

Preface

What follows was inspired by a string of readings and conversations with Darcia Narvaez, a Professor of Psychology Emerita at the University of Notre Dame. Darcia and I share a passion for optimizing human development, a lived process she calls “The Evolved Nest,” <https://evolvednest.org/evolved-nest-components>. Darcia shared a number of academic papers, one titled “The Missing Mind,” that captured my attention. We know that genetic expression is directed by the environment, Epigenetics. Changing the environment changes the brain, how we perceive ourselves and interpret the world. Darcia described how core aspects of our original mind are missing, covered over, negated by our contemporary self and worldview reality. What we assume is normal, isn’t normal at all compared with 99% of our biological presence. The challenge is restoring the original and natural order of the mind, in proper relationship and balance with our inflated intellect, before our misuse of memory puts an end to us all.

Looking broadly at the social, environmental, personal, and cultural crisis we face, and projecting the challenges our children will inherit, in a recent work, “Restoring the Kinship Worldview, Indigenous voices introduce twenty-eight precepts for rebalancing life on planet earth,” Darcia and her colleague Wahinkepe Topa (Four Arrows), suggest that embracing, being inspired or led by aboriginal, native and indigenous ways of relating to each other and the earth can help.

I challenged this, asserting that none of us, and even many natives today, have been planted in the earth and its implicit wisdom as these cultures represent. We hear indigenous wisdom only conceptually, lacking the direct embodied, developmental experiences needed to convert intellect and concept into direct, lived, embodied experience and perception. We ‘think’ we are doing something, when in fact, the “state” of our consciousness remains the same. Darcia agreed, “but we must try,” she said.

One of the native voices in “Restoring the Kinship Worldview,” described how nature, which is our nature, is lawful and that these laws are deeper, more fundamental, universal and powerful than the cultural metaphors we create to represent them. Because we are nature, those laws are our laws, but the quality of mind that sees and acts on these fundamentals is missing, and has been for 10,000 years. What is needed is a portal, an opening in the exclusive state of mind that is killing us, and most other species, awakening a universal, transcendent, intelligent force we all have within.

The Crisis Is Really Inward

Facing the world crisis, driven by our deeply conditioned, virtual, media-marinated, industrialized mind, and by our children whose merciless epigenetics demand that they imprint and become what we (and culture) model, is there any hope? I, and true visionaries much wiser than me, say – yes. It’s definitely possible. And it depends on you, and me, and all of us together. Want a hint? One of J. Krishnamurti’s most incisive and distilled prescriptions:

It is the responsibility of each human being to bring about their own transformation, which is not dependent on knowledge, time [including technology, screens, thought and imagination].

What is he talking about? Knowledge is obvious, what we know, think about, learn in school and imagine. Time refers to the linear process of knowing, thinking and imagining, psychologically, progressively becoming better or different. Not depending on knowledge or time? What else is there?

We lived for 99% of our biological existence directly, in a sensory-emotional reality that mirrored our authentic nature, which is nature. Approximately 10,000 years ago, with the growth of extended memory, the capacity for symbolic abstraction, culture and civilization, a mental virtual reality emerged that dramatically diminished the attention we gave to direct experience, and implicitly what we actually are. Who and what we 'think' we are, our core identity-reality, shifted from embodied nature to concepts.

Knowledge grew exponentially, further separating our conceptual identity from our authentic nature, the living world, and all the other "states" of expressing meaning. Machines and technologies accelerated the process, as did the graphic revolution; television and digital media, all mechanical counterfeits of direct experience. Tacitly, this virtual reality replaced what historically was considered "real" for 99 % of our existence, tossing Eve, her friend, and all the rest of us out of the garden.

