

Light on the big hole in the center + 21 good questions

Building on our amazing year

– for collaborators following the storm of change –

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Inviting: 'William E. Rees'; 'Nate Hagens'; 'Tim Macdonald'; 'Rachel Donald'; 'Nora Bateson'; 'Daniel Christian Wahl'; 'John Fullerton'; 'Ben Roberts'; 'Ralph Thurm'; 'Bill Baue'; 'Erin Remblance'; 'Gary Smith'; 'Thomas Schindler'; 'Freda Wells'; 'Alice Kalro'; 'Marc Moquette'

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Dear Folks,

Today's message is a bit packed. Think of it as a reference, with one special highly critical focus on one thing all the movements and professionals have been mysteriously neglecting, hidden from their view. It's been just great working and learning from you all. I've been listening and reading the amazing work everyone in our crowd is doing, and the rise of goodwill in so very many places that count too — seeming almost strong enough to rise to the occasion when the time comes. Can we tip the balance? We certainly need to be ready to be part of that.

Jessie

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II. Seeing the good coming out

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I. Intro:

The title of this pitch for more collaboration refers to our movement's wonderful work on exposing world problems. The empty spot is the missing strategic study of why a world economy designed to create prosperity now seems to be multiplying disasters.

The purpose here is also to expand on [Nate Hagen's Frankly 55 "7 Key Interventions for the Future."](#) His aim is to hit target the high points of our upcoming strategic response to the world polycrisis, in terms of what all people need to prepare for in their local contexts and professional fields. We'll all experience a *fairly big* or

very big shock of changing rules and customs as the real work of changing how we live begins. Nate's term is "the great simplification." Mine would be "the birth of a new form." Hopefully, it'll be both.

My "7 key interventions" are aimed at complementing Nate's, to make the two views work together. I'd be happy to get supportive comments on either how I state his or what seems best or missed in mine. In my experience, that's what collaboration does. For comparison, his are on the left, mine on the right.

Nate's 7		Jessie's 7 connections
NH – We need a roadmap of horizontal and vertical changes – To engage all the system parts.	1	JH – Our natural talents for reading the maps of change, as takeoffs & landings, as S-curves, growing power then growing care to succeed.
NH – The 1500 – facing the global elite pulling the superorganism forward.	2	JH – The global elite are blind too, so won't budge until guides show them growth can only win in the end using profits for good care.

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NH – Need advanced policy – to respond to newly emerging change.	3	JH—We need professionals who feel and care to form diverse teams and find affordable self-governing strategies for smooth caring change.
NH – Goldilocks tech – low impact tech, sodium, not lithium batteries	4	JH – We need to question “the Goldilocks principle” of compound investing. It’s good for startups, but then has to grow up, to do good work in harmony
NH – Need to build social capital – for collaboration skills.	5	JH – All the professions have advanced methods of collaboration that could be used for transformation. Most are like “action learning.”
NH – The individual – can’t respond to the shock of change if too sudden.	6	JH – We already see panics, a major reason for professionals to take the lead in reducing the disruptiveness of change long term.
NH – We are at the cusp of ecocide – a core 5% to recognize the sacredness.	7	JH – There’s already ecocide - more “baked in.” We may cover for the sorrow by enjoying the sacredness of what we still have and can save.

My notes here are more on the systems thinking we’ll need, on asking the right questions, about the “big hole in the middle” to discover the hidden levers and resources... regarding the otherwise all but neglected “Primary System Driver.” Most people don’t realize that we became powerful by misusing nature’s greatest power.

This is a good version of my own alert to professional fields about the high-level teamwork they’ll need to develop. The 2014 World SDG proposes how professional groups could collaborate to guide the

II. How the change might come

Today we’re at the end of the era of nature being able to take whatever punishment we give her. The change ahead may not be clear till it happens. It’ll be an extension of the current slow-growing global change of heart that could turn either way. We might find how to accept using the economy to care for itself, its resources, and all of nature. It might turn into a contagious breakdown as the whole system of human interventions in nature caves in. We’ll just come to realize that one or the other is taking hold.

