

00:06

Jennifer Brown

Every leader has a story and every conversation has the power to transform how we see the world. Welcome to the Will to Change where my extraordinary guests and I explore bold ideas, uncover untold truths, and dive deep into what it means to lead with purpose. In these episodes, I invite thought leaders, best selling authors and visionary entrepreneurs to ask the big questions and spark meaningful dialogue. Get ready to be inspired, challenged and equipped for your own journey of growth.

00:44

Doug

Hello and welcome back to the wealth of Change Today. Jennifer is joined in this episode by author and futurist Jamaic Cascio. And together they explore how to navigate a world defined by chaos, uncertainty and non linearity. And together they unpack why the old models of resilience no longer serves us. Why the moral universe looks more like a squiggle than a straight arc. And how leaders can embrace flexibility, active empathy and interconnectedness to move forward. All this and more. And now onto the conversation.

01:15

Jennifer Brown

Jamaic, welcome to the Will to Change.

01:18

Jamaic Cascio

Thank you for having me.

01:20

Jennifer Brown

I find myself drawn to futurists and folks who are. I know you're called sometimes the doomsday guy, but I have gotten to know you and I don't actually believe that is true. And not all futurists are at all. In fact, you and what you teach and what we're going to talk about today leave me very actually hopeful because understanding is so much of the battle and having a name for something, I think the worst thing we can do is just spin and spin and feel alone and feel that there's not something larger happening we can understand something that's perhaps in this case at the same timely as it is very ancient and has historical precedent. All those things are, I'm finding soothing in this extremely upsetting time. So I kind of latched, I've latched on to you.

02:12

Jennifer Brown

And then I discovered that you're publishing a book with Barrett Kohler, my publisher, with Bob Johansson and Angela. We're going to get into that a little bit, but I think for us in the D and I world, the refreshment that we need and the nourishment that we need is another way of understanding why has this happened, what has happened, how is this part of a global dynamic that's impacting everyone and then how do we move through it? And so while you may focus on everything that seems to be going quote unquote wrong, although I want to challenge that because there's so much precedent and these are the cycles of the world, right? We have to kind of take those pejorative words out of it, I think, and really engage in creativity in the way that we look at this.

02:55

Jennifer Brown

But also in your book you endeavor to spend many pages on the positive, like antidotes almost or the techniques or the framings that we can use to not combat this world, but to thrive in it and thrive with it, perhaps even like not even in spite of, but with it. And that's where I really want to get because I think we as leaders need to retool ourselves. We need to redefine our mindsets. We need to come with different tools, different definitions of the old business language like resilience and toughness and creativity and innovation. Like I think we have to rethink empathy. We have to rethink everything at this point. And I think you've got some clues for us. So welcome.

03:41

Jennifer Brown

What do you, what do you want to share with audience about you and maybe even take us through a bit of how you came to focus on Ban Danny, which will talk a lot about brittle, anxious, nonlinear and incomprehensible.

03:53

Jamais Cascio

Well, I have been working as a professional, a foresight professional futurist for over 25 years. I have a background. I did my undergraduate work in history and anthropology and my graduate work in political science and then I worked in doing computer work and then did some little bit of paper and dice work, role playing, game design and worked in Hollywood for a little bit. And all of which just ends up describing me as an easily distracted generalist. And it turns out that foresight work, futures work is actually the perfect kind of job for that because it's incumbent upon me to have a sense of everything that's going on everywhere. And it's a bit overwhelming, but at the same time it's invigorating. Although at times like these, the overwhelming kind of overwhelms the invigorating part I have been doing.

04:52

Jamais Cascio

I I specialize primarily in writing scenarios, that is to work with an organization, government, a company, whatever, to help them think through the challenges they're facing today and play them forward and not to do so as a single here's what will happen predictive history, but instead to think here's our Here's a set of different possible plausible outcomes based on what you're experiencing now and the choices that need to be made. So there may be external forces that you don't know. You don't know how they will happen or how they will turn out.

05:28

Jamais Cascio

There may be internal decisions that you haven't settled on and let's play out some combinations and see what happens when in 5, 10, 20 years, as the world continues to evolve, as your market, as your region continues to evolve, the kinds of things we might expect, you know, when we look at how society changes, how technology changes, economics, environment, politics, and how these work together. These are not meant as predictions. In fact, my goal is to be usefully wrong. As I've said, they are meant as provocations to basically make the person reading it, to experiencing it think, I never thought of that before, I never saw it that way before. And to become sensitive to changes in the early days, changes as they're happening.

06:21

Jamais Cascio

And I tend to describe, or I have in the past described scenario work, scenario futurism as kind of a vaccination for change, because the vaccination works by sensitizing the body to a pathogen you might encounter. And if you do encounter it, your body's ready for it. Similarly, scenario foresight sensitizes your brain, your organization to changes that you might, that might happen, but gives you a chance to recognize them early. And up until a few years ago, describing scenarios as vaccination was not at all controversial. So there has been since the late 1980s, a framework for describing a changing world. A framework known as VUCA V U C A which is an acronym encompassing volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, came out of the US Army War College.

07:28

Jamais Cascio

But because business consultants so often really love military language, it got picked up by consultants in the 90s. But after 9, 11 really hit the road with everyone talking, a lot of people in this community talking about the VUCA world, the volatile, uncertain, and, you know, that's nice, we could talk about volatility and uncertainty. But as the world got more and more vuca, we started to start to feel like, as I've said in talks before, we eat VUCA for breakfast these days, it is ubiquitous. And so in order to really be able to distinguish what we're experiencing now and how different and dangerous and transformative what we're experiencing now is, even compared to the VUCA World of 10, 20 years ago, we needed a new language.

08:23

Jamais Cascio

And so for a talk I gave at Institute for the Future, which is an organization I've done a lot of work with over the decades, in 2018, I proposed the BANI Framework B A N I brittle, anxious, nonlinear, incomprehensible as an intentional parallel to vuca. You can sort of see the evolution of uncertain to rather a volatile to brittle, uncertain to anxious, complex to non linear, ambiguous to incomprehensible. And so I had that. That was consciously in mind as I developed it. Not meant to be a this replaces Vuca, but some more a. This talks about the present world and probably the future world much more precisely and evocatively, because what were moving into, we're moving into where we have moved into a world of chaos, you know, an age of chaos.

09:30

Jamais Cascio

And chaos is a situation where the patterns that we have recognized in the past no longer seem to apply. One of the first catalysts for me thinking about this was, you may remember back in, like 2016, 2017, almost in 2017, 2018, when North Korea suddenly got very friendly with Donald Trump and started making noises about giving up their nuclear weapons. Every. I have done some work in that region with specialists from that region in the past, and they were all freaking out, what the hell is going on? Not because they wanted to see North Korea with nuclear weapons, but because this was so atypical. It was not the pattern that they had seen. And they were. They had no idea what would happen next. And that.