Viewed from within our virtual reality, which dominates what we experience as consciousness, and more deeply 'reality', this appeared as progress. When viewed from our authentic nature however, the illusion of progress turns sociopathic, dis-eased, toxic, increasingly self-destructive, and destructive to the natural world. It should be very clear that the illusion of progress we assume and expect, has become suicidal for human beings and perhaps nearly all other species, a realization indigenous worldviews have shared for centuries. The blinding enchantment of our virtual reality persists.

Technocracy, spawned from, and trapped in, the exploding but isolated and limited virtual reality, offers a utopian solution. Have computers and machine learning systems further mimic and counterfeit the 'infinite potential' found in living intelligence, eliminating the need for organic life. Silicone replaces carbon. Plug it in and it lasts forever, including you and me. Nature is irrelevant.

The hubris and tragic flaw of this mechanical, "Dr. Strangelove" agenda, was described by David Bohm, one of the 20th century's most respected and inspired theoretical physicist.

We are faced with a breakdown of general social order and human values that threatens stability throughout the world. Existing knowledge [including technology and artificial intelligence] cannot meet this challenge. Something much deeper is needed, a completely new approach. I am suggesting that the very means by which we try to solve our problems is the problem. The source of our problems is within the structure of thought [and implicitly technology] itself.

George Lucas understood this when he crafted his "Star Wars" myth. Machines are not influenced by "The Force." Jerry Mander shares the same insight with the title of his second book, *In The Absence of the Sacred*, where he explored the difference between technology and the virtual-social-machine called corporations, and compared these machines to native realities. Indeed, the human brain records and stores experience as abstract knowledge – and so much more!

The entire body, every cell, is infused with liquid crystals, electromagnetic receivers that are sensitive and resonate with the "infinite potential," Bohm describes. What we call thought and conditioned knowledge represents one system of meaning. "Insight," a non-rational expression of meaning represents a different system of direct knowing. Human consciousness however, is state specific. Insight is excluded when the mental system that expresses meaning is attuned to conditioned thought and knowledge. Our direct connection to the infinite unknown is lost. Three attached papers by David Bohm and Joseph Chilton Pearce explore "insight" and its implications. Not to be missed.

The spontaneous evolution called epigenetics shows no mercy. When our cognitive virtual reality alters the environment, our brain and how it displays meaning changes. The noise level in a forest is similar to a refrigerator, leaving a lot of room for other sounds and sensations to express as awareness. Not so walking the streets of Las Vegas or thumbing our phones. Lost in our virtual reality, we don't notice the difference. It is only when the noise stops that we appreciate the subtlety of silence. Joseph Chilton Pearce describes a 'strange looping effect,' a mirroring of mind and matter. It is done onto us as we believe, and indeed, "we reap what we sew."

Like a shiny new toy, our capacity to imagine dazzled, enchanted, and overwhelmed our attention. Think of an iPhone replacing the telegraph. Another image is the Milky Way representing the natural and infinite order of the mind and the lights of Las Vegas being thought and conditioned knowledge. The bright city lights obscure the heavens and all the meaning they hold. The infinite light is there but we are colorblind to nature, which is what we are.

Not realizing there is infinite potential behind the dazzling city lights, all that hidden meaning doesn't exist in our colorblind reality. Even when experiencing flashes of "insight," or others describe the Milky Way, we grasp only the words, not the direct experience of heavenly lights. Our consciousness floats like an isolated bubble, the inner surfaces reflecting, like a mirror, only our limited conditioning. The infinite does not exist in a colorblind mind.

Now, imagine that the power grid in Las Vegas quits. All the noise, the flashing bling, suddenly ends. In a few moments you step outside and look up in silence. There it is. Without effort. Without trying the Milky Way spreads across the heavens, at least the fragments not blocked by satellites. What you thought was a black sky is overflowing with light and meaning, etching new contours, changing forever the nature of your mind. And it is so beautiful, so vast, immeasurable, beyond description. Foreground becomes background. What you thought was 'real,' the city lights, is seen for what they are, abstractions, imagined mental images. What is really 'real' are the infinite lights dancing in the infinite sky, and in every cell of your body. By comparison the lights on the Las Vegas strip, conditioned thought and imagination, are a few dull and blinking flashlights. And you see that too. Everything changes. Without the direct experience of the infinite the relative is all there is. David Bohm again observed:

Existing knowledge [including technology and artificial intelligence] cannot meet this challenge. Something much deeper is needed, a completely new approach.

