



## Our vision of the world is outdated.

If we are to overcome the challenges we face today, from terrorism to climate change and financial meltdown, we need to free ourselves from our narrow identities and start thinking like global citizens.

We are all profoundly affected by the decisions and actions of people whose faces we may never see, whose language we do not speak and whose names we would not recognise - and they, too, are affected by us. Our well-being and in some cases our survival depends on us recognising this, taking responsibility and developing four capacities to become **Global Citizens**.

### Witnessing: Opening Our Eyes

As Buddhist masters put it: 'right seeing, right intention, right action'. Once we begin to see the world, then we can learn about it, connect to others and partner with them.

### Learning: Opening Our Minds

Once we can envision the world, we naturally want to learn. We can sense how our mind's full range has been narrowed. We recognise that we can embrace the world only if our mind, like a door, is opened.

### Connecting: Creating Relationships

The mind alone is not a passport across borders.

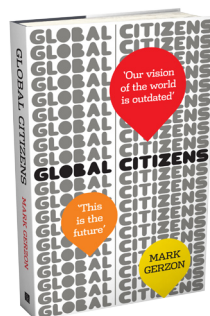
To bridge the divides that separate us, global citizens need to open our hearts and connect with the hearts of others, creating relationships even with those who may be called 'enemies'.

### Geo-partnering: Working Together

With our eyes, minds and hearts open, we are ready to act. But global citizens realise no one of us can build a bridge alone. We need a counterpart on the other side - an ally who is different from us. We need to open our hands, reach out and take theirs, and work together.

Bestselling author Mark Gerzon is one of the world's leading global educators. Deployed by the United Nations to countries in conflict, he has been heralded by the New York Times as an 'expert in civil discourse'. He has worked with a wide range of corporate and civic organisations around the world, fostering closer cooperation across international, ethnic and ideological divisions.

**Global Citizens** is his ground-breaking outline for a new method of thinking. Illustrated with case studies drawn from across the globe and Mark's decades of experience, it is a provocative account that will make us all change the way we see ourselves, and the world.



Global Citizens by Mark Gerzon

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**Conclusion**

# **Global Intelligence:** Twenty Ways to Raise Our GI

*We cannot solve problems on the same level of  
awareness that we created them.*

— **Albert Einstein**

**D**eveloping the four capacities outlined in this book – witnessing, learning, connecting, and geo-partnering – will raise our ‘global intelligence’. Unlike IQ, which is our intelligence quotient, or our EQ, which is our emotional quotient, GI is our ability to use all our faculties in ways that cross the borders that separate humankind. If we crystallize the extensive research on this subject, the most succinct and straightforward definition of global intelligence is: the human capacities that enable us to coexist and co-create with people different than ourselves.

GI involves all of who we are, not just our intellects. It may trigger every human emotion, ranging from the excitement of discovering our connections to each other to the despair of learning about inequality and injustice; from the delight of travelling to distant lands to the confusion of more complexity than we can digest. Becoming global citizens may fill our hearts with emotions that we might otherwise rarely know. It is not just about how we think, but also how we feel; not just about what we know, but how we act.

Among the many tests that measure our GI, one of the most sophisticated is the ‘global mindset’ inventory, based on the pioneering work of Professor Mansour Javidan and his colleagues at the Thunderbird School of Global Management.<sup>4</sup> I encourage you to take this (or another similar) skills inventory to assess your current GI.

However, continuing to develop our GI throughout our lives is ultimately more important than our ‘score’ on a test at one point in time. What matters is discovering daily, lifelong activities for consciously developing your global intelligence that work best for you. After all, ‘raising’ your GI and ‘becoming’ a global citizen are not a college course that lasts a semester, but rather a journey that lasts a lifetime.

Gathered from many sources, as well as my own experience conducting global leadership training around the world, here are twenty daily ways to stimulate global intelligence. Because they raise our GI, they will also help us deal with an increasingly complex and challenging world. Please do not use them as mere brain-teasers, but rather as ways to fashion a globally aware life. Whether you focus on a few of them, or pursue them, please weave them into the fabric of your life. Doing so will help you find your own unique path to global citizenship – enriching your life *and* making a better, safer world.

NOTE: The Global Citizens' Resources section that follows this chapter contains specific books, websites, organizations and other tools for exploring each of these GI-raising methods.

## **1. Be the change that you want to see in the world.**

Gandhi's oft-quoted advice is the right starting point for us because, if followed, it challenges us to go inward and go outward at the same time. It encourages us not to wait for 'them' to change, but to change ourselves first.

In this spirit, I must admit that the biggest obstacle to my achieving change in the world has been me. Although I have been fortunate to have many opportunities to contribute to the world during my life, I have missed some of them because I was not yet aware of the parts of myself that were part of the problem. I was so determined to be a 'caring' person, and ultimately a 'global' citizen, that I remained blind to the parts of myself that were not caring and not global. I was so determined to be generous, for example, that I did not recognize how I was selfish; and so

committed to being collaborative that I did not admit when I was headstrong, etc.

For me, following Gandhi's advice has been highly practical as well as spiritual counsel. When he encouraged us to 'be the change that [we] want to see in the world', he was not advocating personal instead of socio-political change but rather internal change as a means to achieving external change. This distinction in interpretation is crucial if we are to become global citizens who walk in his footsteps.

