



---

Vishen: Hi, I'm Vishen Lakhiani, founder of Mindvalley, the school for human transformation. You're listening to the Mindvalley podcast, where we'll be bringing you the greatest teachers and thought leaders on the planet to discuss the world's most powerful ideas in personal growth of mind, body, spirit, and work.

So your special guest for this podcast is going to be, well, actually no one. I'm gonna be doing this podcast myself. But I am gonna introduce to you five people in this podcast. You see, this podcast is called, "How To Really Make A Dent In The Universe: Lessons from Five Philosophers." And I'm gonna connect the dots between five great thinkers, some long deceased, some alive today. And this is about not just philosophy but really about the true meaning of life and how to truly make a massive impact on the world by questioning some of the traditional ideas of how the world is supposed to run and what success means.

When you listen to this talk, what I'm hoping you'll get to recognize is how you can make a greater impact in your business, in your society, in the world. And as a bonus, how we in America can heal the current political divide in the country. This podcast is gonna give you several new frameworks for understanding the world today. These frameworks are gonna come from these five special philosophers, which includes Charles Darwin, Ken Wilber, Tom Chi, the co-founder of Google X, the famous blogger Tim Urban who writes for Elon Musk, and finally, Neale Donald Walsch.

This speech was given at Mindvalley Reunion in San Diego, which happens every year where an entire community comes together. Get ready to enjoy this talk. And I hope it inspires you to view your life in a completely different way where you recognize that perhaps the meaning



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

of why we are here, it's not about serving ourselves but to serve humanity as a whole. Let's get started.

I'm Vishen Lakhiani, and this is the Mindvalley podcast.

What I wanna talk about is an idea called the human reset. I think the way our industrialized system making us understand how to build companies, hundred-year-old education system, I feel have a deep flaw that if we do not fix will cause us to create a world that is less than ideal to our children. This is my daughter, Eve. Eve is, yeah, that picture always gets that "Oh" response especially by woman. So Eve is three years old. And she's a total badass, right? She wants to grow up and no princess for her. She wants to be a freaking Mexican wrestler. So Eve is really, really, really totally badass and adorable.

But for the first time in my life in the last one year, I wondered is Eve gonna be inheriting a world as beautiful and peaceful as the world that I grew up in, or are we, as a species, in some ways, mightily going backwards? I know, yes, in terms of technology, things are accelerating at a fast pace. But sometimes, it seems that in terms of consciousness, things might be slowing down, or stagnating, or reverting back to ideas from the 1950s or 1920s. And I wonder, if a society's current metrics of success actually make sense, and of all of this chaos that's happening right now is simply a wake-up call that we have to question things such as be an entrepreneur, your success is based on your job title, your value to society is based on your bank balance.

What if these metrics for success are actually only a tiny slice of how we should really be developing human beings? What if the core metric of success is in your life, this life that you lead, when you depart the planet, would you have created a better world for the next generation? What if the entire model of our education system, the way we groomed our employees, the way we ran our companies was all designed to address this one question? Are you, as an individual, going to leave the world better off? And so that question can be expanded. How can we leave a positive mark on the planet for future generations, and how can we truly live while making this positive impact?

So I've been questioning this, I've been trying to wonder, this seems so obvious, right? I mean how many of you here would agree that the mark of a great life is that we leave the planet better off for our children?

Female: Yes.

Vishen: Yet, why is there so much division? Why is there so much chaos in the world? Why are we putting poisons into our body? And why is so much of corporate America and corporate of many other countries in some ways pushing the world backwards? What I wanna share are five insights from five different, I guess you could call them philosophers. And these five philosophers come from very different backgrounds. One is actually a scientist, a really brilliant scientist, perhaps one of the smartest men in America. The other is a blogger and a brilliant blogger, huge fan base. Then there's the naturalist, which you'll learn about, long dead, but very influential. There is the actual philosopher, actually a guy who is considered one of America's foremost philosopher, and finally a mystic. I can't think



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

of any other word to describe this man but a mystic.

Now, of these people, three of them, I know personally as friends, one I hope to meet, one I hope to meet when I get up to heaven. But let's start with the idea from the first guy, the scientists. Now, some you might recognize this name, Tom Chi. And if you've heard Tom Chi speak, you've probably fall in love with Tom Chi. He's a very humble, simple guy, but brilliant. So some interesting things about Tom Chi, right? That's Tom Chi speaking at Mindvalley's Hall of Awesomeness. He came down to Malaysia, he gave a talk there. In the slide beside him, that's Larry Page, the founder of Google. And Tom was telling a little bit about his passion which is rapid prototyping.

