

Mindgames

Philippe Ternes. Our Common Future

If we would like to participate in some way in the future that awaits us, we must first try to imagine it. To do so, the Our Common Future association proposes a letter where Jenny, the sender, explains what the world around her is like, which is very different from ours. In this imagined future world, all human beings are involved in the society where they live and work to improve it, make decisions, prepare to face challenges and become, at some point in their lives, representatives of their peers. According to the performance of humankind as a whole and the evolution of global challenges, individual learning objectives are constantly adapted. In addition, individuals learn much faster because they can instantly immerse themselves in any kind of environment and live a myriad of experiences every day. An invitation to reflect on the world of the future and our participation in it.

The future is being prepared by large tech and medical companies and other actors, mostly behind closed doors. Citizens are consumers of the changes. If we would like to have our say, the most effective way may be to try to anticipate possible developments and debate whether they are desirable before they become a reality. In this vein, the objectives of the mindgames developed by Our Common Future are as follows:

- To help participants further develop their capacity to imagine the future;
- To prompt participants to consider developments that are already underway and their possible implications;
- To encourage discussion of the ways in which citizens worldwide can shape future developments in technology, medicine and science, and act on climate change and other major challenges;
- To help participants conceptualise future

forms of governance in particular;

- To spread knowledge about technology and global politics;
- To stimulate a discussion about global political priorities.

If we would like to have a say on our future, we need to start to imagine it. We need to be many, and we need to be fast. Democracy needs us; democracy needs our imagination.

A Letter from the Future

My great grandpa said that, when he was a child, people were not yet able to talk to persons who lived in the past. This also meant that there was hardly any AI compiling their personal profile while they were alive. I think it's clear that since people know they have a chance of living forever, at least virtually, most people try to be the best version of themselves.

Tomorrow is Friday. For around fifteen years now, nobody has worked on Fridays. Friday is Democracy Day. On Fridays, everyone attends the People's Councils, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The one in the morning is the one we can choose. In my case, it's dealing with climate change. The one in the afternoon has been assigned to me randomly, so that I get an insight into topics I haven't been interested in before: in my case, health, artificial intelligence and eldercare were some of the Councils I have had to attend in the past three years. Participating in the People's Councils is a condition for receiving our basic income.

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They say that, in the past, they had only had a few people taking care of politics at each moment in time. They called them "politicians". It's hard to imagine how this was working out. Nowadays, the vast majority of us participate in decision-making, and everyone has the chance to become a representative for a short term, usually for three months. So, representing people is not a full-time job anymore and people are chosen based on three ratings they receive during Councils: the ability to listen and to make compromises (Mediation), the ability to analyse phenomena and express yourself (Presentation), and knowledge on the policy issue (Understanding); thus, mediation, presentation and understanding.

Once you have served at the regional level for three months, you will go back to your local People's Council, unless you are chosen to represent your regional Council at the global level, in a Global Council. Two months ago, I received the highest rating of my People's Council, out of almost one hundred people. So, I could have represented my Council at the regional level for the next three months, but decided to delegate

this task to Martin, who came second in the ranking. My grandpa had just passed away a week earlier, so I didn't really have the time to travel. But anyhow, I knew that the opportunity would soon arise again.

My dream is to one day become a representative at the global level, where I would stand a chance of becoming a Member of the Council of Humanity. The Council of Humanity discusses the challenges humanity is facing in the next thirty to fifty years, mediates between different policy communities, and distributes the budget of the Humanity Fund. Live feeds and recordings of sessions of the Council of Humanity are publicly accessible online, and everyone can grade each Council Member via the Participation App.

Our PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) define our individual learning goals, which are necessary for Citizen Councils to be able to cope with current and prospective challenges. According to the performance of humankind as a whole, as well as the evolution of global challenges, these individual learning goals are constantly adapted.

Learning goals are defined in five-year periods. If, at the end of a five-year period, a person has not achieved their learning goals, their social points tally is reduced by 500 points, which, for example, means that it will be significantly more difficult for them to be elected as representatives of their Citizen Councils at the higher regional levels.

My PDA says that, based on my current personal preferences and value settings, I will live for another 133 years. It also indicates to me that if I replaced my core-value "cooperation" with "health", I could live for another eight years. However, this would also mean that my average GSP (General Social Points) level would decrease by 11%, which would limit my access to certain VR spaces and limit my chances of one day serving on the Council of Humanity. I thus currently have the choice between living longer or living a higher quality of life.

