

THE JUNGLE TIMES PODCAST

THE BEAUTIFUL PLANET: ON GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NATURE

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Music

The Beautiful Planet: On good governance in Nature

Hello and welcome back to The Jungle Times Podcast. This is Episode #2 and I named it - *The Beautiful Planet: On good governance in Nature*. I'm your host Lawrence Poole.

In my last presentation, I told you that Nature is the best management school known. It teaches us how to manage a predatory/prey environment. I explained that Nature's law is *Survive & Prosper*. I also said Nature is managing *one system* ... and millions of subsystems. That one system requires cooperation, creativity and team spirit from all the subsystems. I told you that *no one can break Nature's laws... even if we can break ourselves against them*.

In this second Episode – I'll explain *how* Nature is managing its *Survive & Prosper* law. Let me start by saying that Nature's management rule is called - *Altruistic self-interest*...

That rule tells us that it is in the best interest of every member of a group to care of the needs of the whole group, and this idea extends to the whole of Nature. I told you last time that I have no problem with the concept. I've loved Nature as far back as I can remember and, having visited a good deal of it, I have no doubt that this is a beautiful Planet.

I've committed some wondrous scenes to memory, in the most beautiful places on Earth. Many of those scenes are unique – like every sunset or every sunrise I ever saw; some of my memories are magical – like the aurora borealis when the sky is streaked pink, green, yellow. Other memories are spectacular – like a volcano exploding at night not 300 metres from where I sat; some are frightening – earthquakes and hurricanes. Even gathering clouds and torrential downpours offer wonder and awe.

I recognize that when I see beauty in a forest though, someone else will see lumber at a board-foot price. That does not change the fact that the *Survive & Prosper* management rule applies to us all - in spite of our differing worldviews. To get it though, you have to see *survive* as an Ego thing.

“I” survive.

Individuals ... survive. Only when sufficient numbers of individuals make it, can we say that a species survived. A clear example is the American Bald Eagle.

In the late 1960s, when the « Endangered Species Act» was created by the EPA, the Bald Eagle was prominent on the list. The Eagle population in the USA was then down to the last 400 or 500 birds. The US Government acted to protect them, banning toxic pesticides and hunting them and, by the 1990s, the bird had sufficiently recovered, and it was dropped from the Endangered list.

Today there are more than 75,000 Bald Eagles in the US because sufficient numbers of individual birds survived so the species is safe. It is prospering.

“I” survive. Having gone through the ordeal of a traumatic car accident, I know that. I also know that even if survival demands every Ego assert his or her own interests, prosper is not even a concept that can be entertained by “one”, by the individual.

Prosperity is a “we” word. Prosperity includes what Wikipedia describes as - “...*flourishing, thriving, good fortune and successful social status.*”

Social status measures value. More specifically, the term refers to a level of respect, honor, assumed competence and deference that is accorded to people, groups, and organizations in society. Who are your heroes?

In fact, we are told that prosperity includes other than monetary factors. Prosperity includes being wealthy in terms of health and happiness too.

We should realize that we prosper with others... by working with them, trading with them, buying from them or selling to them, building with them. We employ others or are employed by them. We

can go farther, faster and for a longer period of time if we give value to others.

Prosperity is a “we” word. “*No man is an island...*”, wrote the poet John Donne. He wasn’t being sexist, he meant to say no woman is either. His poem continues - “*...every island is a piece of a continent, a part of the main body.*”

Folks – you got to know that prosperity is larger than any one Ego, that altruism is a part of Nature’s plan... The fact is, “I” add value *with others*.

Concerned with the whole system and all its subsystems, Nature’s management rule is *altruistic self-interest*. It is in one’s *best interest* to work well with others. The Creator’s political INTENT is kind of clear – *One Planet, One People*.

This idea seems to break down with human beings. In Episode #1, I mentioned a study that reveals 3 kinds of human who are engaged in Nature’s predatory/prey relationship. We can call them - 1. Good people - who generally answer Nature’s law with altruistic self-interest... “*My brother as myself...*” 2. Bad people - who generally act in their own interest selfish interest - “*Me!*” - even if it’s to the detriment of others. And 3. Stupid people - who generally act to the detriment of others, even if it’s to their own detriment... “*Not you!*”

The study warns us that *Stupid people* are the most dangerous, and we are surrounded by more stupid people than we suppose.