When Larry Page came up with the vision for Google Glass, basically, was 11 a.m. in the morning, by 2:30 p.m., Tom Chi had come up with two different iterations to test the idea of the Google Glass. And he did that with chopsticks. So he could see like what was the optimal color that would flash on the screen. This guy is a genius. He is an astrophysicist, he's a DJ, he is a children's book writer, he's a scientist, and he's one of the co-founders of Google X. So he's worked on all of these crazy projects.

Now, Tom came to Mindvalley to give a presentation on rapid prototyping. But again, given his vast, vast knowledge, one of my team members, brilliant guy by the name of Klemen whom you'll meet at some point, asked from this question, "What is a global problem worth solving for a company like Mindvalley?" And when we say company, we mean you guys as well. Within this group, there are students but there are also future teachers, future hosts, future published authors. What is a global problem we can solve? And I just wanna play for you Tom's response. And I want you to think about what he's saying. This was filmed with an iPhone. It was completely unplanned and spontaneous. Tom didn't rehearse this, so the sound may be a little bit off, I hope that's okay.

Tom: Going back to the question, Mindvalley who, given that civilization always wield its technology at the level of consciousness that it's at and you recognize that our technologies are getting more and more powerful, it means that the level of consciousness that we're currying at is getting more and more magnified. And if we do not advance consciousness faster than we advance technology for the next couple of decades, we're done. Like, I don't know if I can say this strongly enough, but it's like if the power of technology continues to advance and it doubles, and doubles, and doubles, and in that same time period, consciousness only gets 20% better, we're done.

I'll give you a real example. In the past, if you wanted to go, you know, do a tactical missile strike and blow up the building, you would need like a \$2.5 million missile to go with the guidance systems and whatever. Right now, you can buy an industrial drone for \$1,000, pack it with explosives for \$4,000 more dollars and fly it directly over your target and drop it. That's a \$5,000 thing that replaces a \$2.5 million thing. And it's about the level of consciousness. Because you can use drones to re-forest the world and turn back climate change, but you can also use drones to replace their \$2.5 million tactical missile, right? This is about consciousness.

And what you guys are in the business of is shifting consciousness, shifting human poten-



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

tial, human possibility. This is your need. I embolden you guys to be like ridiculous about this. Is it all about weight loss? Is it all about making the most money? No, no. I mean, I'm not saying you shouldn't do that stuff too. It's great, right? Look good, make a bunch of money, works for me, right? But I'm just joking. I don't look that good.

But like the consciousness, what consciousness are we plugging into? Right now, we're plugging it into this consciousness which is so disconnected, so commerce-driven, commerce over everything. And now, we're bringing in the nationalistic stuff that we used to have at the beginning of the 20th century, too. So now, we're getting all the poisons, not just one or two. And our technologies are getting 10 times more powerful, 10 times more powerful.

What happens when it costs \$100 to blow up any building you want? Like, this is the world that we are literally creating right now and you guys are at the forefront of can we advance consciousness faster than technology? I think it's totally possible, right? It just needs something that we haven't seen yet.

Male: Great.

Vishen: So let's look at what Tom said, "Technology is getting more and more powerful, while the level of consciousness is far behind. If we don't advance consciousness faster than we advance technology, we're done. I don't know if I can say this strongly enough." And that's a really interesting statement. There was as much technological change between the years 2000 to 2015 as there was between 1900 to 2000. That's according to Singularity U. Singularity U also says between 2016 and 2022, we'll see just as much technological change again and it's accelerating. And so if we don't accelerate our development of consciousness, according to Tom, we're done for.

Let's look at what happened just in the last seven days in the world. There were Charlottesville, there was Barcelona. Tom has a point. And as people in this room who give a damn about where the world is going, the question is what can we do? What do we mean by raising consciousness? How can we contribute to elevating and raising human consciousness so that we can be a society that is actually befitting the technological progress that's coming into the world right now? And the question is what will get us there? And this is where I wanna introduce you to the second philosopher who's a writer. And maybe some of you recognize this blog. It's called "Wait But Why." Any Wait But Why readers here?

Female: Yeah.

Vishen: So Wait But Why is a brilliant blog. This guy, Tim Urban, he writes blog post which has 60,000 words long, which is almost three-quarters the size of my book, right? It takes about three or four hours to read his blog post but he's brilliant. And he wrote this blog post recently about Neuralink, Elon Musk's new company. And in that blog posts, he had a very, very interesting metaphor about the human race. This is basically what Tim Urban said. He said, "Let's say an alien species comes to Earth at three different time intervals, right? Planet 1, he visits maybe 2 million years ago. Planet 2, he visits 10,000 years ago.



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

And Planet 3, he visits today. Now, if that alien would then go back and report what he was seeing, he would say, 'I came across three planets and two had life,' but he would be wrong you see there's a big difference between Planet 3 and Planet 2."

