainly focused on achieving goals where we have experienced fulfillment, satisfaction or contentment and being happy together for a while. These experiences have mostly become the measure of success or progress. And often the goal of the things we do. Focused on ourselves. A feeling we get when we are satisfied physically, emotionally and mentally.

Self-interest or self-centeredness are not in themselves a bad thing, but they can only bring us the satisfaction and pleasure of the fulfillment part of life, never the happiness part.

Although satisfaction and happiness seem interchangeable and intertwined, they are of very different natures.

Satisfaction and gratification are temporary, can only bring about a momentary experience of fulfillment, and must be constantly renewed.

Happiness does not come from the fulfillment of my needs and desires. **Happiness is our awareness of a connection to being, to our origin.** Happiness is born in the act of contributing, in the orientation of what to contribute to others, to the world, to all that is beyond myself. The experience this produces is more a perception of connection to existence than a feeling of fulfillment or joy, and it becomes a constant when I am connected to my root cause.

Satisfaction is the measure of our basic needs that tells us when we have had enough, when we are satisfied. It is an inner measure trained by the ability to experience and understand what is given to us. When properly developed, it is never selfish or self-centered, but is able to accept and work with what life provides. When I use of food, warmth, balance with my environment, social life, appreciation and the ability to learn and develop in the appropriate and unique way that the earth has made for me, I honor the gift of life. What is honoring the gift of life: it is receiving what is given to me by others and giving to others what I see they can receive.

This is the healthy situation, which is not reflected at all in the reality of most people's daily lives. Acting based on what is given to me has become acting on the basis of what I need. When the necessities of life are no longer given to me, I need them. Then basic needs are no longer free but become an obligation and for many people a burden to fulfill. And therefore, what is no longer given to me is something I must have. I am becoming dependent of others instead of connected to others.

Actually, the word basic needs should be replaced by basic given. That could change our view of the world.

The condition of life is a specific and therefore fragile connection to the opportunities of our planet. Our relationship to that delicate balance is disturbed when we use the measure of satisfaction, which has my personal fulfillment as its goal, as a measure for happiness, in which is focused on the other. Happiness then becomes our personal goal. But we cannot experience happiness in personal goals of fulfillment and satisfaction. No matter how much we will possess, achieve, enjoy, it all remains temporary. And because we actually are looking for happiness, we usually start to look for pleasure, possession and satisfaction even more. Then we are surprised at the effect on the world around us, where the pursuit of happiness through satisfaction and fulfillment simply means that somewhere in the system there are deficits and abuses.

This is the result of our inability to recognize that the world is given to us to meet all our basic needs. Wanting to possess more basic needs than we need and the attitude that produces usually stems from a misunderstanding of the essence of happiness.

This is not an argument for ensuring that we all need the same thing. On the contrary, that is an invention of the same confusion between the experiences of well-being and those of being. When I am in balance with the nature of our world, I trust that I am receiving what I need to be able to contribute. It is different for everyone.

It is in seeking happiness in basic needs, that we all desire the same thing and lose our unique balance and individual measure.

Having more than we need is also very difficult to get out of. We are then trapped in such a circle of self-interest, unable to look for what we can contribute to the world without getting anything in return. The result is that we will never be happy, but always seeking happiness, addicted to happiness using the ways and means of satisfaction. Our experience of existence is replaced by our drive for satisfaction and fulfillment.

I would argue that most of the problems we face in the world today are because the things we have developed have no basis in the foundation of our being and therefore without a connection that understands and interacts with the very complex and interconnected nature of our planet.

What this means: it indicates that our actions, our inventions, our activities to provide solid basic needs for everyone, lack a connection to the whole living, integrated system of the world. There is no "wholeness" intelligence. We have not been able to cooperate with nature, in our society and with our techniques in such a way that we contribute to all life. We have taken from the earth, nature and people to create a world in which we want to find happiness by increasing our contentment. I am the first and the other is the second, clearly is the opposite of Earth's intention. And this kind of "happiness" pursuit, is not only about food, but also about work, family, knowledge, relationships, achievements, power and property. It is everywhere.

Let's be honest for a moment and look at what we have done with our approach to have, take and want to satisfy. It has created almost the opposite of happiness and well-being: an unstable culture, people primarily concerned with satisfying themselves, or forced into an endless struggle for survival, endangering nature.

