



perspectives

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Global Transformative Leadership, 17 June 2020

“covid-19 & Synchronous failure” (1)

- Covid as ‘global tipping event’: social systems flip simultaneously to a new state
- Echo 2008-9 crisis
- Virus is exploiting the characteristics of our modern world:
 - Connectivity
 - Inequality
 - Proximity
 - Growth (population densities)
 - Uniformity [even of ideas]
- > making us increasingly vulnerable to:
 - Rapidly cascading change
 - Synchronized crises

Thomas Homer-Dixon (2020)

How
To change
Through education?

change what?

“covid-19 & Synchronous failure” (2)

Three **deep causes** of synchronous failure:

- (1) [GROWTH]
increase in the scale of human economic activity in relation to Earth's natural resources and systems > Planetary boundaries / Anthropocene;
- (2) [CONNECTIVITY]
rising density, capacity, and transmission speed of the connections;
- (3) [HOMOGENEITY]
increasing homogeneity, or declining diversity, of human cultures, institutions, practices, and technologies.

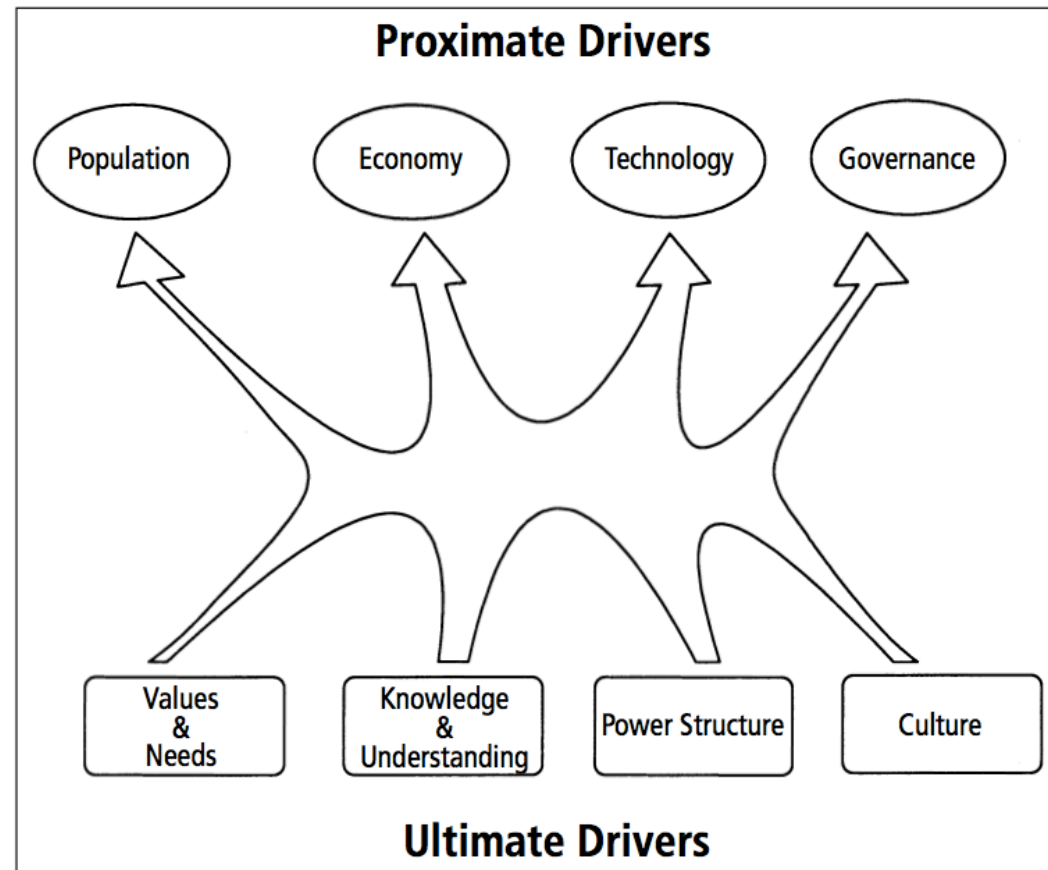
Thomas Homer-Dixon et al (2015)

How

To change

Through education?

