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Submission of Inputs to The Summit of the Future

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

A Proposal for a New Global Motivational Index (GMI) to Power a Shift in Global Governance and Societal Outcomes

OVERVIEW

This proposal explores the potential of intrinsic motivation, a largely untapped resource in behavioural science, as a catalyst for a paradigm shift in how societies and governments operate. By leveraging a deeper understanding of what drives human behaviour, it proposes a new path forward that aligns individual and collective aspirations towards more sustainable, inclusive, and thriving societies, primarily realised through a proposed new measurement standard called the Global Motivational Index (GMI).

THESIS

Background and Introduction

The global governance landscape is at a crossroads, confronting tensions between established free-market capitalism and mounting challenges including authoritarianism, eroding trust in institutions, and growing environmental, social, and economic crises.

Traditional incentives, driven by extrinsic motivation, have fueled widespread short-termism, undercutting collective progress and sustainability. Yet, emerging behavioural science and new interpretations of Darwinian theory¹ indicate that humans are also inherently cooperative and driven by intrinsic motivation for mutual benefit². Despite this growing consensus on a more nuanced human nature, the prevailing global order still assumes that only individualism, competition, and free markets drive innovation and prosperity.³

With the UN's mission to facilitate multilateralism and cooperation it has the opportunity to leverage this emergent pro-social view of human nature to help transcend the outdated political and economic dichotomies, to transform global governance, aligning with long-term, collective well-being.

A Brief History on Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the drive to engage in activities for their own sake, propelled by personal satisfaction, curiosity, or challenge. Historically overlooked by early behaviourist approaches, intrinsic motivation gained prominence with the cognitive revolution, particularly through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasises the fulfilment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.⁴ This concept significantly influences modern practices in education, workplace management, technology design, and mental health, advocating for

¹ See endnotes: Kropotkin, Loye, de Waal, Axelrod

² See endnotes: Kohn, Rifkin, Eisler, and Tomasello

³ See endnotes: Raworth, Hickel, Sandel, Klein, Stiglitz, Chomsky, and Wilkinson & Pickett

⁴ See endnotes: Deci & Ryan



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environments that nurture an individual's inherent desire to learn, create, and grow. Recognising intrinsic motivation's role has shifted perspectives on human potential, emphasising the importance of autonomy and personal growth, and acknowledging the interplay between universal needs and cultural contexts. It highlights humans as proactive agents, driven by internal desires for personal fulfilment and growth.⁵

A Societal Crisis: Driven by Extrinsic Rewards and Fundamental Survival Motivators

Our economic, political, and social paradigm are reaching a critical point due to harmful incentives based on the assumption that selfishness and extrinsic rewards are the primary, albeit not motivators⁶, reflecting a Libertarian view of human nature⁷. This reliance on extrinsic motivation results in various adverse effects, including increased stress, mental health decline, widening inequalities, environmental harm, stifled creativity, and weakened community bonds, all eroding intrinsic qualities vital for personal fulfilment and societal health⁸.

While money, power, and status are recognised as classic extrinsic motivators, the less acknowledged factor of survival, with its competitive, zero-sum influence, significantly shapes the global order⁹. This approach, ironically amidst existential threats, is leading humanity towards self-destruction. Evidence increasingly suggests that our success as a species is attributed to prosocial behaviour rather than a "survival of the fittest" mentality. While survival can be an intrinsic motivator aligning with the desire for life and well-being, modern conditions have twisted it into an extrinsic motivator, driven by fears and stresses¹⁰. This pervasive insecurity about fundamental needs propels a "survive at all costs" mindset, damaging both community well-being and environmental integrity. This misinterpretation of evolutionary success leads to resource depletion, environmental degradation, and societal fragmentation, undermining humanity's collective resilience and capacity to thrive¹¹.

