

it would be a good idea not to throw any more carbon up in the atmosphere. If not, what will happen? The Earth will warm up. Sea levels will rise. This has happened a lot in the past. You can go to any mountain range and find fossils of sea creatures. The Earth will cleanse itself of stuff that is creating an imbalance.

When I was talking to atmospheric scientists a few years ago, the consensus was that if humans disappeared, it would take about 100,000 years for the CO2 that we have pumped up to be reabsorbed. But most of it would be absorbed during the first few centuries. So, there's no question that if we started tomorrow, things would start to improve rather quickly.

One of the proposed solutions - nuclear energy - will also be one of our most enduring legacies. Will this really be a problem for billions of years to come?

Radioactivity is going to be around for a long time. Either the radioactive material gets buried very deep, we come up with some magical way of neutralizing radioactivity - which so far seems to defy the laws of physics - or it's going to sit around in containers.

After humans go extinct, because every species goes extinct eventually, all of the temporary storage facilities will eventually corrode and expose this stuff to the elements, and we'll either get meltdowns or fires or both. That is something that I'm not sure nature has ever dealt with before - a whole lot of radioactivity being released at once. I'll bet stuff survives. Stuff has survived around Chernobyl. I think a lot of life would die off, but new life would eventually evolve.

You frame human population growth as a root cause of mankind's impact on the Earth. Why?

We were all sold an idea by the founders of the Green Revolution, who were brilliant agricultural engineers, but very bad ecologists. They kept saying this is going to solve hunger on the planet, but any ecologist knows that the population of a species will always rise to meet the available food supply. That's exactly what has happened. That's why the population has doubled and re-doubled.

Now we're faced with so many more people demanding so much more food, which requires so much more clearing of habitat and application of chemicals on the land. The result is more demand for energy, more carbon in the atmosphere, and all of those fertilizers and shipping...obviously stuff is spiraling out of control.

I had no idea I was going to get into this stuff about population when I started the book. That wasn't my intention, but it became logical I realized that it all comes down to having a million more people on the planet every four days. This guy who I interviewed left me with this amazing image: just imagine if we all stopped procreating.

Every decade, as there were fewer humans, the world would become wilder and more beautiful.

Within a century, we would go back to the same population we had before the gigantic population explosion that began at the beginning of the 20th century.

What would you say to those who think the problem is consumption rather than overpopulation?

Who do they think is doing the consuming? Trying to change human behavior is going to take a whole lot longer than coming up with technologies or doing something radical, like reducing our population, which by the way, is not that radical, because it's going to happen. The question is do we manage it, or does nature do it, as it always does when any species outstrips its resource base.

We are created to make copies of ourselves. To control our numbers goes not against human nature; it goes against nature. But we now live on a planet where nature has to be managed. I'm not suggesting that we go out there and cull our numbers, like we do with coyotes or deer, so they don't eat everything up. But I am suggesting that we consider managing our reproduction in a way that we don't eat ourselves out of house and home, because that's what we are doing.

Did you find mixed reaction to your treatment of population issues?

You don't see a lot about how much we are procreating because it's loaded politically. There are people on the right and left wing who don't want population touched. "Humans are sacred." But this book isn't preaching what to do. It is simply a piece of journalism that opens readers' minds up to this interesting idea: what if all these people weren't here? Which is a completely different way of looking at things, and eliminates the fear factor that is in so much environmental writing. "If we don't stop doing what we are doing, everybody's going to die." In my book, everybody's already dead, so we don't have to worry about that.

After writing this book, are you still hopeful for the future?

I was very worried about the fate of the world, but I'm no longer worried about it. I think the world is going to be fine. Now whether the world as we know it is going to survive - that's an open question.

Source: editor: Valdis Wisniewski, publishing date: November 20, 2008, Alan Weisman, Author, The World Without Us and Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World

"Drive thy business or it will drive thee."
Benjamin Franklin



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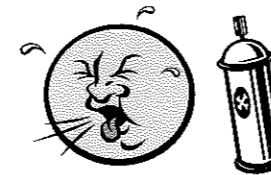
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What is Global Warming?

Global Warming is defined as the increase of the average temperature on Earth. As the Earth is getting hotter, disasters like hurricanes, droughts and floods are getting more frequent.

Over the last 100 years, the average air temperature near the Earth's surface has risen by a little less than 1 degree Celsius or 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit. Doesn't seem that much, does it? Yet it is responsible for the conspicuous increase in storms, floods and raging forest fires we have seen in recent years, say scientists.

