CONSEQUENTIAL QUESTIONS
FOR CONSIDERATION

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Dave Gilmore poses questions and contemplates disruption convergence scenarios.

As we consider the "now" and soon arriving "then", we are confronted with our own lack of initiative regarding the consequential questions we ought to have posed much earlier. Today, we are faced with situations and circumstances most are utterly unprepared to address or respond to with adequate thinking, speaking and behavior that will yield win/win outcomes, the best for the most.

Consider the multiple disruptions on the immediate landscape of human experience. The inventory alone is daunting, but when we consider this multidimensional dynamic converging to create a radically altered reality, we can be overwhelmed to the point of frozen inaction. Perhaps the multiple, repeated disruptions occurring over the past few decades have unconsciously dulled our sensibilities and resolve to act, and therefore, the noted current convergence is more of the same.

What's before us now that we must thoughtfully consider?

1. Accelerating climate change destruction.
2. Escalated worker dissatisfaction triggering work stoppages.
3. Societal realignments and polarization.
4. Massive demographic shifts.
5. Strategic leverage of misinformation and disinformation.
6. Arrival of the spatial web.
7. Ongoing economic ambiguity.
8. Natural resource degradation.
9. Dramatic progression of artificial intelligence.
10. Intercountry trade weaponization.
11. Redefined work and working places.
12. Unprecedented wealth transfer.
13. Pervasive digital transformation.
14. Widening interstate conflicts.
15. New and threatening geopolitical alliances.
16. Global energy transition coupled with fragile energy security.
17. Deepening institutional mistrust.
18. Private money domination of markets.
19. Unprecedented government debt levels.
20. Increasing civil unrest globally.
21. Widening economic divide between haves and have-nots.
22. Growing forced displacement of people.
23. Global supply chain uncertainties.
24. Explosive digital infrastructure growth.
25. Persistent cyber insecurity.

All this seems truly overwhelming when considered together. When understood as converging phenomena, such an inventory is nothing short of terrifying.

> " What are the implications and ramifications of accelerated climate change destruction converging with explosive digital infrastructure growth, global energy transition, fragile energy security and natural resource degradation? "

Disruption Convergence Scenarios

At DesignIntelligence, we've been building "disruption convergence scenarios" to better understand the present ramifications and potential future implications of these dynamics.

For example, what are the implications and ramifications of accelerated climate change destruction converging with explosive digital infrastructure growth, global energy transition, fragile energy security and natural resource degradation?

How about the convergence of societal polarization, pervasive digital transformation, widening interstate conflicts, global supply chain uncertainties and persistent cyber insecurity?

Or what about the combination of the dramatic progression of artificial intelligence, the arrival of the spatial web, strategic leveraging of misinformation and disinformation and the domination of private money in markets?

The design professions are front of mind when we do this work, and we're constantly asking, "What is the value of the design professions in designed solutions and designed perspectives that should be leading in these scenarios?"

A sampling of other consequential questions come to mind for you to consider:

- How did we collectively allow the Earth to be so assaulted that we are now facing existential threats as a species? (Hint: Ask the mirror. Own the responsibility.)

- What votes did we cast that assigned inadequate leadership, allowed for centralized governmental irresponsibility and myopia and set us on the course where so many disruptions are now our common reality?

- What core values and ethical standards for your personal and professional life have you established and enforced, or neglected and compromised, that frame both aspiration and reality for you and your work?

- What investment decisions have you made in the past 10 years that you can objectively state were wholly responsible to the environment and society that yielded both "good" and "well" outcomes?

- What can you as a design professional bring to the crisis decision-making and action table to positively and effectively address the disruptions noted above?

Lots to consider in this brief article. We're wondering what you're wondering about your value and personal/professional responsibilities with all this in the forefront. We hope you'll join us in January (15-16) in La Jolla, California, for the Design Futures Council Leadership Summit on Consequential Questions Demanding a Voice, to examine these issues in person, together.

Dave Gilmore is president and CEO of DesignIntelligence.