

Hi, I'm Adam Crane. Welcome to the Infinite Potentials Series of Netcasts sponsored by The International MindFitness Foundation. My wife, Dagne, and I founded IMF, a 501C (3) not for profit, with the intention of addressing, as best we can, challenges facing all of us. The Institute for the Future of Humanity at Oxford University has listed, arguably, the three greatest problems humankind must resolve. Turns out they are also the issues we set up IMF to address. We will describe them shortly. We think big; however, I am intensely aware of the vast difference between thinking big and doing big but thinking big is a first step. Whatever contribution we can make, however small, is great fun to us.

I have been fortunate to have had a 38 yr career as an entrepreneur and educator in biofeedback, a technology that enhances self knowledge. Gradually, I synthesized a collection of principles and strategies, designed to help we ordinary human beings unfold more of the latent potentials of our minds and bodies. I dubbed this mind/body synthesis MindFitness Training and made the training the early focus of the foundation. At the urging of my friend, Sam Caldwell, I realized that an efficient way to generate dialogue and action is through a series of netcasts. Hence this introduction to the Infinite Potentials Series.

Obviously learning to live more creatively is best served by heuristic, that is self teaching strategies. I chose the MindFitness term because I want to get across the rather elegant notion that it is possible to take actions which will make the mind more fit just as one can take actions in order to make the body more fit. In fact, physical fitness and mindfitness are obviously two sides to the same coin. There are broad principles which almost everyone is aware of underlying physical fitness. One of those principles is the critical importance of adapting training strategies to individual, unique circumstances. Much creativity is required. So, even when focusing on physical fitness we are already engaging in mind or perhaps more specifically put consciousness enhancement.

A frustrating problem in physical fitness is motivation, or taking it a step further, finding the inspiration within oneself - the ability to actually do the work - or better put play. The same problems confront all of us who want to learn how to use more of our mental potential, to improve the quality of consciousness moment to moment, day to day within the endless present - now. The philosopher Karen Armstrong puts it, "Enlightenment is the discovery of a sacred realm of peace within the depths of oneself and thus the finding of strength to live creatively..."

It seems clear that to whatever degree we can meet the challenge of this work we are also contributing to unfolding the latent potentials within society. It seems reasonable to suggest that as individuals become more conscious so humankind will create better societies. Einstein said, "It will take a new manner of thinking if humankind is to survive."

As I researched better ways to help myself and others discover a New Manner of Thinking I came upon a hair raising realization. The work we have embarked on is at least a small contribution to addressing the biggest problems humankind faces today. Conversely, the mind boggling challenges facing the world can, at least arguably, be

seen as also the biggest problems facing each individual - you and me. Let me try to clarify that.

Sometimes problems are so huge they cannot easily be seen. We are too close to the forest to see the trees. Nick Bostrum, director of The Institute for the Future of Humanity at Oxford University articulated the nature of the world's great challenges in a way that I found inspiring. Of course, all three of these mega challenges can also be seen as crises. The root meaning of crisis is, to me, danger and opportunity. Crisis also implies change is coming so we better do what we can to meet the challenges of change. Reminds me of something John Gardner, the Founder of Common Cause once said, "What we have here is a series of great opportunities disguised as insoluble problems."

The first two problems are easy to understand but the third is more subtle. However, the third challenge is exactly what I and countless others have devoted our lives, fortunes and sacred honor to. Furthermore, meeting the third challenge is key to bringing about an inspired outcome in terms of the first two problems.

1. Challenge one is staying alive. Our life spans are increasing. As the respected Atlantic Monthly put it in a cover article, the world is facing a huge problem it has never faced before - an acute shortage of dead people. Furthermore, Aubrey deGray of Cambridge University, Ray Kurzweil and thousands of scientists are contributing to the exploding field of Radical Life Extension.

Decreasing mortality must include increasing quality of life and productivity as we age, especially late mid life and older. The key to this is health. The key to health is mental health. A key to mental health is exceptionally skillful stress management. People who live healthier, happier lives, especially as they age, will probably live longer. Some experts estimate that venture capital investment in life sciences will exceed a trillion dollars per year within 15 years. Much of that will be regenerative strategies that improve quality of life as we age and will probably also contribute significantly to extending life. Do you or I want to seize this opportunity to have a much better quality of life as we age? And maybe even live substantially longer? If we do how do we do it? What does this mean to the world - to us individually? What are the economic implications? Can you, we as society afford it?

2. The second huge challenge is the exponential threats we all face. Many of the finest minds in science say that we are in grave danger of becoming extinct within this century if we make certain mistakes including large scale nuclear war, pandemics, environmental catastrophes, even dangers that are not our fault such as asteroids, radiation, rogue black holes etc. I consider myself to be an optimistic apocalypticist, so I think we can make it. But it might not be with a big margin. And if we do survive it will be because countless people like you and I did the best we could with what we had.

3. But the mother of all challenges to us collectively and individually is bringing about the new manner of thinking Einstein was talking about. Put another way, we have vast mental and emotional potential. But on the whole we seem to be using only a small part

of that potential and letting the rest go to waste. Learning how to awaken sleeping intelligence is critical to addressing all three problems. It is also critical to finding within ourselves the deep resources we need in order to make the most of whatever time we may have on this earth. The Emergence of a new manner of thinking is the only hope I see of significant progress being made. Of course, a New Manner of Thinking would surely think of these crises as wonderful opportunities.

Many of us look back on lives that have been good, often incredibly good. Lives filled with love, beauty and great adventures. Adventures of the body. Adventures of the mind and spirit. We who have been fortunate know that we have been able to enjoy this miraculous earth and the mysterious wonder of life because of the love, sacrifices and good old hard work of countless, noble, beautiful souls who lived and died before us. So, what are the questions we should be asking? Should we just give up and end the infinite potentials of countless others (beings) to come? Who wants to light one small candle rather than curse the darkness? You know a lot of small candles make a lot of light. Maybe just enough. Is it possible that Infinite Potentials can yet - no are still flowing from us?

It is high noon. The hot sun is beating down and an evolutionary showdown is upon us. A New Manner of Thinking Emerges or it does not. Can we awake for heaven's sake? Its up to us.

Our intention is for the following episodes to generate the kind of learning experiences including dialogues that will help unfold the Intelligence enfolded within each of us and within our beautiful and beleaguered world. I would love to hear what you think.