Their data show that an increase of one degree Celsius makes the Earth warmer now than it has been for at least a thousand years. The top 11 warmest years on record have all been in the last 13 years, said NASA in 2007, and the first half of 2010 has already gone down in history as the hottest ever recorded.

Projections from the UN climate change body the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) say that global surface temperature will probably rise a further 1.1 to 6.4 degrees Celsius (2.0 to 11.5 degrees Fahrenheit) during the 21st century. The huge range of estimates is due to the amazing complexity of our Earth's climate system and the uncertainty about whether mankind will fight this warming or continue with business-as-usual.

A certain degree of warming is unavoidable even if we managed to reduce our burden on the climate immediately. Oceans, for example, act as huge heat repositories that follow changes in air temperature with a time lag of decades or even hundreds of years. Melting ice caps reflect less sunlight than previously, so our planet absorbs more and more heat.

Exactly how these changes will influence the warming trend is unclear. All we know for certain is that it's going to be warmer and that human greenhouse gas emissions are an important reason for this. **Are climate change and global warming one and the same?** In a nutshell: global warming is the cause, climate change is the effect.

Scientists often prefer to speak about climate change instead of global warming, because higher global temperatures don't necessarily mean that it will be warmer at any given time at every location on Earth.

Warming is strongest at the Earth's Poles, the Arctic and the Antarctic, and will continue to be so. In recent years, fall air temperatures have been at a record 9 degrees Fahrenheit (5 degrees Celsius) above normal in the Arctic, according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

But changing wind patterns could mean that a warming Arctic, for example, leads to colder winters in continental Europe. Regional climates will change as well, but in very different ways. Some regions like parts of Northern Europe or West Africa will probably get wetter, while other regions like the Mediterranean or Central Africa will most likely receive less rainfall.

But it is not just about how much the Earth is warming, it is also about how fast it is warming. There have always been natural climate changes Ice Ages and the warm intermediate times between them - but those evolved over periods of 50,000 to 100,000 years.

In the past, climate change was triggered by changes in the sun's energy output, the changing position of continental plates, or the rotating axis of the Earth itself. Many plants and animals were able to adapt to these slowly changing climates. Even humans have changed their habitat according to the comings and goings of glaciers.

Source : <http://knowledge.allianz.com>

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5 Steps to Financial Freedom

Financial freedom for you and your family doesn't just happen – you have to be motivated... and disciplined ... and you have to have a strategy.

Have you ever felt the demands of a modern lifestyle tugging at your purse strings? Do you find it difficult to resist the temptation to spend, because that temptation is everywhere? No matter how small your bank balance is, control of your finances is within your reach. Begin with these small steps and make your financial worries a thing of the past.

1. Knowledge

There is no substitute for knowing the facts. There are two parts to financial Knowledge: educate yourself generally, and knowing your own specific financial situation. Some financial knowledge can be obtained without too much difficulty through newspapers, on TV, radio and the internet, and through your financial institution's promotional publications. The first step to good money management is to be informed by knowing and understanding the facts, and where you have questions or require more information, contact the source of the information. Financial matters affect us all in direct ways. It therefore makes sense to become informed and understand the processes that can enrich or impoverish our lives.

2. Goals

We all dream of goals and this requires that we plan and budget financially. Goals could be: long term (e.g. to retire with enough to live on comfortably), medium term (e.g. to be able to pay for a Child's university education or extend a home or start a business), or short term (e.g. to budget effectively controlling one's spending in order to establish a healthy saving pattern). Take a closer look at your own goals and work out the financial implications. With realistic goals to strive for, financial discipline and self control become much easier.

3. Honesty

In good money management honesty means being committed to a realistic budget which enables you to pay your debts and achieve your goals. Honesty means addressing yourself, your needs and your areas of weakness. It means facing facts. Take care not to be over – indebted. Are you free from debt but unable to achieve your goals due to lack of commitment? You can change your habits and achieve your goals, but it requires an honest look at yourself. Only if you honest about your short comings will you be able to overcome them!

4. Discipline and Self-Control

Financial freedom does not mean having unlimited money. It means managing what you have in such way that you are free from worry, guilt and fear. Applying discipline where it is required reaps great rewards. Learn to say 'no' to yourself. If you keep your goals in sight it is easier to be disciplined. Self –discipline comes easy to people who have clear goals and plan for how to achieve them. Revisit your goals regularly, apply discipline and self –control, and you stand a good chance of realizing your dreams.

5. Compassion

Acquiring wealth can be a worthwhile goal, but on its own it may not bring satisfaction or fulfilment. True happiness comes from using our resources – whether money, energy or talent – to make a positive difference in the world around us.