I confess that when I see how some of us are responding to the Covid19 Pandemic – refusing to conform to the recommendations of experts, with no care about who they put at risk – there is no doubt about the danger caused by stupidity.

Predation is widespread in the animal world, and predators come from a great variety of species. By exploring the basics of predation, we can learn to avoid human predators. Think of serial killers or sexual stalkers as easy examples. But watch the Netflix series “*Dirty Money*” to learn about human predators in modern times. You can’t

believe that Bankers or Big Pharma have your best interest at heart, do you?

Make a list of who's who among your acquaintances. Then take a guess: Who contributes beneficially to your relationship, who is a predator, who is a parasite? And see who you prey on – i.e. Who do you use in selfish ways?

Human society can be thought of as a complex ecosystem. To the extent that we exploit each other, we have to admit that some of us are predators, if not we are prey; some play both roles. As such, we function in a wide variety of social classes, playing roles, having occupations and pre-occupations, i.e. - we act *differently* depending on the situation.

We *prey* on each another in ways that are classified as *intra-group* and *inter-group* predation.

Intra group predation - *or within a society* - occurs when members of one group *prey* on members of another. It happens by limiting people's rights for example, do we encourage financial inequalities or class divisions? Think of sex slavery and debt slavery. We overlook child predation, we victim-shame and we tolerate improprieties from higher-ups in the social hierarchy. The Internet has allowed scammers of every stripe to prey on the innocent and the naïve. Trolls, fake news and lies abound.

Inter-group predation is when one society *preys* on another via raids, invasions or war. We colonize people and plunder the other's resources. We exacerbate racial divides; we impose unjust trade policies; we ban or limit immigration, and much more. In addition to having another's will imposed on it, a *preyed society* can be absorbed into *predator society*, to become its permanent underclass.

We live in Jungle Times – i.e. a dangerous world that is in a collision course with ecological challenges that limit further growth. These include climate change, mass migration, resource depletion and social unrest. There are wars and rumours of war.

All these challenges tell us that we have to understand the predator/prey context of our lives a little better. This so we can predict - at least in broad strokes - where we should be headed, how to get there and who can help.

Of course, before you start accusing a brother-in-law or a neighbour of being a predator, you should recognize that a metaphor that classifies us as predatory animals needs a few caveats.

Here are 7 limits to the human as a predator idea that the Resilience Alliance – they're a multidisciplinary research organization who explore ecosystems – suggest that we should consider:

1. Social roles that describe *predator-prey* relationships should not be interpreted as assigning a superiority or an inferiority to those roles.
2. *Predator-prey* relationships among humans are not biologically based but instead are socially constructed. These relationships are subject to moral judgment, negotiation, resistance, and rebellion.
3. Human society currently is so complex that it's hard to know the *predator* from the *prey* in a given situation. As some people serve both functions in different aspects, rather than throw specific groups or occupations into question, it's more useful to identify the means of their exploitation. Who profits how and from whom?
4. Differences in role and power among humans may not be metaphorically reducible to win-lose *predation*. It is likely that some behavior that appear *predatory* evolved to the advantage of the entire species.
5. Some people might object to the metaphor of *predation* to describe them because it seems inherently violent, while human society is largely based on cooperation and collaboration.
6. It is important to acknowledge that humans have always been predators throughout history, and that we are omnivores. But, as we harvest more of Earth's resources, we've become super-predators.
7. Apart from these caveats, the need is to clarify how to use the metaphor, and how not to. Business is an obvious and important subject area in which the "predator-prey" metaphor can yield important insights.

Rather than “*Survival of the strongest or most ferocious*” that many people seem to believe, Nature’s law can in fact be stated as “*Survival of the wisest...*” - wisdom being the capacity to adapt to new conditions.

If Nature favoured the strongest or most ferocious, dinosaurs would rule the world today. They’re still here... but they are called fossil fuel. Dinosaurs once ruled but when a change in condition suddenly occurred – a meteor causing an ice age –, not a single one of them had the brains to go out and buy a fur coat... and so they were wiped out.

In fact, Nature’s law favours *survival of the wisest...* So learn to adapt.