A Neuroscientific Basis to Move Beyond Survival

The need for society to move beyond the extrinsic survivalist mode of thinking is supported when we understand the neurochemistry of how human behaviour is influenced by our internal environment. Survival modes are dominated by stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, vital for immediate, fight-or-flight responses but harmful when chronically activated. These hormones keep individuals and societies in a state of constant alert, promoting competition, anxiety, and short-termism.

Conversely, thriving is associated with an increase in dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins. This neurochemical profile supports behaviours and states of well-being, connection, and long-term health. Dopamine rewards meaningful engagement, oxytocin builds trust and relationships, serotonin boosts mood and social confidence, and endorphins provide pain relief and happiness. Together, they encourage a more collaborative, innovative, and empathetic society.

Understanding this neurochemistry underscores the imperative for societal change. By reducing the emphasis on extrinsic, survivalist incentives and fostering environments that promote intrinsic motivations and well-being, societies can shift from a state of surviving to thriving. This neuroscientific basis highlights the potential for a

⁵ See endnotes: Ryan, Deci, Dweck, Pink, Csikszentmihalyi, Duckworth, Robinson, Turkle, Seligman, and Schein

⁶ See endnotes: Chomsky, Klein, Eisenstein, Shiva, Joseph, Korten, Wilkinson, Rifkin, Jackson, and Raworth

⁷ See endnotes: Rand, Friedman, Hayek, Mises, Thiel

⁸ See endnotes: Pink, Kohn, Haidt, Monbiot, Brown, Eisenstein, Lebow, Schwartz

⁹ See endnotes: Maslow, Harari, Wilson, Pinker

¹⁰ See endnotes: Keltner, Pinker, Nowak, Rifkin, Maté, Kurzgesagt, Ricard

¹¹ See endnotes: Wilson, Harari, Maté, Nowak, Keltner, Rifkin, Rees



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more harmonious, healthy, and sustainable future, emphasising the need for systemic changes that align with our biological design for thriving¹².

Motivation as an Intervention Point to Create Better Societal Outcomes

The core thesis of this paper is that we can harness a dimension of behavioural science to orientate society on a more positive trajectory. Nurturing our prosocial and collaborative nature could sound like a utopian ideal, but when we frame the task as increasing our intrinsic motivation, we find this concept widely understood and in adoption across several societal spheres therefore it is conceptually straightforward to widen its adoption in existing political and economics spheres, particularly because it aligns with the economic benefit of having a more productive workforce. The measurement of motivation and using it as an intervention point aligning personal growth with societal progress could play a crucial role for addressing the complex, interconnected challenges of our time.

Realising this opportunity requires the creation of a set of bold initiatives that could shift global governance practices, for which the UN's Pact for the Future is uniquely positioned to implement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a Global Motivational Index (GMI)

The Global Motivational Index (GMI) aims to facilitate a shift from surviving to thriving modes, by providing a robust framework to assess intrinsic motivation across at each layer of society. A new measurement standard called the Global Motivational Index could be created to sit in the UN's envisioned "dashboard of KPI's".

The Global Motivational Index (GMI) would aim to facilitate a shift from surviving to thriving modes, by providing a robust framework and creation of a new global standard with which to measure the motivational health of all spheres of society and ultimately index countries similar to GDP.

This new standard would leverage the self-determination continuum developed within Self-Determination Theory (SDT), possibly leveraging an existing measurement scale called the The Global Motivation Scale (GMS) which is an 18-item self-report questionnaire that measures a multidimensional conceptualization of motivation falling along the self-determination continuum. This scale has already been adapted and validated in various languages and cultural contexts, making it a widely used tool in the study of human motivation¹³.

The scale for the GMI would likely be a finite, numeric scale with possibly a 1-100 range. It would provide a clear, universal metric while allowing for cultural and contextual nuances. The development of the scale should be informed by precedents like the HDI and psychological measurement techniques, ensuring that it is both robust and sensitive to the complexities of measuring intrinsic motivation globally. The ultimate goal is to create a practical tool that can guide policies and initiatives towards enhancing global well-being through motivation.

