# The Great Simplification

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[00:00:00] Somebody's gonna win the US election in the next week or two weeks or three weeks or we don't know. I don't know what's gonna happen and, as long time followers of this channel know, I'm apolitical. nonpartisan, because I think the story of how ecology, human behavior, economic systems fit together is looking two or three steps ahead from our political situation.

[00:00:31] so I've become, you might say politically post tragic. I don't look at people and think, Oh, Republican or Democrat or progressive or conservative or left versus right. I look at people and think, are they aware of what's going on in the world with all the things that we face or not? That's one category.

[00:00:57] Do they care about what's coming in the future? I could add whether they use a wide versus a narrow boundary lens on the world. A lot of people just look at a single perspective without looking at how everything fits together. And then a fourth, categorization that filters even further would be Are people nuanced or are they certain?

[00:01:24] are they nuanced in there's lots of things that are unknown or are they certain like humans are going extinct in the next decade and there's no argument about it or climate has run away, greenhouse, or this or that. I think there's so many things in our world. collective systems understanding that are unknown or can't be known yet.

[00:01:51] That even running this podcast over these last two and a half years, I've become much more humble about what I know. and I'm connected to a lot of very smart people and it's probably one of the biggest things I've learned in this podcast is things I was really certain about or thought I understood.

[00:02:09] I'm learning that there are different nuances to it. So if you take these four things, being aware, caring, being, wide boundary perspective or, being nuanced and uncertain versus fanatically of an opinion, you know, that, that's a large demographic of people that still exist. But I think what we face is beyond, political and, No matter what happens next week and beyond, about a third of our

citizens in the United States are going to be ballistic and upset, and hopefully not literally ballistic.

[00:02:55] and this is the seesaw that we go through every four years where we put our hopes and dreams and identities and attach it to a person or a party, or in this case more, attach it to the opposite of the person that we think will be a disaster. so today I'd like to talk about the fact that somebody's going to win, this is expected, and what the real work is how we respond, to this as individuals, as communities, and building a global conversation for when the superorganism bends or breaks, because whoever wins this election, that moment is probably sooner, than we've been expecting.

[00:03:41] Under the current, incentives in our world, under the current prices of what we pay for things, under the current economic institutions, and under the current cultural aspirations, both political parties are in thrall to the economic superorganism. That is not to say that who wins next week is not critically important to the world, it is, but both parties generally are in thrall.

[00:04:25] Part of the United States hegemony with wars in the world. Part of we can't meet our economic objectives and keep stability, so we have to print money and go into debt and transmute our wealth into income to kind of put our fingers in the dike to keep things stable until some productivity miracle occurs.

[00:04:48] The BRICS meeting in Kazan last week was a clear, loud knock or call, that half of the world's population and about a third of the world's GDP, and that third is growing much faster than the West, are fed up. With the, unipolar world and the rules based order imposed by the USA and our European vassals, and the superorganism is, fighting that.

[00:05:17] My view there is, I would rather have a multipolar world than a blown up world. and finally, both parties continue with the ecological destruction, that is gradually but suddenly, causing us to leave the stability of the Holocene. One party is of course, worse than that because we, they can't even discuss, climate change and, you know, that is, a worry of mine and a promise here that no matter who wins the election, as long as I'm able on this call, channel, I will highlight, scientists, especially ecological environmental earth scientists, to describe and

witness, the systemic understanding of what is going on, as we, move from the stability of the last 10, 000 years on, on all the things.

[00:06:15] So, broadly, we, our, situation is so complex and threatening that with every year and every election we get further and further from a conversation about the real issues. This gets back to the narrow boundary versus wide boundary thing. Our, culture is based on. a pyramid where money is at the top, politics is underneath that, and technology is underneath that.

[00:06:51] That's the cultural story we have. When followers of this channel know that the real biophysical pyramid Is money, politics, technology, underpinned by a giant, subsidy of fossil energy and non-renewable en materials on human timescales. And that has a foundation of the ecosystem services and stability of the biosphere on all the things that we don't include in our prices, like oxygen, fresh water, stable climate, biodiversity, and the ecosystem services of the world.

[00:07:30] So, that's the story of our culture, but what's important is the exact opposite of that. If we had to demonstrate what is critical to our economy, to our civilization, to the future of our species and others, it would be the exact inverse. It would be the biosphere would be on top, and hugely on top, followed by energy and the non renewable on human timescales inputs, which we're treating as interest instead of principle.

[00:08:06] And then below that, the technology, money and politics. But what ends up happening is when we get to elections, then the inverse happens. money and politics loom large, which is in contrast to what really matters. And the more economically, socially fractured we are and stressed, the fatter those preferences happen.

[00:08:38] And, so this is why we can't, I mean, we, tend to say that XYZ candidate on the Republicans or XYZ candidate on the Democrats are a bad person or not qualified or whatever when the real story is the metabolism of the superorganism and all the little reactions we've had along the way in our culture with social media and debt and, you know, different.

[00:09:07] Different information campaigns have caused us, the people, to select these sorts of people. So yes, it's not a good situation that we face, but ultimately

it's about the people, the conversations, the values, the education, the awareness, what we care about. I think we can do better. as a nation, I don't think that Kamala Harris or Donald Trump are going to meaningfully save, what we face.

[00:09:38] And I think there is a silent majority, who is reasonable, pragmatic, rational, and cares about the right things, that is suddenly, after this election, going to have to be much less silent. than they have been. so again, I know people watching this are grieving, are lonely in a culture that doesn't allow for grief and loneliness.