Figure 9. Proximate and Ultimate Drivers



Raskin et al. 2002

“covid-19 & Synchronous failure” (3)

- Covid-19 **could** catalyse positive tipping points, positive normative change:
 - In humanity's collective moral values
 - In priorities, sense of self and of community
 - In reminding us of our common fate [... inequality?] versus tribal identities.

Thomas Homer-Dixon (2020)

How to change through education: **ETHOS & PURPOSE**

Time to take a stance?

- Eg a normative stance to support a culture that is:
 - Life affirming (thus also of its diversity and plurality)
 - Equitable
 - Regenerative
- Do we learn
 - To perform?
 - To serve?

How to change through education: **ETHOS & PURPOSE**

Time to take a stance?

■ Vs techno-chauvinism

- Eg a normative stance to support a culture that is:
 - **Life affirming (thus also of its diversity and plurality)**
 - Equitable
 - Regenerative

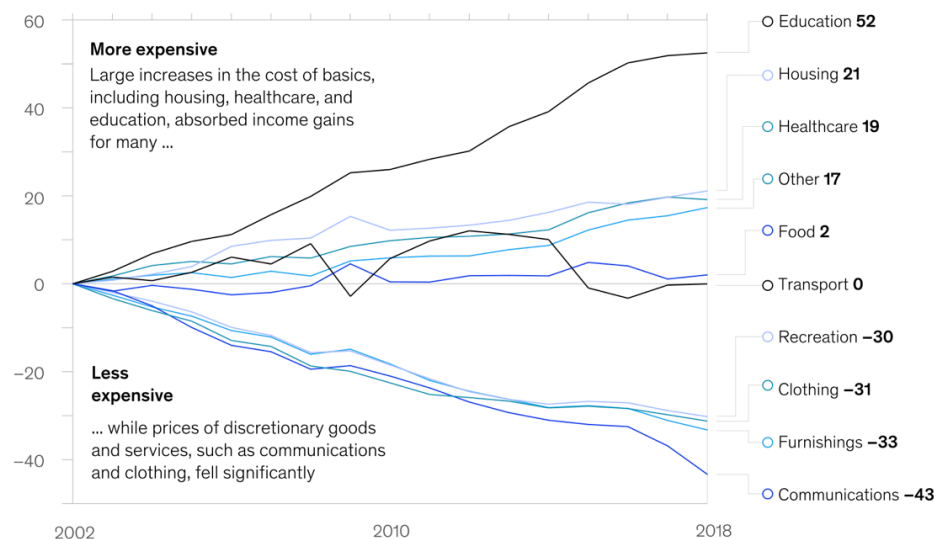
How to change through education: **PREMISE:** **COMPLEXITY**

- Time to problematise (before embracing) increasing complexity?
- Homer-Dixon and colleagues on deep causes of synchronous failures:
 - Growth / planetary boundaries
 - Connectivity / speed etc
 - Homogeneity

How to change through education: **PREMISE: COMPLEXITY**

Consumer prices of discretionary goods and services, such as communications, fell, while the cost of basics, such as housing, increased.

Change in category, consumer prices, indexed to overall inflation, 2002–18, index (2002 = 0)



Note: Value of 0 can be interpreted as "consumer prices in this category match all-item consumer price index." Other category includes alcohol and tobacco, restaurants and hotels, and miscellaneous goods and services. Housing includes actual rentals, maintenance, and utilities but excludes housing purchases or imputed rents. Healthcare includes medical products, outpatient services, and hospital services, but excludes health insurance (which is part of miscellaneous goods and services). Education includes preprimary and primary, secondary, postsecondary nontertiary, and tertiary education, and education not definable by level.

