

The Different Story

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Valerio, thank you very much for the stimulating discussions!

Some spontaneous criticism of one passage or another in this booklet may be:
"I can't buy anything from this!"

The answer is:
"You don't have to, you get it otherwise -
not for free, but otherwise".

What it is about

In the first half of 2022, the author takes a few newspaper articles, mainly from *DIE ZEIT*, to show how global warming, the pandemic, the Ukraine war and digital distraction are bringing the conventional systems in business and politics to the brink. Besides the scope of the dramatic events, the few articles reveal the hopelessness of the only cautious corrections. After half a century of rampant globalisation, essential resources are failing and supply chains are being disrupted in disturbing ways. Faced with runaway inflation, national banks are honestly in a hopeless situation. Not a single economist is coming forward with a sensible explanation, let alone the urgently awaited solution to correct the systemic imbalance.

As early as 1972, the Club of Rome pointed out in *The Limits to Growth* that the economic system defined by growth will hang itself within the next hundred years. For the planet on which it takes place is very much finite. By 2022, it is no longer only clear to the eternally ridiculed and ignored admonishers that economic growth is turning out to be a fatal illusion; by 2022, this painful insight has become common knowledge, as has the realisation that the need to install sustainable alternatives has been thrown to the wind to this day. In the middle of 2022, there is a queasy fear of cold homes, food shortages and hunger, poverty and the disappearance of the bourgeois middle class as winter approaches.

Politicians as well as global corporations are proving unable to act in this alarming situation. A ZEIT article not used in the book reveals the reason for this: An admission by economists and politicians that they have made a mistake is tantamount to an insult. Who wants to be offended!

What remains is comprehensive insight, unrepentant forgiveness and then an equally fundamental reorientation. For this, it is good to reflect on the life-sustaining conditions and to start anew from scratch with a handful of approaches. The upcoming paradigm shift is determined less by artificial theorems than by natural principles. This is by no means as exotic as it may seem at first glance. This booklet shows how inevitable it is that impossibilities wash out. Likewise, it opens the view of civilisation afterwards, embedded in the natural course of things.

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Findings 1: From the *ZEIT*

The "completely different story" starts from the presentation of drastic events in the first half of the year 2022 and their interpretation, as it was, in my opinion, very aptly done by some editors of the German newspaper *ZEIT*. By reprinting their contributions in original sound, the intention would have been to present current developments in the world from a perspective other than my own, i.e. from a neutral, objective point of view.

Unfortunately, difficulties in obtaining the necessary licences have prevented this from happening. In the following, I will try to reproduce the critical statements in the selected articles as unaltered as possible. The references to the articles by the editors make it possible to determine the correctness and authenticity of the reproduction of the statements that make up the drama of the following situation analysis.

In his article "Report of the Club of Rome: May we continue to grow?" in the *ZEIT* of 6 March 2022, editor Uwe Jean Heuser recalls the statement in *The Limits to Growth* that the world economy - starting from 1972 - will self-destruct within the next hundred years because growth will inevitably turn into severe contraction if humanity and the conditions it creates do not change enormously. The Club of Rome report and Uwe Jean Heuser quickly turn to the way people deal with problems. They say that people's concern is always for the immediate, close at hand, and by no means for the long-term, global aspects. Even in the stress of the present, according to Heuser, people examine the situation, realise that something has to be done, and are then distracted by the next challenge - oil prices, the financial crisis, the influx of refugees, pandemics, war.

Although some scenarios did not materialise to the extent assumed in *The Limits to Growth*, there was no correction in climate protection: The CO₂ content in the atmosphere has accelerated just as the authors of the report, renowned MIT researchers, had warned and linked it to the question of whether growth would not stand in its own way if it occurred as unchecked as projected. Then, as now, the answer was: Yes, it is.

The real problem was the constructed conflict between environment and economy, between environment and economy, as a result of the fact that the environment has no price that corresponds to its value. Thus, there was nothing economically standing in the way of limitless growth through the exploitation of natural resources and livelihoods. "If things go on like this," Heuser states (quote), "at some point we will have to say 'no' to growth altogether, [...] Only then - that is the adventure - will we see how much we grow in the new green world. If people learn to keep a globe in balance and value their own experience of nature, if they focus more on experiencing than owning and are proud when everything is reused, then the idea of prosperity will change and space for new growth will emerge. That is why so many experts, up to and including the German Minister of Economics and Climate Protection Robert Habeck, are working on alternative measures of prosperity beyond the classic gross domestic product. But it is of little use to prescribe such an alternative measure from above; people have to internalise it and live it as consumers on a daily basis. [...] This is the most important development, next to the energy transition and the CO₂ tax, next to the construction of new electricity and transport networks, next to innovations for a climate-friendly economy. If, on the other hand, the anger over rising CO₂ prices and the distribution struggle over old property spreads and we continue to cling to the old understanding of prosperity and the

idea that everyone should own as large a car as possible, e-car or no e-car, then we will indeed crash into the limits of growth. So this is the adventure that should have begun earlier: the question of whether the change in values will succeed in such a way that fear of loss turns into a feeling of gain. "(end of quote)

The article "Delivery bottlenecks - hard hit" by Ingo Malcher, Claas Tatje, Marc Widmann and Dr Kolja Rudzio in the ZEIT of 2 March 2022 begins with an alarming reader: "Only 48 hours after the start of the war, the first supply chains broke at VW. Now the German economy is looking for solutions in a conflict it didn't see coming." The authors quickly move on to the drastic consequences of the Ukraine war and sanctions against Russia, which have the German economy preparing for production losses and short-time work. They easily note that in the exceptionally interconnected world of production, any incident can quickly lead to a crisis. With increasing drama, they then list bottlenecks and failures: oil and gas, hard coal, neon, palladium, titanium, which come from the disputed territories or from sanctioned Russia and which directly or indirectly represent critical raw materials and supplies in industrial production. Just as seamlessly as consequentially for the automotive industry, electrical cables from Ukraine join the list as one of several focal points of the Ukrainian automotive supply industry.

Finally, the editors discuss the withdrawal of German companies from Russia and are not embarrassed to list the associated economic cuts of national and international significance.

In the same 2 March 2022 issue of Time, Ingo Malcher and Lisa Nienhaus address the West's painful sanction to cut Russia off from global financial flows as a fierce reaction to Putin's attack on Ukraine in "**The financial war - Russian banks and exchange houses**". The biggest leverage here is Russia's exclusion from SWIFT, the standard, centralised system for the safe and smooth processing of payments among banks worldwide. This makes it difficult even for countries that have not imposed sanctions against Russia to make payments to or receive payments from Russia. The more banks in a country are thwarted in this way, the more severe the side effects. Such an intervention can trigger a financial crisis of global proportions. The last paragraph of the article has it all, because at the end of June 2022, with the halving of gas deliveries to Germany, what was still an attempt to play down there has come to pass: the dilution of the financial sanctions by the fact that Germany continues to import gas from Russia and thus helps to finance the war in Ukraine. The concluding statement seems laconic: that doing without Russian gas would be dangerous for the German economy, that the willingness to do so was questionable and perhaps only the next stage of escalation in a financial war that had only just begun. In the meantime, at least half of this projection has already come true.

The ZEIT of 24 May 2022 returns to *The Limits to Growth* with a guest article by Ole von Uexküll entitled "Stockhol+50 - Luxus, der ins Unglück führt". The author quickly establishes that environmental diplomacy is at rock bottom by describing the multiple major attempts that have so far failed to produce the results that could avert global warming: the Rio Conference in 1992, the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, later the climate conferences in Johannesburg in 2002 and Copenhagen in 2009, as well as the Paris Agreement of 2015 had "renounced any binding effect from the outset", meaning that the systemic change that was as necessary as it was urgent never occurred. Instead, the neoliberal economic order launched by Ronald Reagan and Maggie Thatcher in the 1980s would have gained momentum. With the associated removal of regulatory restrictions, unlimited growth was given the go-ahead and institutionalised with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), founded in 1995, and hundreds of bilateral trade agreements, and consistently promoted in a powerful way with

rules backed by sanctions, strong institutions and the power of a global elite. "Thus, the globalisation of the 1990s became a project of massiveness that carried its mission into the last untapped ecological spaces of the planet," writes Ole von Uexküll.

In 1972, *the limits to growth* offered a change of perspective that has not been perceived until today, von Uexküll notes: "This change of perspective turns many former certainties of human coexistence upside down, right up to the Western concept of property, which is still considered sacrosanct today. According to the famous theory of private property by the English philosopher John Locke, the appropriation of landed property was justified by the fact that the owner 'mixed' his labour with the natural resource of land. But even the liberal Locke formulated a decisive condition for the legitimacy of appropriation as early as 1689. Namely, there must still be 'enough common land, of equal quality, available for others' - a condition that is no longer fulfilled on a finite planet.

The concept of homo economicus - man rationally optimising his material benefit - also falls short in a limited world. As an alternative, the Senegalese economist Felwine Sarr points to cooperative economic models in African societies that do not know an unlimited concept of growth. 'Homo africanus,' he writes in his book *Afrotopia*, 'is not homo economicus in the strict sense. "'

Ole von Uexküll then reminds us that, according to the Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report, the 1.1 per cent of the world's population owns almost half of global property. With the covid crisis, this ratio has become even more extreme. In the two years of the pandemic, the 10 richest men in the world doubled their wealth, while 99 percent of the world's population is now economically worse off than before.

Ole von Uexküll states: "The myth of infinite growth is still the most important justification for the continuation of unequal distribution. As long as the losers of unequal distribution see only themselves as responsible for their own material advancement, they will not perceive the excessive resource consumption of others as a problem. If, on the other hand, the realisation that the pie is in fact limited prevails, Palme's demand for equality and justice will necessarily follow."

On 25 April 2022, ZEIT online reports on the blatant lockdown that the Chinese government has been maintaining in Beijing for weeks. The population has been kept at home for weeks. Driven by hunger and desperation, they are increasingly defying the obedience that is otherwise so common in China. "In some neighbourhoods, metal barriers have been erected outside residents' front doors to prevent them from leaving their homes. The authorities are barely keeping up with delivering food to those trapped inside."

The Zeit online article "Identität und Migration - anders sein, trotzdem dazugehören" by editor Marija Latković on 25 June 2021 helps to understand an invitation further back in this book. It is about the reversal of foreign perception, foreign determination and self-doubt into one's own perception, self-determination and self-assurance. This is relevant not only for people with a migration background and people with some kind of extraordinary nature, but for practically everyone. Marija Latkovic states: "For a while now, we have all been withdrawing in order to reflect on what distinguishes us from the majority, which after all only keeps saying: 'You don't belong'. [...] Letting go of insecurity also means no longer having to dwell on justifications. [...] You become who you can be."

