

# A Critical Point



Life  
Itself

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# This is a critical point in history

Humanity faces a number of existential risks, from climate change to the threat of runaway AI, while our rapidly expanding awareness and capability offers us the potential of a major civilisational breakthrough if channelled correctly.

# The dominant paradigm is broken

Characterised by materialism and individualism (at least in the West), the current dominant paradigm is broken. It is a major source of our dysfunction and cannot support the breakthrough we need: it prioritizes material growth even in wealthy countries when our materialistic values are causing ever worsening exploitation of the planet and of each other. Inequality is running rampant. Depression, drug abuse and suicide have reached epidemic proportions. Despite all the material progress we are still not truly satisfied, happy or at peace.

# The inner dimension is neglected

There is a widespread neglect of the inner dimension, of being and culture as both a lever for social change and a causal factor of our current circumstances. While practices such as mindfulness have gained popularity, this remains bound to the context of personal 'wellness' rather than deeper change.

Traditional frames of sense and meaning  
making are breaking down

Such as religious faith, mainstream politics and even local communities.

# Ennui and polarisation are widespread

There is widespread ennui and polarisation, as the void is filled by a jostling mass of adversarial ideologies. Across much of the world, a deep suspicion of traditional politics and political action has taken root. Vast numbers of the people feel too helpless, too cynical or too blindly faithful in 'modernisation' to participate in meaningful collective action for a better world.

# We lack compelling alternatives

. There are also no clear, attractive alternatives which can easily be gestured to and mobilised around. Alternative ways of living and being do exist but they do not yet resonate with most ordinary people.

# But seeds of a new paradigm are emerging

The need for a paradigm based on interbeing and prosociality, deeper relationships to ourselves and the planet, and well-being that runs deeper than material gratification has been recognized by a small cluster of individuals and groups.



# Though they are still far from mainstream

However, these ideas have not gained anything close to mainstream traction even within the 'social change' sector.

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