10:24

Jamais Cascio

That condition, that paradigm of patterns breaking down seemed to be happening across the spectrum of technologies, of economic models, basically everywhere start to see this chaos happening. And I really felt a need to be able to articulate that more clearly. And as what happens with these kinds of events, there was polite applause. And some folks from the developing world who are Brazil primarily, who were there, were like, yes, this describes it perfectly. The folks from America and Europe were like, oh, that's nice. Yeah, okay, I can understand that. And then Covid hit a couple of years later, and a few people who saw what I had done in 2018 said, you know, you really should talk about that, because that really fits with what's happening right now. And so In April of 2020, I put the.

11:18

Jamais Cascio

The Bonnie concept in a medium, an essay on medium called Facing the Age of Chaos. And I thought, okay, a few. A few people, my friends and followers on. On Twitter at the time will see that and, you know, again, polite applause. But instead, it just exploded. Suddenly it was everywhere, almost exclusively in the global South. But people across the developing world really embraced the. The language of Bonnie, the. The framework that it provides, not as a sense of, here's something that will give us all the answers. Because one of the fundamental ideas of Bonnie is that these are not problems to be solved. These are dilemmas that we have to face. And sometimes the neither.

12:11

Jamais Cascio

Neither answer in a dilemma or any of the answers in dilemma, sometimes none of those are good, but we still have to face it, still have to work through these situations. And so I spent a few years giving remote talks to people in Brazil and Sri Lanka and Mexico. And it was a. It was really remarkable and humbling to me to see how much this language spoke to people around the world from very different cultures, very different places, but all of whom could really feel that they were experiencing chaos in a way that they could not previously articulate. This gave them that articulation. And, you know, in the subsequent years, I've seen people talking about Bonnie in China, in Russia and Ukraine, in most of Latin America, a little bit in Africa, and very occasionally in Europe and North America.

13:21

Jamais Cascio

And it is, it's something I'm watching very closely because I suspect that as the world of what we're experiencing in North America and in Europe gets crazier and crazier, that framing of chaos is going to become more widely appreciated. So that's what I've been working on. I've been working with a colleague at Institute for the Future, Bob Johansson, former president of the organization, and with Angela Williams, who is the CEO of United Way Worldwide. And we've put out, we're putting together a book called Navigating the Age of Chaos, A Sense Making Guide to a World that Doesn't Make Sense. And that. The book draft is done, it's in the editing process now, and it's expected to be published in late October of this year. But all of this comes down to a need to be able to articulate what we are experiencing.

14:23

Jamais Cascio

Not because this framework will give us answers or tell us where to invest or whatever, but because naming things has power. Being able to name what you're experiencing, be able to identify what you're experiencing and the various ways in which it is manifesting that is remarkably empowering and allows you to really get a sense of what your place is and what you can do next. Now, one of the things that in working with Bob has done a lot

of. Did a lot of writing around Vuca in the past. And he actually came up with something that is most likely most often known as Vuca Prime. And that is a set of positive V, U, C, A words that I'm blanking on at, you know, just off top of my head.

15:13

Jamais Cascio

But they are the kinds of words that are responses to the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and they are ways to frame what you can do next.

15:28

Jennifer Brown

Right, okay. Actually I wrote that down. I have it. It's vision, understanding, clarity, agility.

15:33

Jamais Cascio

There we go.

15:34

Jennifer Brown

That's it.

15:36

Jamais Cascio

And so he really encouraged me and together we worked on a set of positive. Bonnie. A Bonnie positive set of words. Now, I actually had some responses in mind, but they did not fit the B, A, N, I framing. And for some reason it is important that we fit that framing for marketing purposes at least. But. So what we have is bendable, which is art in articulation of essentially resilience. And I'm sure we'll talk about that shortly. Attentive, which is an articulation of empathetic empathy for N. It's neuroflexible, which is a way of talking about being improvisational. And I is interconnected, which was a way of using. Saying inclusive, which also starts with an I. But were. We were told by our editor that was probably not the good time to use the word inclusive, which is really unfortunate.

16:51

Jamais Cascio

But anyway, but I still use it as a way of. As a secondary word in the text. So it's there. Yeah, but bendable, attentive, neuroflexible and inclusive or interconnected, essentially saying in a world that has become so brittle, we need to build up our ability not just to be. Not to be strong against the. Against the storms, but to be flexible, to bend rather than break. In a world that is. That is so anxiety inducing. It's critical that we become empathetic, that we be. Have a great deal more empathy for what people around us are experiencing. To really recognize that everyone else is experiencing the kind of chaos that we're experiencing. I think it's. Sonder is the word for the realization that everyone else has the same rich inner life that you do. Oh, but it's. It's a.

17:54

Jamais Cascio

To really recognize that the people that you work with aren't just there in your life for that. That those hours in the workplace, they have a full life, full lives of their own. They may be experiencing. They're very likely experiencing the same kind of anxieties, pressures that you're experiencing. Improvis, the response to being. To non. Linearity, which is disproportionality, essentially really radical disproportionality of. Of cause and effect, a lag between cause and effect. Small actions with big results. Small, big actions with little result. Improvisation, being improvisational. And that is being able to think on your feet. Recognize that the situation is not something you have scripted. You have to be able to recognize what's happening and respond in the moment. To be able to analyze and react, analyze and proact without having to have a set of predefined options. And then the.

19:03

Jamais Cascio

The response to being incomprehensible to a world that's incomprehensible and that is not understanding how something works, but understanding, not understanding why it's happening like this. The response here is inclusivity, or is it? And a set of, a network, set of diverse ideas. The example that we use in the book, and it's something that I've talked about in talks I've given over the years, is, you know, everyone loves the phrase the black swan. And initially back in the 1600s, it was used in Europe to mean something that doesn't exist. But

once black swans were discovered in Australia, it became the metaphor for things that we thought didn't exist, but actually do. And so it's a big surprise. It's a sudden surprise wild card.

20:01

Jamais Cascio

But what I recognize is that, you know, there were people who knew that black swans existed for centuries, if not millennia. You know, the indigenous aboriginal people of Australia. You just weren't asking them. Now you had very. People in 1700s had very good reason not to be. European people in 1700s had good reason not to be asking them, didn't know they were there. But that's not an excuse anymore. And so it's not a situation of maybe you're not asking the right questions, it's maybe you're not asking the right people. And so one way to respond to a world of incomprehensibility is to expand your network of inclusion. The people that you speak to, the ideas that you engage with. And so this has been theme of my life for the past few years.

20:58

Jamais Cascio

Talking about and thinking about and writing about this duality of the world that is increasingly brittle and anxious and nonlinear and incomprehensible and the potential that we have to be more bendable and attentive and neuroflexible and interconnected.

21:22

Jennifer Brown

I hope everybody listening now understands the linkages that I've been feeling between a lot of the aspects of our work. And essentially we are saying so many of the same things. The active empathy, the presence with others, the reaching out to community, the who are you speaking to and including and involving and consulting. Who's missing from that? There's just so many things. The non linearity is especially top of mind for me of the last 30 years that I've done this work professionally. I thought that there was a cause and effect between how we educated about things like racism or the business case for DEI, right, how it was better for customers, better for innovation, et cetera.