He'd say two had sentient life. Planet 1, maybe we'd find early primates who have yet to evolve into human beings. When you get to Planet 2, you basically see that 10,000 years ago, human beings existed. They had just discovered agriculture, they were making fire, they were living in tribes, but then if you come forward just 10,000 years later, human beings are now connected. They have satellites buzzing around the globe. People can talk to each other halfway across the planet through technologies like Skype or Facebook Messenger.

But here's the funny thing, right? If you were to take a baby from Planet 2 and put that baby on Planet 3, time travel that baby, that baby will grow up and that baby could be a doctor or an engineer. But at the same time, if you could take a baby from Planet 3 and put that baby on Planet 2, that baby would grow up to be a hunter-gatherer, basically, you know, learning... His technological progress might be learning to make fire. It's the same human being. We haven't evolved that much in 10,000 years.

But how are we now so much more powerful? Well, this is what Tim says we have to realize, right? He says, both the second and third planets have intelligent life on them, equally intelligent life, so equal that you could kidnap a newborn baby from Planet 2 and swap it with a newborn from Planet 3, and both would grow up as normal people on each other's planet, fitting in seamlessly, same people. What has really happened, he said, is that in Planet 3, we've created a new form of life called the human colossus. That's his name, he came up with that terminology. The human colossus is basically the collective human race, which is now connected through our technology. It's the collective human race which is connected through the World Wide Web, through Skype, through WhatsApp.

And Urban says is the better we can communicate on a mass scale, the more our species begins to function like a single organism, with humanity's collective knowledge tower as its brain and each individual human brain like a nerve or muscle fiber in its body. With the era of mass communication upon us, the collective human organism, the human colossus rose into existence. In other words, we, ourselves, in a 8 billion cellular being called the human colossus. You can think of it that way.

But here's the other fascinating thought. If we are cells, we can be a healthy cell or we could be that, that's a cancer cell. How do you know what cell you are? Cancer cells are not bad, they just don't know what they're doing. How can we tell if our work, if what we are doing in life represents cancer or cooperation?

So I wanna go back to philosopher number one, Tom Chi, and a really interesting story he shared with me. See Tom ran an innovation think-tank in Silicon Valley. So these massive corporations would come to him and they'd say, "Tom, help us figure out. Here's \$350,000. Help us figure out how to do X or how to innovate on Y."

And one day, a particular company came to him and they said, "Tom, we wanna give you



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

all of this money and we want you to help us figure out how to get a beverage, a carbonated sugary beverage to teenagers." So Tom said, "Why do you wanna do that?" And they go, "Well, you know, teens are not drinking as much of this beverage and we think it would be great if you could help us figure out how we can raise our bottom line and improve our shareholder value by getting teenagers to drink our beverage." And Tom said, "But you realize, your beverage is basically high fructose corn syrup, it's sugar. You realize your beverage contributes to diabetes." And they said, "No, no, no, Tom. Our beverage doesn't contribute to diabetes. Yes, it has sugar but everything has sugar. Our scientists have found that there are at least 100 causes of diabetes and there's no conclusive link." So Tom said, "Look, I'm a scientist and I know that. I'm not gonna work with you." And so he actually turned that down. God bless, Tom Chi. He turned down hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Tom told me this, he said, "When I tried to explain to the employees of this company that their beverage cause diabetes, they refused to buy it. They had many layers of denial saying, 'There are hundreds of causes of diabetes and that soda is just part of a balanced set of choices you can make food-wise,'" right? And he said, "They went further. They would say, 'Look, our company is really good. Our company was the first company to show a multiracial couple in an ad. Our company was the first company to show gay people kissing on a television spot,'" And that was actually true. And Tom said this, "It's a classic example of fooling yourself that goodness in one area gives you a free pass in others. Really, what's true is that we need to stay awake and keep learning in all the areas we can."

Now, one thing I love about Tom is he's a really compassionate being, right? He never felt animosity towards the employees of this company, he never felt that they were wrong. In fact, he felt sorry for them. He said this, "I felt for them as well because shaking their reality would mean leaving a corporation they enjoy working at with co-workers they like, and the careers they'd invested in, and the financial stability that has helped them support a family in their city, that's what deep down felt at stake to them, that led them to pile on countless layers of denial and misinformation to protect their business, their idea, their job." Which leads to an interesting question, are you, are we, working for humanity plus or humanity minus companies? How do we know that we have not fallen into that cognitive dissonance? How do we know that we are not actually cancer cells poisoning the human colossus but deluded and fooled into believing that our products or services are actually good?