Nature tells us how to adapt to changing conditions. Adaptation is like working a muscle... the more we do it, the stronger we get. So... Nature favours the emergence of creative leaders. It should be noted the fruit of the labour, the result of always doing our level best, is that we acquire the habit of always doing our level best. Sweet. That is a winner’s recipe.

At this point I recognize that my message isn’t new, but in spite of the deep wisdom it carries, people largely ignore that adapting to Nature’s rule is *in their own best interest*. The jungle management rule is *altruistic self-interest...* whether we are ready or not, whether we like it or not. And even if we live in this predator/prey environment, there are no exceptions.

Friends, no matter what they were taught in management school, bad and stupid people try to break the law. I’ve met corporate CEOs who don’t care if the company goes bankrupt or not, and I’ve known others who cared more about their own perks and privileges than company performance or morale. Still others outsourced jobs and sold assets just to make a quick one-time profit - regardless of the

effect on employees. I've also met political leaders later disgraced because they were caught in shady deals.

It is clear to me that these people are not working in the best interest of all the stakeholders. I've also seen striking employees force a company into bankruptcy rather than compromise on a demand. Those Union leaders didn't give much thought to the hardship members inherit after strike-funds run out. In the same way we see large corporations watch their best people quit because work conditions are terrible.

It seems to me that Nature's expectation for good governance breaks down with our species. Many people don't consider the effect of their behaviour on others... and this explains why we face so many challenges.

What we should note is that Nature manages the "one" system by giving value to 3 aspects of it. I'll call these *Structural capital*, *Client capital* and *Creative capital*.

In the jungle, these work together in symbiosis for the good of all. I'll tell you that Nature supplies us with countless examples of symbiotic relationships in the jungle that show us how species can get along.

A Greek word meaning to *live together*, symbiosis describes any type of close, long-term interaction between organisms. It's important to recognize that the benefits derived by the participants in any relationship can be difficult for anyone outside of that relationship to assess.

Nature's *structural capital* is defined as what a structure does, what it contributes to the whole. I can use the banana tree as an example. In the jungle, a banana tree feeds many species, including human beings. The fact that I can plant a banana tree and, in a year or so, harvest 100 pounds of bananas that I can now sell in the marketplace, lets me know that this structure – banana tree - has a capital value. It has monetary worth.

Note that Nature gives value to everything. Everything contributes something somewhere. Everything has value – even if we don't see it.

Whenever something isn't directly related to human wellness, we tend to disregard it, saying *it's just a weed*. We suppose it has less value and we are always wrong. We cause a lot of damage with that limited view.

Let me give you an example of what I mean. Did you know that without an insect called the chocolate midge, you couldn't enjoy your Oreos? That insect pollinates the cacao flower which then produces cacao beans – or chocolate.

That midge lives in dense jungles on the underside of the leaves of other plants. The cacao flower releases 75 different aromas just to attract that midge, so it continues to pollinate it.

Imagine if a farmer decides that he wants to cultivate more cacao plants and he then orders his workers to cut the weeds to make room for his new cacao plants. Destroying the midge homes forces them deeper into the jungle, farther away from those attractive aromas. By cutting the *weeds*, that farmer loses his real workers, those midge pollinators.

In Nature everything has value for something. Structural capital describes what something does... what it contributes to the whole. A weed can supply food or shelter to that or the other insect, which then pollinate other plants, and supply us with fruit, or something.

Nature's lesson on how to see structural capital applies directly to organizations, showing them how to define their own structure. Wall Street might think a company's structural capital is limited to its material assets – its land, buildings, desks and computers - but in fact structural capital in an organization also describes its more intangible resources - like brands, formulas, recipes, letters patent, techniques, know-how, management skills... and more. All of these assets allow the organization – whether the structure is a bank or a restaurant – to do what it does.

Nature views structural capital as it applies to individuals too. Our own structural capital includes our education, talents, skills and abilities - those we have and those we can acquire.

In an example, I'm bilingual – I'm fluent in both French and English languages. I'm almost trilingual – I can *hablar un poco Espagnol*, and -because I'm a corporate trainer and an animator - that increases the worth of my structural capital, this because my market-potential is bigger.

Also, I'm billed as the only researcher on Earth who treks jungles in a wheelchair and because *Structural capital* increases its value with rarity or uniqueness in the marketplace, my value increases. If you are a world authority on something, anything, or if you are the best talent available, or if you represent a must-have product... then the world beats a path to your door.