Taking and using to create a state of happiness just doesn't work. By not being aware of our giving origin, we take away the core of why we live. Something that is usually overlooked but is actually very important when we consider the huge increase in mental and social health problems: If you no longer recognize that it is given to you to become a giver, you will experience an emptiness in your being that can never be restored by taking more. And you will become even more strongly driven to seek it in the realm of basic needs and satisfaction, at the expense of others. This is not about good or bad, it is about the ability to work with the reality of the environment in which we live, namely that everything is so interconnected, complex and unique that we can only deal with it if we give, if we become skilled in the art of giving.

I would like to add something about the state of euphoria people get into, if only for a moment, when they achieve their goal, their imagined future, their victory, their desire, especially if it is a joint effort. This is a good example of satisfaction. Of personal fulfillment, of having it nice and good yourself. There is nothing wrong with that at all, as long as we do not strive to make our personal experiences of enjoyment a constant. And making that constant enjoyment a life goal.

Unfortunately, the state of constant enjoyment is seen as foreshadowing the bliss we will receive in paradise. All our wants and needs fulfilled in constant euphoria. The paradise syndrome: the experience of a shared state of bliss resulting from complete fulfillment is seen as the future. It is not an image of the future but a remembrance of the past, we have already had that. We were perfect in paradise, but we left it to become unique.

Bluntly put: our take on the future is that we all get what we want. But since almost all of our present wanting enjoyment is a surrogate for happiness, that is not a very likely future. Wanting to enjoy is really based on the past, it is repeating what we already know or expect from the common past. With a little variation, of course. It's like cooking with almost the same ingredients and yet making something new out of them. A fine achievement, but rearranging the past, as you read in the letter to Heke Mai, does not give a future. It is innovating within a certain field, a certain circle of possibilities and thoughts and by processing our experiences, initiating another step, within the same field. The future is not a consequence of the past. I do know that this is one of the most persistent misconceptions out there. The future is no more a consequence of the past than the present is a consequence of the future. Any future that we predict from the present is based on what we already know and understand now, and thus is always an extended past. With potentially similar possibilities and difficulties. The future is always determined by what we do not yet know, understand and expect and still we take a step into the unknown. Moving forward within the confines of what you know and expect is progress, but not future.

Intelligence and consciousness

Is our intellectual capacity sufficient to get us out of the current impasse? No, it isn't.

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

But I also ask you to step back for a moment from how you use these words on a daily basis. Intelligence comes from the Latin word "intelligere" which means to understand; it is my ability to understand the world around me. That is essentially responding to and working with the facts and realities out there.

If I take consciousness literally it means I am aware of (my) being, very close to the original Latin meaning. And not only, as it is widely used today, in the meaning of I am aware. In both Dutch and English these words have lost much of their original meaning, and in everyday use and understanding they usually refer to the use of our intellect. But I like to point out in this letter what the word consciousness means: I am aware of (my) existence and from this awareness I act. Which means I am aware of the effect of what I do or fail to do on the living system of the world as a whole, all individual beings and all that is. Not only at this moment, but also in the future. Hence the expression: conscious living.

For our intelligence, to be aware of everything everywhere and all the time is far too much information to work with, it would overwhelm our intelligent faculties to consider all the facts, the possible consequences and long-term effect and the connection with it all individuals and the whole existence. Intelligence can perform such tasks only within a clearly defined and delineated area.

Our intelligent faculties, thinking and feeling, use our reason to organize their information. Reason puts it in a certain order: thinking: linearly hierarchical, feeling: circularly interconnected.

Intelligence is our great organizer of information **within** a situation, philosophy, belief, chain of ideas, scientific structure, social framework, cultural background, personal beliefs, etc. It does it with reason, reasonably and gives reasons so that we can communicate and share

our ideas and feelings. The intelligence can package the information for our journey through time and space, our reason is able to unpack and repackage the data when needed. Intelligence is a wonderful tool, but our intelligence is not equipped to take us **beyond** our organized thoughts and feelings, beyond the worldview or belief system in which we operate. Reason operates within a well-defined system of conditions, which acts as both boundary and source.