Source: Eurostat; Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices; Japan Statistics Bureau; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

- Homer-Dixon and colleagues on deep causes of synchronous failures:
 - **Growth / planetary boundaries**
 - **Connectivity / speed etc**
 - **Homogeneity**

Manyika et al 2020

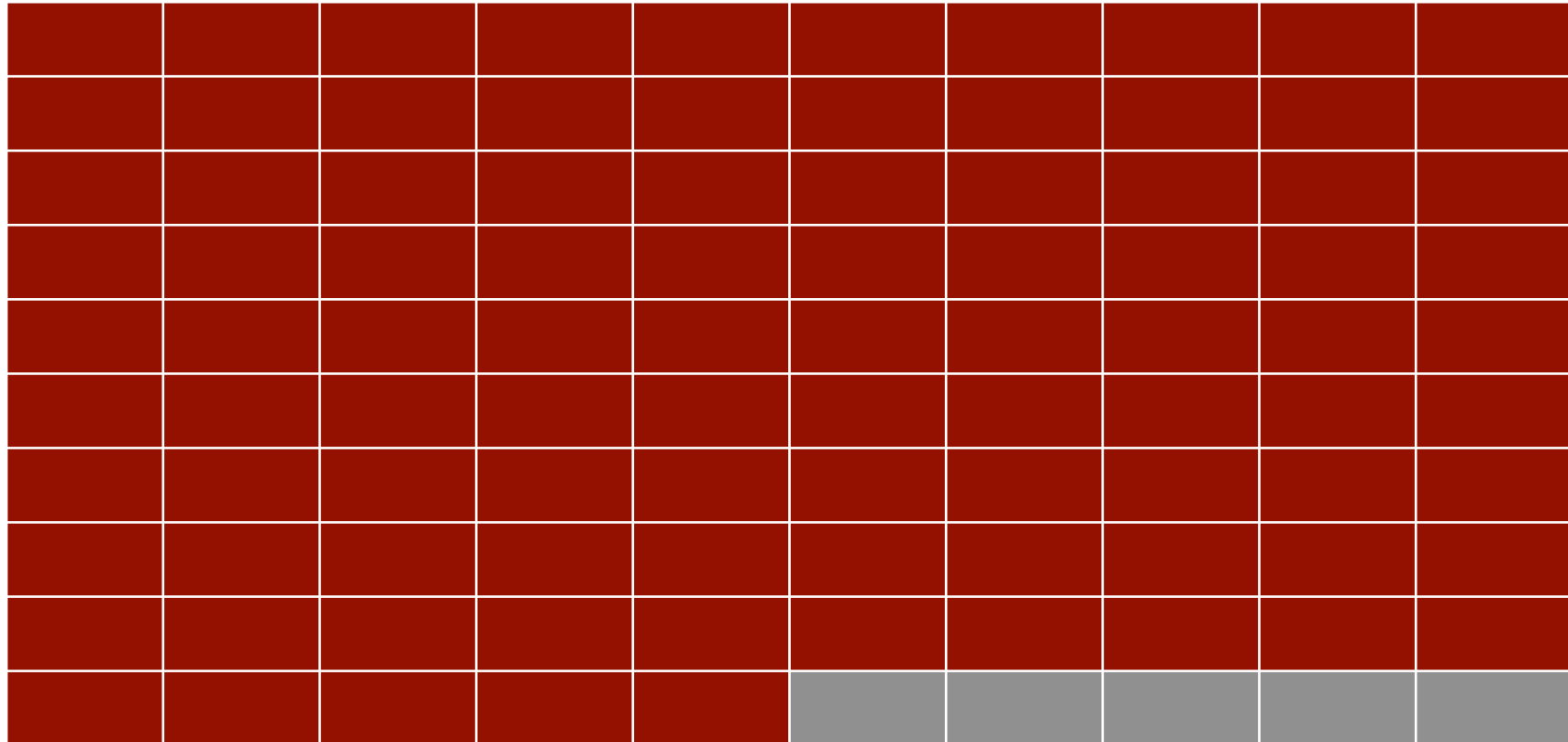


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How to change through education: **WHAT TO VALUE**

- The role of values
- Ethics and morality
- Language and the art of worldmaking
- 'What if we were to change some of the words, and thus the concepts, which serve our art of worldmaking?
- For example, what if we stopped referring to our societies as **consumer societies** and named them **waste societies** (for, simply put, the dominant economic system needs us to buy, not to consume); or if we looked at dominant socio-economic systems not as having the undesired effect of rising *inequality* but rather that of **violence and death**; or if we acknowledged that our dominant way of *knowing* is increasingly becoming **epistemic violence** through suppression of diversity and plurality; or what if we thought of the path upon which rich societies have embarked and, crucially, may be increasingly heading towards – as one of **dis-regard for life?**' (Bina 2020)