The profiles of global citizens in this book are evidence that the key is to start with who we are, and where we are. We met global citizens with great power and influence, like UN diplomats, and those who have very little influence or wealth, like Zimbabwean Virginia Mupanduki. But no matter which global citizen we met – from Israeli and Palestinian peace-builders to African healers, from astronauts returning from orbit to university students in Zhuhai – the starting point for all of us is the same: here, and now.

If we want a compassionate, caring world, let us be compassionate and caring for those around us. If we want a just world, let us live justly. If we want a sustainable world, let us create lives that are sustainable. If we want a peaceful world, let us be peace.

## **2. Use both sides of your brain.**

Brain research has recently established that our minds tend to filter out information that challenges our identities. When we listen to speeches by public figures that include statements with which we disagree, our brains 'turn off'; when they make statements that confirm what we already believe, our brains 'turn on'.

If, for example, a Muslim sympathetic to al-Qa'eda heard a

speech by a US Army general in Iraq, he would immediately discount whatever he heard, even if it were true. An American television viewer who heard a speech by Osama bin Laden would do exactly the same. Our left brain performs this screening function in order to protect our identity. The good news is that by filtering out information that does not fit our current worldview it gives us a cushion of certainty. But the bad news is: it prevents us from learning.

Fortunately, our brain has two hemispheres. In simple terms, the left brain thinks, the right brain feels.<sup>2</sup> We need to use both of them to raise our global intelligence. When our left brain ‘shuts down’ in the face of challenging evidence, our right brain can feel us contract and tighten. It can alert us to the fact that we are being ‘closed-minded’. It can challenge us to show more respect (literally, to ‘look again’). It can remind us to open our minds and to listen deeply to (not necessarily agree with) even points of view that strike us as outrageous, misinformed, and even immoral.

The *corpus callosum* is the vital part of the brain that connects the left and the right hemispheres. This ‘switchboard’ brings the skills of both parts of the brain together. Although it tends to be more highly developed in women than in men, every one of us can develop it more fully by becoming more familiar with its function and using it to keep the door of our minds open to the world.

Recently the GLOBE project, the multi-country research initiative that developed the concept of the ‘global mindset’, hired two neuroscientists to begin studying the differences in brain function between those who were global thinkers and those who were not. Using electrodes connected to an EEG, they found that many sectors on both sides of the brain would ‘fire’ simultaneously in subjects with high GI, while those with lower GI would function almost entirely in one region on the left side of

the brain. While this research is still too preliminary to be conclusive, the early results suggest that whole brains are much better at witnessing the world than only a part.<sup>3</sup>

Note to parents: although television can build GI, please keep it out of the bedrooms of young children. The development of television has clearly strengthened the global part of ourselves insofar as it brings us news about communities and cultures other than our own. However, television in the bedrooms of young children is quite another matter. Children with televisions in the room where they sleep score lower on school tests and develop other negative behaviour patterns. The risks of television in children's bedrooms outweigh whatever the benefits may be.<sup>4</sup>

### **3. Remember that 'one' comes before 'two'.**

In September 2008, more than a hundred Muslim scholars and clerics of all sects wrote an open letter to the world's Christians that should be required reading. From across the Muslim world, they reached out their hands to remind their Christian brethren that Osama bin Laden does *not* represent them. They pointed out how much Islam and Christianity share, including belief in the unity of God, the primacy of love for God, the power of loving thy neighbour, etc. Their letter, entitled 'A common word between us and you', catalysed a response from many Christians, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, who concluded his reply with these words: 'So to your invitation to enter deeply into dialogue . . . we say: *Yes! Amen.*'<sup>5</sup>

Raising our GI means keeping our eye on what we share, not only on what we don't. Yes, our faiths differ – but developing our global intelligence quickly reveals that our faiths also share

common ground. Despite the tensions between the so-called 'Christian West' and the 'Muslim Middle East', both these faiths, as well as Judaism, began in one family – the family of Abraham.

Readers of this book may be Muslim or Hindu, Jewish or Christian. The people who hold this book in their hands may be Arab or Caucasian, Swiss or Swazi. On the one hand, becoming global a citizen means exercising what Jason Hill, a young Jamaican-born philosopher, calls 'the right to forget where you came from'.<sup>6</sup> It means uprooting ourselves from our historical identities. But on the other hand, raising your GI does not mean turning away from your roots, but turning into them.

Whatever our identities are, if we trace them deeper and deeper, they will take us into the oneness of the Earth. 'Read the Bible, read the Koran, read the Torah, the Upanishads, the *Bhagavad Gita*,' said the late Indian guru Swami Satchidananda, in one of his clearest and most succinct statements. '[All faiths] say . . . Get out of these definitions. It's the definitions that divide us.'

Wherever we dare to look beneath the surface differences we find an unexplored or undeveloped oneness. Before we split into many, we were one. To remember this simple but elusive truth, a simple exercise is this: whenever you say, 'One, two, three,' remember that one comes first.

## **4. Make sure your house has a door.**

As everyone knows, a house needs a door. Otherwise it is no longer a home, but a prison. But when it comes to religion, we often build houses of worship without doors. We create belief systems with walls but no exits.

