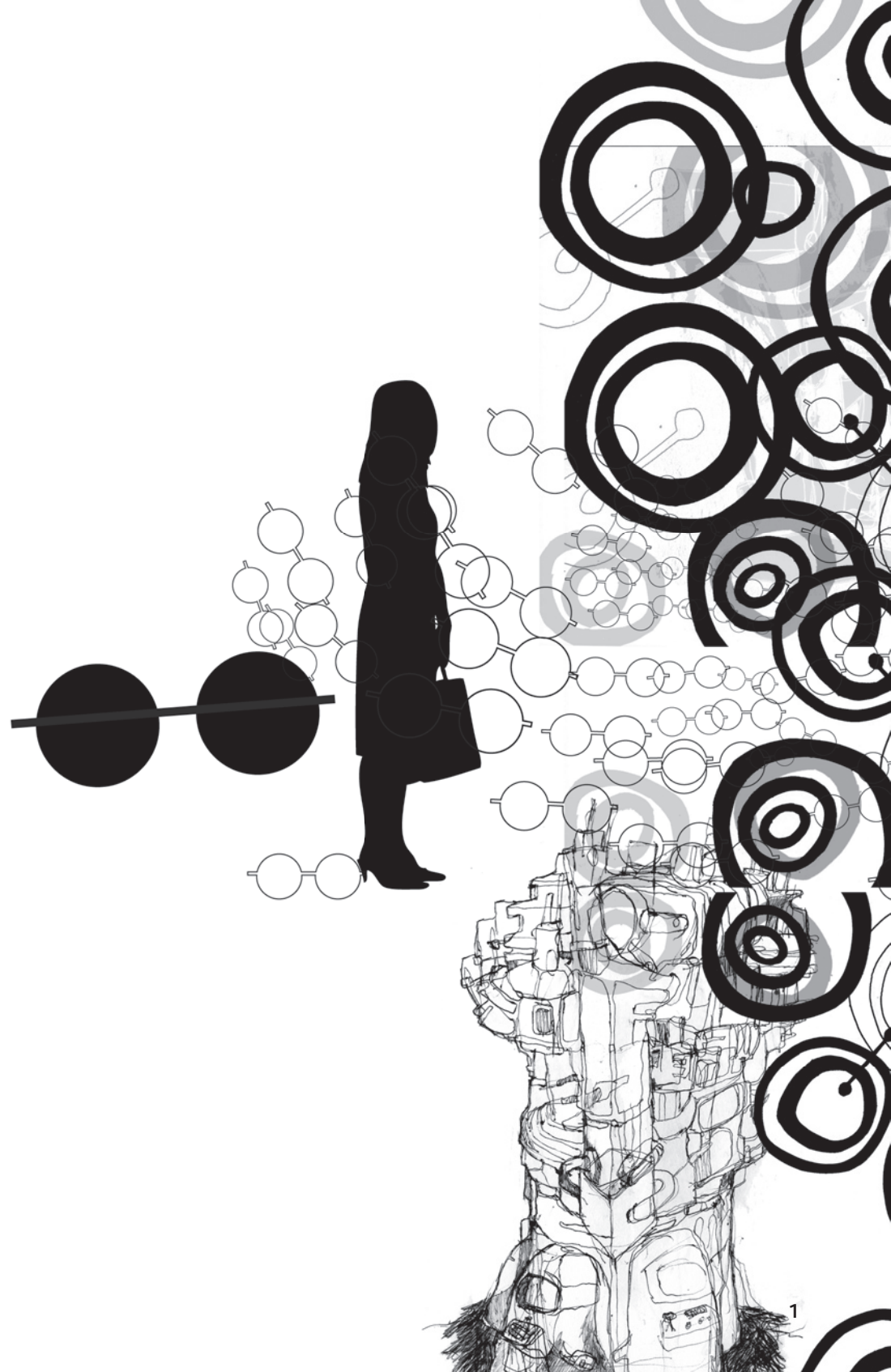


New Spectacles for Juliette: Values and Ethics for Creative Business

BY JIM SHORTHOSE AND NEIL MAYCROFT



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DEDICATION

You and I...

We meet as strangers, each carrying a mystery within us. I cannot say who you are: I may never know you completely. But I trust that you are a person in your own right, possessed of a beauty and value that are the Earth's richest treasures.

So I make this promise to you:

I will impose no identities upon you, but will invite you to become yourself without shame or fear.

I will hold open a space for you in the world and defend your right to fill it with an authentic vocation.

For as long as your search takes, you have my loyalty

(from *Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Society*,
by T. Rosazk)

This book is dedicated to Joanne Naylor, who taught me to think this. And for that, as well as many other things, I will always love her.

It is also dedicated to King Gribble, who laughed along with us more than any man we ever knew.

And finally it is, as always dedicated to our kids, Ella, George, Raya and Rose. They make us better than we once were.

All these people remind us everyday that time is short, so we need to take care of each other.

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PREFACE

STORY

'Why' and 'If'?

Just after the Cuban Missile Crisis, the days in 1962 when the world was on the brink of atomic war, I ran into my teacher Hannah Arendt on the street. The missile crisis had shaken her, like everyone else, but it had also confirmed her deepest conviction. In 'The Human Condition', she had argued a few years previously that the engineer, or any maker of material things, is not master of his own house; politics, standing above the physical labour, has to provide the guidance. She had come to this conviction by the time the Los Alamos project created the first atomic bomb in 1945. Now the missile crisis, Americans too young for the Second World War had also felt real fear. It was freezing cold on the New York street, but Arendt was oblivious. She wanted me to draw the right lesson: people who make things usually don't understand what they are doing...culture founded on man-made things risks continual harm.

(from *The Craftsman*, by Richard Sennett)

Whilst the verdict that 'people who make things usually don't understand what they are doing' may seem a bit harsh, this story does suggest that the 'why' and 'if' questions are sometimes much more important than the 'what' and 'how' questions.

But what should we make of the word 'politics' within Arendt's worries? Can the public ever be the best judge of 'why' and 'if' questions? If the experts cannot sufficiently understand what they are doing and why, and there has been plenty of evidence over the past couple of years that they often do not, can such matters be left to the public acting within the mainstream democratic process?

Is it necessary that the creators themselves be far more engaged in the 'why' and 'if' of taking more care and responsibility for what they do? Do questions of underlying values and ethics hint at another way of doing 'politics' for the public good?

It is this idea that motivates the book you are holding. It will not help that much with questions about what you want your creative business *to be* – its aesthetics, products, services or internal business strategies. But we hope it will help

with questions about what you want your creative business *to be for* – what its aesthetics, products, services, and external relationships express about the values you believe in and the ways it can connect to the needs of the World.

This is the third book in an on-going series published by Nottingham Creative Network which was established in 2006 as a re-incarnation of Creative Collaborations which was established in 2003. Both incarnations offer(ed) professional and business development advice, support, training and networking opportunities made relevant for the specific and sometimes non-standard ways that creative businesses operate and exchange. This series of books occupies a cross-over space between broad conceptual debates, creativity itself, ideas for creative business and concrete advice for professional development.

The first in this series is entitled *Fish, Horses and Other Animals; Professional and Business Development for the Creative Ecology* and tries to offer some ideas about understanding and engaging with informal creative business networks. The second, *Soul Food, and Music: Research and Innovation for Creative Business* explores ways to consolidate research for creative business and use it for thinking about innovation. As you will see, this third book continues the theme of professional and business development for the specifics of creative business by introducing questions of values and ethics into our broader on-going discussion.

But before we go any further,

THREE DIFFICULTIES

The two people writing this book cannot claim to be offering a complete basis for any choice about values and ethics within creative business. We have inevitably made choices about *our* values and ethics, the ones that motivate us to say what we say. Given this, there will always be some immediate, potential difficulties

- There will never be agreement about ethical ideas, moral standards and their consequent cultural, political, economic and business implications
- It can all too easily get rather 'preachy' and 'holier than thou'
- Creative people tend to be motivated by values and ethics anyway

We are very aware of the last difficulty and, indeed, we refer to lots of case studies in our book from creative people who are doing fantastically proactive ethical work that takes its cue from concerns with social responsibility, usefulness and justice. But nevertheless we think what we have to say is worthwhile in terms of broadening and deepening our understanding and encouraging other to do likewise.

We will try to avoid the second of the above difficulties by simply offering ideas, case studies and examples for your consideration without any heavy-duty finger pointing.

Dealing with the first difficulty entails providing a balanced view of competing ethical ideas. But we have to write about something if we are to write this book! Inevitably this will involve us choosing to write about some things and, therefore, not others. Ultimately there is not an awful lot we can do about this. All books suffer from the same problem. We hope you find looking through the particular spectacles we have chosen useful. If you do not you can always read something else!

We do not mean that to sound grumpy!

As we finish writing in late 2010 lots of things are being said about ethics and the lack of them within 'Big Business' and 'Big Politics' – the continued ethical bankruptcy of bankers and 'fat cat' Chief Executives; the need for 'corporate social responsibility', the ethics of environmentalism and 'sustainability', the current obsession of professional politicians with 'fairness' as they cut the public services that the poorest in society rely upon. A lot of these pronouncements are pretty flimsy and seem to lack any real grounding in what such concepts might mean and how they might be really put into practice – creative or business practice. In this book we will try to say things about what could make us and our concrete creative business practices less flimsy when it comes to ethical considerations. We will try to present some conceptual and practical ideas for developing expanding care towards ourselves, other people, other beings and Nature in a way that is as

immediately useful for as many people as possible. We feel this is a necessary and timely theme given the recent lack of ethics within the 'Big Economy', 'Big Business' and 'Big Politics'. We think the meeting point between creativity and business is an interesting and fertile place in which to argue for a better society because it often folds together more enlightened creative motivations with work on concrete practicalities to improve the quality of people's lives in a very real sense.

So our book is motivated by,

- The need to translate some of the difficult scientific, philosophical and theoretical debates about values and ethics into something 'friendly' to read and directly useful for creative business
- Exploration of relationship-based spaces between creative producers, audiences, users and organisations that might lead to expanded mutual 'careful-ness' within creative business acts
- A consideration of how creative practice can be, and often is, about the practical building of a better future through concrete processes within the public realm beyond business considered in isolation

We believe that writing within this cross-over space is a good place from which to explore questions including,

- Why is my creativity as it is?
- Can I make it better by asking what it is for, rather than simply what is it?
- What broad social values motivate it?
- Are there better ones?
- How do I turn values and ethical beliefs into regular business attitudes and concrete creative actions?
- How can I expand my capacity for care towards the World through my creative practice?

CHAPTER PLAN

Chapter 1 considers the possibility of value-based creative business, and its relationship with personal conduct, as something that might grow from developing *new, better spectacles* which can give a broader and deeper sense of perspective about the 'why' and 'if' questions. Chapter 2 deals in more detail with why you should bother being ethical and how you can think about your creative business as a proactive *expansion of care* towards the World. Chapter 3 offers a very brief survey of some scientific ideas concerning our very *nature as human beings*. We thought this chapter was necessary given the twin-track rhetoric coming from evolutionary biology on the one hand and standard business economics on the other. In different ways these views suggest that we are hard-wired to be aggressive, self-interested and in constant conflict with each other. There is equally compelling scientific evidence that suggests it might be part of human nature to be kind, co-operative and in need of mutually beneficial relationships. Chapter 4 explores some of the *philosophical ideas* developed over the past 2,500 years of intellectual history concerning what constitutes ethical thinking and moral behaviour. This involves a lot of intellectual history in a fairly short chapter, so is a necessarily brief overview. Chapter 5 tries to start pinning things down to suggest some 'intermediate' ideas about how your basic human nature for good-ness and the 'Big Philosophy' of ethics might become *everyday ethical skills* for personal conduct and contact with others. Chapter 6 takes these ethical issues into the more concrete issues of *creative business*. It suggests some key points and explores some case studies for reflecting back upon the value-based and ethical practices you might want for your own creative business.

As you will see, if you keep reading, our book has relied heavily upon the words and concrete deeds of others. We make no apology for this. Their words are much more eloquent and beautiful than anything we could come up with and the deeds presented in the case studies show concrete ethical creative practices that we can only stand back and admire.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Something else we admire are the people who have given advice and support towards getting this book together. It has been our pleasure and privilege to work, network and socialise and generally hang out amongst the creative network of Nottingham for quite a few years now. It is always a very warm, caring and co-operative place where people too numerous to mention always freely give their experience, knowledge and creative insights. Please forgive us for not naming you personally. You know who you are, and we will be seeing you again soon. We will buy you a drink then by way of a thank you for all your support.

Chapter 1 – Why Spectacles and Who is Juliette?



STORY

How Humans Have Repeatedly Lost Hope, and How New Encounters, and a New Pair of Spectacles, Revive Them

'My life is a failure'. That is Juliette's verdict on herself, though she very rarely makes it public. Could her life have been different? Yes, just as the history of humanity could have been different.

She carries herself with dignity, observing all that happens around her, but keeping her reactions to herself. Only in brief moments, hesitatingly, will she reveal a little of what she thinks, which she does in a whisper, as though truth is too brittle to be brought out if its wrappings. A glint in her eye says: You may think I am stupid, but I know I am not.

Juliette is fifty-one, and has been a domestic servant since she was the age of sixteen. She has so mastered the art of looking after a house, preparing and serving meals, that all overburdened mothers who catch a glimpse of her, and who can afford to, have the same thought: how can they persuade this paragon to work for them? Has she a few hours to spare? But though an ideal family help, she has been unable to cope with her own family...

At the age of sixteen, 'I did something stupid'. So she married the father of her baby and had eight more children. Babies were pure joy to her; she loves to hug them; but only so long as they are babies. Once they grow up, 'they become difficult'. Her husband was a handsome carpenter doing his military service, and at first he was nice to her: 'I was truly in love'. But very soon things went wrong. When her first daughter was six months old, she discovered from her neighbour that he had a mistress. From then on there was no trust between them.... He began beating her: 'I have scars all over my body'. But she told nobody, she was so ashamed. 'When I saw him coming home through the garden, I was terrified'. Why did she not leave him? 'I was too frightened. I was alone in his home town, where I knew nobody; I was cut off from my family after my marriage; I didn't see my sisters for fourteen years; he stopped me going out, and it was the children who did the shopping. He stopped me going even to my brother's funeral. I had no women friends anymore. I went out only to work'. And that, of course, meant she could not look after the children, who were farmed out to foster parents by the social services. The humiliation has left Juliette very sensitive. When people want to insult her, they say: 'You couldn't even bring up your own children'. She protests, 'People shouldn't say things like that without knowing the facts'.

... It was a long time before she managed to leave him. He died one month after the divorce: 'I wasn't sad; indeed, I laughed. I laugh now, but when we were together I didn't laugh'. Ever since, she has worked with one purpose only: 'My aim in life was to own my own home'. And recently she paid off the mortgage on her flat. It is the foundation of her pride, making her a stronger person. But she is too frightened to live alone, though she has tried to do so. Now she has a man with her: 'It's for security, not to be totally alone at night'. Sometimes she would prefer to have no one at all, and she is adamant that she does not want to marry this man...

They do not speak much. When she gets home in the evening, her pleasure is to rest, to lie alone on her bed in the dark. Never reading a book, and hardly ever watching television, she prefers instead to think, with the lights out, about her past life, her mother, her husband, her children, and the terror of unemployment...

And what does Juliette think about at work? 'Why, nothing. At work I don't think, or I think about my saucepans'. Work is relaxation from home. For though she has organised her home life so that she can have peace, people are prickly porcupines to Juliette, and getting on with them involves constant vigilance. Though she feels less fragile now, she is still very easily hurt by what others say about her. She prefers to work alone, as an independent cleaning woman, because she fears the gossip of offices and factories: 'People repeat things about you, twisting your words, and sometimes that can cost you dearly'. There is nothing she hates more than to be criticised...

'... It would be impossible if I had an employer who shouted at me all day, and then I had to go home to a man who shouted at me all evening'. One of the women she cleans for does indeed shout, but 'has a good heart'. Another is the granddaughter of a former President of the French Republic, who lies on a sofa all day doing nothing, suffering from various ailments: 'If she was not so sorry for herself, she could do something with her life'; but her kindness is perfect. A third has problems with his children and with his health: 'Take care of yourself, I say. Yes, doctor, he replies'. A fourth is a doctor, who shows no interest when she is ill, in contrast to her fifth client, who is all attention the moment she utters a little cough: she remembers it as a high point in her life that he allowed her to go home an hour early once, saying, 'It is not a factory here...'

Perhaps Juliette's life could have been different if the meetings which have decided its course had been less silent, superficial or routine, if more thoughts had been exchanged, if humanity had been able to show itself in them. But they were restrained by the ghosts which continue to influence what employers and strangers and even people who live together may or may not say to each other... It was even more tragic that none of the influential people she worked for believed it was in their interests to help her start a more satisfying career. Her conclusion is, 'My life is finished'.

There are currently several different ways of interpreting this story. One can say: that is what life is like, and there are many reasons why it is so. Or one can hope that if the knots into which humanity ties itself could be untied, and its crazy institutions made more sensible, that life could be changed, and poverty could be abolished, but it may take decades, perhaps even centuries. Or one can hate life for being so cruel and try to bear it by making fun of it, or parodying it, or delight in minute descriptions of it, all the while protecting oneself against disappointment by refusing to suggest solutions to problems, and by condemning all such efforts as naïve... Juliette is not a slave: nobody owns her. She is not a serf: nobody has a right to her labour. But to think one's life is finished, or that it is a failure, is to suffer from the same sort of despair which afflicted people in the days when the world believed it could not do without slaves... The conclusion I draw from the history of slavery is that freedom is not just a matter of rights, to be enshrined by law. The right to express yourself still leaves you with the need to decide what to

say, to find someone to listen, and to make your words beautiful; these are skills to be acquired...

What we make of other people, and what we see in the mirror when we look at ourselves, depends on what we know of the world, what we believe to be possible, what memories we have, and whether our loyalties are to the past, the present or the future. Nothing influences our ability to cope with the difficulties of existence so much as the context in which we view them... When, in the past, people have not known what they wanted, when they have lost their sense of direction, and everything appears to be falling apart, they have generally found relief by changing the focus of their vision, switching their attention. What once seemed all-important is suddenly hardly noticed any more. Political ideals thus collapse abruptly and are replaced by personal concerns, materialism succeeds idealism, and from time to time religion returns. I want to show how priorities are changing today, and what sort of spectacles are needed to observe them. In the course of history, humans have changed the spectacles through which they have looked at the world and themselves...

(from *An Intimate History of Humanity*, by T. Zeldin)

Juliette needs new spectacles, and maybe we do too to find better attitudes for our relationships with our selves, with each other, our creativity, our business strategies and Nature. Juliette's life is not yet over, and neither is yours.

So maybe we need to talk about,

- having trust in each other
- not shouting
- overcoming any unnecessary sense of shame and failure
- ridding ourselves of the fear of others
- grasping our collective abilities to express ourselves
- switching attention to be less silent, superficial and routine with each other
- taking moments to exchange thoughts about our shared humanity
- giving up the desire for conquest
- making life better in a practical sense for as many people as we can

This question of new spectacles suggests that one way or another the question of values and ethics within life and creativity is necessary and urgent. Whilst some of this might just 'come' – from the kind of person you, from your parents and friends, from how you have been brought up – to really get hold of the question of values and ethics in a way that gives them shape and practical application it is necessary to consciously reflect upon them and develop skills in them.

HOW TO BE HAPPY(ER)

Many philosophers have suggested that a happy life comes from a sense of duty and commitment to something bigger than your own life. They suggest that it is futile to always seek an *arrival at the state we call happiness*. If you are always asking yourself whether you are happy or not it is likely you will always

be unhappy, because you will always want the next thing, the thing you feel is missing. You are likely to become one of those 'glass half empty' people.

On the other hand, you could concentrate on the things outside of yourself, put yourself into something you believe in – your creative work, your business, your service to others, your creative purpose.

QUOTATION

Happiness is not a goal, it is a by-product
(Eleanor Roosevelt)

And at the end of one of those working days when you loose yourself in your creative work you can reflect upon how happy this sense of purpose has made you.

And, anyway, being in creative business often means that your sense of yourself is intimately intertwined with what you do. Because *you are what you do* it will be good to do what you think is the right thing. You might as well go with a sense of creative purpose that you really believe in. This is the ethical parallel to the idea that *you are what you eat*. It is likely to make you happy as well as healthy.

So it might be that as with happiness so with creative purpose, some counter-intuitive thinking is needed. You might find these things by not looking inwards at what you want but by looking outwards towards what you can give to the World,

- don't look for happiness – do some work and you will *feel happy*
- don't try to define the meaning of your creativity – offer some service to others and it will *feel meaningful*
- don't try to stick to your creative purpose – look to other people and *act with purposeful-ness* in those situations

For instance,

THINKPIECE

Avoiding Unhappiness

I believe unhappiness to be very largely due to mistaken views of the world, mistaken ethics, mistaken habits of life, leading to the destruction of that natural zest and appetite for possible things upon which all happiness... ultimately depends... Happiness is best achieved by those who do not directly seek it... I came to centre my attention increasingly on external objects: the state of the world, various branches of knowledge, individuals for whom I felt affection
(from *The Conquest of Happiness*, by B. Russell)

For Bertrand Russell, one of the main barriers to happiness is the self-absorption that can come in various guises,

- 'The Sinner' – the habit of believing too often and too strongly that you are always doing wrong, always disapproving of yourself. Carrying around an overt and visceral sense of your guilt –the kind that Religion and over-bearing parents often inculcate within people– is not good for your happiness, creativity or sense of purpose. Give yourself a day off. Then take the rest of your life off
- Narcissism – the habit of admiring yourself and always wishing to be admired. We all need some positive feed back from the World but an overriding desire to always be admired can get in the way of creative purpose and leads you down ethical cul-de-sacs to become less of a person than you are capable of being
- The Megalomaniac – rather than wishing to be admired, the habit of wanting to be feared and obeyed. We all like to get our own way sometimes but for the megalomaniac this desire is excessive, central to their identity and associated with their insufficiently developed sense of the 'real world' as it is experienced by other people. This lead to a lack of emotional intelligence which is not good for anything

None of these personalities are useful for creative business if it is to have any sense of ethical purpose. These attitudes will only get in the way of your creative business.

- *Do you need to get rid of any of these traits within your business?*
- *From within yourself?*
- *From within your business colleagues?*
- *From within your creative business 'personality'?*

VALUE-BASED CREATIVE PURPOSE

But, to take this further, we need to make the distinction between 'feel good happiness' and 'value based happiness'.

'Feeling good happiness' stems from the satisfaction of basic needs such as those for food, shelter and sex. The problem with feeling good happiness is the 'law of diminishing returns'. Some food, shelter or sex when you have not had any for ages is very satisfying and makes you happy. But the same amount when you are already satisfied will not produce the same amount of happiness – sometimes you get stuffed with food, have been in there house for ages and want to go out, just want to cuddle up in bed together and watch telly.

Being a bit more philosophical about this, we can see the behaviour geared towards getting the 'feeling good' stuff as 'resource acquisition' behaviour. The happiness you might get from this resource acquisition goes down the more you have the stuff it is directed toward. This is probably why people, in general, seem to feel less happy as levels of affluence go up. That new car, house, coat etc. you have

been after for six months does not actually make you as happy as you thought it would when you actually get it.

'Value based happiness' comes from a different place, is much less subject to the 'law of diminishing returns' and is much more important for a sense of purpose directing behaviour. As we will see in Chapter 3 it probably comes from a deeper need to demonstrate mutual recognition, reciprocity and kinship with *other people*. Easily recognisable sources of 'value based happiness' are found in the sense of love and commitment we have to our kids (probably all kids when we get down to it), the sense of charitable-ness to the people around us, altruism. The satisfactions we get from it never 'run out' the more we do it and it can, therefore, be the basis for a sustained creative purpose.

And this is the fundamental point. Developing better value-based and ethical spectacles for creative purpose might satisfy an intrinsic human need to show commitment and reciprocity to others so that we can get a more developed sense of ourselves and our creative potential. It is possible that making value-based ethical behaviour part of your creative purpose will create happiness for both your self and for others. Because,

QUOTATION

...to live an ethical life is not self-sacrifice, but self-fulfilment
(from *How Are We to Live?* by P. Singer)

As with happiness so with creative purpose. We don't always find purpose by looking for it, especially looking for it within our selves. We find creative purpose through our relationships with other people.

DOING YOUR BEST SO THAT YOU CAN DO YOUR BEST

Having noted two difficulties associated with discussing values and ethics in the Preface, we could also note that such discussions sometimes feel like they are closing in on you, reducing everything to a bigger and bigger set of pronouncements. 'Do this', 'don't do that', 'be ethical in your practice', 'be ethical in your business', 'be an ethical consumer', 'be a vegetarian', 'don't do air travel', etc.

To discuss ethics in this way is unnecessary. Ethics is not a series of barriers but, rather, a map to better destinations. Values that underpin ethical thinking can be the way to explore new routes and new destinations for your creativity in a manner which may overcome the supposedly normal, and therefore 'only' way of living in this society – the 'Market', competition, selfishness and treating strangers as threats, dogs eating dogs, etc, etc.

There is no need to beat yourself up if you cannot find 'ethical purity' because it does not exist. Doing your best for a more ethical creative purpose is more about constant thinking and practical doing than sitting in a 'ethical arm chair' and trying

to dream up a position that will suffice for all situations. It is more about,

- using your innate capacity for Reason so as to develop your ability to act reasonably
- articulating your self and your human feelings towards others in search of ethically skilful daily contact
- developing your ability to do/be the best you can do/become in and through concrete and practical examples of care towards others

THINKPIECE

Praxis

Praxis is a philosophical term that talks about combining theory, abstraction or conceptual thinking, on the one hand, with regular practice, on the other, in search of a coherent whole.

Praxis is the process by which a theory, lesson, or skill is enacted or practiced, embodied and/or realized. "Praxis" may also refer to the act of engaging, applying, exercising, realizing, or practicing ideas. This has been a popular topic in the field of philosophy, as Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, and many others, have written about this topic...

*It has meaning in political, educational, and spiritual realms.
(wikipedia)*

There is no off-the-peg handbook for how to think or act ethically. All you can do is try to bring these dimensions into your everyday life as often and as thoroughly as you can. Ethics needs to be played out actively in and through particular situations for it to really come alive and be a part of everyday creative purpose.

And it is not easy.

METAPHOR

It Depends on How Close You Are

It might seem relatively simple exercise to see the length of a coastline. Use Google Earth to hover 50,000 feet up in the air and you can see the whole of the coastline of Britain and how long it is.

Get a little closer and you begin to see more and more of the in and out detail making the coastline considerable longer.

Get a bit closer still and even more detail appears.

Eventually you see each individual stone on the beach, lengthening it so much it is now impossible to measure. It becomes impossible to say with any certainty where the coastline ends and the sea begins. Our relatively simple task appears more and more impossible the closer we get to it.

The same applies to the minutiae of particular ethical dilemmas. The closer we

get to them the more intractable they can become.

This is especially the case when we consider another facet of closer-ness and distance – the closeness and distance we have to the person in question. If we are considering the fate of a loved one it is likely that we will use different lenses and levels of ethical urgency than if the person in question is a stranger.

Instead of all the ethical dilemma games that books on ethics often use, ask yourself a simple question – who is the person whose fate I am being asked to decide?

I know that if it is my son whose life was in the balance in a particular ethical dilemma game I would choose his survival every time. Sorry.

There is no ready made solution to this, the coastline metaphor simply warns us that the issues of close-ness/distance has an impact and suggests that we should be wary of assumptions that ethical certainties can be arrived at.

It is a weird one. You might think that what you see depends upon your ethical lens, but actually your ethical lens often depends where we are seeing things from.

And because of this it may be more useful to see creative purpose as an on-going journey rather than something to be *arrived at*. Do your best. And doing your best (ethically) will probably mean that you can do your best (creatively). And then by doing your best you to get to *being* your best. If you see what we mean.

Which will probably entail,

JUDGEMENT

Making ethical choices requires active judgement. We have already referred to *The Craftsman* by Richard Sennett. In his book he uses a long standing distinction between,

Animal Laborens – the work humans often need to engage in without much thinking

Homo Faber – our human capacity to combine thought and action within self-directed work that goes beyond our own immediate needs and wants

The idea of Homo Faber is found in the idea of the *demioergoi* which speaks to our responsibility to be the judge of what we do and why.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Linux as The Demioergoi

The Greek God Hephaestus is a good candidate for the patron saint of creative practitioners because he stands for the image of using of tools for the public good. Hephaestus represents the spirit of the demioergoi, who in Ancient Greek society ... included, in addition to skilled manual workers like potters, also doctors and

lower magistrates, and professional singers and heralds who served as in ancient times as news broadcasters. This slice of ordinary citizens lived in between the relatively few, leisured aristocracy (today celebrities and those other overly-wealthy-for-no-good-reason), and the mass of slaves who did all the work.

The demioergoi get their name from a combination of the Greek word demios – meaning the public; and ergon – meaning productive.

To understand the living presence of Hephaestus, I ask the reader to make a large mental jump. People who participate in 'open source' computer software, particularly in the Linux operating system, are craftsmen who embody some of the elements first celebrated in the hymn to Hephaestus... The Linux system is a public craft. The underlying software kernel in Linux code is available to anyone, it can be employed and adapted by anyone; people donate time to improve it... Eric Raymond usefully distinguishes between two types of free software: the 'cathedral' model, in which a closed group of programmers develop the code and then make it available to anyone, and the 'bazaar' model, in which anyone can participate via the Internet to produce code. Linux draw on craftsmen in a electronic bazaar... This, then, is a community of craftsmen to whom the ancient appellation demioergoi can be applied. It is focused on achieving quality, on doing good work, which is the craftsman's primordial mark of identity.

(from *The Craftsman*, by Richard Sennett)

Our common image of the craftsman (and maybe creative practitioner) tends to involve someone who is committed to the perfection of the object they are striving to create as an end-in-itself. But according to Sennett this can be ethically 'ambiguous'.

QUOTATION

To the absolutist in every craftsman, each imperfection is a failure; to the practitioner, obsession with perfection seems a prescription for failure.

(from *The Craftsman*, by Richard Sennett)

The distinction between *the absolutist* and *the practitioner* continues the point about doing your best in terms of the practical consequences of your creative work. Craftsmanship embodying *Homo Faber*, Hephaestus and the *demioergoi* suggests the need for constant ethical judgement about our spectacles concerning, what you are making says about you the degree to which your creative work is allowed to embody proactive personal awareness of necessary ethical skill the extent to which your tools, techniques, processes, aims and the objectives lead you towards or away from grace and authenticity ... no matter what level of technical perfection you are seeking within your work. Is the work for you to satisfy your own need for perfection? Or is it for another reason which might entail something for other people? Does it treat others as

the point of the exercise? For the *demioergoi* there is no end-in-itself, no chasing perfection divorced from broader consequences.

To develop good judgement we need to start deeper thinking about what business is for, not is *is for*. It might be that an ethical discussion of creative business needs to go as far as to re-claim the very idea of 'business' back from the macho-Alan-Sugar-Dragon's-Den people, who view a rather limited version of events.

THE BUSINESS LENS

What may the new spectacles to revive values and ethics for Juliette's life and your creative purpose look like? We will draw some shapes for this in the chapters that follow when we consider some broad scientific and philosophical lenses. But we do not see this book as anything like an exhaustive account of human nature and ethical philosophy. Instead we offer it as an argument about how creativity, whether in DIY practice or more established commercially-minded business can include a clearer sense of social need, usefulness and responsibility.