Building the necessary capabilities for the Global Motivational Index (GMI) could entail expanding the UN 2.0's Behavioral Science division creating an organisational function for the study and focus on motivation.

¹² See endnotes: Sapolsky, Hanson, Maté, Hari, Levitin, Yong, Hanson, Dispenza

¹³ See endnotes: Zycinska, Urbanaviciute, Pelletier, Guay



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Reform Education Powered by the GMI

Educational reform is crucial for fostering a society driven by intrinsic motivation. The first step would be integrating the principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) into the fabric of educational systems. This means creating learning environments that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby enhancing students' intrinsic motivation. By allowing students more choice and control over their learning, encouraging mastery and providing a sense of belonging, educational institutions can cultivate a genuine love for learning and a robust skill set for innovation and problem-solving.

Adopting the Global Motivational Index (GMI) can contribute to this reform. The GMI would measure the extent to which educational environments support intrinsic motivation as well as provide actionable insights for continuous improvement. It would serve as a tool for educators, policymakers, and international organisations to align efforts and resources towards nurturing environments that bring out the best in every learner, which is aligned with the UN's Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 10: Transforming Education.

Emphasising lifelong learning, as highlighted in the policy brief, is essential. It ensures individuals continually adapt and grow in the face of rapid technological and societal changes. Fostering intrinsic motivation directly aligns with the brief's call for more adaptable, relevant education systems and the need for continuous learning opportunities.

Equity and accessibility are also central to both the GMI initiative and the policy brief's objectives. Ensuring every individual has access to quality, motivating education reduces inequalities and builds cohesive societies. This means not just improving access but ensuring educational quality supports everyone's motivational needs.

International collaboration and investment are underscored in the policy brief and are vital for educational reform. Sharing best practices and investing in motivational research and teacher training can lead to a global education transformation. By focusing on these interconnected areas, educational reform can contribute significantly to building a motivated, equitable, and innovative society, fully aligned with the goals and principles laid out in the brief.

Advocate for UBI to Power Intrinsic Motivation

The emerging view from pilot programs of UBI is that it has the capacity to foster intrinsic motivation. It has the potential to usher in a new work paradigm, wherein individuals are empowered to pursue work that is meaningful and personally fulfilling rather than merely economically necessary. Whilst there are numerous implications for the widespread adoption of UBI, like labour market impact, financial feasibility and public perception, the UN must enhance its capabilities in understanding and advocating for its potential.

Build a consensus for a Civic Leadership & Education Program (CLEP)

Create a roadmap, consensus and support pilot programs for a Civic Leadership & Education Program (CLEP) for late teens, similar to a national service underpinned by UBI and GMI. **The program would be both an opportunity for a new educational ecosystem to promote societal engagement and leadership and a solution to low skilled and essential labour market impact of UBI.**

The program's objectives would include engaging youth in meaningful work, fostering skills, discipline, and civic participation. It would encompass various areas like environmental conservation, community roles, and infrastructure development, as well as low skilled essential functions. Incentives such as educational credits, vocational qualifications, or a stipend in addition to UBI would make the program an opportunity for advancement.



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The program would promote social cohesion by mixing participants from diverse backgrounds, flattening class distinctions. Successful completion would leave participants with enhanced skills, a strong work ethic, and a heightened sense of community and environmental responsibility. This program, if thoughtfully implemented, could be a powerful tool for societal development, resilience building, and class equality.

Enhance the UN's Call for a Renewed Social Contract

The call for a renewed social contract, as advocated by the UN's "Our Common Agenda," is critical in an era of rapid technological change and potential job displacement by AI. **This new contract must shift the perception of work from a survivalist necessity to a means of meaningful societal contribution, emphasising intrinsic motivation.** It should seek to redefine work as engaging in activities that are inherently interesting or rewarding, moving away from the sole pursuit of economic survival. This reorientation is crucial in mitigating AI's impact on jobs, particularly by promoting roles in creative, collaborative, and care sectors less prone to automation. Implementing supportive policies like Universal Basic Income and educational reforms will provide the security and opportunities necessary for this transition. Ultimately, a fundamental societal shift is required to value work that fosters personal satisfaction, community well-being, and sustainable development and the envisioned new social contract offers a perfect platform to enhance this.

