

# THE POWER OF IMAGINATION, INTENTION AND FLOW IN THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

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*“That’s what I want for my children and many others in the world who see virtue and magic in it. I see this way of thinking as one way of enabling far greater balance in business and life between linear thinking and nature based artistic creativity.” – Charles E. Smith, Ph.D.*

## Letter to My Son

July 27, 2021

Dear Thomas,

I am writing to you because I care about your future and I want you to grow up in a brighter world that would promote the values of respect, kindness and empathy, in which human beings would unite and collaborate using imagination, intention and flow to create new possibilities, while working

and living in harmony and balance with nature. This is my dream for you and for future generations. This is the legacy I hope to leave behind.

### **My dream of a brighter world for you**

Through the power of imagination, intention and flow, I envision for you a world free of war, disease, poverty, oppression, discrimination and inequality. In this safe and peaceful environment, society would be governed by fair laws and just courts created for and by the people. Citizens would have equal rights and everyone could easily have access to education and employment. People would align with their higher purpose and awaken to their full potential, by being more conscious of their everyday choices and the impact of these decisions on their life and on the community. A new healthcare system would encompass alternative and non-traditional approaches such as holistic medicine and frequency healing, taking the whole person into consideration and treating a person's mind and spirit as important to health as the physical body, thus stimulating the body's natural ability to heal itself and ultimately improving health outcomes.

### **My vision of the future workplace**

Rooted in the possibility of a positive future for humanity, I dream of a harmonious workplace in balance with nature, where people would feel safe, respected, valued and empowered to achieve peak performance while having fun in a positive work environment. You and others would look forward to going to work because you would understand the "why" (why you do the work you do and why you get up every morning to go to work) and because your work would be aligned with your interests, strengths, skills and higher purpose. You would have the opportunity to do what you love and have a meaningful and joyful work life, balanced with the needs of your personal and family lives. This future workplace would also consider the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual needs of people. People would be encouraged to be physically active, as regular exercise causes the body to produce endorphins that relieve stress and pain and improve physical and mental health. In addition, people would also be given the choice to eat raw and organic foods, including fresh vegetables, fruits and sprouts. Research shows that organic foods are healthier because they

avoid harmful chemicals such as synthetic pesticides, they avoid genetically modified organisms and they are more nutritious than non-organic foods.

### **Site location and surrounding area**

Located near forests, lakes and mountains, the site would be surrounded by an 8-mile trail where people could walk, jog or run outdoors while breathing fresh air and oxygen produced by tree leaves through the process of photosynthesis. In the forest, an obstacle course made of logs and ropes based on 'Hebertism', a physical education system created by Georges Hébert in 1910, would inspire people to train in the heart of nature. On the lawn near the building, a playground for adults based on the 'Ninja Warrior' obstacle course would motivate people to be physically active while playing and having fun, reminding them of childhood moments spent playing in the neighborhood park. Just outside the building, the main plaza would include a food court with picnic tables to encourage social interaction, as well as a fire pit surrounded by wooden Adirondack chairs providing a space for relaxation and informal discussion. Further away, a 60-foot diameter sand circle featuring a ring of vertical stone monoliths inspired by the prehistoric monument at Stonehenge, England, would provide a quiet space for meditation and mindfulness.

### **Building architecture and office space**

The two-story building would be constructed with noble materials, including wood and stone. A glass facade would provide beautiful views of the surrounding forests, lakes and mountains. The open-plan office would include glass-enclosed meeting rooms for group discussions, as well as quiet spaces for individual work. A green roof with a garden and lush plants would allow for outdoor meetings and could also serve as a space for individual reflection. As well, solar panels and wind turbines would provide sustainable electricity generation. In addition, organic vegetables, fruits and sprouts would be grown in outdoor greenhouses and offered for consumption in the cafeteria's salad bar. On their free time, people could help maintain the greenhouses and pick the food.

### **A positive future for humanity**

I strongly believe that my vision of a future workplace for you, rooted in a positive future for humanity, is possible. Considering that people tend to support what they help to create, it is also important to think from a future that inspires others with a sense of what is possible and helping people focus on what they are capable of, rather than just what they do.

For this vision to come true, you and others will face many challenges that require extraordinary innovation. Today, we face a collision of major breakdowns in business, government and human affairs that can only be resolved through extraordinary innovation, specifically collaborative innovation. Collaboration isn't about knowing something, but rather creating an environment and culture which rewards and allows for multiple viewpoints to be heard and considered. This requires strong creative leaders with the courage to change tack, away from old ways of operating from the past, to resolve big challenges. The following six principles of collaborative innovation help expand creativity and innovation: Energy awareness, mutuality, curiosity, coachability, generous listening and committed speaking. Bringing together the combined knowledge and experiences of a group of people and encouraging them to collaborate based upon these six principles ignites creativity and innovation. What emerges is whole new worlds of possibilities...