Already you might surmise that our particular spectacles are giving us an 'alternative' perspective. There is nothing inherently wrong with some of the traditional spectacles for looking at how ethics relates to business. But the traditional business agenda does tend to see itself as the *only* way of looking at how we might live together and organise ourselves to meet our collective needs. The traditional business lens tends to start and finish with certain pre-set assumptions which we need to recognise as *assumptions* before we can go further. These include,

Business is Business – this is the traditional business community's 'fundamentalism'. It holds as sacrosanct competition between firms, the profit motive, traditional relationships between management and workers and all the other assumptions of business regardless of the human implications. These assumptions always come first for the traditional business lens because of even more fundamental assumptions about human nature which suggests that we are hard-wired into selfishness

Economic Man – underpinning the 'business is business' thing is the (in)famous 'economic man' version of events which suggests that the only motivation is the competition associated with the maximisation of our own economic benefit and 'looking after number one' – personal profit, acquisition, consumption. This lens occludes other views concerning what it is to be human, certainly before the evidence is in. By focussing upon what divides us all within this economic competition, and sticking to a limited view of human nature, the traditional business lens is unable to see what connects us all

Let the Market Decide – the 'amorality' and 'impersonal' nature of the Market is held up as the guarantor of fairness because it allows individual freedom and choice. It can therefore become the arbiter of everything, every social and political decision – from education and health care to scientific and culture developments. But this traditional business lens encourages *commodification* – turning every human interaction into a money-based transaction, and *individualism* – suggesting

that we are all only concerned with our own self-interest. The outcomes resulting from the over-adherence to Markets are not good for asking yourself broader and deeper philosophical questions about the values and ethics you want within your (creative) business life

The 'Big Business' agenda that is usually underpinned by some version of these assumptions -the macho kind in which people get off on all the competitive stuff- is one of the few areas of human endeavour that comes with these ready-made, off-the-peg justifications. So it is easy to get sucked into it as the only sensible way of thinking and living. 'Business is business' tends to also come with the 'all is fair in love and war' thing which involves the,

'we can do whatever we want, it doesn't really matter if we are bad, because we are doing 'Business' thing

'we are not really being bad, look at all the things we contribute to economic growth whilst we are being bad' thing

'to say anything against our traditional business view of the World is pointless, because it is just the way things are. We've been to the 'University of Life' thing

Well the 'University of Life' is a crap university. Experiences are great, but to really learn we need to go beyond simply *having them* to understand deeper and broader questions. Experience in the present does not mean *understanding* the present, and sticking at all costs to how things *are now* is not a good place from which to grow an *imagination* for the future. Lacking this understanding and imagination is good for neither creativity nor business, or much else come to that.

This is why the traditional business lens often has a fairly limited approach to ethics and, by the way, why it does not always get the creativity bit of creative business very well either. As you will see if you keep reading, we intend to go beyond this traditional business lens.

There is no point denying that there is a big, often harsh and competitive business world out there. But there have been some very major changes taking place lately,

- the global, post-crash, economic context
- the ethical, political and cultural bankruptcy of many Establishment institutions
- the continued Western neglect of the needs of people in the developing World
- the on-going ecological crisis and the abject failure of 'Big Institutions' to respond adequately
- embryonic changes to the way that the cultural economy is working and trading and the consequent forging new values

Given these big global changes, which we are only now starting to live through, we firmly believe that exploring issues of values and ethics for creative business is not an 'added extra' to be thought about later but an urgent need to make creativity more creative and business success mean bigger things. Values for creative business can be re-viewed as something more than a *reactive* 'ethical wash' aimed at doing less 'bad' in business and become motivated by enlarged *proactive improvements* concerning how we relate to each other and the World so as to be more 'good' though business.

We need bigger specs! Those really big ones that Elton John used to wear. Or maybe not, but you get the point.

For instance,

TRADITIONAL AND ORGANIC CREATIVITY IN BUSINESS

STORY

Becoming a Citizen of Toledo.

Domenicos Theotocopoulos (1541–1614) would doubtless have remained an obscure artist of no significance, repetitively painting conventional icons, imprisoned by formalities and habits, had he not formed links with others and learned how to draw out the humanity from those who seemed to have none. Having absorbed all he could from the assorted traditions of his native Crete –ruled by Venetians, divided by Orthodox and Catholic Christianity, anchored to the past by refugees perpetuating the dying art of Byzantium– he added new dimensions to his heritage by travelling abroad. In Italy, he met a minor Croatian painter called Julio Glovio, known as 'the Macedonian', through whose introduction he became a pupil of Titian. He could then easily have put himself back in the shackles as a pseudo-Italian minor portraitist doing what was asked of him; but he aspired to more than imitation. So at the age of thirty-five he settled in Toledo,

*Asked why, he replied, 'I am not obliged to answer that question'. It was dangerous to say publicly that here he felt free, that there were no rival to haunt him, that his ambition to paint – as he put it – 'more honestly and decently' than Michelangelo could only be achieved in a frontier city. Toledo reverberated with excitement because it knew what both toleration and persecution meant. Christians, Muslims and Jews once lived in it side by side; one of its Kings had been proud to call himself Emperor of the Three Religions, and another to have his epitaph inscribed on his tombstone in Castilian, Arabic and Hebrew. And yet Domenicos Theotocopoulos witnessed over a thousand supposed heretics being brought to trail before the local Inquisition. Here, living in the old Jewish quarter, both solitary and sociable, surrounded both by the spiritual fervour of the Counter-Reformation and by philosophising friends, he was stimulated to try the seemingly irreconcilable. To paint the divine and the human intertwined, to have the courage to **put his colours directly on the canvas...***

... It takes a long time for people to recognise their soul-mates when they have too limited an idea of who they are themselves... (but) Today, the whole of humanity can see something of itself in the paintings of Domenicos Theotocopoulos, who came to be known as El Greco, who died owning only one spare suit, two shirts and a beloved library of books on every subject. Because of him, everybody can feel, to a certain extent, a citizen of Toledo. He is an example of a person who discovers what humans have in common.

(slightly amended from *An Intimate History of Humanity*, by T. Zeldin)

How would you decide to creativity 'travel abroad', live in a 'frontier city' so as to 'put your (ethical) colours directly onto the canvas'?

Before deciding, the philosopher Antonio Gramsci makes a useful distinction between 'traditional' and 'organic' intellectuals.

- Traditional – the academic who has become institution-bound, self-serving and too divorced from the reality of peoples lives. The phrase 'it is just academic' – meaning that is of no real, practical importance, and the idea of living in 'an ivory tower' – being so posh as a result of one's academic role that one is divorced from the real world, both point to the problems with the 'traditional' intellectual
- Organic – the intellectual who tries to interpret and understand some aspect of the World in the way it is experienced by real people, can be understood by the majority and can relate to actually doing something concrete about their felt experiences, especially of disenfranchisement

The mind-set of the organic intellectual can best be summed up with,

GLOBAL LESSON

Shamanism

Shamanism is the oldest form of mind/body healing known to humankind. It involves the use of altered states of consciousness for the purpose of restoring well-being to those who are experiencing ill health or helplessness. Shamanism is estimated by archeologists to be at least forty thousand years old. It's been practiced perennially – or continuously – by virtually all indigenous peoples up to today. Only in the West were its practices essentially eradicated, because of the so-called Enlightenment.

(from *Shamanic Counseling and Ecopsychology*, by L. Gray, in *Ecopsychology*, by T. Roszak (ed.)

(They) are intermediaries... according to believers, they can treat illnesses and are capable of entering supernatural realms to provide answers for humans... Resources for human consumption are easily depleted in tropical rainforests. In some rainforests cultures, such as the Tucano, a sophisticated system exists for the management of resources for avoiding depletion through overhunting... As symbolic teachers of tribal symbolism, the Shaman may have a leading role in ecological management, actively restricting hunting and fishing.

- Healing – Shamanism may be based closely on the soul concept of the belief system... It may consist of retrieving the lost souls of the ill person...
- Knowledge – Really, the Shaman is a person who is an expert in keeping together multiple codes... and has a comprehensive view on it in their mind with a certainty of knowledge...
- Art – Shamans express meaning in many ways: verbally, musically, artistically and

in dance... the Shaman knows the culture of his of her community well, and acts accordingly...

(wikipedia)

The distinction between traditional and organic intellectuals asks you to consider the degree to which your creative business is connected to the social and cultural world of the people around you. This is likely to have a bearing upon its values and ethical abilities. There are many examples of organic intellectuals working in the developing world that show how people have managed to keep hold of an 'organic consistency' between ethics and concrete ways of living everyday life. These lessons from organic intellectuals all share bigger spectacles focused on the relationships between values and the organisation of social, cultural and economic life, to imaginative use of scarce resources, to solve practical issues so that the 'good' is shared. We will look at other concrete examples of the organic consistency within organic intellectualism in the chapters below.

But first the question of the *organic* brings this us to the facet that we are most familiar with, the question of everyday personal conduct within the context of creative business networks, what in *Fish, Horses and Other Animals* we have called the *creative ecology*.

PERSONAL CONDUCT AND THE CREATIVE ECOLOGY

As we will see below, the over-academic specialisation of some ethical philosophy has tended to separate thinking about values and ethics from the everyday lives of people.

In *Fish, Horses and Other Animals* we used an organic metaphor to discuss the way creative business often occurs within networks of interdependence. For instance, a key feature of creative networks are daily, intimate, intensive face-to-face interactions. This becomes therefore an immediate and important factor in the more general thinking about bigger creative business spectacles because it requires your everyday personal conduct to be a part of your 'business skills' over and above your business plans and strategies.

How are you going to get good at developing your personal conduct and sustaining relationships as the 'natural environment' you work within? How do you want the relationships that make up your network connections to be experienced by you and others?

It may well require everyday personal skills in,

- Grace
- Empathy
- Humility
- Dignity
- Emotional intelligence

- Non-egoistic friendliness and conviviality
- Simplicity

For instance,

QUOTATION

... ethics only exists in practice, in the fine grain of everyday decisions. For instance, an environmental ethic will have arrived when most people see a large automobile and think first of the air pollution it causes rather than the social status it conveys, or the frustration it will cause them when they get stuck in traffic or spend precious time hunting for a parking place, rather than the convenience of personal transportation.

For those who choose to live simply, the goal is not ascetic self-denial, but a sort of unadorned grace. Some come to feel, for example, that clotheslines, window shades, and bicycles have a functional elegance that clothes dryers, air conditioners, and automobiles lack. These modern devices are silent, manually operated, fireproof, ozone and climate-friendly, easily repaired and inexpensive...

In the final analysis, accepting and living by sufficiency rather than excess offers a return to what is, culturally speaking, the human home: to the ancient order of family, community, good work, and good life; to a reverence for skill, creativity, and creation; to a daily cadence slow enough to let us watch the sunset and stroll by the water's edge; to communities worth spending a lifetime in; and to local places pregnant with the memories of generations.

(from *Are We Happy Yet?* By A. Durning, in *Ecospsychology*, by T. Roszak (ed.)

Not what you usually get within traditional discussion of business ethics but nevertheless very real, and found in other real social and economic settings all over the World.

For instance,

GLOBAL LESSON

Dama: The Gift Economy of Mali

Mali is a very cash poor country, but it is rich in other ways. Dama is the name they give to an informal economy, often made up of strong networks between Malian women that forms solidarity, generosity and care for the whole of society. Dama is the spirit of solidarity that sustains community and culture and 'spins a rich web of relationships' of care.

Dama might provide a meal for a hungry stranger, give you change for the bus, or provide all the needs of women for 40 days after they have given birth. Dama means that you can give to some and receive from others, so that everyone's needs are attended to. Dama is a reflection of Mali's belief that generosity is the highest

of human values. It reflects what Malians refer to as 'human-ness'. They believe that only by providing for all can anyone achieve dignity.

The spirit of Dama has existed for thousands of years, and Malians are working to protect it against the encroachment of globalisation and market forces.

'A powerful phenomenon is utterly unknown among economic justice and gender justice organizers, advocates, and scholars throughout the world. This is a practice of dama, gifting, which keeps tradition, community, and individuals alive throughout West Africa. It keeps at bay much of the suffering and misery that official stats indicate should be the lot of the vast majority. It maintains dignity and strong values. It keeps tradition and society intact. Dama is based on the value of sharing and 'being human', and propagated primarily through a strong, though informal, women's social network'.

(to find out more about Dama, go to www.onthecommons.org)

We will return to the issue of personal conduct in Chapter 5.

The issue of value-based purpose has raised some initial questions for thinking about what we want creativity to be for and how we might develop better spectacles. Case studies such as *Dama* hint at how other people from around the world have organised themselves around particular values for particular purposes. But how can we start asking these broader and deeper questions for the specifics of creative business? Do you want to bother thinking about this ethical stuff when the rest of the world seems to be only out for themselves?

We think you should bother because it makes sense, and the idea of the *expansion of care* within your creative business is a good place to start bothering about the 'why' and 'if' questions with which we began this chapter. In the next chapter we will tell you why we think this.

Chapter 2 – Why Bother? The Expansion of Care



STORY

Are You Stupid?

A true 'it fell off the back of a truck' story occurred some years ago in the United States when a man of limited means found a sack of money that had fallen from a Brinks' truck. He returned the money to Brinks, who had not yet discovered the loss. The media made him a hero – but he received scores of letters and phone calls telling him he was a fool, and should look out for himself in the future.

This story illustrates how far our society has gone towards the assumption that 'looking out for number one' is the one sensible thing to do, and getting more money is the only way to do it. If we accept these assumptions, we are not making the ultimate choice about how we are to live. Our culture makes it for us. It limits the range of possible ways of living that seem to be worth taking seriously.

The story also suggests why some people hesitate to do what they know is right, if they can get more money.., or something else they want, by doing what they know to be wrong. Absurd as it may sound, they don't want to do what is right because they think that by doing so they will look bad in the eyes of their friends. Their worry is not, of course, about looking morally bad, but looking stupid. Behind this response lies the idea that ethics is some kind of fraud. Since, according to this line of thinking, everyone does put herself or himself first, and this includes those who keep preaching to us about ethics and self-sacrifice, you'd have to be a fool not to do the same.

(from How Are We to Live, by P. Singer)

So why should you bother being ethical? What's in it for you?

The short answer is that this is the wrong question.

The slightly longer answer is that it makes sense. It contributes to your life, your creativity and your business because you will have better and more trusting relationships.

The even longer answer is that it is the way you are made and it will make you happy. To be greedy, selfish, intolerant and non-attentive to the needs of others is dumb and has been likened to a form of quasi-metal illness. And hardly anyone really wants that in their life.

As we will argue in detail below, thinking and acting ethically is the same as taking part in the real existence of your human nature. What else is there? Do you really want to develop your creativity in a way that deludes yourself and other people? In a way that just uses it as a way to earn a little bit of money? In a way that treats other people as some 'thing' to be ripped-off? Being graceful, kind and convivial through your creative work is just more interesting, fruitful and creative because it is usually more fertile, beautiful, socially responsible and useful.

Which brings us to...

THE EXPANSION OF CARE

Before we get into details in subsequent chapters, let's try to lay out some basic parameters. Developing understanding and imagination for a value-based creative purpose implies the expansion of care-ful-ness for your ethical creative business. But what does this mean? What Kind of Expansion? What Kind of Care?

Let's try to pin down some more detailed aspects of the expansion of care for the specifics of creative business, An expansion of care within creative business might involve,

Expansion – a broadening out beyond what your creative business already is and the way it has always been up to this point. An *expansion* of your creativity towards your

- personal capacity for being good
- social capacity for doing right by others
- business capacity for developing new ways of interacting with(in) the broader social, economic and political contexts we live within
- creative capacity for developing new ways of interacting with(in) the natural world

Care – nurturing, tending to, paying attention to. An expansion of *care* so that your creative business can be a more clear, self-reflexive and sustained articulation of

- care for yourself through an awareness of your own personal conduct
- tending towards the needs of others through an attitude of looking after, providing respect for, and expressed within creative business relationships
- awareness towards broader social responsibility, social usefulness, justice and sustainable futures
- a 'cautionary principle' about the consequences of your creative business

An expansion of care entails being more responsive to all the different aspects of the World(s) you are part of, that you help to make and that help to make you.

For instance,

METAPHOR

Life Jackets

The designer Sergio Pellegrino talks about how he feels his life in a comfortable, affluent Western lifestyle is a bit like being in the eye of a storm. Things seem quite calm, but we know that the bad stuff is on the way, and we need to get ready.

In all sorts of ways, through spreading the word, designing a more responsible future, envisioning new ways of thinking and interrelating, creative business can be seen as creating the life-jackets for when the storm gets really serious – which is kind of now!

The expansion of care might get played out across one or more of the following broad facets,

- **Practical** – the potential contribution that your creative business wants to make to satisfying genuine human and social needs identified through direct relationships between producers and users – *integrity*
- **Material** – the use of tools, materials and processes within your creative business that is less damaging to the natural environment – *prudence*
- **Economic** – the degree to which your creative business increases human happiness and quality of life rather than reproducing unnecessary stuff – *humane-ness*
- **Social** – the extent to which your creative business actively creates spaces for people to come together in trusting experimentation – *tolerance towards festivity and playfulness by acting with more love*
- **Political** – using your creativity to engage in debates about new purposes for business – *wholehearted compassion and respect*
- **Personal** – whether you want to explore your innate creative capacity to deepen the meanings that motivate your work – *self-awareness*
- **Spiritual** – seeing creative business of producing beauty, inspiration and an articulation of peoples felt needs and innermost desires – *faith in our collective capacities to make a better, shared future*

ETHICS, MORALITY, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, SOCIAL USEFULNESS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Before we go any further, it might be useful to note that key terms sometimes get used in a rather muddled way. There is nothing exceptionally bad about this as clearly they are all inter-linked. But as we develop our argument about values and ethics for creative business the following distinction might be useful,

- **Ethics** – philosophies or theories about what is good and bad, right and wrong etc – thinking things
- **Morality** – the concrete judgements and actions that people and businesses make, or don't make – deciding upon things
- **Social Responsibility** – relating one's ethical thinking and moral deciding to the society that you are living in specific to the way you and your creative business impacts upon others. As we will see below some professions have a 'code of ethics' to articulate what they perceive as their responsibilities to the rest of society. Some professions do not declare what they perceive as their responsibilities to society so clearly. You might need to develop this for yourself
- **Social Usefulness** – professional declarations of social responsibility can sometimes descend into the 'lowest common denominator' of ethical-ness. They can become corporate declarations about not getting into regular bad-ness. Ideas about social usefulness try to take ethical debates into areas concerned with proactively creating more good-ness. A creative business can be entirely respon-

sible but still in the business of producing tat. A creative business seeking social usefulness might use ethical principles and moral judgements to stop the tat and work to meet the more urgent and pressing needs of the World

- **Social Justice** – this asks for more focus upon what a genuinely just society would look like and for our purposes what creative business can do to bring that about as part of a wider range of social, economic and political endeavours that aim to re-distribute fairness. This might be about a drive to a more equality or a society that has a more equal distribution of opportunity so that people can (re) make themselves as an experiment in their own freedom. Either way, it will probably mean a re-distribution of material resources (including, but not exclusively money) so that the quality of peoples' real lives can be improved

YOU, OTHERS AND NATURE

When we talk about the expansion of care it will almost always be applied to a mixture of,

- Yourself and your own capacity for flourishing – becoming more than you are at the moment
- Other people and the ethics necessitated by relationships – probably the most fertile place in which to construct ethical thinking and play out moral decisions for the expansion of creative business care
- All sentient animals. This is more controversial. Some people would make a big distinction between human rights and animals rights, and they would see the use of animals as resources for human ends as unproblematic. Others take the view that the way we treat animals is a symbolic marker for how ethical we are as a society
- Nature as a whole. More controversial still. As with animals, it might be difficult to talk of the rights of Nature. Clearly human history up to this point has been about treating Nature as a resource to be exploited. But this probably needs to stop. The un-sustainability of this approach becomes clearer by the day and developing a more ethical approach towards Nature is probably part of the necessary change in mind-set we all need to go through

RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In most democratic societies each individual person is a legal entity and has certain rights enshrined by law – the rights to freedom of speech, assembly etc. And with such legally enshrined rights come certain responsibilities. The basic position being that because we expect certain treatment from other people and institutions we need to uphold resulting responsibilities that other people and institutions expect from us.

However, it is useful when thinking about values and ethics to recognise that

rights and responsibilities enshrined by law can be a rather crude and mechanistic way of doing things. As we will see below it can only ever be at best a back-stop. There is nothing inherently wrong with this, but without a more active 'culture of responsibility' on the part of individuals and businesses who are motivated by a felt experience then the whole language of rights and responsibilities can become a little dry and dead. Which it has done.

For this 'culture of responsibility' to become more alive, responsibilities such as those invoked by the expansion of care probably needs to express something beyond purely legalistic and institutional parameters. A 'culture of responsibility' for yourself, others and Nature probably needs to become a chosen expression of *all* your creative capacities to act more humanely. In short, growing ethical skills towards *feeling* responsible and *living* responsibly in broader and stronger ways.

GLOBAL LESSON

'Many Little Fingers'

Jogjami is a system of local co-operation that ensures informal networks of people both receive and provide what we would call 'services' such as letter and parcel delivery. Even though they never meet and no money ever changes hands they assume that the favour will be returned some time later. It is an example of an economy based upon genuine trusting relationships.

In a light and sustainable economy we will share resources – such as time, skill, software and food – using networked communications. Sunil Abraham, an internet advisor to NGOs, told us in Bangalore that local systems of barter and non-monetary exchange, such as Jogjami, have existed in India for at least 500 years. A cooperative distribution system called Angadia, or 'many little fingers' enables people to send goods over sometimes vast distances without paying.
(by John Thackara. To find out more go to www.doorsofperception.com)

Whatever legal rights and responsibilities we may or may not have an expansion of care comes, at least in part from avoiding the oftentimes philosophical *cul de sac* of trying to say ahead of time what counts as ethical and *getting on with it in a more practical sense*. And as a creative business you are in a good place to do this.

AN APPLIED ETHICS FOR CREATIVE BUSINESS?

QUOTATION

It might be thought odd by some; and a scandal by others, that a new venture calling itself 'applied ethics'... had to come into existence at all, for it marks the abandonment of responsibility by these moral philosophers who disclaim all but

theoretical interests in the question of ethics.
(from *What is Good*, by A.C. Grayling)

The very need to think about an 'applied ethics' for creative business is perhaps a facet of a wider detachment of ethical questions from the real World. Ethics has become a rather 'academic' concern that neglects urgently practical issues of social usefulness and justice.

Does creative business have particularly novel potential? To,

- explore human need, emotion, meaning, pleasure and pain?
- give voice to the real lives and felt experiences of real people as they live their lives and culture(s)?
- inspire humanity through music, film, literature, and all the rest, to feel their common heritage and act accordingly?

If so, then some very specific questions concerning creative businesses perhaps need to be posed,

- Is it necessary for creative business to develop a particular ethical debate within itself, for itself?
- Is it possible to develop a specific ethics for such a wide and diverse field of activity as art, design and creativity?
- For instance, can the specific nature of creative business contribute something distinctive to the expansion of care? What is it, if anything, that 'the artist' can teach the philosopher about the inter-relationships between reason and emotion; between the human spirit and logic, between freedom and responsibility?
- Is it enough for creative business to adopt a reactive ethics that merely seeks to avoid doing their kind of 'bad'? Does it need a more proactive ethics that searches for specific ways of doing new kinds of practical creative good?

Many of the case studies offered for your consideration in subsequent chapters suggest that creative businesses are coming to novel answers to these kinds of creative business questions.

For instance,

EXERCISE

Ethical Means and Ends in Architecture

In the context of architecture, Wasserman et al. ask the following ethical questions of creative business,

- Is there a significant ethical dimension to your particular creative acts or situations?

- How can you inform specific creative business choices, plans and strategies with ethical reasoning?
- To what extent is your creative business decision-making based upon compliance to professional codes of practice?
- Does your creative business attempt to actively articulate new ethical choices rather than simply adhere to existing precepts or codes of conduct?
- To what extent is your creative business guided by social usefulness, the needs of others and the forging of new relationship between creative producers and 'end users'?

(from *Architectural Ethics* by T. Wasserman et. al)

Whichever it might be, the specific practices at the heart of many creative businesses, and their particular ways of joining thought and action, at least indicates some fertile terrain. Creativity often involves the 'fiction that can tell great truths'. Maybe it can add stronger emotional content, more vivid metaphors or more nuanced articulations of ethical life. Maybe it can add a more holistic exploration of the human condition and its sufferings that adds greater feeling to areas of life that are losing touch with any ethical groundings – oil wells in the Gulf, the Catholic Church, bankers and the questionable accounting practices of professional politicians.

Or is creativity,

QUOTATION

... a simple, unanalysable property, just as a primary colour is – and that just as we cannot explain what (say) yellow is by means of a classification, but only by showing someone an example, so we can only explain goodness likewise.

(from *What is Good*, by A.C. Grayling)

Should creativity be left to its own devices above the fray of social, economic and political squabbles?

Which brings us to the thorny issue of...

AN OBSESSION WITH THE CREATIVE SELF?

Some types of creative practice often seem to be focussed upon the *personal identity* of 'The Creative Self' as a source of motivation. This can easily become an obsession with one's 'artist-ness' and a particular facet of an attitude which Jean Paul Sartre has called this 'bad faith'. We will come back to this in more detail in Chapter 4 but we will say now that bad faith is not good. There is also an overly reverential obsession with the *artistic object* due to internally self-validating propositions about what 'Art' does and is for. Herbert Marcuse has called this kind

of self-referential logic 'one-dimensional thought', which is not good either. One dimensional thought is found within the 'Official Art World' when it celebrates artistic disconnected-ness from everyday life and deliberately mystifies the idea of art and creativity so that only the initiated can take part. It too often avoids plain speaking about what is going on and insufficiently engages with the everyday lives and needs of people.

And these attitudes have entered, however quietly by the back door, broader cultural perceptions. Current cultural assumptions about artistic and creative work being the product of a lone 'genius' descending from Heaven to reveal 'Universal Truths' are often tied in with self-granted permission on the part of artist to avoid the ethical or moral codes that 'ordinary people' live by. Friedrich Nietzsche represents this tradition of thought and criticises such 'ordinary people' for trying to constraint the 'genius' by imposing morality upon them. Such 'genius' is given permission by Nietzsche to transcend this 'slave morality' and cultural stereotypes of the 'artist' or 'creative' are still sometimes affected by this rather elitist and patronising attitude. We remember that we are living through the high tide of celebrity culture which suggests that fame and fortune are the only things that really count as cultural 'success'. Some forms of creativity have become rather indistinguishable from the commodification and individualism inherent within this celebrity culture and the circus performances it encourages. If the very 'being-ness' of The Creative Self is presented as creativity it can end up as all creative mouth and no real creative trousers; it talks the talk but does not walk the walk.

We don't want to suggest that creativity should be devoid of self-exploration. It could never be anyway, and even if we did suggest it, who are we? But seeking to expand care for others through creativity is also good for the exploration of The Creative Self because such interaction with the real World(s) of other people is necessary for a fuller professional development. To put it bluntly, an obsession with The Creative Self can be a starting point but it can never be a particularly interesting end point. As with most things a balance between exploring The Creative Self, on the one hand, and developing a creative practice that speaks to/for the needs of others, on the other hand, is a more vibrant approach. So whilst we will say things in subsequent chapters about developing self-awareness and self-fulfilment we do not think these things truly come about through self-obsession.

To put it even more bluntly, we think that an obsession with The Creative Self might end up getting a bit boring for everyone else, whereas an expansion of care towards others might make you feel happy and cry with joy on the inside little bit. Having a more authentic relationship with others can help with this.

PUBLIC AUTHENTICITY

We have witnessed improvements in the public understanding of science in recent years. This has tended to involve,

- articulating a coherent 'story' of science

- developing a greater public understanding of the basic characteristics of scientific knowledge creation and methodology
- ensuring the process of becoming a scientist is a relatively transparent process which people can join if they learn enough
- encouraging a public appreciation of the broader contribution of the sciences to social, cultural and economic life

Improvements in the public understanding of science have been about explaining what science has done for the public good. It could perhaps be summarised by a sentiment that says *'we know science is complicated, but we will pay particular attention to explaining it to everyone, because it is important to us all'*. As a result, the public story of science is perceived through its practical benefits and tangible technological progress. We need look no further than medicine science for examples of its grandeur.

By contrast, the 'Arts' are perceived as increasingly arcane and disconnected from the general public even as its designs, images, sounds and experiences surround us more and more. A greater understanding of the creative professions and their potential contribution to the public good is needed, because,

- the public story of 'the Arts' is under-explored and incoherent
- too much attention is placed upon the intuitive exploration of 'The Creative Self and a celebration of mysterious 'Art Objects'
- the processes and methods of creative origination are under-discussed and there is too little public reflection upon who gets to say what counts as 'Art'
- the contribution of the creative professions to broader social, cultural and economic life is too often tied to an overly economic agenda that conflates consumer culture with the public good

This kind of 'Artistic' creativity is often about what it can do for an individualistic 'me'. It could perhaps be summarised by a sentiment that says *'I know my work is quite difficult to understand, but it is about me and if you don't understand it, then that is a problem with you, the viewer'*. Too often people are heard to say 'I don't really understand Art', fail to take up invitations to engage in public architecture, are given no recourse but to accept bad design.

And because a relatively closed, opaque process dominates, idea that 'Artistic' creativity is a potential site for ethical relationships is damaged. Whilst there are clearly pockets of great work out there within architecture, community arts and educational work, using various creative disciplines as their vehicle, lots of opportunities for broader authentic public engagement are left under-developed. The outputs of the more commercially minded creative businesses are often nothing but a response to markets and consequently approach the public realm as being made up of passive consumers rather than active cultural citizens. So the potential contribution of creative business to actively improving quality of life, personal well-being, effective cultural communication and a beautiful public realm is too often left to a minority.

It might be time for 'the Arts' and the Big Business of Culture to get over itself, learn from the public engagements of science and look for more authentic spectacles for the future.

QUOTATION

Science is the only news. When you scan a news portal or magazine, all the human interest stuff is the same old he-said-she-said, the politics and economics the same cyclical dramas, the fashions a pathetic illusion of newness; even the technology is predictable if you know the science behind it. Human nature doesn't change much; science does, and the change accrues, altering the world irreversibly
(from web address???? By Stewart Brand)

For instance,

ANALOGY

Public Health

There is a useful analogy between ethical creativity and public health, in that ethical creative business might strive to provide a space to promote the co-development of public creativity

A public health version (of creativity) would entail dealing with the problems that the greatest number of people, especially the greatest number of poor people face in their daily lives... as Jesus knew well, giving of our time and talent to those most in need will have a transformative effect on us as well as them.

(from *Architectural Design and Ethics*, by Tom Fisher)

These are controversial points, and we have deliberately put them in a rather pointed way. It is part of the grandeur of 'Artistic' creativity that it *can* be about the unexplainable and ineffable. But to be truly authentic creative businesses might need to go beyond the celebration of objects and open up its processes to a wider public. If this kind of critical self-reflection and a breadth of public vision are neglected it damages the idea that all people can consider creativity as part of their life.