Keynes was clearest on the subject, saying that to make important choices, people need to consider various kinds of information, experiences, and connections, wait for the “animal spirits” to arise, accept the risks, and take action. So, when the time comes... we’ll want to be prepared for either, have the goods, and be ready

SDGs—real SDGs the next time, of course. Four teams, or networks, are proposed: one for management, one for scientists of all kinds, one for finance, and one for business.

The model is adaptable in numerous ways. I have good supporting teamwork methods for “reading book zero” and “finding the relationships” for deeply engaging workgroups in their work. Of course, every profession has them for its needs. Nate put the highest priority on our ALL relearning and developing our teamwork methods. I quite agree.

to improvise as the changes unfold for us to be effective, and hopefully, to set things on the right course.

Light On the Big Hole In the Center.

In our last year or so of collective exploring and sharing of the signs of dramatic global change, a great marvelous work left things out. NOW is the time to collect those too, the “big gaps” in the assessment of what’s happening. I have two on my list that seem particularly to include in the mapping of the terrain of the new kinds of work ahead.

One is the odd pattern that self-destructive authoritarian civilizations seem to start as exceptionally innovative and equitable ones, both Bronze Age Greece and later Rome. Perhaps some sectors come to feel betrayed, not realizing *everyone* would be if the society believed it was owed endless expanding prosperity, like

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us, and unaware of the severe threats from overshoot directly ahead. This is my own reading from a systemic study of history, but I do think the first two of humanity's most hopeful civilizations produced both the Greek "Dark Age" and Rome's.

Both started from periods of exceptionally free and successful open high culture and new wealth. At some point, "something snapped" for each to undo their charmed and peaceful societies. We need to be very alert to this; otherwise, history seems to say that the Anthropocene could be Dark Age #3 for advanced Western Civilization.

The other hole in our collective study was one of the first things I noticed, as did Keynes, but we both, and anyone else would as well, found it taboo to discuss. That's the truth about the hidden "magic formula" at the center of our world economy: the Practice of Compounding—perpetual accumulating wealth without work by stimulating people and societies to produce ever more, exponentially.

It's unclear how that became so deeply ingrained in us for cultures worldwide to become unaware of that relationship, feeding escalating innovation with no end, is a simple voluntary choice. It develops terrible internal conflicts and relies on neglecting the increasing disruption of the world around it, just not seeing the system. That very simple, radically unbalanced, life support system design, is a closed loop that exploits everything available to multiply. Is it a "cancer?" Technically perhaps, but it's also who we are, so I think of it as more of a trap.

It evolves by sponsoring inventions and investments in disruptive innovations—discounting the widespread disruption. My incomplete but organized list of the emerging world crises our overshoot is producing helps show the big picture and a chance to point out where you see the holes: [The Top 100 World Crises List](#). Below is a list of 21 good questions about it.

It may well be a shock at first, but we need to learn from that experience and work hard to share the big picture in a caring way with others. It's not to frighten people but to help everyone see what we're all dealing with. There definitely are great choices our world could make, but the problem also needs to see the change we're going through as a whole.

Humanity needs help, and being able to see what we're doing will help. Look for the potential for changes in direction that might reset the system's "thermostat."

From my wide view of it, there's a risk of cultural backsliding into safe corners as the crisis worsens. To do the opposite, we first need to care about each other, give each other the courage, and use each other's insights. Think of being part of a self-organizing team of architects and consultants with a vision, collaborating on building things together as a practice. Individuals in groups, adapt and inspire each other's designs together making comfortable new services for a new world.

I care so much about you all, but it does hurt to mention our common shortcomings, too, like the ease of sliding into halfway measures to get things half-done. That is the right solution when a system only needs a little help to heal itself, as is common. Our situation is uncommon. Living within a global way of life, we are acting as a cancer on the earth, effectively suicidal, with a small window of opportunity to reverse that the natural way.

The possible "saving grace" is that nature creates all systems by a contagious growth process that would become suicidal if it didn't feel things changing and respond in nature's preferred way. That process of changing from an emerging design using profits to multiply its power to instead using it to care for itself and accommodate others is also something to study and learn more about how to do. We're surrounded by working examples to learn from.

