



Money – Work – Generosity (2nd stage) 24-26 May 2019

All the documents

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A) Reminders from the previous workshop

01) 19.00 – Introduction (15')

Rules: 1) Try not to go astray in our sharing and discussion. Focus on the theme / on the questions. 2) Contribute with awareness to the evolution of the debate. 3) Do not confront others but you may challenge them. 4) Keep it confidential.

About the topic of this workshop: The economy and market forces dominate our lives and decide of our priorities. To be free of this domination we need to discern what is creative in our economic system and what is harmful. Then we may be able to choose better priorities and reorganise the way we exchange goods and services and especially the way we relate to these things in our own lives and before all how we relate to one another. Our main problem is that we are intoxicated by the surrounding way of thinking and we can't think clearly. We get confused. Among people in a frantic trance it is difficult to keep serene.

02) 19.15 – Four important notions (15')

Important notion 1 – the hunter-gatherers model - abundance is given:

Nature provides what we need. No need for storage. Trust that it will be provided. Hunter-gatherers are used to stop hunting or collecting when they have enough. They can then celebrate.

Conclusion: Money and market create penury.

Important notion 2 – Chayanov's law and its corollary - self-limitation allows harmony:

Chayanov's law: "The greater the ratio of workers to consumers in a household, the less each worker produces; production stops as needs are

covered". For communities that live on a subsistence basis (i.e. mainly traditional and rural societies), the intensity of production per worker increases in proportion to the number of consumers per worker. It means that workers in charge of more dependants work harder than the ones who have to feed fewer. In other words the intensity of work depends on the range of the needs multiplied by the number of dependants. Production will even stop when needs are satisfied or when abundance is provided.

Corollary of Chayanov's law: when needs are satisfied one may spend time celebrating life (making friends, dancing, performing rituals).

Conclusion: When needs are covered we can celebrate life.

Important notion 3 – Subsistence as duration - inversion of our usual understanding of work: first comes subsistence which makes work possible (and not the contrary).

Subsistence provides the conditions to be able to work; and not work the conditions to be able to subsist. We need first to be fed and clothed before we can work and be creative. And not the contrary: we believe too often that we have to work to be able to be fed and clothed. Subsistence comes first, before work. It is why we care for our children to allow them to be in full possession of their potentials and they can thrive because they are cared for. The same is true for all of us.

And subsistence is linked with duration. Whether our work is productive or not, we have the same needs: 3 meals a day if possible, some 8h sleep, a good roof and warm and protecting clothes, not mentioning affective needs. The increase of our work does not increase our needs. When subsistence is ensured we can work without having to produce; or we may work for free. This brings a great freedom for creativity, generosity and creating links. On the contrary our present system believes that for each hour more I work I need to be paid the same amount. It means that if we work more we should become rich. I hope you can see that this is nonsense.

Finland recently has made the experience of distributing a minimal income given without conditions to a certain group of people in need, in

order to allow them to thrive. It seemed to be very effective. Many similar experiences have been made elsewhere too. A basic minimal income (kind of old age pension for life) could replace any form of salary and we could work for free. We all could get a minimal income and be free to work as we want to.

Conclusion: subsistence comes first (duration and not product); our social surroundings provide it; then we can work fully and participate in the thriving of our community (an offering).

Important notion 4 – Traditional model - Ownership and access – the Commons.

Abundance depends on harmonious relationships with nature and on our social belonging.

- 1) Natural resources: they are given free by nature. Life, water, air, wood, food.
- 2) Cultural and social resources: they are given free by society. Language, knowledge, education, skills, relationships, love, ethics, spiritual teaching.
- 3) These resources need work to be made available: wood that becomes a table, knowledge that becomes teaching in schools, books to be written and printed.
- 4) Work is time of subsistence. We need to be alive to be able to work and serve our family and community.
- 5) Things cost because work costs (is compensated for) because subsistence costs because work costs. Or everything could be free if work were free.
- 6) Most goods multiply when they are shared: justice, peace, love, knowledge.
- 7) Most goods cannot be divided: universal equilibrium of nature, gravitation, love, spirituality.

What is the difference between ownership or access to use?

- 1) The gifts of nature and the wealth of common heritage are provided by our surroundings. We learned everything from our natural and

social context. Even our skills are given to us, and developed thanks to our context. Everything is free: life, air, water, love, knowledge, culture, spirituality. Food grows because of the sun and the rain and the nourishment of the soil, etc.

- 2) Why do things cost?
- 3) What is best: private property or shared property? We tend to store goods on our shelves instead of making them available (accessible) for all. Access to use is much more efficient than ownership. Few things only have to be in private (restricted) property: such as a tooth brush, trousers. If tools are common to a whole neighbourhood, all people can access them and use them when they need them. The most essential goods should be common: schools, public libraries, public infrastructure, etc.
- 4) Making it accessible for all and keeping it as a common wealth. The Commons are the root of our prosperity. The more we share the more we get rich; equality generates harmony.

Conclusion: Most wealth is common wealth (natural and social resources).

03) 19.30 – Many aspects of money (15') – p5

Pragmatic aspects: transport and how to combine seller / buyer or items or opportunities of choice, etc.

Problem of conversion: what is value? what is price. Conversion of value as a form of speculation (how much for this item?).

Money as a yardstick: the yardstick never stops changing.

Speculation: stock exchange, investment, interest rate, usury, etc.

04) 19.45 – Four transformations by money (15') – pp6-9

From network to egocentrism: money replaces relationships.

From self-sufficiency to overconsuming: money extends our needs.

Pyramid and hierarchy: the few richest drain the wealth of many.

Profit replaces purposefulness and spirit of service.

03 – Many aspects of money

Pragmatic aspects:

Compare with barter:

- 1) Facility of transport (my ox in my pocket),
- 2) Subdivision of value (the leg of my ox and not the whole ox),
- 3) Dissociation of buyer and seller (the butcher takes my ox but I get my tools from the hardware shop),
- 4) Dissociation of items (I sell my ox and then think about my tools),
- 5) Multiplication of choices (I may buy my tools from different sources – choice of quality and provenance).
- 6) System of accounting: how much we owe each other.
- 7) Money can also correct inequalities and injustice, as compensation or as redistribution of wealth. Note that this is not structural but only a correction.

Problem of conversion:

- 1) What is the true value? How much should it cost?
- 2) Value and price are not the same.
- 3) Values fluctuate according to perceptions.
- 4) Prices fluctuate under the influence of market and speculation (retaining or flooding).
- 5) Market influences the prices but not the value (our personal valuation).
- 6) What does the price represent indeed?

Money as a yardstick:

- 1) Measuring wealth (according to price and not value). Variations in the stick length!
- 2) GDP, exchange rates, local prices, market influence, land value, falsify the comparisons.
- 3) What cannot be sold: natural cycles, sunshine, air, light has no price (in the double sense of the expression).
- 4) Values without price: equity, justice, peace, love, etc.

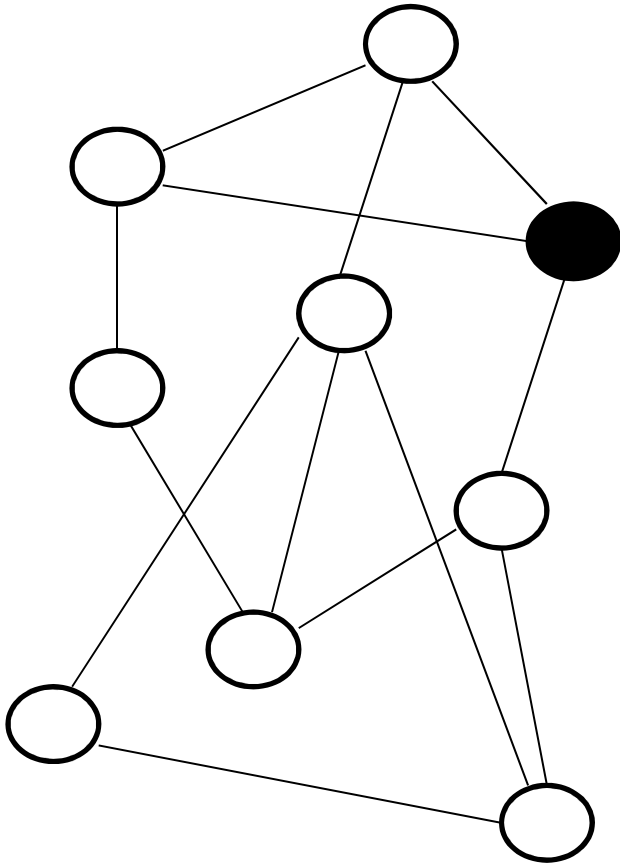
Speculation:

- 1) Because of conversion money may produce money: stock exchange, investment, interest rate, play on exchange rate, etc.).
- 2) The way to become rich without working.
- 3) Is the practice of interest rates justified?
- 4) Usury is forbidden by Islam.
- 5) If money would lose its value when kept, it would circulate all the time, and not be stored.