If structural capital like yours is worth a dime a dozen, well your capital is valued at less than one cent.

I said Nature also values *client capital*. Client capital is the relationship that exists or can exist between systems. More properly said, client capital describes anyone or anything that contributes or consumes the structural capital.

In my example, I eat bananas... so we can say that I'm a client of the banana tree. In the same light, the banana tree is a client of the compost on which it feeds. Nature gives value to the relationships between systems.

For organizations the lesson should be - *“Yes we have clients ‘out there’ who consume our product so we must value them - after all, they pay our bills and our salaries. But we also have clients ‘in here’ who contribute to our product so we must be mindful of them too. Our employees and our collaborators contribute to our capital worth by helping to serve our consumers.*

In that same way, individuals should see the people who surround them - who depend on them, and on whom they depend - as their client capital.

Nature is telling us to add value to your relationships... those you have and those you can develop. Different from structural capital, client capital generally increases in value with numbers – i.e. More clients = Greater worth. How many friends do you have? How many people can you influence? The number is important... Nature suggests - *the more, the merrier*. We increase the value of our client capital by nurturing our relationships.

Lastly, Nature gives value to its creative capital. This describes “how” a system is adding value to its structural capital, its client capital. Nature gives value to how a subsystem is contributing to the whole system.

Creative capital is what separates a company from its competitors. It describes how one professional distinguishes himself from another. A circus was just a circus until Cirque Du Soleil reinvented the product... and added great value to itself.

People who urge us to be positive, to shift attitudes and to do our level best, each in his or her own way, have discovered that Nature wants us to invest in our creative capital. Adjust your day-to-day thinking so that you give the world the very best of yourself ...and then you’ll be stunned to see how the world responds. You’ll find out that luck happens. You become lucky when you discover that luck is found *where preparation meets opportunity*.

Imagine if you were to take your structural capital (your talents and abilities – those you have and those you can develop) and seriously worked on them. Imagine if you nurtured your relationships and looked forward to meeting more people... wouldn’t that add value to your client capital.

Imagine that both of those conditions require a creative attitude. *How* we do things. If we were to ask Nature what form of capital –

Structural, Client or Creative capital - has the most value, the answer might surprise more than a few.

If Nature had to choose one answer to give us, its choice would have to be *creative capital*. It is your creative that gives value to the other two. How you think about your talents, your abilities and your potential is what decides how well you will do in life. More than what you think about, how you think about it has value. Are you ready to be lucky? Are you prepared to be a leader? Just invest in your creative capital.

You decide *who to work for*, and *whom to work with*. Then you should give value to your choices. You decide *how to serve* your clients and your collaborators... so serve them well.

I remember watching a Simpson's episode where Homer hates his job. He ends up learning to appreciate it when he discovers the real value of his client capital. He learns that he doesn't have to love the job for itself, but he has to do his best at it for his real client... *his baby daughter Maggie*.

Client capital is who we do it with, and who we do it for.

A lot of folks give value to money, but money is only a way of keeping score. It's a measure. Real value is *your «structural capital»* - i.e. what you do. Who you do it for and who you do it with are the value of your *«client capital»* and how you do it, your unique touch, is what gives value to your *«creative capital»*.

INTERLUDE

Invest in yourself! Adapting to change takes time. Studies suggest it might take up to 6 months to integrate a change when it's a personal choice, much longer if the change is imposed. A social change can take up to 15 years to be accepted by a majority of people. My own experience working for the disabled persons community confirms that to me.

It took me about 10 years to rise above the devastating effects of my accident. Suddenly paralyzed, I had a lot to learn when I was at my weakest. It took that much time to build up my physical and mental strength sufficiently so I could start a new career as a *corporate trainer*.

I invested in myself. After determining what my structural capital was – my passion for Nature is educational - I looked to serve others. I can tell you that investing in my client capital financed Suzy and my dozens of trips into the jungle, some for several months at a time. There we invested in our creative capital, gathering data directly from observing Nature.

Along with hundreds of hours of contemplation, we learned to develop our creativity. At a certain point, we bought a 60-acre parcel of primary rainforest, to could transform it into a centre where I could explore Nature more deeply. I'll share two anecdotes that led us to that decision. They also reveal a little about life in a wheelchair.