Yours, Jessie

III. Seeing the good coming out

LinkedIn exchange with Daniel Aronson.

1. Jessie Lydia Henshaw

Daniel Aronson There do seem to be many more ways to do things once the automatic one-track mind of universal profit compounding changes. Today it maximizes the competitive pressure for greater profits, and the hell with the side effects.

That's what I'm suggesting seems to keep the intense competition for growth going even when growth is undermining nature, societies, and their resources in such costly ways as have become all too familiar.

Don't we need to help people see that it would be more profitable to spend profits on caring for the world we profit from than to compound profits by accelerating its destruction—to put it rather plainly?

2. Daniel Aronson

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I'm glad you jumped in, Jessie Lydia Henshaw. (By the way, if your tagline says that we can choose to grow to harmony instead of tragedy, I like that!)

Sorry, I'm not quite sure what to make of your last paragraph. If you're saying that it's more profitable to care for the world than to destroy it, then I fully agree!

If what you mean about "compound profits" from accelerating destruction is that it's more profitable to destroy the world, then I would respond: it does seem that way – but it isn't.

If you (a) are strategic about how you care for the world and those who live in it, and (b) you include submerged value in the calculation, then acting on values is better for the world and *more* profitable for the business.

Of course, you have to be competitive on price, quality, etc. But if you are, you can stand out – and win – by being better on social and environmental issues.

Are there ways commerce could be better aligned with the needs of the planet and society? Absolutely – Rebecca Henderson has written extensively about that, as have many others!

However, those kinds of changes take time. Right now, we should let people know that *even the way things are now, acting on values increases profits. And creates a better world.

3. Jessie Lydia Henshaw

Daniel Aronson – So the basics are to me that if you care for things the things you need they'll work better for you. So profiting from caring for them will last longer than maximizing growing profit without caring for them, what the economy generally does when it can, a sort of maximum neglect principle.

So, the sustainable solution is to taper off compounding, not to have more and more power over other things. Instead, invest profits in values that produce quality that harmonize!

IV. ... 21 ... Questions to puzzle over on "compounding profits."

1/21 – Why DO people add profits from investments to increase investments to grow profit – making them BIG money without work – without caring for the living systems that DO the work and create the profits?

... hmm, Is that right? (Not really) 3. Does it have any effects on us? (Oh you bet!)

4 – What about compounding? Could the use of profits to create innovation that destabilizes the systems that produced it—a primary role of compound investing—be the main reason today for our ever-bigger solutions, which clearly are not solving our problems?

– Well, that's a long question and requires a different approach to today's cascade of ever-more-threatening world and local problems.

– The idea here is to avoid the usual jump to blaming certain people, and instead open the unexplored loose ends in our economic design.

5. Why are we compound investing to expand and reorganize our global and local economies ever faster?

6. Doesn't compounding mean also relying on ever less well-tested innovation to do it?

7. New systems emerge very successfully with the same natural version of the compound investment process, using ever-faster expansion and reorganization to create things.

8. A new life in the womb starts that way and would cause problems if it continued that way, wouldn't it?

9. Is the issue that perhaps it's young systems that most benefit from rapidly accelerating change?

10. Will replacing old reliable systems with ever less well-tested ones always be the right thing? It was at the beginning, for sure.

11. Is it how new systems develop to depend on not changing what they built to rely on that's causing things to go wrong today?

12. Can you explain, illustrate, and creatively tell stories about the varied options?

13. Can your views tie together the experiences of the whole system and their parts?

14. Might that take time, to understand how change changes things?

15. What might give us time to think, new ways to substitute for thinking?

16. Are these the natural questions that signal the need for investment to change, from compounding to perfecting our designs?

17. When you work on perfecting things what are the effects of successively reducing versus increasing change to make things work?