Since our world is now physical, virtual and augmented at the same time, we apparently learn much faster than our ancestors did, as we can instantly immerse ourselves in any kind of environment and live a myriad of experiences every day. Our PDAs instantly translate any language still spoken on our planet into our reference language. At the age of thirteen, we normally also complete part three of the course on “perspective thinking on the basis of world languages”, which deals with perspectives that can normally only be found in certain cultures and their languages. Peoples’ Councils on Education established this measure twenty-five years ago when some languages were threatened by extinction, and it was seen as worthwhile keeping some of the perspectives and notions they conveyed alive.

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Hearing the song *Solitary Daughter* by Bedouine last Sunday when entering my home completely shook me up. It pulled me into a rush of emotions. Usually, there is no music at all when I enter my home, given that my brain is already saturated with my own playing every day. But this time, my PHS (Personal Health Screener) had decided to confront me with my memories associated with that song. My PHS knows when it’s best to revive a certain memory and when I have the right mindset to learn from these memories.

Actually, if I compare with what we know from history, I cannot really imagine how people were able to cope with their lives until, say, the mid-21st century. We have a lot more time nowadays to devote to activities that really develop our full human potential. In the diary of one of my ancestors, I read that she was still busy with “day to day chores”, such as cleaning, ironing, shopping, etc. These tasks are nowadays

all performed by robots guided by our PDAs. We therefore spend a substantial amount of our time on self-development and continue learning throughout our lives. I read that even brushing your teeth was a tedious task back in the day and I can’t imagine how it worked properly with a simple brush. Nowadays, we use a device that envelops our teeth and provides all the care they need in fifteen to twenty seconds.

On Sunday evenings, I tell Deli-Robo some of the things I would like to eat in the coming days, and Deli-Robo takes care of the rest. Deli-Robo sets up my menu for the week and prepares the food in time. It knows exactly when I should eat what and synchronises my meals with my calendar-app. Sometimes Deli-Robo doesn’t use any of my preferred ingredients. Since Deli-Robo is connected to my PHS, it knows much better than I do what I should be eating and when.

Deli-Robo prepares the dishes all by itself of course. Since we have had the PHS, we have to comply with Deli-Robo’s suggestions. The PHS has an exact overview of all of our health-related data at each moment in time. If my health values are critical for longer than one month, my basic income is reduced. If this goes on for longer than three months, I need to go to rehab. The only non-screening day is Sunday. On Sundays, Deli-Robo usually has a rest, and I eat out with friends.

Everyone also has a personal health screener at home. Once a week, we hop into it for thirty seconds and it communicates all developments in our body to our PDA, which in turn guides our devices, such as our tooth cleaner, and also determines our diet. While I sometimes communicate some ingredients I would like to taste in the coming days to my PDA, my Deli-Robo (the Robo that prepares my meals) usually already finds a perfect mix that allows me to achieve my health goals without too much effort. I would say almost every dish prepared by Deli-Robo contains some new flavours and combinations.

With all the additional time on our hands, we can now participate in the design of many different products. My PDA establishes a representation of my current skill and talent set and makes recommendations for new creations to which I should contribute. If I contribute successfully, I get a certain number of social points, depending on the effort invested and the impact of my contribution to product efficiency and general welfare.

Based on the aggregate performance of all humans on the planet as well as our individual learning progressions, our PDAs calculate our optimal learning trajectory and the tasks we need to perform each day. Our PDA also chooses most of the items we need in our life. On average, people can determine around 20% of their shopping freely. All other choices are made by our PDAs, as they know best what the market currently has to offer and what best corresponds to our needs.

For over thirty years now, we have not used money as a means of exchange. In our age, money would be a profoundly unjust and also inefficient way of governing our societies. Now that most jobs that existed in the past have become redundant, active participation in the political and economic planning has become the primary contribution people make to their societies. Our system of social points is based on these new realities, and everyone gets rewarded for their contributions to society and for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

The fundamental rule of the game has thus changed. While in the past some people may have amassed wealth and power at the expense

of their peers or the environment, access to extravagant spaces and services is nowadays ruled by social point status. The only way for people to improve their quality of life and access to exclusive goods or services is by improving their social points tally.

As usual, I will tell you more in my next letter.

With love, Jenny

We would love to hear your feedback on Jenny's letter. Please send us a message: all@ourcommonfuture.org

How can you engage in the mindgames?

You may register to be invited to future online mindgame sessions: <https://eu.jotform.com/euform/mindgames>

You may send in your own letter to: all@ourcommonfuture.org

You may simply reach out to us with questions, ideas or suggestions.

We look forward to hearing from you!

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