My first story takes place at the Cahuita National Park, on Costa Rica's Caribbean coast. Suzy and I arrived there one sunny afternoon, intent on seeing the *Oropendola*, a very interesting bird that lives in large communities. Imagine a large blackbird but with gold-coloured tail feathers.

Nesting pairs, the female build a nest woven from twigs and fibres that hang like a large windsock 20-30 meters up a tree. The nest can hang 2 meters as the male is considerably larger than the female. Typically, there are about 30 nests in a community, but more than 150 nests have been recorded on some trees.

As we neared the Cahuita National Park entrance, we were greeted by large piles of debris that blocked any semblance of wheelchair access. Spotting us and seeing my dilemma, a Park Ranger ran over. He apologized for the devastation caused by a recent hurricane and, sadly, he said they were just starting to clean the beach which wasn't at all accessible for my wheelchair.

I told him we had come to see Oropendolas and he brightened up, pointed to a trail away from the beach into the jungle and he said: *"This trail is hard-packed sand and very flat so it will be easy to wheel on. If you follow it for - oh 45 minutes to an hour - you will find several large colonies of them. You will easily see them hanging from the trees."*

Off we went. About 40 minutes into my ride, it suddenly rained. And I mean a tropical downpour... a torrential rainfall. We quickly found shelter off-trail, in a spot under the canopy, and so we were only moderately soaked.

After several long minutes, the rain just as suddenly stopped but any semblance of a trail had completely disappeared. The hard-packed sand was mush and the humidity made the heat of the day quite oppressive.

On that wet mush, my wheelchair would not move an inch. Suzy got behind me and tried to push. The chair dug down and refused to budge. I popped a wheelie and jumped it forward ...about an inch. I did it again and, now coordinated with Suzy's push, I moved forward about 2 inches.

We did this again. And again. Now I was tired and draped in sweat, night was falling, and our jeep was far away. *What do you do, what do you do?*

Well, I laughed. The situation was ridiculous, and I thought to myself: *"How long will it take God to find me some help?"*

As I mentioned last time, God is my friend. Not a minute or two later, I see a very fit-looking young man, shirtless but wearing shorts

and sneakers, jog into view. He was running towards us with determination. I yelled - "*Hola amigo!*" - and waved to him. He looked up from the trail, spotted us and ran right over.

I said: "*You look like you enjoy keeping fit... Have I got a super workout for you to try!*"

I explained our dilemma to him, and he was glad to help. Balanced on my back wheels only, Suzy and he lifted the chair's front end and pulled me out of the jungle. We enjoyed a cold beer and a few laughs together just after dark. By then, he knew enough about our work and my trekking jungles in a wheelchair to offer: "*Amigo – there has to be a better way...*"

My second anecdote happened about six months later. This time we were headed to Tortuguero National Park where we wanted to visit the Green Turtle Research Station. To get there, we had to sail 4.5 hours up freshwater canals teemed with wildlife - like jaguars, tapirs, caimans, and countless others.

We began near the city of Limon with a fireman's carry to get me aboard a small boat we hired. Then my wheelchair was hoisted aboard and everyone else climbed in. We enjoyed a slow sail and saw some outstanding examples of the beauty to be found in the jungle on a sunny morning. The canals end on a beach that is a major nesting site for the Green Sea Turtle.

My surprise came at the other end of that trip. Once there, the crew unloaded my chair and set it up on the beach. Then I was 'fireman-carried' from the boat to the chair where I sat. I wheeled forward about a foot or two and – to my horror – my chair's frame gave out from under me.

I was stunned to see the left front post had completely rusted out. Wow! I got the deep meaning of *rain* forest. In the humidity, rust never sleeps.

What do I do... what do I do? Well I decided to have lunch. No sense panicking, after all - *God is my friend*. Also, I knew a paraplegic in San Jose, the capital about 6 or 7 hours from where we were, who owned a workshop.

This was before cell phones and there were no landlines that far in the jungle, so we made plans to head back up the canals right after lunch.

We finally found a telephone about 10 minutes before 5:00pm - and this on a Friday, so I called my friend at his place of business. His secretary told me that he had just left for the weekend. He was on his way to his beach house and, as he had no phone service there, he would be unavailable until noon Monday.