And this kind of public authenticity can lead to practical social change. In *Being and Nothingness*, Jean-Paul Sartre links our human capacity for authentic choice back to the possibilities of practical intention for envisaging a different state of affairs that we might call the public good,

QUOTATION

We should observe first that an action is in principle intentional... It is on the day that we can conceive of a different state of affairs that a new light falls on our troubles and our suffering and that we decide that these are unbearable... it is after he has formed the project of changing the situation that it will appear intolerable to him...

(from *Being and Nothingness*, by J. P. Sartre)

Some ethical creative businesses have found ways to be more open to this public realm. For instance, Victor Papanek, in *Design for the Real World and The Green Imperative* has outlined the following key features for a socially responsible and publically authentic creativity, one that motivated his own design practice,

- Can it make life easier for some group that has been marginalised by existing social, political and economic organisation?
- Can it ease pain (in all its forms)?
- Will it significantly aid the sustainability of the environment?
- Will it save energy or? Or better still help to gain renewable energies?
- Can it save irreplaceable resources?

QUOTATION

A positive answer to these or similar questions does not make the design visibly spiritual. But the performance of such services to our fellow human beings and the planet will help us inwardly. It will nourish our soul and help it to grow. That's where spiritual values enter design...

The job of the designer is to provide choices for people. These choices should be real and meaningful, allowing people to participate more fully in their own decisions, and enabling them to communicate with designers and architects in finding solutions to their own problems, even – whether they want to or not – become their own designers.... Any attempt to separate design, to make it a thing-by-itself, works counter to the inherent value of design as the primary, underlying matrix of life.
(from *The Green Imperative*, by Papanek p. 60).

And in practice,

CASE STUDY

Urban Design and Public Authenticity

With specific reference to urban design, Papanek argues that the 'good life' entails the satisfaction of four public 'desires',

- *Conviviality*
- *Spirituality*
- *Artistic and intellectual growth*
- *Politics*

To respond to the public realm with practical Reason urban design should provide,

- *Informal social and cultural places*
- *Arts and sporting arenas*
- *Places for spirituality*
- *Places for intellectual growth (libraries, museums, networking spaces, etc)*
- *Political meeting places for joint decision-making*
- *Economic places that support these social and cultural functions (the original conception of the 'Market')*

Too often public squalor amidst private affluence characterises our public realm and raises specific challenges for creative business. Because urban centres today do not always fulfil public needs Papanek advocates a more authentic approach to urban re-design around the following,

- *Provision of the above 6 points*
- *A 'people not traffic' agenda*
- *An 'aesthetics of site'*
- *A 'sense of location'*
- *An 'ideal size of community' and adherence to simple design principles to shape it*
- *'Learning the lessons of vernacular architecture'*
- *Developing a self-reflexively, ecologically responsible, consciousness to patterns of living, producing and consuming*

(from *The Green Imperative*, by V. Papanek)

But becoming skilled in spotting opportunities to take part in agendas that might flow from public authenticity is likely to require reflection upon one's basic motivations.

MOTIVATIONS

When it comes to all the recent debates about the 'creative industries' the motivations that lay behind the term it are woefully under-researched largely because of an oversimplified focus upon the business and economic assumptions touched on above and the aforementioned 'economic man' idea and ideal. But we cannot assume that the motivations behind creative business stem from the idea that we are all selfish profit-maximizers in constant competition with each other.

Traditional business economics fundamentally separates the 'fact' of how the Market economy currently *is* from the values inherent in imagining how things *could be*. This encourages us all to think that the World as it already is can only ever be that way. History that gets hi-jacked to 'prove' that the way we are now is how we have 'always been', so imagining different social and economic futures is held to be futile by those who have been the the 'University of Life'. In technical jargon, this amounts to ideological control encouraging a inverted view of matters, what some used to call 'flase consciousness'.

To use a bit more jargon, this starts to get us into the *naturalistic fallacy*. Some philosophers have argued that the world of 'facts' arrived at through 'sciences' such as economics have no relationship with the human creation of the world of 'values' that speak about what ought to be. This view tends to argue that connecting these two worlds is merely a psychological defence mechanism that helps us deal with the scary 'real world'. For this position values and ethics that contest this world of 'facts' are only fictions that we use to justify our own emotional wishes. The 'real world' of economics and business just doesn't work like that. We should 'get over it' the bankers and politicians tell us.

But things could be different. Thinking about values and ethics for creative business encourages a more questioning attitude towards what could be, and as such it tends towards thinking about what *ought to be*. We will come back to this in Chapter 6, but as creative businesses most of you already know that simple profit-maximisation is not what motivates you and that the traditional businessman-in-suit view of the World is rather limited compared to the myriad motivations behind creativity. But, nevertheless, thinking about what *could be* and what *ought to be* can help to provide even more new spectacles for creative business.

Even if ethical ideas are subjective creations that have no basis in hard fact, ideas about trying to 'do good' are still important because they motivate actual behaviour. Even if ethics is 'only' about feelings it can still inform as to how we can strive to *live better*, together. Trying to demonstrate some proven scientific basis for ethics is just not an important question. What actually happens is more important. This gets us into the 'Pragmatist' idea of ethics explored in more detail in Chapter 4. This view suggests that you can be relaxed about not having a universal ethical basis for creative business motivations so long as you genuinely use your creativity to pursue what you believe is right. But this will be up to other people as much as it will be up to you and will probably involve treating other people as ends in their own right and not means to your ends, as in Immanuel Kant's famous maxim,

QUOTATION

Always recognise that human individuals are ends, and do not use them as means to your end
(Immanuel Kant)

For instance,

EXPERT CONTRIBUTION

By Donna Sawyer of Bang Short Film Festival

Giving a Voice

bang! Short Film festival and The Human Rights Law Centre based at Nottingham University recently collaborated in developing the Rights in Motion Film Screening

We wanted to create a platform where films with a Human Rights theme could be seen, discussed and recognized. Largely due to the digital revolution, short film has become a more accessible tool to tell stories and highlight situations from all across the globe and it soon became clear to us that we should create a section of our short film festival specifically to embrace this and give it a broader platform.

The festival included 'Black Street' by Faolan Jones, which is about young people in Sierra Leone and the UK collaborating. The documentary follows 'Black Street' the name of a group of displaced young people living in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown which is notorious for drugs and crime. Many in Black Street used to be child soldiers during the country's civil war and now work as prostitutes, thieves and or have drug addictions. With the support of a local youth organization called AUCAYD a group of musicians from Black Street are using music to work towards transforming a culture of crime and violence into a culture of creativity.

When Faolan returned to the UK he approached Trevor Rose who runs the Community Recording Studio in St. Anns, Nottingham. With the support of some local musicians and a beat a truly collaborative International recording project began. Filmed both in Freetown and Nottingham, Black Street gives a voice to young people from Sierra Leone and is a truly inspiring piece of work that transcends cultural boundaries and politics. The aim is to sell as many copies of the song as possible with all profits going to supporting creative projects on back in Freetown.

The human rights section of the festival also included 'I Am Pem'a' by Sam Wangyal and Andrea Paffetti; 'Pride' by Michael Hudson; 'Infant Brides' by Antonio Pizzicato; 'Fear of Retribution' by Ed Barton and 'Wardisease' by Marie Magescas.

In their different ways, all these films show the commitment that the film-makers have to giving a voice to the oppressed and marginalised, that even independent low/no budget documentary films can give support for their struggles and can add to call for their situations to be improved.

They all show the potential power that film making can have to both inform and contribute to change, as well as show how creative people can grow relationships with others around the World and find a sense of purpose for their own creative talents.

To find out more about this work and bang! Short Film Festival itself go to www.bangshortfilmfestival.com

The fact that there can be no universal ethical 'purity' can be a good thing for creative business because it puts the onus on what we actually do in concrete terms. But this suggests the need for constant ethical debate between people about our motivations and their underlying values so as to co-evolve more care-ful

relationships. And, because of this, we see that ethics can be both an end in itself to guide personal conduct, and a set of tools, what Ivan Illich has called 'tools for conviviality', for making more specific decisions about the practical content of your creative journeys. And this tends to come out best in and through the actual *practices* of creative business.

PRACTISING CARE-FUL RELATIONSHIPS

This brings us back to the sentiment expressed by Theodore Roszak at the beginning of this book. It might at first sight seem contradictory, but we are firmly of the opinion that you can sometimes find your own creative motivations through a sense of service to others, find your own creative voice through conviviality towards others.

You can sometimes find your Creative Self through better relationships beyond your self.

Any 'Big Philosophy' of ethics worth its salt connects in some way or other to the idea of going beyond one's own creative 'appetites' and becoming aware of the broader *consequences* your actions have on others. But, as we will explore in the chapters that follow these are choices to be made, and they are your choices. You can work on expanding your ability to respond to others through care-ful relationships in lots of ways.

Juliette's life is not a failure. You can help her and lots of other people see that with more care-ful-ness. This is kind of what the rest of this book is about. It is up to you how and why you might show concern for Juliette's health and peace of mind. How and why you might, together with her search for better spectacles, continue living lives not yet finished.

GLOBAL LESSON

Comida and Impostura: Soul Food from South America

To contrast the individual self... from the 'we' of comida, we find ourselves remembering the beautiful small town of San Andreas Chicahuaxtla (Mexico)... We remember when we first met dona Refugio, the mother of a friend of ours... The fire is at the centre of the warmest room in the house. And dona Refugio is there, every day, at the very centre, surrounded by her whole family, talking with her husband, children and grandchildren; discussing personal difficulties or the predicament of the community... The whole community's life is in fact organized around such fires, the centre of kitchens, the source of comida...

There is no English word for comida. It is not easy to explain why. While 'feast' comes closest in its implications of eating together, it refers only to a special occasion, while comida is eaten by the 'social majorities' in the 'normal' course of every day. Perhaps we need to recall that the Anglo-Saxon world was the cul-

tural space in which the industrial mode of production was established first and foremost. There, vernacular activities related to comida have been suffocated and suppressed... To eat, to care for comida, to generate it, to cook it, to assimilate it: all these are the activities that do not belong to industrial eaters

Impostura

In the Dominican Republic's Monte Bonito, a beautiful small town in the northwestern part of the country, Erik Duus, a Norwegian, has been recording an extensive practice of the local women called impostura. (Both) comida and impostura create 'we's' in and through the communion of food embedded in soil (agri)culture... an informal contractual relationship, where the partners make an implicit promise to each other to exchange part of their meal with each other.

(from Grassroots Post-Modernism: Remaking the Soil of Culture, by G. Esteva and M. S. Prakash)

Thinking about practicing care-ful relationships starts to show the practical benefits of co-operation for our creative lives.

AVOIDING PRISON AND GETTING HOME THROUGH THE SNOW AT A REASONABLE TIME: THE BENEFITS OF CO-OPERATION

THINKPIECE

The Prisoner's Dilemma

In The Evolution of Co-operation, Robert Axelrod uses the Prisoner's Dilemma game to establish the long-term practical benefits of choosing co-operation.

In this game we imagine that two blokes have been brought in for questioning by the police. Each prisoner has to decide whether to break ranks and grass-up the other prisoner. But they are in separate rooms, so they must make their choice without any knowledge of what the other prisoner is going to decide.

So their dilemma is this.

- *If they decide to grass on the other person they will get a lighter sentence for their crime*
- *If they both keep quite they both get away with it*
- *But if they do keep quiet but the other person grasses on them, they will get a harsher sentence*

What should they do? What would you do in this situation? Would you go it alone and give up on the other person? Would you assume that is what they would be doing to you? Or would you try to keep faith in the mutual co-operation?

The Prisoner's Dilemma shows that the immediate temptation is to go it alone and look after your self. But if either one of them, or both give and break ranks then

they both fail to get the best possible reward – freedom.

An assumption of co-operation and mutual support is the only way each individual can get the best outcome. Co-operation makes the best sense but is often the hardest thing to see and stick to.

But we also have,

THINKPEICE

The Snowdrift Game

Whilst the Prisoner's Dilemma game is commonly used for talking about why co-operation makes sense, other thinkers have recently turned to the Snowdrift Game because they think it more realistically reflects how and why human co-operation comes about.

In The Snowdrift Game, two drivers are trapped at opposite ends of a big snowdrift blocking the road. Each driver could either

- *Stay in the car and wait for the other person to clear the road, or*
- *Start to shovel the snow and clear the road themselves*

Letting the opponent do all the work to clear the road has the highest pay-off in the work-to-reward ratio (no work at all – road cleared). Doing all the work to clear the road whilst the other driver does nothing to help has the lowest pay-off in the work-to-reward ratio (all the work – road cleared). Both people co-operating to clear the road has a medium pay-off in the work-to-reward ratio (some of the work – road cleared).

The Prisoner's Dilemma highlights the danger of being exploited in your co-operation (not grassing on the other whilst the other grasses on you) so you end up with zero reward. Indeed you go to prison so things actually get worse. In The Snowdrift Game whatever you do you benefit, even if you have to do all the work yourself at least the road gets cleared and you can get home at a reasonable time.

So when thinking about whether it makes sense to co-operate with others or not, the Snowdrift Game might be more useful because it better reflects the real situations you are likely to find yourself in. Whatever you might think about the possibilities of co-operation with real people in real situations, it is never a very good strategy for very long to just sit there in your metaphorical car waiting for someone else to come to your rescue.

But whatever, the fundamental and over-riding point that both the Prisoner's Dilemma and The Snowdrift Game show is this – if you want to stay out of prison and get home through the snow in a reasonable time then co-operation is usually the best strategy. Especially if everyone else thinks the same; you may have been through these types of events several times and have come to trust each other, which often happens in good creative networks with healthy working relationships.

Co-operation makes sense. And the more you do it the more it makes sense.

But the Prisoner's Dilemma and the Snowdrift Game are more than just abstract bits of thinking for avoiding the police and getting home through the snow. If you allow a co-operative attitude to inform your creative business approach it can bring real practical benefits.

For instance,

QUOTATION

Developing Mobile Phones

The economists Richard Lester and Michael Piori have studied the firms that sought to create the switching technology (needed to develop viable mobile phone systems), finding that cooperation and collaboration within certain companies allowed them to make headway on the switching technology problems, whereas internal competition at other companies diminished engineers' efforts to improve the quality of the switches. Motorola, a success story, developed what it called the 'technology shelf', created by a small group of engineers, on which were placed technical solutions that other teams might use in the future; rather than trying to solve the problem outright, it developed tools whose immediate value was not clear. Nokia grappled with the problem in another way, creating an open-ended conversation among its engineers in which salespeople and designers were often included. The boundaries among business units in Nokia were deliberately ambiguous, because more than technical information was needed to get a feeling for the problem... By contrast Ericsson proceeded with more seeming clarity and discipline, dividing the problem into its parts. The birth of the new switch was intended to occur through 'the exchange of information' among offices' rather than the cultivation of an interpretative community. Rigidly organised, Ericsson fell away. It did eventually solve the switching technology problem, but with greater difficulty; different offices protecting their turf. In any organisation, individuals or teams that compete and are rewarded for doing better than others will hoard information. In technology firms, hoarding information particularly disables good work.

(from *The Craftsman*. By Richard Sennett)

THE ULTIMATE CHOICE

So when thinking about your value-based creative purpose and the possibility of an expansion of care it might be good to remember that Socrates is famous for saying that 'an unexamined life is not worth living', which suggests the need for a clear sighted vision.

But, as we saw earlier, Bertrand Russell is famous for saying 'Happiness is best

achieved by those who do not directly seek it' which suggests that you might find something by not looking for it!

Albert Camus is just as famous for saying '*Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to the fundamental question of philosophy*'. He suggests that clear sightedness, happiness or purpose cannot be found through abstract ideas alone. Only through consciously chosen and actively pursued engagements with the World of other people can we judge whether our creativity has purpose and a care.

And this brings the fundamental aspects of *choice* to centre stage. Philosophers usually emphasise that we are free to make our own decisions about how we are to live because we are our own end and not a means to some other end. So we are faced with a choice between narrow self-interest on the one hand -the World of 'economic man' that motivates the 'Raiders of Corporate Greed'- and the search for more enlightened relationships with the World on the other -the case studies presented throughout this book.

You can be what you want to be. But this freedom to choose is not an ethical blank cheque! The freedom to make choices about how and why your life is going to be comes with responsibility to try to make it wisely on the basis of bigger ethical spectacles.

This is another reason why you should bother. It is possibly the main reason why you should bother because it is the ultimate thing to bother about. It is what A.C. Grayling has called the *Ultimate Choice*.

EXERCISE

Are You a Hero or the Civic Ideal?

Homer had the idea of 'heroic virtue', by which he meant the realisation of a heroic life stemming from things like,

- Fitness and strength of body
- A quick and alert mind
- Endurance
- Fortitude
- Courage
- Boldness

These 'manly' virtues are still celebrated in some quarters and are echoed within those views of the world that advocate a competitive spirit. Market economics, business competition and certain ideas of the entrepreneur are strong representatives of this. The whole Alan Sugar thing.

Socrates on the other hand saw civic virtues such as,

- Justice
- Friendship
- Service to the community

... as being more apt to the living of a good life, and were only arrived at through self-awareness, self-knowledge and self-criticism – all geared towards a sense of self-expansion – the expansion of care for yourself. Developing this civic ideal comes through an on-going journey similar to the one many artists recognise in themselves from an 'examined life'.

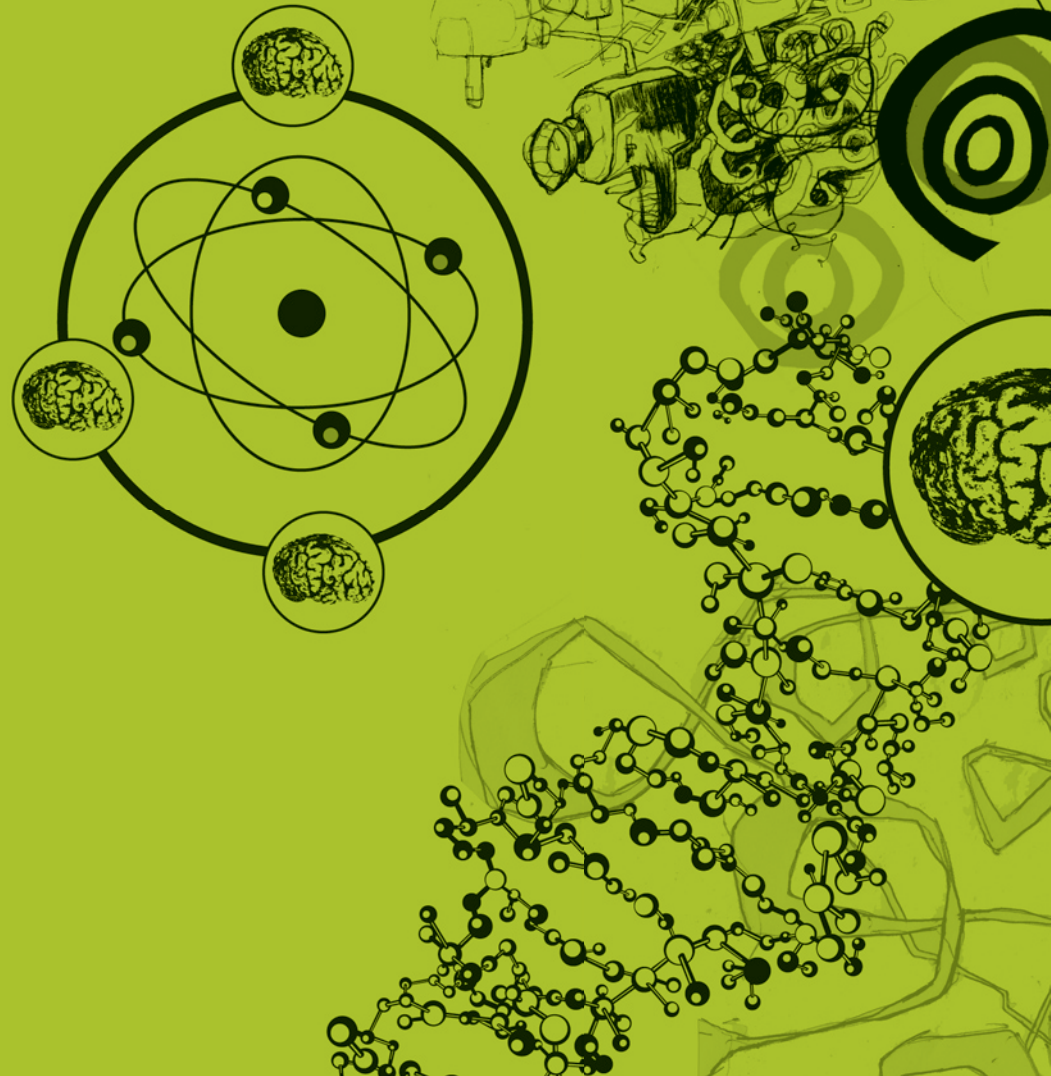
This is the thing that makes life good and worth living for Socrates and has probably got a lot to do with being creative too.

Do you want to win through your creativity? Or do you want to co-operate and collaborate, so that you win by helping more people to win?

Now we have introduced Juliette, raised some possible signposts for developing spectacles to see value-based creative purpose and suggested general reasons why you should bother with them, we can get into details.

First, we want to bust a myth. Rather than being contrary to our purportedly aggressive human nature, we will suggest in the next chapter that new spectacles for Juliette actually fit well with our basic needs for fairness, co-operation, reciprocity and human kinship. After that, we will explore how ethical philosophy has developed particular concepts for a deeper and more intricate inquiry into how we might think and act ethically. We will then try to pin things down even further to concrete aspects of personal conduct and creative business activities.

Chapter 3 – Taking Part in the Existence of Things: An Ecological Lens



STORY

Water

The Ancient Greek philosopher Thales is sometimes referred to as the father of philosophy. In around 580BC he suggested that water is the fundamental 'principle of the universe'. Thales observed that water – the seas, rivers, the sap of the trees, the vapour in your every breath and in the blood your veins – was everywhere. This led him to see that everything's connection to everything else was the basic shape from which the World flows.

2,500 years later Roger Deakin wrote,

For a year I travelled amphibiously about the country, swimming in the wild, literally immersing myself in the landscape and in the elements, in particular the primal element of water, in an attempt to discover for myself that 'third thing' D. H. Lawrence puzzled about in his poem of that title. Water, he wrote, is something more than the sum of its parts, something more than two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen. In writing Waterlog, the account of my meanderings, swimming was a metaphor for what Keats called 'taking part in the existence of things' (from Wildwood by R. Deakin)

The water metaphor helps us to recognise the inter-connected-ness of all things and that 'taking part in the existence of things' entails immersing ourselves in already existing connections with other people and Nature. It asks us to see that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. It suggests that we have responsibilities to this bigger thing as much as to chasing our own interests.

HUMAN NATURE

We are wary of ideas that suggest 'human nature' is fixed in some way, but we will now stop putting it in inverted commas as that will get tiresome. The question of human nature often comes up when two or more people discuss values and ethics. We are not really going to claim that we know what human nature is. That would only make us look silly. But that goes for anyone else too. Whenever anyone tells you that they know what human nature is, you should go to talk to someone else because they are probably trying to tell you what they *want* it to be at that particular time.

Scientific studies of the natural world and human consciousness have interesting things to say for our general themes of value-based creative purpose and the expansion of care. Perhaps the most necessary implications of these studies is the de-bunking of the idea that human nature somehow hard-wires us into being fundamentally aggressive, selfish and competitive.

It might be that the thing we call human nature is actually defined by our ability to respond differently to different situations and reflect on how we are behaving whilst we are doing that behaviour. This capacity for *self-reflexivity* means that human consciousness is constantly moving about due to the choices

we are constantly making. Whilst there might be human propensities towards selfish aggression there is plenty of evidence to suggest that natural world of which we are part also involves basic drives towards mutual recognition and reciprocal behaviour that fosters co-operative relationships of fairness, trust and kinship too.

It might just be that we are built to be ethical if we want to re-focus our spectacles on this basic inter-connected-ness.

Let's look at some of this evidence.

THE DARK SIDE

Some interpretations of evolutionary biology suggest that the more brutal impulses towards aggression and cruelty are instinctual drives of all animals geared towards survival and reproduction and as such are fundamental aspects of nature. And in the wrong hands this has taken social and economic forms. This Dark Side perpetuates a view of human existence that is characterised by,

- Individualistic immunity – they don't care about me, so I am not going to care about them
- Self-perpetuating denial – although I know other people will suffer if I carry on like this, I have to do it because there is no alternative. There is no other way I can look after myself and my own survival. Moral judgements are all very well inside emotional life, but I need to get what I need to get

This emphasis has also taken cultural forms that come from making fixed distinctions between your group and another group, between 'us' and 'them'. In the cultural world this process has been called 'otherisation' and might lay behind fundamental human experiences of fear and cautiousness towards the unknown, along with feelings of anger or disgust when dealing with the 'danger' of these unknown others. This seems to have led to all sorts of people giving themselves permission to be disrespectful and neglectful towards others as they work to convince themselves that they 'don't really count', 'are not really human'; 'deserve it'; 'don't really feel the same way towards their kids as we do'. Blah, Blah, Blah.

A less 'fundamentalist' view allows for the interplay between a basic impulse towards aggression and competition on the one hand, and reciprocal fairness on the other – what Jedi's might call *The Force*. This view suggests that the tension between instinctive drives towards cruelty and fairness, competition and cooperation, aggression and love is fundamental to human nature.

QUOTATION

'Nature red in tooth and claw', wrote Lord Tennyson in the 1830s. 'No man is an island' wrote John Donne, about 150 years earlier. Both are right. War and peace

are threads that run through all of life, from the cradle to the grave, from the seed to the compost heap. Everything we do reflects the tension between conflict and cooperation.

(from The Secret Life of Trees: How They Live and Why They Matter, by C. Tudge)

This applies to the world of economic and business too.

QUOTATION

The biological necessity for morality arises because, for the species to survive, any animal must have, on the one hand, some egoism – a strong urge to get food for himself and to defend his means of livelihood; also – extending egoism from the individual to the family – to fight for the interests of his mate and his young.

On the other hand, social life is impossible unless the pursuit of self-interest is mitigated by respect and compassion for others. A society of unmitigated egoists would knock itself to pieces: a perfectly altruistic individual would soon starve. There is a necessary conflict between counter tendencies, each of which is necessary to existence, and there must be a set of rules to reconcile them. Moreover, there must be some mechanism to make an individual keep the rules when they conflict with their immediate advantage
(from Economic Philosophy, by J. Robinson)

Likewise with creative business. It is not the pen, the brush or the software programme that produces good or ill but the character and intentions of the person using them. We tend to agree with Marcel Duchamp when he said '*I don't believe in art, I believe in artists*'.

For instance,

PROVERB

If the water of a pool is drunk by a poisonous snake, it is changed into poison, if the water of the same pool is drunk by a cow, it is changed into milk to feed a child

It is not the water that produces good or ill, but the character of the creature using it.

HARD-WIRED FOR FAIRNESS?

But there is also scientific evidence to suggest that we are actually hard-wired to be aware of the fundamental interconnections between our selves and the rest of the World. It might be that the evolution of human nature has led us to adopt fairness and co-operation for competitive advantage in the evolutionary stakes

and it is our current social and economic context that cause us to un-learn this basic nature. It might be that we can choose to return to this lens to overcome the Dark Side.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

The Ultimatum Game

There is a relatively new research discipline called neuro-economics which entails economists working with neurologists to map brain functions of people as they make economic choices. They are beginning to 'prove' what more socially-oriented theorists have assumed all along, but economists have tended to ignore – that we make decisions for social reasons as much as, or actually for more than rational economic (economic man) reasons.

The Ultimatum Game entails two players. £100 is placed upon a table and Player 1 has to make an offer to Player 2 as to how they should split the money. If they can both agree to Player 1's offer they both get to keep their share of the money. If they cannot agree to Player 1's offer then no one gets to keep any money.

After many studies it has been shown that offers from Player 1 to Player 2 below £30 are usually rejected. But this offer of £30 or less is clear profit for Player 2, so why not accept it?

Mapping the brain responses of Player 2 during the game have shown that their responses do not come from the Frontal Lobe which is supposedly where rational decision making takes place. Instead it is the Lymbic System that seems to be active. It is thought that this part of the brain deals with more basic felt experiences that come as it where 'before' rational thinking.

It is suggested that Player 2 is responding to a more basic sense of injustice and disrespect, which suggests we may be hard-wired to adhere to a sense of fairness and reject its transgression.

It may be that other more developed forms of fairness such as altruism, charity and protectiveness stem from this basic drive towards fairness.

THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

Recent research in the neuroscience of happiness is suggesting more 'objective' measurements of subjective experiences of happiness. Whilst the pleasures we get from the satisfaction of basic wants and needs (food, shelter, security and sex) produces certain feelings of satisfaction, recent research seems to be suggesting that happiness comes from a 'variety of pleasures'. Happiness is not created by the satisfaction of the same limited bodily pleasure over and over again. We can only get a limited satisfaction from more food, more warmth, more security and more sex. More of this stuff does not lead to more happiness. This may be part

of the fundamental reason why we do not seem to get more happiness from more consumption, which has been the predominant Western cultural assumption about economic growth and consumer culture for around 50 years now!

Neuro-science is suggesting that happiness is more complex than satisfaction, and it comes from more complex pleasures. Maybe not that surprising if we stand back from the details and remember that human life is a complex mixture of 'human nature', individual personality, learned social and cultural behaviour, memories and expectations and an ability to think about different futures. So clearly not everyone will get the same experiences of happiness from the same complex pleasures (art, music, relationships, self-expression). There are personal differences here according to our individual personality, social expectations and cultural upbringing. Being satisfied in terms of basic human needs is not being happy as living, thinking human beings. For that we probably need to experience ourselves through our capacity for self-expression and demonstrate our particular feelings. And it is highly probable that this will fundamentally entail forming relationships with others.

The potential for happiness as a fundamental aspect of what it is to be human, 'human nature' if we want to call it that, seems to hinge upon what we choose to focus upon, the extent to which these interests become motivations that we are able to turn into concerted and viable actions in the real World and the extent to which we are able to use this to connect to the lives of other people. This is what Aristotle seemed to have meant all those years ago with the concept of *eudemonia*. Happiness comes from a 'life well lived' not from simply getting more stuff for yourself.

So rather than seeing happiness laying in an obsession with the Self, this recent neuro-scientific research re-affirms our aforementioned 'this Worldly attentiveness' and a creative intelligence to so engage with the World. In other words, we might be wired up to get happiness from the expansion of care for others. We see this all the time within creative practice or business. Creative people seem to be motivated by the deferral of the gratification of their own personal appetites in favour of articulating something deeper and broader about the World to the World of others. We only need to look at the question of money to see this in action. If personal gain were the main motivation then why would the people who engage in creative work do it? As we all know, if we were into this for the money alone then most of us would be disappointed most of the time. But we are not. Creative people have always known what the Big Business agenda does not, that money and personal gain is not what it is about. The idea of human nature underpinned by the concept of 'economic man', that we are all inherently selfish is shown to be incorrect at a deep level. Neuro-science is beginning to catch up with this idea and 'prove' it. It is time that the Politicians, business economists and other advocates of the Dark Side caught up too.

Being good, doing right and expanding care towards others makes us happy. Instead of believing in the Dark Side of human nature, you could allow yourself the social, creative and psychological time to engage in such happiness, producing stuff, because '... you're worth it'. And so is Juliette, and everyone else.