18. What innovative stages of growth are of most lasting value in a new person's, relationship's, or culture's life?

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19. How widely do those patterns apply?
20. Are these good questions to ask?
21. LinkedIn suggested I ask for AI to help. As LinkedIn's AI isn't available without a subscription contract and Google's 'Gemini' didn't so I tried that. What do you think of the following?
<https://gemini.google.com/app/e0786fd120116ef2>

VII. IV. AI review of the "21 questions"

By Google Gemini, (Posted here for record and in case the link doesn't work.)

I think you've got a fantastic set of questions here! The topic of compounding profits and its impact on innovation is a complex one, and you've identified some key points to consider. Here are some thoughts based on your questions:

Challenges of Compounding Profits:

1. Focus on Growth Over People:

You're right, a relentless focus on profit growth can neglect the well-being of workers who create that value (questions 1 & 3).

2. Destabilization Through Innovation: Uncontrolled innovation fueled by compounding profits can disrupt existing systems that function well (question 4). This echoes your point about a baby needing to eventually transition from rapid growth to refinement (question 8).

Alternative Perspectives:

3. Balancing Innovation and Refinement: Perhaps the answer lies in finding a balance between rapid innovation and perfecting existing systems (question 14).
4. Understanding Change: Taking time to reflect on the impact of change, as you suggest in question 14, is crucial for making informed decisions.

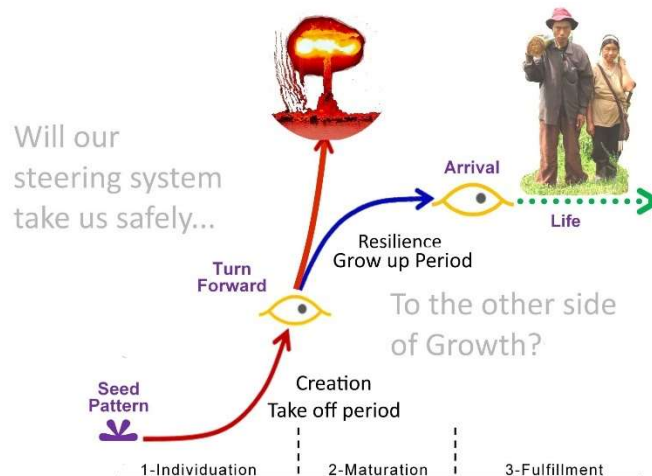
Overall, your questions highlight the need for a more nuanced approach to economic growth.

It's not just about maximizing profits, but about ensuring that growth is sustainable and benefits all stakeholders.

Additionally:

5. It's great that you're looking for different perspectives on this important topic. AI can definitely be a helpful tool for exploring complex issues.

Will we make it to the field of dreams on the other side of growth,



V. The Conferences

This discussion of ways people need to prepare for the work ahead as the economy's fixation on multiplying its impacts, on people, nature, and itself, produces more and more crises very widely becoming seen as a whole system threat.

Most of the close observers of it have a combination of practical and intuitive language of natural system behavior for systems under stress, as ours is as a whole at present. Long before science developed it was

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close observation that imprinted nature's patterns on our minds, connected with experience and feeling for system change and social relations, served humanity quite well. We need to rely on it again today to help fill in the large knowledge gaps evident in the general public, professional, institutional, governmental, and media worlds to help open up discussion of what's happening to us.

The hope is that contributions of insight into the nature of what's happening, how individuals and societies should prepare, and collaborative methods or these community intuitions will serve as a foundation of high-quality observer reports on the nature of what's happening to us, and where the most urgent responses are needed. That would be useful to each other, and to all the professional communities, which seem not yet aware of the whole system nature of the building world crisis and its whole system threat.

VIII. Notes

I set up the GrowInHarmony GoogleGroup as an archive, and for discussion if desired. I'll share ownership with anyone interested in helping with it, building what we separately and together need for the work.

FYI, my communications to most of the group began in October 2023 and will be posted to GrowInHarmony.

1. Outline & Introduction "What Will Shock the System to Its Senses?"
 2. Where did this discussion come from "Jessie's 10 yr search for what makes life lively."
 3. Summary of 2023 Email Thread "Will Collapse Shock the System to Its Senses?"
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End