All over the world fundamentalist parents of every faith believe that it is bad for children to learn about other ways of

seeing the world, particularly ways that they consider evil. In the United States, for example, there are millions of followers of Jesus Christ who mistrust anyone who follows Mohammed and who would never encourage their children to study the Koran or read about Islam. Halfway around the world, in the thousands of fundamentalist religious schools called *madrasas* from Morocco to Mindanao, there are hundreds of millions of followers of the prophet Mohammed who do not want their children to study the Bible or read about Christianity. And scattered throughout the world are Jews, who live as a minority among the other Abrahamic faiths, and who inculcate their children into Judaism.

Of course parents of all faiths have the right to give their children a religious ‘home’ in order to ensure that they adopt the same faith as their parents. Although ignorance about one’s neighbours is not good for anyone, parents around the world teach their children about their own traditions and very little, if at all, about the faiths of others.

However, when we live in a community, we should know enough about our neighbours to be able to respect their way of life (and they should know us sufficiently to respect ours). After all, we global citizens are not only members of our respective religions; we are also stewards of Creation, which includes people of all faiths. The more we know about Creation and all its creatures, including the two-legged, the better we can take care of it – and ourselves.

## **5. Think like a minority.**

At home in Colorado, where I live with my family and spend time with local friends, it is easy for me as a ‘white man’ to believe that I am in a racial and ethnic majority. After all, most of the people

around me day to day look like me. But if I drive a few hours south, I will be in towns where seven out of ten people are Hispanic, or nine out of ten Native American. If I fly to Mexico City, or to Beijing, I become part of a minuscule white minority. To become global citizens, we need to remind ourselves of this fundamental truth: every one of us is a member of a minority.

To underscore this point, imagine for a moment that you are a member of the largest ethnic group in the world, the Han Chinese. They constitute approximately 92 per cent of the total population of the People's Republic of China. Although this means that there are more than one billion Han Chinese, they are still less than 20 per cent of the total human population. In other words, even the Han Chinese are a minority of humanity.<sup>7</sup>

So whatever the colour of our skin or the shape of our face, and regardless whether our neighbours resemble us or not, it is important for us to think like a member of a minority simply because we are one. This awareness makes us more mindful that we are only one patch in the quilt of humanity, only one of many kinds of leaves in the forest. Ethnically speaking, we are not the rule, but the exception.

## **6. Increase your knowledge – including how to not-know.**

‘What should every global citizen know?’

I will never forget what happened when I posed this very direct question to a group of twenty thoughtful colleagues gathered at a global conference. As soon as I asked it, this distinguished group offered their rapid-fire replies.

‘Ecological literacy,’ said Fritjof Capra, author of *The Tao of Physics* and *The Web of Life*.

‘Sustainable economics,’ said Hunter Lovins, one of the eco-authors of *Natural Capitalism*.

‘Understanding financial systems,’ said Jeff Gates, an economist.

‘Systems thinking,’ said a professor from a leading university.

‘Physics and biology,’ said another participant.

‘World religions,’ said a more spiritually oriented colleague.

As the list of ‘must-learn’ subjects continued to grow, the mood in the room shifted from excitement to confusion. The avalanche of answers almost buried us alive. In less than five minutes, they had outlined a curriculum equal to half a dozen graduate degrees!

I share this experience because ‘keep learning’ is paradoxical. At first it can be empowering; but ultimately, it is not enough since no one can know it all. Yet many gurus of global thinking seem to be unaware of the left brain’s limitations. For example, Jeffrey Sachs, Director of Columbia University’s Earth Institute, advises us to become global citizens by learning about ‘this generation’s challenges’ by ‘studying development economics, climate change, public health, and other relevant fields’. (He adds that *Nature*, *Science*, *New Scientist*, *Discover*, and *Scientific American* are ‘must-reads for our age’, and then encourages us to stay abreast of ‘countless high-quality Web sites’ as well.)

While I have the greatest respect for this gifted economist, certainly one of the most effect global citizens at work in the world today, I must disagree with his advice. His research assignment is so daunting (and requires so much leisure) that I doubt most human beings – even his full-time graduate students – would be able to follow it.

Which is why I suggest instead: keep learning – including how to not-know.

‘Not-knowing does not mean you don’t know,’ said Zen master Suzuki Roshi, who developed the concept of ‘beginner’s mind’. On the contrary, it means not being *attached* to what we know, and being able to hold our knowledge lightly. It means being able to think beyond the limits of the known. So a vital part of cross-boundary learning is becoming aware of what we do not know. Not-knowing is a key to becoming global citizens because it will keep us steady, confident, and humble in a world of infinitely expanding information.

## **7. Test your worldview against the actual facts.**

*Q. What country has the largest number of Muslim citizens?*

*A. India B. Saudi Arabia C. Indonesia D. Egypt.*

As you reflect on your answer, take a moment to reflect on your state of mind. Are you sure about your answer? If so, do you remember how you first learned about the Muslim faith (or religions other than your own)? What shaped your image of these 1.3 billion people? And is your image based on first-hand experience, or second-hand information?