SELF-REFLEXIVITY FOR THE ULTIMATE CHOICE

But whichever way the tension between selfish-ness and fairness, competition and co-operation gets played out there is a more fundamental problem with the promotion of selfishness as basic to human nature. Because evolutionary biology tends to over-emphasise a hard-wiring conception of the human condition they ultimately end by presenting the what we are as the way we need to be as the final description of our one true human nature. They are scientists and as such tend to want those kinds of Big Answers. As a result they tend to extrapolate too many 'answers' from fairly limited evidence of the complex areas of human consciousness, motivation and decision making. The truth is probably that human behaviour is *over-determined* whereby lots of different causes come together to produce one bit of actual behaviour. But this suggests that it can be very different next time as another combination of causes produce other bits of behaviour.

To ignore this is to under-estimate the complexity of the human condition and the clearly demonstrable capacity for self-reflexivity. We clearly have the ability to reflect on our selves and our actions as we are being/doing it. So evolutionary fundamentalism tends to underplay our ability to make choices. Most significant of which might be the Ultimate Choice of ethical spectacles. Choose for yourself.

QUOTATION

What makes the theory of evolution so remarkable is the enormous simplification and unification it imposes on the panorama of life on Earth. But a gap remains. We are not just another species. Our ability to reason, our ingenuity, and our linguistic skills place us so far above any competing animal species that many of us feel that something beyond the mechanisms of evolution must have occurred to produce homo sapiens. Or perhaps a unique mutation freed our brains from the constraints of instinct and gave us a mind. The sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson dubbed it the Promethean gene.

What distinguishes us more than anything else, however, is our acute awareness of a self, and a mental preoccupation with our own being that goes far beyond the kind of self-preserving behaviour that all animals exhibit.
(from *The Creative Leap: How the Brain Makes a Mind*, by E. Harth)

Because we have the ability for self-reflexivity we are not at the mercy of our instinctual drives, nor are we locked into making the same choices everytime we are faced with a particular situation.

Which raises certain question,

- Should you remember that aggression and selfish-ness were self-defense mechanisms, no longer so necessary, fit for a society that no longer exists? Should you stop using this to justify a negative attitude to others, anger towards strangers, worries

about safety, fear of the unknown? Has this ceased to be a competitive advantage within the evolution of humanity and so mean that you might 'die out'?

- If self-reflexivity means you can choose to be fair and good, should you try to unlearn the social and cultural influences that are getting in the way of your goodness and turning you bad – selfishness, greedy over-consumption, neglect and intolerance towards others.?

Let's evolve. As Bill Hicks once said '*It's kind of our role*'.

When it comes to culture, the evolutionary hard-wiring thing finds it particularly difficult to explain why human creativity is so often deliberately playful, 'use-less' or expressive of the ineffable especially when it has so little value in the evolutionary survival race. The universalising nature of evolutionary theory as to what counts as human nature in relation to creativity is just not very good at explaining the complex particularities of culture(s). In John Carey's words it is like '*doing a jigsaw with a forklift truck*'

Clearly something else is at work within the over-arching evolutionary process. And it is likely that constant self-reflectivity/reflexivity at the heart of creativity is part of this. Again this returns us to our ability to make choices, and maybe Ultimate Choices.

And this probably involves,

THE CREATIVE BRAIN: TOOLS, TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE

Less fundamentalist representatives of evolutionary biology emphasise the capacity for human self-reflexivity as the basis for the *creative loop*. This creative capacity brings the ability to think about how we are thinking, devise abstract plans and then to act upon such plans.

It gives us a view of,

QUOTATION

... a subject who not only sees and hears but perceives what he or she sees and hears, who recalls, projects, associates, imagines, invents, creates. He or she also feels – is happy or sad, hopeful or despairing, elated or depressed, angry or in love. All these functions, and many more, are subsumed collectively under the heading the mind of man (sic).

They all have in common the fact that nobody has yet succeeded in explaining them as chains of logical steps or mechanistic events.
(from *The Creative Loop*, by E. Harth)

Whilst evolutionary change is frozen within our DNA and is always part of the present, the creative loop allows for the purposive acts found in the development of tools, technology and culture that differ from this slow trial-and-error mutation.

For instance,

QUOTATION

Toolmaking is the oldest creative activity, and still one of the most spectacular. To create a tool, even one as primitive as a paleolithic handax, requires more than serendipity, although accidents surely have played a role in many inventions. Concepts of need, of sharpness, of application, must have been in the mind of the creator before he started chipping away at the rock. There was memory also of the type of stone that chipped best and held its edge. The end had to be envisioned before the creation could be caused. Intentionality must precede creativity.
(from *The Creative Loop: How a Brain Makes a Mind*, by E. Harth)

There is a lot in this. Let's recap. The characteristics of the creative brain include,

- self-awareness
- perception
- imagination
- association
- projection
- vision
- invention
- intelligence geared towards an abstract plan
- memory
- intentionality
- application
- evolution of logical steps
- need
- purpose
- function

The real existence of things is found in the creative brain that gives us a large degree of freedom from the constraints of our instincts whatever they might be. Rather than being hard-wired to act in any particular way every time it is more probable that the evolution of the brain gives us the creative ability to reflect back upon situations, ideas, strategies and plans *before, during and after* we choose a particular bit of behaviour. In his book *Consciousness Explained* Daniel Dennett talks about our capacity to choose between the 'multiple drafts of reality' which guide our personal conduct. It is this ability that offers us the possibility to be both creative and ethical because it allows us to understand the consequences of our creativity before we carry it out. This ability for abstract thinking suggests that creativity and ethical reflection inhabit a similar place in our human consciousness.

Which brings us to further complexities. Neuroscience tends to see human

beings in terms of an isolated Self. Rather than looking at human nature in this way, a more realistic view of the being of human-ness and creativity might be found in the here and now contexts that motivate particular acts. And this takes us back to the water metaphor we started this chapter with. If everything is connected to everything else, we are again involved in the realm of intimate and sustained relationships.

BEYOND THE SELF: BACK TO CO-OPERATION

We suggested earlier that co-operation makes sense. But it might be that it is just natural to the way we are and how Nature works. The competitive-ness inherent within the individualism that right-wing interpretations of the human condition hold to be the 'natural state of affairs' contrasts with more contemporary and sophisticated emphasis on the fundamentally co-operative and collaborative character of aspects of Nature. And human nature cannot be something separate that 'stands above' this Nature. Human nature is *in* Nature. Where else is it going to be?

This starts to suggest the 'natural intelligence', that which the social sciences might call a developed sense of social and cultural interconnection. Howard Becker, one of the godfathers of modern sociology has defined his discipline as the study of 'what people do, together'. And, this inherent *togetherness* suggests that the co-operation which underpins ethical behaviour starts very deep.

For instance,

METAPHOR

Nature is Co-operation

The very cells that we are all made of are eukaryotic cells, and are themselves an example of the inherent collaborative-ness within the Natural World.

The eukaryotic cell,

... is a coalition. It was formed initially be a combination of several different bacteria and archaes which hitherto had led separate lives (and others are probably involved, besides the protobacteria and cyanobacteria). Over the past 2 billion years or so the eukroytic cell, innately cooperative, has proved to be one of nature's most successful and versatile creations. There could be no clearer demonstration that co-operation is at least and much a part of nature's order as is competition. They are two sides of a coin.

(from The Secret Life of Trees: How They Live and Why They Matter, by C. Tudge)

If co-operation is so fundamental to Nature can it be so far removed from human nature? This suggests that felt experiences underpinning co-operation –love, respect, trust, reciprocity and a capacity to use self-reflexivity for the expansion of care of others– are not only rational in a practical sense but also central to our

very being. It might be that acting ethically through mutual beneficial relationships is synonymous with taking part in the real existence of things.

Another more social example,

CASE STUDY

Sex is Good, and Good-ness

For sex to work, each creature must find a mate... Yet relationships between creatures of the same species – parents and offspring, friends and rivals, males and females – are only a part of life's complexities. Each creature must perforce interact with all the other species that share its environment... Sociology merges with ecology. It is not true (as Tennyson implies) that each individual or each species in inevitably in conflict with all the others. No species, to extend Dunne's metaphor, can ever be an island. Co-operation is often the best survival tactic, as Darwin himself emphasised – and so it is that many pairs and groups of different species are locked in mutualistic relationships that are vital to all participants... Co-operativeness and amity are at least as much part of us as viciousness. The point is not to override our own nature, but simply to give the positives a chance.
(from The Secret Life of Trees: How They Live and Why They Matter, by C. Tudge)

Give the positives a chance. Do sex more often with someone you love. Put this book down right now and get on with it. It's much more interesting.

Now that you are back, let's repeat the optimistic last sentence from Colin Tudge. To develop new ethical spectacles we do not need to override some deeply intrinsic aggressiveness within our very nature. Rather we need to re-see that we have an in-built capacity for co-operation and mutual relationships. We just need to devising ways for such positive relationships to blossom. And humanity has been busy evolving words and concepts to express this potential for a long time now.

GLOBAL LESSON

The Words for Things

Although there is no direct translation of Plato's concept of sophrosyne it involves ideas of temperance (moderation in all things), self-restraint and striving towards a wisdom about the world as the basis for an attentive expansion of care. Plato's use of the concept amartiai means 'bad shots' to talk about getting things ethically 'wrong'.

In the Hebrew language of The Book of Genesis, nature is referred to through words such as Kabash – to 'subdue', and Radah – to 'have dominion over' whilst

Jainism is premised upon care for all living things and refers to Nature through the concept of Ahimsa – 'non-violence'

The Latin root of the word 'Religion' is religio. The literal meaning of this is 'to connect' – not subdue or divide yourself from others.

In Greek the words 'economy' and 'ecology' share the same root, which is oikos. This means 'house' and implies a co-operative system of mutual benefit, not im-personalised markets or hard-wired nastiness.

So,

EXERCISE

Which is the best mind-set for your creative business

- Sophrosyne or Amartiai?
- Ahimsa or Kabash or Radah?
- Connect or Subdue?
- House or Market?

It seems that good is within us all. We need to let it come out through *reciprocal co-evolution*.

THE EVOLUTION OF RECIPROCITY

To automatically see other people as some kind of enemy to be avoided or defeated is a kind of social madness. To be so individualistic denies the reciprocal characteristics of the Natural World.

QUOTATION

Co-evolution and Synecology

The Gaia theory (of James Lovelock), as well as the earlier work by Lynn Margulis in microbiology, has exposed the fallacy of the narrow Darwinian concept of adaptation. Throughout the living world evolution cannot be limited to the adaptation of organisms to their environment, because the environment itself is shaped by a network of living systems capable of adaptation and creativity. So, which adapts to which? Each to the other – they co-evolve. As James Lovelock put it, "So closely coupled is the evolution of living organisms with the evolution of the environment that together they constitute a single evolutionary process... So the driving force of evolution, according to the emerging new theory, is not to be found in the chance events of random mutations but in life's inherent tendency to create novelty, in the spontaneous emergence of increasingly complexity and order. Once this fundamental new insight has been understood, we can then ask: What are the

avenues in which evolution's creativity expresses itself?

(from The Web Of Life, by Fritjof Capra).

This view of evolution through reciprocity asks us to re-view,

- An awareness that we are all made from our relationships with others
- That human life is lived in and through a sense of emotional proximity
- Feelings of responsibility towards the fate of others therefore make us what we are, or at least could be

And a reciprocal view of the social world,

QUOTATION

... recognises that the whole process of human success has developed precisely upon the ability of our species to create and to keep intact large communal institutions through sustained mutual aid and co-operation,... (it) questions how it is possible for people to function as isolated atoms... (this) Firstly places emphasis on the civic bonds established via participation in the social, economic and political life of the community, rather than on the impersonal market relationships. Secondly, it considers mutual co-operation for the common good as the fundamental norm of social behaviour, rather than the pursuit of individual interest. Of paramount importance for our endeavour is that, since each person-in-community is aware of being constantly interrelated with others, then it will be possible for a moral culture assuming universal responsibilities for the well-being of others to take place... the notion of mutual co-operation has long been considered as one of the decisive driving forces for the improvement of humankind... (numerous philosophers and scientists) have demonstrated that it has been through reciprocal co-operation and not through the struggle for life that humanity has evolved (from The Value of Reciprocity, by C. Orsi)

To be wholehearted in life is to be true to your human nature and not so distracted by the fallacy of individualism. Wholehearted-ness requires a sense of living with the whole of your heart, your capacity for humane-ness and feelings for others as an expression of what your heart can be. Or what you want it to be. It is your choice remember and it is still the Ultimate Choice. There is not much hard-wiring here.

In the first book of this series, *Fish, Horses and Other Animals* we used an ecological metaphor to say something about how creative people come together in networks to create mutually supportive creative environments. The concepts of reciprocity and co-evolution illuminate the deep roots of such human behaviour. The way whole ecologies, creative or otherwise come about, grow and change through complex and mutually interacting relationships emphasises two-way

reciprocal interaction between species and environments. Species (us) do not just adapt to our environment, but can also create and change it. This deep ecology hints at recasting the fundamental relationships between being human, being co-operative, being care-ful and being creative. Expanding your care within, or for the creative ecology so as to co-evolve more ethical working relationships with others seems like a good place to start thinking about how you would like your 'environment' to be.

But envisaging these possibilities of reciprocal ecologies asks us to be more imaginative about how we might self-reflexively design care-ful relationships with other people, in what sociologists often call the *public sphere*.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Articles of Association Between Designers, Human Beings and Technology

Organising a space for reciprocal creativity can help to form more care-ful relationships between the creator and the people who use it.

Article 1 – *We cherish the fact that people are innately curious, playful and creative. We therefore suspect that technology is not going away: it's too much fun*

Article 2 – *We will deliver value to people – not deliver to systems. We will give priority to human agency and will not treat humans as 'factors' in some bigger picture*

Article 3 – *We will not presume to design your experiences for you – but we will do so with you, if asked*

Article 4 – *We do not believe in 'idiot-proof' technology – because we are not idiots and neither are you. We will use language with care, and will search for less patronising words than 'user' and 'consumer'*

Article 5 – *We will focus on services, not things. We will not flood the world with pointless devices*

Article 6 – *We believe that 'content' is something you do – not something you are given by a person in a black T-Shirt*

Article 7 – *We will consider material and energy flows in all systems we design, with the objective of ensuring their impact on the biosphere is neutral*

Article 8 – *We will not pretend things are simple when they are complex. We value the fact that by acting inside a system, you will probably improve it*

Article 9 – *We believe that place matters, and we will look after it*

Article 10 – *We believe that speed and time matter, too – but that sometimes you need more, and sometimes you need less. We will not fill up all time with content* (from Icon Magazine: Manifesto Edition. August 2007. On www.iconeye.com)

We will come back to such points of concrete creative practice in more detail in the next few chapters. But before that we should note that these rather deep points hint at something wider.

HUMAN KINSHIP

Archaeological evidence suggests that cultural communication which creativity allows is itself part of the evolutionary advantage of *homo sapiens*, but in a broader sense than the selfish interests of lone individuals. This is because it contributes to the development of a greater sense of shared kinship. For instance, in his great work *The Golden Bough*, J. G. Frazer shows the purpose and function of shared myths lead to 'practical' stories that guide concrete conduct *between* people. Such early myth-making leads to established ideas about how humans need to live together, which enables necessary human co-operation to become more effective.

QUOTATION

Regarded as a system of natural law, that is, as a statement of the rules which determine the sequences of events throughout the world, it (early myth) may be called Theoretical Magic: regarded as a set of precepts which human beings observe in order to compass their ends, it may be called Practical Magic (from *The Golden Bough*, by J. G. Frazer)

Modern anthropology, such as Alfred Gell's *Art and Agency* explores how artistic production, circulation and reception creates a stronger sense of human kinship. In *Homo Aestheticus* Ellen Dissanayake uses the idea of 'making special' to show that creativity can bring an added sense of tradition, ceremony and meaning to invite a more conscious reflection amongst groups of people as to how we are going to live together. This 'making special' helps communities of people form and stay together by making what is necessary for mutual survival into something shared and meaningful, thus helping to expand a sense of care.

QUOTATION

... human communities that made things special survived better than those that did not, because the fact of taking pains convinced others as well as themselves that the activity – tool manufacturing, say – was worth doing. So arts function was

to render socially important activities gratifying, physically and emotionally, and that is how it played a part in natural selection
(quoted in *What Good Are the Arts?* By J. Carey)

This anthropological lens places an emphasis upon,

- Agency – what creative people actually do
- Intentions – why they do it
- Causation – the effects their work has upon other people
- Results – where it takes us all in our collective journey
- Transformation – how it might make things practically better

These anthropological ideas almost automatically draw our attention back to value-based creative purpose and the expansion of care – what are we actually going to say to our kin about new ways of expressing care for each other? This draws our attention to the way an expansion of care grows out of on-going relationship forming and maintenance. Ethical awareness is perhaps stronger and more alive if it lives in and through the shared 'special' spaces of social and cultural dialogue.

And perhaps the urgent need for new ethical spectacles to develop human kinship and 'make special' is best highlighted through the forming of new relationships with Nature.

For instance,

GLOBAL LESSON

Soil and Soul

Alastair McIntosh describes his involvement in a community-led campaign to resist ecologically damaging industrial development on the island of Eigg in the Inner Hebrides. An increased sense of community solidarity grew as the stories of shared heritage, connection to the land and joint social care developed through the campaign. This simultaneously led to a strengthening of the community's capacity to

develop their joint stories through the 'myths' of the campaign. As the myths led to stronger community and this stronger community led to stronger myths, the art and culture of the campaign strengthened its inner sense of shared kinship.

People's very sense of who they were, what their human worth was, and what values they espoused was transmitted through legendary genealogy, myth, poetry the pibroch (piobaireachd) of classical bagpipe-playing and harp-accompanied song... Normality proceeds from the mytho-poetic rather than the other way round. The mytho-poetic is more fundamental...the bard's greatest gift lay in wisdom and eloquence joined together
(from *Soil and Soul*, by A. McIntosh)

So why bother again? Because to not bother is to deny what you could fully *be* according to your nature, and *do* within communities of deep human kinship. And it's kind of important to hold onto those things

Don't let those miserable people from the University of Life tell you that everyone is inherently bad and should not be trusted. The 'Lecturers' at the University of Life have not done enough research. And don't let those pompous 'Business Leaders' dictate to you what human nature is. It is the attitudes of these people that has just screwed everything up. Your human nature can be an experiment in freedom to live through an innate capacity for fairness, co-operation, reciprocity and kinship with others. It is up to you to *become* the best that your human nature allows you to be. Your creative brain gives you that potential. And it is likely that this will benefit you along with others and the Nature. It is still your Ultimate Choice.

But although this chapter has tried to de-bunk the Dark Side account of human nature and offer an ecological lens to suggest an ethical life chimes with our human nature, it does not say enough about how this ethical life might be conceived and played out in practice. For this, let's now turn to some developed philosophies of ethics and morality.

Chapter 4 – Being Good
and Doing Right:
A Philosophical Lens



STORY

A Permanent Testament to the Spirit

In 12th Century Italy, Florence and Sienna were going through an early 'industrial revolution' as the textile trades expanded and thousands of people flocked to the cities.

This caused large wooden shanty towns to spring up on the edge of these cities and the inhabitants become largely disconnected from the cultural and religious life of the Official City. The Franciscan order, followers of St. Francis of Assisi saw this problem and started to build churches on the edge of the city rather than in the official centre. This was both a practical concern to better connect to the populace, and symbolic manifestation of their belief in the 'Poverty of the Church'.

About the same time, their religious iconography started to move away from very expensive mosaics that had characterised church art previously and towards the use of frescos. Frescos were seen as more appropriate for connecting to 'ordinary people' by expanding their chances to see and meditate upon visual manifestations of the Word of God. These churches and their interiors become a permanent testament of the spirit of kinship offering more open access to anyone as part of a public realm.

The early architectural and artistic responses of the Franciscan Order show them as using their creative energies to form and maintain ethical relationships – for being good and doing right.

Because it is the Ultimate Choice, and perhaps something basic to our human evolution, the ethical decisions we make as part of our creative business might also be a permanent testament to our spirit. But the modern idea of business and economics is encouraging us to un-learn this spirit, and is de-skilling us in our dealings – ethical and/or business.

So although we have so far tried to set out some broad features about the idea of a value-based creative purpose and the expansion of care, about why you should bother and how ethics might simply be a facet of your human nature anyway – we need to get into some serious philosophy so as to tackle this modern day ethical de-skilling. Without this things could easily become a bit flimsy.

There is lots of ethical and moral philosophy out there and it comes from people smarter than us. So the philosophical lens in this chapter will have to be rather brief. But we hope it is not therefore superficial. Maybe we should start by looking at what has been said about practical elements within ethical philosophy. This seems a good place to start because it most immediately connects us to issues of creative practice.

A 'THIS WORLD' ATTENTIVENESS

Big Philosophising sometimes becomes a mystified and mystifying activity using a specialised language that only the initiated can take part in. It can seem too

disconnected from the lives and concerns of the majority of people.

We tend to agree with Peter Singer,

QUOTATION

...j the way in which philosophy should be radical (is) to get involved in practical issues and write about them in a way that reaches a lot of people.

((from How Are We to Live? by P. Singer)

Since around 1500 AD, the philosophical movement sometimes called *enlightened secular humanism* has been developing ideas about human development and welfare in a way that challenges to the 'other worldly' nature of religious dogma. Secular humanism roots its thinking within the human condition rather than accepting the universal ethical 'Truth' handed out by the representatives of God(s) and their various religious handbooks. The secular humanist tradition has made the simple but fundamental question 'How shall I live in order to achieve a good life?' possible and relevant for every person in the context of their own lives. The spectacles you use for Juliette and yourself are still your Ultimate Choice.

This calls on us all to put reasonable-ness, that is practical human Reason at the centre of our live and decisions. A 'this worldly' Reason-ableness can be,

- Subjective – being applied to your own chosen way of living and what you have decided is right/wrong for yourself, and/or
- Objective – that there are things that could, maybe should be taken on board by everyone because it encourages a shared sense of humanity. Obviously this has been difficult to agree upon, but something shared is precisely what we most urgently need for relationships between people

Either way, a 'this worldly' Reason-ableness puts our abilities in self-reflection at the centre of ethical philosophising about *real world stuff*.

For instance,

QUOTATION

... suggesting an attitude of appreciation and mindfulness, especially mindful of beauty, as central to a life well lived... in which the world and our experiences of it are good things in themselves, and in which, when life is lived with attentiveness and sensitivity –an intellectual as well as sensory attentiveness that can be educated by practice– it is rich and good... it is not a long step from such an attitude to one in which attentiveness and sensitivity to others makes the life of the community good too; and it is hard to imagine such an attitude of mind being anything but tolerant and full of fellow feeling

(From What is Good, by A.C. Grayling)

This takes us right back to treating our life and the lives of others as an end in itself and not as a means to an end that we might wish to impose upon them. Since the Ancient Greeks, a 'this worldly' Reason-ableness has involved,

- developing freedom of thought that the ability to Reason offers you so as to become more as a person – trying to *be good*
- respecting your ability to use your Reason to establish attentive judgements towards the World beyond your self – thinking about doing right
- combining Reason and judgements with practical attentiveness towards the needs of others in the real World – doing right

That is, thought and action combined for a real world attentiveness.

HOWEVER...

If you put two or more philosophers into a room and asked them to work something out they would first spend lots of time disagreeing about what the question means. Whilst this is a good pub game, we don't want to get into that kind of stuff here. As we said at the beginning, this book is not intended as a philosophical discussion of ethics as such but a discussion of some aspects of ethical thinking we feel might be useful for developing an ethical creative business that can grow in and through a 'this worldly' attentiveness. But having started to make the distinctions between 'being good' and 'doing right' it does become necessary to get into some of the developed philosophical debates about what this might actually mean.

On the one hand ideas about 'being good' tend to focus upon you as an individual person, your own internal character, personality and choices – your personal virtues, or lack of them. Hence the name *Virtue Ethics*.

On the other hand, ideas about 'doing right' tend to focus upon the way you interact with other people and the World. This is based, loosely or tightly upon shared social agreements that we learn to be able to live ethical lives. For this reason it is referred to as *Social Contract Ethics* because it speaks of things like obligation and duty. Social Contract Ethics, found in philosophical traditions such as Utilitarianism and (sort-of) Pragmatism is a debate about the ethics that focuses on the outward *consequences* of actions rather than the inward nature of goodness and virtue.

We shouldn't over-do this distinction because there is a lot of cross-over terrain between these various philosophical positions. Obviously 'being good' helps you to 'do right' and 'doing right' shows that you can 'be good'. But nevertheless it is a useful distinction to order our thoughts about new spectacles for Juliette.

BEING GOOD: VIRTUE ETHICS

A person's good character and conduct comes from sticking to things such as,

- Classical Virtues – justice, courage, temperance and prudence (Some people think that prudence, as in being careful, as in the 'cautionary principle' is the most important, especially given the threat of impending eco-crises)
- Theological Virtues – faith, hope, charity and love
- Modern Virtues – fidelity, humility, simplicity, honesty, compassion, tolerance, integrity and respect

But then we get faced with the *paradox of virtue* in our everyday (creative businesses) lives

- To be virtuous, we need to recognise our vice, so as to resist it
- To be honest, we need to recognise our dishonesty, so as to resist it

Etc...

So virtue comes from acting towards others as we would have them act towards us, rather than staying obsessed with how we as individuals are doing in isolation. Our own personal virtue is measured by how we are with and for others and it is this that can animate ethical creative business thinking. But it is a skill. We have already said that there is no ethical purity that we can arrive at in the comfort of our bedrooms. It comes into play when it comes *into play* (and work, creativity and business). The skills needed for developing ethical personal conduct is an issue we will come back to in Chapter 5, but for now we should recognise that Virtue Ethics form the basis for reflecting upon personal conduct for ethical creative business.

The downsides to Virtue Ethics are,

- they can only ever be by loose guidelines about 'being good' and cannot give any definitive guide to the actual content of what 'being good' might entail in specific situations. As we will see below, developed 'codes of conduct' for professional conduct over and above the personal are more clear and definitive
- there are always tensions between various virtues – for instance, being honest with a friend and being kind to a friend
- because virtues are general they are open to interpretation. This can mean they become something that people 'hide behind' and use to give themselves the 'blank cheque' of being 'true to their own beliefs' whilst neglecting broader consequences
- because of this, it can easily become an over-individualised focus upon one's interior beliefs at the expense of wider social responsibilities. This becomes a version of the '*I am just trying to make it better for everyone, so do what I tell you*' refrain
- it can encourage a kind of 'straight line' ethical thinking that does not always exhibit a pragmatic real-world attentiveness towards more concrete situations
- it works best when dealing with situations that are 'closest' to our emotional lives, when a sense of commitment is already there. Without this the personal and emotional basis of Virtue Ethics is perhaps not the best place to start and there more clearly defined codes of obligation and duty might be more useful

Which brings us to,

DOING RIGHT: SOCIAL CONTRACT ETHICS

This essentially flows from upholding a sense of duty to those around us, such that those around us do the same back – a ‘contract’. A ‘social’ contract because it is about the way two or more people come together to *interact*, rather than focussing on the interior dynamics of an individual’s virtuous beliefs.

For instance, Utilitarian philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill used to talk about the ‘Golden Rule’. This was the idea of basing political decisions on doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people. It embodies that idea of mutual obligation, duty and to care towards the happiness of others beyond the personal wants and desires of individuals themselves. Social Contract Ethics are useful for creative business in that they ask you to consider ways in which they can contribute to increasing happiness and avoiding pain.

Social Contract Ethics underpin the view that it is not so much about what we subjectively believe but the degree to which our actions adhere to externally agreed standards of behaviour. There are some obvious places where this works – Statutory Law, Civil Law, Common Law – all the legal precedents that have been established over the years that delineated right from wrong. You might not like them or agree with them but you generally stick to them because if you don’t you will get into trouble. It helps to underpin professional codes of practice. Some of these have a formal legal aspect, such as Medical Ethics. But there is also a broader social contract element that professionals agree to on the basis of codes of good practice regardless of whether it is actually illegal or not. Most people don’t get into producing pornography because of a wider decision about ethics rather than (un)lawfulness.

The main downside to Social Contract Ethics are their current institutionalised character, because,

- it has become rather hi-jacked by the maximisation of material wealth and affluence as the arbiter of ‘the greatest good for the greatest number’ which is not always the increase of happiness it claims to be
- this reduction of ethics to institutional economics and politics denudes our capacity to think about other dimensions of the ‘good life’ and forms of social justice. The rhetoric of economic growth and Big Democracy as inevitably about the public good neglects these alternatives
- Social Contract Ethics perhaps too easily assume that it is possible to come up with social agreements and neglects the possibility that the loudest political and cultural voice claim general ‘agreement’ where it does not exist. For instance patriarchy – which is why feminism has felt it necessary to criticise such ‘social contracts’ and develop a specifically feminist ethics
- due to this, Social Contract Ethics do not always sufficiently respond to the felt experiences of the minority. Especially where the minority are the same people every time whose beliefs, needs and aspirations are never part of the majority view, resentment can be created.
- Social Contract Ethics do not necessarily require ethical thinking and belief per

se, just a mechanical adherence to actions dictated by social norms. They can, therefore, lead to conformity to prescribed rules that is not the lived commitment that ethical behaviour probably needs to be

- this implies a ‘bureaucratisation’ of behaviour whereby an absence of a ‘rule’ can lead to an ethical void and a less than affective ability to deal with new issues and ideas as they arise. For instance, institutional ethics based upon Social Contract thinking have been woeful tardy at developing environmental ethics

The Institutional location of most Social Contract Ethics can lead to the adherence to prescribed social norms which are not the same as a genuine belief in social justice that might animate everyday creative lives. Ethical codes that Social Contract thinking tend to create might help to *reactively prevent* patently unethical behaviour, but they do not always help to inspire broader ethical sensibilities. It is likely that creative business behaviour for a better social and environmental future will need to *proactively encourage* a broader and deeper ethical sensibility, something we will come to in later chapters.