A Resolution with a New Vision of 'Global Sovereign Commitment'

Build on the Responsibility to Protect commitment of 2005 which sought to reframe the underlying principles of sovereignty and further reform the concept of national sovereignty towards shared global responsibility. The UN could **draft a new resolution called the "Global Sovereign Commitment" that would seek to transcend the implicit survivalist underpinnings of absolute national sovereignty by promoting a thrivalist mentality at the nation-state level.** Drawing on Peter Senge's concept of learning organisations, nations would be encouraged to adopt principles that nurture collective aspirations and expansive thinking, enhancing their capacity to learn and adapt. By personifying nations as entities capable of intrinsic motivation, the framework could foster a more cooperative international atmosphere, where mutual support and shared responsibilities lead to more sustainable and inclusive development. This shift from absolute sovereignty to a learning, cooperative global community could act as a fundamental shift for addressing global challenges.

Create a UN Media Division

Build out capabilities of the Department of Global Communications for a new media entity, dedicated to effective storytelling and the dissemination of accessible, engaging media content promoting the ideas in this paper and beyond. **"UN Media"** can include a for profit division similar to the BBC's commercial arm, engaging partnerships and joint ventures with other media companies to produce stand alone content and brands that can be distributed through traditional channels and streaming services.

Summary of Recommendations



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ENDNOTES

- Axelrod, Robert. "The Evolution of Cooperation." New York: Basic Books, 1984. Axelrod's influential work explains how cooperation can arise and be stable among self-interested entities through the analysis of the iterated prisoner's dilemma game.
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- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. "Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience." New York: Harper & Row, 1990. This book introduces the concept of flow, a state of concentration and engagement in activities that leads to high levels of satisfaction and achievement.
- de Waal, Frans. "The Age of Empathy: Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society." New York: Crown, 2009. De Waal explores the naturally occurring empathy in primates, including humans, arguing for its significant role in social bonding and conflict resolution.
- Duckworth, Angela. "Grit: the power of passion and perseverance" (TED2016): Discusses "grit" as a significant predictor of success and defines it as passion and sustained persistence applied toward long-term achievement.
- Duckworth, Angela. "Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance." New York: Scribner, 2016. Duckworth explores the concept of grit and its role in success, arguing for the importance of passion and persistence in achieving long-term goals.
- Dweck, Carol. "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success." New York: Random House, 2006. Dweck explores the concept of mindset and how believing in the ability to grow and improve can fundamentally influence all areas of life.
- Dweck, Carol. "The power of believing that you can improve" (TEDxNorrköping): Introduces the concept of a "growth mindset," emphasising the ability to grow one's brain's capacity to learn and solve problems through perseverance and effort.
- Eisenstein, Charles. "Climate: A New Story." North Atlantic Books, 2018. Eisenstein links environmental harm partly to extrinsic profit motives, arguing for intrinsic motivators like interconnection with nature.
- Eisenstein, Charles. "Sacred Economics: Money, Gift, and Society in the Age of Transition." Evolver Editions, 2011. Eisenstein envisions economics based on gratitude, generosity and community, not scarcity and self-interest.
- Eisler, Riane, and Fry, Douglas P. "Nurturing Our Humanity: How Domination and Partnership Shape Our Brains, Lives, and Future." New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. This book explores how the interplay between our biological makeup and cultural environment has formed patterns of human behaviour, particularly focusing on the dynamics of domination and partnership. Eisler and Fry argue that understanding these patterns is key to addressing global issues and nurturing more humane societies.
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- Friedman, Milton. "Capitalism and Freedom." University of Chicago Press, 1962. Friedman makes the libertarian case for free market capitalism and limited government intervention.
- Guay, F., Blais, R., Vallerand, R. J., & Pelletier, L. G. "The construction and validation of a self-determination scale." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(7), 789-805.
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- Hayek, Friedrich. "The Road to Serfdom." Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944. Hayek argues against centralized economic planning in favor of free markets and individual liberty.
- Hickel, Jason. "Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World." London: Windmill Books, 2020. Hickel advocates for degrowth strategies to achieve ecological sustainability and social equity.
- Hickel, Jason. "The Divide: A Brief Guide to Global Inequality and its Solutions." London: William Heinemann, 2017. In this book, Hickel explores the origins and persistence of global inequality and offers solutions to overcome it.
- Jackson, Tim. "Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet." London: Routledge, 2009. Jackson questions the viability of continued economic growth given ecological limits, advocating post-growth economics.
- Joseph, Peter. "The New Human Rights Movement: Reinventing the Economy to End Oppression." Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2017. Joseph proposes a sustainable economy centered on collaboration and open access rather than competition.
- Keltner, Dacher. "Born to Be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life." W. W. Norton & Company, 2009. Keltner argues human brains evolved for cooperation, not just competition.
- Klein, Naomi. "Addicted to risk" (TED2009): Discusses the competitive greed behind the financial crisis and how we must find empathy and connections to solve global environmental challenges.
- Klein, Naomi. "This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate." New York: Simon & Schuster, 2014. In this book, Klein argues that combating climate change requires a radical shift away from market fundamentalism towards more cooperative and sustainable economic models.