The correct answer is ‘(C). Indonesia’. (The nation with the second largest Muslim population, by the way, is India.) As this suggests, the vast majority of Muslims live in Asia, not the Middle East. If you answered that question correctly, congratulations! You have freed yourself from the mass media stereotype that most Muslims are Arabs (in fact, only 20 per cent are). You have an accurate sense of the geographic and cultural distribution of this vast and diverse religious community. If your answer was incorrect, take it as an opportunity to learn.

Here's another more controversial question on which to test your worldview:

*Q. Which economy catalysed the recovery from the most recent global recession?*

*A. The United States B. China C. Europe Union D. Russia.*

In previous eras, the right answer would have been 'A. The United States'. Typically, previous global economic slumps were turned around by American economic enterprise. The USA would spur growth, and Europe would follow close behind. But the 2008 recession was different. The United States did not lead the pack, but followed it. This time the hero of the story was in Asia. 'The economic centre of gravity has been shifting for some time, but this recession marks a turning point,' said Neal Soss, chief economist for Credit Suisse. 'It's Asia that's limiting the world, rather than the US, and that's never happened before.' Agreed Jeffrey Garten, former Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade in the Clinton administration: the 'locomotive for global recovery' will not be the US; it will 'have to be China, where growth is humming along . . .'<sup>8</sup>

Yes, 'B. China' is the correct answer. 'Asia's Recovery Highlights China's Ascendancy' happened to be the banner headline in the business section of the *New York Times*, but the same story was reported in the *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, and other publications.<sup>9</sup> It was Asia, followed by the European Union, that emerged first from the recession. The USA came later.

As the question suggests, raising your GI means letting real experience challenge your 'mental map' of the world and continuing to renew and revise your worldview as long as your heart beats.

## **8. Know your enemy – inside and out.**

On the eve of the Iraq war, an American columnist wrote: “The question before us is very large and very simple: “Can – and will – the *civilized* part of humanity disarm the *barbarians* who would use the ultimate knowledge for the ultimate destruction?”<sup>40</sup> This kind of language is not useful if we are truly going to ‘know our enemies’. In fact, it does just the opposite: it makes us ‘civilized’ (i.e. human) and them ‘barbaric’ (i.e. subhuman). This simplistic dualism leads not only to ineffective political strategy, but also to inept military action.

‘Knowing your enemy’ is not an idealistic, save-the-world notion, but rather a practical, hard-headed way to use our GI in order to keep ourselves, and our loved ones, safe.

Although the biblical advice to ‘know your enemy’ is thousands of years old, we human beings have unfortunately not followed it very well. Even though every faith, in one form or another, admonishes its followers to ‘do unto others as you would have others do unto you’, we have tended to do so only when the ‘others’ are like us. When the ‘others’ are very different from us, we have often conveniently forgotten this golden rule.

If we want to bequeath to our children a more secure world, empathizing with our adversaries, actual or potential, is essential. According to veteran national security officials like Zbigniew Brzezinski, we all too often deal with enemies, particularly those we call ‘terrorists’, as if they were ‘suspended in outer space as an abstract phenomenon . . . acting under some Satanic inspiration unrelated to any specific motivation.’ What is missing, says this former US National Security Advisor, is ‘the simple fact that lurking behind every terrorist act is a specific political antecedent.’<sup>41</sup>

Translated from diplomatic formality into the language of the human heart, 'political antecedent' usually means 'human suffering'. Something traumatic happened to the 'terrorists' or their loved ones before they committed their acts of violence. Wherever terrorism chronically occurs – in Northern Ireland, in the Basque region of Spain, in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, in Kashmir, in Chiapas (Mexico) or Mindanao (the Philippines) – it is preceded by traumatic triggering events.

Let us think, for a moment, about our 'enemies' – whoever we consider them to be. Can we witness their world? Can we learn something about their history of suffering? Can we connect to their loss and grief? And, finally, can we discover ways, no matter how small, to partner with them in our common interest?

As a concrete example, take the relationship between the Western and Eastern superpowers, the United States and the People's Republic of China. Countless recent books by Western 'China experts' – with alarming titles such as *The Coming China Wars*, *Showdown: Why China Wants War with the United States* and *America's Coming War With China* – portray this ancient nation as an emerging 'enemy'. Because of China's growing economic power and increased military spending, some global security experts in the US and Europe assume that China is flexing its muscles and preparing to expand its empire. They advise Western powers to 'contain' China and, in some cases, to invest in more military bases and stronger defence systems in Asia.<sup>12</sup> If we get to know our 'enemy', however, a different perspective on the Chinese emerges. One discovers a nation that is extremely concerned about its *internal* security situation, with very little energy or ambition for external exploits. Objectively, the USA and Europe are not surrounded by Chinese military installations, while China is, in fact, enveloped on all sides by a Western

military presence. From Afghanistan in the West, to the Philippines, Japan, and South Korea, to a host of aircraft carriers positioned strategically in nearby waters, the Chinese are encircled by troops and weapons belonging to a foreign power. (The USA, for example, has over seven hundred military ‘sites’ outside its own borders. Since there are only a hundred and ninety-two nations in the world, that is an average of more than three military installations per country!) If we ‘walk in their shoes’, even for a few steps, we will find many ways to engage our so-called enemy in a promising, fruitful, honest relationship.