Finding 2: What makes us stupid

Can you still concentrate? Can you manage to read this article without texting on your smartphone in between? Without checking Instagram and Tiktok?

"Sonntagszeitung" of 5 June 2022, editor Michael Marti

Our ability to concentrate is declining dramatically. And the loss of concentration is not simply a personal problem of each individual, but a social crisis that calls into question the functioning of the public sphere and democracy. Finally, we are not simply losing our ability to concentrate. In fact, it is being stolen from us.

This article requires about 8 minutes of concentrated reading time.

According to Johann Hari, author of the bestseller "Stolen Focus. Why You Can't Pay Attention", the loss of attention is one of the greatest predations in the history of mankind. In any case, the expert, who is highly praised by the Anglo-Saxon media, presents impressive evidence to support his thesis.

- On average, American workers still spend 3 minutes undisturbed and concentrated on doing a job.
- Among US students, the same figure is 65 seconds.
- In 2017, the average American read a book for 17 minutes a day. However, they used their smartphone for almost 6 hours a day.
- On average, Americans look at their smartphones around 2000 times a day (i.e. within 16 hours).
- For one study, two groups of students solved intellectually challenging tasks. One group put away their smartphone; the other regularly received text messages on their devices. This second group of the unfocused performed 20 per cent worse on the test than the group of the focused.
- According to the experts quoted by Hari, it takes a full 23 minutes to regain full focus after a distraction.

Admittedly, Hari is not the first to write against endless scrolling, compulsive zapping, non-stop texting or manic commenting. But the 44-year-old non-fiction author competently places the phenomenon of stolen concentration in an overall social and historical context.

Multitasking lowers IQ

The son of a Swiss and a British mother, Hari presents a carefully researched and entertainingly written book in which he reports on his own notification overkill, his own information crash. Hari took refuge in a self-imposed three-month digital detox cure in a beach house in Provincetown, Massachusetts. To free himself from the bondage of his smartphone, he bought a plastic box into which he locked his mobile phone for a certain period of time. That's how it all began.

Loss of concentration, like obesity, is a social epidemic.
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For his book project, Hari spoke with dozens of experts from various fields. His twelve theses on how our powers of concentration are being robbed are primarily aimed at digitalisation, smartphones, social networks and notification tsunamis - but not only. For example, when Hari shows how the modern diet with its excess of carbohydrates and sugar impairs attention.

The connection between concentration crisis and nutrition crisis is close anyway. Thus the renowned US psychologist Joel Nigg, who is known for his research on attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders, dictated to book author Hari in his notepad: "The collective loss of the ability to concentrate, like obesity, is a social epidemic."

Social media is digital fast food. The Tiktok feed and the hamburger both provide an "instant gratification" that can be addictive in the long run. One conclusion from Hari's research: the social media industry and tech companies farm our brain cells, the fast food industry farms our fat cells. And both are hacking our brain's reward system to maximise their profits.

The business model of the tech companies is called Screentime - humanity pays for it with lifetime.

The book becomes particularly exciting when Hari interviews insiders from Silicon Valley and discusses with them the strategies and tricks that software programmes use to tie users to their smartphones. Hari calculates that Google controls around 50 percent of all notifications, messages and pushes sent on smartphones with its apps and Android operating system; he calls these messages "behavioural cocaine". One thing is certain: when we stare at smartphone screens, these companies earn money; when we don't look, they don't. The business model is called screentime. And humanity pays in this deal with its data - and its lifetime.

In Hari's book, prominent software developer Aza Raskin has his say, the man who established the "Infinite Scroll": the feature that constantly flushes new, algorithmically selected content into the feed on Instagram and many other social media apps. Raskin is self-critical, regrets his development - and emphasises how simple it would be for tech companies to give their users more room for concentration. Facebook, for example, could keep the number of notifications low via default settings, Instagram could show a limited feed with a limited number of posts. The Silicon Valley managers would only have to want it.

Less and less sleep for people

Hari cites the chronic overtiredness of society as another main reason for the collective loss of focus. The majority of people sleep too little and poorly: this is poison for the ability to focus. Around 40 percent of Americans would sleep less than 7 hours a night; the figures for European countries are similar. Since 1950, the average time spent sleeping per night has decreased by about one hour in industrialised countries; for children and adolescents even by almost one and a half hours.

Hari does not shy away from dramatic sentences. "We need to act urgently," he writes, "because perhaps it's like the climate crisis or obesity: the longer we wait, the harder it will be to mobilise the individual and political energy to fight the forces that are stealing our focus."

Regulations for the attention destroyers

But Hari is not a blind technology hawk who wants to turn back the wheel of time to the era before the internet. However, the reconsideration of the power of undivided attention is only imperative because humanity cannot solve its crucial problems, such as the climate crisis, as long as it allows at least 20 per cent of its overall spiritual power to be stolen.

It is time for a kind of popular uprising, an "attention rebellion", as Hari calls it. He argues that society needs to tackle its attention crisis politically and socially, otherwise a problem of the century looms. In his opinion, this includes legal rules and regulations for the attention destroyers, for companies

like Meta or Google. But it also includes measures by each individual, such as enough sleep and a healthy diet. And that everyone should consciously take time for in-depth reading.

As have all those of you who have been reading this article without interruption for the last 8 minutes or so.

Johann Hari: *Stolen Focus. Why You Can't Pay Attention*. Bloomsbury, 352 pages, approx. 30 francs. Currently only available in English.

Quintessence

In 2022, in the face of five fundamental crises, humanity realises that it has lost its way and is at an epochal, existential impasse:

1. The war in Europe brings a relapse into global rearmament.
2. There is also general uncertainty in view of the Covid pandemic.
3. Global warming and the energy crisis make regional, renewable energy urgent.
4. Supply crises call for regional independence in raw materials and production.
5. The general public is running out of money. Fearful control over the ailing monetary system prevents further beneficial development.
6. People visibly lose skills that are critical for success, focus and creativity suffer.
7. Politicians are at a loss, administrations are lost in trivialities, public infrastructure is struggling with bottlenecks and failures.

Reflection 1: Fährdrich - And forgive us

Martin Klöti, March 2020

It was almost done and yet not. What do you mean, his imaginary counterpart asked him: *and yet not?! What the hell more did you want?* There was hardly anything more. You had bought up almost the whole world, almost the whole capital of this world and united it in you as the sole owner. Just as it had been laid out in the system and had ultimately been foreseeable. At the end of a process that concentrated more and more capital with fewer and fewer rich people, it had to come out like this. He belonged to the small circle that had become smaller and smaller, faster and faster. Or I belonged, Fährdrich said to himself and stopped talking to himself.

He sat in the cathedral, in front of him the sober baptismal font, behind it the shining stained glass windows, impressively high in rich, colourful abundance. Above him was the vaulted ceiling of the nave, supported by mighty sandstone columns, themselves ending in Gothic pointed arches until they met in the middle of the high ceiling. They separated the nave and aisles in a wide open space.

His eyes silently followed the clear lines of the vault. With his head back and his mouth open, Fährdrich rummaged through his deeply buried school knowledge and tried to remember how old these walls must be. He imagined all the things they had seen and could tell. A feeling came over him that he had not felt for a long time: to be small and bare, insignificant and mortal himself.

Now more than ever in the age of Corona.

He had come to the church after it had increasingly seemed to him over the last few days that it might do him good. The desire for silence, contemplation and reflection had grown in him and he had not wondered about it. Doubts had come over him. Until recently, he had been accustomed to being powerful in his mind, resolute, purposeful, razor-sharp in thought, crystal clear in action. For a lifetime, his only questions had revolved solely around the next deal. Now, just before the almost last one was done, Corona had thrown a spanner in his works. His enormous fortune, it was no more. It had dissolved in the worldwide rampant crisis, and in the maelstrom of government emergency programmes and immeasurable loans it had been relativised at a frightening pace. It had been worn down and finally declared void and worthless.

The International Monetary Fund and, in its wake, all national banks ultimately had no choice but to declare the global financial system a failure. The threat of national bankruptcies had weighed too heavily for it to have made the slightest sense to hold the limitless debts against each other, let alone to offset them somehow and somewhere. There was no longer any financial-political herb that could be grown against such dimensions. Long before Corona, the monetary watchdogs had shot their powder with spiralling interest rate cuts. They wanted to override the hopelessness of the international financial world.

He felt empty, dull, shaken to the core. He no longer understood what had happened. Corona had managed to wipe out everything and put him on an equal footing with everyone else.

Infinite disillusionment, a great emptiness hitherto unknown to him, had spread through him. This had brought him here, where he now found himself on the second foremost bench in front of the

baptismal font and organ. Perhaps it would be possible for him here to give an explanation to the inexplicable, solid ground to the shocking, an inner truth to the happiness that had slipped away.

I have sinned, a searching thought began to settle in his head after some time. I have bought together, whipped through and driven in, thrown over and brought under control, laughed at and absorbed, taken over and flattened. I have humiliated and flayed, ridiculed and mocked, crushed and overrun. I have invaded and poached. I have delivered and cannibalised.

With a lowered gaze, he watched as his one hand placed itself in the other. Melancholy. Now, hold on a second, he startled: It wasn't all as violent as you now think, a second voice inside him announced. You also taught, led, guided, paid. You did it gladly and many gladly followed you. Already, and yet: Was it good? Did it bring anything?

And forgive us our trespasses, he heard himself say far away. Astonished, he tried to grasp his culpability. Whether willingly or not, for better or for worse, for or against, yes or no - he began to realise that he had always imposed his will on everything. He had deprived beings and things of their self-determination, had always shaped them into the form he thought was right. The dawning realisation of having imposed his will on the nature of creation and the course of things, often pushed with might, force and violence - it began to disturb him in this moment of disillusionment. And it made him think more than ever. That he had never really felt happiness in all he had achieved, if he wanted to be honest, did not seem surprising to him now. He was even prepared to understand and associate it with the fact that, much as he quarrelled with the expression, he had sinned. Accurately considered, he had been guilty of the people, the creatures, the water, the land, the plants, the life, the universe, by putting himself before them. Whether consciously or unconsciously, with every one of his actions and with every one of his decrees and orders, he had deprived them of the possibility of determining their own being, of experiencing meaning and fulfilment.