In going through the list and visiting their websites, that you have come across in your research into the future, I found that most of the information and sources of the information, design and ideas, trials and examples, have in common that they are reasonable. They contain and are made by intellectual or/and emotional reason. Therefore, their arguments, plans, propositions and demands for change are valid in an intelligent worldview. We humans use our reason to change and renew the world and ourselves, and we are good at it and want to do good with it.

Since Descartes, reason has slowly become the same as logic. The, if I may call it that, despair underlying your question comes from a confusion of reason with logic. Similar to the confusion between pleasure and happiness.

Our intelligent instruments are quite capable of doing their job, as long as we do not force them to do something they were not designed to do. Our intelligence was not developed to answer questions about existence, but to answer questions about well-being. Well-being is about improvement and fulfillment within certain clearly defined conditions. How to improve is a helpful question for our thinking and feeling. When we have defined what those conditions are and what we want to do within that framework, we get the best results. All based on reasoning through a process.

My friend, we have regularly discussed the completely illogical impact of very reasonable solutions.

- For example: the development of plastic is reasonable but not logical. Reasonable because it is a wonderfully useful product and well developed. Illogical because you should never make something that threatens life in a fragile living interconnected system, by ignoring the basic rule of this living system, namely make and un-make.
- Or for example: The way we organize our economy is reasonable within a certain frame of mind, but of course it is beyond any logic when you see that the workings of the system make it increasingly difficult for people to be part of this system themselves.
- For example: It takes a lot of intelligence to develop a car and it is done with great effort and offers us many possibilities. It lacks complete logic to let this development pollute one of the basic resources of life.

Intelligence is by its nature incapable of seeing beyond its own limits, but when it is in good shape, it recognizes this and leaves perception beyond its space to consciousness. In recent centuries, however, by the result of our underlying mental model, it has slowly become a firm belief that intelligence has no limits (of course a very unintelligent belief). Which could indeed point to a reduction in our ability to reason as you fear in your letter.

So anything our reasonable inventions, constructions, politics, predictions, cause that was not factored in, is usually seen as lack of knowledge or chance. At least not as something I could have known and influenced. When it becomes a problem, we use yet another

reasonable intervention to deal with the difficulty. This trap of our intelligence arises only when our conscious capacities are not in shape, not as well developed as our intelligent capacities. Intelligence understands after the fact and bases its steps forward on knowledge we already have or can possibly acquire based on an understanding we have gained from our current view (shaped by the knowledge we already have) of the world. Perhaps a difficult phrase, but important in understanding both the possibilities and limits of our intelligent capacity. Often, combining past insights in a new way produces surprising advances. And that is what intelligence is good at: progress.

Most of the examples you wrote about in your research are intelligent solutions, coming from the same source that created the problems in the first place. In some cases that is the right way forward, but not in the remaining cases.

My point is this: Those who propose solutions or give ideas and do things that are not based on the right approach have no idea that their designs come from the same source that created the problems. They do not make the distinction between rearranging information from the same source and finding another source. They offer an alternative arrangement within the existing structure; exactly what intelligence is so good at. Intelligence is capable of creating all kinds of versions of the same thing. Unfortunately, it is not always the approach we need.

And because of the contemporary imbalance between the use of consciousness and intelligence, people tend to have unquestioning faith in the source upon which much of their current ideas and classification and understanding of the world is based.

We usually have little idea that we are using a certain source and certain boundaries. Let alone that we are aware that we can use different sources that may challenge our comfortable and habitual view of life.

If we do not challenge our beliefs, belief systems and way of life, any progress we can see or foresee will be shaped by the same or similar basic ingredients we have used before. We will simply not notice alternative or different information.

Most of the time we really think we need **more** rather than **unknown** information. We are no longer aware that we also have a great ability to work with different and complex data. That ability, to step outside the worldviews and belief system to which we are attached, with which we are fused, from which we derive self-worth and which we have made our foundation, comes from our consciousness.

Consciousness uses logic as its method.

Some problems or challenges need our intelligent capacity that provides change and renewal, while others need our conscious capacity that gives us ways and means for transformation and metamorphosis. I hear you ask: How does this work?