## **9. Transform stereotypes into relationships.**

On a leadership course that I co-founded with Outward Bound International, we took twenty emerging leaders on an expedition to the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro. After ten days’ trekking, sleeping in tents together and struggling side by side to stay alert despite altitude sickness at 19,000 feet, we knew each other quite well. What became clear to everyone was that the four Muslims – from Oman, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and India – were as different from each other as anyone else in our group. ‘They’ did not fit a stereotype; and neither did ‘we’.

Sometimes reading an insightful novel about them, or watching a powerful film that evokes their history, can open our eyes. But almost always, knowing one’s enemy more than superficially requires direct contact. One of the most active leaders of the Czech citizens’ movement that fought valiantly against communist domination was Vaclav Havel, a playwright who wrote for the stage what the Soviet authorities prevented being said in the public square. (He later became President of

Czechoslovakia and then the Czech Republic.) Perhaps he best summarized this GI-building practice when he advised each global citizen to ground his views ‘not only in sociological statistics, but in real people’ and to follow ‘not only an adopted ideology, but also his own soul’.<sup>43</sup>

‘Try to avoid abstractions,’ advises Shlomo Hasson, a leading bridge-builder between Israelis and Palestinians. ‘I try, and would advise my fellow citizens to try, to find a friend, a family, on the other side. To learn about their lives, their stories. Don’t learn just through statistics or through political analysis. Don’t try to “fix” the other side through superficial or instrumental economic or political interventions. Listen to them and their life stories. This will make you care about them and want justice for them, just as you want it for your own flesh and blood.’<sup>44</sup>

## **10. Ask questions that stretch your mind.**

In the preceding pages of this book, I raised questions that have expanded the envelope of my own understanding of the world. In my experience, asking – or *being* asked – a powerful question can stretch one’s mind and increases one’s GI more effectively than almost anything.

Several years ago, for example, I was reading a report about trade practices when I encountered an interview with Nawaz Hazari, an uneducated, poor sewing-machine operator in the Ganakbari export-processing zone. This zone, located near Dhaka, Bangladesh, is devoted to producing products for foreign sale. ‘Work in the factory is hard,’ Nawaz told an English-speaking visitor through translators. ‘We are not well treated. *Do people in your country think about our condition when they buy the shirts we make?*’<sup>45</sup> CUT ONE

To this day, I have never forgotten her question because it disturbed me so deeply. I had been wearing shirts made in Asia for many years and had never stopped to ask myself that question. Of course I had thought abstractly about unfair labour practices and the rights of workers. But I had not actually thought specifically about the real human beings who make my clothes. Awakened by her question, I began looking at the labels, learning more about working conditions, and taking these issues into account as a consumer.

Here are three more mind-stretching, heart-opening questions that can challenge us to raise our GI:

*How would you control the spread of nuclear weapons?*

Ever since 1945, when the first atomic bombs were dropped at the end of World War II, the question of how to control nuclear weapons has been at the front of humanity's negotiating table. Russia and the United States have more than 90 per cent of the world's nuclear weapons.<sup>46</sup> Most of the rest of the world wants these two nations to decrease their stockpiles. These two nations (in their own particular national styles) want other non-nuclear nations to sign and ratify an agreement not to develop nuclear weapons first. How would you negotiate a breakthrough on this stalemate? And how you would do it *soon* before the spread of nuclear-generated electricity makes almost every nation a potential producer of these diabolic weapons – and makes it easier for non-state terrorist groups to access them?

*How would you reduce poverty while protecting the environment?*

If you have access to the Web, please put the words 'bottom of the pyramid' in your browser and scroll through some of the more than one hundred thousand entries. Doing so will give you direct access to many of the thinkers who are currently grappling with the plight of the billions of people living on two dollars a day.

Challenge yourself to think about how these neighbours of ours in the global village can raise their standard of living, and how they can do so in ways that will not destroy the natural environment on which they depend.

How can impoverished families improve their standard of living in sustainable ways? And what is the ethical responsibility of the more affluent to assist them?

*How would you prepare for the intensifying water shortage?*

Today one billion people lack safe drinking water. With population increase and climate change, that number will skyrocket.<sup>47</sup> In Asia, for example, more than two billion people depend on their fresh water from the Himalayan watershed. If, as predicted, the glacier ice is reduced by 80 per cent by the year 2030, those two billion people will be in particular peril. Given the near certainty that conflict over water will be a vital issue in the coming decades, what would you do to deal with this looming crisis on the horizon?

If these three questions intrigued you, please select other questions that open your mind. Seek questions that are challenging enough to inspire you to learn, but not so challenging that they make your mind turn off. Remember: the goal is to stretch your mind – not overwhelm it.

## **11. When the Earth speaks, listen.**

When Arctic and Antarctic ice that has been frozen for centuries melts; when entire pods of dolphins are washed up on the beach, dying in huge numbers; when the rate of respiratory diseases increases dramatically in cities during high pollution alerts; when the number of killer hurricanes, heat waves, and other weather phenomena spike – the Earth is telling us

something. But are we listening?