But deliver us from evil, it flickered in his head. It made him melancholy. He began to realise how sorry he was. He felt sorry for himself too, because, strictly speaking, he hadn't fared much better himself. He had also been in his own way - triggered by his goals, his ambition, his plans, his intentions, his actions, his doing. Suddenly he was no longer so sure whether it had been existentially necessary to be the way he had been. Also for everyone else, for his fellow world that had served him? How else would all the people he had given work have lived their lives?

With folded hands and bowed head, he pondered the missed opportunities of having sought a middle way between necessary structures to secure existence and the right to spaces and times without any intention. Enough space, then, for being, discovering and experiencing without conditions and without judgement. Shocked, he realised at that moment how he had wasted his life time with his operative, mechanical actions. With the dull feeling of uncertainty, he tried to comfort himself that he and his time had taken it upon themselves for the coming generations, so that they would then fix it better.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. As he was so absorbed in himself, he realised that he could only heal the effects of his deeds if he consistently kept his hands off what he was doing. Left to themselves, in no way influenced, distracted or even irritated, the beings and things would come to rest. And thus be able to mobilise their self-healing power.

A strikingly bright spot caught his attention. He raised his head and fixed the beam of light on the sandstone column to his left, fascinated. The sun had sent it through the top of the Gothic window at that moment. Yes, I have sinned, often and in some ways. I realise that today. With my quick responses and reactions, even if well-intentioned, I have run over others and led them astray from my own will and path. Know, be able, plan, buy, regulate. That was my beat. But happiness, goodness, trust, tranquillity - they can neither be bought nor controlled nor forced. They are given to you. To demand them - come hell or high water - now seems to me to be a failure. That fails, lets their power fade, their source dry up. In the same way, the often naïve conceit that I am the greatest, the best, the most beautiful, the strongest, is foolish and stressful, in no way true, unable to fulfil anything. My eternal division into good and bad, better and worse, humiliated both the good and the bad and both the better and the worse, simply because I had elevated myself above them with my judgement. To make an image of something, to communicate it and hold on to it, limited the diversity and power of the other. Yes, I have sinned. I guess it's a tightrope walk between stimulating and restricting, between commenting and nailing down. Judging is a taboo, where did I ever get the right to do that?!

His eyes followed the sunny spot. Calmly he observed how fine dust danced in the cone of light. You may forgive yourself, for it is not your fault alone. You grew up like this: loved and at the same time driven by your parents and grandparents with demands, expectations and rewards, with praise and criticism. You are shaped by society in its tradition and culture, by school, kindergarten, rowing club, gymnastics club, student fraternity, military service: you can, you are, you will! Certificates, diplomas, rankings, medals. They have shaped you, stimulated you, driven you, moulded you. Was it not a privilege to create them, to achieve them, to receive them? What about all those who were denied such, who were subordinated and ostracised, not given the slightest chance in screaming, systemic inequality?

Finally, you yourself have acted as a parent, as a teacher, as a leader, even as a grey eminence. How much did you demand and supposedly promote, complain, criticise, praise and confirm? By what right? Flowers and trees don't do that. They stand there and blossom and let everything else around them be as it is without comment. Strong and fruitful. There is no intention, no ifs and buts, no condition, no expectation.

Today I feel remorse, Fährndrich admitted to himself, because I missed being one with my fellow world, with the wind, the sun, the water, the warmth, the cold, the earth, the forest, the plants, the animals, the people. Of course I saw them, but did I also perceive them, experience them, love them, unite with them? In the end, have I not missed giving and living appreciation and love? Yes, he admitted to himself, but had it been enough? Time was always pressing, the next task, the next agreement, a next goal, a next must. That tore me away from them again and again. I constantly had to be somewhere, even if I had imposed it on myself. Because that was the way it was supposed to be. Everyone did it that way. Time, or rather the measurement of time, created the constraints for us, set the limits, the beginnings and the endings. Time had not allowed us to be timeless, to let life flow carelessly and to live in the moment. We were mercilessly timed with smartphones and voicemail, drugged and flushed with guilt that wouldn't go away, fearfully driven to not use the time and miss the next thing again. I have sinned, because I myself have made this beat, decreed it, demanded it, put things, systems and errors into the world. I have helped to spread them. With my money, with my consumption, with my greed and the marketing of companies, corporations and platforms, I am complicit in the madness of having remote-controlled and driven people to the

furthest corner of this godforsaken world to be permanently in money trouble, over-indebted and pursued by debt collectors. The calls on their smartphones had regularly startled them, wondering if there was someone again trying to talk them into something new or remind them of their outstanding bills. In fact, it had only been about the money. And in the intention and need to organise and procure it in time, just about the ticking clock. True content and living values, something like happiness and joy, had long since fallen by the wayside.

Following the beam of light, his gaze lingered on a magnificent rose in the church window. He lingered on it, oblivious. It glowed intensely red.

On earth as it is in heaven. I wish once again for the happiness of having arrived, finally without any finitude. At some special moment, everyone has had that wondrous feeling of having arrived. It is the total relief, the nurturing security, the pure joy resting within. Having arrived: One has experienced it and had to let it go again after a short time, had to get out of being arrived because time had run out, money threatened to run out, duty had called again. So I want to forgive and ask for forgiveness myself for the fault, for the time pressure, the command, the order, the wish, the advice, the judgement.

Next to the rose, he made out a rich, yellow ear of corn with long, straight bristles in the coloured window picture. Again, next to it, a delicate, slender hand that seemed to pick it up.

Okay, forgive! I forgive you, I forgive myself, he whispered to himself. He breathed calmly while his gaze lingered thoughtfully and longer than usual on the motifs he had discovered in the church window.

And instead? What then?

Nothing! Just nothing. In any case, for the time being. Unplug and start again.

He swallowed in embarrassment. For he realised that this had just somehow corresponded to reality, since Corona had ensured that the seemingly real had become so relative and had been removed into the far distance. In any case, for the people spread all over the earth - humanity, the homosphere, they had become relative.

And then?

Then we look. For what and for what?

Probably wrong question, probably leads to the old mess.

But?

Instead, leave it there for a while. Keep your distance. Breathe deeply. And realise.

What?

Yourselves, others, the next ones, the environment, the world around us.

And let it slide?

Wrong word, again. Yes, yes, let it slide and yet not. Rather, let it flourish, work, unfold, grow. Follow your own path, your energy, your intuition, your destiny. Develop a sensorium, a fine, sensitive feeling for one's own being and for that of one's neighbour, for one's special talent, for one's own contribution, regardless of how great it is. It is precious in any case.

That seems very difficult to me and it probably basically amounts to a new ability to let oneself live and work without pushing things and limiting people.

So would it be okay to be passive? Rather, to simply offer oneself without any expectation of attention, respect, consideration or reward. Because such expectations quickly make the offer suspicious, unmask it and water it down. It would quickly become clear that it is about something other than the actual offer, namely the background of one's own expectations.

An offer without any conditions, solely of one's own free will and strength. Giving without expectation, accepting without obligation - both without weighing, spontaneously, on occasion, in abundance, daily, hourly, always, here and there and everywhere.

Fähndrich jerked upright in the pew. His hands gripped the back of the front pew tightly and he felt his pulse begin to quicken. What had gone through his mind so unexpectedly? In disbelief, he put his right hand to his mouth, soon adding his left and burying his face deep in both hands. We are shaped in such a way that only someone who also gives something gets something. Up to now, our motivation has been: we'll do it, I know how to do it, I can do it, we'll manage and achieve it. And *nothing* comes from *nothing*, we used to say. Maybe that was just too concrete, too narrow, too naïve. What does "nothing" mean? Is nothing really nothing or, on the contrary, perhaps even more so the whole abundance? Where pure nothing is set up, other things can arise fully. Where there is nothing, the emptiness can be filled by something else. Other things can realise themselves and become true. What it takes to recognise, appreciate and allow this fullness is a special, particular gift. We are not used to this. We dare not and cannot. It is difficult to endure because there is nothing that can be seen with the eyes, grasped with the hands, smelled with the nose, heard with the ears, felt on the skin. *Nothing* is incomprehensible, seemingly non-existent, surreal.

Surreal. People just used this word a lot when they told how they experienced Corona.

Fähndrich followed the slender hand on the ear of corn, the thin arm that followed it, and arrived at the kind face of a woman bending down to the ear of corn. Then he realised: *Nothingness* requires the strength of the soul and the courage to submit, to surrender, to grow and to let things happen, to take oneself along and to let oneself go. To people who were used to relying exclusively on their head, hands and feet, this had been difficult to access, erroneous, alien. They did not have the necessary instruments and the appropriate means to grasp the power that arises in and from nothingness and to which the gracious soul can dock.

Astonished at his peculiar thought processes, he rejoiced at the realisation and, respectfully following his previous logic, tried to coin it into certain consequences. Startled by these habitual expressions, he tried to find a new formulation and settled for gentler terms like "teachings" or "insights". However, what was important to him was the attempt to first make the consequence of his insight understandable to himself:

All humans are allowed to live carefree, Fährndrich now ventured his first thesis and was surprised that it did not even seem particularly courageous to him. At the same time, he realised that the statement could probably be applied to all creatures beyond humans. But he didn't want to go that far at that moment and reassured himself that it wasn't even necessary, at least for the first of his two insights: Carefree can mean not having to worry because there is nothing to worry about. Because there is nothing that can end or be lost. Because this physical, often material dimension, which had taken us so much by the scruff of the neck, was now devoid of any meaning. It was not worth worrying about.

Of course, it had not escaped his notice how people had become concerned about their livelihood, about the subsistence level, about livelihoods. Now that he was on such fundamental issues, it was more distant than ever for him to mock it. At the same time, he felt himself drawn towards an indifference that wanted to signify to him that the questions about the beginning and end of an existence were ultimately futile. What was it, then, this existence? Where and how does it stage itself? And if it has a beginning and an end, an entrance and an exit, what is before and after? Is it worthwhile to rack one's brains over this? Is it worth fearing anything at all? Does the mayfly care about its existence, does it fear and fight for it? Or does it willfully submit to the rhythm of its coming into being and passing away? Fährndrich was surprised at the unknown depths into which he had suddenly plunged here on the second foremost pew in this venerable nave. What he had realised calmed him, took away his grief, fear, anxiety, made him sovereign and free. The warmth that rose in him with it pleased him and he wished he could find a suitable way that would allow him to share it with others.