We have these vast databases of personal and collective information in the conscious and unconscious reservoirs of our consciousness. It is a well-developed tool that allows us to draw upon the stored information from upbringing, experience and background of ourselves and others as needed. Intelligence is able to work **within** a database, consciousness is able to work **with** the databases. When I look at our lifestyle and fundamental organizational and social patterns, we are primarily trained to use our intelligence: the ability to work within a particular database.

Moving, searching, rearranging, studying in a database we do with our intelligent ability. Working with and learning from multiple databases we do with our consciousness capability. Intelligence uses reason, consciousness uses logic.

I am now going to write about how conscious faculties work. Since you have already read what I wrote to Heke Mai, I will try a different approach. You see, it is almost impossible to activate our conscious faculties without moving.

We have to move our body, soul (thinking and feeling) and spirit to be conscious. I am not going to describe the activity of consciousness reasonably, but logically.

To begin: I also urge you to move while reading this.

So, get up from your chair and start moving. It is an integral part of training consciousness, to move while you learn.

Intelligence is concentration on a subject, an experience I am going through, a sequence of activities, a goal I want to achieve. Everything comes from that concentration on a goal and the data, emotional, social and intellectual information, show me where I am in the activity. When we physically move to concentrate, we shut down to concentrate: We contract. I call that the movement of contraction.

So do the contracting motion with your whole body and make yourself as small as possible. Almost to a ball also with legs and arms retracted.

We stay focused and achieve our goal, but we also have little or no connection to what lies beyond our intended goal. We all know how intelligence works because concentration, contraction, is movement that we apply daily for long periods of time.

However, we don't really know how consciousness works.

Our conscious abilities require us to expand, to open up, to let go; we create a much larger surface. We are not trying to find an answer, purpose or reason. It finds us. We give ourselves to receive what is given. But to put it this way sounds profound or not of this world. I am afraid we are all very influenced by the intelligence of science and religion to step into the kind of consciousness I describe without feeling alien, lost and even indigenious. But I assure you that it's just a matter of practice. At least that is my experience with most of the people with whom we begin this work: they have no idea that their body is a highly sensitive perceptual instrument. When you use it that way, information is revealed to you, but only because we are doing the activity of expansion. It is not idle waiting for it to come, it is not relaxing or resting. It is very consciously perceiving through the activity of expansion, without explaining or indicating. That will come later when we bring all the data to our intelligence.

Now do the movement of expansion, extending yourself, open yourself: your arms, legs, chest, ears, etc. everything as wide as possible.

Then alternate between expansion and contraction. Do it 5 or 6 times, contracting and expanding. Start the sequence very slowly and then increase the pace. Stand still for about a minute and become aware of the balance between the two movements.

Next, do the same exercise but internally, without moving the outer body. Experience how that works. And then a moment of peace and quiet.

Please start moving again my friend.

We humans are in balance between that contracting and expanding information processing dance. If we use those primal movements in proper alternation, we will be healthy receivers and healing givers.

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

Contraction gives us intelligence and all the wonderful inner tools and outer applications of thought and feeling.

Expansion gives us awareness of uniqueness and interconnectedness.

The movements are very different, because with the first one I go towards it in an attempt to get it, reach it, grasp it. If I lose a decent link to my conscious movements, I may even think I have it.

With expansion, I open myself to allow a connection to the information of which I am not aware until it connects with me. At that point I have a dialogue in concepts and experiences. Not in thoughts and feelings because those are its effect.

Awareness, the ability to deal with information from many and different sources, coming from different databases, like any ability we humans have, must be kept in shape through training and feedback. The more we have practiced, the better we are able to deal with the unknown, the uncertain, no idea where we will find the information, it is given to us. But expansion is as active as contraction, it is not "laissez faire," it is the conscious gesture of letting in as much information, as many connections as you can handle.

But since we have come to regard our information-gathering abilities as merely reasonable capacities, we have developed a preference for training ourselves intelligently.

Intelligence knows what it is looking for, consciousness does not know, but it becomes aware.

Because of our one-sided training, we make it difficult for our intelligence to understand consciousness and have mostly forgotten how consciousness handles information.

The point here is that of course we use both our contracting and expanding abilities all day long, but we are only intelligently trained: we are aware of our contraction movements in reasoning, focus and result orientation. We are mostly unaware of our expansion movements to we naturally use them unconsciously and therefore untrained (hopefully you now understand why I chose the word awareness).