In the current negotiations about climate change, human beings in unprecedented numbers are discussing the fate of the Earth. Rich nations are negotiating with poor nations, powerful multinational corporations are negotiating with governments, environmentalists are negotiating with business leaders. More human beings are engaged in a global-policy conversation than ever before. But are we listening to the Earth itself?

As a tropical ecologist and conservation biologist from Tanzania, raised at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro, Nobby Cordeiro has noticed a strange paradox in his field. 'The scientists who write about tropical forests, and the journals in which they publish, are overwhelmingly based in the North,' he said to a gathering of his peers at the University of Marburg in Germany, with the data carefully presented on the PowerPoint behind the podium. 'With the exception of Brazil and Mexico, the information about the tropics is being gathered and disseminated by scientists in Europe and North America. How can we listen to the Earth if we are handing a fraction of humanity a megaphone and turning the volume down on the rest!'<sup>18</sup>

Listening to the Earth, then, means listening to all its residents – particularly those who often lack a voice. This includes not only the disenfranchised parts of our own species, but the flora and fauna that are not represented in the halls of power. As global citizens, our 'motherland' or 'fatherland' is not just our country. It is the whole, living planet. So listening to her is one of the most important commitments a global citizen can make. Ultimately, she may teach us things that no one else can

## 12. Focus patiently on what works.

This way of raising our GI may appear at first glance to be the least exciting, but it is also absolutely vital. Focusing on what works, with genuine patience, can be an antidote to one of the most common toxins of global intelligence: despair.

As we learn more about the world, we become aware of a lot of sad and frightening news.

‘So what’s the state of the world today?’ *Ode Magazine* asked Lester Brown, founder of the Earth Policy Institute.

‘We’re seeing eroding soils,’ he replied, ‘falling water tables, collapsing fisheries, shrinking forests, expanding deserts and deteriorating grasslands.’ And then he continued with a litany of other negative trends including ‘rising temperatures, which affect crop yields and lead to rising sea levels’.<sup>49</sup>

Brown’s facts are probably correct. But when they are assembled and presented in this way, do they depress or inspire? As global citizens, we must be careful not to trigger in others, if not in ourselves, a desperate voice that says: ‘Things are so bad that all my efforts to make the world a better place will achieve nothing in the long run – so I might as well do nothing!’

Even among ‘save the world’ activists, it can become very chic to despair. Whoever has the direst diagnosis is considered to be the best-informed. We are so proud of being ‘globally literate’ about what is unfair and wrong, problematic and negative, that we have lost touch with what is beautiful and right, promising and positive. We become addicted to what does not work.

This addiction is fed by the mass media. If a village explodes in violence in Kenya, we see the pictures and read the stories about women and children burnt alive while taking refuge in a church, and we are horrified. When things *don’t* work in a spec-

tacular, often violent way, they make the news. Then we pay attention.

But what if a village in Kenya more than doubles its yield of grain per unit of land, increases the amount of land planted, then quadruples its grain production in less than two years? What if the number of malaria cases drops to almost zero? What if children's attendance at school, thanks to a midday feeding programme and other support, increases significantly? And what if similarly remarkable results occur, not just in one village, but in every village that is part of the Millennium Village Project (MVP)?<sup>20</sup>

The fact that MVP has received so little attention and so little money – despite its remarkable success fighting poverty in sub-Saharan Africa – should make us concerned. A church with one hundred people can be burned down in a matter of minutes and images of the heart-rending tragedy can circle the globe in a matter of hours. But turning a village around from despair to hope, and dependence to self-reliance, takes years. What works often requires *patience*.

Paying attention to what works can raise our GI as much as, if not more than, learning about what doesn't.

## **13. Do it across borders.**

Engineers do it. So do architects, news reporters, and teachers. And so do clowns, rock bands, and – as evidence by the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Doctors Without Borders – physicians.

As different as these professions are, they can all be practised across borders. In order to emphasize that their profession is made up of global citizens whose responsibility does not stop at the borders of their respective countries, they have created organizations called Engineers Without Borders, Bands Without

Borders, Philanthropists Without Borders, Médecins sans Frontières, and others.

Once a profession goes cross-boundary, it changes. Engineers Without Borders, for example, point out that 90 per cent of their profession is focused on problems that affect only 10 per cent of the world's population. Similarly, Doctors Without Borders address the injustice that the vast majority of medical research is focused on diseases that affect only the most affluent fraction of humanity. Because these organizations work across borders, they do not get trapped in one culture's definition of 'medicine' or 'engineering.' Instead, they work for the whole.

From my own personal experience, I know that, whatever you do, doing it 'across borders' will change both you and your profession. In 1986, I brought filmmakers from the USA and the USSR together in an 'Entertainment Summit' to form an organization that worked to end the cold war on the big screen by fostering collaboration between the Soviet and American film industries. Twenty years later, while working for a global policy think-tank in New York and Brussels called the EastWest Institute, my colleagues and I organized a 'worldwide network of think-tanks' so that these well-connected and well-intentioned enterprises could help each other think – and act – more globally. These and other experiences have taught me that, almost whatever we want to do in our short and precious life, we should learn how to 'do it across borders'.

## **14. Think both profits and values.**

We can concentrate on making money or honouring global values. But if we want to raise our GI, it makes more sense to think about both.

