

## Wisdom in a World in Crisis: The Counterintuitive Need to Slow Down and Find Spaciousness

with Iain McGilchrist | Episode 217

### Show Notes and Links to Learn More

*The TGS team puts together these brief references and show notes for the learning and convenience of our listeners. However, most of the points made in episodes hold more nuance than one link can address, and we encourage you to dig deeper into any of these topics and come to your own informed conclusions.*

00:00 – [Iain McGilchrist, Substack, YouTube channel](#)

- Books: [The Master and His Emissary](#), [The Matter With Things](#)
- Previous TGS Episodes:
  - [#165: Wisdom Over Power: Why Contemplation & Wonder Are Essential for the Future of Humanity](#)
  - [#85: Wisdom, Nature, and the Brain](#)

01:11 – [More-than-human predicament](#)

04:30 – [Paramount importance of value](#)

05:10 – [Upcoming Sheldonian Theatre Oxford lectures on truth, beauty, and goodness](#)

06:00 – [Power and the left hemisphere of the brain](#)

06:30 – [Importance of spirituality, meditation, sense of transcendence](#)

07:15 – [Cultural mitochondria](#)

07:35 – [Panentheism, Pantheism](#)

07:55 – [Panentheism and compatibility with Buddhism and Christianity](#)

09:25 – [Saint Augustine on the limits of understanding God](#)

10:00 – Hebrew tradition: [God is the unnamable](#), [Tao Te Ching](#), [The Tao that can be named](#)

10:45 – [Eastern Orthodox Christianity](#), [Transcendence and immanence](#)

12:15 – [Two accounts of creation in Genesis – What is meant by “subdue”?](#)

15:05 – Recent [AI technology advances](#) and [biosphere degradation](#)

15:30 – [Left hemisphere versus right hemisphere overview](#)

17:00 – [Evolutionary origin of hemispheric lateralization](#)

17:10 – [Broad vigilant attention \(right brain\) versus narrow focused attention \(left brain\)](#)

18:25 – [Left hemisphere world: fragments, categories, the explicit](#)

18:53 – [Right hemisphere world: nothing is ever entirely fixed or certain, everything is interconnected](#)

19:20 – [Implicit knowledge degraded when made explicit](#)

21:25 – [Cultural differences in human brain activity](#)

22:35 – [Halakha and Aggadah in Jewish tradition](#)

22:45 – [Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel – The Sabbath, The Sabbath](#)

24:30 – [Three civilizational cycles of hemispheric balance in Western history \(Greeks → Romans → Postmodernism\)](#)

25:00 – [Sixth-century Athens, Rome, Renaissance](#) as right-hemisphere flourishing

26:50 – [Attention as fragmented commons](#)

# The Great Simplification

- 28:00 – [99.4% of brain activity is unconscious](#)
- 28:45 – [Religious references to people as sleepwalkers](#)
- 29:15 – [Inattention blindness, Gorillas in Our Midst experiment](#)
- 31:00 – [Attention is guided by what we value](#)
- 31:15 – [Polycrisis → metacrisis, The Metacrisis/Polycrisis](#)
- 32:50 – [Cultivating internal openness](#)
- 33:45 – [Meditation and prayer as right hemisphere practices, Saint Francis views on prayer](#)
- 36:00 – [Aristotle, humans as social animals, Humans are highly social animals](#)
- 36:10 – [Belonging to a social group is vital for human flourishing](#)
- 36:40 – [Roseto effect, community health despite poor lifestyle](#)
- 38:25 – [Parable of the Two Builders](#)
- 38:43 – [Definition of embodiment, \*Embodiment and Human Development\*](#)
- 40:25 – [Luc de Clapiers, marquis de Vauvenargues on emotion and reason, Antonio Damasio on emotion and reason](#)
- 41:35 – [Imagination vs. fantasy](#)
- 41:50 – [Mathematical beauty, Darwin on beauty, \*The Descent of Man\*](#)
- 42:20 – [Intuition](#)
- 43:00 – [Hegel and Schelling on imagination, Wordsworth and Coleridge on imagination](#)
- 43:55 – [AI as narrowing imagination and reducing aperture of awareness](#)
- 44:30 – [Savoir versus connaître – two kinds of knowing](#)
- 46:25 – [Brazen head](#)
- 46:40 – [Asymptotic analysis](#)
- 47:20 – [Cultural speciation from intensive AI use](#)
- 47:30 – [Cultural speciation with AI use](#)
- 48:00 – [How AI impacts our brains, How social media and smart phones affect a developing human's brain](#)
- 48:40 – [Process philosophy, relations rather than things](#)
- 49:30 – [Connection with nature as foundation of human flourishing](#)
- 50:05 – [Modern art's repudiation of beauty](#)
- 51:15 – [The Matrix](#)
- 51:30 – [Frankly on soft feudalism, The Superorganism](#)
- 52:45 – [Misconceptions about feudalism](#)
- 53:00 – [Medieval peasant life, 180 holidays per year](#)
- 53:35 – [Industrial Revolution and capitalism brought about a new kind of human exploitation](#)
- 55:25 – [Frankly on spaciousness and agency](#)
- 58:50 – [Dietrich Bonhoeffer, His morning prayer](#)
- 1:01:30 – [Agency \(Self-leadership\), \*Self-efficacy: The exercise of control\*](#)
- 1:01:45 – [Duke conference: Cognitive Liberty, Iain's lecture](#)
- 1:03:10 – [Bhagavad Gita, hell is more and faster](#)
- 1:03:40 – [Unity of opposites](#)
- 1:04:15 – [Buddhism: Non-doing](#)
- 1:04:30 – [Śūnyatā, emptiness as fertile space in Buddhism](#)
- 1:05:00 – [Psychology of creativity – Incubation](#)
- 1:06:30 – [Hypnagogia, Shower thoughts](#)
- 1:07:25 – [Obsession with extending human life with technology](#)
- 1:09:00 – [Death as fulfillment, mortality, and meaning](#)
- 1:10:50 – [Cryogenics, Transhumanism](#)
- 1:11:30 – [Concept of consciousness continuation after death](#)
- 1:11:50 – [Schelling, Whirlpool as metaphor for selfhood](#)