I was considering my options when she suddenly changed her tune. Now she excitedly told me that she heard his car, that he was back, that he must have forgotten something. A long story made short, he cancelled his weekend plans and suggested we meet him at his office the next morning. He'd be there with a mechanic who was also a welder. They'd fix the chair.

Well – as I keep saying, God is my friend – but now I was convinced: There had to be a better way for me to do my work.

Think what I might, the conditions “out there” – the limits imposed by a wheelchair and the landscape – made me realize how vulnerable I was, and in consequence Suzy too.

My thinking completely shifted – instead of chasing *lessons from the jungle* all over the place, I wondered how to get critters to come to me? I thought about wheelchair-friendly trails in an appropriate forest.

Suzy and I looked into buying some land. We found a very good real estate agent and began searching... and we ended by purchasing a 60-acre piece of jungle in the Talamanca Mountains. At 400 metres altitude, we now had a wide variety of giant tree that 5-10 people with joined hands could gird, and hundreds of other species of flora and

fauna. On the whole property, only two small areas were flat and bare.

At first, you would never imagine wheelchair access. The mountain top had a flat homesite about 150' x 150'. Looking at the Pacific Ocean to the West, it offered a spectacular view of the mountains as they plunged into the sea.

The property also has an amazing particularity: A 150' x 200' flat and bare area about 100 metres below the homesite, down the steep Eastern slope of the mountain. That "backyard area" juts out perpendicular from the mountainside, at the height of the canopy of giant trees that surround it. That 2nd flat area then slopes down the mountain to the jungle floor. As 85-90% of all species that live in a rainforest are housed in the canopy - the treetops, you can comfortably sit in that backyard and watch dozens of animal and bird species organize themselves for a successful life.

Around that tiny plateau, we planted 500 fruit trees of 50 different species to feed the animals year 'round. We also planted more than 200 species of medicinal and flowering plant and shrub to attract butterflies and birds, and we added over 100 species of exotic plant that were on the endangered list.

In short, we created a garden of exceptional beauty at the level of the jungle treetops, and then we planted hedges as rooms for hidden observation stations.

The property is a part of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor - a project that links land in Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama into a permanent bridge that species can use as migration routes. Because many animals will not cross open pasture or roadways, their loss of habitat has pushed many species to the edge of extinction. The Bio-Corridor helps them.

That project forced Suzy and I to change our perspective - from being observers of Nature with no participation, to observers completely immersed in the environment. We thus migrated through 4 phases of

contemplation: 1. Total Observer; 2. Observer as Participant; 3. Participant as Observer; 4. Total Participant. That property now spoke to us.

After our backyard became a feeding station, we thought species would appreciate a drink at the buffet table we planted so we added several Agua de Manzana, a tree that ponds water. Presto

It took about 3 years for my idea to prove itself. Let me tell you that my faith in the creative process paid off big time. Dozens of bird and butterfly species moved into our forest. As the trees came into fruit, things changed quickly – and we counted 3 kinds of monkey, 2 kinds of sloth, agoutis, tapirs, armadillos, coyotes ...in fact so many species moved in. We even saw a jaguar one day, not 10 feet from us. That scene – and so many others - are etched into my mind for all of time. What a thrill.

As the bushes and perennial plants went to seed, I saw *parrots, toucans, motmots, manakins, hummingbirds and so many others drop by*. I saw snakes, lizards, frogs, spiders and many other beasties. One morning, I excitedly counted 10 Giant Blue Morphos in less than an hour... but as our magic forest housed so many kinds of butterfly, it quickly became routine.

To link the garden to the ocean-view homesite 100 metres up the mountain, Sergio – our caretaker – carved a long winding trail. With his machete, he created a ramp is easy enough for a wheelchair – especially as I now had a *jungle chair* – built with rust-free aluminum and large dirt-bike wheels.

Sergio built trails that radiate out from the garden where we added aromatics like *Frangipani, Gardenia, Ylang Ylang and Wild Rose* so the breeze fills the park with enchanting smells. We planted exotics like fluorescent coloured vines and a variety of ginger plants. We planted several kinds of bamboo – for making furniture, timber and food - and Kapok trees that grow the very best nesting material... waterproof fibres that are as soft as silk.

As planned, we had a buffet table where animals came to feast and then went home. Sitting quietly behind a hedge, you disappear and don't bother them at all. Oh – a howler monkey might howl once in a while, of course, but most just ignore you and go about their business.