And this is where I believe our education systems need to introduce a new model into the world, humanity plus or humanity minus. Entrepreneurs can be humanity plus or humanity minus. Businesses can be humanity plus or humanity minus. I believe the word "be an entrepreneur" or all of these motivational speakers who say, "Go, hustle. Be an entrepreneur," bullshit. Entrepreneurs can be destructive forces, or they can be positive forces. If you do not make that distinction, you create entrepreneurs who help perpetuate this society where we never feel enough, where we have to drink high-fructose corn syrup, which is marketed as happiness in a red can.

So the question is how do you tell if your job, if your work is actually pushing the human race forward in this does humanity plus, or if your job and your work is really an algorithm



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

designed to create shareholder value but it's really going to be creating a world that is worse off for your children. And that is a really important question.

Female: Feel out.

Male: Feel it out.

Vishen: Thank you. The question I asked myself in every business decision I make is a question I call the Eve question. My daughter's name is Eve, and I find that thinking about your children is a very good way. If I'm getting a product out, will this product make the world better for Eve, or will it simply make me more money in the short term? If you're working for a company, this particular soda company, massive shareholder value. They probably made a lot of people rich but they are poisoning the planet.

The latest thing they've done is they realized that fewer and fewer people were drinking soda, so they launched a campaign to say that you have to drink their bottled water. And they also said, "Don't worry about the plastic, it's gonna get recycled because the tap water in your city could be bad for you." Then it was found that the tap water in the city was actually cleaner than some of the bottled water they were peddling, but it was too late. Today Americans discard billions of bottles of plastic bottled water and only 5% are recycled. That's another example of bullshit algorithms ruining the world. Now, the same company pays their employees 30% higher to stay because employee turnover is high. They are buying people's consciousness.

Now, this is just one of many other ideas out there where if we can simply understand humanity plus or humanity minus, the smartest minds in the world would not be joining this company, not even for 30% more, and would maybe go and work for companies that are pushing organic food, or changing the education system, or helping heal the Earth, or becoming teachers, or educators but our algorithms are wrong. And this is why we need certain guideposts or certain ideas to help us tell whether we are on the right path or we're on the wrong path, and we're actually a cancer in the human colossus.

See, think of the human colossus as all the people on Earth today and all the people who are going to come. Your body has cells, and every seven years, your body completely reduced itself. Every cell you have in your body did not exist seven years ago. And every cell you have now will not exist seven years from now. Your body is always renewing itself, there are generations upon generations, upon generations of cells. But if you poison your body, that poison stays, that poison will affect future generations of cells. We do that to the planet. We poison humanity by getting humanity to buy products that will make us feel temporarily happy but actually hurt future generations.

It happens not just for products but for political ideologies. Think about how people were raving about Trump going to be a great president because he was a businessman. But nobody asked, was he a humanity plus businessman or a humanity minus businessman? That simple distinction would have really helped.

So now, let's go on to the next idea, right, the naturalist. How do you tell? Well, there is a



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

model. Now this naturalist is Charles Darwin. A lot of people don't know this about Darwin, but in 1872, Darwin wrote that book called "The Descent of Man, Selection in Relation to Sex." Even in 1872, if you wanted to sell a book, put sex in the title. Now, a lot of people think Darwin coined this word, "survival of the fittest," right? Turns out survival of the fittest, Darwin hardly mentioned that. The word that he was more prone of using and the word that he used a lot in this book is actually a very different word, called "diffusion of sympathy."

And there's this one paragraph in that book that gives me tingles every time I read it, because it's written by freakin' Charles Darwin right, but it sounds like it came from the Dalai Lama. And the paragraph goes like this. "As man advances in civilization and small tribes are united into logic communities, the simplest reason would tell each individual that he ought to extend his social instincts and sympathy to all members of the same nation though personally unknown to him." See? Darwin didn't just predict where we came from as human beings. He's predicting, in this paragraph, where we are going to go. You don't learn this in school, but Darwin was very concerned with where humanity was headed. And he wrote these words 150 years ago.

He said, "As we start advancing in civilization, we start seeing the tribes around us as allies because that's the way to survive. But once we get to that point, this point once being reached, there's only an artificial barrier to prevent his sympathy extending to men of all nations and racists." This happened in Darwin's country. England was once at war with Scotland. England and Scotland became one with Wales and Northern Ireland. It became Great Britain. And then that sympathy diffused further. The European Union was then formed. That was a classic example.

Just 80 years ago, Europe was at war with each other. Today you can freely cross the border between Germany and France, you can marry people of different countries, that was diffusion of sympathy. Darwin predicted that.

Now yes, sometimes things go back, right? Some idiot call Nigel Farage convinced a whole bunch of Brits that they had to escape the European Union with dumb statistics and ideas, that actually really deeply hurt Britain. That was against Darwin's prediction. It was against Darwin's hope. The British had voted Darwin the most significant man in their history. But then they accidentally got fooled by a bad politician, a humanity minus political idea and voted against that very idea. How do we prevent that from happening again?