This completely new approach is "insight." The original and natural order of the mind, our inner Milky Way, is real. The flashing lights in the Vegas dreams we dream are abstractions, fleeting mental images. The direct perception revealed in this insight flips our self and worldview. We are what we now experience as 'real,' and we are not the dream we have been dreaming for 10,000 years. The default state of our mind, consciousness and more importantly our identity-reality flips. We see directly that what we thought was a snake in the dim corner of our mind is a misperception. Without this fundamental insight, this flip in the default state and nature of the mind, our imagined virtual reality is all there is, and try as we might, nothing changes.

Changing channels on the television or clicking on our computers or phones does nothing to transform the device. The same is true in our mind. We need a fundamental shift in the nature, state, and order of the mind, not adding or flipping more content. That "insight" is not a concept, rather a different order of direct perception, is the key to personal and global transformation. The general term "enlightenment" is this insight.

Infinite potential implies subtle gradations and nuance of everything. When our mind is blinging like a Vegas casino, or surfing the internet, subtle does not exist. Only the brightest primary colors and loudest impression are perceived. The sacred, and its infinite creative potential, does not exist in our Vegas mind, which includes screens and their technocratic utopia, only stripped-down, virtual counterfeits.

Metabolic flexibility refers to the body's ability to use sugar or fat for fuel, but not both at the same time. Conditioned thought, in all its manifestations, is sugar. When sugar is not active, the tank is empty, to use the Buddhist metaphor, the body changes its metabolic engine to run on fat. Something similar occurs in the mind. When the machinelike activity called thought and imagination are empty, not stimulated, attention shifts and expands to a completely different system and order of meaning; transpersonal, non-rational "insight," as nature designed. What nature could not anticipate is that the average person would consume fifty-seven pounds of sugar each year. Pawing our mobile, with its mind dulling artificial imagination, eight to ten hours a day, is the metal equivalent of binging on sugar.

The key to this cognitive-metabolic shift is space. Insight demands space, an empty cup. To reflect the infinite the surface of the pond must be still, silent. The mind must be empty of self-generated noise to invite and behold infinite potential. Appreciating this, all self-realization traditions begin with two practices: mindfulness, the gathering of attention, and quieting our agitated, sugar binging mind, traditional meditation. The more advanced follow with strict forms of logic and self-dialogue that reveal the limitations of thought and our habitual misuse of memory, especially around the images we have about ourselves, others and culture. These practices may be helpful. In the end however, negation, not eating more sugar, is the difference that makes the difference.

Recalling, 'epigenetics shows no mercy,' and 'it is done unto us as we believe,' the emergence of symbolic and metaphoric language and imagination represented a new and novel epigenetic force. Reification, misperceiving a mental abstraction as a concrete, independent, 'thing' emerged, setting into motion a compounding delusional process, a form of shared insanity that continues unabated today. The ancients called this "Maya." The childhood phrase, "sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me," is a classic reminder of this infectious misperception and implicit insanity.

We all know the word chair is not a chair. Failing a proprioceptive quality of mind combined with the low level of cognitive attention and awareness that is our norm, abstract mental images are misperceived and assumed to be actual things, including personal egos, along with the complex systems of beliefs that evolve as culture. Nationalism, religious ideology, and racism are prime examples. I am a constantly changing, entangled, interdependent, living process, a verb, like a stream, not a noun-thing, not a Michael, a Buddhist, or a Republican. To mistake ideology with identity is delusional, but not in a virtual reality that tacitly reifies mental abstractions, now on steroids, driven by technology.