The unconscious use of expansion brings us more to the need for relaxation, leisure, not having to concentrate for a while. And less to the active act of expansion to retrieve unknown information. Unfortunately, most vacations have degenerated into inactive expansion to counterbalance excessive contraction. Relaxation is not the same as expansion.

In the movement of expansion, I open myself to more information by using all my senses, all the information that comes in my thoughts, feelings, sensations, impressions, emotions, insights, etc. are **perceptions** at that moment. But when I open unconsciously, without being aware of my expansion, all information is processed **personally** and intellectually. I confuse perceptions, information of connections, with my own personal feelings, thoughts and experiences. Conscious impressions contain so much information of the other, of things that are not me that I am not able to work through the information intelligently. Processing these perceptions as if they were mine and not observations, often leads to a personal problem.

In many cases, when we are given conscious information and we are not aware that it has a conscious quality, we begin to process it with our intelligence. I can only say that in my work

I have seen that most personal and organizational problems stem from this deep misunderstanding. It is my opinion that almost all the modern phenomena under which the youth is weighed down come from this misunderstanding of the difference in information quality.

No may I ask you to sit down again my friend. Since your questions follow your reading of the letter I send to Heke Mai on identity and consciousness, I will not go into that today, but identity is an integral part of using the gifts of consciousness.

The essence of consciousness is dialogue. A kind of dialogue that all the senses are capable of, where we receive the information; then we give something back and receive again and so on. Intelligence likes to classify information in order to grasp it, and before it answers, the information is weighed in my thinking and feeling. With intelligent information, this makes sense because we can follow content with our thinking or co-experience it with our feeling. We stay with it to perceive what our reaction is and return it, but we also pay attention to what that reaction is. We assess whether our response fits our mental model and belief system and estimate how our response will be received. We check. We control. Consciousness accepts the deeper, more direct message that the living and material world is constantly giving. It's like listening not so much to what someone is saying, but to what it means. In fact, we do it all the time: what do words and gestures express, more than content. The tone, the rhythm, the movement of the body as we speak. The depth of understanding from interconnectedness through time, to uniqueness in the moment, as we listen. The dialogue I am referring to is a conversation between two identities in the language of understanding. To truly accept this multiplicity and uniqueness of information, I need my whole body, not just my head and brain. Our whole body is designed to have a conscious dialogue. Take the simple example of the impressions people have when they walk in nature or in a city. It gives them something much more than the translation into intelligence that comes later. The interaction between me and my environment and the different contexts in which we live and work is usually overlooked until it becomes very clear as a feeling or a thought. But those are only the conclusions, contractions, taken from a much larger body of impressions and observations and placed in a familiar framework of intelligence to make sense of them. Most other information is pushed aside, judged by our preferred database to be irrelevant. Because of our controlling habit. What does the landscape say? What is the city making itself heard? What does this group in society really mean to say? What are you expressing when you discard excess waste? I only can become aware those messages when I do not filter the answers through my controllers. Words come when my intelligence begins to understand the language of my consciousness. When my consciousness is in shape it finds meaning and direction in the multitude of information to which I can tune my intelligence. Our consciousness is aware of where and how to go, what to do and when, even before we know, because knowing comes after an contracting intelligent processing of information. In consciousness we are in dialogue focused on the other, so not concerned with ourselves or what we want to achieve or conclude. Consciousness uses the activity of differentiation to experience the specific and unique and the activity of correlation to understand the interconnected wholeness of our planet's living system. These abilities provide insight and cooperation to find a path to the future.

Since I know you as a scientist and a thinker, you probably need more than my description and the exercise.

The function of consciousness is probably easiest to explain by naming its two basic abilities. Consciousness is being awake and perceiving that everything is related to everything and everything is unique. You cannot find two equal grains of sand on the entire planet and you cannot isolate something in order to understand it. I call these abilities of consciousness: correlation and differentiation.

Harnessing the power of uniqueness means differentiating and allowing many different viewpoints, cultural backgrounds, views on life, talents, etc. into the space to create a sustainable path forward. I am using an example from my own working life, but it can be applied to anything.