[00:10:11] many people are struggling and they have, emotionally, burdened the election result as some ray of hope that's a speed bump, along the route to The Great Simplification. And I get that. I'm one of them. so again, I'm, more of a witness and a communicator and a teacher of the global predicament than I am any, guru or expert.

[00:10:46] But given all that, here are a few recommendations I have to you listening before the election and after. Given the things I've just said. First of all, of the things you could do, one is set an unconditional goal for yourself. A goal that doesn't have to do anything with who wins the election, but that you can choose on your own.

[00:11:15] volition, and discipline, and decisions, plant a garden, meet some new friends, develop a new skill, that irrespective if the person that you win, that you voted for wins or not, you can do. Secondly, stop. The Tribal Doomscrolling, if the candidate that you want to win loses, don't just wallow in despair and getting confirmation bias online, one way or the other, go out and do something tangible, physical, sure, be informed, but Get away from the, the ghost of dopamine present, and do something functional, with your own hands, heart, and head instead of getting caught up in all of the negativity online.

[00:12:05] There will be a lot of negativity. Third, and this is difficult, is first of all, in your community, imagine someone, your neighbor that you know right now voted or will vote for the opposite candidate who you, want to win. Watch something and try to take, the perspective of the other person. And just as an exercise and look at the issues of the world through the lens of the other person.

[00:12:38] They might be totally wrong, but just take a perspective of, the other person. Go out in your community either before or after the election and find someone who you are quite certain is voting opposite you and strike up a conversation with them. It would be great if you just talked about the things that you both cared about, irrespective of who wins.

[00:13:03] What are the things that matter in your community that you both care about in the future? But more than that, just listen to them. And don't offer a rebuttal and don't really offer, a debate or a debunking of their points. Just listen to their points. and would you also appreciate if they did the same for you?

[00:13:25] We've lost this, and Part of it is our circumstances. Part of it is social media. Part of it is the algorithms. Part of it is the whole freaking global thing. but we can do better as individuals. In fact, if we don't do better as individuals, what help are a president or a Congress or a Senate going to do except at the margin, shuffling things marginally in one direction?

[00:13:54] Another thing to do is have a bipartisan, nonpartisan meeting in your community about what can be done no matter who wins. And this is more difficult, and this I should have recommended months ago, because a lot of communities eventually are going to be on their own. Look at what happened to Asheville and some of the communities in eastern North Carolina, where people are going to, are having to respond on the fly and to have social networks and relationships that cross party lines.

[00:14:28] I don't think party lines really matter in Eastern North Carolina in the last month. People want to help each other. And I think when crises happen, they are crises, but they're also opportunities to share and help and, show the better side of humanity. I think You know, I will continue to highlight the importance of the natural world, which we are taking for granted, and it's being, death by a thousand cuts, both locally and globally.

[00:15:03] Of course, climate change is not one issue, but it's also loss of wetlands, loss of species, soil degradation. Try to find others, no matter who wins, in your town, in your county, in your watershed, to value the local ecosystem. Because if we continue growth at all costs, forget about global economic growth for the moment,

if we continue growth at all costs in your community, there will eventually be nothing left of the natural world.

[00:15:39] We think about growth and we say well yeah, those places in Kansas or Seattle or South Africa or Holland, oh I don't want them to grow, but here we have to grow in my town because growth is good for jobs and a new airport will be good. look around with an ecological wide boundary lens at the home.

[00:16:02] that surrounds you. The trees, the grasses, the species, the birds, the soil, the insects, the community of life that surrounds where you are. That is a non partisan thing that we can work on. And lastly, ahead of the election and after the election, be kind to yourself. We are born at a phenomenal, tragic, and wonderful time on this planet.

[00:16:34] Followers of this podcast might think it's much more tragic than wonderful, because we're aware. We see with the wide boundary of what's happening to the natural world. But be kind to yourself. This isn't your fault. and no matter who wins, and somebody's gonna win, but no matter who wins, this is just the next stage in our cultural awareness, our awakening towards the species level conversation.

[00:17:05] And the future is not yet set, it is not yet determined. Some futures are now walled off, but we, are funneled away from the truth like there's a barricade. And I think you know, being kind to yourself first and then playing a role, in what we face, I would advise that if possible. And I have to advise myself that, especially after I read the YouTube comments.

[00:17:39] by the way, it, I'm recording this on Sunday, October 27th, and I just read the YouTube comments on the Michael Evry Luke Groman, round table. This is an exact and real example. of what I've been saying on this. Some people are just so upset that I had these two financial experts to talk about debt and the dollar and geopolitics and they can't understand why I didn't talk about ecology.

[00:18:08] and others are like, This is like the best thing that you've had on and you're talking about the real issues. This is a multi issue podcast because it's a multi issue world. And if you go back to the pyramid that I talked about earlier, somehow

we have to blur those lines within the pyramid and we have to step, fly higher to look down on how all these things fit together.

[00:18:36] That's the work. We're in a difficult moment, my friends. I'm going to leave you with a quote because my Sasquatch poem was such a hit. There is almost a sensual longing for communion with others who have a large vision. The immense fulfillment of the friendship between those engaged in furthering the evolution of consciousness has a quality impossible to describe.

[00:19:08] By Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. I feel that. and I'm trying to build that community, and I hope you're trying to build communities wherever you are on this blue green earth. Somebody's gonna win. and the only promise I can make is that no matter who wins, I will continue to host and highlight voices around the world that care about our future, especially Natural science, earth science, environmental, experts from around the world, and people who are working on the bend versus break, categories and interventions, and an awakening of what we're capable of.

[00:19:57] I think we can be better as citizens. As humans. I'll talk to you next week.