

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT




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Audio 01: One of my starting points for all of this is that we are, as a species, facing enormous challenges. There are two things about them; one is that they are relatively recent challenges. Certainly climate change was not something that Shakespeare was going around fretting about, or that anybody who preceded the Victorians had on their mind. It never occurred to people that we might mess up the planet in such a way that we couldn't stay on it any longer. And the second is poverty. And some of the root causes, I think are... also the roots to the solution. The fact that we're creative is really important because human beings are the most creative species ever to live on the planet. And we haven't been here that long. The planet, you know, when people talk about saving the planet, it's a slightly arrogant attitude, I think, in that the planets have been around for four and a half billion years. It'll be around for another four and a half billion years, as far as we can tell, and as we know, the dinosaurs were around for 30 million years, and they didn't leave of their own accord. We've been around for about 150,000 years, I mean, as modern human beings. I mean, we were cooking for a long time before that, but modern human beings like you and me, you know, an attractive group of people, you know I'm saying... we've been around, as far as we can tell, for about 150,000 years. So, if you were to think of the entire lifespan of the planet as one year, human beings showed up at about a minute to midnight, less than a minute to midnight on the 31st of December.

Audio 02: We're now approaching seven and a half billion, heading for 12 billion by the end of the century, according to who you listen to on population projection. So, most of that's happened the last 300 years, which is a beat of a wing cosmically. And it's handy because we've got even more and more creative, you know, we, from the Industrial Revolution on, our creative powers have simply grown exponentially, collectively. So, we've transformed the circumstance, the planet, we are transforming the face of it. And the more of us there are, the more taxing these problems become, because we're not, we're being very creative, but not very far sighted about these things, our reliance on hydrocarbon fuels, our methods of farming, our obsession with pouring chemicals all over the planet, the way we're messing up the oceans, what we're endangering is not the planet, the planet will recover. It will shake us off like a rash. You know, like we tried humanity not so good, you know, we're going back to bacteria, they were fantastic. What we're endangering, are the conditions for our own survival. So, that's a really big issue, seems to me, are we now putting ourselves at risk as a species, and all the other species with it?

Audio 03: All of these efforts to exploit the earth and to better our own circumstances, are being done competitively rather than collaboratively, and so we're creating these massive gulfs in the conditions in which groups of human beings live. I've often quoted it, but there's a thing on the BBC about how many people can live on Earth, it was a documentary presented by David Attenborough. It was called How Many People Can Live on Earth. The BBC is very good at titles, as you know. And they concluded that if everybody on the earth consumed food, fuel and water, at the same rate as the average person in Rwanda, the earth could sustain a maximum population of about 15 billion people. So we're halfway there. But we don't all consume as they are doing in Rwanda, if everybody on the earth consumed as much as the average person in North America, food, fuel and water, the earth could sustain a maximum population of 1.5 billion, well we're at seven and a half now so, you know, one projection is if the entire planet wants to live as we do in North America, which as Rwandan's know and actually... you could also say the UK, it's not so different. By the middle of the century, we're gonna need about four more planets to make this work, which we don't have. So, these two factors of the exhaustion of the resources we need, the way we're upsetting the ecosystems that we depend upon, combined with the unequal distribution of resources and wealth and circumstances among the seven half billion others that there are, seem to me to be absolutely critical. And it's not like we've got forever to figure it out.