PROFESSIONAL CODES OF PRACTICE

As the most common public face of Social Contract Ethics, various professional codes of practice are devised within specific professional and institutional settings – The Geneva Convention, medical ethics, legal ethics and the other professional codes of conduct that specific industries have developed for themselves. Compliance with these rules and codes is accepted as a condition of entering the profession or getting a job within a particular institution. They often exist to comply with legal statute – health and safety, equal opportunities, non-discrimination policy, employment law and duty of care towards employees, a commitment to confidentiality and offering staff development opportunities. They are also usually connected to public statements from a particular profession, Institution or agency about what they stand for and against.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

An Engineering Code of Practice

The American Society of Civil Engineers’ code of professional practice states that engineers shall,

- *hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public and shall strive to comply with the principles of sustainable development in the performance of their professional duties*
- *perform services only in areas of their competence.*

- *issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner*
- *act in professional matters for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees, and shall avoid conflicts of interest*
- *build their professional reputation on the merit of their services and shall not compete unfairly with others*
- *act in such a manner as to uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, and dignity of the engineering profession and shall act with zero-tolerance for bribery, fraud, and corruption*
- *continue their professional development throughout their careers, and shall provide opportunities for the professional development of those engineers under their supervision*

In a more specific sense such codes of practice can be useful in practical ways for developing your creative business because they offer,

- a clear, objective and impersonal base-line for ethical business thinking that can help in quick, immediate and practical ways
- a reference point from which to respond to other business and agencies who are either disinterested or incapable of more genuine ethical dialogue
- a basis for talking to suppliers, collaborators and customers
- ways to make decisions when ethical issues are paradoxical and confusing, which they often are

Broad public statements about the value-based commitments within your creative business can help to signal your ethical credentials.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Believe it or Not... Ethical Banking

The Co-operative Bank includes the following points within their statement on Ethical Policies,

- **Tackling Global Poverty** – *we will not finance businesses that do not respect fundamental labour standards and we are committed to initiatives such as micro-finance that enable people to work their way out of poverty and become self-sufficient*
- **Combating Climate Change** – *since 1992 we have refused £169 million worth of finance to organisations involved in the extraction or production of fossil fuels. We now extend our policy on climate change, refusing to finance businesses engaged in the distribution of fuels with a particularly high global warming impact, such as tar sands*
- **Human Rights** – *we support the principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and will challenge organisations that undermine basic human rights; benefit from oppressive governments; manufacture or transfer armaments to oppressive*

regimes; manufacture torture equipment or other equipment that is used in the violation of human rights. The global arms trade is worth over \$50 billion. Our policy excludes finance for the manufacture or transfer of armaments to oppressive regimes

- **Animal Welfare** – *our policy will not finance businesses involved in intensive farming methods, for example, caged egg production*
- **Social Enterprise** – *we are the UK's largest provider of banking services in the credit union sector. Our policy seeks to support charities across the broad range of organisations involved in the Social Enterprise Sector, including co-operatives, credit unions and community finance initiatives*
- **Customer Consultation** – *we will regularly reappraise customers' views on (our) Ethical Policy and other ethical issues through, for example, our campaigning activities*
- **Influence for Change** – *we've joined together with other investors and are engaging directly with oil companies to highlight our concerns over this issue*
- **Trade and Labour Rights** – *we will seek to protect workers from exploitation and oppose child labour; support poverty reduction by encouraging the adoption of Fair Trade and ethical trading principles; advocate the ending of trade which fuels conflict and undermines human rights, for example by displacing people from their land; and encourage the promotion of co-operative enterprises*

The downside to relying on formal codes of professional practice, and the 'rule compliance' they encourage is,

- because codes of practice are specific and detailed statements for a particular professional situation they do not invite debate nor do much to encourage active ethics within everyday lives. They can descend into becoming 'ass-covering' exercises
- the codification of ethics can lead to mistaking ethical 'means to ends' for 'ends in themselves' that can place a higher value upon abstract rules than on more authentic ethical thinking
- referring to professional codes of practice as too small a base-line can culminate in institutions referring to them in situations they do not adequately cover
- an overly strong focus upon limited ethics fixed within the pre-established boundaries of an institution or profession risks closing off broader debates and ethical futures

EXERCISE

Ethics Within Your Business

Having considered the in' and out's of Virtues Ethics, Social Contract Ethics and the value of professional codes of practice, now ask yourself the following questions,

- What are the relative degrees of importance that you attach to each of the virtues?
- Does their relative importance differ depending upon who and what you are dealing with?
- Which virtues do you most admire in others?
- Which makes you most satisfied about yourself?
- Which is most missing from your job, company, practice, work in general?
- Why is this? Who says this?
- Do you think other people see you as being ethical?
- What are the ethical lines you would not cross in your personal life? Are these the same lines you would not cross in your professional life? If they are different, how come?
- Do you know the content of Professional Codes of Conduct relevant to your work?
- Do you feel yourself making compromises between what you believe and what you do?
(first raised in *Ethicability*, by Richard Steare)

GETTING ON WITH IT: PRAGMATISM AND EMOTIVISM

For Pragmatism the focus tends to be about the practicalities of actually doing stuff, the pragmatic consequences. Hence the name. So, there is a natural connection between Pragmatist ethics and the practical focus of creative work because both tend to be concerned with 'getting on with things' rather than chasing an abstract position that stands for all time.

Richard Rorty, one of the big hitters of Pragmatism puts it like this. Firstly he makes a distinction between *philosophy* (with a small 'p') and *Philosophy* (with a Capital 'P'). He thinks Philosophy is too concerned with asking Big Questions and establishing Universal Answers. For him this is not the best way of addressing things,

QUOTATION

Pragmatist philosophers...

... are in a position analogous to that of secularists who argue that research concerning the Will of God does not get us anywhere. Such secularists are not saying that God does not exist, exactly: they feel unclear about what it would mean to affirm His existence, and thus about the point of denying it. Nor do they have some special, funny, heretical view of God. They just doubt the vocabulary of theology is one we ought to be using... They think it will not help to say something true to think about Truth, nor will it help to act well to think about Goodness, nor will it help to be rational to think about Rationality...

They would simply like to change the subject.
(from *Consequences of Pragmatism*, by R. Rorty)

Pragmatism wants to focus upon what actually happens rather than upon the search for the universals of being good and doing right which are probably not achievable nor agreeable to everyone for all situations for all times. They want to get on with thinking about the 'why' and 'if' of what we actually do by bringing an ethical lens to bear upon the consequences of those actions, and let the lens refocus as the action develops.

For instance,

GLOBAL LESSON

An Immune System

Majid Rahnema describes pragmatic inter-dependencies that make up local ways of interacting in some developing societies. Decisions about economic and technological issues are genuinely set against their social, cultural and ecological consequences. These vernacular economies form an 'immune system' with which people can mutually protect each other from the ups and downs of the Big Global Economy.

Rahnema describes a vernacular economies as having,

- *An 'organic consistency' to ways of living together that is a 'living tissue of social and cultural relations defining the activities of their members'. These ways of living together embody an ethic that helps to make human solidarities that preserve community. There is an holistic and multi-dimensional approach to life and an organic linking between the social and cultural on the one hand, and the 'economic' on the other*
- *An approach to 'economic' questions about what should be produced and who should get it that is thoroughly embedded in social and cultural values. 'Economic' relationships are not abstracted or depersonalized away from the values that guide personal relationships. 'Economic' issues are situated against values such as reciprocity and the collective good*
- *A practical perception of community need and definition of what is essential to produce that emanates from traditions of voluntary simplicity that rejects the culture of unlimited growth, unlimited needs and the maximisation of consumption*
- *An awareness of the community's collective capacity to meet its needs that is situated against its environmental capacity. There is an ecological vigilance informed by a sense of harmony and dialogue with Nature, rather than seeing it simply as resources to be exploited*
- *A minimization of risk that seeks to sustain the community rather than pursue growth in ways that might endanger the sustainability of the whole. There is a diversification of strategies and approaches to resources which tries to ensure a greater capacity for self-protection rather than to rely upon one strategy or resource for survival*

- A 'prudent attitude towards innovation' whereby new ways are only sought if they are needed. That is, innovation is not fetishized or pursued for its own sake

(from *The Post-Development Ready*, by E. Bawtree and M. Rahnema)

When outside investment, usually in the form of 'Aid' comes it usually comes with strings attached which often mess up local economies. Because of this Aid too often works like 'AIDS'. These vernacular forms of solidarity work to re-form the 'antibodies' that fight against this potential damage to the health of the local community and its ecology of social and cultural relations.

Whether these vernacular economies are 'ethical' or not is not an issue that seems to occupy the minds of the people who develop them. They work because they already embody pragmatic forms of solidarity, mutual commitment and the value of reciprocal care. Trying to devise an 'ethical position' is less important than getting on with it and demonstrating one's values and ethics through *pursuing* practical relationships that have mutually beneficial consequences.

The downsides of Pragmatist Ethics are,

- the outcome-centeredness of Pragmatism can easily get hi-jacked by the rhetoric of 'the end justifying the means'. Fetishising economic growth and expanding consumerism at all costs is a case in point. We will still probably need some ethical baselines 'behind' pragmatism
- at the other end of the spectrum Pragmatism can leave us unable to demarcate one consequence as better/worse than another. Any old tosh can stand as 'ethical' if someone shouts loud enough that it works for them. This starts to throw the ethical baby out with the Philosophical bath water.
- this potential collision with Emotivist Ethics, the 'ethics' of having a personally meaningful emotional reaction to something. This can end up as self-obsession dressed up as an 'ethical' argument which is not very good. We are probably going to need a more shared notion of ethics if we are to be saved from the bankers and professional politicians

The value of Pragmatism lies in the way it draws our attention to a 'this Worldly' attentiveness and the issue of practical consequences when we are thinking about values and ethics for creative business. The problem with a purely consequence-centredness lies in ethical debate getting hi-jacked by those with a loud enough voice to draw attention to certain consequences (that suit them) and therefore divert attention from other consequences. The current Coalition Government's attempts to hi-jack 'fairness' by focussing on some, selected consequences of their policy is an example of this ethical bad faith.

This starts to get us into the idea that ethics needs to be a social dialogue, played out through real World ethical encounters rather than technical Philosophy. And this itself starts to raise the idea that ethical differences have to be taken into account, because such differences, around which ethical dialogue revolves,

carry heartfelt meanings for all people. Emotion is implicit, and possibly necessary within ethical debate. Which brings us to Emotivism.

An Emotivist idea of ethics is something that creative practitioners might feel drawn too given that they are often concerned with visceral, emotional reactions rather than purely logical ones. Emotivism might chime with creative business more easily given that it leaves room for the *feeling* of ethical-ness rather than focussing upon the dry technicalities of Big Philosophising. It may also chime with creative practice because it is quite relaxed about the idea that ethical values are a kind of *fictional truth*. For instance, most creative practitioners are probably used to the idea that great literature, whilst being entirely fictional can reveal great truths about the human condition. No amount of rational Philosophy can 'prove' Shakespeare but it can still speak to us in very profound ways. If ethics, like music, art, film and all the other things we use to speak to each other, is capable of moving us to feel for the other person and become better people ourselves then it is doing its job. It perhaps does not need the technical authentication of Big Philosophy. Indeed we may need to resist Big Philosophy if it is emptying out ethical debate of all fellow feeling.

Emotivist ethics,

- suggests that there is no objectively 'factual' basis for ethics but nevertheless felt experiences, wholehearted-ness and fellow feeling within ethical life are a necessity
- warns us that the best any of us can probably do in our concrete creative business is not get things too wrong. We can never get them universally right because there is no 'right' to get, which
- suggests wariness about what you think are the normal, received ideas of ethical behaviour that 'everyone knows'. These are probably social conventions formed by groups. And this is not the same thing as 'real'. Other people will be felling different things just as strongly as you are feeling your feelings

There are no universal truths about values and ethics.

So the best we can do here is see ethics as a dialogue between different groups as a fundamental aspect of social, cultural and political life. This is politics in its broadest, most sophisticated sense and might be the only real place where we can co-evolve and share ethical idea and develop new ones. At the very least, Emotivist ethics suggests the need for a good balance between an emotional response to specific situations and broader principles that are bigger than your own emotional response.

And this is especially the case with creative work. Virtue Ethics, Social Contract Ethics and Pragmatism are fundamentally based upon Reason. Whilst it would be silly to argue against this, Human Reason is not always the thing that creative people turn to first. Indeed, it might be that referring to Reason holds the danger of 'improving' ethical behaviour at the expense of creativity. Sometimes creativity might need a space away from ethical conventions to take its first breath.

As A.C Grayling puts it,

QUOTATION

Established ethical positions might be,

... too middle-aged, middlebrow and middle-class, suggesting a rather limited individual prone to pomposity, who, in shunning the extremes of passion, love, anguish and like states, cannot know the value of them as sources of insight and creativity

(from *What is Good?* by A.C. Grayling)

But we still think you should bother!

It is pretty obvious that Emotivist ethics needs to be treated with some caution. Your emotional responses are themselves likely to be coloured by your cultural background and subsequent ideas about what is 'right' and 'wrong'. There is an obvious danger in sticking to ethical beliefs just because you like the way that they make you feel. This can easily become the opposite of ethical skill because it ends up in a deep sense of self-ish-ness and helps to reproduce the obsession with the Creative Self we have already discussed as potentially unhelpful. This is because,

- purely individualistic emotional thinking can lead to fairly arbitrary ethical ideas that you alone have, and that don't necessarily make any sense to others
- you can't expect everyone else to act upon your ideas just because you have them. Within ethical creative business you will probably need some firmer back up or more rational argument. This is where Pragmatism's focus upon the consequence of any suggested behaviour comes back in
- a purely Emotivist ethics opens up the possibility of all sorts of 'bad faith' whereby people use 'ethical' arguments to get their own way by convincing others that 'their way is how it (ethically) should be'
- We have mentioned bad faith a few times now so let's pay some attention to it directly: emotions and feelings can be dangerous sources of self-delusion and ethical inauthenticity.

BAD FAITH, COLLUSION AND ALIENATION

Being an existentialist, Jean Paul Sartre argued that each one of us is fundamentally free to make choices about how we will be and live. When he wrote that we are 'condemned to be free' he meant we have an unavoidable responsibility to face this freedom. This often brings with it a sense of psychological discomfort but to not live our lives as an experiment in freedom is to willingly turn ourselves into an inert object.

Clearly circumstances limit what any of us can practically do. But when we work to convince ourselves to *believe in* the things that are happening to us or others

due to these external circumstances then we are in 'bad faith'. Thinking ethically is an exercise in avoiding such bad faith. The example that Sartre famously uses to describe bad faith is the rather pompous, stuffy and overly 'waiter-esque' cafe waiter living through his 'waiter-ness'.

QUOTATION

His voice oozes with an eagerness to please; he carries food rigidly and ostentatiously. His exaggerated behaviour illustrates that he is play acting as a waiter, as an object in the world: an automaton whose essence is to be a waiter. But that he is obviously acting belies that he is aware that he is not merely a waiter, but is rather consciously deceiving himself.

(from *Being and Nothingness*, by J. P. Sartre)

R.D. Laing has also shown us that choosing to be ourselves and to live through our capacity for freedom is complicated. He shows us how something like Sartre's bad faith can occur in the space between two or more people. He calls this process *collusion* whereby two or more people agree to play false roles and maintain each others chosen illusions – *I will pretend for you if you pretend for me, and together we can mutually avoid facing what we need to do.*

Bad faith and collusion can culminate in very unnerving and rather weird situations.

CASE STUDY

The Stockholm Syndrome

The Stockholm syndrome is a psychological response sometimes seen in abducted hostages, in which the hostage shows signs of loyalty to the hostage-taker, regardless of the danger or risk in which they have been placed. The syndrome is named after the 1973 Nommalmstorg Robbery of The Kreditbanken in Stockholm, hence the name. The bank robbers held bank employees hostage from August 23rd to August 28th during which the victims became emotionally attached to their victimisers and even defended their captors after they were freed from their six-day ordeal

The millionaire heiress Patty Hearst was kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) and after two months in captivity she actively took part in a robbery they were orchestrating. Her unsuccessful legal defence was that she suffered from Stockholm Syndrome and was coerced into aiding the SLA

During 2002 in Missouri, Shawn Hombeck was kidnapped at age 11 and held for four years by Michael J. Devlin. Shawn started using Devlin's last name and despite talking to police on two separate occasions about other unrelated matters, he did not seek their assistance. There have been many cases including victims of sexual

abuse and kidnapping who have expressed their understanding and support for Shawn's decisions not to make an attempt to escape.

(Wikipedia)

Other philosophers such as Erich Fromm and Paulo Freire have discussed the 'fear of freedom' implicit within bad faith and collusion when we avoid our ethical responsibilities by over-conforming to the security of wider social, political and cultural conventions.

QUOTATION

Fear of freedom, of which its possessor is not necessarily aware, makes him see ghosts. Such an individual is actually taking refuge in an attempt to achieve security, which he prefers to the risks of liberty... the conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting him; between human solidarity or alienation; between following prescriptions or having choices; between being spectators or actors; between acting or having the illusion of acting through the action of the oppressors; between speaking out of being silent,

(from *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, by P. Freire)

But of course the conditions we are forced to live in impact upon this – meaninglessness and powerlessness within work for the vast majority, non-Reasonable attitudes within Big Economics, Big Politics and Big Business, non-social Social Institutions present which encourage us to 'believe in' that which stands above us. We are left with little option other than to rage against the machine.

So as with bad faith and collusion, we often actively embody our selves in an 'alien power' that 'stands over us' in various ways that involve us reneging on our capacities for expanded care.

You can be alienated,

- **from yourself** – by embodying yourself into something that is less than meaningful to you. For instance an 'identity' as a 'fashion-head', Macho-guy, banker
- **from others** – by treating them as a means to your ends rather than as someone who wants to flourish. For instance approaching people through relationships coloured only by money
- **from Nature** – same thing. By treating Nature as a means to your ends rather than as something that wants to live as an end in itself. For instance treating Nature only as a resource there for you to use. A relationship still often coloured by money

Alienation makes ethical creative business difficult. Actually it makes it impossible. Virtue Ethics, Social Contract Ethics, Pragmatism and Emotivism are useful and informative because they can help you to develop your ethical thinking for being

good and doing right. But to go beyond thinking about ethical creative business and go 'out there' to expand your capacity for care also requires more basic questions about the way the institutions of economic power and cultural influence are set up. And ethical creative business is as good a place as anywhere to start this critical re-questioning for the development of bigger spectacles.

But living through an awareness of freedom to make ethical choices and live out moral judgements with strong commitment is not easy. We are all prey to self-delusions such as bad faith, collusion and alienation in order to make the often harsh World out there more psychologically palatable. But developing a value-based creative purpose for the expansion of care within creative business involves being aware of these tendencies to become what we think others want us to be, as well as facing the responsibility to embrace our freedom and make choices. It is still the Ultimate Choice.

Sartre, Laing, Fromm and Freire also start to bring us to a Critical Theory of ethics. But before we think about this idea of ethics in detail, we need to note a more general philosophical point.

IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM

There has never been a resolution to this deep philosophical debate and we are not going to give you one here. But a problem with a lot of ethical philosophy is its tendency to focus just upon the realm of ideas. For many this is not a problem at all because they believe that the concrete World out there is a manifestation of these of ideas. This is an *idealist* position – ideas come first and create the World. For instance, the idea that language determines what we have the capacity to think and therefore do in the World.

On the other hand there is *materialism*. This position sees the concrete, material World of economics, industry, power and poverty as coming first and the World of ideas and culture as being a manifestation of that. Real economic power enables the powerful to decide 'what counts' as Culture because they also have the loudest Cultural voice.

For instance, many of the pronouncements about how art and culture connects with ethics and what it can do in terms of 'moral improvement' has been coloured by an idealist philosophy. And as a result they have been a bit limited.

For instance,

QUOTATION

In the 19th century it became a widespread cultural assumption that the mission of the arts was to improve people and that public access to art galleries would effect this. It was felt in particular that if the poor could be persuaded to take an interest in high art it would help them to transcend their material limitations, reconciling them to their lot, rendering them less likely to covert or purloin or agitate for a

share in the possessions of their superiors
(from *What Good Are the Arts?* By J. Carey)

Trying to 'improve' people's conditions of life through ideas without changing their material conditions – better incomes, working conditions, housing etc. is a deeply unsatisfactory ethical position. And this is when idealism becomes ideology that uses culture to reproduce existing social and economic divisions. Moral improvement such as the ones mentioned above –not coveting your neighbours possessions, not stealing stuff– are far more likely to come about if people have a decent income, job and house, some might say. But idealism is not an old 19th century idea. It is still with us and too much debate about art, culture and creativity is still disconnected to the social and economic realities of the vast majority of people. It is often still geared towards creating 'social tranquillity' and disconnects the potential of creative businesses to improve the *material conditions* of life for a greater number of people and as a route to an expanded sense of care.

Whilst ethical creative business might need to offer more than just ideas this does not mean you have to choose materialism alone and forget the realm of ideas. That would be kind-of hard and probably counter-productive for creative business. But the practical possibilities within ethical creative business to expand care towards the lives of more people are high. Ethical creative business needs at least one eye on material questions as part of the basis for an ethical agenda .

The next two chapters will explore concrete examples of this. For now this brings us to...

FLOURISHING

Aristotle's concept of the *eudemonic* nature of human life suggests that striving for a greater sense of flourishing, to become more than we currently are, is a central impulse. Already we see the good news, a view shared with Buddhism that we all have the capability get closer to what we want to be, and, ethics in and through a value-based creative purpose can be a vehicle for this.

There are many ideas about what this flourishing might involve. Maria Nussbaum's list is one of the most recent and best for thinking about the relationship between idealist and materialist facets for a value-based creative purpose and the expansion of care within creative business,

Nussbaum suggests that flourishing for your self and others requires,

- **Life** – being able to lead a full life
- **Bodily Health** – being able to have good health
- **Bodily integrity** – being able to have physical security, sexual satisfaction and choice about reproduction
- **Senses, Imagination and Thought** – being able to use the senses in a truly human way through education and guarantees about free expression

- **Emotions** – being able to develop our emotions of love, grieving, longing and gratitude
- **Practical Reason** – being able to form a conception of the good and to plan one's own life
- **Affiliation** – being able to live with and for others. Being free from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion or national origin
- **Other Species** – being able to live with concern for animals, plants, and the world of Nature
- **Play** – being able to laugh and play
- **Control Over One's Environment** – being able to participate politically, being able to hold property on an equal basis with others, and being able to work with meaningful relationships of recognition with other workers

It needs to be made clear that you don't *have* to do these things. That's up to you and Nussbaum wouldn't want to tell you off. She means that we all need these material opportunities so we can live more meaningful, flourishing lives. These material conditions form the basis for social justice because they form the basis for an equalisation of social and cultural opportunity which is needed before the call to the realm of ideas can have any real purchase upon people's lives.

For instance,

GLOBAL LESSON

New Spectacles for Bankers: Grameen Bank

Grameen Bank (GB) has reversed conventional banking practice by removing the need for collateral and created a system based on mutual trust, accountability and participation. GB provides credit to the poorest of the poor in rural Bangladesh as a cost effective weapon to fight poverty and serve as a catalyst in the overall development of better socio-economic conditions... Professor Muhammad Yunus, the founder of "Grameen Bank" and its Managing Director, reasoned that if financial resources can be made available to poor people on terms and conditions that are appropriate and reasonable, "these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder."

As of March, 2009, it has 7.80 million borrowers, 97 percent of whom are women. With 2,548 branches, GB provides services in 84,096 villages, covering 100 percent of the total villages in Bangladesh...

The origin of Grameen Bank can be traced back to 1976 when Professor Muhammad Yunus, Head of the Rural Economics Program at the University of Chittagong, launched an action research project to examine the possibility of designing a credit delivery system to provide banking services targeted at the rural poor. The Grameen Bank Project (Grameen means "rural" or "village" in Bangla language) came into operation with the following objectives, to

- extend banking facilities to poor men and women;
- eliminate the exploitation of the poor by money lenders
- create opportunities for self-employment for the vast multitude of unemployed people in rural Bangladesh
- bring the disadvantaged, mostly the women from the poorest households, within the fold of an organizational format which they can understand and manage by themselves
- reverse the age-old vicious circle of “low income, low saving & low investment”, into a virtuous circle of “low income, injection of credit, investment, more income, more savings, more investment, more income”

... In October 1983, the Grameen Bank Project was transformed into an independent bank by government legislation. Today Grameen Bank is owned by the rural poor whom it serves. Borrowers of the Bank own 90% of its shares, while the remaining 10% is owned by the government.

Grameen Bank 2.0

Grameen Bank has come a long way since it began its journey in the village of Jobra in 1976. During this quarter of a century it has faced many operational and organisational problems, gained a lot of experience through its successes and failures. It incorporated many new features in its methodology to address various crises and problems, or utilise new opportunities; discarded and modified the features which became unnecessary or less effective. There were a number of major

natural disasters in Bangladesh during the life span of Grameen Bank. The 1998 flood was the worst of all. Half of the country was under flood-water for ten long weeks... Grameen borrowers, like many other people of Bangladesh, lost most of their possessions including their houses because of the flood. Grameen Bank, which is owned by the borrowers, decided to take up a huge rehabilitation program by issuing fresh loans for restarting income-generating activities and to repair or rebuild their houses

In 1996 Grameen Bank won the Nobel Peace Prize.

(slightly amended from www.grameen-info.org)

So we have now suggested that being fair, co-operative and reciprocal is part of the human condition and that it is rather dumb to pretend it is not. And we have briefly explored some developed philosophical ideas about how this inherent capacity for an expanded care for yourself, others and Nature could be thought about.

But all this is still rather abstract and a bit difficult to 'carry around' with you as you go through your everyday creative life. The next two chapters try to pin all this science and philosophy down to some ideas for everyday personal conduct and concrete creative business engagements.

Chapter 5 – Everyday Skills in Care: Contact Lens



STORY

A Difficult Week Filled With Long Hours

It's 6.30pm on a Friday evening in the early spring, and Scott, who recently celebrated his fortieth birthday is about to leave work. Scott has had a difficult week filled with long hours and hair-raising stress. Scott, who is single, is now preparing to go out with some male friends to unwind and share war stories about the week that was. They plan to go to a Japanese restaurant for sushi and sake. As always, Scott and his friends will spend much of their time talking about career goals. All of them will complain about not making enough money; at least one will brag about a recent business coup. They will also compare notes on personal relationships. Afterwards, the men will stop by a club in the hope of meeting some women.

Scott and his friends do the same thing almost every week. On one level, they think of it as networking; on another it's male camaraderie. Tonight at about 2.00am Scott follows his typical pattern and starts to head home, alone, a little bit drunk, worrying about whether he is going to have a headache in the morning and if he has spent too much money. He will probably also feel a little bit depressed, a little bit lonely, and he'll have an overriding sense that the night was a waste of time – in fact, that much of what he does is a waste of time. Scott would like to change. But how? And in what direction?

It's as it always is, week in and week out. But this night, although he is thinking his usual thoughts something amazing happens: As Scott walks down a dimly lit street searching for his car, he taps the sensor button on his key chain and waits for the flashing light to lead him to his vehicle. But instead of seeing car lights, he hears the sound of low chanting and immediately becomes aware of an unusual sight. A yellow robed man is sitting in the lotus position under one visible street light, meditating and chanting. It's the Buddha. What is the Enlightened One doing here, and what is the wisdom that he can impart to Scott?

"Instead of wandering around in this dangerous jungle seeking a woman and some money, wouldn't it be far better to seek your true self?" asks the Buddha.

*(slightly adapted version from *Awaking the Buddha Within*, by Lama Surya Das)*

In fact, this is a modern version of the famous 2,500 year old tale about the origins of Buddhism. In the original story, the Buddha was sitting in the forest when a band of villagers came along looking for a woman who had stolen money from one of them. But the Buddha's question has as much meaning today as it did then. Should we be searching for meaning instead of chasing after temporary economic or sexual conquests within a repeating cycle of behaviour?

But how do any of us actually achieve this kind of change in our everyday personal conduct? Whilst the Big Ideas we have looked at so far might be interesting and useful, how do we find effective ways of bringing these ideas into the practicalities of our daily creative business lives? As we suggested at various points so far, this is your choice. We cannot tell you how to do this. Instead we will use

this chapter to suggest some 'intermediate' concepts that will hopefully help you to join the Big Ideas to everyday practice.

We will suggest intermediate ideas as part of the thinking about new spectacles for Juliette, as new contact points between your self, your creativity, your business and other people – as *new contacts lenses*.

In that sense, this chapter is about personal and professional development.

THE QUEST FOR GRACE

For Gregory Bateson the *quest for grace* comes from practical responses to lived experiences. It is a life-long journey full of wrong-turns and failures, involving the rejection of the self-delusions, self-created ghosts and fears we touched upon in the last chapter. It is akin to a quest in the literary sense of the word. It involves the coming together of being good and doing right, of a Pragmatic concern with consequences and a felt experience of other people.

QUOTATION

*In Steps to an Ecology of Mind, he describes it thus,
... for the attainment of grace, the reasons of the Heart must be integrated with the reasons of Reason.*

(from Steps to an Ecology of Mind, by G. Bateson)

For instance,

STORY

Domingo's Spectacles

Domingo's story is typical of the refusal to settle for the 'success' that dismembers the individual self... a postman in Mexico City for twenty years, he came to us to celebrate his recent promotion: selected from among six thousand colleagues to a rank a number few ever rise to in the postal hierarchy of Mexico, Designated Postal Inspector, he was ecstatic. However, just a few months later, he came to say good-bye. He had just resigned his new position...

'My family called me back. Once they learned that I was Postal Inspector, they had full proof of my reliability and sense of responsibility. They are honouring me as the municipal authority of the community for the next year. Therefore, I must return immediately. Yes, I am giving up all my privileges I have here. I will no longer enjoy the new status I have at work. I will not have my pension. But after all, what does that mean compared to being in my community as a responsible elder? Where will we find our community in Mexico City? What does it mean to

have a pension and institutional dependence in this urban desert? If I do well in fulfilling my functions in my village, and I assure you that I will do my best, I will be someone amongst my own people. That means being cared for till the day I die, after which my family will have our whole community's support. That is why I am going back to my people.'

(from *Grassroots Post-Modernism*, by G. Esteva and M. S. Prakask)

The grace of Domingo's spectacles that combine the reasons of the heart with the reasons of Reason draw our attention to its *courage*. In his book *The Courage to Be*, Paul Tillich shows how courage is at least in part a moral choice to re-affirm your self and what you want to be, for your self and loved ones. The idea of *eutrapelia* (translated as graceful playfulness) is linked to courage in a broader embrace of value-based creative purpose as it links graceful virtues to concrete creative action. This requires what Ivan Illich and Amartya Sen amongst others have called *practical Reason*.

Grace and courage as everyday facets of a value-based creative purpose and the expansion of care require that practice and Reason, action and thought combine.

PRACTICAL REASON: LOST AND RE-SEEN

But grace and practical Reason, that combine the reasons of the heart and the reasons of Reason, are in short supply today. It may be that we need to re-invent practical Reason as we devise our new spectacles.

Writing in the 14th Century, Ibn Khaldun wrote of *asabiyya* to refer to the spirit of human kinship and witnessed the growing decadence within the Institutions of power and control of the time as the denial of *asabiyya*.

QUOTATION

Whoever takes someone's property, or uses him for forced labour, or presses an unjustified claim upon him, it should be known that this is what the Lawgiver had in mind when he forbade injustice
(Ibn Khaldun)

The recent dramatic failings of the Big Institutions – banks, the Catholic Church, MP's, National Governments during the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, and industry's continued neglect of environmental responsibility show that some things have not changed that much.

QUOTATION

... the experts are knaves and fakers, the promise of unlimited material progress

and universal affluence is a lie, the economy is an inhuman machine operated by rogues and blunderers... the system is running out of control... (we need to) expand our conception of human personhood
(*Person/Planet: The Creative Destruction of Industrial Society*, by T. Roszak)

In terms of practical Reason, what is the role of creative business in reproducing this 'fakery'? In the future will creative businesses continue to be motivated by Celebrity Culture and celebrations of acquisitiveness? Will it be about creating 'objects of desire' to be passively consumed? Or will it strive to design encounters to encourage more active participation for all? Will it embrace the practical Reason of serving broader social and environmental needs within a more caring public sphere? That is, will creative businesses approach people as consumers, or will they strive to relate to people as citizens?

These are very big questions, and we do not claim to have any universal answers but we do believe that asking questions concerning practical applications of creative Reason can help.

The history of humanity's attempt to attain Reason is a very long one, but, as we draw ever closer to the ecological limits of our Planet, renewing this sense of practical Reason becomes an increasingly urgent aspect of ethical creative business.