Look at the way global human mind has been impregnated and filled by media; radio in the 30s and 40s, television in the 50s, computers in the 70s, the internet and social media, so called smart phones, the night sky now covered with tens of thousands of radiation generating satellites, ever expanding and invasive 4G, 5G, 6G, video calling and streaming, body and brain chipped interfaces, each advancement in technology deepening and intensifying our delusional virtual reality enchantment. Each exponential step eroding and negating the capacity, and therefore the possibility for insight, the true enlightenment flip that redefines what is really real or not.

One definition of health is the absence of toxin induced stress. To a non-delusional mind, the word “poison” on a bottle evokes a rattlesnake response. Change the label to read vaccine or food additive, and the ‘don’t touch,’ charge disappears, but not the poison. Forget the commercial propaganda and marketing claims. Pharmaceuticals are toxic. Read carefully the side effect warnings. Change the label of every toxic chemical to appear beneficial and the human body, mind and natural world become landfills for profitable poisons. Buzz the phone, flash the screen, relentlessly distracting the human population like football, or the next text being announced, the image on the television jumps, or WhatsApp chimes, and Pavlov is right, when the virtual bell rings we are distracted on command. Knowing that most are too dull, conditioned, and unaware to realize what is happening, this becomes a perfect storm for sustained population control, exploitation, and manipulation. Another very old story.

David Bohm astutely observed; the primary defense that sustains our virtual enchantment is concealment. If we perceived directly that our mental images are just that, images, the enchantment would be lost. We are trapped in a virtual reality game that conceals from all the players that it is a game. Concealment is necessary to keep the game going. This applies equally to our personal-ego image and the various images we call culture. True enlightenment is perceiving directly that the game is just an image, a dream, a shared trance.

By constantly intensifying the reality simulation of the virtual, participation in the game negates any possibility or capacity for enlightenment-insight, just as the lights on the Vegas strip extinguish the infinite lights in night sky. We remain trapped, enchanted, believing that the lights on the strip are all there is. Every attempt to modify or correct the game, becomes another part of the game. Is there any hope, given that most human beings are planted and develop in this shared trance, this virtual dream hallucination, disconnected from and hostile towards nature? Appreciating that this enchantment has intensified for past 10,000 years, where do we go from here?

Living In and Leading From Insight

The exponential spread of cognitive virtual reality, its sustaining concealment, increasing reality simulation, riding the constant growth of technology, all these and more conspire to extinguish and negate the capacity for insight-enlightenment; the direct experience of another reality; original, authentic, vast, whole, and creative, exploding with infinite potential.

This “other” reality was and is the original human mind, before our imagined virtual reality cemented over its direct, subtle, and often nonlocal, transpersonal, life-serving meanings. Hints of this pre-conquest, pre-agricultural, pre-civilized mind can be seen in Aboriginal, Native, and Indigenous, earth-connected worldviews, because these worldviews, cultures, and their stories and ceremonies, emerged from, and reflect our true nature, which is nature.

A worldview, by definition, emerges from reality forming forces that percolate much deeper than concepts. Living with the land, indigenous self and worldviews express what is obvious; human beings are not separate from or dominate over nature. We are nature. Health, wholeness, wellness, sanity, and sustainability is achieved by aligning with what the ancient Chinese Taoist called *The Way*, meaning nature, our nature. From this deep, earth connection reality-worldview, not following The Way is insane, anti-life and suicidal, in a word, western civilization and technocracy.

While indigenous worldviews can provide hints, in a colorblind mind these hints are shallow pointers, not direct, lived experience where insight-enlightenment abide. Lacking insight, indigenous hints remain conceptual, superficial abstractions. Again, as Bohm described,

Existing knowledge [including technology, artificial intelligence and indigenous hints] cannot meet this challenge. Something much deeper is needed, a completely new approach.