So Darwin continues, "If indeed such men are separated from him by great differences in appearance or habits, experience unfortunately shows us how long it is before we look at them as fellow creatures." What was Darwin referring to? These people, Syrian refugees coming to the shores of Europe. Some people embrace them, some people fear them, some people reject them, some people think they are dangerous. But Darwin was clear. He said, "These people are only not accepted now because they look different, but as humanity advances, they are going to be accepted." Is Darwin predicting that ideas like the European Union will eventually extend and turn all the world into one borderless nation like we see in Star Trek?



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---



Female: Yeah.

Vishen: We don't know. But let's continue with what Darwin is saying. He goes further. "Sympathy beyond the confines of man that is humanity to the lower animals seems to be one of the latest moral acquisitions." Right? At that time, it was only during that time the peoples was starting to really care about nature, and he says this, "This virtue, one of the noblest with which man is endowed, seems to arise incidentally from our sympathies becoming more tender and more widely diffused until they are extended to all sentient beings." And that's what gives me tingles.

Now, he goes on. "As soon as this virtue is honored and practiced by some few men, it spreads through instruction and example to the young, and eventually becomes incorporated in public opinion." What Darwin is saying is the only reason we fear other people is because our parents feared other people. As soon as we start understanding and diffusing our sympathy to people of all the Earth, you know what? The next generation won't have any freakin' issues with that.

Male: Yeah.

Female: Yeah.

Vishen: That's basically what he's saying. And he's saying, "This is the inevitable forward progression of the human race." As I said, it looks something like this, your passion, your compassion goes from tribe to state, to nation, to union of nations, to all of humanity. Darwin went from talking about the evolution of mankind to talking about the future of mankind. That's why I have so much respect for that man.

The question is how do we get there, right? And now, I wanna go a little bit deeper and I wanna talk about a philosopher. So this philosopher is a guy who is frequently known as one of America's greatest thinkers. But here's one of the key ideas he popularized. A lot of us think, if you want to get fully conscious, you wanna be amazing and change the world, meditate, practice spiritual practices, pray, go to church, find God, turned out it's not true. So that man is Ken Wilber, right?

Now, Ken Wilber, through his model of integral theory, introduced a very interesting paradigm and personal growth that a lot of people have not caught on to. At Mindvalley, it's central to what we do. He says, there are states of consciousness. And through spiritual practices, through self-awareness, through finding ourselves, we can advance our states of consciousness. Philosophers put states of consciousness into these four areas: gross, subtle, causal, non-dual. You don't have to understand them, just know that we can go from regular waking consciousness to say Samadhi or feelings of oneness with all life.

These are states. You can be here and you can go to Samadhi. It doesn't last forever, you may then come back here. States change all the time. But we think that people who experience Samadhi, or people who are powerful, or people who are godlike, or people who pray a lot are at a higher level of consciousness. Turns out, that's not true.



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

Ken said around 30 years ago, they started discovering that it's really two different axis. The second axis is stages of consciousness. So you can have a state of consciousness but you can also have a stage of consciousness. And states happen very rapidly, right? You can go from waking to sleep, to lucid dreaming, to waking, to stressed out, to Samadhi experience stages, you linger in, you grow into, you stay there for years of your life.

And these are some of the stages, one can be at the egocentric stage, means, it's all about me. I am gonna screw my fellow man so I can get what I want. Then there's the ethnocentric stage. I'm kind to people, I love people, but only people who pray to the same God as me and people who are within my border. There's the worldcentric stage, which a lot of people here seem to be because you tend to clap every time I talk about, you know, unity. Worldcentrism is that you fully...you love your country, but you recognize that there are many other great nations in the world, everybody loves their country, and we're all right to do so, and we can all get along and so on. Then there's the cosmocentric stage. This is a very interesting stage. This is when your love for the entire human race goes beyond. You now have compassion for not just all human beings alive today, but all future generations, and all sentient beings across the entire universe.

Now, Ken Wilber says 70% of the world is at the ethnocentric stage, 30% at worldcentric or higher, 1% is at cosmocentric. Where do you think you are? You know, an interesting thing about this diagram is most people overestimate where they are, and between these, of course, there's lots of different levels, but when you can see a map like this, you gain the ability to start advancing in the map. Now, if you put this together, you really get a diagram that looks like this. There are states of consciousness and stages of consciousness. States move, you move through them very rapidly, stages take years of development. The world is moving more, and more, and more towards worldcentrism. Every future generation is more and more worldcentric.

I remember reading some statistics at one point, 4% of Americans were in mixed marriages. Now, it's 7% rapidly rising to 10%, someday, we won't really give a damn what color people are, right? More and more people are moving towards worldcentrism. But when you understand this, you understand the flaw in the entire personal growth movement. And soon, you're gonna see the flaw in the entire political movement.