22:11

Jennifer Brown

And yet I feel like all of that is, I don't know if it's true or not, but it's certainly being deeply challenged now in the way that we taught it and the assumptions that we had about the fact that it would do the trick. You know, the fact if I show people something, they will be changed. If I just put, you know, explain it or if I, you know, punish people that didn't know about it and say you should have known that will somehow the linearity of that, I think expectation is that you will get the reaction that you expect, which is everybody. The mark of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice. So I'm going to bend it. It's going to bend the way that I want it to bend. I'm going to use all the arguments, right?

22:53

Jennifer Brown

So I think we're all sitting here in this non linearity of saying, wait a second, like all the things I said and the way that we said that, the way that we taught it, the way that we I think lost connection honestly with the who was on the other side of the orthodoxies and the quote unquote truth and the data and all of it, you know, I think we really misjudged. But again, like when I hear you speak, I say there was something much larger afoot that I don't think were paying attention to, which is this spanny wild card, chaotic, unpredictable, no patterns anymore, environment. It's, it's. We have to change then our teaching, right?

23:38

Jennifer Brown

And I don't know what we're changing it to, but all I know is as I review, which I do daily, maybe even hourly, what just happened? Like why did we not accomplish what we thought we would. We were, we followed a recipe that I think a lot of us agreed on and here we find ourselves in this completely unpredictable place. And it's just, it, I can't even describe the feelings of that because I have 25 years invested in it, you know, and it's very strange to have your field be so kind of repudiated your methods, your, the things that you were told would cause every action would cause this reaction. And then we underestimated, I think and we didn't even pay attention to really the reaction.

24:21

Jamais Cascio

I think, I think we really probably drank our own Kool Aid and kind of zipped ahead, you know, towards this future, this ideal future. And if your scenario plannings would have, we had you, we could have sat there and said let's work through four different scenarios. How is this gonna go? That would have Been amazing because, you know, I, we didn't do that at all. And we thought the arc, this arc of the more universe thing, which believe me, is one of my favorite qu. But I have to question everything now. I have to question everything down to the stage.

24:53

Jamais Cascio

Well, that's the first problem right there. It's not an arc. It's not an arc, it's a squiggle. Yes, the squiggle of the moral universe is long, but eventually it tends towards justice. But you'll get a lot of ups and downs along the way.

25:12

Jamais Cascio

Yeah.

25:13

Jamais Cascio

And that's actually kind of comforting to think of it that way is that it's not that the arc of the moral universe is bending wrong or will take millennia to get to justice, but that we're going through a squiggle. It's not, it's not a mathematical arc, it's just something hand drawn by a three year old.

25:33

Jamais Cascio

And you said something earlier that I was like, America's, you know, young and we're all getting a history lesson right now. And I think your point about global reactions to Banny versus America and maybe Europe, this sort of youth, right. This optim, whatever it is, optimism that really haven't been through the level, any sustained chaos. And so this is fresh. But then you were like, well, it went not so fast actually. This is just a different combination perhaps of the elements that have we have experienced as a society, but we perhaps don't recognize them as such. In this combination and in this poly crisis, which I want you to define again, which is the compounding effect and the timing of so many different disparate pieces.

26:19

Jamais Cascio

Yeah, polycrisis or omnicrisis. I like Omni crisis because it reminds me of the Britishism omnishambles, which also seems to fit everything falling apart. The one I came up with was metapocalypse. But the idea here is that yes, we have experienced things like, you know, pandemic disease and wars in Europe and you sort of go down the list of all of the horrible things that are happening right now, but we've never experienced them in such a compressed and overlapping way. We've never experienced this kind of combination. And because we are in an Internet connected world, right. We're able to see everywhere in real time what's happening.

27:05

Jamais Cascio

And I don't think if you've been around long enough to remember the early days of the Internet, you may remember something called the Declaration of Independence for Cyberspace written by John Perry barlow in like 97 something like that. And it was a statement that the Internet is its own place and it has its own morals and its own codes. And he was so 100 wrong. But one thing that he was right was the emphasis on how connected to everything it makes us. And one of the things that people have celebrated about the Internet from fairly early on is the way that it gives marginalized communities voice that people, you know, a gay kid living in Topeka can connect with a community that may be hundreds of miles away and feel like he has a community, he has people.

28:08

Jamais Cascio

What we forgot about is that some voices are marginalized because they should be marginalized. Neo Nazis for example. The same kinds of, the same kinds of voice to the marginalized given to gay. The gay kid in Topeka is also giving, given to his incel. Neo Nazi friend next door.

28:33

Jennifer Brown
Right.

28:34

Jamais Cascio

And I don't think we've really have fully recognized just how much of an accelerant the Internet is to these kinds of social processes, social and social media in particular. It's like the crystallization or crystal method crystallization of everything that is problematic about the Internet because it is predicated upon generating attention. And neural neuroscientists have known for years that the best way to get and capture attention is to make people scared and make people angry. Fear and anger generate more attention than compassion. And that's really unfortunate because there's a whole industry based on that getting, generating clicks by making you angry. There's actually a term for rage farming.

29:34

Jamais Cascio

And so we're living in a world that has all of these things falling apart and some things that are unprecedented, some things we've never seen in combination, all based on a substrate that is built around making us upset. And that's how we communicate with each other. That's how we get our information, that's how we live. And it's. If you can step back and be, you know, pseudo objective about it because you really can never be truly objective on this stuff. It's just so overwhelming. But if you can step back a bit, it is remarkable. Frankly, it's fascinating just how much of this chaos is self induced and how fast it hit, just how fast it all hit.

30:29

Jamais Cascio

And then you have the, you know, the various technologies that we don't quite understand what they're doing to us, don't quite understand what they mean for us. Not just as an individual, but as part of a, an artistic community, as part of a religious community. It is, it's a bit much.

30:56

Jennifer Brown

Yeah, we're not equipped yet. But I think that's what positive Banny asks. Right. Which is right. And your early warning signs, you know, the ability to live into these different scenarios. And I think that's the way we build. Resilience is agency to say I will have, if I scenario, plan, I will have some additional capacity that I've invested in.

31:29

Jamais Cascio

Resilience is in many ways the direct opposite of efficiency. And we have built so much of our economic and in many respects social world, political world around efficiency. The drive to do as much as possible with as little as possible. And that kind of hyper efficiency when it works is really remarkably wealth generating. And when it breaks, it shatters. And so we have systems that are just in time, industry just in time. Manufacturing is predicated upon every single part being where it needs to be at that moment and no sooner, because if it's there sooner, you've wasted time. Whereas resilience, a resilient world is one that recognizes that there are stumbles along the way, there are slowdowns, there are problems, there are changes that happen.

32:25

Jamais Cascio

And having a backstock, having some slack in the system means that you won't be quite as profitable, won't be quite, you know, nearly as efficient, but it will be much more survivable when something bad happens, when something unexpected happens. The whole notion for me, when I talk about resilience, I've been actually writing about resilience for a little over a couple of decades at this point. The key to resilience for me is not that it's about strength. It's not about being able to withstand the windstorm. It's about being able to bend and be flexible and come back afterwards, stand up again. It's not about being so tough that nothing can hurt you. It's about recognizing being able to adapt to the changes as they happen.