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- Kohn, Alfie. "Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes." Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993. This book critiques the use of rewards and incentives, suggesting they undermine our intrinsic motivation to learn and work together.
- Korten, David. "When Corporations Rule the World." West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1995. Korten contends corporate dominance promotes amoral competition at the expense of human values and global sustainability.
- Kropotkin, Peter. "Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution." London: William Heinemann, 1902. This book is a cornerstone of Kropotkin's argument for mutual aid as a significant factor in evolution, challenging the focus on competition.
- Kurzgesagt. "The Evolution of Trust." YouTube video, 2017. Animated video explains game theory experiments showing cooperation as a winning strategy.
- Lebow, Victor. "Price Competition in 1955." Journal of Retailing, Spring 1955. Lebow's classic paper showed how extrinsic financial incentives for salespeople actually decreased performance compared to no incentives.
- Loye, David. "Darwin's Lost Theory of Love: A Healing Vision for the New Century." Santa Rosa, CA: Foundation for Mind-Being Research, 2000. Loye delves into the often-neglected aspects of Darwin's writings, emphasising love and moral progress as evolutionary forces.
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- Monbiot, George. "Out of the Wreckage: A New Politics for an Age of Crisis." Verso Books, 2017. Monbiot argues that extrinsic incentives have contributed to social disintegration; advocates intrinsic community motivators.
- Nowak, Martin. "SuperCooperators: Altruism, Evolution, and Why We Need Each Other to Succeed." Free Press, 2011. Nowak discusses mathematical models showing cooperation is an evolutionary advantage.
- Pelletier, L. G., Fortier, M. S., Vallerand, R. J., & Briere, N. M. "Validation of the 21-item version of the revised motivation scale for exercise." Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 24(3), 361-380.
- Pink, Daniel. "Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us." New York: Riverhead Books, 2009. Pink discusses the importance of autonomy, mastery, and purpose as key motivators in the workplace and beyond.
- Pink, Daniel. "The puzzle of motivation" (TEDGlobal 2009): Critiques traditional incentives in business and argues for a deeper understanding of what motivates people, highlighting autonomy, mastery, and purpose.
- Pinker, Steven. "The Better Angels of Our Nature." Viking, 2011. Pinker discusses declining violence as survival motivations are less influential with economic development.
- Rand, Ayn. "Atlas Shrugged." New York: Random House, 1957. Rand advocates rational self-interest and warns against corrupting influences on free market capitalism.
- Raworth, Kate. "Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist." London: Random House Business, 2017. Raworth critiques traditional economic theories and introduces the concept of Doughnut Economics as a sustainable model balancing essential human needs with ecological limits.
- Ricard, Matthieu. "Altruism: The Power of Compassion to Change Yourself and the World." Little, Brown and Company, 2015. Buddhist monk discusses research on empathy, cooperation and motivation to help others.
- Rifkin, Jeremy. "The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis." New York: Tarcher/Penguin, 2009. Rifkin explores the evolution of empathy and the profound ways it has shaped our society, arguing for its role in facing global challenges.
- Rifkin, Jeremy. "The Zero Marginal Cost Society: The Internet of Things, the Collaborative Commons, and the Eclipse of Capitalism." New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. He discusses the rise of a new economic system that reduces marginal costs and promotes sharing over ownership, indicative of a shift towards cooperative modes of living.
- Robinson, Ken. "Bring on the learning revolution!" (TED2010): A call for a fundamental shift in education towards personalised learning environments that celebrate individual talent.
- Robinson, Ken. "Do schools kill creativity?" (TED2006): Explores how current education systems undermine creativity and argues for a radical rethink to cultivate creativity and acknowledge multiple types of intelligence.
- Robinson, Ken. "The Element: How Finding Your Passion Changes Everything." New York: Viking, 2009. Robinson discusses how finding one's passion and natural aptitudes can lead to a more fulfilling and successful life, particularly in education.
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- Ryan, Richard M., and Deci, Edward L. "Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness." New York: Guilford Press, 2017. This book provides an extensive overview of SDT, discussing its applications in various domains including education, work, relationships, and health.
- Sandel, Michael J. "The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?" New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020. Sandel critiques the idea of meritocracy, discussing its negative impact on societal cohesion and the common good.
- Schein, Edgar H. "Organisational Culture and Leadership." San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010. Schein explores the concept of organisational culture, its impact on leadership, and how it can be aligned with employee motivation and company objectives.