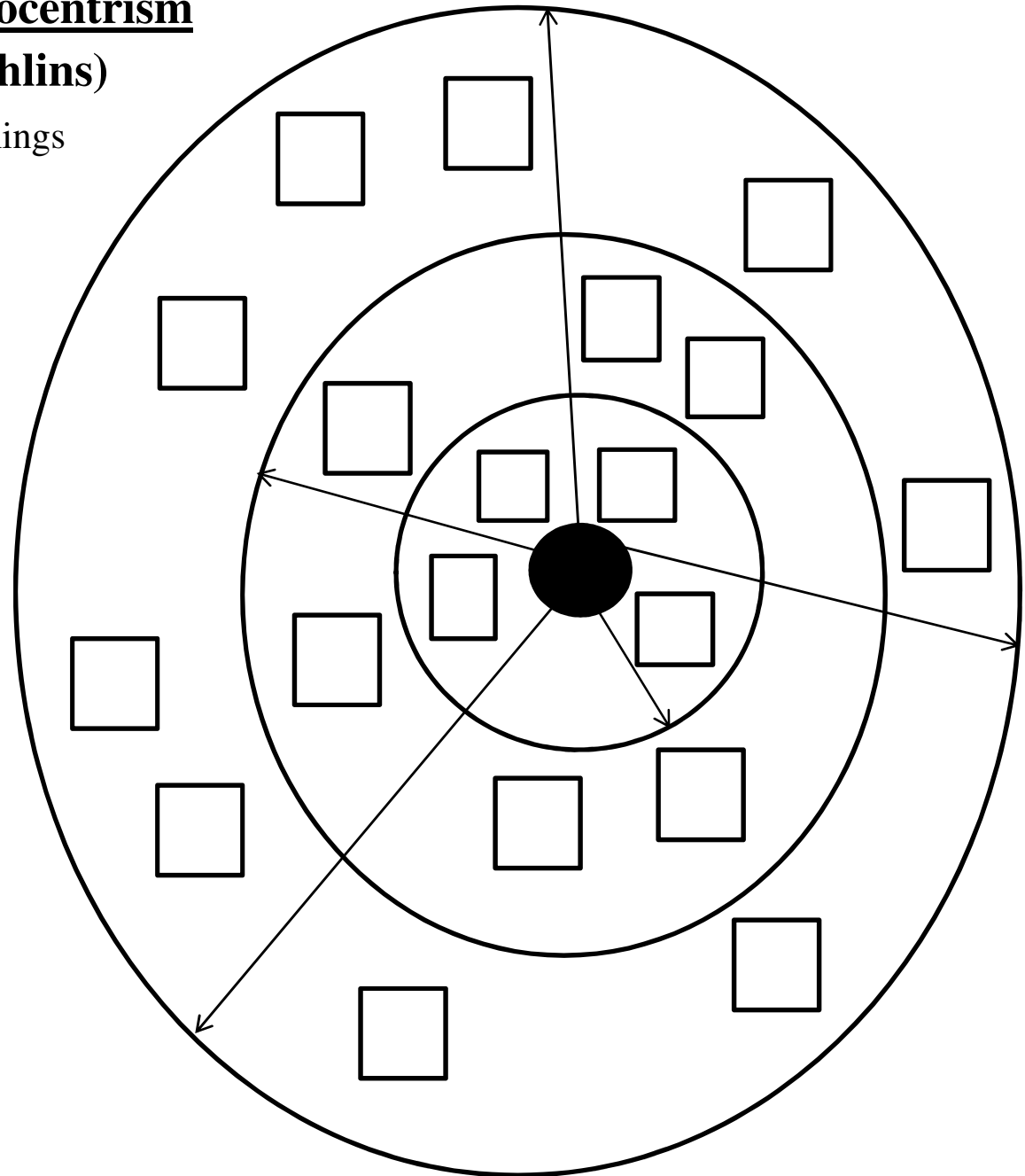
04.1 - Transfo 1: from network to egocentrism

Money replaces relationships (M. Sahlins)

in the next sketches: ○ = people □ = things



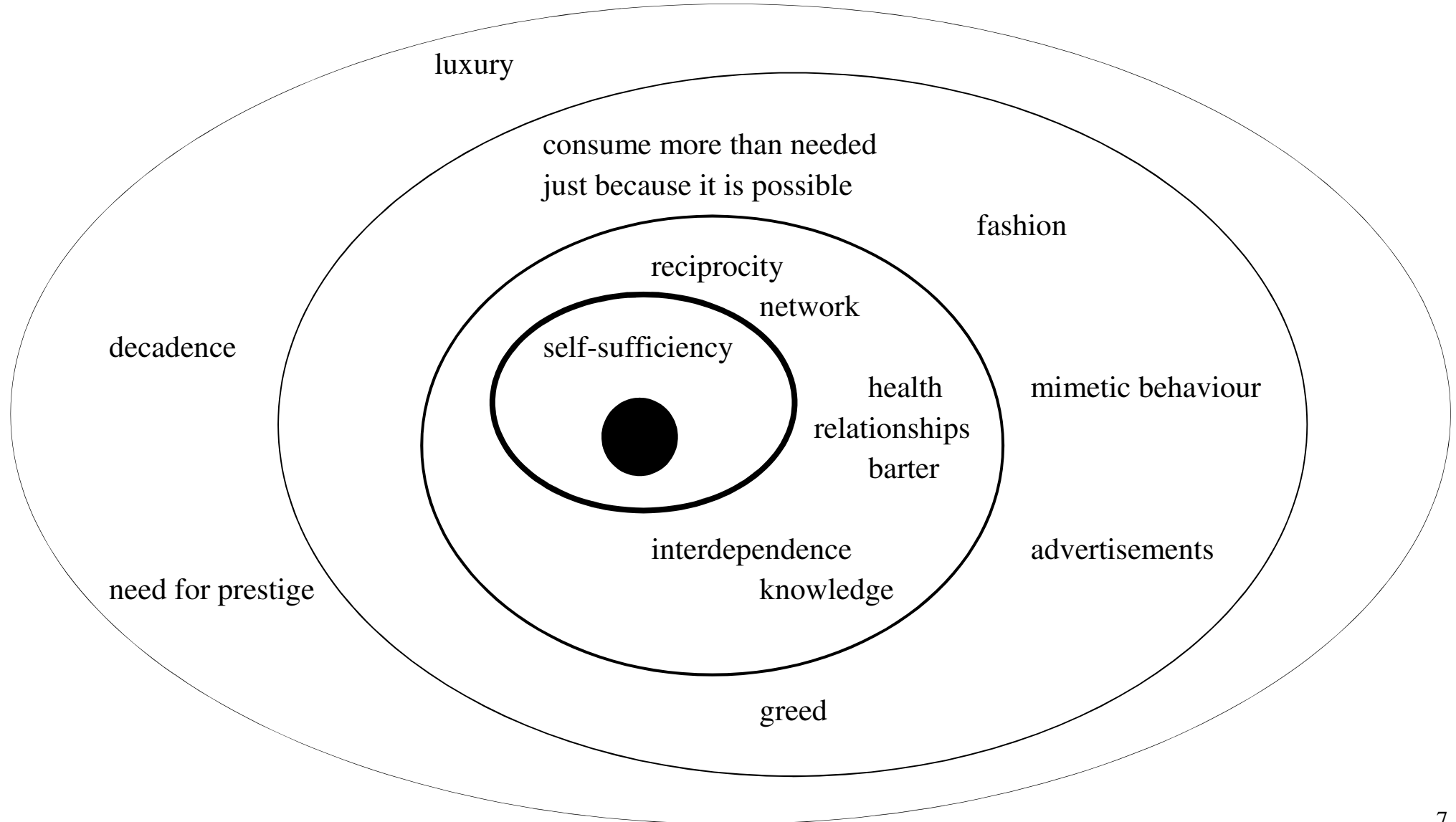
An ever growing self-centeredness



04.2 - Transfo 2: from self-sufficiency to over-consuming

Without money our needs would be more reduced (self-sufficiency and interdependence)