Let's start with the flaw in the personal growth movement. We're gonna talk about the asshole guru, which many of you guys have come across. You've heard about these yoga guys who have built these massive \$100 million yoga organizations and then sexually harass people. I've had my encounter with the asshole guru. So some years back, this guy was brought to me, and scientists were raving about him. And because he had this ability, he was this guy from India, he had this ability to basically bless people, bless objects. He could bless seeds and these seeds would germinate faster. Scientists could measure this so they were fascinated by that.

And so they came to me, they wanted me to build a website for him, they wanted me to help... Back then, Mindvalley basically built websites. They wanted me to help market him and so on. So our team was excited, started working with him, built the website. You know,



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

we put about 50-grand into building all the marketing, and the branding, and the website. And then I was in San Diego right here, having a meeting with him. And so we were in a hotel. He had just finished his talk. We were having a meeting in one of the meeting rooms. And one of my employees walked in. His name was Juan, a guy I deeply care about, good friend, phenomenal employee and business partner.

And as I'm sitting here with the so-called guru and Juan walks in, the guru goes, "Who the fuck are you?" And I'm like, "What?" And Juan is like, "What?" And the guy is like, "You, get out. Get out. I don't want you here. I only meet with Vishen. You get out, get the fuck out." And I'm like, "Hey, that's Juan. That's my business partner. He's like, "I don't care, only you. Get out, get out. Fuck you, get out." Whoa. So Juan was dazzled, I was dazzled. And I tried to finish the meeting, my heart was racing, I walked out, and the very next day, I decided that we will not work with this asshole. So we dumped him, we got rid of the money, and we lost. We lost about 50-grand in an initial investment. But man, can you believe that? But that happens. And now, you understand why.

When you are following any teacher, any guru, don't get mesmerized by their state of consciousness. You need to understand their stage of consciousness. If you understand the difference between state and stage, you can protect yourself, and you can understand how to also be a more effective teacher and speaker.

Now, here's the other thing, can this model help us heal the left versus right divide in America because it is worse than it's ever been before, and it is hurting the country. How many of you agree with me on this? Okay. So let's go back to stages of consciousness. What I showed you was one model for stage. It's very akin to Darwin's model, right? Ethnos...ego-centrism, ethnocentrism, worldcentrism, cosmocentrism.

There's another model of stage, which is based on...by a psychologist called Gebser. And it's called this, it talks about people's worldview in different civilizations. If you're in Papua New Guinea and people believe that certain stones that they carry with them will help them hunt an animal, that's the magic stage. There's early mythic stage, maybe in Sumeria, where you believed if you did certain rituals, the gods would bless you. There is mythic stage, which is basically in religious societies, in Iran or even an evangelical America, where they believe that that certain things that you follow, like the Ten Commandments, or if you confess your sins, you gain certain blessings. That is called the mythic stage.

But people and civilizations move up these stages. You start moving up to the rational stage. The rational stage started appearing in humanity maybe a couple of hundred years ago. This is where your Wall Street, your Silicon Valley, you look at the guys who go to church and pray, and you go, "God, they're so goofy. We know this shit, you know, we don't buy any of that. It's about science, it's about technology."

Now, the danger with the rational state is that it also dismisses all spiritual experiences as goofy. Now, you can go a little bit higher, to the pluralistic state. These are often called the greens, these are people who shop at Whole Foods, wear Lululemon. They protest Trump, and they want to hold hands with everyone and sing Kumbaya. And they look at the rational people, Silicon Valley and Wall Street, and they go, "Those guys that goofy. Those



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

guys don't get it, you know? Let's just enact universal basic income and pay for everyone's everything."

So every state has its goofiness. I'm exaggerating of course, right? And we can be in between states. There is one state right at the top, which Ken Wilber says we have to aspire to. That's called the integral state. The integral state is where you never label anyone goofy. You see that every state has its weakness, and has its strength, right? And so people at the mythic state, they were the people who built America. People at the rational state, they're the people driving our engines of economy. People at the pluralistic state, they are our peace warriors, but everyone can co-exist and everyone is simply at a different worldview.

Now, there is such a thing as the leading edge worldview, pluralistic, for example, is more leading, integral is even more leading, but people evolve there. You cannot blame your grandparents for a racist comment they made because honestly back then, the world was in a different state. So again, you can put this on a map. And in fact, some people have done so, it's called the Wilber-Combs Lattice, and it's a really powerful model for understanding how we perceive the world.

So let me zoom in, right? Take a picture of that if you want, right? So they use colors. The reason they use colors is because calling it a level seems to imply that one level is higher than the other. But colors help you understand where you are.

