

# Crisis and Wisdom

## Manifesto

1.

**Life cannot be good without thinking.** *So be wise; cultivate the mind so you can make the right choices.* Times of crisis show both value and cost for the community whose leaders did and did not, respectively, do so on time, sufficiently and in the right way.

2.

**Most begin too late cultivating wisdom.** Most of the time we let ourselves be ruled by urgent and practical problems, despite these in essence being secondary problems already. *Hence, always take more thinking time than deemed necessary.* Even though it may seem wise to prioritise getting organised, that common idea underestimates the impact and relevance of thinking. Because once the true crisis happens, it becomes clear why you should have cultivated wisdom long before. At that moment of crisis, you may miss the inner space and freedom required for wisdom.

3.

**We feel vulnerable when we do not know what to think,** because we never learned how to think about what to think. What to do, when we don't know what to do? *Hence, cultivate an attitude of inquiry and wondering.* Times of crises show that such an attitude provides a better anchor than that provided by empirical reality. The stability in 'normal' situations is only apparent. A thinker, used to the concept of not-knowing, is far less likely to be confused during times of crises and empirical instability.

4.

**Human connection arises from thinking together.** *Do interact with others on your true questions and deeper doubts.*

5.

**Our need for answers comes at a cost.** *It would be better to become more comfortable with questions in and of themselves.* What's wrong with answers? Do questions not ask for answers? Our focus on answers dilutes our inspiration and flexibility. Being skilful in the art of questioning will help to accept the unknowns of a crisis. He who sees the dynamics of questions as a fundamental part of life, and is not afraid of this dynamic, lives in freedom. He will give rise to justice and a better and more beautiful world.

6.

**Our ability to find solutions limits us.** As such, *develop multiple ways of thinking and learn to see which of those is adequate under specific circumstances.* Very few people will see solutions as a problem. And yet, our instrumental rationality can be a bottle-neck. Result-oriented thinking, any cause-effect consideration and all strategic deliberations enhance our belief in the manufacturability of the world; a belief that will be disenchanted by reality in the end. That makes it wise to not only think our way out of undesirable situations, towards better ones, but also learn to see things differently. Life then, is so much richer than our current hasty existence with possible empty results and meaningless success.

7.

**Knowledge of facts can never be the only basis of good decisions.** Hence, *do not hide your judgements, and continuously improve them.* A decision will always require a judgement on the meaning of certain expertise or facts. This is the only way in which knowledge can contribute to choosing the right direction for a decision. Some say it is better not to judge, but this makes life impossible to live. Others might advise to postpone ones judgment - this is only wise when the intention of the delay is to still provide the judgement later, in a better form. Much better is to cultivate one's judgment and foster the growth of quality and freedom in it. Because when fixed structures and habits suddenly disappear, it becomes clear what the impact is of thinking - cultivated and wise or not – on human society. how we as human beings live together.

8.

**Political consciousness is undue.** We hear political opinions and normative ideas all too soon, yet are not able to listen well and engage insufficiently about them in real dialogue. This becomes immediately clear in times of crisis. Strategic framing based on too limited contemplations – for which executives are commended for by their inner circles - weakens the bigger entirety. Nobility, openness, reflection and depth make a huge difference in terms of sustainability and will undeniably decrease the gap between the 'walk' and the 'talk'.

9.

**Seeing the bigger picture in leadership is also helpful on a smaller scale.** Hence, *let analysis for what's needed on larger scale, and values that we perceive as intrinsically important (such as freedom), be of meaning, also on a smaller scale.* Some use analogies between monkeys and humans or our reptilian brain to argue that we will never be able to do so. However, that part of our brain is called our 'ancestor's brain' for a reason. The new part is growing and yields wisdom. The global physical connection that is becoming more and more obvious - and intense – illustrates how crises can provide true opportunities for humanity as a whole.