I was amazed at what I discovered. Over several years, I wrote dozens of syntheses from my observations at Mayamü, translating adaptive behaviour into personal and professional strategies. Suzy and I shared them with leaders in Canada and Europe. I saw that, in the jungle, species have absolutely no resistance to complying with Nature's law. With the exception of damaged humans, every creature wakes up every day to actualize Creator's intent that we *Survive & Prosper*.

My death allowed me to see how this super-Intelligent rule is animating life, all of life. I saw that I am energy in a sea of energy. We all are. But the jungle taught me how this energy is manifest.

I called this episode of The Jungle Times Podcast - "*The Beautiful Planet*", with the sub-title - *On good governance in Nature* - because of the wondrous way that Earth is managed. We might like to think that we are separate from Nature, or somehow above it all, but simple observation belies our efforts. We are born to this world... and we are natural in it.

INTERLUDE

The word nature is from the Latin “*natura*” which means the essential quality or the innate disposition of what is described. The word is used to define specific qualities that exist universally. Even if we humans are a part of nature, many think our activities are somehow separate from other natural phenomena.

In this presentation, I described Nature's rules from the perspective of organic molecules - where matter and mass are organized into biology... into intelligent life.

I explained how we can manage a healthy, wealthy, wise and successful life for ourselves by investing in our Structural capital – our talents and abilities, those we have and those we can develop. I said to invest in our Client capital – our mutualistic relationships – those we have and those we can develop. And I said to invest in our Creative capital –our capacity to adapt and overcome challenges. Like all of Nature, we aren’t finished yet, we can increase our value.

I think my timing for the release of the information can’t be better. We have never had a greater need for good governance. Wikipedia defines governance as “... *the processes of governing, whether undertaken by a government, a market or a network, whether in a family, a tribe, a formal or informal organization or a territory and whether through the laws, norms, power or language.*”

Good governance relates to the interactions and the decision-making by the actors involved in managing a collective. Good governance leads to the creation of institutions and the establishment of equitable social norms.

Visit my website at www.TheJungleTimes.com and in the right margin, you’ll find the URL links to newspapers around the world. You can click and instantly reach the front page of the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, The Times of India, of Tapei, of Korea, and a few dozen others.

Scan the headlines on any given day and see how world leaders are responding to the challenges we face in these Jungle Times. You'll find real discrepancies.

Today for example, in late May 2020, The Washington Times tells a story about how the American Government is managing the Covid19 pandemic.

Four months after the first case of infection was reported in the US, they are still debating the desirability and duration of stay-at home orders. The article exposed an uncomfortable relationship between science and politics. Science experts describe a direction based on facts, while politicians offer nonsensical opinions.

Politicians and scientists have competing claims on the truth, so they divided the country. Any real solution is delayed by their debate, and the crisis is made worse. Opposed to this, The Tico Times reports how Costa Rica had one of the more effective responses to this same crisis. It was the first country in Latin America to confirm a Covid19 case, and now its 5 million citizens are starting to emerge from a strict self-imposed lockdown with less than 850 confirmed cases and only 10 deaths.

Two main factors worked in the tiny country's favour. It has a good health care system, and the government mobilized very effectively to provide basic services and support. Professor Juliana Martinez-Franzoni of the University of Costa Rica said: *"Costa Rica's response was faster than most Latin American countries and more disciplined."*

She adds: *"... people trust the government, trust that the state can help them in a crisis, so our degree of compliance was very high."*

Despite its size and relative poverty, Costa Rica's government helped its people cope with and contain the virus, and it managed the economic fallout – all this while the US leadership failed miserably.

How can the most educated and prosperous country in history be mired in such chaos?

The answer is that – in a lot of ways - they are living in jungle times. Nasty and stupid people *and their minions* are manipulating good people to create the chaos. You should see a BBC documentary called the *Power of Nightmares* on YouTube to understand how the manipulation works.

You'll discover that politicians have learned that fear is a powerful motivator. They also know that creating problems to which they promise solutions lets them rule the world.

Many people are more than ready to subscribe to a political slogan with fight cries that promise to fix the chaos. As a reaction to anger, the human body releases aggressor hormones into our bloodstream. These fuel an inner dialogue that generates a fear of “*out there*”.