Money makes consumption easy and therefore increases our needs just because it is possible



04.3 - Transfo 3: Pyramid and hierarchy

A few richest drain the wealth of many

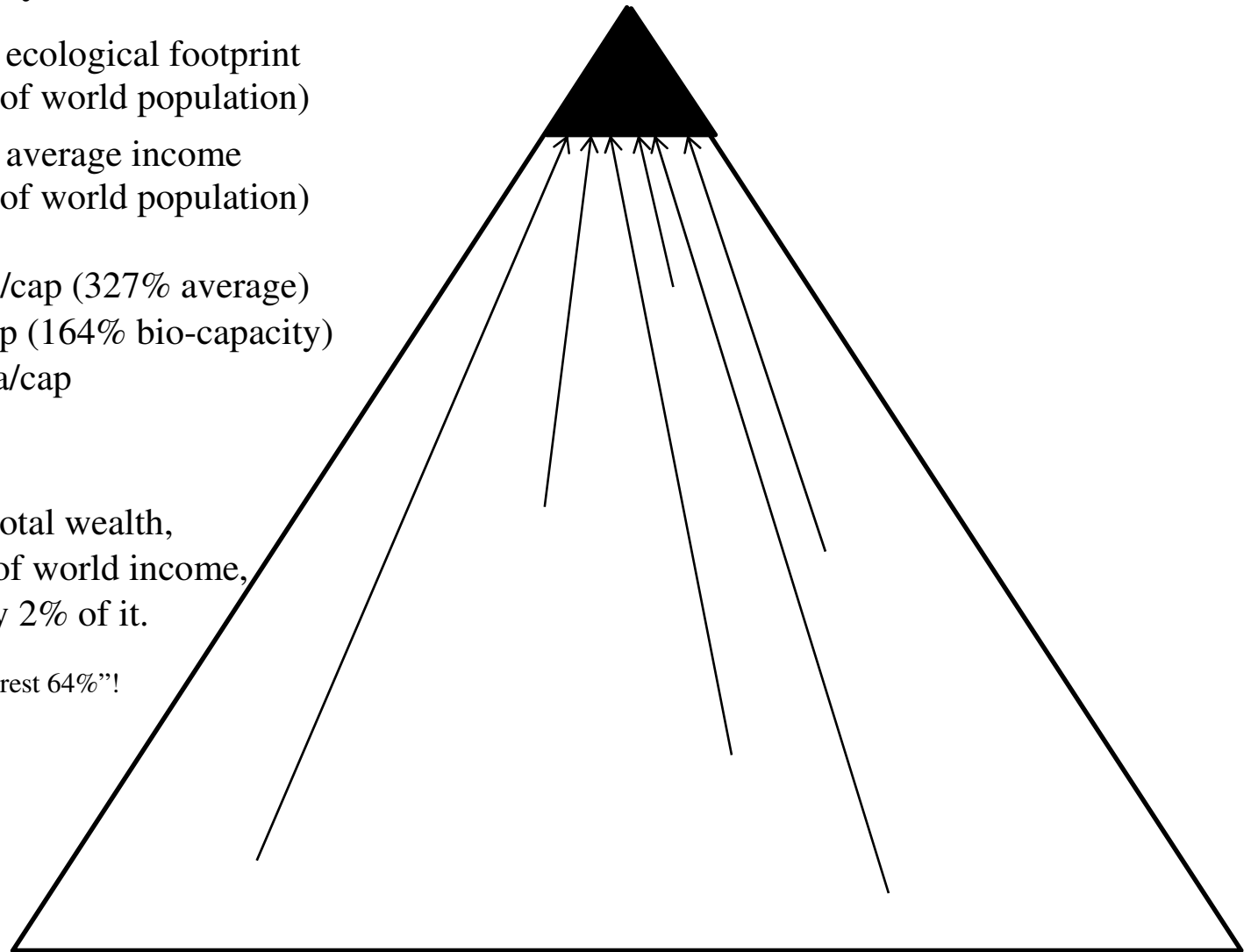
Australia: 4th / 187 countries for the ecological footprint
(top 4 countries = 0.36% of world population)
6th / 187 countries for the average income
(top 6 countries = 0,55% of world population)

- Australia's footprint in 2016: 9.3 ha/cap (327% average)
- Average world footprint: 2.84 ha/cap (164% bio-capacity)
- Average world bio-capacity: 1.73 ha/cap

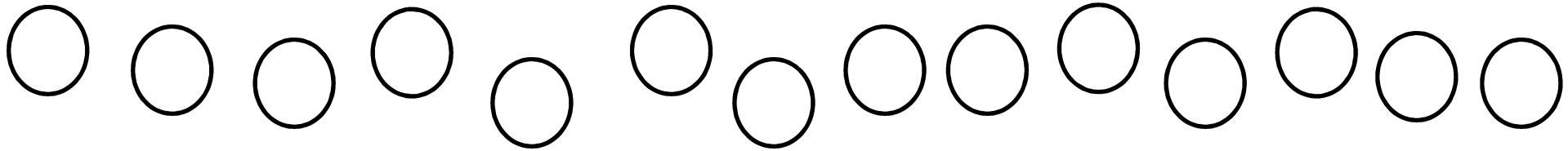
In the world in general:

- the richest 1% owns 45% of world total wealth,
- the richest 35% (us) consume 53% of world income,
- the “poorest” 64% (*) consume only 2% of it.

(*) Examine the paradox of the expression “the poorest 64%”!



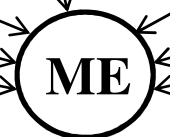
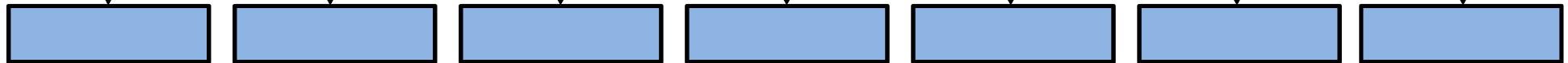
04.4 - Transfo 4: profit replaces purposefulness and spirit of service



People do not matter. They can be used. Their work and living conditions degrade.



Things do not matter either. They are just an opportunity for speculation. Quality degrades. Purposefulness disappears.



Profit consists in **detaching** from the goods sold the part of value I can **keep for myself**: this part is indeed the fruit of the work of others = this is a common good (common natural resources or cycles, knowledge, know-how, creativity, ethics, etc.). Profit is made possible to be detached because I can play on the difference between price and value. Profit destroys the Commons.

Any search for profit: 1) generates overproduction, 2) reinforces globalisation and competition, 3) prevents exchanges from satisfying real needs and 4) destroys good life conditions.

05) 20.00 – Many forms of work (15')

Judith Wright: Eve to her daughters

*It was not I who began it.
Turned out into draughty caves,
hungry so often, having to work for our bread,
hearing the children whining,
I was nevertheless not unhappy.
Where Adam went I was fairly contented to go.
I adapted myself to the punishment: it was my life.
So he set to work.
The earth must be made a new Eden
with central heating, domesticated animals,
mechanical harvesters, combustion engines,
escalators, refrigerators,
and modern means of communication
and multiplied opportunities for safe investment
and higher education for Abel and Cain
and the rest of the family
You can see how his pride had been hurt.*

*In the process he had to unravel everything,
because he believed that mechanism
was the whole secret—he was always mechanical-minded.
He got to the very inside of the whole machine
exclaiming as he went So this is how it works!
And now that I know how it works, why, I must have invented it.
As for God and the Other, they cannot be demonstrated,
and what cannot be demonstrated
doesn't exist.
You see, he had always been jealous.*

*But Adam, you know ... !
He kept on brooding over the insult,
over the trick They had played on us, over the scolding.
He had discovered a flaw in himself
and he had to make up for it.
Outside Eden the earth was imperfect,
the seasons changed, the game was fleet-footed,
he had to work for our living, and he didn't like it.
He even complained of my cooking
(it was hard to compete with Heaven).*

*Yes, he got to the centre
where nothing at all can be demonstrated.
And clearly he doesn't exist; but he refuses
to accept the conclusion.
You see, he was always an egotist.*

*It was warmer than this in the cave;
there was none of this fall-out.
I would suggest, for the sake of the children,
that it's time you took over.
But you are my daughters, you inherit my own faults of character;
you are submissive, following Adam
even beyond existence.
Faults of character have their own logic
and it always works out.
I observed this with Abel and Cain.*

*Perhaps the whole elaborate fable
right from the beginning
is meant to demonstrate this; perhaps it's the whole secret.
Perhaps nothing exists but our faults?
At least they can be demonstrated. (-> p12)*

05 – All kinds of work – shadow work and paid work – what is the impact of paid work?