The goal of making profits alone will not boost executive GI. Corporate global intelligence will rise much faster if our businesses operate with a triple bottom line: not just profits, but also people and planet. By thinking not just economically, but also socially and environmentally, global citizens in business will raise their GI – and probably their revenues as well. In the words of Google’s former executive director Larry Brilliant: don’t think in terms of ‘traditional profit’, but rather of ‘social profit’.<sup>21</sup>

During the early years of the AIDS crisis, for example, pharmaceutical companies were attacked by activists for their cold-hearted refusal to lower prices from levels that condemned many African patients to unnecessary suffering and death. Fortunately, thanks to intervention by the Clinton Foundation and other third parties, CEOs of the pharmaceutical companies realized that they could lower prices to a ‘no-profit’ level in poor countries while maintaining their patent-protected prices in high-income markets. After Merck pharmaceuticals took this step, employees in the company responded with renewed enthusiasm and, according to their CEO at the time, Ray Gilmartin, the company experienced its biggest boost in morale that he had ever seen.<sup>22</sup>

This response should not surprise us. As powerful as the incentive of money can be, it is nowhere near as powerful as money multiplied by meaning. Yet many multinational corporations are still not clear about the global values for which they stand. They project an image of an institution that cares only about its profits, or its return on investment, or increasing its market share. Today they are learning that a company that provides a return on financial investment without global values, if competing against another equally successful company with such values, will ultimately lose global market share.

If given a chance to work for – or buy from – a company that offers both money *and* meaning, global citizens will choose that brand every time.

## **15. Travel far from – and close to – home.**

Global citizens do not measure travel in terms of miles or kilometres alone. ‘Travelling’ does not necessarily mean dashing through a global landscape. It also means digging into one’s local terrain. If we look closely, the whole world is often present near to wherever we call home. In addition to travelling ‘abroad’, we can also travel ‘at home’.

Many local communities are like seeds that contain within them the tree of humanity. Knowing the local is one of the best ways to know the global. If you live in a city of significant size, the whole world is outside your doorstep. Dig beneath the surface of Curitiba (Brazil) or Chicago (USA), Bogotá (Colombia) or Mumbai (India), and you will discover an ‘integral city’ that contains the whole world in microcosm.<sup>23</sup> You don’t need an aeroplane ticket to visit the world, just a city bus pass!

In fact, for most citizens in developed countries, the wider world is as close as your local supermarket and the shelves in your kitchen. Trace even the most products, such as your morning cup of coffee or the bananas you slice onto your cereal, back to their source and you encounter a global travelogue filled with rich complexity. If we want coffee and banana farmers around the world to have a living wage, then we can be part of solution by ensuring that the products we purchase are based on the principles of fair trade: fair prices for small farmers, good wages and working conditions for plantation workers, the rights of workers to organize, and sustainable agricultural practices.<sup>24</sup>

And once you learn the lessons of those supply chains, you can study the petrol in your car, the wood in your home, or the microchips in the computer at your local cybercafe. If you do, you may suddenly discover the whole world.

The truth is: our local culture is often more global than it first appears. Look at those who govern your community or nation, for example. Whether you live in the People's Republic of China or the United Kingdom, in Germany, France, or the United States, look at the people in your legislature or parliament. You will notice that they tend to be much more uniform than the people whom they represent.

So one way that global citizens can travel without leaving home is to make sure that your local institutions begin to honour the 'glocal' realities. Help to bring your local diversity into the halls of power. If you bear witness to your own community, you will almost certainly find the world *within* it.

## **16. Seek common ground.**

*What do the American and Chinese cultures have in common?*

This question is vitally important to the course of the twenty-first century for a very simple reason. If these two cultures find nothing in common, they will find no common ground and we are all in trouble. But if they share at least something, then they can build on that common foundation.

Fortunately, underneath some profound differences, these two great cultures do have cultural common ground. According to the GLOBE study, the Chinese and American views of leadership are extremely different and extremely similar. In terms of attitude toward authority, no two cultures could be more different. If we want to create tension between these two great

nations, there are many wedges we can drive between them in this area. However, these same two cultures have some attitudes that are absolutely shared. Both of them, according to the lead researcher, Mansour Javidan, have an extremely high 'performance orientation'. Both care deeply about results, and both today's Chinese and Americans want to be rewarded based on actual accomplishments, not status or rank.<sup>25</sup>

As this data demonstrates, we have a choice. Whatever the differences between human beings may be, we can focus on what divides us, or on what connects us. Finding common ground creates possibilities. Seeking out what is universal therefore raises our global intelligence because it compels us to look beneath the obvious, and sometimes aggravating, differences to discover the hidden (and often rewarding) commonalities.

As global citizens, we don't need to minimize differences, but we do need to learn about what all people share. We need to search for common ground – and that, in turn, requires another practice.

## **17. Speak more than one language.**

As children, we grow up speaking a language that enables us to communicate to some of our fellow human beings, but not to others. The language (or in some communities, the languages) that we learn when we are young occupies a unique position in our brain physiology: it becomes the lens through which we view the world. It shapes us in ways that neurolinguists are only now discovering.