33:25

Jamais Cascio

And that, you know, for some communities that may sound weak and well, so it is for me it means that it is a the right way to respond to a world that is undergoing radical transformation, whether it's political or technological or social, rather than trying to push back to, in the immortal words of William F. Buckley years and years ago, to

stand athwart history saying, no, it is necessary for us to learn how to learn the different perspectives on what's happening and see, not necessarily accommodate them, but fit with them, understand what they do, what you can push back on, what you can change in return, how you can cause that storm to blow around you without necessarily having to stop it entirely. Because that sometimes and increasingly I think is the way of things. That's not possible.

34:30

Jamais Cascio

It's not possible to stop these things entirely. It's certainly not alone. You know, climate, the climate disaster for example, is not something that any one of us can stop on our own. It's not something that any one country can stop on its own. But it is something that in order to survive, we're going. Even as we try to reduce its harm, reduce our contribution to it, we need to be figuring out how to adapt to it and how to help people who are not, who don't have the resources that we do adapt to it. For we talk about the positive bunny and then to go with that same B A N I framing me and my Bob Johansen and I came up with a set of four bendable meaning as opposed to brittle.

35:19

Jamais Cascio

It's bendable that is resilient really trying to figure out how to be able to bend rather than break, rather than shatter. For anxious or anxiety inducing. We want to be attentive, which is to be empathetic, to recognize when other people are being harmed and to recognize when you're. You yourself are being harmed. There's a real important element of being empathy empathetic to yourself that goes into this.

35:47

Jennifer Brown

I love that's to me that's grace. It's grace for the self and for others. And you write that this kind of empathy, active empathy is a remarkable cognitive trick that humans are capable of. Say more about what you meant.

36:06

Jamais Cascio

Well, empathy from a neuroscience point of view is. It involves something called mirror neurons, which is basically being able to construct a model of another person's mind in your own mind and understand what they are feeling from their perspective. It's not something that you do consciously, but it's something that our brains evolved to do in order to work more effectively together. Quite likely around the same time we develop language. The, the cognitive trick of being, of having empathy for yourself is to essentially set up that mirror of your own mind and recognize yourself as an individual, not as a self, but as a person. And having that kind of willingness to accept and work with a failure, not just somebody else who fails to do something but, or has the situation go wrong for them, but also for yourself.

37:08

Jamais Cascio

You failed to do something, situation has gone wrong. Rather than blaming yourself, rather than just simply saying I'm an idiot. It's really recognizing, trying to get a better understanding of the context in which this all happens. You know and so empathy is in many respects a understanding context, understanding the bigger picture in which we all exist for non linearity which is really in for. For Bonnie. Really, really. The description of disproportionality, whether it's something that is experience is displaying great hysteresis, that is lag between cause and effect. Or is this explaining great disproportionality of action and result. You know the butterfly effect, you know, butterfly flaps his wings in the Amazon, causes a hurricane in the. In the Gulf of Mexico. It is the response to that is neuro. Flexibility or improvisation. Yeah. The idea here is when you.

38:15

Jamais Cascio

When you are in a world that is so unpredictable and disproportionate, you can't rely on scripts. You can't rely on the preexisting patterns of what you should do next, the pre existing rules for what you should do next. Instead you need to be able to see that big picture, see the greater context. Amazing how that rises up again. Be able to see what's happening and adjust your actions accordingly. And whether that is in response to or in preparation for being able to recognize what's happening and not be stuck in your old ways of thinking. Because those old ways very much might not be working anymore and may even be counterproductive.

39:06

Jennifer Brown

And you have, by the way, jamae. You have from coping to dancing in that section. I thought that was really beautiful. It's dancing with. And the coping piece is I think the old definition of resilience. Right? That's the hustle porn. Productivity worship. Like how much more can I withstand?

39:24

Jennifer Brown

How.

39:25

Jennifer Brown

How much productivity can I squeeze out of myself and how healthy can I be and how like how much can I micromanage everything? Right. It's completely. Not that it's.

39:36

Jamais Cascio

There's this whole noun maxing subculture on the Internet. Whether it's looks maxing or you know, it's basically trying to. Okay, let me step back. In computer games where you get to set up your character to be able to carry, to fulfill whatever functions to. To blow up Nazis or whatever, you can adjust the parameters of your character in different ways, decide what skills that person has, how strong they are, what kind of endurance, whatever.

There is a whole subculture of what's called min maxing which is trying to figure out the best possible combination of attributes and skills to be able to beat everybody else of the game. And that whole min maxing subculture in gaming sort of proliferated and turned into this whole.

40:31

Jamais Cascio

It metastasized really into this something that is Everywhere for a particular subculture, at least of trying to figure out the hack to have the maximum possible result. And I think that hustle. Hustle culture that the bragging about how many hours a week you work is all part of that same kind of delusion around life maxing.

40:57

Jennifer Brown

Yeah.

40:59

Jamais Cascio

And dancing is not life maxing.

41:03

Jennifer Brown

No, definitely not. And then incomprehensible. We talked about it's interconnected web like not hub and spoke. So the shape of it, the way we think about it is different. Not about asking the right questions, but the right people and something that looks like a black swan, but it actually exists. But the arrogance of expertise, the worship of expertise and how dangerous it is. I loved in this section of the book you talked about intertidal zones and the flow of those zones and the. And the richness that occurs there and the resilience that occurs in these like. I don't know if they're like barrier, you know, sections between. But there reminds me too of like tidal marshes and the way that they protect. And this is why it's so dangerous not to have them anymore.

41:55

Jamais Cascio

Right.

41:55

Jennifer Brown

Because they are the surge protectors literally. They're the absorption, they're the filter. They're the, you know, the mechanism that blunts the. The force, you know, between tectonic, you know, things like I love that our interconnectedness. And I also think this takes us so much back to. Out of capitalism and individualism and really takes us back to community cultures that knew. Had a wisdom that we have forgotten.

42:22

Jamais Cascio

Having a background in anthropology that actually has two different. Two different discussion points leading off here. One, the first and just as a quick reaction is I find myself really reluctant to valorize old culture too much. Pre capitalist indigenous cultures too much because they were humans as well. They had their own problems, their own biases, their own forms of corruption. And so thinking about people of the past knowing so much more than us, which is not what you said, but that's what I've seen said, I've heard said.

43:02

Jennifer Brown

Definitely. Yeah.

43:05

Jamais Cascio

Just feels like it is the same kind of basically denying yourself the. The agency to act because we don't have that kind of ancient knowledge anymore.

43:15

Jennifer Brown

That's disfranchising. I think that's true. I like that correction. I mean or just that lens. Right. We do need to. Anything that deprives us of agency right now is probably not given everything that's going on. It's probably not the direction we want to go, but just different. Different practices and the same. Because they were humans to your point.