While inside the virtual reality game, metaphoric hints, thought and imagination, data and existing knowledge, act like reified tokens or casino chip currency. The game provides the context that give these abstract symbols meaning and value. Step out of the casino and the poker chips are worthless.

For indigenous worldview precepts, prayers, ceremonies, and hints to have meaning the metaphors must be converted into direct lived experience. We look through the metaphor, like a window, not at it. This 'looking through,' not at, represents stepping out of the game, leaving the casino, and experiencing in oneself what the hints invite. The state of the heart, mind, and attention change, and with that change what we see, the meaning of the hint or metaphor becomes real, a lived insight, no longer abstract. This conversion is critical.

For the native-indigenous, this conversion of the abstract story, the ceremony, ritual, song, and dance, into direct insight-experience is, or was, relatively easy, obvious, and natural in a body and mind planted in nature and the living world. Today, humanity is colorblind, alien and often hostile to nature, having been planted, not in the living world, rather in concrete, TV dinners, cement buildings, technology, and screens. Our personal, autobiographic conditioning, the source of thought, imagination, and knowledge, lack the natural, living experiences this conversion demands. The state of our mind and therefore what we perceive remains trapped in our virtual Vegas casino, where flipping concepts is the game. We look *at* indigenous metaphors, not *through* them. There is no insight-enlightenment. No change or transformation. This, I believe, is why the profound insights and weeping of our indigenous sisters and brothers have had so little impact on the civilized mind. Lacking the lived experiences this conversion demands, we hear their words as concepts, data, not insight.

Does this mean the game is over? Machines win? That's how it appears, trapped in the virtual casino game looking out, which is the reality most know and experience. Lacking insight-enlightenment as the default state, our primal, natural, and original order of the mind, reality is Las Vegas. The Milky Way, heavenly lights and their infinite potential exist only as concepts.

J. Krishnamurti observes; "we think the crisis is out there, in the world. The crisis is really inward, and we are unwilling to face this." Concealment, remember? For the game, the tokens, and casino cash to have value, and more importantly for the game to continue, which is all the game really cares about, the players *must* remain colorblind.

Becoming aware of a stage magician's trick, seeing the illusions, delusions and collusions, all words from the Latin meaning "theater," that give life to the game, reveals the trick we are playing on ourselves, and each other. We see! It's all just a trick, a misuse of memory, a game. The virtual reality ends and is replaced by another, deeper, lived, organic and authentic reality-identity, which replaces thought's virtual reality as the default state of perception, consciousness, and our reality-identity. Insight-enlightenment drives the bus, while impersonal, objective and deeply creative thought takes its proper place as a tool. Not the other way around. This shift in the state of the mind, that transforms all its content, including who and what we think we are, is "insight-enlightenment."

Mindful emptiness is a classic Buddhist description of insight-enlightenment. Emptiness is the Vegas electrical grid crashing, the casino lights (conditioned thought, imagination, and memory) going out. Mindfulness is attention; sensitive, alert, and expansive. Attentive to what? Now, perhaps for the first time, attentive to the infinite potential implicit in the Milky Way and galaxies beyond, exploding, and *we are that*.

This direct perception of infinite potential is not knowledge as our Vegas casino mind conceives. Insight is a different order, a different system or language of meaning, instantaneous, whole and direct, not symbolic. Like Mozart's symphonies, the revelation is a "eureka" experience, which then becomes data, like indexing a library card catalog, for the thinking mind to process and translate direct meaning into thoughts abstract and metaphoric lexicon.

This is the natural and organic order of the mind, perception, and true intelligence, thought being used surgically, as a sharp tool, in the service of impersonal, universal, compassionate, egalitarian insight-enlightenment, always awakening and expressing new orders of life serving wholeness. Sounds like a Buddha to me.

Our hopelessness and despair is grounded in our virtual, Las Vegas enchantment, cut off, isolated, and concealed from our true nature with its infinite potential, a vision and self-worldview that conditioned knowledge can never touch or contain.