Shadow work

Cooking
Cleaning
Washing
Clothes repair
Shopping
Health care
Sport

Self-sufficiency

Gardening
Maintenance
House repairs
Building
Cleaning gutters
Cutting wood
Self-employment

Relationships

Raising children
Intimacy with partner
Hospitality
Friends
Neighbours
Community
Volunteering

Spirituality

Meditation
Teaching
Sacred texts
Prayer
Celebrating

Learning

Reading
Training
Keeping informed
Experimenting
Leisure

Creativity

Dreaming
Imagining
Inventing
Singing
Painting
Playing instrument
Activism

Transport

Going to work
Holidays
Visiting family

Work as creation:
**The meaning of
work is to foster
relationships and
recognition and
(self-)esteem**

**THE
TROUBLESOME
LINK**

Work as income:
**Money destroys
work and replaces
relationships; it
dictates a logic that
goes against life**

*But it's useless to make
such a suggestion to Adam..
He has turned himself into God,
who is faultless, and doesn't exist.*

06) 20.15 – Vernacular model - reciprocity (15')

The vernacular model is the model of (home) subsistence that was practised traditionally: self-sufficiency and barter and exchange of services, with a minimum use of money because money is rare.

It has the following characteristics:

- Home economy: many activities, no specialisation.
- Subsistence and needs linked by Chayanov's law.
- Adaptation to natural laws because the survival of the community depends on nature.
- Self-limitation because there is no emphasis on material accumulation. Sufficiency is the reference measure (and not fashion).
- I help you repair your roof, you teach mathematics to the neighbour's daughter, she brings you vegetables, etc... The dance of reciprocity goes on for ever. Reciprocity as a never ending process of exchanges of goods and services that never compensate each other but call for ever new exchanges and never stop either creating new links of dependency and friendship (community).
- Feminine and anti-patriarchal attitudes because women are very powerful in their role. (Understand well: subsistence is anti-patriarchal; it does not mean the structure of the society cannot be patriarchal).
- No unisex issue of professions that use us as cogs without considerations for our differences of gender. In our market society (in most cases) a woman has to practise her job as a man does. This is masculinisation of tasks and behaviours.

- Diversity and complementarity are the basics of the exchange system, instead of competition.

Today in our modern society money replaces relationships because it puts an end to each exchange by proposing the "right and final" compensation. By contrast reciprocity generates social links because it never tries to compensate fully what has been received but just creates a new "imbalance" through new exchanges that call in turn for more exchanges in future. Reciprocity is:

- A rough (and generous) calculation of exchanges that generate deep human relationships.
- A space for creativity and free exchanges.
- Work becomes a free gift to the community.
- Work becomes a link that generates social relationships and personal recognition.
- In work there is always an uncertainty of result because of creativity. When one searches for a solution it may pop up in a few seconds or take weeks of long investigations.
- LETS is a management tool, not a value.

07) 20.30 – Generosity - flow of life and creativity (15')

Economy should be a tool for service and not a dominant force: exchanges and work are meant to satisfy further deeper human needs. Yet nowadays economy has become the law that rules our lives and makes us slaves of a general greed for profit; our lives are driven by artificial desires that indeed do not matter much because they even do not answer our deeper needs.

What would an economy at the service of human kind look like? This is the big shift we have to go through: another way of perceiving the Reality of our world and of Life.

08) 20.45 - The big shift: from mechanical to Life (15')

The basic principle:

Our society works against nature and against Life. We cannot find true life if we adapt to the rules of our society. This is the deep contradiction of our “civilisation”.

This is the big shift:

Everything is given (it is called the Commons). Subsistence is limited to a duration (time) that is easy to ensure (Chayanov's law + role of community). The only dimension we add through our work is our creativity as a free gift in return to our community in the duration.

In other words: all resources are given in a constant flow and work is time (i.e. flow). This is the perfect flow of Life that creates ever new relationships. Matter and things are only means and not purposes.

Therefore there does not seem to be any sense for private property (except the personal use of personal items such as a tooth brush).

Everything is the flow of time (life).

We do not own things but we belong.

Fr Bede Griffiths: the New Age

There is a general feeling today that we are at the end of an age, an age which began three centuries ago with the discoveries of Galileo and Newton and resulted in the gradual development of a materialist philosophy and a mechan-

istic model of the universe. This has in the course of time affected our whole society. The present industrial system and modern technology are the direct result of this mechanistic concept of the universe. The whole social, political and economic system of the West is governed by it, and even art, morality and religion are affected by it. So we live in a world which came into being in the last three centuries, and has come to a head only in the last century.

*The basic principle of this world is its materialistic philosophy. This materialism is explicit in Marxism but it is implicit practically everywhere and it governs people's attitudes of mind and behaviour. Its basic principle is reductionism; it is the reduction of everything to certain material principles and to its material base. To take a simple example, all music can be reduced to vibrations on strings or in a pipe, mere vibrations in the air, and those vibrations may then be treated as being what music is, without concern for any other value which belongs to it. Fritjof Capra has shown convincingly in *The Turning Point* (1982) how this mechanistic system has come to dominate every aspect of science and of practical life today. He shows how modern physics was at first an attempt to explain everything in terms of atoms, where everything was reduced to material particles which obeyed mechanical laws and could be known by mathematical calculations. So the whole physical world came to be reduced to a machine. In biology the attempt still continues to explain all life in terms of physics and chemistry, and to believe that living beings are simply more complicated machines. More seriously for practical purposes, in medicine the human body is conceived from a biological point of view as a mechanical system obeying physical and chemical laws, and to be treated simply as a physical entity and manipu-*

lated by genetic engineering, without relation to the psyche or to the whole human person.

Psychology is obviously less amenable to reductionism than medicine. Nevertheless many of its methods are conspicuously reductionistic. Behaviourism, for instance, is a serious attempt to reduce the human psyche to the status of a machine by analysing it only in terms of external behaviour. Another example is the psychoanalysis of Freud and the tremendously influential method based on his work, where the attempt is made to explain the whole human personality in the light of the unconscious, which is seen in terms of repressed appetites, instincts and desires. In Freudian psychology all the higher levels of consciousness, the motives of the heart, morality and religion are explained in terms of the unconscious. This is typical of the whole method. It is an attempt to explain the higher in terms of the lower and to reduce the higher to the level of the lower, so that, to take a glaring example, religion is regarded as repressed sex.

In sociology the attempt is made to reduce society to individual persons who are either left free to seek their own advantage or have to be organised by the state. From this arises capitalism and communism, in both of which systems society is reduced to a multitude of individuals. Finally, in economics this principle is most obvious where the whole aim is to conceive society simply in terms of production and distribution. In Marxism society is deliberately reduced to the economic base, which is conceived as determining the whole. In capitalism society is judged in terms of monetary value so that the prosperity of a nation is evaluated in terms of its gross national product, by the money which is being circulated in it and the way it is being used.

Ken Wilber: Translation versus transformation

In the following text, the “self” means the separate entity we believe we are as separate human beings, or individuals.

In a series of books (e.g., A Sociable God, Up from Eden, The Eye of Spirit), I have tried to show that religion itself has always performed two very important, but very different, functions. One, it acts as a way of creating meaning for the separate self: it offers myths and stories and tales and narratives and rituals and revivals that, taken together, help the separate self make sense of, and endure, the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. This function of religion does not usually or necessarily change the level of consciousness in a person; it does not deliver radical transformation. Nor does it deliver a shattering liberation from the separate self altogether. Rather, it consoles the self, fortifies the self, defends the self, promotes the self. As long as the separate self believes the myths, performs the rituals, mouths the prayers, or embraces the dogma, then the self, it is fervently believed, will be “saved”—either now in the glory of being God-saved or Goddess-favored, or in an afterlife that ensures eternal wonderment.