Now that his inner tension began to release, he also found a comfortable position on the pew. Finally, he was able to take his thoughtful gaze away from the church window and crossed his legs in the newfound familiarity. His arms clasped his knees and he tilted his head slightly to one side. As if he had found the solution, he smiled mischievously to himself and nodded towards the pulpit, which had moved into his field of vision.

His old ego came back for the second thesis: *we effectively and persistently overcome the now more peculiar and hardly relevant condition that we only need enough money and time to secure our existence and be happy. To be socially integrated and secure, to exist quasi unconditionally*, that is to be the credo, the political consensus, forever and ever. This second thought also seemed great to him, and after all that Corona had brought, paralysed worldwide and thereby in a certain sense tidied up, even his private fortune, that finally seemed quite plausible and sustainably good. For a long time, he had been dithering with the definitive verdict that all capital was null and void. Now he was able to make peace with it.

With Corona, he had experienced first-hand what it means to say goodbye to old habits, to lose everything and gain everything at the same time. It was only a question of perspective. He put his chin in his left hand and supported his head, which was getting heavy. The question of perspective did not yet suit him. It seemed a bit simplistic to him. Searchingly, he rubbed his chin in the palm of his hand and asked himself whether the combination of his two quickly formulated theses might be correct, i.e. to combine the greatness of pure fearlessness and carelessness with a certain striving for supporting structures and comprehensible orderliness. Yes, this combination seemed to him to be good advice for coping with the challenge that was currently driving humanity: to send oneself

trustingly into the (natural) course of things, to read the order laid down in it and to consistently create structures for oneself and one's existence that follow this order.

With this realisation, he returned once again to what had been his favourite and greatest thing until then. Money: Did it have a natural order? Did it belong in the system? And if so, what kind of system was it? To what sources did it go back, I mean to what natural origin? Did money and the monetary system, as he himself had operated and driven it, follow any rules of nature? He shivered when he honestly had to admit that the answer was *no* across the board. Obviously no. The money was merely an intellectual construct of theorists, universities and consultancies. The very central theorem and dictate of growth, which had been the measure of all economies, mocked any naturalness of a closed system, which was what the world was.

Here on his second foremost pew, after his abrupt further excursion of thoughts, he now definitely decided for himself that it was so good: to give up the money system as it had driven itself to the wall. To stop giving it the attention and importance that he had spent his life giving it and - he now realised - wasting it.

Like a boxer counted out in the tenth round, with his chest open and his arms spread wide in the ropes of the confined ring, he leaned back in the pew. The question that now preoccupied him was: How does the individual man make the transition away from compulsion to himself? How does he break free from rigidity and get into flow? Can each of us do this on our own, or should we come together as a whole - regardless of our origins - and approach it synchronously? It would certainly be helpful if we, as a homosphere, as a large world community, agreed on how, what and above all *that* it is now. This would remove a lot of imponderables and possibly expose doggedly defended errors and new potential seductions from the game. And who is *humanity*, who represents it, who speaks and acts for it? The worldwide protests in the streets that had dominated the media before Corona? The governments that were struggling for sobriety and clarification today? The corporations, banks and insurance companies that demanded bailouts? The parties that lamented and got nowhere? The churches that struggled to make political announcements? The NGOs that mobilised to be heard? The citizens' movements, which were solidary but fragmented and difficult to grasp? The United Nations, which was conspicuous by its absence and individual vetoes?

Snapping his fingers, he tried to come up with a conclusive answer. The governments, it's the governments, he decided, jumped up and sat right back down in the same motion. They were the elected representatives of the people, as far as his country at least was concerned, just doing a brilliant job and had gained the hearing and trust of the people as hardly ever before. Of course, there would be preliminary, careful, well-moderated and yet determinedly single-minded work among the world's governments to coordinate a consensus, a common statement, a common voice, to finally arrive at a common declaration of forfeiture. But, it seemed clear to him now: The admission and the need for a synchronous transition, a common farewell to what has gone before and a common encouragement and invitation to start again, it had to come from the united, national governments of this world. Here and now, coordinated, in time, so as not to run the risk of falling back into the familiar dilemma of the paralysing distinction between good and evil, rich and poor, slow and fast, stupid and clever.

It would be devastating, in the sense of destroying the aspiration for a future in which people's dignity is respected embedded in their fellow world. And he wished that the shock of the Corona

crisis was sufficiently deep-seated to promote this determined joining of governments. Under its leadership, which in most cases was democratically legitimised, Switzerland, in its long, peaceful tradition committed to neutrality, might well go ahead and take the initiative and secure the unification process. Fährndrich liked what he had for the time being worked out for himself. His gaze rose above the altar back to the church window, through which the evening sun shone warmer than before. In the name of God Almighty. He could have sworn that the vast majority of national constitutions began with such an invocation.

It is like the five phases through which one passes in the mourning of a loved one. The shock and the denial are followed first by emptiness, soon by reconciliation, the acceptance of the indispensable, until one finally finds one's way back to strength and finds inspiration and something to carry on in the changed circumstances. Fährndrich had once taken this from a lecture. Now he recalled it and applied it to the global situation: overcoming shock, putting fear aside, making peace, finding a way out of emptiness, welcoming life, letting it have its way, giving it its place.

The courage to reconcile, as natural and primordial as it is, will be a special overcoming, a special challenge, a great exercise and a formative experience for rulers and citizens alike in all nations. It will hurt when it gets down to the nitty-gritty and it is declared that the immense debts worldwide will be cancelled. This will make the financial system obsolete, topple, collapse, be eliminated.

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. The global amnesty over the entire financial system, with all its private, institutional and governmental participants, is tantamount to a shock admission, fortunately cushioned by the synchronisation of government declarations. And it will fuel the innovative thrust in standing together in solidarity, as has proved very spontaneous, encouraging and even gratifying from the very first hours of the declared Corona emergencies. People have become very creative, because it has long been inherent in their desires, their wishes, their fantasies, their partly secret partly open action. Entire entrepreneurial, new concepts have emerged on such a basis and are just waiting to be demanded and used by the official world. They can herald a new era of economy and society with far-reaching effects. If the critical mass of those working in solidarity is sufficiently exceeded, no one needs to feel stupid any more. Then no one needs to fear ridicule, denigration, pillorying and exclusion. Then the individual actions turn into movement. Then shame turns into joy, condemnation into admiration, suspected subversion into gratefully received courage and celebrated model. Hence the necessary synchronisation among governments. Because politicians are only human and fear the risk of exposure like the devil fears holy water or baptismal water.

If I leave this church now, Fährndrich told himself, and share with people what I have just thought about, ultimately no one will be surprised, let alone outraged, when it is finally enacted by governments. Fährndrich recalled the catastrophe of Fukushima, which had made one government or another declare its withdrawal from nuclear energy and focus on the alternatives, which had been prepared in forward-looking circles long before, ready to be put in the drawer.

The heavy church door softly slammed shut behind him as he stepped out onto the forecourt. He squinted into the evening sun and let his gaze wander across the river to the opposite bank. The sturdy houses of the old town stood there unperturbed. From the crown of the mighty maple tree, a blackbird greeted him loudly with its boisterous song. The leaves sprouted bright green from the mangled branches. Just in front of the terrace on which he was standing, a junior double sculling boat

was cutting through the water with powerful strokes of the oars. Moved, his gaze followed the sleek boat. He laughed happily.

Reflection 2: Creation and climate justice

Martin Klöti on the occasion of the impulse meeting on 9.1.2021 on the ecumenical campaign of Bread for All and Fastenopfer

Climate-friendly behaviour is more a question of basic attitude than the result of recycling or cycling, for example. The video depicts Mother Earth, Gaia, as a living being. If people behaved as empathetically towards her as they do towards their neighbours, climate-friendly behaviour would quickly become a daily matter of course. The video tries to introduce such an attitude.

The video is available on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/fEE9JQt11us>

This is our village. I invite you on a tour through our neighbourhoods, through our little world. Speaking of the world: Mars and the world meet, whereupon Mars asks, startled: Uih, what happened to you?! Are you FIEBER?! To which the world replies: "Don't worry, it'll pass. I only have Homo Sapiens."

This little story teaches us at least two things:

1. The world is alive. In this living quality, they also call science and philosophy *Gaia*.
2. Gaia has existed for around 13.5 billion years, leading a highly complex life of its own. 3.8 billion years ago, certain molecules began to combine to form organisms. Humans themselves have only existed as cultural beings for the last 70,000 years or so, a relatively tiny fraction of Earth's history. In the way we behave as humanity, it is around 200 years of industrialisation and modern civilisation, based very largely on the use and burning of coal and petroleum.

Gaia has always been sovereign and has ensured that she is doing well with water, soil and air, with an enormous diversity of species in peaceful, synergistic coexistence, with a relatively narrow temperature range and a balanced composition of the atmosphere that enables her and her earthlings to live.

When we understand the earth as a living being in this way, everything suddenly becomes very simple. I mean questions like:

- How is the Earth, how is Gaia?
- What is the importance of humans for Gaia?
- What is the significance of Gaia for people?
- What role do humans play for Gaia and what role does Gaia play for humans?

If humans see themselves as part of the biodiversity on Earth and expect their position in the life of Gaia to be secure, that is, they have a right to exist, how exactly would they be expected to behave towards Gaia?

The reality of the drastic Corona precautions to protect our accustomed life is helping us a bit right now. Mother Earth, Gaia, and our Father are being very strict and serious with us right now. Such clear language as they are using now is unpleasant. They are forcing us to finally clean up the mess we have made.

Like in the nursery, where we could have screamed at the sheer severity and cursed upbringing that seemed so inappropriate and so unfair. Usually we would then squat on the floor and wait for better

times, for someone to help us. Each time it was almost unbearable. After a while of insight, contemplation and calming down, we as children finally gave in and more importantly the decisive jolt to tackle what we had been told to do. And often father or mother would appear quietly and abruptly in the doorway and help to complete what had been started. They had always seen and felt what was going on with us and in us. They were never far away, but always close and connected in their unconditional love, with their big heart and with the untiring will to see us grow up as mature human beings. And with the reassuring certainty: You are not alone, not today and not tomorrow.

Yes, you are not alone. But you can't behave as if you were alone either! And again, it's actually quite simple: if we want to be popular, or rather loved, then we also have to adapt, fit in, behave as expected:

To be decent, cooperative, empathetic; to behave properly, to fit into an order that is even. Everything doesn't always go our way, our way, our way. Someone else is in charge - Gaia, Mother Earth and the good Father. After all, we also have brothers and sisters who also want their rights, who are just as valuable and precious, just as sensitive and delicate:

The worms, for example - together with grubs, larvae, mites, microorganisms in the soil, the soil as a substrate for growing and thriving, as a CO₂ reservoir, as a basis for life. Where else would the cereals and fruits come from, a large part of all food?!