43:37

Jamais Cascio

So the other way off of anthropology that fits here is actually, I did a lot. I've done a lot of study around evolution with focus on evolutionary anthropology, but also evolutionary biology. And that intertidal zone. Intertidal zones tend to be a catalytic point for evolution. You get the fastest kinds of change happening in those twin zones, friction zones, where you have two different kinds of worlds rubbing up against each other and bleeding over each other. That really gives you the. The most opportunity for rapid, responsive change.

44:18

Jennifer Brown

I know. What a metaphor.

44:20

Jamais Cascio

And so when we think about the. We think about incomprehensibility and interconnectedness, inclusivity. We're trying to generate these friction points, these moments of where you have different ideas, different beliefs, different views coming together and mashing up with each other. There is a. There is a music genre called mashups that take two seemingly very different songs and somehow figure out a way to interweave them. One of my favorite take. One of my favorite ones takes a Green Day song, I Walk Alone, and a. And something like on the name the. They were the next Beatles in England in the 90s. This is going to drive me up the wall.

45:27

Jennifer Brown

How old are we? Isn't the who.

45:31

Jamais Cascio

No, no, no. They were. They were notorious for having Oasis.

45:37

Jamais Cascio

Oasis.

45:37

Jennifer Brown

Oh, yes, yes.

45:39

Jamais Cascio

So it basically mashes up a Green Day song and an Oasis song, two very different feelings, but actually comes up with something that is in many ways better than the both of them.

45:48

Jamais Cascio

Right.

45:50

Jamais Cascio

Or at least more interesting than the both of them.

45:52

Jennifer Brown

Yeah, yeah. And fresh. And this is, you know, this is a principle in DNI again, something that we've taught, endeavored to say, the creative abrasion that occurs. And when we say diversity of thought, that's what. That's what that gets to. And then you bring in diversity of lives and experience and life stage and thinking styles, and you know that you get this like, rich soup. But then it has to be managed, of course, because it's humans. And that's the inclusion part, as we've always described it, which is that inclusion is the how, the behavior, the sort of the steering of that goodness towards something that you want versus kind of devolving into chaos, you know, so we've kind of understood that there are these. And I don't know what. What is the.

46:38

Jennifer Brown

The equivalent in the tidal zone of the inclusion piece of what I've just described. I don't know, maybe there is something that steers towards an outcome or if it's just random and nature is that way.

46:51

Jamais Cascio

The more diversity of species you have, the more opportunity there is for cooperation, which happens a lot more in nature than people recognize. When we talk about all of this, I'm thinking about the Bonnie positive. It strikes me that what we are experiencing right now with the current American administration, but politics more broadly, globally, but especially in the US Right now, is not precisely that the administration is trying to enhance the negative body of brittleness, anxiety, etc, but instead is acting directly counter to the positive body.

47:40

Jamais Cascio

So if we are trying to build up a resilience, they're taking away the mechanisms we have for that kind of slack, or we're trying to build up resilience, we're taking away the mechanisms that we have to have the kind of added resources, to have the kind of information resources that make it possible to find something different to do.

48:05

Jennifer Brown

Right.

48:06

Jamais Cascio

If we're trying to build up our empathy, we're being told that empathy is a sin, Right? Which is crazy. But if you Google the phrase empathy is a sin, you'll see dozens, if not hundreds of articles from people from all sorts of right wings thinkers who were talking about how bad empathy is, which is stunning to me. You know, we're trying to build up our ability to improvise. And they are forcing people to abide by certain scripts. If you don't say the right thing, you're out.

48:38

Jennifer Brown

Right.

48:40

Jamais Cascio

You're trying to build up our ability to be inclusive. And they're telling us that is absolutely wrong. And it's, you know, if I didn't know better, it almost feels like it's intentional that they're trying to really hit at these four tools of a positive bunny.

48:57

Jennifer Brown

It really does. It's like evil genius. The genius part, because it's crippling. I mean, what you've laid out is the way out around with. But if you cut it off, like we can't access it and the problem is it doesn't happen.

49:14

Jamais Cascio

That doesn't happen quickly. Doesn't happen quickly. And I think that's one of the things that is the most troubling because we have, for a variety of reasons and I think globally encourage ourselves to believe that we can get things done quickly, make things happen quickly.

49:35

Jennifer Brown

We are addicted to what we want quickly. Yes, Chachi. PT Give me the answer right now.

49:40

Jamais Cascio

Yeah, it doesn't matter if it's real or not. Yeah, you know, Amazon, don't just ship it overnight. Ship it to me this afternoon. Yeah, yeah, get it quickly. And we are not prepared to build the cathedral. You know, the, you know, the idea that you have, you do something that's going to take a while to get a result, you may not live to see the end of it. There was a point in time when a lot of cultures embrace that idea, mostly because they had no choice. And you know, getting things quickly is much nicer than having to wait for your grandkids to get it. But the problem with getting things quickly is that when things don't happen quickly, you think you're being betrayed.

50:26

Jamais Cascio

And so one of the fears I have and I, you know, talk about in the book around non linearity is this that hysteresis that I mentioned before, a lag between cause and effect. It turns out that for a variety of complex geophysical reasons, changes made to carbon levels in the atmosphere, your greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and changes to temperature and precipitation that result have a lag. So if you additional carbon, greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is going to be another five or 10 years before you see the changes to increase in temperature or change in precipitation patterns that would result from that. Or more critically, if you reduce how much greenhouse gas are put into the atmosphere, it's going to take 5, 10, maybe even 20 years to see a change in temperatures. And bear in mind you are reducing, not eliminating.

51:30

Jamais Cascio

And which means that you're not making temperatures go down, you're just slowing how much faster getting hot. And if you were to eliminate putting any greenhouse gas in the atmosphere today after that 5, 10, 20 years of increasing temperatures, which is going to freak people out, it's a stay stable, it's not going to go back down unless we start doing some kind of really serious technological research about pulling large amounts of greenhouse gas from the atmosphere, which is really difficult to do, not impossible, but difficult. And so this is the kind of thing that a lot of people don't know about.

52:09

Jamais Cascio

And I think it's going to be a real big political problem down the road and get people to make major changes to their lives and lifestyles predicated on the idea that this is going to help the planet, this is going to make things better for our world. And things don't get better. They don't get better for a decade. Did you do all that nothing for nothing? Did you give up eating meat for nothing? Did you give up driving your Canyonero for nothing? And even worse, it doesn't get better. You know, something I say in the book is we're really not accustomed to a situation where stop when we stop doing the bad thing, it doesn't make things better. All we're doing is stopping things from getting worse.

53:02

Jamais Cascio

And so all of this, whether it's Bonnie or Bonnie positive, it's not about trying to solve problems. A lot of these things are not going to be easily or readily solvable. Some of them are not going to be solvable at all. What we're trying to do is respond to them, ameliorate the harm whenever possible, adapt to them when necessary, and understand what's happening. So much of what's. Of the crises we are experiencing the world come down to not knowing what the heck is going on. You know, and that's a large part of the incomprehensibility. Part of Bonnie is just why is this happening? Why is this going on?

