

Is There Hope for the Planet Among our Young People?

Excerpt from Future Thinkers Interview (81: Charles Eisenstein - The New Story of Climate & Humanity, Part 1)
<https://charleseisenstein.org/video/is-there-hope-for-the-planet-among-our-young-people/>

Mike Gilliland (Future Thinkers): When you look at the generation of say your kid's age, do you see enough of a change in the way they look at the world that this could, the kind of global change we're talking about, could happen within their generation?

Charles Eisenstein: Yeah, I meet different kinds of people, so we're saying like early twenties maybe. Some of them are just more lit up and conscious in a way than I was at that age. A much keener awareness of taking ownership of their projections onto other people, of separating fact from story, of asking themselves, "how is this coming from me?" of noticing codependent patterns, et cetera. When I was 22 I didn't know the word codependent. It wasn't a concept and I would just default into judgment and blame without considering, "oh, is my judgment actually a projection of something in my self, something that hurts and I'm putting it on somebody else?" That was not even the foggiest notion in my brain. It took me 30 years to start thinking that way and my kids default to that. They're so much more sophisticated in their consciousness. And then there's also a lot of young people who are not really aware of that, but what I find is that even they are much less willing and enthusiastic participants in the story of normal. They resist that story. They get so depressed or suicidal or addicted, it's like their soul's way of rebelling against it. They've been bribed and threatened into it. They have student loans hanging over their heads. They have economic insecurity. They're being pushed into living out an obsolete story, but their heart isn't in it and so that's why they have to use more and more force to stay with the program. So this kind of rebellion where energy is getting taken away from maintaining the world as we know it, that's creating conditions for change in the long run.

Mike Gilliland (Future Thinkers): How else do you think people can adapt to the future? What are some of the things people can do, an average young person can do right now that would build this vision of a better future?

Charles Eisenstein: Usually when someone asks that question, "how can we adapt to the future?" conventionally speaking, and I'm not saying that you're saying this, but conventionally speaking it's "how can I be secure, how can I thrive, how can I survive even in the future?" because it's going to get more and more competitive. So how can I be ok? I think that the future that we want to adapt to... for one thing, the future is still to be determined. We don't know what the future is. There are multiple futures that co-exist so I would take that to a meta-level question and say, "what future do you want to live in? What future do you want to participate in? Which timeline do you want to walk down?" So imagine multiple co-existing futures as if in a quantum super position of states and one of them is going to come into measurable reality, relational reality. Which one do you engage with? The future that I want to engage with is one where we don't even ask "how am I going to survive it?" Instead we ask, "how can I serve it? What am I here to serve? What is so beautiful to me that I would give everything I can to make it reality?" The more people who step into that attitude the more beautiful the future will become. So yeah, I would turn the question on its head. It's not so much "how we adapt to the future," but it's really "who do we want to be? Who do you want to be?" And understanding then that there is an intimate relationship between who you are and the future that manifests in our experience. The world that we see today is intimately entwined with who we are today.