Insects, for example - not just bees and butterflies, but all insects including mosquitoes, flies, wasps and cockroaches. They all play their part in life, helping Gaia to live life by pollinating flowers and feeding birds.

The microorganisms in the water, for example - plankton together with amphibians such as amphibians, salamanders, tadpoles, frogs, toads, large and small fish. They all keep the water, the water bodies, the rivers and lakes, the sea healthy, nutritious and in ecological balance. Mankind draws a large part of its food from the water, from the sea.

The flora and fauna, for example - plants and animals with us in the settlement area, in the forest, in the field, be it in our balanced climate zones, be it in the Alps, at the sea, in the desert, in the ice.

Hm, it seems funny to me, somehow helpless and naïve, downright laughable and tearful when we

- Cover the glaciers with foils
- refuelling the cars with electricity
- Recycle plastic and yet produce more and more of this stuff
- Compensating for pollutant emissions with questionable objects
- Hold climate conferences and convene climate summits only to throw their decisions to the wind!

What the heck!

But it would be so simple:

- if we said *please* and *thank you*, not to us, but to Gaia!
- if we were attentive to how she was doing - after all, it would only be human and normal!
- if we were to look carefully and consistently, listen and perceive where everything we need in terms of food, protection and health comes from. Then we would try to understand what

Gaia might think when we unabashedly help ourselves from and out of her. Wouldn't she have expected it differently? After all, our Father talks about it all the time.

So, go!

It can't be that difficult! But we have to practise it, or even learn it anew, from scratch. Better now than tomorrow.

You can do whatever and however you want. The decision is entirely ours. Gaia may not be able to avoid protecting herself.

Yes, it is up to us.

She can do well without ... us.

Doesn't matter?

Never mind!

Solution approach 1: Solidarity-based, regional circular economy

A small textile manufacturer from Glarus designs the master plan for the Swiss hemp industry. But the beginning is hard.

"Handelszeitung" of 31.12.2021, Editor Andreas Valda

The man has something of a guru about him. He is distantly reminiscent of Mahatma Gandhi. He tries to rally people around him in the countryside and promises independence and upswing through self-sufficiency. His goal: the introduction of a real circular economy in the Alpine region. If successful, he wants to export this model. For this, he is looking for "a worldwide alliance of partners for global sustainability in society and the economy", it says on LinkedIn. What it doesn't say is that his world project is based on hemp. The man's name is Martin Klöti. The 62-year-old from Thalwil was a project manager at banks for a long time, most recently at Julius Bär. He then became a professor of ecology and sustainability at the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland. There he taught ethics, postulated empowerment and green tech, railed against consumerism, invited speakers from half the world and overspent the budget. As a result, he was kicked out and founded the Glärnisch Textil cooperative in 2017 with 16 fellow campaigners.

With the help of his family, Klöti raised 1.5 million francs in capital and is the head of the cooperative. He has set himself the goal of building up a new textile industry from hemp, with its epicentre in Glarus. His ambition is to make spun hemp fibres as fine and soft as cotton yarns. The aim is to make them marketable in the fashion industry. Made in Switzerland - a high standard, like everything else at Klöti: always bordering on megalomania. Dream 1: Bringing industry back to the valley The ETH cultural engineer was not intoxicated when he developed his vision. For the commercial hemp he processes is the THC-free cannabis sativa. It looks like drug hemp, but is as suitable for smoking pot as a piece of cardboard. Of economic interest are the seeds for food, the stalks for textile fibres, for building and insulation material, and the natural resin they contain. It can be used for car bodies or for ski waxing. This cannabis species is a pioneer plant with extreme performance. It does not need pesticides or artificial fertilisers. It is not very sensitive and grows up to high altitudes. And it grows fast: it is ready for harvesting within a hundred days. According to Klöti, "all kinds of plastics and materials" can be made from this renewable raw material. Medicine and cosmetics also use cannabis sativa. Klöti is working on a master plan à la Metaverse so that everyone in Glarus can imagine the dawn.

The emergence of the new textile industry is to be simulated on an internet platform, "one-to-one on the basis of the actual conditions," says Klöti, "from the hemp fields and the farmers to the hemp crushing plant, the spinning mills, the weaving mills, the fleece production, the building material plants, the sewing workshops and rope mills, and finally the cloth mills. Klöti himself only uses the stalks. He receives a few tonnes per year, although he would have the capacity for 2000. They come from three dozen hemp farmers in Graubünden, Liechtenstein, St. Gallen and Aargau. The stalks have a hard shell and a soft core. They are broken over several stages. The hard parts fall into a container. Klöti sells them to a successful manufacturer of hemp bricks in South Tyrol. The soft fibres are combed by machine until they feel like cotton wools: This is the raw material for insulation, which he

also sells, and for yarn. The only crushing and combing machines in Switzerland rattle at Klöti. Now he is working on a spinning machine, together with the Winterthur manufacturer Rieter. A first attempt with five tonnes of fibres failed recently, says Klöti. The spun threads broke because the fibres were too short. The raw material came from the wrong hemp variety. "We now need long fibres from winter hemp," says Klöti. This grows in the fields of some farmers and is harvested in spring. So the hemp guru is not too far along yet. The example demonstrates the complexity of the project to build up a textile industry from nothing: Farmers have to grow the right raw material, spinning mills have to produce fashionable yarn - and new textile companies have to find customers. And it needs money to finance the whole thing, otherwise it won't work.

Dream 2: Food grows in Switzerland But there are two examples where the calculation is already working out, at least for the hemp farmers. They sell the extracted hemp seeds to food producers. These are two companies, one young, the other established: the company Alpenpionier in Ilanz near Chur and the cooperative Landi Freiamt in Bünzen AG. Their brands are Alpenpionier and Hanfwohl. They have been selling hemp seeds for consumption, hemp bars, oil and cooking ingredients such as hemp powder for three years. In both places, idiosyncratic founders are at work - at Alpenpionier the food engineer Carlo Weber (37) and at Landi the shop network manager Daniel Appert (52). Hemp clusters have formed around these two poles since 2017: There are two dozen hemp farmers in Graubünden and Liechtenstein, and 14 in Aargau. Weber is ahead of the game with Alpenpionier. Its marketing and products appeal to a young, trendy audience for whom fitness, outdoor, veganism, cooking and health are important. The seed crumble, hemp tea and hemp beer are doing well. But his best invention is protein and energy bars that would fit right in with Red Bull. They are so tasty that Migros and Coop will soon include them in their range - Weber's first major success. His factory also has the first and only industrial machine for hulling hemp seeds, which look like linseed but are rounder and larger. The competition also profits from this. Appert's Landi has its seeds hulled there to reduce costs. The margins are still far too small for competitors to build up parallel capacities: Cooperation is the key. What makes hemp seeds so valuable is that they contain the famous omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. They are said to have a life-prolonging effect when taken regularly, and they contain all the amino acids necessary for life, so that a person could do without eating animal proteins. "This is ideal for vegans," says food engineer Weber. Hemp crops would be a profitable alternative for the loss-making dairy and meat industries. The well-known vegetarian restaurant chain Tibits relies on hemp seeds from Alpenpionier: in iced tea, in dumplings, on salads and as a warm drink, the "Hanflatte", made from seeds, dates and oat milk. Tibits is always experimenting, says co-founder Reto Frei. They are currently looking for recipes for breakfast drinks, for a protein shake and for a bread made from hemp meal. "Hemp food has a lot of potential because it is versatile, tasty, healthy and locally produced," says Frei. He took a stake in Alpenpionier as a small shareholder and had himself elected to the board of directors last summer. But Alpenpionier is burning money. The business is still in the red in its fourth year of operation. They are relying on volunteer work, idealism and crowdfunding. The head of finance, a former investment banker, works part-time - and turns every franc around twice before spending it. Turnover is probably less than 500,000 francs. Nevertheless: the canton of Graubünden supports hemp cultivation with contributions and the Glarner Kantonalbank has granted Alpenpionier a loan. "It wouldn't have been possible without them," Weber admits. In return, the canton hopes that Alpenpionier will generate such a large demand that an agricultural economy based on hemp will develop regionally. This would be a profitable alternative to the loss-making dairy and meat industries. Why an alternative? The Graubünden Office of Agriculture says that hemp "can mature at an altitude of 1,500 metres above sea level" - the highest field was at 1,250 metres in Scuol - and that hemp has a protein quality comparable to soya. 800,000 tonnes of soya are imported

annually, mainly for vegans and vegetarians. Ergo, valuable protein could be procured domestically with hemp cultivation. And this is how the Office of Agriculture formulates its dream: the project has "considerable potential to revive a crop with a great past and considerable future potential in the Alpine region and especially in the canton of Graubünden". Dream 3: Hemp, the environmentally good raw material This potential has now also been discovered by Agriculture Minister Guy Parmelin. Thanks to lobbying by the cantons of Graubünden and Aargau, he had the Federal Council approve direct payments for hemp crops in November. The subsidy will be paid from January and will cover about half of the farmers' expenses. Since they expect about the same yield per kilo as before, the subsidy will mainly go to producers, who will only pay about half as much for the raw material in future as before. This leaves more money for development, according to the producers. Farmer Andrea Haas is one of 14 hemp farmers in the Freiamt cluster who have been active since 2019. She is also happy about the subsidy, but not because she will make more profit, but because there will be more money to market commercial hemp. Those who want to earn big money do not have to rely on commercial hemp. "We grow it out of passion, to try something new," she says, who knows many people involved and is on the board of Landi. "It's a valuable product, it's just that food made from hemp is too little known." ANDREA HAAS, HANF GROWER DOTTIKON The 33-year-old also grows conventional seeds, such as wheat or sugar beet, on her parents' farm in Dottikon AG. But she is looking for innovation: for the past two years she has been growing commercial hemp. This takes up a tenth of the land she cultivates, the size of eight football fields. Haas is thinking about switching to organic farming. After all, hemp is virtually organic. Hemp grows faster than weeds. The plant is suitable for arable farming because it fits perfectly into crop rotation. And cannabis sativa provides a "mega-value product - the only problem is that consumers don't jump on it on their own. That is unfortunately the case." The Herculean task is to make hemp products known. Haas' seeds reach consumers under the brand name Hanfwohl. Specialities are hemp pasta and hemp birewegge. A single incident can endanger the Swiss hemp project. The distribution network has been modest so far: Around fifty Volg and Landi shops are the distribution network - plus an online shop. But that is not enough. Turnover is not exhilarating. Haas is hoping for a push from Migros Aare and Lucerne. The two cooperatives have agreed to sell Hanfwohl products under the title "From the Region". This is not yet a knighthood, but at least Haas' products will have another channel. Dream 4: Creating a new industry Whether Haas, Appert, Klöti, Weber or the agricultural functionaries: they all dream of a commercial hemp industry. They know each other, talk about quantities and prices and try to help each other. But it will only work if each level does its part: the farmers, the manufacturers, the textile industry and the retail trade. For example, Coop could market hemp oil from Switzerland instead of Austria. A single incident can endanger the Swiss Hemp Project. This was demonstrated by an incident two years ago: Martin Klöti's hemp crushing machine caught fire. A single stone that had accidentally got into the machine set off sparks that ignited the hemp fibres. The operation came to a standstill. A full year's work for nothing. The farmers had to store thousands of bales of hemp straw. And - as a reaction - switched to a variety that generates shorter fibres. Unfortunately for Klöti, he now lacks long fibres for spinning yarn - that's how fragile the system is. The other big catch is that Swiss hemp products are still far too little known. The players have invested an estimated 10 million since 2017 without getting into the black. That wears on the nerves. They have put in a lot of unpaid hours and idealism, but have not yet experienced a broad echo. Neither energy bars nor "hemp nuts", nor hemp pasta, nor hemp birewegge are very well known. Most kitchens have probably never heard of this high-quality protein substitute. The players themselves complain about the lack of awareness. The big dream is threatened. Meanwhile, Martin Klöti from Glarus continues to dream his dream. A fortnight ago he published a flyer calling on landowners in Glarus to donate vacant houses -