Most don't suspect that the real enemy – *fear* - is within. Aggression is our genetic "*fight-or-fright* " way of coping with stress.

In spite of our inner conflicts, we must face challenges like climate change and other environmental realities; we also have to fix the real economic inequalities; there are great disparities in education and opportunity; add the fact that there's an aging population, unprecedented migration, and a lot more local problems to solve ...so you might think that we're facing disaster.

Many of the secrets that I learned in tropical jungles now have direct applications in the social jungle – for example how to organize our communities and our environment for the good of all.

In my book - *Invest in your creative capital* – available on Amazon, I describe "*the effect of paradigm*", and refer to how our memory - what we learn and experience – are etched in our brain as neurological pathways.

How we link neurons dictates our view of the world, and that worldview limits our possibilities. My book explains that your beliefs about the world limit your potential in the world. If you believe Aliens or Jesus or avenging Angels are going to descend to Earth and

fix your problems, if you're waiting for that to happen, well then - *all you're really doing is waiting.*

In my case, the beliefs I held since my Catholic education many years before were instantly transformed in an out-of-body experience in the trauma of my accident. I saw pure Light animating the world and everything in it [$e = mc^2$].

I saw how God's creation has little to do with what I believe. God's law is Survive & Prosper. To do it, Nature gives value to 3 aspects of itself. We must learn to do the same. There are better ways of managing our daily affairs, but we must change to let order emerge.

We know more today than ever before. More people are educated, and more have access to knowledge than ever before in human history. Our overall IQ has increased about 20 points in the last 50 years, but we still manage ourselves like the grade schoolers in Lord of the Flies.

Petty politics and division exist. Well contrary to the disdain that the "elite few" have for us, the great unwashed masses, a majority of people respond to *nurture* as well as to their genetic nature.

Unfortunately, many people still hold belief that stand in the way of their own empowerment. I think there is enough known right now to solve all the problems we face. I think most of us realize no one is coming from somewhere else to save us. We either fix everything ourselves or we pass the shit on to our kids and our kids' kids.

In my last Episode I told you what I learned from that marmot one day: If I had any hope for a better life then I'd have to make every effort myself.

I believe human beings of every ethnicity and creed can come together in answer to the important challenges we face. A healthy and prosperous future is a common need, and a vital one. We can make that happen.

Tune-in my next Jungle Times Podcast and discover how to do that. In an Episode called “*How Nature manages complex situations*”, I’ll explain the principles that allow leaders to emerge from the chaos.

Folks - there is no other Planet we can move to; we’ve found no secret portals into other dimensions; there is no stairway to Heaven. As the story is told, paradise is here... on Earth. To get it, I you have to see the world as more than just meat and matter... Look at it as if a sea of energy, a sea of infinite intelligence.

That intelligence exists in 3 dimensions we’ll call - the known, the unknown and the unknowable. We’ll set the unknowable aside because - by definition it is **not** knowable. So, nothing about it can be reasonably said.

That leaves us with the other 2 dimensions to explore - the known and the unknown. Each of them has a quality that we can count on.

The quality I attribute to the known is that - *it is local*. What one person knows, another may not. And vice versa. What one culture sees, another may not. What one Nation has, another does not. What one group believes, another will not. All this makes for complex situations - but the good news is *the known can be shared*.

So - let’s deal with the unknown. The quality of the unknown is that *it can become known*. The unknown is not the unknowable. It is only the unknown.... and being unknown is a temporary state. The unknown will reveal itself in time. I discovered that we can force the unknown to reveal itself by questioning it.

The more we ask questions of it, and then seek out the answers, the more the unknown becomes known. You shouldn’t be afraid of the unknown because it is only information that’s just waiting to be known.

I’ve spoken to a good many people who’ve gone through drastic changes in their life. Now they have something most people don’t. They understand the process of change. To try and explain it, they’ll

use expressions like - "*It's always darkest before the dawn...*" but others have to believe them, or not.

This because survivors know that there is light at the end of the tunnel. And if you know that, then you aren't afraid of the dark anymore. You just carry on... into the light.

Folks, I'll speak to you next time. If you liked this presentation, please give it a positive review and tell your friends. If you didn't like, tell me about it.

If you would like a transcript of this presentation, visit my website at www.TheJungleTimes.com. Thanks...

Adios for now.