The expansive, luminous state of mindful emptiness, what the classics referred to as a "Buddha Mind," is infused with all the qualities that indigenous and native worldviews express, and more. Yes, from a conditioned experience and knowledge perspective, indigenous hints and worldview stories need embodied experience to convert metaphor into direct lived insight. But there are other doors of perception. Stepping out of our conditioned virtual reality, opens us to a Milky Way of heavenly responses that resonate life's laws, not simply our cultural conditioning. This, Joseph Chilton Pearce describes in, "The Biology of Transcendence."

Bohm described, "at close examination matter dissolves seamlessly into mind." Reductionists assumed that matter gave rise to mind. Mystics and many astute scientists today understand that mind gives rise to matter. Evolution's transcendent and driving force is cooperation, not competition. Empathic, egalitarian, kind, caring, mutually respectful, golden rule qualities are universal, infused, and implicit in our original-indigenous-Buddha Mind. That conditioned trauma cements off this state of mind, selfishly and aggressively defending against more trauma, does not negate. When this conditioning is suspended the deeper laws of nature express spontaneously as insight. All one needs to do is stop eating fifty-seven pounds of sugar each year.

"The first step," Krishnamurti describes, "is the last step." Having an insight into the limitations and pervasive misuses of memory, breaks the spell. Progressively then, this insight, without will or effort, eats away, dissolves our interest in the reflexive, pinball, Las Vegas activity of mind. Enchantment dims, then fades altogether as the energy and attention we habitually invested in the dream, expands to embrace and itself become infinite. When we look up, we see the Milky Way, when before we saw only blinking neon signs. Everything changes. Not by doing anything, rather, simply, by not eating more sugar. The state of the mind settles back to its original and natural order, expanding beyond space and time, and without effort.

The irony is; it is so damn simple, so close we miss it. Attention is the key that flips the switch between knowledge and insight. With complete attention there is no room for conditioning. Free from the borders that thought impose, attention expands, always inviting spontaneous revelations of infinite potential.

What we are trying in all these discussions and talks here is to see if we cannot radically bring about a transformation of the mind. Not accept things as they are... To understand it, to go into it, to examine it, give your heart and your mind with everything you have to find out a way of living differently.

Because you are serious, because you are intent, then you are aware of the whole process of the observer. Which means that you are totally attentive, completely attentive. And in that attention there is no border created by the center. When there is complete attention there is no observer

[thought, judgement, belief, opinion, conditioned imagination]. The observer comes into being only when, in that look, there is inattention which is distraction.

We have put away the observer [thought as a state of the mind] and therefore there is complete attention, which may last a second; that is good enough. Don't be greedy to have more. In that greed to have more you have already created the center, and then you are caught.

In that attention there is no seeking at all. And therefore there is no effort. And the mind becomes extraordinarily alert, active, silent. Such a mind is the religious mind. And such a mind has an activity totally different, at a different dimension which thought can never possibly reach.

J. Krishnamurti
PBS Broadcast, Ojai, California, 1966

Where do we go from here? Having an insight into the limitations and pervasive misuses of memory breaks the spell, first in each of us, then, completely grounded in this "other" reality, we model and explore ways of inviting our children do the same. And even that is without effort. Children are driven, compelled to imprint what we actually are, what Joseph Chilton Pearce called "the model imperative." As spontaneously as they learn to walk and talk, their absorbent mind accepts insight-enlightenment as the normal and natural state of their mind, reality, and identity, with creative thought and imagination serving this transpersonal inspiration. It is so damn simple. The crisis is really inward, and we have been unwilling to face this, until now.

Attached are three papers: "The Limitations of Thought," and "Knowledge and Insight," by David Bohm, and "On Insight," by Joseph Chilton Pearce. These powerful hints open the door. What really matters, and the future of humanity, is up to us.

Michael



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