of which there are many. No joke. Klöti's offer: exchange your house for shares in the Glärnisch Textil cooperative. His plan: to renovate the houses and set up textile workshops in them in order to obtain capital (mortgages). It remains to be seen whether his plan will succeed. The idea is clever, but somewhat presumptuous. Why should a bank give mortgages for textile studios as long as there is no demand? This is the chicken and the egg question. Which comes first? Klöti's answer to this is an appeal to the future. "By 2025, the cleverly networked people of Glarus will be relying on substantially more renewable raw materials and recycled materials. Thanks to determined implementation, they will create around one thousand new jobs in the valley within five years and mutate into a showcase region with international appeal." After the past decades, some of which have been very arduous, the Glarnerland is to be "spruced up properly. - A wonderful dream. But there is still a long way to go.

When a T-shirt becomes the impetus for something new

"St. Galler Bauer" 19 - 2022, Editor Barbara Schirmer

The Glärnisch Textil cooperative focuses on hemp. Industrial hemp is a forgotten all-rounder. Martin Klöti from the Glärnisch Textil cooperative sees a lot of potential in this raw material, also for agriculture.

Long-stemmed pale beige stalks pile up in the large hall of the Glärnisch Textil cooperative in Schwändi. In the middle of it all is the chairman of the board of directors, Martin Klöti. He takes hold of a handful of stalks, shakes them until they are more or less parallel and puts them over his free arm. "This is winter hemp. It arrived a few days ago," he says without interrupting his work and adds that in future a special parallel mower will be used so that the stalks are ready for further processing by machine immediately after harvesting and manual labour is no longer necessary. But that is a vision for the future.

This is the first delivery of winter hemp for the Glärnisch Textil cooperative. In general, the Swiss hemp project is still under construction. "We want to move away from questionable, wasteful forms of production and consumption. The solution lies in the circular economy," Klöti explains the cooperative idea. The idea is to obtain and use materials and auxiliary materials for human needs that are provided by nature. These should be processed into good, contemporary products. It is also important that once the products have reached the end of their useful life, they must be returned to their origin completely and in perfect condition. Not to be forgotten are the production conditions. The cooperative also focuses on these.

It was a trip to China, which Klöti made as a former employee of the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland in cooperation with Sulzer Textil, that forced him to act. "What I saw and smelled there really moved me," he concludes. As a result, he said, he thought about what all had to happen to put the grievances right in the long term. During this time, another key experience followed. "I wanted to buy a T-shirt made of a high-quality cotton fabric," he says. He wears his clothes for years and therefore prefers fabrics that stand up to this demand. But he found nothing satisfactory on the market. Knowing full well that challenges do not solve themselves, he took action and laid the foundation for today's Glärnisch Textil cooperative.

An undemanding survivor

"Hemp is a survival artist, at the same time incredibly versatile," Klöti knows. Indeed, hemp provides food in the form of nuts, flour and oil. At the same time, the fibres are a supplier of textiles, building material and insulation. Even apparent hemp waste can still be recycled. It is used as synthetic organic granules or hemp cellulose. Last but not least, hemp can even be used to produce energy. "Hemp completely covers our life's needs. We just have to use it properly.

The fibre plant grows uncomplicatedly, without sprays, no matter whether long dry phases or rainy periods dominate the weather caprices. It simply waits until better times come and then continues to thrive. Even on heavily used or neglected areas, hemp is said to be usable. Its fibres are correspondingly robust. Klöti bears in mind: "If fibres unravel during processing, part of the machine spikes beforehand rather than the fibre giving way." In the past, the fibres were mainly used in shipping for sails and ropes.

The winter hemp, which is waiting in the hall to be processed, has a different purpose. It is to be used for textiles. "Since the winter-grown hemp does not bear any fruit, the combine is not needed. This leaves the stalks in their originally grown long form. Which speaks for stable tear-resistant threads. Summer hemp is different. It is primarily a supplier of oil and nuts. The straw shortened by the thresher thus finds its intended purpose as a building material.

More value creation possible

Klöti is convinced that agriculture can reposition itself by making a significant contribution to the economy's other needs in addition to food. The cooperative's goal goes even further. "We want to enable farmers to produce semi-finished products directly on their farms. This increases the added value for the farms. At the same time, the knowledge of hemp processing will be broadly supported." Thanks to the Glärnisch Textil cooperative, the machines needed for this should be in a price range that the farmers can afford.

Commercial hemp is currently growing in a wide variety of locations in Switzerland. It is Martin Klöti's concern that farmers in Glarus and the Linth Plain should also be recruited for production. Glarus, with its long textile tradition, still has one of the last industrial spinning mills. Grad winter hemp would thus be processed directly where it grows. "This saves transport routes and offers remote areas the chance of jobs." Moreover, with this step, agriculture would grow beyond its basic function as a food supplier and become a partner for all basic human needs. Klöti warns: "Especially now, when the near war in Ukraine is raging, we should be sensitive to the importance of a broad-based agriculture.

He is still untangling stalks of winter hemp in the large hall. Soon, he says, a crushing machine specially constructed for the further processing of these long fibres will expand the range in Schwändi. Then another important step will have been taken to spin strong threads and weave high-quality fabrics. So that not only Martin Klöti will have a long-lasting T-shirt.

Three questions for Marco Baltensweiler, Head of the Office of Agriculture of the Canton of Glarus

How realistic do you see the cultivation of hemp in Glarus?

We have been dealing with the question of how agriculture in Glarus should develop for some time. In addition to dairy, meat and alpine farming, the valley also has about 200 hectares of fertile soil. I see great potential in winter hemp as an intercrop.

Where is the difficulty?

Of course there are conflicts of use. The balance of alpine grazing and green spaces in the valley, which has functioned well up to now, should also remain intact. A sensitive approach and considered action is necessary. Moreover, hemp cannot be cultivated in the entire canton. It is mainly the areas around Näfels and Mollis that are suitable for this.

What would the realisation of hemp cultivation mean for the Glarus region?

For a long time, Glarus was a textile canton. The cultivation of winter hemp, which is used for textile production, would therefore fit very well into the valley. The circular economy that Glärnisch Textil is

considering is also a valuable contribution to sustainable agriculture. We would not be saving the world, but we would be taking a step in a good direction.

Solution approach 2: Sufficiency as a social paradigm

Sufficiency, i.e. sufficient supply of everything that is necessary for life, and at the same time frugality, i.e. not wanting or needing to have more than is necessary, is an ancient paradigm. In the last 50 years or so, it has been abandoned in the globalised world with devastating consequences. Global society is finding its way back to this principle and thus to healthy autonomy, independence and proportionality. Increasingly, re-emerging communities, for example in functioning neighbourhoods or in a traditional, monastic community, are living everyday sufficiency.

What all belongs to sufficiency? Beyond sufficient food, protective clothing and functioning shelter, other dimensions of sufficiency are: familiarity, security, variety, diversion, joy, change of scene, knowledge, experience, fun, inspiration, connectedness, exchange, culture. None of this comes up short and has a rich measure of authenticity. Ways and means to sufficiently fertilise and fulfil such psycho-hygienic needs are: appealing, creative, nurturing, functional, well-kept and restful places, spaces and meeting places such as generally accessible neighbourhood and village squares, parks, gardens, forests, near-natural recreation areas, bodies of water, workshops, studios, spas, care and health practices, stages, concert halls, theatres, larger and smaller kitchens with defined collective engagement and creative and creatively effective offerings to experience, enjoy, inspire, participate, create, design, relax and move on. Occasional changes of scenery, broadening of horizons and inspiration are encouraged by means of travel on the part of both travellers and hosts, well-functioning public transport for near and far, car-sharing, house and flat exchanges (hotels become superfluous and become communal housing complexes), literature, film, music, culture in every real and digital form.

Security, safety, serenity and confidence, regardless of the twists and turns that life brings and takes, are crucial aspects of sufficiency. If they are given, talents, good forces and energies can develop freely. These ultimately contribute to the sustainability and development of human civilisation. All chapters on future approaches contain statements on the preservation of these four important aspects for the well-being not only of human beings, but of all living beings in general.

Approach 3: Actively teach and learn from each other

People and thus society(s) have a lot of tradition, knowledge, experience and innovation. It is crucial that individuals and societies are always able, motivated and capable of sharing knowledge, skills, culture, values and behaviour with each other, i.e. to make such things available to each other and thus to broaden, deepen, expand, multiply, consolidate and anchor existing competences across the entire breadth of a society and to apply them on a daily basis in a situational, sensitive, wise, creative and respectful manner.