# The Great Simplification

- 1:13:20 – [Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Quote referenced](#)
- 1:13:40 – [Hegel, Quote referenced](#)
- 1:14:05 – [David Bohm, \*Wholeness and the Implicate Order\*](#)
- 1:14:40 – [Nicholas of Cusa](#)
- 1:16:20 – [Entropy and dissipative structures, Evolution](#)
- 1:16:45 – [Aristotle on telos, Teleology in biology](#)
- 1:18:15 – [Alfred North Whitehead on being alive versus persistence](#)
- 1:19:55 – [Beauty, love, and truth are not human concepts, they are innate](#)
- 1:20:30 – [The Universe is creative and relational](#)
- 1:21:38 – [Humans have been here for 300,000 years](#)
- 1:22:20 – Nonhuman beings [recognize beauty](#) and have capacity for [self-sacrificial goodness](#)
- 1:22:50 – [Truth, German etymology](#)
- 1:23:35 – [Panpsychism](#)
- 1:24:45 – [Consciousness has always existed](#)
- 1:24:55 – [Pan-experientialism](#)
- 1:26:30 – [Consciousness and its Place in Nature](#)
- 1:30:50 – [Nate's Framework for Action, A Guide to Staying Human \(Part 1\)](#)
- 1:31:50 – [Three kinds of response: political, small communities, inner transformation](#)
  - [Transnational organizations devoted to good causes](#)
  - [Small communities living locally and with little energy](#)
    - [E.g. 2000-Watt Society, TGS Episode](#)
  - [Developing your inner life](#)
- 1:32:30 – [Nth order effects](#)
- 1:33:20 – [Community resilience](#)
- 1:35:15 – [Margaret Mead, Quote referenced](#)
- 1:36:00 – [1 Corinthians 13:1](#)
- 1:39:55 – [Existential dread](#)
- 1:40:50 – [Paul Kingsnorth, \*Against the Machine\*, Nate's Frankly on this](#)
- 1:41:15 – [Lifecycle of civilizations, TGS Episodes on such: \[Ep 194\]\(#\), \[Ep 164\]\(#\)](#)
- 1:44:05 – [Compassion, Humility, Wonder](#)
- 1:44:55 – [Rod Dreher, \*Live Not by Lies\*](#)
- 1:45:10 – [Reductive materialism](#)
- 1:45:30 – [Physicists in the 19th century thought they had figured out everything](#)
- 1:46:20 – [Intelligence etymology, Understand etymology](#)
- 1:48:00 – [RSA talk: \*Whatever Happened to the Soul\*](#)
- 1:50:45 – [Issues with current education, \*Education in the Metacrisis\* TGS Episode on such: \[Ep 180\]\(#\), \[Ep 122\]\(#\)](#)
- 1:51:08 – [Importance and current break down of familial values, \[How to strengthen familial bonds\]\(#\)](#)
- 1:52:00 – [Love](#)
- 1:52:25 – [Issues of parents being friends with their children and not leaders](#)
- 1:53:40 – [Importance of parents spending time with and involving their children](#)
- 1:57:35 – [Pascal, \*The heart has its reasons\*](#)
- 1:59:30 – [Telos in evolution, cosmic tendency](#)
- 2:03:10 – [Myth that left hemisphere is just thinking and right hemisphere is just feeling](#)