Practical Reason might involve,

- practical Reason – new wisdom and attitudes for our current circumstances as human beings and members of society. Learning a new grammar of life is an urgent necessity
- practical Reason – artists, designers, writers and other creative professionals have the particular skills to create encounters that can help provide practical resources for a new public realm animated by ethical relationships

For instance,

THINKPIECE

For the Medieval mind, practical Reason is embodied in the Seven Work of Corporal Mercy, which were

*Feeding the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Clothing the naked
Sheltering the homeless
Visiting the sick
Visiting the prisoner
Burying the dead
And the accompanying Seven Works of Spiritual Mercy were
Instructing the ignorant*

*Counselling the doubtful
Admonishing the sinner
Bearing wrongs patiently
Forgiving offences willingly
Comforting the sorrowful
Praying for the living and the dead*

PROFESSIONAL SELF-REFLECTION FOR PRACTICAL REASON

In an attempt to pin this down a little more, we can borrow and slightly change Sandy Fraser's three overlapping aspects of professional self-reflection for developing practical Reason within creative business. Laid out in her book *The Critical Practitioner in Social Work and Health Care* they are,

- **Critical Analysis** – evaluating broad social, political and economic contexts leading to a recognition of broad social needs
- **Critical Reflexivity** – questioning personal assumptions and values to engage the self more fully and negotiate new forms of active engagement with things
- **Critical Action** – applying analysis and reflection to the practical possibilities of growing ethical standards and building them into on-going creative business strategies

This kind of professional self-reflection might help specific creative businesses to arrive at practical Reason as they develop,

- **Imagination within Critical Analysis** – imagine new possible reactions to broad critical evaluations
- **Awareness out of Critical Reflection** – finding new ways to relate one's creative motivations to the needs of others and Nature
- **Engagements through Critical Action** – providing practical ideas and resources for a just distribution of self-determination

Such professional self-reflection for practical Reason might help create a situation whereby,

QUOTATION

Technique would then tend to become art, and art would tend to become reality: the opposition between imagination and reason, higher and lower faculties, poetic and scientific thought, would be invalidated.

(from *Essay on Liberation* by H. Marcuse)

... the basis of practical reasoning must include ways of judging how to reduce injustice and advance justice, rather than aiming only at the (abstract) charac-

terisation of perfectly just societies.
(from *The Idea of Justice*, by A. Sen)

Practical Reason requires personal awareness for better contact lenses.

PERSONAL AWARENESS

In *Towards a Theory of Creativity* Carl Rogers highlights the complicated interplay between various personal motivations that aim at the public good and the outcomes of such intentions. For practical Reason to be played out through smart engagements with the World, good intentions are not always enough. Skills in understanding yourself and others are also needed.

QUOTATION

Many, perhaps most, of the creations and discoveries which have proved to have great social value have been motivated by purposes having more to do with personal interests than wider social value; while on the other hand history records a somewhat sorry outcome for many of those creations (various Utopias, Prohibitions etc.) which had as their avowed purpose the achievement of a social good... (if) the individual is denying (an) awareness... larger than areas of his experience, then his creative formings may be pathological or socially evil, or both. To the degree to which the individual is open to all aspects of his experience and has available to his awareness all the varied sensings and perceivings which are going on within his organism, then the novel products of his interaction with his environment will tend to be constructive both for himself and others.

(C. Rogers)

Pere Teilhard de Chardin's discusses such interactions between what he calls *the within* of personal spirit and the *the without* of the concrete material World. He suggests that the practical Reason of engaging with the material World and ethical judgements within it should be mutually informative as they both flow from and simultaneously lead to greater personal awareness if they combine effectively. The World makes you, and you make the World, better, if you get it right. In *The Phenomenon of Man*, he writes,

QUOTATION

Nowhere... is the need more urgent for building a bridge between the two banks of our experience – the physical and the moral – if we wish the material and spiritual sides of our activities to be mutually enlivened.

(from *The Phenomenon of Man*, by Teilhard de Chardin)

Too often traditional ideas of business encourage professionals to become stuck within self-oriented ways of thinking and working that deny this capacity for personal awareness. This can easily encourage a thoroughly bureaucratized attitude to the World such that an impersonalised professional mind-set becomes an end-in-itself and fails to deliver practical Reason. This calls on us all to recognise that personal and creative ways of seeing are also simultaneously ways of 'not seeing' other things.

In *Bureaucratic Structure and Personality*, Robert Merton writes,

QUOTATION

A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing... Actions based upon training and skills which have been successfully applied in the past may result in inappropriate responses under changed conditions... occupational psychosis rests upon much the same observation. As a result of their day to day routines, people develop special preferences, antipathies, discriminations and emphases... Adherence to the rules, originally conceived as a means, becomes transformed into an end-in-itself...
(R. Merton)

And it is easy for any of us to become individually prey to this creative business 'psychosis' and avoid personal awareness of the possibilities of practical Reason in our creative business life.

Back to the question of new spectacles for Juliette, Freudian psychology has a number of ways of accounting for personal ways of not seeing,

EXERCISE

Creative Business Psychosis

Are you sure that your creativity and business is not suffering from the following?

- **Repression** – burying thoughts, ideas and revelations
- **Denial** – a failure to admit
- **Displacement** – inappropriately transferring hostility and frustrations onto something or someone else
- **Fixation** – an over-adherence to one's own idea or view
- **Projection** – inappropriately directing feelings for oneself onto others
- **Introjection** – inappropriately directing feelings for others onto oneself
- **Rationalisations** – re-writing false accounts of the situation after the event
- **Reactive Formation** – changing an emotion into its opposite to avoid the consequences of that emotion
- **Regression** – adopting childish behaviour
- **Sublimation** – changing basic impulses into socially acceptable or 'respectable' reactions

- **Idealisation** – working to convince oneself that the best possible conditions already pertain in order to avoid the discomfort of recognition
- **Splitting** – falsely isolating elements that are really connected

Buddhism can also help with personal awareness.

QUOTATION

We want success so much that we give up our real lives; we want beautiful things so much that we only see the imperfections in what we have; we become so attached to others that we try to control or own them; we become so attached to something or somebody that we become totally dependent on them and forget who we are... Purifying oneself of pride and jealousy is essential in loosening and diminishing our ego-centred and incorrect view of reality...
(from *Awakening the Buddha Within*, by Lama Surya Das)

Western civilisation has only relatively recently come to appreciate what Buddhism can add to any thinking about the personal awareness needed at the heart of everyday ethical skill. It is way beyond our capabilities to give a full account of its practical relevance and beauty. But we couldn't ignore it. So with a large degree of humility, we wanted to say something about Buddhism.

Firstly, let's recognise that we don't have time to become Buddhist monks. But central to Buddhism are daily practices designed to bring greater personal awareness about the *what, why, how* and, indeed *if* questions of our lives. It is a way of being more constant in our ability to see the nature of our reality and to critically examine what we are thinking, experiencing and doing. When you breathe, experience yourself breathing. When you walk through a doorway, experience yourself walking through a doorway. Then maybe expand this, don't be worried *because* you are worried, upset *because* you are upset, jealous *because* you are jealous. These are just fleeting emotions and they will change. You can choose more useful and enjoyable emotions.

THINKPIECE

Buddhist Tips and Pointers

It terms of learning to bring greater personal awareness and clarity of thinking into your daily life, the Lama Surya Das offers the following daily practices – these are for 'immediate doing' rather putting off and/or thinking about doing later,

- Meditate
- Be aware/stay awake
- Bow

- Feel
- Breathe and smile
- Relax/enjoy/laugh/play
- Create/envision
- Let go/forgive/accept
- Walk/exercise/move
- Work/serve/contribute
- Listen/learn/inquire
- Consider/reflect
- Cultivate oneself/enhance competencies
- Cultivate contentment
- Cultivate flexibility
- Cultivate friendship and collaboration
- Open up/expand/include
- Lighten up
- Dream
- Celebrate and appreciate
- Evolve
- Love
- Share/give/receive
- Walk softly/live gently
- Expand/radiate/dissolve
- Simplify
- Surrender/trust

(from *Awakening the Buddha Within*, by Lama Surya Das)

Whilst we haven't got this far ourselves, we can tell you that through such daily practices Buddhism suggests we are enabled to see more clearly the negative impact of *The Three Poisons* or *Three Fires*,

- **Ignorance** – in its common forms of self-perpetuating delusions, confusions, fantasies and denials, ignorance is the fundamental barriers to personal awareness and the cause of the suffering you feel and that you sometimes cause others. Overcoming ignorance entails overcoming the false stories we tell ourselves
- **Attachment** – the only thing you can truly rely on is unpredictability. The only thing that truly stays constant is change. There is not point moaning about change because it will happen. Moaning about change because you are too attached to the way things currently are will only mean you end up being annoyed because you are annoyed. Don't get stuck within your attachments
- **Aversion** – ignorance and attachments tend to create frustrations that become anger, dislike, contempt and disgust towards bits of the World that we feel have let you down. We all do it – 'I hate him/her because...'; 'He/she/they make me sick because...'. Aversion only means that you focus upon emotions from The Dark Side when you could spend your time much more positively with bright emotions

Overcoming these *Three Poisons* is likely to lead to improving everyday skills in engaging with the public spaces of other people's lives. It is likely that developing personal awareness will enable more effective recognition and empathy.

Which brings us to,

RECOGNITION AND EMPATHY

Human beings have developed a sophisticated capacity for mutual recognition as part of a system of rewards (for being good and doing right) and sanctions (for being bad and doing wrong). On-going mutual recognition between people is needed for regular contact to occur, is a basic necessity for things like trust and respect to work, motivates voluntary restraints upon unnecessary competition and allows self-less behaviour such as altruism to become meaningful.

Mutual recognition is necessary for agreements about the common good to co-develop.

However, we might be in danger of losing it if the Dark Side takes hold and we lose our capacity for mutual practical Reason. For instance, Michael Sandel has argued that recognition is becoming rather watered down into passive concern to avoid the other person – to respect someone's space has too often come to mean leaving them well alone; to respect someone's rights has too often come to mean no engagement with them at all. Recognition and respect are becoming a passive lack of authentic relationship with other people. Hence all the stuff we hear about people bemoaning the 'loss of community'.

This is not good for proactive ethically skillful-ness. It might be that we need a more active sense of the other person and how we as individuals can be better ourselves through relationships – because as we have mentioned already ethics is best when it is based upon the recognition of relationships between people.

Perhaps we need a more active sense of *empathy*. In *I and Thou*, Martin Buber shows that to treat the Other as 'Thou' is to recognise their full person-hood. To treat the Other as 'It' is to lack true fellow feeling. And by choosing one or the other you say something about your own capacity for full humane-ness.

QUOTATION

If Thou is said, the I of the combination I-Thou is said along with it.

If It is said, the I of the combination I-It is said along with it.

The primary word I-Thou can only be spoken with the whole being.

The primary word I-It can never be spoken with the whole being...

If I face a human being as my Thou he is not a thing among things... The Thou meets me through grace.

(M. Buber)

Carl Rogers takes up this theme in *A Way of Being*, and suggests three elements to empathy,

- Congruence
- Caring
- Understanding

QUOTATION

In the ordinary circumstances of life – between marital and sex partners, between teachers and students, employers and employees, colleagues and friends – congruence is probably the most important element. Congruence, or genuineness, involves letting the other person know 'where you are' emotionally. It may involve confrontation and straightforward expression of personally owned feelings – both negative and positive. Thus, congruence is a basis for living together in a climate of realness.

But in certain other special situations, caring, or prizing, may turn out to be a significant element. Such situations include nonverbal relationships – between parents and infants, therapists and the mute psychotic, physicians and very ill patients – a nurturing climate in which delicate, tentative new thoughts and productive processes can emerge.

Then, in my experience, there are other situations in which the empathetic way of being has the highest priority. When the other person is hurting, confused, troubled, anxious, alienated, terrified, or when he or she is doubtful of self-worth, uncertain as to identity – then understanding is called for. The gentle and sensitive companionship offered by an empathetic person (who must of course, possess the other two attitudes) provides illumination and healing. In such situations deep understanding is, I believe, the most precious gift one can give to another .

(C. Rogers)

Laziness, short-term thinking and self-obsession are the opposites of empathy. For James Fynn emotional intelligence that underpins being better at empathy stems from concentrating upon 'the right habits of mind' devoted to both *understanding* and living out *obligations* beyond our own desires. There is a resonance between this emotional intelligence and broader ethical issues so far discussed in that both ask us to be more personally aware when dealing with real situations in real, practical, friendly and wholehearted ways.

For instance, from the 'hard-nosed' business world,

CASE STUDY

Little Big Things

Tom Peters is a famous business guru who over the past 30 years has worked with

the major global business corporations and written many best selling business books.

You might expect him to be a macho, hard-nosed business guy who wears a suit to work everyday. Maybe he does do that, but he also sees the simple act of kindness as a key element in business success. As he says himself,

Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind...

... Hard (as in being unkind) is Soft (as in not clever): Soft (being gentle wherever possible) is Hard (difficult, but very worthwhile)...

... If good business is built on great people and superb relationships... then it is built upon a bedrock of decency, thoughtfulness, empathic listening and mummings of appreciation.

For Peters, the importance of kindness, and by extension a general ethical attitude for business can be summed up by the equation

$$K = R = P$$

$$\text{Kindness} = \text{Repeat Business} = \text{Profitability}$$

*And empathy can be fundamental to everyday skills in expanding care. In *An Intimate History of Humanity*, Theodore Zeldin tells a story,*

STORY

A murder condemned to life in prison was pardoned and returned home. He found his wife lying with another man, and a son who did not know him. He saw his life as a failure and decided to end it. Whilst preparing himself to die he met a monk and told his story.

'I can do nothing for you' said the monk.. 'I gave up my inheritance and can give you nothing. You want to die, but before you kill yourself, come and give me a hand with my work. Afterwards, you can do what you like'.

These words changed the murderer's world. At last he was no longer disposable. He agreed to help and later said to the monk,

'If you had given me money, or a room, or a job, I would have restarted my life of crime and killed myself or someone else. But you needed me'.

When faced with this person in distress, the monk gave nothing but asked for something instead. This is how Abbe Pierre's Emmaus Movement works.

*(slightly amended from *An Intimate History of Humanity*, by T. Zeldin)*

How can empathy be taken into creative business? Aldo van Eyck shows one way,

CASE STUDY

'Blind Spots or Empathy in Architecture – In-Betweening

The dominant approach to urban re-design is often based upon large-scale master plans that create 'blind spots' which forget the spaces that people have related to for generations.

In contrast to this approach the architectural work of Aldo van Eyck was inspired by the idea of 'in-betweening' borrowed from the ethical philosophy of Martin Buber. Buber believed that dialogue between people, and the 'between' realm was the key to developing the common good.

Van Eyck focussed upon dialogue between people as the basis for his work.

One might say that community formed the core of... (this) humanist approach to architecture. And because he was above all concerned with the community, for him the plan of the building was its most important dimension. He conceived it that way, as a means of ensuring the building would contain meeting places... It placed the emphasis on buildings as means for creating relationships between people rather than as goals in themselves

(From Aldo van Eyck: Humanist Rebel – in-Betweening in a Post War World, by L. Lefaivre and A. Tzonis)

It is perhaps not surprising given van Eyck's commitment that he put these ideas into practice most effectively by constructing children's playgrounds – 734 of them in left-over bomb-sites in immediate post-War Amsterdam. He was very conscious of the parallels between effectively using these 'blind spots' for his in-betweening architecture and the lack of voice that children all too often have.

Van Eyck worked to put into physical form a collective empathy rooted in the 'everydayness' of people's lives. Rather than insisting on abstract plans, van Eyck's work took its cue from, in his own words 'ordinary language', 'real circumstances', 'lived-in conditions', 'experienced cases' and 'immediate contexts'.

DIGNITY AND HUMILITY

Witness the person returning home from a Florida holiday which a hurricane had hit

'My holiday was completely ruined. I am not happy about this, I want to know what the Government is going to do about it!'

No, it was a hurricane! And anyway it doesn't work like that.

In contemporary society, this culture of 'entitlement' – the whole '...you are worth it...' thing is a facet of the more general consumerist culture of acquisition that chips away at more a dignified and humble attitude towards the World. Constant clamouring for what we can individualistically 'get' intrudes into everyday ethical skill. It is perhaps in our care-less relationship towards Nature that we have most clearly demonstrated our common neglect of dignity and humility.

In *To Have or To Be*, Erich Fromm recounts the differing reactions of two poets towards a flower in order to describe the acquisitiveness that lacks dignity and humility in favour of acquisitive-ness.

THINKPIECE

Tennyson writes,

*Flower in a crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand...*

Basho's haiku poem is,

*When I look carefully
I see the nazuna blooming
By the hedge*

Of this Fromm writes,

Tennyson reacts to the flower by wanting to have it. He plucks it 'roots and all'... The flower itself is killed as a result of his interaction with it. Basho... does not even touch it. All he does is 'look carefully' to 'see' it.

(from To Have or To Be, by E. Fromm 1976. P. 30)

The process of 'otherisation', whereby certain groups create an identity out of differences creates distance and, disparegements between groups is a common social form of indignity and false pride. It is rife within the creative and cultural world. In *What Good Are the Arts?* John Carey exposes the lack of dignity and humility too often found in the World of creative people,

QUOTATION

... persuad(ing) yourself that other people – because of their low tastes or their lack of education or their racial origins or their transformation into androids by the mass media – are not fully human, or not in the elevated sense that you are fully human yourself.

(J. Carey)

Overcoming the ludicrous self-obsession of our Florida holiday-maker involves overcoming the common tendency to put our selves and our personal woes at the centre of the Universe. To treat others with authenticity, awareness, recognition and empathy involves lessening the importance one attaches to oneself. This is not easy but it is perhaps useful for developing effective contact lenses. This is close to the original meaning of *stoicism*, developed by the Stoic philosophers of ancient Greece. Epictetus speaks of this when he writes,

QUOTATION

The proper goal of our activity is to practice how to remove from one's life... cries of 'alas' and 'poor me'

(Epictetus)

Stoic philosophers made a distinction between what is *within* and what is *beyond* our power to influence. They believed that we should learn to accept with 'fortitude' what is beyond our power to change and things beyond this should not be used as a platform for blame of our selves or others when things go wrong. Striving to overcome feelings of anger, guilt or failure about things over which we have no influence is part of dignified personal conduct. But this does not mean they advocated a fatalistic acceptance of the ways things were. They believed that dignified acceptance of what is beyond our power to change helped to re-direct attention towards that which we can change. This encourages us to develop a sense of 'orderliness' from which to develop our ethical creativity.

For instance, the postscript to *If This is a Man*, by Primo Levi includes the following encounter,

THINKPIECE

Question – *In (your) books there are no expressions of hate for the Germans. No desire for revenge. Have you forgiven them?*

Answer – *I believe in Reason and in discussion as supreme instruments of progress... I prefer justice. Precisely for this reason, when describing the terrible events of Auschwitz, I have deliberately assumed the calm, sober language of the witness... I have not forgiven any of the culprits, nor am I willing to forgive, unless he has shown that he has become conscious of his crimes... an enemy who sees the error of his ways ceases to be an enemy.*

(P. Levi)

But this kind of dignity and humility, within a lived sense of practical Reason can contribute to everyday ethical skill and a value-based creative purpose for expanded care.

For instance,

GLOBAL LESSON

Ram Chandra and the \$28 Foot By Tim McGirk

People who live inside the World's many war zones, from Afghanistan to Rwanda, may never have heard of New York or Paris, but they are likely to know of a town in northern India called Jaipur. Jaipur is famous in strife-torn areas as the birthplace of an extraordinary prosthesis, or artificial limb, known as the Jaipur foot, that has revolutionized life for millions of land-mine amputees.

The beauty of the Jaipur foot is its lightness and mobility -those who wear it can run, climb trees and pedal bicycles- and its low price. While a prosthesis for a similar level of amputation can cost several thousand dollars in the U.S., the Jaipur foot costs only \$28 in India. Sublimely low-tech, it is made of rubber (mostly),

wood and aluminum and can be assembled with local materials. In Afghanistan craftsmen hammer the foot together out of spent artillery shells. In Cambodia, where roughly 1 out of every 380 people is a war amputee, part of the foot's rubber components are scavenged from truck tyres.

The inventors of the Jaipur foot seem a mismatched pair. Dr. Pramod Karan Sethi, 70, an orthopedic surgeon, is a fellow of Britain's Royal College of Surgeons, while his collaborator, an artisan named Ram Chandra, reached only the fourth grade in Jaipur. Their paths first crossed more than 30 years ago at the Sawai Man Singh Hospital in Jaipur. There, Sethi was helping his orthopedic patients wobble down the corridor on their crutches, and Chandra was teaching lepers to make handicrafts...

When the two met, the Sawai Man Singh Hospital was turning out only five or six artificial limbs a year, mostly for people injured in road and train accidents, and a few of the wealthier patients wore American-model limbs. Both were too expensive for the common man, and neither permitted very much mobility. Besides, as Sethi explains, the old artificial limb was a cultural misfit not just for Indians but for people in most developing countries. "We sit, eat, sleep and worship on the floor – all without shoes," he says. Also, the "shoe" attached to the old limb was made of heavy sponge, making it worthless for any farmer working in the rain or in irrigated paddies.

Watching Sethi's patients, Chandra became convinced that he could fashion a more lifelike -and useful- artificial limb. He took his proposals to Sethi, who explained to the barely literate craftsman about pressure points and the intricate movements of bones within the foot. For two years, the two men fashioned limbs out of willow, sponges and aluminum molds, but their experiments failed. Their choices proved to be either too fragile or too unwieldy. "We made all kinds of silly mistakes," says Sethi.

Then one day, while riding his bicycle to the hospital, Chandra ran over a nail, and his tyre went flat. He wheeled his bicycle to a roadside stall, where the repairman was busy retreading a truck tire with vulcanized rubber. Once his bicycle was fixed, Chandra raced to the hospital and consulted with Sethi. Soon Chandra returned to the tyre shop with an amputee patient and a foot cast. He asked the repairman if he could cast a rubber foot. "He agreed," Sethi says, "and refused to accept any money once he found out why we were doing it."

Rubber alone was not good enough; it shredded within a few days. It was only after Chandra and Sethi began to construct the rubber foot around a hinged wooden ankle -wrapping it in a lighter rubber (similar to a bicycle inner tube but flesh colored) and then vulcanizing this composite- that their invention succeeded. The resulting limb takes only 45 minutes to build and fit onto the patient and is sturdy enough to last for more than five years. Sethi says of his partner, "We had a lot of opposition from formally trained doctors. In a way, someone who's not so educated is much more free..."

From 1968 to 1975 only 59 patients were outfitted with the Jaipur foot, but the use of the new limb spread outside India during the Afghan war, which began in the late 1970s. Russian land mines -some diabolically shaped like butterflies

to attract curious children- caused thousands of injuries, and the International Committee of the Red Cross discovered that the Jaipur foot was the hardest limb for the mountainous Afghan terrain.

Since then, countless land-mine victims in many countries have been fitted with the Jaipur foot. "Western aid agencies have helped millions of amputees, and they've found that they can't do it as cheaply as with the Jaipur foot," says Sethi. In India most of the 72,000 amputees wearing the prosthesis were migrant laborers injured while trying to hitch free rides by clinging to train roofs and windows. During their long journeys to the harvests, many of these workers slipped off the trains and were run over...

At his Delhi workshop, where he has been developing above-the-knee artificial limbs, Chandra points out a little girl whose leg was severed in a bus crash. "People said I would be a rich man if we had patented the Jaipur foot, but it's enough satisfaction for me to see the joy on that girl's face when she walks again." He adds, "I'm still learning from my patients. I haven't done anything yet..."

He dresses in a simple white dhoti and lives frugally. "I only need money for the barber and occasionally the tailor," he says, laughing. He rises at 4:30 a.m., milks his cow and prays until breakfast time. Only then does he resume his ongoing effort to improve the Jaipur foot and create new artificial limbs that will be as real and useful as humanly possible.

(from The \$28 Foot, by T. McGirk, at www.time.com)

All this then brings us to,

LESS EGO: FRIENDSHIP, SOLIDARITY AND CONVIVIALITY

For Aristotle 'genuine friendship' is central to an ethical relationship because it is 'grounded in good' and goes deeper into mutual responsibility than that the 'shallow' convenience of less wholehearted forms of associations. Aristotle thought of genuine friendships as 'completed' because their '...goal is wholly within the relationship itself' and not 'merely an instrument for some other or further end' situated somewhere within the individual ego. Echoing this, and some of the ecological evidence we looked at in Chapter 3, Bertrand Russell sees our capacity to love and the need to be beloved as an urgent and felt human need.

QUOTATION

... love is able to break down the hard shell of the ego, since it is a form of biological co-operation in which the emotions of each are necessary to the fulfilment of the other's instinctive purposes

(from The Conquest of Happiness, by B. Russell)

The felt experiences of love central to human existence highlight the weaknesses of the more mainstream theories of ethics that hold out the possibility that every-day ethical skill will stem from the internal dynamic of the isolated individual.

QUOTATION

in the sense that the good is supposed to be something realisable in each separate person... All such views, to my mind, are false, and not only in ethical theory, but as expressions of the better part of our instincts. Man depends upon co-operation, and has been provided by nature, somewhat inadequately, it is true, with the instinctive apparatus out of which the friendliness required for co-operation can spring. Love is the first and commonest form of emotion leading to co-operation...

(from The Conquest of Happiness, by B. Russell)

Authenticity, personal awareness, empathy, dignity and humility do not reside in individual bearing but in personal conduct in and through relationships. These personal quests for grace can only truly succeed if others have dignity too. As Andre Gorz once said, 'your dignity rests upon the dignity of others'

For ethical creative business motivated by an expansion of care, humble actions designed to bring dignity to others within the public realm are probably needed. For instance, Richard Rogers' discussion of urban re-design in *Cities for a Small Planet* and *Cities for a Small World* include the call for urban design to enshrine the possibility for a more dignified urban environment for all.

GLOBAL LESSON

Curitiba: The City and Quality of Life

Curitiba, a Brazilian city of 1.5 million residents, once suffered from the usual problems of rapid expansion and desperate shanty towns, but has now emerged as leader among sustainable cities. It has made sustainability and citizen participation the guiding principles of its daily life and the environment its priority. During his term as Curitiba's mayor architect Jamie Lerner tackled its problems with broad policies. As the shanty towns were mostly contained on the banks of the city's river and lacked formal roads, garbage remained uncollected and became enormous fetid piles on the river banks. The rivers as a consequence were stripped of vegetation and contaminated with raw sewage. Lerner introduced a range of schemes aimed at drawing in the participation of the shanty-dwellers to solve these problems. He offered transport tokens to adults, and books and food to children, in exchange for bags of rubbish delivered to the local dumps... The mostly unemployed shanty-dwellers are now given opportunities to sell their own crafts and produce in specially built non-corporate shopping centres introduced by the mayor. They can obtain benefits such as food, rent, education and health care in

exchange for their labour... The showpiece of Curitiba and Lerner's vision is the transformation of the city's defunct quarries into a landscaped cultural centre. He has commissioned three financially modest but inspiring cultural projects. One quarry contains the 'university of the environment', built within a circular structure of reclaimed telegraph poles; here schoolchildren and their teachers follow specific courses explaining the principles and tangible results of urban sustainability... Curitiba is robust rather than beautiful, but Lerner's urban agenda has created a genuine spirit of participation amongst its citizens...

(from *Cities for a Small Planet*, by R. Rogers)

The concept of a sustainable city recognises that the city needs to meet our social, environmental, political and cultural objectives and well as our economic and physical ones. It is a dynamic organism as complex as the society itself and responsive enough to react swiftly to its changes. The sustainable city is a city of many facets;

- **A Just City** where justice, food, shelter, education, health and hope are fairly distributed and where all people participate in government
- **A Beautiful City**, where art, architecture and landscape spark the imagination and move the spirit
- **A Creative City**, where open-mindedness and experimentation mobilise the full potential of its human resources and allows a fast response to change
- **An Ecological City**, which minimises its ecological impact, where landscape and built form are balanced and where buildings and infrastructure are safe and resource-efficient
- **A City of Easy Contact**, where the public realm encourages community and mobility and where information is exchanged both face-to-face and electronically
- **A Compact and Polycentric City**, which protects the countryside, focuses and integrates communities within neighbourhoods and maximises proximity
- **A Diverse City**, where a broad range of overlapping activities create animation, inspiration and foster a vital public life

(from *Cities for a Small Country*, by R. Rogers)

If the capacity for everyday ethical skills is tied in some way to relationships then how can we develop a heightened sense of them by establishing spaces of attentiveness and sensitivity in and through *solidarity*?

In *What is Good*, A.C. Grayling suggests that the creative spirit tends to be naturally open to an attitude of solidarity that comes from a sense of fellow feeling,

QUOTATION

... an attitude of appreciation and mindfulness, especially mindful of beauty, as central to a life well lived... in which the World and our experiences of it are good things in themselves, and in which, when life is lived with attentiveness and sen-

sitivity – an intellectual as well as sensory attentiveness that can be educated by practice... it is not a long step from such an attitude to one in which attentiveness and sensitivity to others makes the life of the community good too; and it is hard to imagine such an attitude of mind being anything but tolerant and full of fellow feeling.

(A. C. Grayling)

Ivan Illich adds the idea of *conviviality* as a facet of these new spectacles that enable us to re-see relationships of solidarity. He defines conviviality as,

QUOTATION

...the autonomous and creative intercourse between persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment.... I consider conviviality to be individual freedom realised in personal interdependence and, as such, an intrinsic value

(from *Tools fo Conviviality*, by I. Illich)

It is important for Illich to note that conviviality can be practiced. By 'practiced', we mean both repeat attempts until we become good at it, and the bringing of solidarity and conviviality into the centre of on-going creative business based upon practical Reason, public authenticity and personal awareness. The contact lenses of solidarity and conviviality helps us to re-see,

QUOTATION

... what we must do to use mankind's power to create the humanity, the dignity and the joyfulness of each one of us... We can only live these changes: we cannot think our way to humanity. Every one of us, and every group with which we live and work, must become the model of the era which we desire to create.

(from *Celebration of Awareness*, by I. Illich)

Housing is one of the biggest material problems we all face. If we can do housing through becoming models of solidairty and conviviality, we could probably do most other things.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Convivial Housing

The name of the late Walter Segal is now synonymous with self-build housing. Whenever people meet to discuss what they could do to house themselves,

someone mentions the Segal system of quickly-built, timber-framed dwellings which are environmentally friendly, and seem to generate friendship among the self-build groups that have succeeded in housing themselves this way. The attraction increases when we learn that they include men and women with every kind of background, and they often say that the experience changed their lives.

The heartbreaks and delays that self-builders experience are not to do with the process of building itself, but, as Walter Segal used to observe, are the result of the inflated price of land, the rigidities of planning and building controls, and the difficulty of getting mortgage loans for anything out of the ordinary. They are all made worse by the assumption of both regulatory authorities and providers of finance, that a house should be a full-finished product right from the start, rather than a simple basic structure that grows over time as needs grow and as labour and income can be spared. Segal's achievement was to devise a way of simplifying the process of building so that it could be undertaken by anyone, cheaply and quickly. He insisted that his was an approach, not a system, and he made no claims for originality or patents.
(from *Walter Segal: Community Architect* by Colin Ward)

Working with engineer Peter Rice, we (Richard Rogers' practice) developed a light-weight structural panel system using composites of re-cycled plastics and sheet metals. The basic elements of the system was a single residential unit 'box', the size of a standard (shipping) container, which could be assembled as low-rise, courtyard or high-rise configurations. Buyers would design the layout of their apartment, select the fittings and review the design on a computer-generated model...