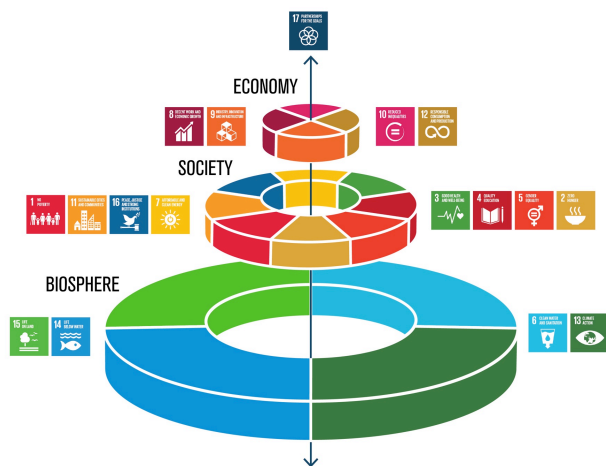
'Human factors drive our society but [receive] only 5% ...–
reduces to just 4% excluding SC6 from total budget' (Alexander
2017)



'the share of budget going to SSH partners amounts to 5% of the total 2015
budget of €3.7 billion for SCs and Leadership in Enabling and Industrial
Technologies.'
(Birnbaum et al 2016)

How to change through education: **WHAT TO VALUE**

- The role of values



LIFE?
Diversity
Plurality



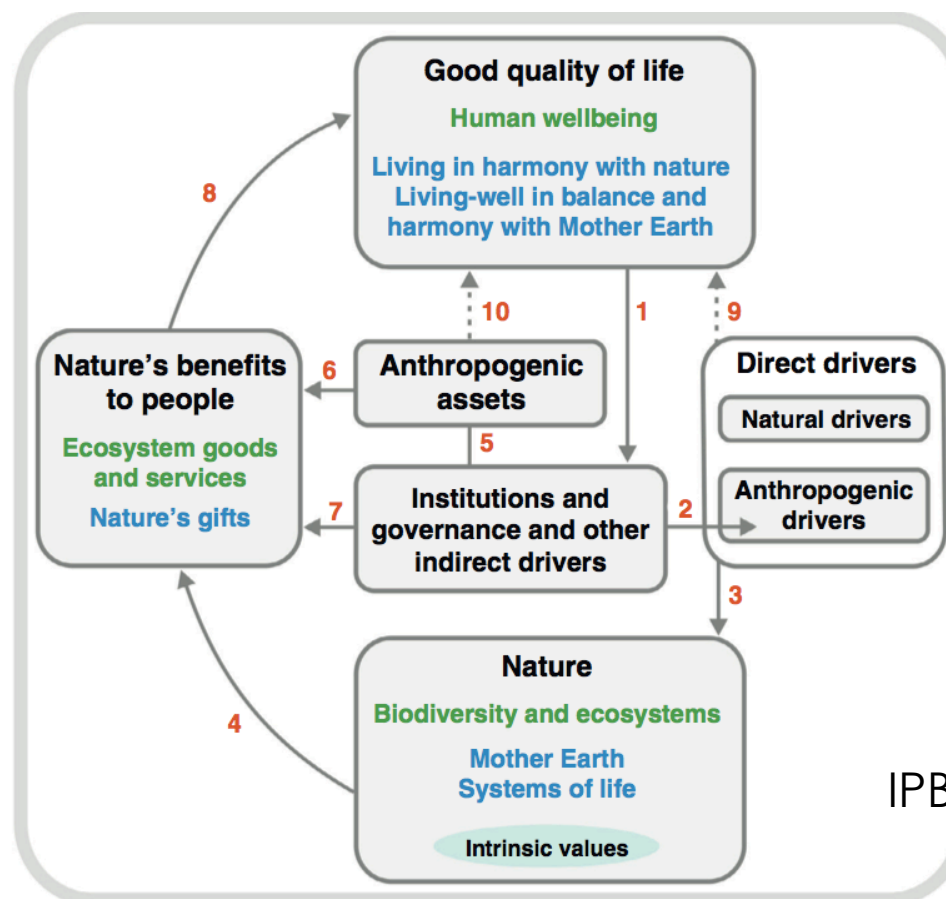
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How to change through education: **HUMILITY**