But two, religion has also served—in a usually very, very small minority—the function of radical transformation and liberation. This function of religion does not fortify the separate self, but utterly shatters it—not consolation but devastation, not entrenchment but emptiness, not complacency but explosion, not comfort but revolution—in short, not a conventional bolstering of consciousness but a radical transmutation and transformation at the deepest seat of consciousness itself.

There are several different ways that we can state these two important functions of religion. The first function—that of creating meaning for the self—is a type of horizontal movement; the second function—that of transcending the self—is a type of vertical movement (higher or deeper, depending on your metaphor). The first I have named translation; the second, transformation.

With translation, the self is simply given a new way to think or feel about reality. The self is given a new belief—perhaps holistic instead of atomistic, perhaps forgiveness instead of blame, perhaps relational instead of analytic. The self then learns to translate its world and its being in the terms of this new belief or new language or new-paradigm, and this new and enchanting translation acts, at least temporarily, to alleviate or diminish the terror inherent in the heart of the separate self.

But with transformation, the very process of translation itself is challenged, witnessed, undermined, and eventually dismantled. With typical translation, the self (or subject) is given a new way to think about the world (or objects); but with radical transformation, the self itself is inquired into, looked into, grabbed by its throat, and literally throttled to death.

Put it one last way: with horizontal translation—which is by far the most prevalent, widespread, and widely shared function of religion—the self is, at least temporarily, made happy in its grasping, made content in its enslavement, made complacent in the face of the screaming terror that is in fact its innermost condition. With translation, the self goes sleepy into the world, stumbles numbed and near-

sighted into the nightmare of samsara, is given a map laced with morphine with which to face the world. And this, indeed, is the common condition of a religious humanity, precisely the condition that the radical or transformative spiritual realizers have come to challenge and to finally undo.

For authentic transformation is not a matter of belief but of the death of the believer; not a matter of translating the world but of transforming the world; not a matter of finding solace but of finding infinity on the other side of death. The self is not made content; the self is made toast.

Now, although I have obviously been favoring transformation and belittling translation, the fact is that, on the whole, both of these functions are incredibly important and altogether indispensable. Individuals are not, for the most part, born enlightened. They are born in a world of sin and suffering, hope and fear, desire and despair. They are born as a self ready and eager to contract; a self rife with hunger, thirst, tears, and terror. And they begin, quite early on, to learn various ways to translate their world, to make sense of it, to give meaning to it, and to defend themselves against the terror and the torture never lurking far beneath the happy surface of the separate self.

And as much as we, as you and I, might wish to transcend mere translation and find an authentic transformation, nonetheless translation itself is an absolutely necessary and crucial function for the greater part of our lives. Those who cannot translate adequately, with a fair amount of integrity and accuracy, fall quickly into severe neurosis or even psychosis: the world ceases to make sense—the boundaries between the self and the world are not transcended but

instead begin to crumble. This is not breakthrough but breakdown; not transcendence but disaster.

But at some point in our maturation process, translation itself, no matter how adequate or confident, simply ceases to console. No new beliefs, no new-paradigm, no new myths, no new ideas, will staunch the encroaching anguish. Not a new belief for the self, but the transcendence of the self altogether, is the only path that avails.

Still, the number of individuals who are ready for such a path is, always has been, and likely always will be, a very small minority. For most people, any sort of religious belief will fall instead into the category of consolation: it will be a new horizontal translation that fashions some sort of meaning in the midst of the monstrous world. And religion has always served, for the most part, this first function, and served it well.

I therefore also use the word legitimacy to describe this first function (the horizontal translation and creation of meaning for the separate self). And much of religion's important service is to provide legitimacy to the self—legitimacy to its beliefs, its paradigms, its worldviews, and its way in the world. This function of religion to provide a legitimacy to the self and its beliefs—no matter how temporary, relative, non-transformative, or illusory—has nonetheless been the single greatest and most important function of the world's religious traditions. The capacity of a religion to provide horizontal meaning, legitimacy, and sanction for the self and its beliefs—that function of religion has historically been the single greatest “social glue” that any culture has.

And one does not tamper easily, or lightly, with the basic glue that holds societies together. Because more often than not, when that glue dissolves—when that translation dissolves—the result, as we were saying, is not breakthrough but breakdown, not liberation but social chaos.

Where translatable religion offers legitimacy, transformative religion offers authenticity. For those few individuals who are ready—that is, sick with the suffering of the separate self, and no longer able to embrace the legitimate worldview—then a transformative opening, to true authenticity, true enlightenment, true liberation, calls more and more insistently.

[Extract of One Taste, KW Journal 1997]

[Further in the same text, KW shows how both functions have indeed to combine one with another]

09) 21.00 - Emptiness – pure relation (30')

We need to transform our understanding of life, from a materialistic understanding of the world to a dynamic perception that sees that all we see around us is indeed defined by the true nature of the flow of Life.

This flow is not visible as such but it is possible to perceive it and recognise it in its effects or impacts on our lives, as the wind is not visible but we can see how it moves the trees. Who would deny the existence of the wind? We saw also at the last workshop how we see the sun rise and set as if it would be circulating around the Earth. But science tells us that it is an illusion and it describes what we should perceive: the Earth turning on itself. Then we can see it clearly and

escape the first illusion. The same about materialism. This is called revelation.

A metaphor: our solar system:

Earth: diam 13×10^3 km	or 1 u	or 1 mm
Sun: diam 14×10^5 km	or 100 u	or 10 cm
Distance Sun – Earth = 15×10^7 km	or 10'000 u	or 10 m

Take a grain of sand of 1mm diam. and take a grapefruit (some 10cm diam.) and place it 10m away from the grain of sand. It is roughly the proportions and distance between Earth and Sun.

As the solar system Life is Emptiness. Emptiness is buzzing with life.

Matter is made of atoms which present roughly the same absolute proportion of almost total emptiness as the solar system. Matter is insignificant. What is important here is that it is energy that holds all these particles together. This energy is physically attraction, i.e. spiritually the correspondent of love.

The understanding of materialism according to Fr Bede means that the metaphor of the solar system and structure of atom as an empty space animated by life and energy should not be understood in Newtonian ways but as a teaching about the true nature of life: we could interpret this metaphor as an expression that things and individuals (Sun, Earth, particles) are not real things and that only relationships (attraction, love) and flows (life) are significant.

As persons:

- 1) we are a point of perception and awareness of what is, in space and time; rather than a separate individual (self) that acts as an atom (*atom* has the same etymology in Greek as *individual* in Latin).

- 2) we are also a beam of light (a channel) that makes the others shine (or smile).

All is emptiness. Things are irrelevant. Only relationships matter. Everything is time = life.

- **We are like particles: points of nothingness that can be aware of what is: the flow of life and of relationships.**
- **We are only witnesses, more than actors. Creativity is a flow through us more than a flow we create.**
- **The flow generates links and community, the further dimension of our evolution.**
- **Relationship is the IN-BETWEEN (love) that links us.**
- **Love happens in emptiness (in-between), more than in ourselves.**

* * * *

SATURDAY MORNING

07.30 – MEDITATION

08.00 – BREAKFAST

10) 09.00 – Quick review

**Remember: we have to choose between
the laws of our society = the world as a translation that helps us to
suffer)
and Life = a transformation of ourselves and our values, of the way
we live as a liberation.**

The basics – Summary

Five basic laws:

- 1) The great inversion by market: is not life at the service of things?
- 2) We are responsible for the world we are shaping.
- 3) Each choice is a vote.
- 4) Marketing is whitewashing.
- 5) Our empowerment is proportional to our freedom of spirit.

Four important notions:

- 1) Abundance is given.
- 2) Self-limitation allows harmony.
- 3) Inversion: first comes subsistence that makes work possible (and not the contrary).
- 4) The Commons: most wealth is common (natural and social resources).

Four transformations through money:

- 1) From network to egocentrism (money replaces relationships).
- 2) Extension of needs and overconsumption.
- 3) Pyramid: wealth sucked up the ladder.
- 4) Search for profit as destruction of the Commons. Overproduction.