53:53

Jamais Cascio

And a great deal of what we're trying to do with the positive, Bonnie, is to build out the conditions to allow us to better understand what's going on and to help each other while it happens.

54:08

Jennifer Brown

Help each other while it happens. That's all we can do and learn to somehow use this to our advantage. I mean, just the eye of improvisation. I mean, all these things have been needed for so long. And I think a lot of us have wanted a banny positive world. I mean, we've. And we've been trying to lead others towards that and encourage it with all the headwinds and pushback that we faced. And when you talk about the pace of change, like true change, you know, back to our arc of moral universe, you know, and when. And it's a squiggly line and it again, it. It's a wonderful reminder and I find it actually soothing and comforting that all the things, the seeds we planted and the work that we've done, there is this lag.

55:02

Jennifer Brown

And in a great way of people always ask me, net, did we accomplish anything in the last. Before DEI got canceled, did we accomplish anything? And it's such a. It's a hard question. I could answer it many ways. Depends on my mood.

55:15

Jamais Cascio

But you really can answer for generation.

55:18

Jennifer Brown

Exactly. It's a total lag like you were describing. And it's a delayed gratification and yet. But it. It works with the laws of nature that you're describing. It actually corresponds beautifully to what you just said, which is that, you know, it's only our modern mindset that's become addictive to this like proof, immediate proof, immediate response. Like I teach inclusive leadership. And I say to people want the checklist and they want to know when they're done and they want to know when they've done the thing. And you know, and I have to always kind of pull people back and say this is an evolution.

55:52

Jennifer Brown

I mean, it takes time to open up your mind, have empathy for others, to learn about their life experience, to change your language, to modify and broaden your vocabulary, to get the courage, which by the way is not something that's immediate at all. And then ultimately to develop competency and expertise even in showing up in a different way as a human. I mean, what I just described is years, it's lifetimes. And it's tricky because I know I'm hired to give people quick and easy things and I, and this is the addiction of the business world that I've always felt extremely uncomfortable with because I want to have this deep and meaningful conversation about when do, how do we change, what are the elements, how. It's not about how long it's going to take it. That's irrelevant.

56:40

Jennifer Brown

It, to me it's the preparation in the self that it's the practice of the resilience building that we've been talking about today, which is the presencing, the improvisation, the active empathy, the sit, the ambiguity. It is leading with that. Not just with no answers, but just asking, who, who's here, who's not here, who's included, who are we missing? You know, all that stuff. I think it's such a radically different way to lead and we need to incentivize leaders differently. Organizations are going to need to take this to heart and I don't know what that's going to

look like and what it's going to mean for organizational structures and things that are traditionally measured. And you know, efficiency, like you say, has always been the goal. Always or just in time has always been the goal.

57:29

Jennifer Brown

How do you operate in a chaotic, the humans are chaotic in your organization too. This isn't just supply chains. This is unprecedented mental health and loneliness, epidemics and disconnection. And all of a sudden humans are coming into the organization who are bringing so much of that day to day chaos in with them. And that we see it as like lack of preparation and lack of professionalism and all these sort of lenses that we put on it generation to generation. And it's, it's, you know, I think it's disparaging when really the humans are in pain in our organization. I mean that's really all we need to really know. And then how do we give agency? I Love that word. We talked about it today. What does agency look like? What does inclusion and interconnectedness look like?

58:17

Jennifer Brown

All the positive bannies, neuro flexibility, you know, bending and being flexible and open and not taking positions and not agree, disagree. And all these sort of hard binaries that, you know, we cling to because we feel like it makes meaning out of chaos. We got to, we got to help people, I think, disconnect from that like, knee jerk place that we go.

58:41

Jamais Cascio

One thing about being bendable, of being resilient, is that even when you're bendable, you have roots. And you know, they're one of the things you say. Agree to disagree just sort of flagged on. Agree to disagree is about flavors of ice cream, not about slavery. And so knowing where you're, what is what we can agree to disagree about and what things you need to stand firm about. And I think a great deal of the complexity, the anxiety that we're experiencing now is trying to figure out just what are those points that we must be, we can't be flexible about, just what are the points that we have to be firm about. And you said courage. And one of. Just something that has stuck with me is that courage is not the lack of fear. Courage is having fear, but acting anyway.

59:44

Jamais Cascio

And I think that's something to bear in mind is that this is. We're not asking people, when we talk about positive bonding and we talk about dei, we're not asking people to suddenly be virtuous. We're asking people to recognize that we can better and that we can do things to not just make our own lives better, but in doing so, not make other people's lives worse.

01:00:12

Jennifer Brown

Beautiful mic drop. I love the image of the roots and all that goes on underground that supports those beautiful trees. And the trees are not as old as the mycelia underneath, which is the most ancient and largest organism in the world. Is that right? So the trees may come and go, right? They have short lives. They're struck by lightning, you know, they, they withstand and bend and degenerate and are eaten by all the nature that eats them and decomposes them.

01:00:47

Jamais Cascio

But, and they become the nutrients for the next set of trees.

01:00:50

Jennifer Brown

That's right. There's a cycle. So I love the contrast of bendability and something that's perhaps fixed is not the right word, but something that is deeply grounded and rooted.

01:01:00

Jamais Cascio

Well, rooted. Rooted, yeah.

01:01:01

Jennifer Brown

Rooted, yeah. And I think that's. The rootedness is. I think you're Right. That the anxiety of what are we rooted to? Are we rooted in common ways that our roots connect to each other and we send nutrients to each other like trees do? Has that been disconnected in our modern society? We are living our lives as if we are above the forest floor and not as if we are below.

01:01:29

Jamais Cascio

Right. I think one of the other elements of anxiety that connects directly to the. To the backlash against DEI is the, oh, my God, have I been evil all along? That recognition that, you know, what is being described is real, you know, whether we're talking microaggressions or, you know, systemic racism, systemic sexism, and we are complicit in it to varying degrees. And there is a recognition that people who have historically had power have to go through that. One of the reasons that I am so comfortable with my power right now is because the system has been built upon harming others. And by. And then asking how much am I complicit in that evil by accepting it, and what can I do otherwise? That's not going to, in turn just simply harm me. For Internet points. Yeah.

01:02:40

Jamais Cascio

And so I think that's been one of the real complexities that, you know, you mentioned that. That folks in the DEI community didn't really think about the backlash when you really started doing this 10, 20 years ago. It's this question of have I been wrong all along?

01:02:58

Jennifer Brown

Yeah.

01:03:00

Jamais Cascio

Is to consider whether you're talking about whoever you're talking about. It doesn't have to be a old white guy like me. Anyone who's. Who is facing the realization they've been wrong in ways that have. That's hurt people. People, you know, among the choices they have, simply deny it. Nope, not wrong. Right. All along. And that's what a lot of people have done, because that's easy. It's hard to do the work. It's hard to. To have that recognition and know that there's nothing you can do about it too. I can't change my history, but I.

01:03:40

Jennifer Brown

Can change my go forward.

01:03:42

Jamais Cascio

Right.

