

Hello, everyone. an old guy who knows shit here. Welcome back to **Season 2** of anoldguywhoknowsshit:

an old guy who knows shit explains it all for you

Episode 4: The freedom to make money? or the freedom to live?

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This episode we are going to look at a central idea I introduced in the Introduction to this season, that the freedom to make money is the primary driver of both American policy and climate change.

If you consider that the purpose of government is to make money for the wealthy, we have been a raging success. Except that if you stay there, we're all dead. If you consider that the purpose of government is to protect society, then there is no greater fail of public institutions anywhere in history. In our zeal to make money, the most important thing in life (to us), we neglected to consider balance. We neglected to consider that the earth, combined with the heavens and the sun, the oceans and the air, provides us with everything. She must be working. She is like an engine, with a thousand parts that all must be carefully machined and lubricated and functioning smoothly to run. We forgot to pay attention to that. If it could be converted into money, harvesting it and then throwing it away have been fully justified. This is an essential, core belief of our culture. God put it there for us to use. To say otherwise was almost sacriligious, like you were some kind of sun worshipper or drugged out hippie. The freedom to convert anything - and all of it - into money, without recourse or consequence, has ruled for a hundred years. We have paid no attention to balance whatsoever. Converting everything we could find into money, regardless of the consequences, we have relentlessly disrupted the balance. As our engine of life, we have run our earth-mobile hundreds of thousands of miles and we haven't checked the oil or thumped the tires once.

What we were pursuing was not true. We were not pursuing a thing of actual value. In fact, we specifically ignored actual value. We gave it no respect. We forgot how to even see it. We made money. We devoted ourselves to a made-up thing. Whatever is true out there, whatever we needed to respect to keep our home livable, we forgot what that thing was. We decided we could dominate it. We could impose our thing onto it. We could change the shape of what is true.

Think about this: western civilization has been a process of conquering nature, of suppressing it, of rising above it, of controlling it and using it to do what we want. From the Greeks to now, what has defined civilization has been its dominance over nature. We didn't need to live in the woods, and saw no point in it. We had money, manifest destiny, colonialism, empire-building, all in the name of civilization, always taking us farther and farther away from nature, insulating us more and more as it provided us with all kinds of comforts and security. We had no interest in balancing with nature, we wanted to conquer it, to overwhelm it and turn it into a money machine, which we did. Wealth discovered oil and what it could do, and then *everything* became DEstructive. Those comforts and security that money-machine brought were very costly. There is nothing you can do in our economy today that doesn't DEstruct somehow. Any plastic. Any vehicle. Any poly-blend clothing. And the sole purpose of all of it is to make money for a very few. They aren't even trying to make the best plastic or the best vehicle or the highest-quality poly-blend clothing - they are trying to make the most amount of money. Quality means nothing, how much can you get for it means everything. Folks, this is a profound and deep corruption of actual value on a societal scale.

So we could not and we did not change the shape of truth at all. We merely corrupted our perception of it. What is true that we ignored, or was true that we did not respect, has broken our engine. So now, the question becomes, how can we find that true thing now? Is it too late?

I believe truth can be found in what restores balance to Mother Earth. I'm pretty sure this is the source of truth, in fact. The truth is seen in the vision of what actually restores balance. There is another kind of truth we must recognize that leads to balance, and which is really quite critical in the US today, and that is factual truth. The actual physical truth that exists in relation to Mother Earth. How do we know that? How do we recognize that truth? First of all, I believe we all have a truth sensor, that is part of our 6th sense, that is telling our brain on some level what is actually true. That voice can be very small, utterly suppressed by other people's beliefs hijacking our own. So the other important piece of truth recognition is affirmation from outside your own bubble. The truth will be true everywhere. Sometimes we are swept up and forget to look elsewhere. But things that are true in your bubble that are NOT true in anyone else's bubble are probably not *actually* true. Truth will be affirmed by multiple sources. We must never stop our quest for truth, and we must never stop testing our

beliefs for veracity, for outside affirmation. Truth is not necessarily a single narrative, but there are not too many options, either. We need to find and follow truth in every way possible, because Truth is the only route to Balance. Lies disrupt balance. We have paid no attention to balance whatsoever, but Folks, Balance is the critical factor in climate change. And no, I do not think it is too late, but we are flirting with the deadline.

As a teenager, somewhere around the early stories, it occurred to me for the first time that every single thing we did in America we did to make money - with the exception of creative expression and charity, we never did anything for the value of the thing itself. That seemed wrong. It seemed that the things themselves were being corrupted by doing them for money. And yet everyone of course spoke of how good economic competition is, that doing it for money is even better because money is a stronger motivator. And yet, that did not seem right, either, but I could not see what did seem right. Now I know that money corrupts and cheapens everything it touches - which, today, is our entire lives, which we live to make money. Don't we? We have no choice - if we don't value money, we don't survive! But that has blinded us to actual value altogether. Do we even know what is really valuable? What, in our lives, has actual value, that isn't somewhere down the line ultimately DEstructive?