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- Schwartz, Barry. "The Paradox of Choice: Why More Is Less." Ecco, 2004. Schwartz provides research showing extrinsic incentives around maximizing personal choice do not increase happiness and often diminish it.
- Seligman, Martin E.P. "Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being." New York: Free Press, 2011. Seligman expands on Positive Psychology, providing insights into well-being, happiness, and the foundations of a good life.
- Seligman, Martin. "The new era of positive psychology" (TED2004): Seligman discusses Positive Psychology as a field of study and its implications for understanding what makes life most worth living.
- Shiva, Vandana. "Oneness vs. the 1%: Shattering Illusions, Seeding Freedom." Chelsea Green Publishing, 2020. Shiva critiques wealth consolidation by a corporate elite, arguing their domination is based on false ideologies. She advocates equitable, sustainable economies grounded in community and interconnectedness.
- Shiva, Vandana. "Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply." Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000. Shiva contends that industrial agriculture and commodification of food undermine small farmers, diversity, and nature.
- Stiglitz, Joseph E. "The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future." New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012. This book discusses how current levels of inequality are unsustainable and counterproductive to economic growth and democracy.
- Thiel, Peter. "Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future." New York: Crown Business, 2014. Thiel is critical of stagnant innovation under the current system and proposes new models.
- Turkle, Sherry. "Connected, but alone?" (TED2012): Examines the modern relationship with technology, particularly mobile and social media, and its effect on our social lives, suggesting a need for more meaningful face-to-face interaction.
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- Wilkinson, Richard, and Pickett, Kate. "The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better." London: Allen Lane, 2009. The authors provide a wealth of data to show how societal problems are more prevalent in unequal societies and advocate for a more equitable world.
- Wilkinson, Richard. "How economic inequality harms societies" (TED2011): Shows how income inequality correlates with ills like crime and addiction while equality promotes trust, health, and prosperity.
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