01:03:43

Jennifer Brown

But. But the positive banning, I think, is a way in, to deconstruct some of that, I hope. I mean, I think we have to help people deconstruct as well as build new. We talk a lot about skill building, but the deconstruction is such an important piece of old identities. And I've been talking a lot about the composting metaphor and all the ingredients that need to dissolve, and yet the. The richness and the seeds of what will become. It's not that you're completely lost. You haven't totally. You, you have not died. But it feels like death. It feels like death. And it's something you avoid because you're terrified of the disillusion. Because you, you lose your grasp, you lose your sense of this person. Who am I? Who, who am I? What life have I lived? What does it mean?

01:04:37

Jennifer Brown

What is, what's, you know, have I done everything I should have done? You know, all of that is a very important process for people to go through. Really critical. If our society has. Is not willing to do that over and over again, I think over the course of our longer and longer lives. I mean, God willing, we go through it many times, I think, in life in ways. And the resilience that's built each time. The way I think about it is the. It's hard, but the

welcoming of the disillusion because I'm not attached to it and I'm allowing it because I'm trusting that this is a process that happens everywhere around us in nature is a process of renewal. It is a process of reinvention and bettering and improving, if you will, and shifting. And I think, yes, we absolutely avoid.

01:05:29

Jennifer Brown

It's super uncomfortable and threatening and it is extremely destabilizing. And to do that at the same time as your world feels like it's being composted, that's asking a lot of the humans. Yes, how much, you know, can we take?

01:05:47

Jamais Cascio

And then you do this. You have those kinds of questions and you're feeling these kinds of feelings in a context where there are. There's a small number of people with a great deal of power trying to make sure that you don't change your behavior because doing so would undermine them.

01:06:07

Jamais Cascio

And that's being revolutionary.

01:06:11

Jamais Cascio

We know the. Yes, what's that? The great old line from John Kennedy is people who make a peaceful change impossible make violent change inevitable. And whether we want to use violence as a description or simply as a metaphor, you know, people who. When you have a system that makes it difficult or impossible to change in a way that helps everyone, you're going to end up with a system that people are going to forcibly change in a way that doesn't necessarily help everyone, you probably won't. Actually.

01:06:49

Jennifer Brown

I love how you just reframed that because I usually think of the disillusion process as an individual choice, if you will, and something maybe to be avoided or afraid of. But the fact that the world is right now is not aligned, is actually misaligned to that and wants the rigidity. It wants the brittle. It wants that. You know, it wants that. It wants the chaos and it wants to maintain it. And the actual, the act of resistance is this like this evolution process that we should go through actually to become like the humans that we are going to need to be, to lead, to shine a light, to create something better, to create something different coming out of this. I mean, we. So just to be aware that we're up against some very powerful things.

01:07:38

Jennifer Brown

And it's not always what I hear you saying is not always a moral failing or a lack of courage to change. My podcast, this podcast is called the Will to Change. And I feel like that's so much of what we've been talking about. Like, why do we. Why don't we change? Why do we. What's misaligned with our changing? What. Why, you know, why do we feel alone in our changing too? I mean, I think too. This is a community endeavor. I don't think we. How do we change together? And how do we build the fabric in which we can be held, you know, and weave our threads together in a way to be, you know, strong in this way that includes all of us as well.

01:08:16

Jamais Cascio

You know, it's funny, we. We tend to be. I know that were talking about this early on, sort of some. Somewhat critical of individualism, or at least the. The way individualism has. Has evolved and emerged in Western society. And yet so much of our critical description of what should be done next, what, how you should change, puts it on the back of the individual. And when you're asking someone to change and they don't have the support of the families or the communities, it doesn't matter whether that changes for the better. If it's going to hurt, and it's going to hurt in a way that they don't see an end to. And whether it's emotional hurt or physical hurt or financial hurt, it's that feeling of, yeah, I could do that, but nobody around me would support me.

01:09:12

Jamais Cascio

And this isn't something that's going to immediately make my life better, frankly, it's going to make my life

worse for a while, and I don't know when that will end. And so it's just that it just struck me right then. It just struck me that we talk about the importance of community as a positive without necessarily recognize or always recognizing that the community side has to be there for dealing with the negative as well. Can't just be back on the backs of individuals.

01:09:43

Jennifer Brown

Yeah. And it can work at cross purposes to your evolution in the same way I think back to your example about the gay kid in Topeka living next door to the neo Nazi. Right. It's the, it's again, it's everything you speak about. It's the juxtaposition and the holding of these two things, these many things to be, you know, the paradox of it. But I think that's such a good point as well. The interconnectedness can actually hold you in a system and prevent you. Like, like I think of men and masculinity and I do a lot of thinking and programming around that. And just the man box is this confining norm set of norms that when you break out, you're viewed as a traitor, you are rejected by the group.

01:10:28

Jennifer Brown

So for me to say be a male ally, you know, is so easy for me to say and teach the tenets of it and whatever, but fundamentally this thing has always caught me, which is what I'm asking people to do is so difficult and so risky and so scary. And it's sort of this conundrum in my work because I guess in order to go to the vision that I think we all want, the passage, my friend says it's hell in the hallway. The door closes and another opens, but it's like hell in the hallway. Get yourself into the hallway. What is to me resilience is learning to live in that hallway. You know, you may between communities, you may have rejected one and you may be seeking another. And there's this liminal space between trapeze.

01:11:16

Jennifer Brown

You know, you've let go of one thing and hopefully another swinging towards you. You have no idea if you're going to be able to grab it and you're just, you're floating and.

01:11:25

Jamais Cascio

Right.

01:11:25

Jennifer Brown

I think a lot of us are floating like we're, we are in. To me, the definition of becoming is the maybe the letting go, the necessary ending of the things you knew and the leap towards something that you're not sure is there. And it's the. To me, that's the leadership competency. If I could boil it down, it's like, what does that. When you are floating, what does that look like? Like, how do you at the same time enable agency, show empathy, provoke, you know, positive questions and scenario, plan and like, give people a sense of like I am. There's some empowerment here for me to still engage my creativity and my hopefulness and everything, all my resources, you know, I think that is that leadership I think we're looking for because we're going to be in that space.

01:12:15

Jennifer Brown

Maybe Maybe for a very long time.

01:12:18

Jamais Cascio

Right There is a, a tool for that. Business consultants, especially foresight centered business consultants, use the, the two curves, the declining curve and rising curve. And you know, so as one system declines, another system is coming up and the point at which they intersect really defines how difficult the transition is. Because very often, you know, sometimes you get a situation where the declining curve, the old system is declining and gets very close to bottom before the new system even starts to appear. And so you have this big gap that trapeze act, that space of floating or falling with style or whatever you want to call it, where you are. And that's where chaos lives.

01:13:07

Jamais Cascio

And I, I think we, in a lot of the systems that we have come to depend upon have failed or are in the process of failing, and we don't yet have viable alternative systems to shift to. I think that as an example, transnational industrial capitalism, as designed as developed initially in the 19th century and perfected in the 20th, has outlived its usefulness. But we don't have something that works or even has the potential to work for the majority of people on the planet to shift to. And that shift is going to be difficult. You know, the longer the jump, the harder that shift is going to be. And looks like it's going to be a really hard jump, really hard shift to make. Oh, that's interesting.