Contrasting with these high-technology processes, emergency housing was developed in Kobe, Japan, by the architect/engineer Shigeru Ban, using humble everyday materials and production techniques. The load-bearing system of walls, roofs and floors consisted of cardboard tubes made from recycled paper. A house for four people can be erected in six hours... The exploded view of the dwelling (shows) beer crate foundations, timber plank floors, cardboard tube walls and structure, and canvass roof...
(from *Cities for a Small Planet*, by R. Rogers)

Even more 'low-tech', or maybe 'appropriate tech', Papanek describes house building in North African desert-filled countries. The one thing they have plenty of in these countries is sand. To construct the dwelling, a large mound of sand is collected, channels down several sides of the mound, ending in a hole in the ground are dug. A form of adobe cement is used to fill each of the channels and the holes at their ends. When the adobe is set, the mound is simply dug away leaving the structure which can then be 'roofed' as and when required with animal skins and anything else that might come to hand. Because of the local climate, these and other mud-built buildings have lasted for hundreds of years

And this case study brings us to,

SIMPLICITY

The idea of simplicity as a lack, as an absence of plenty, as austerity, has taken a cultural hold. However, when discussing 'voluntary simplicity' in *Tools for Conviviality*, Ivan Illich exposes the inadequacy of this current view,

QUOTATION

'Austerity'... has been degraded and has acquired a bitter taste... (but Thomas Aquinas) defines 'austerity' as a virtue which does not exclude all enjoyments, but only those which are distracting of personal relatedness. For Thomas 'austerity' is a complementary part of a more embracing virtue which he calls friendship... it is the fruit of an apprehension that things or tools could destroy rather than enhance eutrapelia (graceful playfulness) in personal relations.
(from *Tools for Conviviality*, By I. Illich)

Far from leaving a 'bitter taste', a reflection upon simplicity suggests a component for our broader everyday ethical skills. As Ernst Schumacher suggests in *Buddhist Economics*,

QUOTATION

It is not wealth that stands in the way of liberation but the attachment to wealth; not the enjoyment of pleasurable things but the craving for them. The keynote of Buddhist economics, therefore, is simplicity and non-violence. From an economist's point of view, the marvel of the Buddhist way of life is the utter rationality of its pattern – amazingly small means leading to extraordinary satisfying results
(from *Buddhist Economics*, by E.F. Schumacher)

In *Stone Aged Economics*, Marshall Sahlins contrasts the un-Reason of Western acquisition-based cultures with the practical Reason of more 'primitive' gift economies that ensure an intimate intertwining of material exchange and solidarity. He highlights the 'affluence without abundance' simplicity of these lives based upon movement and the portability of possessions. For these people an 'abundance' of material possessions are experienced as lack of freedom, as figuratively and literally a 'burden' to be carried. Simplicity-based gift economies are animated by a 'Want Not, Need Not' ethic of convivial solidarity where the Western ghosts of 'scarcity' and individualism have less purchase.

QUOTATION

...it was not until culture neared the height of its material achievements that it

erected a shrine to the Unattainable: Infinite Needs.... The transfer of things that are in some degree persons and of persons in some degree treated as things, such as the consent at the base of organised society. The gift (on the other hand) is alliance, solidarity, communion – in brief peace.
(M. Sahlins)

And we are beginning to witness all manner of experiments in sustainable simplicity within more contemporary creative business.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Sustainable Partying

The average nightclub, with sound systems pumping and lights blazing three times a week, consumes 150 times more energy than a four-person family every year, according to Enviu, an environmental non-profit organization that's bringing green design to the dance floor—literally. The Netherlands-based group's research into sustainable partying has yielded plans for the world's first eco-club, which will use some fancy physics footwork to pump its dancers' energy back in to the house.

When clubbers press down on the spring-loaded floor, it dips about 2 cm and activates a flywheel, which starts to capture the kinetic energy of their bumping and grinding and convert it to electricity, similar to the electro-mechanical process of a handcrank or bicycle-back LED light. In fact, an early version of the floor used the stored power to light LEDs under tiles of the glass surface (at least 11 watts each) and let testers see sustainability in action. But the ultimate goal is to lose that gimmick and feed the main power grid of a club, says Michel Smit, general director of the Sustainable Dance Club project. Although the floor may never be able to power an entire club by itself, he added, its design could pave the way for the power-sucking nightlife industry to shore up its heating and cooling systems,

shore up its heating and cooling systems. Enviu even wants to convert dancer's sweat so it can flush a club's toilets.

(from Eco-Disco: Self Sufficient Dance Floor to Power First Green Nightclub, on www.popularmechanics.com)

So we come back to where we started this chapter, the quest for grace. The grace to be found in simplicity is made clear by Alan Durning in his article *Are We Happy Yet?*

QUOTATION

For those who choose to live simply, the goal is not ascetic self-denial, but a sort of unadorned grace. Some come to feel, for example, that clotheslines, window shades, and bicycles have a functional elegance that clothes dryers, air conditioners, and automobiles lack. These modern devices are silent, manually operated, fireproof, ozone and climate-friendly, easily repaired and inexpensive...

In the final analysis, accepting and living by sufficiency rather than excess offers a return to what is, culturally speaking, the human home: to the ancient order of family, community, good work, and good life; to a reverence for skill, creativity, and creation; to a daily cadence slow enough to let us watch the sunset and stroll by the water's edge; to communities worth spending a lifetime in; and to local places pregnant with the memories of generations

(A. Durning)

These contact lenses, building on the ecological and philosophical discussions in the previous chapters suggest some 'intermediate' concepts that begin to link Big Theory to personal and public conduct. But now let's turn to even more practical, concrete thinking and look at how some of these ideas might be pinned down into professional attitudes and creative business actions.

Chapter 6 – A Transformative Moment: A Business Lens



STORY

Asoka, Beloved of the Gods

We do not know when Asoka, the great Indian king and Beloved of the Gods ascended to the throne or how long he reigned. Kosambi places his accession in about 270BC. J.F. Fleet maintains... that his anointment was on 25th April 264BC. Some scholars take 269BC as the year of his accession. According to Thapar's calculations, Asoka was probably around thirty-four years old when he gained power...

In the early years of his reign (Asoka) had a grim reputation of being cruel and vindictive. But one day it so happened that a holy sage unwittingly entered Asoka's palace and was at once seized by jailers. They cast him into a seething cauldron of filth, beneath which a great fire was kindled. But the sage miraculously remained unscathed by the great fire. When this was reported to Asoka, he came to witness this marvel, and was immediately converted by the sight, and the preaching of the sage.

No monarch had ever set himself nobler goals, or worked harder to achieve them than Asoka after his conversion. His entire value system underwent a radical change when he became such an earnest Buddhist. Asoka gave to governance something different from Arthashastra, which was solely concerned with administrative efficiency in promoting the power of the King, without any regard for the welfare of the people, or any consideration whatever for ethical values.

"Work I must for the welfare of all the folk, and for that energy and dispatch of business are essential. It is hard to obtain happiness in this World and the next without utmost love for dharma (freedom through enlightenment), utmost self-examination, utmost obedience, utmost fear of sin, and utmost effort" said Asoka.

And he insisted that all his court officials, all his officers and all those who did his works followed these policies towards expanding dharma,

"You are in charge of thousands of living beings. You should win their affection. Reflect on it well. You should strive to practice justice. But this is not possible for one who is envious, lacks perseverance, is cruel and heedless, wants application, is lazy and slack. Ill performance of duty can never gain my regard".

Asoka turned towards criminals with a humane face that asked them to seek dharma. He sought to speak well to all people. He went of tours to neighbouring countries to propagate dharma. He established dharma on pillars and other edicts in the common language of the people so that all could hear the good news of their possible attainment of dharma. He exhorted people to live sensibly and with responsibility. It was good sense and practicality that marked Asoka's edicts, not religious fervour. He was only concerned with what would benefit the individual, society, and the state. He ended the killing of animals for sacrifice and called towards ahimsa, non-violence towards all nature.

"Everywhere two kinds of medical services have been instituted by Asoka, for the treatment of man and for the treatment of beasts. And wherever they were no herbs that are beneficial to men and to beasts, everywhere they were cause to

be brought and planted; similarly, roots and fruits, wherever lacking, have been planted. On the highways I have had banyan trees planted, to give shade to beasts and men, and I have had mango-groves planted, and I have had wells dug and rest houses built at every half-kos (about 4 km). And numerous watering-places have been provided by me here and there for the comfort of man and beast"

(slightly amended from Gem in the Lotus: The Seeding of Indian Civilisation, by Abraham Eraly)

How do we respond to Ashoka's examples? How do we apply the ideas we have discussed so far to the specifics of creative business? Are there specific ways that a business lens might help with strategies for everyday ethical thought and action? This is what we want to explore in this chapter.

But before we get into the details of that, let's stand back and recognise that we are living, working and doing business within the context of the Big Economy and the fact that it is a time of dramatic change.

THE BIG ECONOMY: WHAT IS AND WHAT OUGHT TO BE

Since 2008 some big Big Economy and Big Politics things have started to change,

- The continued failures of the Big Economy and Big Politics to adequately address ecological problems becomes more and more obvious as the need for solutions becomes more and more urgent
- The basic logic and assumptions of the Big Economy have been dramatically shown to be over-blown and in some cases false
- The balance of global economic power is shifting fast away from the West and towards China, India and Brazil
- Western governments seem to have forgotten about laissez faire economics and have renewed calls for a more regulated global economy due to the challenges represented by these emerging countries, because it now suits their interests
- The fetish for Markets as the only tool for all forms of social, economic and cultural co-ordination is increasingly seen as irrational
- The Banking Sector, for years the most gung-ho representative of Free Market Global Capitalism has become a basket case because of its internal irrationality and greed
- Establishment social institutions have been shown to be inept, untrust-worthy and in some cases corrupt
- As Corporate pay and Bankers bonuses increase exponentially, the Professional Politicians who bailed out these 'Casino Banks' try to claim 'fairness' as they work to 'balance the books' through cuts to Welfare Spending that the poorest in society rely upon the most

The inauthenticity, bad faith and general ethical bankruptcy of the Big Economy seems to know no limits.

On the other hand,

- Ecological consciousness is growing and increasing numbers of people put the search for ecological solutions at the top of their list of social and political priorities
- A black man has become President of the USA, which 10 years earlier would have seemed utterly impossible
- Micro-experiments in alternative economics, new forms of solidarity and conviviality are being developed, especially in the developing World
- Western cultural values are shifting such that many people are thinking about their 'quality of life' in terms of cultural, spiritual and emotional factors rather than their 'standard of their living' measured purely through the consumerist trappings of 'affluence'
- The Web allows people to co-create their own culture(s) independently, away from the gatekeepers of the Big Business of Culture
- Technological changes are opening up new economic relationships and business models for cultural production, distribution and exchange and are leading to the 'democratization of creativity' found in spaces such as the Open Source Movement

It is far too early to know what the outcomes of these Big Economy, Political and Cultural changes will be, and no doubt Establishment institutions will work tirelessly to contain fundamental change. It is difficult for individual people to realise solutions to the Big Economy and ecological issues by themselves. But nevertheless, as Big Economy continues to re-consolidate 'business as usual' after their dramatic collapse of Reason, the everyday cultural lives of many people seem to be heading in the opposite direction and turning more consciously to questions of values and ethics in their relationship to their own lives, each other and Nature.

QUOTATION

There are,
... *two contradictory hypotheses; (1) that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future; (2) that forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society*
(from *One Dimensional Man*, by Herbert Marcuse)

We may have reached a *transformative moment*.

As with the question raised at the beginning of this book concerning business, the transformative moment starts to raise really big questions about what the Big Economy is *for* –not how it works and what is likely to happen to it in the next quarter according to the latest economists who are just making educated guesses based upon shonky statistics– but what it is actually **for**.

It raises fundamental questions about how we are going to organise our-selves

to produce and distribute the basic wherewithal for life, ensure social responsibility and justice, carry out business and create culture. Creative business is no exception, and can usefully ask itself,

- What gets produced?
- How and why?
- Who gets it? And perhaps more importantly...
- Who doesn't get it, and why not?
- What proportion of creative business is to be about the Public Good?
- What relationship does the creative business world want to have with broader issues of social responsibility, usefulness and justice?

Such questions might throw up implications concerning learning new ways of producing, distributing and exchanging to be able to work more effectively during this transformation; envisaging more flexible and network-based creative businesses able to re-see transformations as opportunities and drive them forward; the development of new business models and ways of getting paid. It might raise fundamental questions about whether traditional notions of commercial success within the Big Economy are sufficient motivation. It might end with questions concerning the extent to which creative business is about working in the Big Economy as it '*already is*' or with articulations about what it '*ought to be*'.

Values and ethics as we have explored them so far will probably need to figure quite largely in this thinking about possible transformations specific to creative business.

Such as,

EXERCISE

- Is creative business to be about pursuing commercial successes come what may because 'business is business'?
- How is it going to balance the sometimes competing demands of creativity, business and issues of responsibility and justice?
- Does it stick to the professional codes of ethics that have been devised by others as a basic ethical 'back-stop' for creative business?
- Is it about searching for more proactive ethical positions for creative business?
- Does creative business try to live with ethical dimensions in mind and do its best whenever particular creative business situations arise?

Is your creative business something for you as an individual or does it embody dimensions of a bigger debate about practical Reason, public authenticity and personal awareness that asks questions about what creativity, business and the economy ought to be for?

There are no easy answers to such questions, at least we do not have any. It is your choice. But it is perhaps the Ultimate Choice for creative business. For instance,

CASE STUDY

Do we do what someone in power tells us to do if we think it is wrong, or do we refuse to carry out the command, even if it means that we personally pay for such a decision? Ethics can help us weigh the different courses of action we might take in such situations, since all too often the right course of action can lead, at least in the short term to personal inconvenience or even hardship... That is why ethics and design (creativity at large) have such a critical role in the coming decades. While we may seem far removed from the work of environmental scientists or public-policy specialists, the real change will happen with a change in our thinking and in our actions on a daily basis. Ethics helps us to see the world from other vantage points, with the interests and values of others in mind, and to do what we know is right, regardless of the resistance to it, by taking the needs of the most vulnerable always into account.

- Instead of superfluous form, make everything count
- Instead of quantities, focus upon qualities
- Instead of throwing away, reuse or recycle
- Instead of ignoring sources, attend to the source of everything
- Instead of consuming things, treat everything as sacred
- Instead of wanting more, seek doing with less
- Instead of expensive, focus upon affordability
- Instead of exclusivity, provide everyone a space
- Instead of cutting us off from Nature, connect us to it
- Instead of reducing ecological diversity, improve it
- Instead of creating objects, build community
- Instead of specialised things that can only have one use, make them multi-functional
- Instead of radical experiments, see everything in evolutionary terms
- Instead of focussing on abstractions, attend to what is real

(from *Architectural Design and Ethics*, ???? by T. Fisher)

GROWTH AND CONSUMPTION

But despite these global shifts in the Big Economy, the System still wants us to believe that they are the solution when clearly they have been, and continue to be, the problem. But this is leading to all sorts of fundamental questions about the very nature of our economic assumptions and the meaning of business. Perhaps

one of the biggest questions, one that is central to the transformative moment is the questioning of the inter-connected assumptions of everlasting economic growth and unlimited expansions in consumption of consumer stuff. These two assumptions have been the basic pillars upon which the Big System has formed economic policy and business strategies since at least the 1970s. This has led to 'growth fetishism', the idea that economic growth – having more and more production and spending no matter what that production and spending is about, is always a good thing and is the only thing we need to focus upon when we think about our economy and business.

One of the potential transformations that the current economic crisis has highlighted flows from recognising the truly bonkers nature of this growth fetishism. Is it beyond the wit of human beings to be make more rational decisions about what our economy is going to be for? Is it really beyond the Big Economy to recognise that nothing can grow in such an unlimited way? Do they really not see that there has to be a limit to growth and consumption simply because there are finite capacities within the natural environment?

The advocates of the Big Economy and Big Business do realise this. These ideas have been around for a long time now. It is just that they have responded in the deeply irrational way of pretending that it is not happening and carrying on with 'Business as Usual'. But the economic crisis and the deeper sense of cultural dissatisfaction with growth fetishism and the consumer culture that fuels it is now making this 'head in the sand' approach less possible. Even Big Voices from within the Big Economy are raising the questions. Transformative indeed!

Such Voices are beginning to say,

- our Big Economy has clearly lost all sense of Reason. The Big System is now in the one business of defending itself and reproducing itself. Banks are only interested in survival as they expose themselves to each other and then try to get their money back. They have lost touch with any sense of a 'culture of economic responsibility' and have become 'socially useless'
- that measuring a sense of economic well being and business success simply through the numbers involved in GDP, business turnover and the 'bottom line' is dumb. We need better, more intelligent ways of mutually discussing economic well being and business success such as quality of life, justice, economic security and experiences of happiness
- we cannot carry on with growth fetishism and consumerism anyway because we are fast reaching the ecological limits to it

But what does this mean for creative business?

Economists traditionally talk about two kinds of economic growth,

- extensive growth – the growth that comes from bringing more and more raw materials, people, energy etc into the economic effort of a town, region or country. This is the kind of economic growth that China and India are going through right now. They are growing because there is simply *more economy* about

- intensive growth – this is economic growth that comes from using the same amount of raw material, people, energy etc. but using them in a smarter way. This is the type of environmentally sustainable 'growth' that creative business might contribute to in the future, because it requires the key aspect *innovation*

But the Big Economy problem here is this. Traditional economic growth has been based on that which is limited, such as 'natural resources', whilst restricting that which is unlimited, for example, ideas and communication. The traditional nature of economic growth and business has been a barrier to innovation for too long. This is largely because they have restricted the flow of knowledge, information and ideas through patents, copyright and other legal barriers to protect their profits rather than expand care.

By contrast, Steven Johnson in his book *Where Good Ideas Come: A Natural History of Innovation*, has shown in detail that since the 1800s non-profit oriented, networked spaces have been responsible for far more World changing innovation than traditional Big Business organisations. The on-going economic and environmental crises are showing beyond all doubt that the World needs a new idea of what the Economy and Business is *for*. It is probably going to need some intensive growth to improve our mutual capacity to feed, cloth and shelter each other through smarter ways of using the same or decreasing amounts of resources. It is going to need new ways to clean up the mess we have already made. It is going to need sustainable developments based upon innovation.

Which is where you come in. As creative businesses skilled in innovations of all sorts, THE WORLD NEEDS YOU. But it needs you to expand your capacity for care. It needs you to grasp the transformative moment.

And this requires creative business to devise new business plans and strategies based upon being more proactively good and doing more proactive good.

Example

Giandemenico Picco was the UN emissary who helped to end the war between Iran and Iraq in the 1980's which up to that point had killed around 1,000,000 people. When Iran took the Western hostages, amongst them Terry Waite and John McCarthy in the 1980, Mr. Giandemenico Picco risked his life to get them freed, ... *it was my chance to help.*

Is how he describes why he would risk so much.

It may not need you to risk your life, but the transformative moment is your chance to help.

AUTHENTICITY AND AWARENESS IN CREATIVE BUSINESS

Socrates thought that 'intrinsic knowledge' was the particular kind of knowledge that led to authenticity and awareness and was underpinned by self-questioning and self-criticism. And central to the development of business awareness is knowledge of one's own limitations.

QUOTATION

Now that you know that you do not know, we can begin to make progress
(Socrates)

This probably requires creative business skills in what Cicero called 'autonomous thinking'. The Big Economy tends to come with ready-made pronouncements about what is 'real', 'normal' and 'necessary' within business and these usually revolve around individual self-interest and commercial success. Economic competition within markets are held up to be the only 'rational' way to go in creative business. Authenticity and awareness for ethical creative business requires that we question these ready-made 'Truths' and choose the business lens most appropriate for the job, just as we would the most appropriate creative lens.

This calls for creative business planning and the development of business models that involve thinking about,

- A greater understanding of yourself – through constant self-examination, self-honesty and skills in dealing with your own fundamental approach to your creative business
- A greater understanding of others – gaining more information through research and developing better empathic insight into people and situations that your creative business wants to deal with

But *creativity* – as you invest more and more of our heart and souls into it, and *business* – as you build up knowledge and experience to run a successful business, earn money and support your family, can easily become a fixed *identity*. And this can preclude self-reflection for authenticity and awareness.

To counteract this,

EXERCISE

The general considerations for ethical creative business planning might require a specific lens to see,

- **Behind the Business** – the past of your creative motivations and business ideas
- **In/Through the Business** – what is happening at the side of you amongst peers, collaborators and competitors
- **For/In Front of the Business** – one's existing creative agendas and business identity towards possible future engagements for authenticity in the broader public domains occupied by customers, clients and audiences
- **Beyond 'Business and Usual'** – towards questions about the transformative moment within the Big Economy as a whole. If the big question is 'what is the Economy for?' then the more specific question for the business lens is...

'What is business for?' Then once you have worked out what is it, how it works, what your business plan is and so you can become successful, ask yourself again, what is it for? That is, how do you take virtue, social contract, pragmatism, emotion, public authenticity and personal awareness into your creativity and business?

EVERYDAY ETHICAL SKILLS IN CREATIVE BUSINESS

For Cicero at least, the foundation of the human community is our capacity for Reasoning about our *shared duties* to each other found through 'kindness, generosity, goodness and justice'. So is the business community so different? Need there be such a tension between being ethical, being creative, being successful in business and demonstrating the everyday ethical skills we discussed in the last chapter? Indeed, given the transformative moment we are living through it might be that everyday skills in empathy, humility, dignity and friendliness are increasingly useful and necessary components for creative business success. I am sure all the ego-centric 'business gurus' we see on TV these days would disagree but this is still your Ultimate Choice.

And anyway, the creative bit of many creative businesses tend to work in a way that resonates with everyday ethical skills because both tend to be,

- motivated by intrinsic felt experiences and personal judgements rather than extrinsic factors
- guided by 'personal tastes and sentiments' and cannot be for long dictated to by external codes or abstract ideas
- aware of the necessary balance between creative freedom and responsibilities to wider social, cultural and political issues

And this is a good thing too.

ANALOGY

Your Creative Business Map

In his book A Guide to the Perplexed, Ernst Schumacher talks about how all Russian maps during the Soviet period had the churches removed for ideological reasons. He uses this as an analogy to point out the continued need for spiritual reference points over and above purely practical information. The sanitisation of these maps is often paralleled by the over-emphasis upon economics within traditional business studies rhetoric.

We should not let an overly economic mentality distract us from the necessity of everyday ethical skill within creative business.

To protect your creativity you will probably need 'churches' as well as 'factories' and 'offices' on your creative business map.

But felt experiences can come from unexpected and counter-intuitive places whereby you actually *feel* worse about yourselves whilst you are actually learning to be better. This is what self-awareness, self-questioning and self-criticism asks of you – that you continue your creative business lives by recognising what you are *not good* at, at what you are *getting wrong*.

It may feel difficult, but ethical creative business planning may require you to avoid the business 'blind spots', 'occupational psychosis' and psychological defense mechanisms we touched upon above and embrace what is 'wrong' with you, so that,

- your ignorance might lead you to business knowledge
- your self-delusions might lead you to business authenticity
- your unfairness might lead you to business justice
- your lack of dignity might lead you to business humility
- your obsessions with your Creative Self might lead you to business empathy
- your uncertainty about your purpose can lead to a sense of happiness in business
- your self might lead to better business relationships with others

Which brings us to,

LESS EGO IN CREATIVE BUSINESS: MEAN AND ENDS

The next time someone you meet through business suggests to you that '*the ends justify the means, and therefore my business plan is...*'

... you might want to suggest that '*the means and the ends ought to form a coherent whole, and if they find themselves using unethical business means, it is probably because there is something wrong with their ultimate business ends*'. They might think you are a bit weird, but it would be good fun.

Looking for justification from *within* your already established view of the World is no real justification at all. Justification needs to come from *somewhere else*, probably from outside what you have already thought or done. The justification attempted by statements such as 'the ends justify the means' is only really an attempt to self-justify. To use a bit of jargon it is a 'self-validating analytical proposition'. But we don't need to worry about that now.

Gregory Bateson reminds us of something that we could easily test this with some kids. They mostly recognise being *selfish* as being unfair – in more adult language, as not all that compatible with being guided by values and ethics.

But at its heart business too often puts 'itself' and its own needs before those of the real people who live with it,

- We have to make you redundant because whilst we have made a profit this year, we have not made enough and the shareholders are unhappy' – the ends of maximizing profit justifies the means of increasing poverty
- We have to damage the environment because that is how this technology, which

we have invested our money in and the way we make profit, 'works' – the ends of applying this technology, come what may, justifies the means of getting the rest of society to suffer the environmental degradation

- 'Our business policies do not cover this eventuality, so I cannot help you with your problem' – the ends of sticking to business systems justifies the means of not adequately performing the role that the business was originally set up for

Going back to the spectacles thing, the type of thinking that fails to adequately combine business means and business ends into an ethical whole is the business equivalent of,

THINKPIECE

Maybe Your Lens is Too Scratched?

Are you 'marooned in your own selfhood'? The poet John Donne thinks you are. He thinks we all are.

To make this point he talks about a mirror which after years of use has millions of tiny scratches all over, all pointing in every direction. If you bring a candle close to the mirror's surface, these millions of scratches disappear and the beautiful light that you bring re-arrange themselves into a series of orderly, concentric circles. And your reflection, the very light of you being will appear at the centre of this 'little universe'. The light that you bring will make all the disorder of the universe, represented by the millions of haphazard scratches disappear. How very beautiful and benevolent you are to bring this light to bear upon the World

Of course, we are being a little sarcastic. You are not the centre of the Universe and the light of your being cannot really make the millions of scratches on the face of the mirror disappear.

This analogy asks you to consider the reality of millions of little scratches – ideas, opinions, thoughts – are all pointing in different directions. It also asks you to consider whether putting yourself and your 'light' at the centre of things is to mistake yourself for the Universe.

If you are doing this it is not the answer, it is the problem. Putting yourself at the centre of the Universe is what creates your own self-induced 'limits to sympathy' and shows that the degree to which you have become unaware of your real self in the creative business world.

... if a man entertains false opinions regarding his own nature, he will be led thereby to courses of action which will be in some profound way immoral and ugly...

(from *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, by G. Bateson)

This type of business thinking is inherently unethical because it fails to ethically account for its *means* and hides behind the idea that business *ends* can justify any and all courses of action. If this were a person they would be described as profoundly ego-centric, possibly pathological.

You could then suggest to the person with the self-justifications that they are being ego-centric in business and invite them to consider the Ultimate Choice. (But you might then need to go have a drink with someone else for a while).

When you come back you could also suggest that the issues of,

- What 'is' and what 'ought to be'
- Authenticity and awareness in creative business
- Everyday ethical skill in creative business
- Reconsidering means and ends for a less ego-centric creative business agenda...

... can also be used for some fine-tuning of new spectacles specific for a business lens.

THE IF, WHY AND WITH WHOM OF YOUR CREATIVE BUSINESS PLAN

When considering the *If* of your creative business plan it might be good to reflect on the stages involved in business planning,

- Origination
- Research and Development
- Production
- Marketing and Distribution
- Customers and Consumption

Knowledge, applications, communications and the practical consequences of concrete business actions within each of these stages cannot easily, if ever be un-invented.

Are you OK that you have ethical virtue, clarity, authenticity and everyday skill within each aspect of your creative business plans – *should you do it?*

When thinking about the *Why?* of your creative business plan are you sure that you have sufficiently addressed questions such as,

- Is your creative business plan virtuous enough?
- Does your business strategy adhere to the basic shared agreements and Social Contracts upon which we have historically decided to base ideas of 'right' and 'wrong'?
- Do you need a clear code of conduct for your creative business that has been well articulated to others?
- Does your creative business have sufficient focus on the practical consequences of what you do over and above what you think and say?
- Does your personal conduct reinforce your espoused creative business ethics?
- Is ethics within your creative business merely about avoiding 'bad', or could it be more about looking for new ways of doing 'good'?

If someone asked you why you are doing what you do, would you have a good answer? – *why do you do it?*

When thinking about the *With Whom?* of your creative business plan it is good to remember that business is made up of all sorts of relationships, some formal, some semi-formal and some completely informal. These relationships are with,

- Colleagues and collaborators
- Other businesses, who may or may not be competitors
- Suppliers
- Public agencies and regulators
- Customers and clients
- Creative networks in a more general sense
- The public realm in an even more general sense
- The cultural life of your town, city, region, country and World

Are you OK that you have ethical virtue, clarity, authenticity and everyday skill within all these relationships – how do you do it *with them?*

For instance,

INTERVIEW

Happiness at Work... Yes, Really – Q and A with Srikumar Rao – by Cali Yost

Cali Yost (CY) – ... I was surprised (by Professor Rao's work) because the core principles of the *Happiness at Work* philosophy run counter to the standard profile of the typical top (business models) I've encountered both while at school and after (although, there are exceptions for sure). For example here's a quick side-by-side comparison to illustrate my point:

The Happiness at Work Philosophy	The Standard Business Philosophy
It's about the process, not the outcome. Focus on the action you can take	Outcome is all that matters—good grade, high profile job, big pay cheque
Paradox—by insisting on your way, you decrease the chance of getting what you want	Risk and aggressiveness are rewarded
You are playing a role, but you are not the role	My job, my prestigious MBA, my wealth define me
It's not about the money (in fact, if it is, you are in trouble). It's about the why and what you are doing	It's all about the money, even if I don't love what I am doing

The models you operate within are not reality

Prestigious MBA, well-paying job, comfortable life is reality. And I am angry when it's challenged

CY: *How will the curriculum of top MBA programs have to adapt and integrate more of the principles espoused in the Happiness in Work philosophy?*

Srikumar Rao (SR): *Today, our top business schools are not educational institutions as much as they are indoctrination institutions. They don't encourage students to question basic assumptions we've bought into for years such as consumption is good, or giving people more choices will increase their well-being. Does it really? Is advertising good for society? Maybe it's not. As it stands now, MBA programs don't challenge these core assumptions even though there is good research refuting many of them... Business (thinking) needs to address students (people) on a human being level, not as cogs in the machine to supply fresh talent to big companies.*

CY: *What is your vision of what a career will look like in the future if it's not based on the highly-competitive, high-risk/high reward model?*

SR: *In terms of what a career should look like, unfortunately Cali, we are far from it. What it should look like is that we derive a deep sense of meaning from the work we do. And we, as individuals, must be responsible for our careers with the goal of reaching our highest potential. The job of a manager is to tap into that energy that's already there... In terms of companies, they must stand for something bigger. They must be dedicated to something larger than financial results. I reject the Milton Friedman belief that a company's sole responsibility is to the shareholders.*

(slightly amended from original interview by Cali Yost, blog entry at www.fast-company.com)

These *If, Why* and *With Whom* questions for choosing new spectacles for a specific business lens call can be considered across various *facets of choice*,

- Strategic choices – what kinds of work you undertake, for whom and why? Ethical choices about the kinds of creative projects and clients you are willing to engage with
- Aesthetic choices – the concepts, look and design choices related to issues of broader responsibilities and usefulness, virtue, authenticity and awareness
- Relationship choices – choices about the values that underpin the way you relate to customers, clients, staff and other collaborators in relation to your day to day business operations
- Action choices – the degree to which your ethics are reactive to a basic ethical 'back stop' compared to the degree that it is a proactive attempt to find more ways to do more good within business
- Public choices – choices about the relative degrees of open-authenticity and conviviality on the one hand, and the degree of closed-ness and competition on the other

- Ecological choices – what kinds of impact, 'carbon footprint', and 'cultural carbon footprint' are you going to allow for yourself and 'be OK with'?

