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# Longpath

Becoming the  
GREAT ANCESTORS  
Our Future Needs



An Antidote for Short-Termism

Ari Wallach



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## CHAPTER 3 | PRACTICING



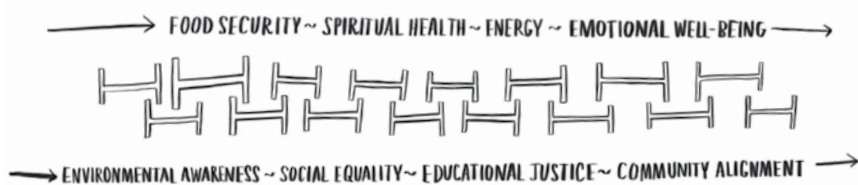
Looking Backward,  
Inward, and Forward

In Western culture, at least, we've typically stuck to a more limited framework to guide our choices. My parents raised me on the wisdom of well-known philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Nietzsche, and Kant. And these guys are great and all, but they did one thing that, as I look at it now, not only bums me out, but makes me question so much of how we think about the meaning of life. They all took the single human life span, from birth to death, as their unit of measurement for what it meant to be virtuous and good.

We can't think about the problems facing our world, like food security or climate change, or even the problems facing our families, like emotional well-being, and limit our thinking to the single life span as the unit of measurement. When we do, we fall into "lifespan bias." With a Longpath lens, we think longer and, importantly, in both directions. We think about the past—our mothers' experiences and our great-great-great-



grandmothers’—and the future—our children’s, nieces’, and nephews’, as well as their great-great-great-grandchildren’s, grandnieces’, and grandnephews’.



Transgenerational Empathy is an antidote to short-termism because it helps us prioritize long-term objectives over short-term gains. It is a reminder that you are a link in the chain of being—that a lot happened before you came on the scene, and a lot will happen after you leave it. And so much of what happens after you leave depends on what you do, think, and feel while you do the little song and dance called “my life.”

## CHAPTER 4 | CREATING



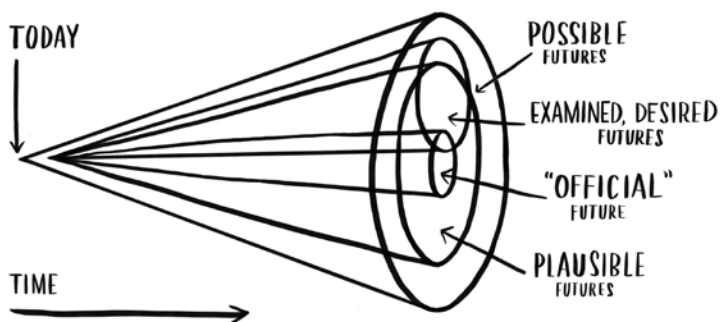
# Futures and How We Make Them

## **How to Co-Create the Future: The Second Pillar of Longpath**

The question is this: How do we influence the future in a democratic, participatory way, so that no one entity, industry, or even religion is in charge of dictating to us what “the future” will be? How do we support the future so it is multifaceted, always improving, and we *all* cowrite it? The Longpath answer is to do away with the word *future* in the singular, in favor of *futures*. There’s not one predetermined way forward, there are many, and each is in constant mix and match and inventive play with the next. There’s no Official Future; there are emergent, Participatory Futures. If an Official Future is a formal and scripted orchestral arrangement, then Participatory Futures are the best jazz set you have ever heard. The interplay between the parts of the system and the process itself becomes part of what makes it magical.

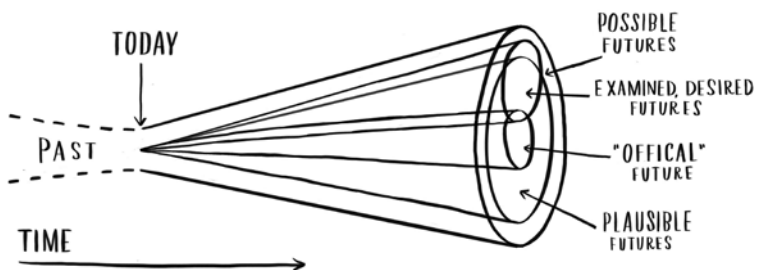
I’m hardly the first futurist to suggest that we don’t need to follow an Official Future. It’s kind of our vocation’s calling card, actually. A futurist named Joseph Voros put a great image to it with the Voros cone—also known as the futures cone, which I’ve adapted somewhat for Longpath Labs.





The Voros cone shows how there is more or less a straight line between what we do today and an “official future.”

Creating examined, desired futures requires looking not just forward but back. It requires blending the Voros cone with the Mobius chain from following chapters. The New School professor and design researcher Elliott Montgomery got to this concept with his reimagining of the Voros cone as one that includes the past.



# LONGPATH MEGATRENDS



## SOCIAL & CULTURAL SHIFTS

- DECLINE of TRADITIONAL GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS
- GLOBALIZATION of IDEAS & NARRATIVES
- RISE of DIGITAL CULTURE & SOCIAL NETWORKS
- RISE in STATUS & POWER of WOMEN



## DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

- GROWTH of the MILLENNIAL GENERATION
  - BOOMERS RE-BOOMING
- URBANIZATION EVERYWHERE
- RISE of the NEW RACIAL & ETHNIC MAJORITY



## SCIENCE & TECH DEVELOPMENTS

- ADVANCEMENTS in BIO-ENGINEERING
- RADICAL TRANSPARENCY & RISE in BIG DATA
- BREAKTHROUGHS in ENERGY RESOURCES
- 0101 of EVERYTHING • UBIQUITOUS INTELLIGENCE



## ENVIRONMENTAL DYNAMICS

- CLIMATE-BASED DISEASE SPREAD
- CLIMATE-BASED MIGRATION
- CLIMATE CHANGE & RESOURCE SCARCITY



## ECONOMIC SHIFTS

- MULTI-POLAR GLOBAL ECONOMIC ORDER
- DISAGGREGATED & DISTRIBUTED WORK
- RISING INCOME DISPARITY



## POLITICAL DYNAMICS

- DECLINE in TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONAL POWER
- NEW TURF WARS

## Journal Pages

A series of ten horizontal, slightly wavy lines, resembling hand-drawn paper, intended for journaling or writing.

## Journal Pages

A blank page with horizontal lines for journaling. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing.

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A blank page with horizontal lines for journaling. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for writing.

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