OK, well, we can find truth in the exchange of CONstructive energies between people. We are social animals. No matter how we try to go it alone, we need other people in our lives. We need to be exchanging energy with other beings like us, or we stagnate. Between us individuals, us real people out here in the trenches, love and compassion between individuals is among the last of the sources of true, CONstructive energy available to us. But, as I have pointed out repeatedly, when large numbers of people join forces their power increases geometrically, so it is in the best interest of the wealthy to keep people isolated and at odds with each other. They do not want people getting together and joining forces against them. The mainstreaming of in-your-face lying was a boon to the DEstructors - now they no longer have to waste any energy justifying lies, now they can just make shit up extempore, shoot these energy streams of utter fiction out into the populace, and they can keep the divisions between the lie-believers and the truth-seekers unresolvable almost indefinitely. The new Texas abortion law is a perfect example of this: get people tattling on each other for a \$10,000 reward, and you guarantee a thoroughly divided populace that will NEVER work together.

But Texas's law is only the most recent in-your-face example. The rise of media in general, and social media in particular, has given the wealthy drivers of this machine everything they need to keep the populace fat, happy, isolated, dedicated to their mission (make money), and quiet - meaning no reason to vote.

I inherited a piano from my grandmother, that a tuner tells me is almost exactly my age. It still has wonderful tone and key action, but is not worth anything because 1950 or so marked the end of the era of "every family has to have a piano." In those years, thousands and thousands of pianos were made every year; good pianos, too, but then television came along. Instead of the family gathering around a piano and making music together, both social and creative, they sat around a television and received entertainment with no effort. Neither social nor creative. That was the beginning of what has become a complete and utter loss of social interaction in our culture, now almost completely replaced by media. People think social media is social, when in fact it is not social at all, it is private, individual, and it is whatever is on the screen going directly into your head. In the guise of entertainment, we have been almost completely isolated in utterly fictional made-up worlds, including the one we walk around in every day, which is a construct designed to make money, not to take care. Since the 1960s, each generation has had more screen time and less time living life, until now it is possible to live your entire life online, in a completely commercial construct, and not ever deal with anything real. We don't gather socially anymore. Over the past 20 years nightclubs have disappeared entirely. Look around. Where is the establishment where regular folks can go out for dinner and dancing, my mother's favorite date? Nobody wants to do that anymore, they'd rather stay home, watch their 72 inch television and order-in plastic food. All of which supports the money machine that keeps money flowing directly into already wealthy pockets - and none of which is CONstructive, or social, or true, or of any real value whatsoever, to us real folks down here in the trenches. We are mesmerized by our screens and cheap food, the value of which is all made up. It's fake. But it is what we do: we CONSUME it. Mesmerized, we are happy as clams and simply don't pay attention to the precipice that is only a few feet away.

There are utter crazies with 150 million followers on social media, every one of them a powerful energy stream, every one influencing how people think, and do any of them deal with actual truth, or interact with live people? Is that social? Is there anything CONstructive coming of that?

On the flip side, those same 150 million people could listen to this podcast, as well. They are unlikely to because I'm not crazy enough, to start with. But it is possible. There is a need for something to happen, and maybe this can help. The machine that we call our oil-based economy is not only a made-up construct, it is a made-up construct that has caused climate change. A made-up construct that is killing us. That is an actual, for-real doomsday machine that we are actually for-real driving. But is also a made-up construct that we can unmake however we want to.

The good news hidden in here is that right now, 2022, there is still time to prevent runaway warming, which, if it happens, will wipe us out. It's too late to stop permanent change, but if we citizens, if enough of us folks down here in the trenches, get our ire up and every one of us gets to the polls, there can be a true, legal, fully within the system, revolution. We can change the purpose of our country. Which would be revolutionary. The framers counted on enough of us not taking part, and if enough of us DO take part, all it will take will be one election to start the turn-around.

What we must demand is our freedom to live. The purpose of this country must not be to make money for the already wealthy.

We, the people, can, without bloodshed or any violence whatsoever, we the people can vote out the DEstructors, we can send the Making Money Justifies Enslavement team packing. Then we the people can elect members of the Compassion Love and Beauty team, who will specifically legislate a new purpose for this country:

To provide the freedom to live to all of its citizens equally.

That will be a start to the restoration of balance.

OK. So how do you change an economy from a doomsday machine to a balance-restorer? Tune in next time around, because the answer may surprise you.

This is an old guy who knows shit, signing off till next time.

Twenty years ago, when we knew about climate change but it had not reared its ugly head yet, the American people had a choice between an establishment republican and Al Gore, Mr. Climate-Change-Is-Coming. And the American people chose Al Gore! But our public institutions rejected that choice, gave the presidency to GW, and the rest, at least until 2016, is history. I say that because, of course, 2016 was the next time the people chose one candidate and our public institutions rejected that choice and made another, much more DEstructive, choice. I want to remind you of the Powell Memo, which you looked up after the first episode this season. I believe the election of 2000 was a significant turning point, when the results of the Powell Memo kicked in and we began to be ruled by the minority party.