Another dimension is the degree to which your business ethics are *extrinsic* and come from the outside of your creative business thinking compared to *intrinsic* ethics that are always within your creative business choices. To be good at making the *If*, *Why* and *With Whom* choices for your creative business plan might require the search for the more intrinsic.

A case study that seems to represent useful intrinsic spectacles across all these facets of creative business is,

CASE STUDY

Ethics for Business Success

The outdoor clothing firm Patagonia has grown directly out of an environmental sensibility, ethical commitment to its customers and convivial relationships between everyone who works at the company. Its strategic, aesthetic and action choices stem from values deeply held by the people within the company.

Despite near universal consensus among scientists that we are on the brink of an environmental collapse, our society lacks the will to take action. We're collectively paralyzed by apathy, inertia, or lack of imagination. Patagonia exists to challenge conventional wisdom and present a new style of responsible business. We believe the accepted model of capitalism that necessitates endless growth and deserves the blame for the destruction of nature must be displaced. Patagonia and its thousand employees have the means and the will to prove to the rest of the business world that doing the right thing makes for good and profitable business...

Their business strategies... are an expression of our values as they apply to different parts of the company. Our philosophies for design, production, distribution, image, human resources, finance, management, and the environment are each written specifically to guide Patagonia through the process of designing, manufacturing and selling clothes. But they can be applied to any other kind of business as well...

Patagonia's design principles include,

- Is it functional? – designing from the foundation of filling a functional need focuses the design process and ultimately makes for a superior product. Without a serious functional demand we can end up with a product line that, although it may look great, is difficult to rationalize as being in our line – i.e., Who needs it?
- Is it Multifunctional? – why buy two pieces of gear when one will do the work of both? Making products as versatile as possible derives from our origins as mountain climbers who had to haul our gear up the mountain on our back, not

in the trunk of an SUV... to carry as little as possible in the mountain is a spiritual tenet of many outdoor enthusiasts

- Is it Durable? – this question also derives from our origins in climbing gear, which has to stand up to hard, prolonged use, and has become a factor in our environmental philosophy as well
- Does it Fit Our Customer? – at Patagonia we pattern our sizes to our core customers, who are active and in better shape than the average snowmobiler or bait fisherman. This may mean we lose potential customers in order to keep our core customers happy. So be it
- Is it as Simple as Possible? – the functionally driven design is usually minimalist... Complexity is often a sure sign that the functional needs have not been solved. Good design is as little design as possible
- Is the Product Line Simple? – people have too many choices these days... we avoid the smorgasbord approach. We don't systematically rip off our competitors' most popular styles to end up with twenty functionally identical ski pants
- Is it an Innovation or an Invention – when I die and go to hell, the Devil is going to make me the marketing director for a cola company. I'll be in charge of trying to sell a product that no one needs, is identical to its competition, and can't be sold on its merits. I'd be competing head-on in cola wars, on price, distribution, advertising, and promotion, which would indeed be hell for me. Remember, I'm a kid who couldn't play competitive games. I'd much rather design and sell products so good and unique that they have no competition
- Is it Global Design – you'll never know if you're making the best products in the World until they're sold and used all over the globe
- Is it Easy to Clean and Care For? – when we studied the environmental impacts of clothing throughout its life cycle (i.e., manufacture, dyeing, construction, distribution, care by the consumer, and disposal), we were surprised to find that two of the biggest villains were transportation and cleaning. In particular, we found that the post sale care of a clothing product caused as much as four times the amount of harm as the entire manufacturing process... The most responsible way for a consumer and a good citizen to buy clothes is to buy used clothing. Beyond that, avoid buying clothes you have to dry-clean or iron. Wash in cold water. Line dry when possible. Wear your shirt more than once before you wash it. Consider fast-drying alternatives to 100 percent cotton for your travel clothes
- Does it Have Added Value? – only 10 to 15 percent of the money Americans spend on goods and services (are) necessary for survival... We design everything we make to be the best of its kind, and whatever doesn't measure up goes back to the drawing board. Moreover, we carefully define, rather than just assert, what makes each product the best of its kind. Durability and low environmental impact make that list. Fleeting fashion and the illusion of luxury do not
- Is it Authentic? – the fashion industry is so caught up with the idea of 'authentic' that it has become another of those meaningless words. However, our customers expect us to make the real thing. Just as a field coat has to have a blood proof, lined game pocket in the back, and work pants have to be made for real

carpenters, roofers, and masons, if we offer a rugby shirt, it has to be made to play rugby in

- Is it Art? – when I think about clothing as art, I imagine a Navajo Indian Blanket coat worn by an eighty-year-old woman. Her silver hair is tied back in a bun. She could be rich; she could be poor. She could have bought the coat in 1940, or it could have once belonged to her mother. The coat is authentic and a classic, not a modern version of a traditional blanket coat. It's a work of art
- Are We Just Chasing Fashion? – because of our commitment to quality, we run at such a slow pace that we're turtles in the fashion race... We rarely buy off-the-shelf fabrics, and we don't buy existing prints, so we have to work with artists and design studios in producing original art
- Are We Designing for Our Core Customers? – all our customers are not equal in our eyes. There are indeed some we favour more than others. These are our core customers, those for whom we actually design our clothes. To understand this more clearly, we can look at our customers as if they existed in a series of concentric circles. In the centre, or core circle, are our intended customers. These are the dirt-baggers who, in most cases, have trouble even affording our clothes
- Have We Done Our Homework? – Although we encourage everyone at Patagonia to be 'gonzo', to stick his or her neck out, we don't want to become martyrs... The problem with risk taking of course is that it's risky... You can minimise risk by doing your research and, most of all, by testing
- Is it Timely? – it's almost as if every idea had its time
- Does it Cause Any Unnecessary Harm? – we take responsibility for what we make, from birth to death, and then beyond death, back to rebirth, what architect, designer and author Bill McDonough calls 'cradle to cradle'. It means making a pair of pants out of infinitely recyclable polyester or a polymer like Nylon 6 and, when it is finally worn out, melting down the pants to a resin and creating another pair from the same resin – over and over again
(from *Let My People Go Surfing*, by Y. Chouinard)

THE PUBLIC GOOD – BROAD FRONT: SMALL CHANGES

It is helpful to think on a broad front when considering the debates touched upon so far for how and why your creative business strategies might develop new spectacles. But making small changes within this broad front might be a useful tactic.

In his book *Small Change: About the Practice and the Limits of Planning in Cities*, Nabeel Hamdi refers to the 'informal city' by which he means the non-institutional spaces and processes that make up the public sphere. He talks about 'network governance' whereby these non-institutional networks of people work to devising mutually supportive and respectful dialogue, more authentic joint actions and forge more ethical relationships.

For Hamdi, smart ways of responding to the informal city involve,

- Recognising the organic processes through which cultural and economic activity

occurs – a diversity of creative business meanings

- Finding sensitive and inclusive ways of engaging with these processes as the people themselves understand them – a diversity of creative business ends which therefore entails...
- Ways of working that are sensitive to the nature of the creative business needs and tasks in hand – a diversity of business means

Working in smart ways with the informal city involves,

QUOTATION

... a co-operative effort for sustainable development... (involving) creative answers to local needs, using local resources, creating organisations and institutions which co-ordinate a multitude of efforts integrating community organisations, private companies and government action.

(from *Urban Future 21: A Global Agenda for 21st Century Cities*, by P. Hall and U. Pfeiffer)

In his book *Small Change* Hamdi suggests 14 practical points for thinking about growing such diverse and sensitive spaces for business meanings, means and ends. This list might help pin down routes to a value-based creative purpose and expanded care for a creative business lens.

1. RECOGNISE CONVERGENCE

Institutional boundaries between creative, economic, political and environmental concerns; and between different agencies, networks, businesses and communities are probably over-blown. They should be avoided and/or broken down as much as possible. Creative businesses can become more 'open systems' if they are to be better at encouraging and supporting the innovative 'associations of difference' that an authentic public sphere needs to enable articulate ideas about the public good.

QUOTATION

... create more synergy and strengthen the linkages between practical ground-level work and the more strategic business of policy development and structure planning. It... is about finding the balance between the structures (business or public) we must design and those that must emerge... Working with both the elite of city authorities and the pluralism of the grassroots – (is) not either/or... we must increasingly move our territory of operation outside of those individual realms and place our practice firmly in between

(Hamdi)

For example

2. KEEP IT TO A MINIMUM

Use the minimum of Big Plan and Big Management thinking to allow a maximum of flexibility, innovation and creativity to emerge out of the *daily doing* of your stuff. Over-planning and over-management encourages an ego-centric, mechanistic and personally unaware approach to creativity and business that can easily misunderstand the organic and relationship-based nature of the creative business World. This puts business means before the ethical ends.

QUOTATION

I and many others, known and unknown to me, call upon you:

To celebrate our joint power to provide all human beings with the food, clothing and shelter they need to delight in living.

To discover, together with us, what we must do to use mankind's power to create the humanity, the dignity and the joyfulness of each one of us.

To be responsibly aware of your personal ability to express your true feelings and to gather us together in their expression.

(from *Celebration of Awareness*, by I. Illich)

3. UNDERSTAND YOUR PARADIGM

Understand that everyone operates within a particularly (self)-selected World-view which is never the only way to see things. They are not set in concrete and can be re-seen, re-chosen. Put another way, all creative businesses have an internal culture that impacts upon the way it responds to the World.

A healthy creative business plan is aware of its own ignorance and embraces,

- Lateral thinking
- Emergent behaviour
- Cyclical rather than linear thinking
- Mutualism and joint growth
- Growing new collaborations
- Seek joint authorship and intelligence feedback loops from both inside and outside the business

To a large extent the two previous books in this series, *Fish, Horses and Other Animals*, and *Soul Food, and Music* are an exploration of the relevance of these ideas for creative business.

QUOTATION

*... in practice, we need often to act spontaneously, to improvise and to build by small increments. First, spontaneity, as a **quality of practice**, is vital because most problems and opportunities appear and disappear in fairly random fashion and need to be dealt with or taken advantage of accordingly. Sometimes problems appear all at once and not according to predictable patterns. One therefore has to be selective, knowing that one problem has been dealt with another will appear equally randomly. When you have run out of resources but not out of problems, you improvise – inventing rules, tasks or techniques as you go along. Improvisations then become a means of devising solutions to solve problems which cannot be predicted, a process full of inventive surprises that characterise the informal way in which many poor people gain employment, make money and build (creative) houses... The question is, to what extent are those changes inhibited or supported? And, having answered that question, what kind of intervention is appropriate at each of the various developmental stages?*

(Hamdi)

4. HOLISM AND ECOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

Working in a wholehearted, humble, dignified and simple way *with* the environment (social, cultural, economic or Natural) rather than trying to master it. A broad point that suggests that the Alan-Sugar-Dragon's-Den mind-set at the heart of traditional business agendas is deeply inappropriate for ethical creative business because it is inherently ego-centric and obsessed with maximums.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Slow Wardrobe

Fashion designers seem to be grasping the 'eco' label, but are still intent on over-producing more and more garments. Maybe they still haven't really sorted out the problem from the solution. The degree to which fashion is more 'eco' or not is maybe not the way to go. Maybe we just need less of it. As they say, 'less is more', but in this case this is not simply a style thing, but actually, really just less would be better'. Which some people think is more stylish anyway. Without this, 'eco' fashion runs the danger of being figuratively and maybe literally the 'window dressing' for traditional Big Economy self-obsessions with sales and profits.

But the Slow Wardrobe Movement proposes a more sensitive mind-set. For example,

How big is your fashion footprint? From 2003 to 2007, garments fell in price by an average of 10%, and over the past five years the rate of frenzied buying has

accelerated. We make room for the new by discarding some 2m tones of old every year, which goes into landfill. The Slow Wardrobe extends the useful lifespan of the threads already hanging in the national wardrobe while redistributing stockpiled fashion to those who will wear it, with the aim of reducing today's average consumption of 35kg of clothing per season to a more sustainable 7kg. Consumers prioritise longevity by buying trans-seasonal garments (such as a classic jacket) rather than pure fashion and by purchasing as far up the material food chain as they can afford (higher durability so it lasts longer). We also learn to wash and dry clean more sparingly (both decrease the lifespan of clothes) and to use specialist services to refashion and/or mend older garments (just 2% of the annual fashion budget goes on mending or servicing clothes, so this needs to be increased). Meanwhile a 2008 YouGov poll found that there are an amazing 2.4bn pieces of clothing unworn for an entire 12 months (many possibly brand new) cluttering up the national wardrobe. This needs to be redistributed via a system of clothes swap parties and targeted donations before it is chucked in landfill
(from *The Observer* 10/01/09)

5. BOTTOM-UP

For too long economists and Professional Politicians have had a fetish for economic growth in the Big Economy no matter what the immediate costs to the public good, because eventually the benefits will 'trickle down'. The problem is that they never really do, at least not fully enough. Innovations, ideas, inputs, community voices, the power to make decisions and put real World practical improvements in place often need to start at the bottom. This is what the organic intellectual would do within ethical creative business. Maybe then values and ethics will *trickle-up*. This is particularly important for any creative businesses wishing to avoid a 'democratic deficit' and ethically engage in the felt needs and experiences of other people. At the very least this asks creative businesses to become the 'bridges', the 'choreographers', the 'conductors' between,

- the bottom-up voices
- the more unified and established voices
- the Institutional voices
- the Big Politics voices

whilst also contributing in some way to practical improvements.
For instance,

CASE STUDY

The Homeless Vehicle by Krzysztof Wodiczko

There is a significant group of homeless who work day and night collecting bottles and cans in New York... So Wodiczko thought that the best way to make the situation clear to the non-homeless would be to help the 'bottle men' by providing them with a tool which would not be associated with stolen objects, such as shopping carts, but something that would be especially designed for them (and with them). The vehicle can be used both for personal shelter and can/bottle storage. Through the increased presence and mobility of this object it would become both communication and transport, articulating the real conditions of work and life and the resistance of this group.
(to find out more, go to www.art-history-concordia.com or search wikipedia)

6. WORK BACKWARDS, MOVE FORWARDS, START WHERE YOU CAN

Work backwards by starting with small changes geared towards making practical differences rather than trying to devise an overall 'master plan' too far ahead of time. On-going creative analysis and evaluation within each small business step can be a good basis for on-going decision-making. This is better for public authenticity and personal awareness. Big Institutions find it nearly impossible to turn around to see from the other direction, but as a creative business you can easily and quickly devise new spectacles. You just need to choose them.

CASE STUDY

Reinstating the Drinking Fountain

Design for voluntary simplicity and sustainability asks us to re-see simple and elegant design solutions that have worked for time immemorial, but have been discarded for weak reasons. This re-seeing can replace over-blown and wasteful technologies with more graceful creative business solutions.

For instance,

Say 'no' to bottled water – and 13m plastic bottles sold in the UK every year (just 3m of which are recycled) – is catching on but still hard work. This begs the question of what happened to all the beautiful fountains, many donated by philanthropists in the 1880s that were once dotted around civic centres and parks, and when are they coming back?
(from *The Observer* 10/1/09)

7. RECOGNISE YOUR OWN IGNORANCE

It is perfectly understandable for us all to believe that the view from our spectacles is the clearest and most developed. The only trouble with this is that it is incorrect! The best creative spaces are the ones that exist *between* people, groups, agendas, etc. Ignorance can be a useful thing if it is recognised and embraced. Recognising your ignorance is but a small, everyday sub-set of the wider notion of recognising the limitations of your paradigm. A failure to recognise this is always detrimental. Recognising one's ignorance '...leaves space to think creatively in search of alternatives' and is helpful for finding public authenticity, personal awareness and empathy.

THINKPIECE

Looking Whose Talking... and How

In his book I and Thou, Martin Buber develops his theory of ethics by suggesting the 'between' space created by two or more people through dialogue is key for creating the common good. But not all dialogue is neutral.

Buber makes a distinction between,

- Technical Dialogue – that tends to be purely instrumental aimed only at getting information from the other person rather than arriving at mutual understanding
- Monologues – that are guided by pre-established agendas and already taken decisions that masquerade as dialogue between people
- Genuine Dialogue – guided by intentions to establish on-going, living dialogue between mutually respecting people to develop mutual understanding and care

You might not be right this time! You might be engaging in technical dialogue that is bamboozling people. You might simply be engaging in a monologue.

Paying attention to this might help with the If, Why and With Whom of a creative business dialogue so it can demonstrate grace, empathy and expanded care. Your preferred ideas, theories and ways of talking might not be the best available. You might need more genuine dialogue.

8. NEVER SAY CAN'T

Findings various ways of saying 'can't' should be resisted. Rather than focussing upon 'what's in it for me...' questions focus upon 'why not...' ethical aspirations. This encourages proactively doing more good unless there is a reason not to. Move from reactive ideas of 'I can't because...' to proactive ideas of 'I should because...'. Such a 'this Worldly' attentiveness asks you to search for ways to re-combine

your knowledge with character, your science with humanity, your commerce with morality, which is probably necessary because,

THINKPIECE

The Seven Social Sins

*For Gandhi's Seven Social Sins,
knowledge without character
science without humanity
wealth without work
commerce without morality
politics without principles
pleasure without conscience
worship without self-sacrifice*

9. LET YOUR IMAGINATION WANDER, REASON LATER

Try thinking the unthinkable as this is at the heart of creativity. If it is combined with judgement, awareness and skill, imagination can be as central as knowledge for engaging with the felt experiences of others and unlocking ideas for proactively ethical creative business.

CASE STUDY

The High Line

A derelict mass of rusty iron and reinforced concrete; a vestige from a bygone era that tore through the West Side of Manhattan; a grim and gritty canopy, sheltering blood-soaked meat packers and transgender prostitutes. Back in 1990, the raised tracks of the High Line, which until 1980 had freighted factory goods between 34th Street and Chelsea and Soho downtown did not seem to me like the natural place for a park.

It was (previously) viewed by many, especially local property developers as an impediment to regeneration. In 1999 mayor Rudy Giuliani approved its destruction... That was when 'neighbourhood nobodies' Robert Hammond and Joshua David formed Friends of the High Line to fight to save the bucolic self-sown landscape. They galvanised local residents, businesses, socialites and celebrities such as Edward Norton, Kevin Bacon and the designer Diane von Furstenberg. "They had the wonderful idea – a park weaving through the city like a green ribbon" says von Furstenberg. "The choice was to rip it out and be left with a huge pile of junk, or fill it with plants and trees and make it beautiful," says Bacon...

It is organic and architectural... It is a wild, low maintenance environment, a curvi-linear boardwalk that flow 22 blocks through woodland, grasslands, public squares and performance spaces. In essence the cultural anchor of the neighbourhood.

10. BE REFLECTIVE

Taking time to stop, to be as personally aware as often as possible, to think about what just happened, what went right and wrong is always good.

EXERCISE

A Buddhist 'Code of Practice' for Creative Business?

To become fully skilled in these Buddhist practices is a lifetime journey, which would probably need to be a thing in its own right. We can bring this 'down to earth' by using the lessons of Buddhism into our daily creative business lives.

- **Right Viewing** – offering your creativity to potential clients in a way that avoids any delusions for either party in a way that is able to truly deliver
- **Right Intentions** – working with people through intrinsic good intentions even though you may have no emotional investment with the business client
- **Right Speech** – being aware of treating people in business dealings through graceful and gentle interactions
- **Right Action** – seeking to do work and business that ensures your own ethical peace of mind
- **Right Livelihood** – trying to act in ways that proactively increases the good between yourself, your business clients and the rest of the World
- **Right Effort** – seeking work that allows you to hold feelings of virtue whilst conducting business
- **Right Mindfulness** – bringing a compassionate mindfulness to the real people involved in your business dealings
- **Right Concentration** – bringing yourself wholeheartedly to creativity and business to keep a clear focus

Reflecting upon how to help make these co-operative conditions allows competitiveness and aggression to be removed. This 'Buddhist economics' helps to guide creative business relationships within creative ecologies of co-operation and contributes to solidarity and conviviality that speaks to the mutual needs of people. These kinds of action based upon personal awareness might help with your general expansion of care.

11. EMBRACE SERENDIPITY

Don't necessarily try to sort out the mess and ambiguity. Maybe try to engage with it. Allow for messiness, uncertainty and change because that is how the World is. Having a clear, well ordered creative business plan is not always the same as actually getting things to happen. And anyway, trying to impose such order might actually be counter-productive. A plan that maps out signposts, progress points, achieving targets is not the same as having a good map. As Steve Johnson has shown in his book *Emergence*, it is probably fundamental to intelligent and creative behaviour that we see the patterns across random encounters and paying attention to the haphazard and unplanned message we get from unexpected quarters. If we do not 'plan-out' haphazardness and spontaneity but embrace it then it can help with authenticity and awareness in creative business engagements.

CASE STUDY

Two Problems Become One Solution: The ParaSite by Michael Rokowitz

The Artist Michael Rakowitz feels so strongly (about the issue of homelessness)... that when he focussed his creative attentions on the subject he began manifesting practical outcomes, specifically the ParaSITE. The ParaSite is a small, collapsible, double-membrane shelter that uses the escaping warm air from a building's heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system to inflate and warm the temporary home.

Two problems – homelessness and the waste of energy are brought together through seredipity into one solution.

12. CHALLENGE CONSENSUS

Group-think is the natural tendency for groups of people to congregate around their mutually shared idea of 'the truth'. And It is not comfortable to be the one person that challenges the group consensus, especially if it is a group you like being in. But it is probably necessary for ethical thinking. Consensus-centredness has a strong tendency towards reducing all possible options down to the one that fits best with the existing group mind. This is the opposite of authenticity, awareness, ethical skill and expanded care.

Group-think is an ethical blindfold not new spectacles. And our culture does precisely that, blindfolds us with received ideas about what is 'right', what 'everyone does, knows thinks'. Whilst we probably need something shared, a social contract, it is also good to check this 'everyone' and think for yourself by challenging the supposed consensus sometimes.

For instance, maybe challenge the biggest consensus of all, the link between consuming more, feeling better, being happier and living peacefully. We in the

West consume lots and are at war. Embracing Ivan Illich's idea of 'voluntary simplicity' might be a good antidote to this supposed consensus.

QUOTATION

The optimal pattern of consumption, producing a high degree of human satisfaction by means of a relatively low rate of consumption, allows people to live without great pressure and strain and to fulfil the primary injunction of Buddhist teaching: 'Cease to do evil; try to do good'. As physical resources are everywhere limited, people satisfying their needs by means of a modest use of resources are obviously less likely to be at each other's throats than people depending upon a high rate of use. Equally, people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade
(from *Buddhist Economics*, by E. F. Schumacher)

13. LOOK FOR MULTIPLIERS

Sometimes 1 + 1 equals 3. Working through different creative business relationships and networks of mutual care for greater solidarity can create synergies so that the sum of energy is greater than the individual parts. This can sometimes mean that social, economic and cultural benefits can be multiplied so that everyone benefits. Traditional business strategies that favour competition and individualism often miss this potential. Ethical creative business strategies can sometimes be found through initial ideas that enable people to use and re-develop things in their own way and so multiply the benefits for themselves.

For instance,

CASE STUDY

Solar Power as People Power

Portable solar powered re-chargers can help to re-power anything from an electric light to a mobile phone. In that sense it is a good example of a piece of care-ful design that can perform multiple functions.

But it goes much further than merely technical considerations. In areas of the developing World,

- It replaces peoples reliance on the Big Grid, which is easily controlled by Big Politics, and, therefore, is usable as a weapon of political control, with something that enables people to be more autonomous
- It gives these people access to something that is relatively cheap to replace their reliance on candles – which are expensive and burn out, and kerosene lamps – which are more expensive and very bad for their health
- It enables electric light after dark which thereby enables more cultural life, more education (kids can do homework after the farming day) and better communication in all sorts of ways
- It brings mobile phone technology within their use so that they can call a doctor or check local market prices so that they do not get ripped off by the local merchants etc.

One small, simple piece of technology allows for a multiplicity of developments to improve political freedoms, health, education, economic knowledge and culture.

14. FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF

It is not always easy or comfortable to be working within this messy, unpredictable way, embracing your own ignorance, searched for personal awareness and trying to be authentic. But don't be defensive, don't feel guilty or stupid, don't patronise and don't dismiss. Try to inspire and from that take inspiration yourself, about yourself.

Encourages small changes.

CONCLUSION

In the end we can do no better than to conclude with the words of Ivan Illich, one of our all time heroes.

QUOTATION

We must build, in hope and joy and celebration. Let us meet the new era of abundance (or now the falsely created 'austerity') with self-chosen work and freedom to follow the drum of one's own heart. Let us recognise that a striving for self-realisation, for poetry and play, is basic to man once his needs for food, clothing and shelter have been met – that we will choose those areas of activity which will contribute to our own development and will be meaningful to our society...

(from *Celebration of Awareness*, by I. Illich)

People need not only to obtain things, they need above all the freedom to make things among which they can live, to give shape to them according to their own tastes, and to put them to use in caring for and about others...

(from *Tools for Conviviality*, by I. Illich)

We started by talking about spectacles, so let's end in the same way with an example of ethical creative business case that encapsulates all that we have tried to say in this book.

GLOBAL LESSON

Helping 1bn of the World's Poorest See Better

It was a chance conversation on March 23 1985... that first started Josh Silver on his quest to make the World's poor see. A professor of physics at Oxford University, Silver was idly discussing optical lenses with a colleague, wondering whether they might be adjusted without the need for expensive specialist equipment, when the lightbulb of inspiration first flickered above his head.

What if it were possible, he thought, to make a pair of glasses which, instead of requiring an optician, could be 'tuned' by the wearer to correct his or her own vision? Might it be possible to bring affordable spectacles to millions who would never otherwise have them?

More than two decades after posing that question, Silver now feels he has the answer. The British inventor has embarked on a quest that is breathtakingly ambitious, but which he insists is achievable – to offer glasses to a billion of the world's poorest people by 2020.

Some 30,000 pairs of his spectacles have already been distributed in 15 countries, but to Silver that is very small beer. Within the next year the now-retired professor and his team plan to launch a trial in India which will, they hope, distribute 1 million pairs of glasses...

If the scale of his ambition is dazzling, at the heart of his plan is an invention which is engagingly simple.

Silver has devised a pair of glasses which rely on the principle that the fatter a lens the more powerful it becomes. Inside the device's tough plastic lenses are two clear circular sacs filled with fluid, each of which is connected to a small syringe attached to either arm of the spectacles.

The wearer adjusts a dial on the syringe to add or reduce the amount of fluid in the membrane, thus changing the power of the lens. When the wearer is happy with the strength of each lens the membrane is sealed by twisting a small screw, and the syringes removed. The principle is so simple, the team has discovered, that with very little guidance people are perfectly capable of creating glasses to their own prescription...

The implications of bringing glasses within the reach of poor communities are enormous, says the scientist. Literacy rates improve hugely, fishermen are able to mend their nets, women to weave clothing. During an early field trial, funded by the British government, in Ghana, Silver met a man called Henry Adjei-Mensah, whose sight had deteriorated with age, as all human sight does, and who had been forced to retire as a tailor because he could no longer see to thread the needle of his sewing machine. "So he retires. He was about 35. He could have worked for at least another 20 years. We put these specs on him, and he smiled, and threaded his needle, and sped up with this sewing machine. He can work now. He can see..."

(From *The Guardian*, 22nd December 2008)

In the end there is no conclusion. It's just a choice. It's your choice. It's the Ultimate Choice about attitudes to creativity and business that offer new spectacles for Juliette, and for you.

A GLOSSARY OF ETHICAL SAYINGS

It is sometimes useful to have certain sayings, mottos or mantras in mind so that you can remind yourself of ethical principles as you go through your everyday life. This glossary presents some of them. They come from a variety of philosophers, scientist and artists. Thanks to the myriad other books from which some of these original quotations have been reproduced. In no particular order...

FOR THINKING ABOUT THE EXPANSION OF CARE IN GENERAL

Here is the beginning of philosophy: a recognition of the conflicts between men, a search for their cause, a condemnation of mere opinion, and the discovery of a standard of judgement – Epictetus

Wisdom is the supreme part of happiness – Sophocles

Man is a rational animal, endowed by nature with rights and with an innate sense of justice – Thomas Jefferson

It is curious that physical courage should be so common in the world and moral courage so rare – Mark Twain

Patience is the companion of wisdom – St. Augustine

It is in the knowledge of the genuine conditions of our lives that we must draw our strength to live our lives and our reason for living – Simone de Beauvoir

It is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust – Samuel Johnson

Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none – William Shakespeare

Any situation in which A objectively exploits B or hinders his pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression – Paulo Freire

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit – Aristotle

Without feelings of respect, what is there to distinguish man from beasts? – Confucius

No one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions – John Locke

There is no god higher than truth – Mohandas K. Gandhi

True courage is not the brutal force of vulgar heroes, but the firm resolution of virtue and reason – Alfred North Whitehead

Don't live as if you are going to live myriad years. Fate is hanging over you; while you have life, while you may, become good – Marcus Aurelius

ON THE EXPANSION OF DOING RIGHT FOR SOCIAL CONTRACTS

One of the reasons we have so much regulation is because we cannot rely on people stopping to think about what's right – Michael Kirkwood

Personal and professional integrity should always be consistent – Sir Derek Higgs
The superior man understands what is right; the inferior man understands what will sell – Confucius

We do not err because truth is difficult to see. It is visible at a glance. We err because this is more comfortable – Alexander Solzhenitsyn

The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom – Isaac Asimov

Our main business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance but to do what lies clearly at hand – Thomas Carlyle

Without ethics, everything happens as if we were all five billion passengers on a big machine and nobody is driving the machine. And it's going faster and faster, but we don't know where – Jacques Cousteau

If one is not capable of knowing the law and living within the rules of it, he is never capable of being a free man – John Locke

ON THE EXPANSION OF PRACTICAL WISDOM FOR DOING YOUR BEST

Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere – Chinese Proverb

Life is the sum of all your choices – Albert Camus

The basic value of a sustainable society, the ecological equivalent of the Golden Rule, is simple: each generation should meet its needs without jeopardizing the prospects for future generations to meet their own needs – Alan Durning

Custom will reconcile people to any atrocity; and fashion will drive them to acquire any custom – George Bernard Shaw

But what is happiness except the simple harmony between a man and the life he leads – Albert Camus

All it takes for evil to flourish is for good men to do nothing – Edmund Burke

It is a man's own mind not his enemy or foe that lures him to evil ways – Buddha
He who knows others is learned; He who knows himself is wise – Lao-Tzu

Life is like a game of cards. The hand you are dealt is determinism; the way you play it is free will – Jawaharlal Nehru

The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between political parties either – but right through every human heart – Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Every person must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. This is the judgement. Life's most persistent and urgent question, what are you doing for others? – Martin Luther King

On a personal level, everyone must answer the following question: What is my highest aspiration? The answer might be wealth, fame, knowledge, popularity or integrity. But if integrity is secondary to any of the alternatives, it will be sacrificed in situations in which a choice must be made. Such situations will inevitably occur in every person's life – Murphy Smith

The truth is not simply what you think it is, it is also the circumstances in which it is said, and to whom, why and how it is said – Vaclav Havel

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