Now, let me explain a little bit further. So there are states of consciousness and stages of consciousness, Ken Wilber calls this waking up and growing up. So waking up is when you start moving into different states. Now, you can bounce back between states. States are very fragile. Every day you go through different states. And then there's growing up. Growing up is when you evolve slowly over time into different world views.

Now, let's look at the American culture war. What does this tell us about the culture war? Well, Ken Wilber released a free PDF called "Trump and the Post-Truth World." And really, he talks about the downside of being red, orange, or green. Red is mythic, orange is rational, green is pluralistic, right, and why we need to aspire to be integral. And this is basically what he says. I want to read it to you. Ken is very heavy on language, but this is very important.

"Trump is so boisterously amber ethnocentric in so many ways, this will force the present green leading-edge into one of two major reactions: it will simply double down on its present hatred, revulsion, and open ridicule of amber (aimed at Trump and his followers), or it will pause, realized that its own hatred and ridicule of amber has profoundly contributed to amber's angry, virulent, hateful resentment of elites everywhere, and hence realize that it must in some way attempt to understand, include, even compassionately embrace that larger portion of the population whom green is in fact supposed to be leading, not despising."

What this means is don't hate people who vote for politicians who you disagree with, don't vilify them, do not call them deplorables. And certainly, don't assume they are rac-



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

ists. They are not racists. They have legitimate fears. They're coming from different backgrounds. But they are Americans just like you. And all Ken is saying is when you move to the integral level, you can see that everyone has different opinions, that we can all get along, and it's all a process of evolution.

Now, how do we move to integral thinking, right? One of the first things he says is the problem with greens, which is a lot of the people in this room, pluralistic greens is classism. Green say, "Look, we wanna to respect people of very culture," you know, "Don't put Muslims on a watch list, appreciate every single culture. Everyone has a right." But then, they fall into a classism. "I wanna respect all these other cultures, but the people in my own home country in the Midwest states who voted for Trump, they are idiots." That is classism at its worst.

So all Ken is saying is, "Look, if you wanna talk about embracing diversity, you embrace diversity. Now, no one is saying you got to embrace the neo-Nazis who marched at Charlotte, that is a dangerous viral and dangerous strain that should be condemned. But I still see people getting into silly Facebook debates with people who disagree with you and then hating on the person who disagree.

I recently put up a post and I was just sharing a really funny commentary on Trump by Jimmy Kimmel, right? And someone wrote, "I don't agree with what Jimmy said." And this guy is a friend of mine, an evangelical friend of mine, "Trump did this, and he did this, and he's amazing, and he's a rockstar, and he's gonna save America." And some other guys who were green started attacking him, "We're unfriending you, we're unfriending you." So I wrote to my friend, I'm like, "Dude, I love you. We are friends. I'm so glad you said what you said because debate is healthy. Love you, bro."

That is integral thinking. That is what I wanna ask you guys to do. Because you see, this whole left or right thing is made up. There was no left and right before 1994, read that study. This is shocking. In the study participants were shown speeches by members of Congress from 1873 to 2016 and ask the guess whether the speech was given by a Republican or Democrat. When the speech was given in years before the 1990s, participants correctly guessed the party only slightly more than half the time. There is no left and right. But the biggest fight dramatically in 1994. And by 2010, participants guesses were correct 73% of the time.

What happened in 1994? And why is it that in the philosophies of stages of awareness, no philosopher puts left and right? It doesn't freakin' exist. It is an American media invention by this man, Newt Gingrich, 1994, Contract for America. What he did was, he developed really effective marketing, right, which is how Americans are now divided. So the Affordable Care Act, rather than call it what it is, Affordable Care Act and have healthy debates about it, it's certainly not perfect, we call it Obamacare.

Here's another example, of course, we are going to debate gun control versus gun rights. But did you know it was once called the gun safety and everyone agreed? See how words can create such a different...pro-life versus pro-choice. Words divide us, then people are being manipulated. Entire television networks use this to gain viewership because when



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

you're angry, you stay tuned in. And this is what you wanna be really conscious of and really careful.

Yes, you can dislike Trump. And I was recently on an interview on "London Real" and they asked me what I thought about Trump. And I said, "He's a good man," and I got slammed for that. Let me explain. I refused to villainize anyone because I disagree with them. Now, I do want to stay, I think he's incompetent, he's immature, he is definitely a racist grandfather, but he's not bad because he says racist comments, it's the era he grew up in. He's incompetent, he shouldn't be president, he's an imbecile. I believe he's dividing America, but I will never say he is evil.

Evil is Hitler, there's no comparison. Trump is a man who probably loves America, loves his kids. We may disagree with his business practices, but look, that's like saying, you know, cola companies are evil and McDonald's is evil. If you use that definition, you'd see evil everywhere. So the point is if you call people racist, if you call people evil, you lose the ability to help them rise up to integral. They stay rooted where they are, at that level. And as greens, as the leading edge, your job is to compassionately embrace everyone, to disagree, that's fine, but to embrace lovingly and help elevate.