### **My commitment**

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Happiness is when what you think, what you say and what you do are in harmony." In the past, this was something I struggled with. I now understand that when my thoughts, words and actions are aligned, I begin to love and trust myself on a whole new level. This then increases my level of integrity, confidence and happiness and ultimately my overall fulfillment in life.

Moreover, words are energy. When we speak or write, we use the vehicles of words to carry meaning, as well as energy, from ourselves to another person or group of people. Each word we speak has a life of its own, a vibratory signature that creates waves into the expanse of the universe, in the same way that a note of music creates waves. And like musical notes, our words live in communities of other words and change in relation to the

words that surround them. When we are conscious of the energy behind our words, we become capable of making beautiful music in the world.

Knowing that my words can have an impact on the world, I pledge to you that I will speak from my heart, be true to my word, live authentically, lead by example, and embody the change I dream of for you and humanity.

*“The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.” – William Hutchison Murray*

### **How to make this a reality?**

In order to make this future scenario a reality, I believe that what is currently missing in the world is a culture of leadership based on unity and service to others that promotes core values such as love, kindness, empathy, respect, honesty, mutuality, open-mindedness, competence, cooperation, agility, flexibility and resilience.

In any organization, successful change management requires a large commitment from executives and senior managers, whether the change is occurring in a department or in the complete organization. Leadership from the senior team is the most significant factor in helping people to buy into and support needed changes.

Therefore, if we are to implement meaningful and sustainable change to positively impact the lives of human beings on Earth, I believe it would be essential for this commitment and support to come directly from the leaders of our planet, our society, our governments, our institutions, our schools, and our businesses. I am committed to this transformation.

### **The deep dive: What lies beneath it all?**

If we take a deep dive into the possible root causes of why this hasn't worked so far, we can agree that society and the education system in the Western world have taught us from an early age to be individualistic and competitive, therefore emphasizing the "I" over the "WE". People do not know how to listen to each other. When they have an idea in mind, some stubborn people who think they know everything are not willing to listen to others' points of view. Listening is an art, and it can be learned. If people were more open to the practice of generous listening, I believe this could take us higher and further as a global society. Furthermore, drawing on the traditional use of talking sticks in many indigenous cultures around the world, I think that the practice of committed speaking from the heart, empowered by intention and flow, would allow people to express their authentic truth and colors. Thus, if the principles of generous listening and committed speaking were applied on a planetary scale, I believe this would be a game-changer.

### **My request to you**

When I have time to myself, I go outside and sit by a tree. There I practice stilling my mind and being fully conscious in the present moment. In this state of mindfulness, I contemplate the surrounding nature and meditate on my life and the world around me. Harnessing the power of imagination, intention and flow, I enjoy visualizing possibilities in my mind. I ask myself the questions "What if?" and then "So What?". At night, while sitting outside by the fire, I look up to the sky and gaze at the stars. I can't help but wonder, "What is it like to travel in space through the galaxy?", "Are we alone in the universe?". Then, I try to shift my perspective by imagining myself looking at the Earth from its orbit.

From this vantage point, I could experience what is called the 'Overview Effect', first described by the author Frank White in 1987. The Overview Effect is a shift in awareness reported by many astronauts and cosmonauts during spaceflight. It refers to the experience of seeing firsthand the reality that the Earth is in space, a tiny, fragile ball of life, 'hanging in the void', shielded and nourished by a paper-thin atmosphere. The experience often transforms astronauts' perspective on the planet and humanity's place in the universe. Common features of the experience include a feeling of awe

for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment on Earth.

Thomas, it's not about you or me or them, it's about 'US'. We, as human beings, as individuals and as a community. What if a critical mass of us felt a sense of wonder for our planet, understood the interconnectedness of all life, and felt a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment? What would then become possible?

My request is addressed to you my son and to everyone who will read these lines, whether you are a parent, a child, a student, a teacher, a faculty dean, a worker, a self-employed person, a manager, a business executive, a retiree, a citizen or a world leader: I speak from the heart when I ask you to consider what I have said here and be open to positive change where it means the most in your life.

I sincerely hope that this letter will plant in your head the seed of a possible future for humanity and that it will create a spark that will ignite the fuel of your imagination, intention and flow, so that you too can commit yourself, take action and begin realizing your dreams.

I love you and I am proud of you,

Dad