Work as an opus (and not an income)

- 1) Reciprocity as the means for developing ever deeper relationships.
- 2) Work relies on resources, knowledge and skills that are provided freely by society.
- 3) Work as creativity (opus – oeuvre) encompassing all aspects of life, and not labour (suffering - travail).
- 4) Chayanov's law: when subsistence is ensured, celebrate!
- 5) Creativity as the energy of life: a free gift. Work creates links, more than products.

The big shift

- 1) Subsistence is limited to a duration (time) and is easy to ensure (Chayanov's law + role of community).
- 2) Everything is given: the Commons provide all necessary natural and social resources.
- 3) The only dimension we add through work is creativity: free gift as return to our community in duration.
- 4) In other words: all resources are given in a constant flow and work is time (i.e. flow). This is the perfect flow of Life that creates ever new relationships.
- 5) In other words: **we do not own but we belong.**

Radical generosity

- 1) The law of life is constant giving and gratitude for what is received. Generosity is the essence of the movement of life.
- 2) All is emptiness. Things are irrelevant. Only relationships matter. Everything is time = life.
- 3) We are like particles: points of nothingness that can be aware of what is: the flow of life.
- 4) We are witnesses, more than actors. Creativity is a flow through us more than a flow we create.
- 5) We are beams of light that make the others shine (or smile). We are the channels for creativity and light.
- 6) The flow generates links and creates true community, which is the further dimension of our human evolution.
- 7) Relationship is the IN-BETWEEN (love) that links us. Love happens in emptiness (in-between), more than in ourselves. Love is at full completion when our selves disappear.

B) Contemplation and right brain faculty

Yesterday we reviewed rapidly the material of the precedent workshop on Money Work Generosity. To make this material more relevant we need now to appropriate it to ourselves. We need to make it more personal. I propose that we now look in more details into this fundamental contradiction between the system of our modern western society and a deeper perception of the true meaning of life. Of course nobody knows exactly what life is, because it remains a mystery. But we know nevertheless that it is based on generosity and love which are values that are denied by our daily practice of market, technology, competition, domination, fear, exclusion, etc.

11) 09.30 – A new way of looking at the world / life (30')

First we have to learn to look at the world in a different way if we want to be able to see what it is truly. If we want to leave behind the false understating of the world as a material entity (text of Fr Bede) and if we want to be transformed (text of Ken Wilber), we need a deeper change of mind. Only a radical change of mind allows us to look at the world differently. If not we just repeat the same patterns and fall back into materialistic interpretations. How do we grasp reality? There are fundamentally two ways: either we learn what others have said about it or we delve into our own depth and discover there the inspiration of the spirit in us. Both ways are not exclusive but the latter is evidently a more truthful one. But how do we do that?

Gerald May: *Will and Spirit*.

Contemplation and intuition

In traditional religious usage, the term contemplation implies a totally uncluttered appreciation of existence, a

state of mind or a condition of the soul that is simultaneously wide-awake and free from all preoccupation, preconception, and interpretation. It is a wonder-filled yet utterly simple experience. The Newman Dictionary of Moral Theology defines contemplation as “a gaze of the mind accompanied by admiration.” The twelfth-century Hugh of Saint Victor defined it more precisely as “the alertness of the understanding which, finding everything plain, grasps it clearly with entire apprehension.” In Hinduism and Buddhism this kind of awareness is called samadhi or satori, a state described by the seventh-century Shantideva as “stillness joined to insight true.”

What is known in spiritual traditions as contemplation is very similar if not identical to the philosophical term intuition. It should be immediately understood that the meaning here is not at all the popular interpretation of intuition as a sort of “hunch.” Instead, intuition refers to a very specific and long-acknowledged way of knowing. In epistemology—the study of ways of knowing—intuition is often considered to be the highest, purest form, surpassing even reason and inferential thought. It is the state of apprehending or appreciation that occurs before any thinking takes place. If, for example, one closes one’s eyes for a while and then suddenly opens them to look at an object, there is a fraction of an instant in which the object is perceived purely, before any thought or any response occurs. If this instant were protracted, we would have the intuitus that Descartes described as “pure,” “ready,” and “so distinct that we are wholly freed from doubt.” Spinoza also emphasized the purity of what he called scienta intuitiva, noting its rarity in daily life. “But those things which I have hitherto been able to know by such

knowledge,” he said, “are very few.”

Will Durant suggested, “Let us for a while stop thinking, and just gaze upon that inner reality. . . . We see life in its subtle and penetrating flow. . . . This direct perception, this simple and steady looking-upon (intueor) a thing, is intuition; not any mystic process, but the most direct examination possible to the human mind.” Durant goes on to affirm that this high praise of intuition is not meant to disparage other ways of knowing. Most philosophers, except perhaps for Rousseau, would maintain that all ways of knowing are important and necessary for a balanced approach. It is just that intuition has a slightly special place because of its purity, directness, and apparent rarity.

Thus, religion and philosophy have a well-established conceptual meeting ground in this arena. Intuition and contemplation are so closely related that, at least for the purpose of our discussion, we can assume that they refer to the same state. The difference is simply that one is a philosophical term and the other, religious. In further defining contemplation, Hugh of Saint Victor called it “the piercing and spontaneous intuition of the soul.” [...]

Contemplative psychology

A contemplative psychology is an approach to human experience that maintains that wisdom depends upon a full cooperation of all ways of knowing: observation, logical inference, behavioral learning, and intuition. It acknowledges that the purest form of knowing is intuition, and it seeks to expand the innate human capacity for intuitive perception. The goal of a contemplative psychology is not the separate autonomy of the individual but the realization of one's essential rootedness in God and relatedness in creation. **Its means are not willful mastery**

but willing surrender. Its resources lie in the comparison of modern psychological understandings with the insights of ancient spiritual traditions of both East and West. And its laboratory is the stillness of the human mind in silence.

A contemplative psychology cannot be seen as a simple addition of new facts to existing psychological knowledge. Rather, it must change the very roots of science as we know it. It calls into question any endeavor that seeks to assert the individual self over and against the mystery of life. In this light, the idea of a contemplative psychology would be expected to appeal only to those people who are deeply aware of “something missing,” who have given up on believing that positivistic psychology can speak to the deepest human needs, and **who are willing to risk a major reshuffling of identity—even perhaps to the point of losing identity entirely—in order to move into the search for truth.**

[...] A contemplative psychology will not “answer” the basic questions of meaning, identity, and belonging in the way one might expect from a traditional scientific approach. But it will respond to these questions in a way that will keep them nourished, alive, and increasingly friendly. What we must deal with here is a process of appreciation rather than of comprehension (1).

Note (1): In past works, I have tried to make a distinction between comprehending and apprehending. But I find that the etymology of both terms has to do with grasping. Since this is decidedly not my meaning, I have chosen appreciate, with its root meaning “to value”. [A friend] has pointed out to me that **the relationship between appreciation and comprehension reflects the difference between willingness and willfulness, and that in fact the mastery that accompanies willfulness amounts to an act of depreciation.**

Mystery

In the popular mind a serious misunderstanding of science stays alive. Starting with the assumption that mystery can be equated with the unknown or not-yet-experienced, mystery is seen as temporary and unsubstantial. It is simply a knowledge gap waiting to be filled, a set of questions awaiting answers. It follows from this belief that mystery cannot ever be “known”, for as soon as one can confront it fully and know it, it will be solved. Such an attitude leaves one with a very limited capacity to respond to mystery; it can either be solved, and thereby destroyed, or it can be ignored.

*The fundamental contribution of contemplative traditions to this dilemma is their constant affirmation that mystery can indeed be known without being solved. Mystery can be experienced, sensed, felt, appreciated, even loved, without being understood. **This may not be easy; it requires a surrender of all willfulness, a risking of self-image, and a nurturing of intuition.** Mystery, say the contemplatives, can be “known” without being known. This, the first of a host of paradoxes that accompany contemplative insight, is beautifully described by Wordsworth:*

*For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often times
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,*

*And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.*

*Once mystery is noticed in this way, as a substantial and vital part of life rather than as an esoteric concept, it becomes evident in and around us all the time. It can be found in all aspects of nature, in the feelings and actions of other human beings, in the silence of our own minds, in every bit of the universe. **One need not even ask the ultimate questions in order to sense it. All that is needed is to become aware of the existence of one’s own consciousness.***

*Such encounters with mystery can be very beautiful, but often they are also associated with considerable anxiety. This comes, as we shall see, from some very deep sources within us. But superficially and immediately there are two reasons for our fear. **First, since we are not used to doing anything but trying to solve mystery, we feel in alien territory at the prospect of simply being with it. Put another way, mystery threatens our willfulness; there is nothing for us to do with it. Secondly, being in the presence of mystery tends to make us feel very vulnerable and out of control.** A friend of mine once abruptly announced: “I never do anything which will make me feel too good, because when I feel very, very good I start to marvel at the wonder of being alive. And then I become frightened. Partly it’s because the more I feel the beauty of being here on this earth the more I realize how fragile life is; how easily it can stop. And partly it’s because I just don’t know what to do with it all. I know I can spoil it if I try to touch it, or even if I think about it. But it’s almost*

intolerable just to let it be. No, I'm really much more comfortable when I'm not too close to the wonder of life. When I've got problems or distractions or something to struggle with I feel much better, because then at least I know who I am and what I need to do."