At the Thunderbird School of Global Management, for example, the faculty tries 'to teach students how to read *how the*

*world works'*. With thirty-eight thousand alumni in a hundred and forty-one countries, Thunderbird – like other leading international business schools such as INSEAD in Paris and Singapore – promotes global literacy as a key part of its curriculum.

Thunderbird is a leader in cross-boundary learning because, while located in the USA, it still manages to create a global learning environment. According to Dr Angel Cabrera, its president, top European business schools are 'intrinsically more international than their US counterparts'. As an example, he cites a school in Holland which, 'by necessity, will have a student body comprising five or six different countries and those students are going to come in with three or four languages'. To create a similar kind of cross-boundary environment, Thunderbird requires foreign-language training.

'You can train people in cross-cultural communication,' says Cabrera, 'but it is harder to get them to understand what cross-cultural relations are if those people have never struggled with learning a foreign language.'<sup>26</sup>

In addition to learning more than one *culture*-based language, we also need to learn to communicate with other *belief*-based languages. For example, some people speak the theological language of the Bible or the Koran. Others speak the corporate language of bottom lines, ROIs, and market shares. Still others speak the language of the law and rights.

So do not presume that everybody – even everybody in your own linguistic group – speaks your 'language'. One of the best investments you can make is to learn to speak the language of the people you want to reach.

If requiring a foreign language for a degree in 'global management' sounds obvious to you, keep in mind that, until recently, very few CEOs in the West were multilingual. Even most

Presidents of the United States have never been able to speak a language other than English fluently. So the recognition that a second, or even a third, language makes a business executive more effective represents a critical, if elementary, step in raising our GI.

## **18. Learn to see through walls.**

Two feuding brothers may build a wall through an orchard, separating it into two. But the fruit is still the same; the roots are still in the same earth; the same bees will pollinate the blossoms; the same sun will shine on their leaves. No matter how high they make the wall, and even if they fortify it with barbed wire or defend it with armed guards or dig deep trenches around it, their wall does not demarcate the end of the orchard. On the other side of the wall, it continues.

Wherever you or I sit right now, something stops our vision from extending throughout the world. It may be the physical walls of an apartment building or school or institution. Or it may be the political walls of cities or states and countries or regions, or the economic walls of wealth and poverty, privilege and oppression. If not these barriers, then it may be the mental walls of attitudes and ideologies, dogmas or belief systems. Wherever we live, there are walls which block our vision – if not of oppression, then of privilege; if not of ignorance, then of sensationalized and incomplete information.

But from an aeroplane or a spaceship, or via images transmitted from a cell phone camera, we can see on the other side of the walls. We know from our personal experience that a wall cannot block our vision. Indeed, we have a skill that sounds like a superhero's: we can see through walls.

## **19. Explore the mysteries of the sacred.**

Discovering what our fellow human beings hold sacred – and why – is one of the most important GI-building journeys we can undertake. Since human intelligence alone will never unravel all the riddles of creation, the sacred practices of the cultures of mankind are vital sources of wisdom that our species needs in order to survive and flourish.

I have attended Catholic Mass in Paris, Shabbat services in Israel, and sacred dances in Indonesia. Around the world I have bowed and prayed in mosques, held the Torah in synagogues, and recited psalms from the Bible in churches. I have practised Buddhist mediation and recited ancient Hindu mantras. And after a lifetime of exploring the sacred traditions of the world, I bow in reverence more deeply than ever before the great mystery.

My life has taught me that the sacred knows no borders. It is everywhere. I can't always recognize it, or understand it. But it is there in every culture in the world.

When thirty-two bishops met to replace Desmond Tutu as the Anglican Archbishop of Southern Africa, they agreed to set ground rules for the deliberations. 'We must listen to one another,' said one bishop.

'No, brother, that's not quite it,' said a second bishop. 'We must listen with empathy.'

'That's still not enough,' said a third. 'We must listen to the *sacred* in one another.'

If we focus on the 'sacred in one another', we discover that we are all connected not only by our genes, but by our souls. When we filter out the narrow, manmade, 'tribal' elements of the various faiths, we are left standing in awe at the shared spiritual

heritage of humankind. All the faiths have a golden rule, and following this golden thread will more deeply connect our global intelligence to our souls.<sup>27</sup>

## **20. Global citizens, unite!**

To raise our GI effectively, we need to work with others in geopartnerships. The best way to learn is to find a partner and get to work. Learning how to collaborate with other human beings around the world is the ultimate test of our global intelligence.

Based on my experience, I know that there are tens of millions of people, from every nation and with every colour of skin and in every profession, who are global citizens. I have met some of them all over the world: in cafes in Amman; in an international school in Hong Kong; in a Kenyan village; at a corporate retreat in Texas; on the trails of Mount Kilimanjaro; and in the halls of parliaments and legislatures throughout the world. Everywhere, I experience this yearning to connect beyond the borders that divide us.

Wherever we live, let us find these global neighbours. Let us explore what we can do beyond borders that we cannot possibly do within them. Working separately, barricaded behind walls, our fate is sealed. But working together, the possibility of a truly just and sustainable global civilization has never been more alive than today. By reaching out our hands to each other, we can transform that possibility into a living reality.