01:14:02

Jennifer Brown

Oh, can I ask you what. Can I ask you one more very deep question? Do you think that all this destruction is happening because it has to happen to enable, to jumpstart and to enable a new system? Do you think again, we're all just in so much existential pain and dread. And I always try to think what is really happening in the sort of long arc right now and is this a hastening of that space? And do things need to break and call and come apart as were talking about earlier, catastrophically in order? It's like the forest fire wiping everything out. All the good and the thing, but the restorativeness of it and the fact that it's prevented by personkind and therefore leads to worse disasters because it serves a purpose, but I don't. Is there a purpose happening and unfolding right now?

01:14:58

Jennifer Brown

Because I have found I won't let go unless I am forced to let go through catastrophe. I literally have noticed that about myself that I cannot, like I say, I want change, but I will hold on. And then if I'm brought to my knees and I'm forced to do it, and then I look back And I'll say, wow, I resisted. I didn't want to look at it. I didn't want to do the hard thing. It was forced on me, literally. And then I had to reinvent. And I just sort of wonder, like, do you some. Does that occur to you sometimes about the. The reason I guess this is happening? As evil as it all feels.

01:15:40

Jamais Cascio

I do think that there is a pro a the creative destruction concept from what, early 20th century? Karl Popper. [Correction: Jamais meant to credit Joseph Schumpeter here]. I think this idea that in order to create something new, you have to break apart what's old, that's definitely a thriving idea at the present. And it's a way of being hopeful, frankly, of seeing that, okay, maybe this is all happening and it will give us a better platform upon which to build. Actually, as a interesting counter example, that helps to reinforce that idea, there was a, I think, a really persuasive argument that if Trump had won in 2020 and he'd done the next four years, he would have had the continuity of the same people that he's been working with.

01:16:37

Jamais Cascio

And by not winning four years for the Heritage Society to create Project 2025, basically for the team of people that had influence over him to really come up with deeper plans on what to do next. And a. An eight year, eight straight years of Trump probably would have been far less damaging than what we're getting by having a fort. Having four years of Biden. And that's an interesting way of thinking that sometimes you may. You need to go through the. The crappy part to get to the better point, because if you don't, if you delay the crappy part, it might get worse.

01:17:20

Jamais Cascio

It's the reckoning.

01:17:21

Jamais Cascio

Yeah, yeah.

01:17:22

Jennifer Brown

I mean, we've delayed our reckoning with our history and as a country, and it continues to plague us now.

01:17:29

Jamais Cascio
For what I really think is. Ever played the game SimCity?

01:17:33

Jennifer Brown
Oh, I know about it. I know about it.

01:17:35

Jamais Cascio
Okay. So one of the things you can do in SimCity after you've built up your big city and made it a thriving metropolis, you can start throwing tornadoes at it and floods and Godzilla and basically you can start throwing crap at it. If we are living in a simulation, as some philosophers like Nick Bostrom at Oxford think. Oxford or Cambridge, anyway, for living in a simulation, have we reached the point where the person playing the game has started throwing crap at us just to see what happens? And that's just me being really weird, but it makes me laugh.

01:18:14

Jennifer Brown
I just had this vision of, like, the Greek gods, like, fighting and, like, throwing.

01:18:19

Jamais Cascio
Just getting caught well, at a keyboard and mouse with a big screen like, yeah. Oh yeah. Well, I can do this.

01:18:26

Jennifer Brown
Oh yeah. You think you're all that keeping us humble. That is for sure. And we all need a more humility. But I don't know. There's going to be a lot of collateral damage to this. So. Wow, this is so has been wonderful. Thank you. I just could keep talking to you for hours, but this is the book is out. Everybody.

01:18:45

Jamais Cascio
October 28th.

01:18:46

Jennifer Brown
October 28th, Bob Johansen, you, Angela. United Way.

01:18:53

Jamais Cascio
Angela Williams.

01:18:54

Jennifer Brown
Angela Williams on Barrett Kohler, which is the publisher of how to be an Inclusive Leader. Everybody. So this is going to be a wonderful read and I encourage everyone to. I hope you found this hopeful, inspiring, provocative, maybe a new model in which to understand and then maybe even bring people along. How this is taught is going to be the art of it to, you know, really, that's going to be something you and I will probably be talking about. How do, how do we broach these topics and bring folks along? And I don't want to say in as short of amount of time as possible, but because it always feels like I'm being pressured to like deliver complex things quickly. And I, you know, we've talked about how problematic that is today.

01:19:42

Jamais Cascio
Right.

01:19:43

Jennifer Brown
But this is one is worth sinking into. And I, I really, you know, I, I hope there are workshops on this that, you know, that are people and can get engaged in and that it is not controversial. It's uniquely not controversial and I

think uniquely universal. And it speaks to our deep need to belong, to be creative, to be empathetic, to have grace for each other. I mean, it's all the tenants of everything I know that I've taught. It just happened to have the container of dei. So this positive banny thing I think has so much legs as does scenario planning. And we didn't get into that too much. But there's a whole section in the book devoted to it. And I know it's your expertise too. Let's do that more. Let's, let's engage in that.

01:20:26

Jennifer Brown

Let's train our brains and our hearts and our bodies to, you know, feel as if or once upon a time as you always start your scenarios. I loved that.

01:20:36

Jennifer Brown

Let's imagine if this is a world in which.

01:20:39

Jamais Cascio

This is a world in which that's how you start. And I think that's beautiful and hopeful and engages all of us, which I think is healthy. This is how we keep our ecosystem, our tidal zone flowing. You know, I think we have to just be extremely careful right now of blockages and also of the narratives that we're hearing to your point, about what we people and those out there want and don't want for us and being very aware of that.

01:21:06

Jamais Cascio

And, and we need to be compassionate with ourselves when we stumble.

01:21:12

Jennifer Brown

Beautiful.

01:21:13

Jamais Cascio

We can't be perfect. We're not going to be perfect at this. We have to be willing to say to get up and try again.

01:21:18

Jennifer Brown

That's right. So core, thank you, my friend.

01:21:23

Jamais Cascio

Thank you.

01:21:27

Jennifer Brown

Hi, this is Jennifer. Did you know we provide a full transcript of every podcast episode on my website@jenniferbrownspeaks.com While you're there, subscribe to get notified whenever a new episode drops and explore my latest insights on leadership, resilience and navigating transformation in today's world. Together, we can unlock new ways to lead and grow by bringing our voices, experiences and courage to the table. You've been listening to the Will to Change with me, Jennifer Brown. If you enjoy this episode, please subscribe and leave a review. It helps others discover the show. To learn more about my work, visit jenniferbrownspeaks.com and thank you for tuning in and I'll see you next time for more conversations about growth, leadership, and creating changes.

01:22:16

Doug

Sam.