

Video 10

A Letter to Your Grandchildren

Before we go any deeper into this frightening mess—which you young people have so unfairly inherited—I would like to suggest three things that you can do in the quiet of your private lives.

Three things which can help to clarify your own thoughts.

First, take a walk to your favorite place out in the natural world. It might be a small woods early in the morning, when the birds are waking up and singing. It might be a country road that leads to a meadow filled with wildflowers. It might be a park in the heart of your city. It might be a dock jutting out into a lake at dusk, so that you can watch the first stars as they appear in the night sky.

Or, if you prefer, visit your church, your mosque, your synagogue, your shrine, at a quiet time when few people are there.

Ask yourself, “What is my Purpose?” You were given keen intelligence, and a multitude of talents, and a young person’s energy. But none of them will fully be put to good use until you have a clear purpose.

Ask yourself, “What is the purpose of my life?”

I suggest that you bring a notebook, so that you can write down your thoughts. (With place and time and date.) Can you state your purpose—or multiple purposes—in one or more short, clear sentences?

Are those singing birds a part of your purpose?

Are the children playing among the tall trees in the park a part of your purpose?

Are the distant, silent, mysterious stars a part of your purpose?

Perhaps, every few years, you might take another walk with your notebook. How are you doing in the fulfillment of your purpose? Has it changed? Do you have a new purpose?

Keep that notebook. Treasure that notebook. It is your map and compass.

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My second suggestion is that you write a letter to your children (who may not be born yet), a letter which they will read when they are ten years old.

Explain to them why, when the world was already experiencing the first major disasters of climate change, you did nothing.

Or, explain to your children why you decided to help build a Renaissance.

What was your contribution to the Renaissance?

What did you study in school?

How did you feel when you reached out to other people in your own generation all around the world?

What kind of world did you want to give to your children?

Now write another letter, a letter to your grandchildren, which they will read when they are ten years old.

What wisdom can you share with them?

What advice can you give them?

Do you have any pictures that you would like to show them, taken in our world today?

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My third suggestion is that you read a book. Yes, I know, you don't have time to read. You would rather watch a funny movie. But if you are going to survive—to *survive*—the coming decades of climate disasters, then you must develop your thinking far beyond where it is now. You must understand the complexities of the great challenges which you face. You must reach with your thinking around the entire planet, and you must reach with your thinking to the end of the 21st Century, at least.

The best way for you to develop your thinking is by reading a book. And then another book. And then . . . don't ever stop reading those books.

I know. This is a teacher talking.

I would like to suggest two books, one short and one long, which explain more fully the subjects which we have been exploring in our talks. Many of the ideas in these books are now familiar to you, but you need to spend more time with these ideas, the same as you spend time with a friend to really get to know each other.

The first book is called **A Letter to the Young People of the World**. Yes, this book is a letter written by the author to *you*. The book is filled with pictures, woven into about thirty pages of text. You can read it in a couple of hours.

The writing is crystal clear. The chapters are short. It was written by a teacher who has worked with teenagers from California to the Caribbean, from Norway to Russia.

Your children are asking you to read this book. Your grandchildren are asking you to read this book.

Mother Earth is asking you to read this book.

Perhaps you and a group of friends can read this book together, pausing after each short chapter to talk about the ideas. Get a real discussion going. Learn from each other.

A Letter to the Young People of the World is an electronic book, an ebook, so that you can read it in Eritrea, or Ecuador, or Cambodia, or Ireland. You can download it from this website, absolutely free. No charge, ever.

This book was written by the teacher as *a gift* to young people around the world, because he believes in them.

No quiz. No exam. Your exam is the next sixty years of your life.

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The second book which I would like to recommend is called **Rise Up and Roar**. It is a long book, a novel of over four hundred pages.

Yes, you can kick and scream, you can complain and moan and grumble and tell me that your stomach hurts. I've heard it all before.

The main characters are young people just like you, who confront the worsening mess which has been dumped into their laps by the adults. The very stupid adults.

The story is about much more than climate change. It is also about war, and refugees, and trying to start a new life in a foreign country. It is about the reindeer who live on the tundra in northern Norway. It is about the world, seen through the eyes of a sixteen-year-old (your daughter), in 2043.

It is a story about hope. And determination. And the building of a Renaissance.
All of the books written by the teacher are very positive. They are not Gloom
and Doom. No Apocalypse at the end.
Because, you see, the teacher believes in you.

The chapters are short. The writing is crystal clear.
Get a group of friends together and read **Rise Up and Roar** chapter by chapter.
The story will become a *springboard* for great discussions.

No quiz. No exam.
One day, you will tell those very stupid adults to please step aside. You—with
very clear ideas—are building a better world.

Thank you.

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John Slade

Saturday

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