Proven models of civilian and paramilitary organisations can be used for the meaningful perception of such education and training: the Boy Scouts, many exemplary, large clubs and associations, the Swiss Civilian Service, etc. Incentives here come from attractive, promising courses as well as from individual promotion and advancement. An important driving force, i.e. intrinsic motivation, is the acquisition of personal and collective competence, skill and sovereignty, which increasingly results in achieved independence, recognition and unconstrained, natural authority.

An interesting as well as delicate question is whether an actual catalogue of all necessary competences and work is necessary for a functioning, supporting and constantly developing society. Delicate because a pernicious suspicion quickly arises: would this catalogue imply planning and thus produce a supposedly safe, less flexible and less creative planned economy? Would a catalogue cement a social value system that, in addition to qualification, would also lead to the arbitrary, dangerous and thus not very beneficial disqualification of activities and workers? Would such a catalogue cloud the outlook and confidence that diversity, vitality and the ability to survive (resilience) of a society are ultimately given and secured by its talents, which in any case always complement and stimulate each other?

It is probably better to remain optimistically excited about collective success and boldly refrain from creating what ultimately seems like a petty catalogue of skills and work in a functioning society.

Much more decisive than professional competences for the recovery of social quality and performance is the internalised code of character, attitude and behaviour. This code includes qualities and skills that are too crucial, such as reflection, respect, empathy, solidarity, helpfulness, frugality, curiosity, the will to discover, perseverance, precision, stamina and perseverance. These are the real ingredients that determine the prospects and success of individuals, communities and societies. In a decentralised approach and thanks to a naturally understood due portion of civil courage, all members of society continuously train each other in these disciplines by making each other aware of deficits and being role models and mentors to each other. In the end, everyone is doing well.

An intellectual and competent, sustainable and resilient society is formed, in which the professional, social and cultural competences are distributed spatially and temporally, thus securely anchored and cultivated and further developed in the active collective through all ups and downs. Highs and lows certainly also refer to such natural and existential concerns as the vitality, performance and neediness(ies) of the members of a community, such as the constant change of environmental, living and production conditions.

A prerequisite for effective training, especially in practical skills such as handling materials, tools and aids, is free access to workshops and places of learning where these very materials, tools and aids are available as teaching and learning resources. In practical application, it is possible there to deal with resources in a purposeful way, on the one hand to become experienced and virtuoso and on the other hand to soon become creative and innovative. With the discovery of one's own skills comes the discovery of the given and further possibilities. This brings movement to the matter and dynamism to development and progress, which benefits the individual and the collective.

Approach 4: Free access to livelihoods and means of production

In the near future, there will be no more property, only productive property.

In order to be able to overcome the manifold crises, the present civilisation will not be able to avoid jumping over its own big shadow. It will have to admit to itself that two fortresses of its economic and social reality are proving to be mistaken: The illusion of perpetual and supposedly limitless growth is dissolving into disillusionment in the face of running out of raw materials and depleted soil. And the artificial value of private property is disintegrating because capital is being held back and thus frozen by clueless owners and despondent administrations. This does not at all correspond to the will of the economists, according to whose definition capital is constantly being converted and used.

The general opening up of ownership of land, capital, energy, labour and raw materials that inevitably results from this will be preceded by the realisation by the wealthy few that their highly concentrated power over money is toxic to the system and to themselves.

This is ensured by deflation, which occurs when there are too many goods against too little *general* purchasing power. If this is the case, the market dries up. Without sufficient consumption, the market economy hangs itself. The so-called Wal-Mart effect has been extensively studied and documented in this regard: where there are no or low wages, there is hardly any purchasing power. With a low-price strategy to eliminate competition, competitors inevitably also go out of business as employers and as tenants of properties and business premises. Soon, vacant business premises and abandoned shopping centres will be the result. Entire streets, neighbourhoods and cities will be left to languish when the last customers with purchasing power have left them. Who then wants to live in a run-down area, rent a flat, buy a house, run a business?! This seals the fate of real estate prices, land prices, shops for rent, factory halls and office buildings, public facilities: Devaluation to the bitter end.

In the real estate market, the risk-averse banks are currently contributing greatly to deflation and the stalling of the real estate market: In line with their own security requirements, they are holding on to the record high imputed interest rate, which has become the ultimate disincentive to grant mortgages.

Capital thus destroys itself when it is concentrated and hoarded and blocked in this concentration by a few heavyweights. Some countries in Africa and South America already have experience with this. The powerful are left sitting on their properties and goods, which quickly rot and decay, while the broad population becomes impoverished.

In the deflation that inevitably sets in with the rapid concentration of capital, the collapse of consumption and the collapse of prices coincide. Owners can no longer achieve sufficient returns according to their outdated ideas and consequently want to sell their property. The majority of the formerly affluent are visibly subject to two handicaps: they have lost money themselves and are unable or unwilling to use it. This is because they have no interest in acquiring companies, means of production and real estate that are no longer profitable in the dried-up market environment.

The sacred cows of capitalism do not even need to be shaken. With the current concentration of capital in a few global organisations and individuals and the simultaneous impoverishment of the general public, this will take care of itself. The neoliberal booster of the recent present will sooner or later cause every market and every region to fall out of balance. Despite the economists in the national banks, the limitless state credits and the denigration of admonishers: limitless growth and private property are out. As artificial constructs beyond all laws of nature, they are proving untenable. This actual truth is becoming very clear to humanity in the first half of 2022.

Private property is, in the final retracing and consequence, the invention of nefarious presumption, arrogant self-appointment, violent conquest and systemically arranged appropriation, thus mostly the result of a violent act. In the animal kingdom there may well be a principle of and of the stronger, but never a principle of ownership. The site of a bird's nest may be defended for a breeding season or the hunting ground for a foray. But at the end of such use, the resource used reverts to the public and to the bosom of nature.

With the extreme prophecy that the problems with capital and private property will take care of themselves as they intensify, a dance on the volcano is looming. The global community would do well to clean up the unspeakable history before the great impoverishment has ravaged the remaining order and infrastructure. It is the political responsibility of the global collective to make the return of the factors of production to common ownership so attractive that this transfer can take place quickly and peacefully. What are the appropriate arrangements for this?

In absolute compliance with solutions 1 to 3, i.e. circular economy, sufficiency and collective learning, participation and involvement are the liberating key to constructive, broad-based, sustainable use of resources. For this to succeed, the donors, i.e. the current and soon to be former owners of the resources, need a sufficiently powerful incentive. What can such an incentive consist of?

First of all, there is the liberation from what has so far impaired the quality of life, even of the powerful: Debt, taxes, suspicion, information, administration and control. No longer having to dwell on this is an enormous relief and source of energy even for the very rich. The absence of envy, jealousy, anger, harassment - often in the form of aggressive, unjustified claims and frightening attacks of a physical and psychological nature - is just as much a gain in quality of life for the hitherto rich as it is for ordinary citizens. Security is not only a physically, but to a large extent also a psychologically valuable commodity. Society is taking the formerly powerful back into its midst with a healthy dose of appreciative empathy. For their leadership and creative qualities are fundamentally also well needed in the new, open society, but in a modified form.

In the course of the changed awareness and in the weighing of advantages and disadvantages, it seems and becomes unattractive to have property. On the contrary, all those who open up their property and generally invite participation reap respect, recognition, appreciation and solidarity.

At this point, a digression on taxes and fees is necessary: In their monetary form, i.e. in the form of bills and payments, they no longer exist. The public goods such as schools, hospitals, roads, railways, ports, public transport, post and telecommunications, security and health, which were previously financed by taxes and fees, are provided from the regulated, active and very operational participation of people and resources (more on this in Case study 3: Creating infrastructure).

As a result of this epochal upheaval, not only thoughts but also goods become free and are thus available to all productive, creative and innovative forces. Free, but not chaotic! For access to goods and means of production is not quite so free: when, for what and how they may and can be used is the subject of prudent rules and collective agreements within regions and communities. Such agreements had already been made by valley communities, user communities and professional associations in earlier times, when it was a matter of the sustainable, substance-preserving use of commons, i.e. the preservation of the commons in all its quality. In the wake of recent insights, these tried and tested forms of mutual consensus, agreement and commitment are once again coming into play.

Beyond the regulation of types, quantities and times of use, the sacred basic principle of careful handling always applies: "Leave something the way you want to find it". Those who cannot do this are admonished and trained by teachers, as stated in the solution approach "actively teach each other and learn from each other".

A postscript to prevent misunderstandings

Money, capital, property, taxes, debts, bills, payments, reminders, debt collection, ...all this will soon no longer exist from the perspective of the global challenges as they present themselves in 2022. The primacy and dictates of money and its institutions such as banks, financial institutions, insurance companies, trust companies, taxes, collection agencies, securities will soon no longer exist.

Monetary value is replaced by participation and productive output. Ownership is transformed into communal ownership based on solidarity. Creating, contributing, co-designing, collaborating, co-producing, co-responsible, co-using, co-caring rigorously replaces buying. Careful use follows thoughtless exploitation.

In 2022, humanity frees itself from the shackles of capital, which has always been scarce, has demanded a lot of attention, vital energy and creativity over centuries, and has finally pushed itself so far above everything else that it has become its own undoing.

Case study 1: Permaculture mountain valley

A permaculture garden may be familiar to many. Far beyond their own garden, the residents and visitors of an entire valley community recognise their space with all its elements, beings and potentials in comprehensive, symbiotic co-existence. They understand how to use and preserve the nourishing habitats as part of this fruitful interaction.

From a technical, methodological point of view, the consistently practised circular economy is at the centre of the organic, inherently stable biodynamics based on the rough pastures, the meadows and alps, the forest with the forest edges, the upland moors, the bushes, the surface and underground waters, the small-structured farmland - all in their different exposures to the course of the day, the weather and the seasons. Embedded in this are the flora and fauna as well as useful plants and farm animals of man; and finally man himself.

Permaculture is like sowing, thriving and harvesting in cross-fertilisation, in natural balance and in a perpetual cycle. Surpluses that are not immediately used in everyday life for personal use or in some form of transfer are preserved for less fertile times and processed for storage. Raw materials such as hemp, flax, canes, woods, flowers and herbs, wool, horn, minerals, leather and certainly much more are processed in workshops, kitchens, studios, rooms, barns, on the farms, in the former hotels and hostels of the region into everyday, useful, fine, fascinating, authentic products such as food, cosmetic and medical products, building materials, fashionable and everyday textiles, instruments, tools, objects of daily use for private and commercial life. In the process, locals and guests may work hand in hand and enjoy an atmosphere that will soon get around. Water and energy are provided from the own region using traditional and contemporary clever, autonomously functioning processes and technologies, just as the return of recyclable materials and elements into the natural cycle after use is a matter of course.