Remember the two moments in our collaboration when we applied this differentiation? I was invited to help you and your team transform the governance and leadership of the large educational institution you were then heading. We met in this beautiful conference room where you had invited almost all the major professors who had some connection to business and leadership studies. Since you had given me a free hand, I invited this group of 12 people for a walk and during our walk I explained the differentiation approach. I asked all but one of the professors to drop out of the transformation team, with the promise that they would each be given an important task at a later stage of the process. In which they would have to apply the same methodology to their own departments. They could follow the steps we were about to take through a live broadcast. With only one professor and only you and I left, we began our search for team members to create the first draft. The professor came with his friend, a professor of astrophysics if I remember correctly and a Hungarian student from one of his college years. You came with your department's cleaning lady and your daughter's landlady (but if I remember correctly also a bit as a joke or test). I brought the woman from the coffee shop down the road and my friend the chief surgeon of the hospital group in your town.

The design team, after a short period of familiarization and training, came up with great ideas. Looking back, I loved most the immediate simplicity of the organization and especially the processes we designed. And even the most cynical and incredulous professors had to admit that the design and implementation process worked well when they, too, started applying it at the institute. Process design and implementation strategy come from differentiation: as many unique points of view as possible. The exercise is to help people move from their common opinions and sentiments to their individual expressions.

You called the choice of participants in the design group arbitrary, but I called it specific. It is our ability to find the appropriate and unique information and the right people, as long as we are willing to move among multiple databases and not drive it with the knowing. We are finding the right uniqueness, the right unique way forward in our approach, by getting as much diversity in our teams as possible but also by exercising our "random hunches" ability and starting to use it much more.

The entrance to contribute to the complex system of the world and the future is found through our correlative understanding. To the untrained consciousness and over-trained intelligence, its efficacy may be even more incomprehensible. But on the other hand, I have met many people who could experience this connection to the world "in depth". Knowing

that things are correlated is by no means the same as being able to experience the correlation. The experience of correlation can be seen in natural **attention** to the other, to the environment, to the consequences of our actions, to the future. This understanding naturally arises on the basis of being connected to the root cause of existence: contributing. The first step in connecting to the root cause of our existence is "awareness of ease". There is no compulsion in the application of the correlation principle: no first necessity compulsion, no political compulsion, no legal compulsion, no majority compulsion, no system compulsion, no mental model compulsion, no belief systems compulsion, no social obligations compulsion, no progress compulsion, etc.

Anything that has no real connection with the whole living system exerts coercion somewhere in the cohesion of life and conversely anything we make with obligation does not work with the living system.

Or in other words, to actual new ideas, one must first break free from everything that tries to force itself from the past into the future. For example: my view or image of what the future should look like. That is the intelligent approach, which does not go beyond innovation. Creating and experience of calm and ease, acceptance and safety where participants focus on the other's views and ideas is a great way to see **a future design emerge**.

What we already know of the future we can feel free to use as information, as long as it does not become directional. Becoming aware of coherence is an exercise in setting off without knowing where you will end up. The result, we are not aware of yet, determines the path and steps we will take. Of course, we can only begin such a path forward if we are aware of a question of the future. We have a starting point, but no goal yet. That is, we develop the process, the method, the goal, during the work. If we have a goal before we start, we are going through an intelligent and not a conscious process.

The guiding principles we use to arrive at a result of a consciousness process, of which the "awareness of ease" is one, are also not sequential steps, but much more awareness guiders to see if we are still true to our intention. I hope you remember the steps we took with the group of business and organization professors to create a path into the future.

If we do not allow our consciousness to do the job properly, the interactivity between databases becomes weak and the database of our preference becomes dominant and therefore hardened even callous. Hardened means that it is no longer able to process unknown, unfamiliar, different and opposite information from what it already has in storage. The static database will not only start looking for similar information that it already possesses, but our information processors will no longer be able to recognize new, unknown, untrusted and opposing information. Due to excessive contraction, unknown information will be considered irrelevant and will not be stored. The next step is that we will become so impenetrable that information that does not meet the norm will be seen as threatening and even hostile. And a rationale for that will always be constructed.

Just think of the reasons given for doing things that are wrong, we see so much coming from our institutions or from ourselves when we allow ourselves to be taken over by self-interest. Even to the extent that facts are bent to fit within a particular frame of thinking. You can recognize if a hardened database has prevailed by the fact that activities (including decisions) always harm something or someone else.