Q: Comment this text.

Left side / right side of the brain

In the precedent text it is said that intuitive insights are rare. I'm not sure it is quite right. It seems to me more adequate to say that it is another mode of perception that is recessive, i.e. prevented by our dominant way of perception that overrides it. We may practise this recessive mode more or less. And our dominant culture goes evidently against this kind of subtle and intuitive approaches that do not look scientific and rational enough. But they do not yet exclude a rational approach. We can trust our intuition which will reveal a lot to us and then process the gained insights with our rational mind. The danger is evidently to lose the fruit by dissecting it. But both approaches (intuitive and rational) do not oppose one another; they are complementary.

We all know that our brain is split in two halves. The left half of the brain is analytical and rational while the right half is synthetic and intuitive and grasps reality as a whole. Both halves work together in complementarity, sending messages to one another and treating further what the other has provided. It means that what has been said about intuition is rather the fruit of right brain perception. I believe we have to re-learn to practise right brain perception: a synthetic and global approach.

In the following investigations and sharing of this morning we will try to practise intuition and right brain perception. Focus on the topic and

let arise what comes up. Observe as a witness without judging what comes up. Listen to it; welcome it as a message destined for you. The Spirit never stops speaking in us. We just too rarely listen because we do not trust Him/Her.

Iain McGilchrist:

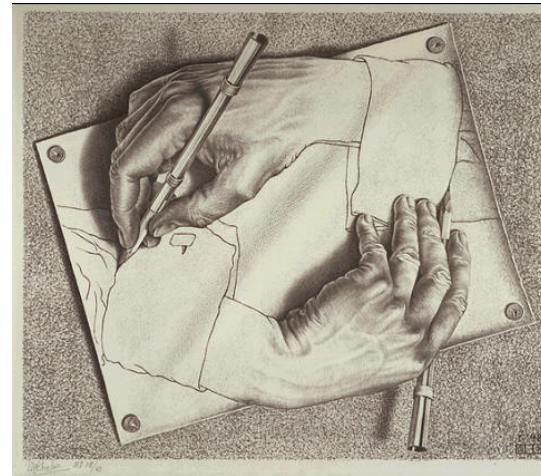
The Master and the Emissary – The divided brain and the making of the modern world

*I mentioned the importance of the intention behind attention. As may have become clear from the last chapter, the nature of language in the left hemisphere and its relationship with grasp imply the overriding value to it of use. The left hemisphere is always engaged in a purpose: it always has an end in view, and downgrades whatever has no instrumental purpose in sight. The right hemisphere, by contrast, has no designs on anything. It is vigilant for whatever is, without preconceptions, without a predefined purpose. The right hemisphere has a relationship of concern or care (what Heidegger calls *Sorge*) with whatever happens to be.*

If one had to encapsulate the principal differences in the experience mediated by the two hemispheres, their two modes of being, one could put it like this. The world of the left hemisphere, dependent on denotative language and abstraction, yields clarity and power to manipulate things that are known, fixed, static, isolated, decontextualised, explicit, disembodied, general in nature, but ultimately lifeless. The right hemisphere, by contrast, yields a world of individual,

changing, evolving, interconnected, implicit, incarnate, living beings within the context of the lived world, but in the nature of things never fully graspable, always imperfectly known - and to this world it exists in a relationship of care. The knowledge that is mediated by the left hemisphere is knowledge within a closed system. It has the advantage of perfection, but such perfection is bought ultimately at the price of emptiness, of self-reference. It can mediate knowledge only in terms of a mechanical rearrangement of other things already known. It can never really 'break out' to know anything new, because its knowledge is of its own presentations only. Where the thing itself is 'present' to the right hemisphere, it is only 're-presented' by the left hemisphere, now become an idea of a thing. Where the right hemisphere is conscious of the Other, whatever it may be, the left hemisphere's consciousness is of itself

And this brings us finally to the third question I asked at the outset in this chapter: can all this tell us something about the nature of the brain? I think so. That answer is implicit in all that has gone before. There is no such thing as the brain, only the brain according to the right hemisphere and the brain according to the left hemisphere: the two hemispheres that bring everything into being also, inevitably, bring themselves - like Escher's hands. So to some people the brain is a thing, and a particular type of thing, a machine; which is only to say that it is something we understand from the bottom up and which exists for a purpose we recognise. To others it is something the



nature of which is unique, which we can understand, therefore, only by being content with a degree of not-knowing which opens the mind to whatever is, and whose purpose is not so easily determined. In other words, we should expect that some people will be confident that they know precisely what sort of thing the brain is, while others may know precious little about that.

- Q: A) What is the difference between willingness (surrender) and wilfulness (mastery)?
 B) How much do you practise right brain perception?
 C) Remember of special experiences when intuition brought a mind blowing insight or when you have been enriched by right brain action.

10min personal reflection then sharing.

C) What is the contradiction in money?

12) 10.00 – Your own experience of money (60')

While practising this rather intuitive (right brain) approach, we will spend this morning examining these contradictions between the values of money and work according to society and the perceptions we may have of them. In two blocks of one hour each, one about money, the other about work. And this afternoon we will try to find ways to solve these contradictions. To make it more relevant and personal each of us needs to examine their own experience of these contradictions and to see how they impact on our lives.

We will have two columns: a first one for the characteristics / experiences of the present system (whether positive or negative) / and a second one for the related quality of life (whether compatible or opposed).

See the questions on the next pages (pp 25-26). The following titles are only a few hints for help. Feel free to ignore or adapt them. The purpose of the process is to have a critical look at the use we make of money. Try to consider it as something weird, although we are very much accustomed to this weird use that impacts strongly on our lives.

Remember: do not focus on the question with your left brain (the rational analytic brain) but contemplate with the right brain, globally, and let arise the answer. Listen to the Spirit in you and trust Him/Her. Keep out of the way!

11.00 – MORNING TEA

D) What is the contradiction in work?

13) 11.30 – Your own experience of work (60')

Same question about work. See pp 27-28. Take work in its broader sense, as an activity not necessarily linked with money or income or even subsistence.

Remember: do not focus on the question with your left brain (the rational analytic brain) but contemplate with the right brain, globally, and let arise the answer. Listen to the Spirit in you and trust Him/Her. Keep out of the way!

13.00 – LUNCH

12 – Contradictions in money (1)

Experience of money in our system

As daily need for cash:

As superfluous (not adequate) in daily life:

As cause of penury / scarcity / obstacle to access of goods:

As transport / transfer of value:

As system of accounting (debt / credit) rather than value:

As yardstick for measure of value:

As cause of devaluation of what really matters:

As a brake for practising generosity:

As a measure for decisions:

As income from work:

As means for profit (distinct from income):

As (replacement for) relationships:

As killing the true spirit of what is exchanged:

As factor of increased needs (over-consumption / production):

As means of exploitation of unknown poorer people:

Corresponding (opposed?) experience of life

12 – Contradictions in money (2)

Experience of money in our system

As a cause of our excessive ecological footprint:

As wealth that offers new perspectives:

As replacement for subsistence or providence:

As related to the value of the Commons (common wealth):

As impacting on the way we relate to one another locally:

As (in)security, reserve or savings:

As forcing us to work more than we need (hunter-gatherers):

As investment that provides income (interests):

As credit that changes our relationship with time?