Living symbiosis, mutual attention, sparked synergies and natural regulations contribute in their own, seemingly miraculous, yet thoroughly natural way to peaceful and fruitful coexistence. The active use and comprehensive care of landscape and space leaves disturbances outside. For example, the wolf does not penetrate so far that it would tear sheep. This is because shepherds and dogs are sufficiently present and perform their tasks. Without distraction and absorption by other duties, they concentrate on their important task with sufficient leisure. Their presence alone keeps the wolf from approaching them and their flocks.

Case study 2: Producing healthy food and renewable raw materials and thus being sufficiently supplied with them

Agriculture is at the very beginning of value chains and is thus regaining its fundamental importance. Community organisation, solidarity-based management and an orientation towards regional sufficiency give it a completely different, new face than the one it is used to from the time of globally positioned, industrial and large-scale monocultures. In the new understanding, consumers are also producers. They not only consume, but also help out on the farms - not always and everywhere, but rather according to their abilities and possibilities at places and times that they have agreed upon with the agricultural management teams.

People thus produce "their" food themselves, so to speak, and use the professional means and expertise of "their" farms to do so.

The Cooperation Centre for Solidarity Farming (solawi.ch) has been demonstrating how this works for years. With insights into daily work, with documents, concepts, teaching materials and courses, the cooperation centre supports and networks the numerous *solawi organisations*. These, in turn, are proving with their increasing success how reliably the communally run system is able to ensure the supply of its members.

Beyond food, solidarity-based agriculture can be extended to the cultivation, harvesting and processing of renewable raw materials, which are taken over by processing workshops and industrial enterprises that are also based on solidarity, community and region.

On both the agricultural and industrial farms, workshops and studios, machines, resources and processes are so widely distributed and frequently available that it is possible for one piece of equipment to break down without the entire production being jeopardised. Because the knowledge and experience of the employees is also available several times, in general and in particular, due to the changing assignments, and is distributed over several shoulders, the production basis is highly efficient and resilient, crisis-proof.

The demands on productions and products are high in favour of the safety and health of the producers and consumers. Thanks to conscious, stringent, intelligent and innovative development of production processes, the high requirements are uncompromisingly met thanks to the solution approach of "actively teaching each other and learning from each other". This includes maintenance and servicing of the means of production, as well as attentive, active care of the working environment, working atmosphere and other individual living conditions. Over time, the places where people live and work are not only close to each other geographically, but also in terms of atmosphere. Often they are even congruent, so that life and work, living and working, community and individual retreat, effect and recreation, merge as a matter of course and harmonise in relaxed coexistence.

Where people get involved and participate productively in the creation of goods, services and conditions, they are also allowed to use them according to the jointly agreed rules. What is described

here is collective self-sufficiency by pooling the common possibilities, means and forces, mostly of a very real and - in between, absolutely just as necessary - of an ideal nature.

Case study 3: Building houses and living and working in them

A former office building or a former hotel must be converted into a place where people live and work according to the models described. The previously obvious approach of awarding building contracts and having the building done for you is also replaced in this case by co-design, co-responsibility, co-participation, co-use, co-maintenance, co-development. Conversion requires design and planning, approval, cooperation, heavy equipment, building materials, labour. The labour force in turn needs expertise, skill, accommodation, food, care, recreation. All this is contributed by the beneficiaries of the soon-to-be converted building by bringing in such from their stocks, connections and relationships. The following example may seem exotic, but it shows very clearly what it is about and how it is done: In China, even at the beginning of the 21st century, if a truck was so old and overloaded that it broke down on the motorway, neither a breakdown organisation nor an automobile club came to the rescue. Nevertheless, by the next morning at the latest, the broken-down vehicle was back on the road again. For the unfortunate driver had asked a colleague for help and from then on the mishap was passed around by mobile until experts, tools, spare parts and aids arrived to repair the damage on the spot. With the power of the unconditionally chained and creatively lived community and thanks to a healthy portion of idealism and lived helpfulness, a small miracle had happened.

This is also how it can work when constructing a building. In rural areas of Austria, for example, active participation on the neighbour's building site is still common practice. After all, the next time you're a neighbour you'll be a neighbour again, just the other way round. In the present context of this book, the necessary heavy construction equipment is already or still available at work yards and may be used for as long as it is needed on the basis of an agreement reached, on the basis of a mutually fulfilling trade or even simply for the joy of doing it. The building materials - naturally renewable or recycled - come from regional production, in which the builders themselves may have lent a hand (according to case study 1 above).

Those who have helped on the building site are not forgotten and are allowed to share the newly constructed or converted building and the community working there at the next opportunity. The building thus has the character of a common good. The community living and working there is open without further ado and of course in unconditional solidarity when it comes to helping others to achieve the same happiness.

When it comes to living in this new place, the unusual may serve as orientation. Aged people and people with limited possibilities who need special attention and support in their reduced independence also live and work here. It is crucial and of enormous importance and relief that these people live in the midst of their living and working community and are excellently cared for in it. This is because the members of the community spontaneously and without being asked take on smaller and larger tasks, help, alternate services and invitations. Sharing and participating are lived and enjoyed spontaneously, empathically and unagitatedly as central principles at every moment and in every situation. Because here, too, there is the great certainty that sooner or later it will be everyone's turn.

Case study 4: Create and operate infrastructure and provide public services

One can still imagine a house remodelling. But what about large infrastructure projects such as railway lines, roads, airports, computer centres, school buildings, hospitals, laboratories, water supplies, power plants? Or trains, aeroplanes and computers - big, complex things? In principle, it will be similar to today in terms of planning, expertise, construction management and organisation. The big difference between today and tomorrow is the way in *which* the forces for a large building, a large construction site, a complex undertaking are concentrated at the right time and coordinated in the right place with the necessary reliability.

This is where the collective power comes into play, as large organisations such as armies and civilian services and, to a considerable extent, volunteer organisations know how to mobilise and lead. Reservations and resistance to feared authoritarian systems may quickly arise, and it is definitely necessary to consciously distance oneself from such systems. The solutions described above (1 to 4) offer protection against this, so that all participants will be immune to any subjugating dependencies.

Particularly as a result of the solution approach "actively teach each other and learn from each other", learning organisations are emerging for large infrastructure projects, whose dynamic creative and productive power is based in the breadth of intelligent contributors and whose leadership is based in the natural authority and lively empathy of convincing personalities. In the past, still in the paid, monetary systems, they were what made successful teams and outstanding team performances so special.

In the new understanding, it is all about the so-called *intrinsic* motivation: joy and pride in the task and in the good success of the work are the driving force. Good results create identity as well as perception, appreciation and recognition. Connected with this is the overriding certainty of belonging, of one's own importance and role in a team and even in society. This in turn generates joy and charisma, which in turn fascinate, infect and carry away the wider environment. Such positive energy creates the upward spiral that makes for strong cultures, societies and economies.

The large works and all their workers are embedded in a logistical environment from which materials, tools and heavy equipment are supplied. The accommodation and supply of the participants with all the necessities of life also takes place spontaneously and symbiotically from this environment out of the enthusiasm for the work being created. And out of the certainty that the great work will sooner or later serve the surrounding area and its progress by providing its service to the region, expanding its comfort, independence, resilience and survivability. Large plants bring innovation and development to the region, which in turn positively stimulates the quality of life in the region.

Case study 5: Travel - public service for connection and inspiration

To conclude, let us look at the maintenance of the road system and public transport. They are visible representatives of a critical infrastructure that is conducive to everyday quality of life and reliability.

Travelling means making connections, meeting and exchanging ideas, experiencing wide horizons, having new experiences, being inspired. Roads and public transport serve the flow of goods, the exchange and provision of goods, no longer necessarily globally, but definitely between localities and regions.

So far financed largely by taxpayers' money, roads and public transport are an interesting subject to examine the question of how they can be operated and kept in good shape when the money is no longer available. To put it in a nutshell: their reliable operation is a combination of self-evident participation and involvement in everyday maintenance on the one hand and the professional civil service approach to the complex issues of these demanding systems on the other.

The daily routine includes things like keeping order, cleaning, washing, disposing of rubbish, cleaning toilets, cutting grass, bushes and trees, repairing small things, looking after passengers, giving information, helping with luggage, supplying and serving dining cars and restaurants. These are tasks that the committed, intelligent and attentive collective constantly takes on. In return, you can travel freely and get on the train without a ticket.

For the technical maintenance and expert operation of the rail network, the rolling stock and the road network, which have become common property, an organisation of specialised staff is necessary, as already described in case study 3.

There is still the question of the provision of energy, electric power for the railways and suitable fuels for individual transport on the roads. Energy is now also a public good and as such relatively freely available due to agreed rules of use. This is because the power plants have also become public works in the service of the general public, i.e. commons, which are operated exclusively on the basis of renewable energies and fuels.

Until now, travelling included hotels, restaurants and holiday resorts. Their function has now been taken over by open houses, places and neighbourhoods where people live and work. As a resident, you are just as good a host and hostess there as you are welcome, well looked after and taken in when travelling elsewhere. Of course, there is always a speciality from home in the luggage as a souvenir and thank you, because the hosts enjoy the exchange, the news, the attention and the inspiration just as much as the guests in the still unfamiliar surroundings in the new place. For longer stays, pre-arranged flat swaps and AirB&B come into play.

Case study X:

Own thought experiments

Imagine that it had already come to a head, had already escalated, had become an uncomfortable reality, what is listed in the chapter "Quintessence". No one may seriously claim that this is unrealistic. But people do not want to admit it. Until it all comes crashing down on D-Day. Just like the invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops on 24 February 2022. Just like the emergence of Omikron 5b. Just like the closure of various car plants due to the long-term failure of the necessary suppliers. Just like the blocking of the last tranche of 140 million Swiss francs for the extension of the Zurich Glattalbahn.

Yes, all this is neither trivial nor temporary, but rather symptomatic, systemically relevant and thus fundamentally serious. All of us will not be able to avoid thinking about the epochal transition from a weakening, declining system to sustainable alternatives, actively shaping it and bringing it into the world hand in hand.

So be brave and curious, take a personal situation and do your own thought experiment on how this considered situation can be shaped under the changed circumstances.

All is not yet lost, the common vision can still be realised piece by piece.

Thank you for your immediate willingness and your special courage!

Termites build large, strong works without money and form large, stable peoples.
Why have we civilised people not thought we could do this until now?