- Epistemological humility
 - Stop idolizing rational 'intelligence' to the exclusion of other ways of knowing
 - Embodied knowledge: physical, emotional, intuitive
 - The relational intelligence of the natural world
- To understand reality as an organic whole rather than as parts of a machine

How to change through education: **HUMILITY**

- Epistemological humility
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IPBES 2015

How to change through education: **HUMILITY**

- Epistemological humility
 - To understand reality as an organic whole rather than as parts of a machine
- Bio-cultural diversity

IPBES 2015

How to change through education: **HUMILITY**

- Interdisciplinarity
 - Mutilated knowledge (Spinoza)
- Choose teachers who are leaders of the future we want?
 - As an example: Simons, N. (2018) Nature, Culture, and the Sacred: A Woman Listens For Leadership Paperback, Green Fire Press.
 - NINA SIMONS, co-founder of Bioneers, is a social entrepreneur passionate about reinventing leadership, restoring the feminine, and co-creating a healthy and equitable future for all life on Earth. An advocate for social and environmental healing, she speaks and teaches internationally on leadership and transformational social change and is dedicated to the value of creating truly diverse collaborations and connections among issues, leaders and movements.

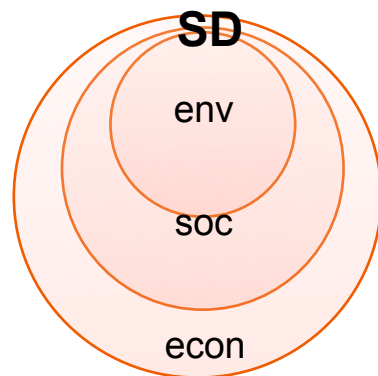
How to change through education: **HUMILITY**

- Interdisciplinarity
 - Mutilated knowledge (Spinoza)
- Obstacles

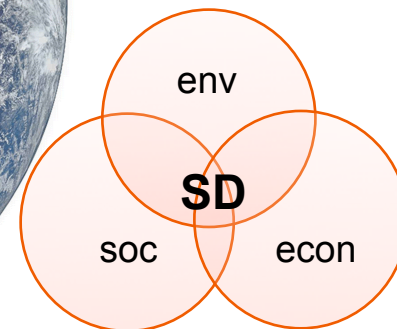


Klein 2009

How to change through education: **WHAT COSMOLOGY?**



How to
learn about
conscious
kinship?



How to change through education: **Sustainable and just futures**

- Ultimately, higher education should aim at the creation of a new society —**non-violent and non-exploitative**— consisting of highly cultivated, motivated and integrated individuals, inspired **by love for humanity** and guided by **wisdom**.
 - UNESCO World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century (1998, §6d)

UNESCO

How to change through education: (re)Thinking knowledge and wisdom

- **Wisdom** / Ways of Knowing/ Other traditions of knowledge
 - 'While academic enquiry has focused on acquiring new knowledge, the **fundamental mission** of academic institutions should be to develop wisdom understood as “**the desire, the active endeavour, and the capacity to discover and achieve what is desirable and of value in life, both for oneself and for others**”’
 - (Nicholas Maxwell, 2007)

How to change through education: **DRAFT WAAS MASTERS**

- Challenges – order matters
- Opportunities – cultural dimension of needed progress ('social')?
- Education as a force:
 - of balance and acceptance of interdependence?
 - 'harmonisation'
 - ... of embracing diversity and plurality?
 - 'unification'
- To respond as community
 - 'society'
- Post-development agendas and decolonise knowledge
- Indigenous and local knowledge
- Can this be: a **radical** space for **radical** knowledge co-production?
- What is WAAS aim?
 - Max reach > Shorter & online course would be excellent
 - Mix MOOC & present?
 - Funds – full MA