It is very similar to the resistance you can meet when you want to change something, either in yourself or in the outside world. Remember we met intense resistance, with even aggression and attacks when we started a lifestyle program in an area in your city. People had to change their diet and start exercising and working out, as the start of a change program. None of this was our idea, mind you, they designed the program themselves, but when it came down to actually doing it, there was intense opposition. In retrospect we could all laugh about it, and the residents marveled at their own behavior, but at the time we found it very stressful.

Due to the lack of conscious training it could well be we have turned our fit and agile databases into belief systems and mental models. Beliefs and models that we use to control our existence and inevitably that of others, without being very aware of it. We might even believe the world is like our preferred databank suggests because we have been unable to detect anomalous information relative to our findings and beliefs. Worse, we see deviant as abnormal and irregular and opposite as hostile. The other is suddenly suspect and we need the other to make our databanks agile again.

Our education, supported in it by the social establishment, has not sufficiently trained the innate ability of our consciousness. Thus, we are poor at verifying that our databases receive and record diverse and coherent information. And being untrained, we forget that **we** oversee the governance and stewardship of our databases and not the opinions and sentiments of our favorite database.

The formation and maintenance of our databases is hardly a factor in our upbringing and mouthful in our education. Actually, education is mainly an upload of information to our databases of a certain kind, brand, model and belief. Where consistency and uniqueness lose out to information that seems to us necessary for a future life in the prevailing worldviews and sentiments about life. But as already stated this view of learning has very little future value.

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

Yet another generation of very intelligent but unaware young people.

I find it hard to see that we keep burdening our young people and also our intelligent ability with it.

But getting our conscious faculties back into shape is not that difficult. The mode of our consciousness is dialogue, that is, really receiving and giving information. Receiving information is listening on several levels, not only content but also meaning, gesture and intention. I must confess that when I watch the media today, there is very little receiving, but an overwhelming amount of "critical" listening, which is more listening to whether it fits my database or not. The result of one-sided training. But when you remember how easily we changed that habitual attitude in the teams and groups we worked with by creating an atmosphere of trust and openness, it shows how much closer receiving is to human nature than "looking for what I recognize." Intelligence works so much better when it doesn't have to be overly alert and judgmental, when it doesn't have to compensate for the lack of our conscious faculties.

The essence of consciousness is dialogue. A kind of dialogue where all the senses receive the information; and then we give something back. Intelligence likes to classify the information to make sense of it, but consciousness accepts the deeper, more direct message

that the living and material world is constantly giving. It is like listening not so much to what someone says, but to what it means. **Not the content, but the connection.**

When we look at the world, we can observe our inability to contribute to the future at almost every social and personal level.

This inability has two basic characteristics: We seek security and stability in immutability and we seek progress within the same frameworks. Both come through untrained awareness of how to connect to the future and produce fear of life and fear of life always leads to compulsion and self-interest.

Differentiation is our power to find peace and individuality outside our own frameworks.

When we use this ability, then we can meet many other people and other ideas and insights without compromising ourselves and our individuality. The key is to be judgement free. Our view of the world, our opinions and our sentiments undoubtedly change when we no longer seek to fit the information of the other into our own worldview. When we have based our self-image on a fitting and filtering process, it is hard work. But our contact with our real self becomes much more solid as a result, so much so that I can begin to move outside my views and frames of mind without the experience of losing myself.

Correlation is our power to experience stability in dynamics.

When we use this ability, we are able to experience that we have a place within a coherence of life. The place is there, we recognize it, indeed we cannot hold it if we do not move with the dynamics of life.

We do tend to isolate and level out our differences to create certainty when we want to find stability. But true stability in life is firmly rooted in our existence, and existence at all is the most diverse and dynamic experience I know.

Consciousness gives us a tool to experience ourselves as a uniquely valuable part of the coherence of existence, our foundation in life.

Future is not provided by anything static, by anything we have or hold on to. It is not provided by any static system or structure: It does not matter much whether we believe in science, God, progress, people, natural development or money. If we accept a single point of view as our future, it is determined by difficulties we create ourselves. On the other hand, if we consciously keep our databases movable, to receive all types of information, giving becomes a natural gesture and the gateway through which we connect to the future.

Heartfelt greetings to Bhavişyattu,
In friendship,

Peter Paul