As game (I win / I lose):

As power or force of control:

As domination or exploitation:

As defining our sense of property (my own):

As means for redistribution / equity:

As support for creativity:

Corresponding (opposed?) experience of life

13 – Contradictions in work (1)

Experience of work in our system

As linked with subsistence / livelihood (duration):

As only needed when subsistence is needed:

As linked with time / duration:

As needed as a basic form of expression and discovery:

As linked with money:

As activity including shadow work and other activities:

As labour (suffering):

As opus (creativity):

As addiction / escape :

As career:

As social status:

As identity:

As cover / social protection:

Corresponding (opposed?) experience of life

13 – Contradictions in work (2)

Experience of work in our system

As creation of links:

As detached from / linked with reciprocity:

As linked with skills, knowledge, specialised training:

As process of learning / discovering:

As needed for social recognition:

As a flow of energy:

As related to our Work / our vocation:

As common social project:

As transformation:

As masculine dominating model:

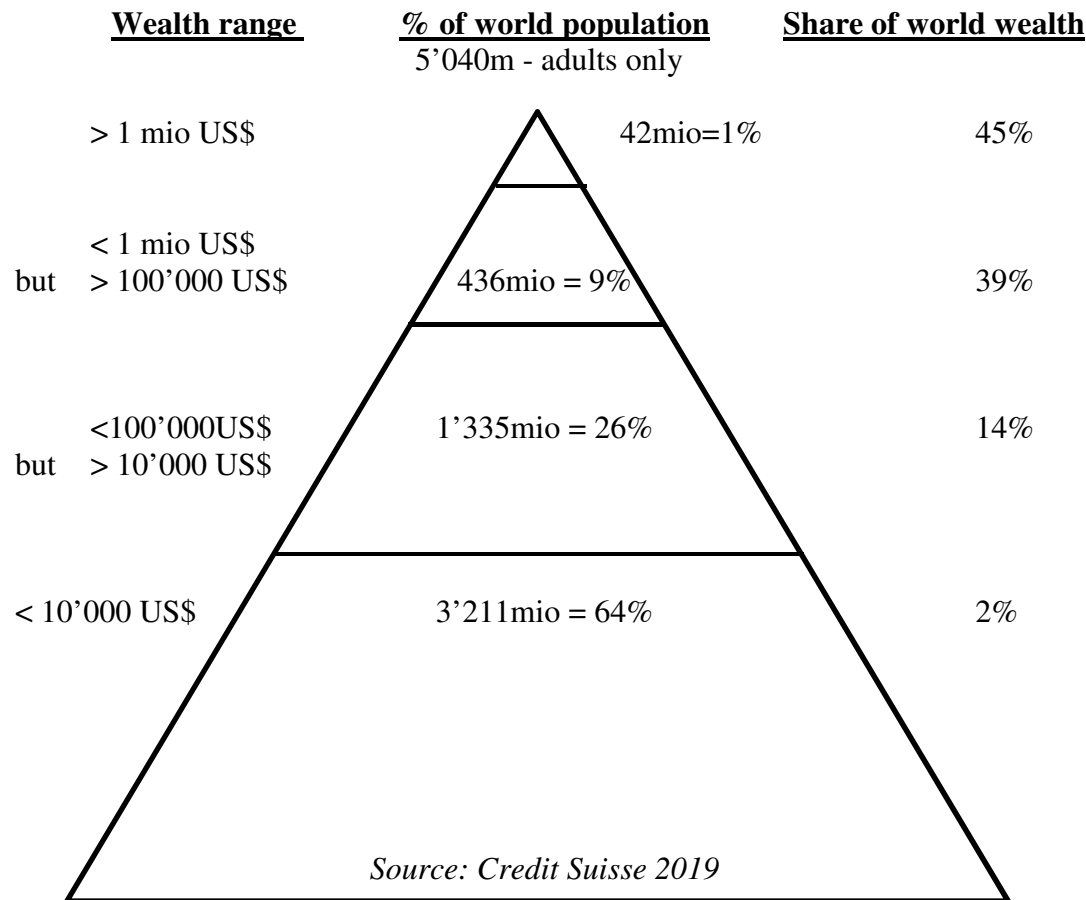
As enabled by community (skills, opportunities, connections):

As marvel:

As...

Corresponding (opposed?) experience of life

14) 14.30 - Share of global world wealth (see 4.3) – What do we need or want ? (30')



What does this picture tell us about work and money?



As Australians we are, at worst, at the bottom of the 1+9% or at the top of the 26%. At the best we are in the middle of the 1+9%. The world wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few (1+9% own 45+39% of it) while the majority becomes poorer (64% live on only 2% of the total wealth) and while we, most of us (the 15% of Europeans, North-Americans, Japanese and Australians - not including the richest 1%), belong to the third (9% + 26% = 35%) that owns more than 10'000 US\$ per adult (in most cases even more than 100'000 US\$) and consumes more than half of world wealth (39% + 14% = 53%), i.e. some 150 to 50 times more in average than the two other thirds of world population.

E) Transformation - Reinventing life

Now the big question: we have to choose between conventional behaviour (adaptation to what is) and transformation (of ourselves and the social setting). Remember the text by Ken Wilber. Our spiritual path is a call for living in the truth. What does it mean? What is the big change?

15) 15.00 – Invent your own path (what matters) (60')

You are invited to go for a walk and reflect by yourself about the material we have examined. We have described how much our conventional practice (as a modern western society) is in deep contradiction with what we believe life should be and how we wish to experience life despite the fact that the context does not offer the best conditions for that.

The question is then:

What is the great transformation from conventional conformism back to life? What is the Work (capital W) for me? What is my true vocation, my call?

How can I change the way I do what I do in order to make my daily practice more similar to what life is (the Work) than to what our society imposes (a job for sale)?

What can I do in my own life to express through work and exchanges what matters most to me?

Get some help from the questions we asked this morning and see how they apply to your own life. Or what you wish to change. Work with your right brain.

Back here at 16.00.

16.00 – AFTERNOON TEA

16) 16.30 – The Work: reinventing money and work (90')

90 min left to reinvent the world! We share about our Work and how to translate it into daily life. Remember: we are not Human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience! (Teilhard de Chardin).

Money

Share what you discovered on your walk.

In what consists the main contradiction? What is the main transformation?

How can we better escape this contradiction at our level, and create better conditions?

Work

Same questions. What is the Work, your Work (with capital W)?

18.00 – EVENING MEAL

17) 19.30 – Video – “Demain / Tomorrow” (120')

Some examples of best practices, in France, UK, US, Danemark, Switzerland, India, Finland, etc concerning agriculture, energy, transport, wastes, money, banking, education.

Nothing very new, irregular in content but some interesting thoughts and practices among other more conventional ones about climate change and a new economy.

By Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent. Some French with English subtitles, but mostly English spoken. 2h.

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SUNDAY MORNING

07.30 – MEDITATION

08.00 – BREAKFAST

18) 09.00 – End of the workshop

Money – Work – Generosity (2nd stage) 24-26 May 2019

A) Reminders from the previous workshop

01) 19.00 – Introduction (15')

02) 19.15 – Four important notions (15')

03) 19.30 – Many aspects of money (15') – p5

04) 19.45 – Four transformations by money (15') – pp6-9

05) 20.00 – Many forms of work (15')

06) 20.15 – Vernacular model - reciprocity (15')

07) 20.30 – Generosity - flow of life and creativity (15')

08) 20.45 - The big shift: from mechanical to Life (15')

09) 21.00 - Emptiness – pure relation (30')

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SATURDAY MORNING

07.30 – MEDITATION

08.00 – BREAKFAST

10) 09.00 – Quick review

B) Contemplation and right brain faculty

11) 09.30 – A new way of looking at the world / life (30')

C) What is the contradiction in money?

12) 10.00 – Your own experience of money (60')

11.00 – MORNING TEA

D) What is the contradiction in work?

13) 11.30 – Your own experience of work (60')

13.00 – LUNCH

14) 14.30 - Share of global world wealth (see 4.3) – What do we need or want ? (30')

E) Transformation - Reinventing life

15) 15.00 – Invent your own path (what matters) (60')

16.00 – AFTERNOON TEA

16) 16.30 – The Work: reinventing money and work (90')

18.00 – EVENING MEAL

17) 19.30 – Video – “Demain / Tomorrow” (120')

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SUNDAY MORNING

07.30 – MEDITATION

08.00 – BREAKFAST

18) 09.00 – End of the workshop