By using our wealth to help others, you'll find that the value of money far exceeds its spending power. There are plenty ways to do this. Some people donate money to charities every month because they approve of the work that the charity performs. Others use their money to give someone else a leg up – perhaps a younger person with ambition, or a mother struggling to make ends meet. Others again prefer to put a small part of their wealth back into the community they grew up in. It all makes the world a better place.

Source: ADRA link Winter volume 24 2008

“Energy and persistence conquer all things”
Benjamin Franklin



POINTS ON HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR LIFE

Personality:

- Don't compare your life to others'. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
- Don't have negative thoughts of things you cannot control. Instead invest your energy in the positive present moment
- Don't over do; keep your limits.
- Don't take yourself so seriously; no one else does.
- Don't waste your precious energy on gossip.
- Dream more while you are awake.
- Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
- Forget issues of the past. Don't remind your partner of his/her mistakes of the past. That will ruin your present happiness.
- Life is too short to waste time hating anyone. Don't hate others.
- Make peace with your past so it won't spoil the present.
- No one is in charge of your happiness except you.
- Realize that life is a school and you are here to learn.
- Problems are simply part of the curriculum that appear and fade away like algebra class but the lessons you learn will last a lifetime.
- Smile and laugh more.
- You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.

Community:

- Each day give something good to others.
- Forgive everyone for everything.
- Spend time with people over the age of 70 and under the age of 6.
- Try to make at least three people smile each day.

- What other people think of you is none of your business.
- Your job will not take care of you when you are sick. Your family and friends will. Stay in touch.

Life:

- Do the right things.
- However good or bad a situation is, it will change. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
- The best is yet to come.
- Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.

Source: Dr Randy Pausch – email

“Personality can open doors but character can keep them open”
Elmer G. Letterman

10 INTENTIONS FOR A BETTER WORLD

Say it once a day...

The First Intent ~ Support Life

I refrain from opposing or harming any person or any animal. I allow others to have their own experiences. I see life in all things and honour it as if it were my own. I support life.

The Second Intent ~ Seek Truth

I follow my inner compass and discard any beliefs that are no longer serving me. I go to the source. I seek the truth.

The Third Intent ~ Set Your Course

I begin the creative process. I give direction to my life. I set my course.

The Fourth Intent ~ Simplify

I let go so there is room for something better to come in. I intend that I am guided, guarded, protected, and lined up with the Highest Good at all times. I trust and remain open to receive from both expected and unexpected sources. I simplify.

The Fifth Intent ~ Stay Positive

I see good, say good and do good. I accept the gifts from all of my experiences. I am living in grace and gratitude. I stay positive.

The Sixth Intent ~ Synchronise

After intending and surrendering I take action by following the opportunities that are presented to me.

I am in the flow where Great Mystery and Miracles abide, fulfilling my desires and doing what I came here to do. I synchronize.

The Seventh Intent ~ Serve Others

I practice love in action. I always have enough to spare and enough to share. I am available to help those who need it. I serve others.

The Eighth Intent ~ Shine Your Light

I am a magnificent being awaking to my highest potential. I express myself with joy, smiling easily and laughing often. I shine my light.

The Ninth Intent ~ Share Your Vision

I create my ideal world by envisioning it and telling others about it. I share my vision.

The Tenth Intent ~ Synergise

I see Humanity as One. I enjoy gathering with light-hearted people regularly. When we come together, we set the stage for Great Oneness to reveal itself. We synergise.

Source: Mary- Ann Dummer, Website www.soulgroup.co.za

Dreams come true. Without that possibility, nature, would not indicate us to have them”

John Updike



The World Without Us

How long would it take the climate to recover if we all disappeared? We asked Alan Weisman, bestselling author of *The World Without Us* the following questions:

Your book - which shows how the Earth would change if humans suddenly disappeared - might strike some as bleak. Why such a negative perspective?

It's not that I want people to disappear. I got rid of human beings theoretically to see how nature would respond without having to deal with us constantly heaping more abuse on the planet. Ultimately, the aim is to figure out if there is a way to add humans back into the mix so that we could live in harmony with nature as opposed to mortal combat with it.

The problem with environmental books, as brilliant as they often are, is that they are so depressing and scary that only environmentalists read them. I wanted to write something that would reach a huge audience, but still be realistic. I wasn't going to pull any punches.

You discuss different human impacts on the Earth's environment. How does climate change compare with these?

In the shorter term, global warming is our biggest problem, because it's the one that we can see threatening us. Can we survive it? I think so, at this point. But from here on out,