Female: [Inaudible]

Vishen: Thank you. Now, this brings us to the final philosopher. And the question now is how do we do that, right? And this final philosopher is the guy I call the mystic. That's him, speaking at one of our Mindvalley events. Anybody recognized that man?

Together: Yes.

Vishen: Right, he's Neil Donald Walsch, the guy who wrote the "Conversations with God" book series. I love Neil. His ideas have had a profound impact on my life. His books have probably been the most influential books on me ever. And in "Conversations with God," book 1, 2 and 3, Neil talks about this. "The first guiding principle of advanced civilizations is unity." He emphasizes this over, and over, and over again. I started going through those books and circling places where he mentioned unity. He emphasizes it over, and over, and over again.

He says it is the first guiding principle of advanced civilizations. He goes on to say this, "Social evolution is demonstrated by movements towards unity, not separatism because unity is the truth, separatism is the illusion." He goes on to say, "The only solution is the ultimate truth, nothing exists in the universe that is separate from anything else. Everything is intrinsically connected, irrevocably interdependent, interactive, interwoven into the fabric of all of life. All government, all politics must be based on this truth. All laws must be rooted in it. This is the future hope of your race, the only hope for your planet."

And so the idea here is do you have a value for unity? And that unity value, if you understand that, if you go back to what Darwin said, you go back to integral theory, embracing all ideas and seeing the beauty in all of these ideas lovingly, while still helping ideas move to the leading edge, you go back to Neil Donald Walsch and understand the importance



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---

of unity, you start making the right decisions in your life. But I wanna ask you to go further. You can do good in the world. But if you really wanna change the world, you got to stand up for unity.

Recently, Mindvalley released this video. It became the most watched video in our network. I wanna just play it for you and then tell you may be why we released it?

President Trump: We are going to build a wall.

Female: I stand for love.

Male: I stand for peace.

Female: I stand for unity.

Male: Education.

Female: The environment.

Female: Equality.

Female: I stand for refugees.

Male: In an age of dangerous politics, don't let bullies force you to sit down.

Female: To tell you you're being too political...

Female: ...or unpatriotic.

Male: ...when you speak your truth.

Male: To tell you...

Male: ...you can't stand tall.

Female: Or that you don't belong here.

Female: Speak out.

Female: Rise up.

Male: Unite.

Female: And to those who dare to stand...

Vishen: Thank you. So the question is what do you stand for? Do you stand for humanity minus companies, humanity plus companies? What will you do to ensure that your com-



pany shift towards humanity plus values? What will you do to make sure that the entrepreneurs you mentor or the companies you start are humanity plus companies? Will you build walls or will you break them down? Will you tolerate fear-based politics or will you insist that your leaders practice unity-based politics? And unity means unity between the left and right, where we don't villainize each other, and we can actually debate issues in a healthy way. Not the adamant for gun control or gun rights, but say, "Look at gun safety, something we can all agree upon."

Ken Wilber says, "Right now, maybe about 5% of the world is at that level, is at that integral level." And he says, "Imagine a world if we can get it to 10%." And he says, "I predict that that will happen in the next 10 to 20 years. But the beauty of that is that 10% can create ripples that will change the other 90%. They become the leaders at the forefront of change." And he says, "And the timing could not be perfect because in the next 20 years, that's when we expect it to get really close to artificial intelligence and the singularity, and massive disruption in our way of life, thanks to algorithms and robotics."

And if we don't elevate human conscious to that level, to a level of unity where unity is our driving value, unity is what we teach in schools, unity is how we design our products and our companies, unity means we will sacrifice some shareholder value so we aren't poisoning the human colossus, unity means we will never call someone who politically disagrees with us a racist or label them a villain, unity means you can resist a politician you disagree, you can absolutely protest against Trump. Many of his ideas deserve to be protested against, but you make it about the idea and you don't villainize the 40% plus of Americans who actually voted for him. So if we can do this, we can go for collective growth and create agents of change. We can create a world where people genuinely care about each other. We can be more transparent and human, create more cooperation, and ultimately create a better world for the next generation.

All we ask you to do here as part of the Mindvalley community is to think of yourself as a superhero. And as you go forth after this event, remember, the world needs powerful people who can stand up for unity.

So the five questions that you want to ask yourself as you walk out of the room today is what are you doing to build human consciousness? You don't have to be a teacher or a coach, you could be a CEO, an entrepreneur, how can you create more conscious workplaces, more conscious schools, more conscious hospitals? Is your work humanity plus or humanity minus? If your company, you feel, might be humanity minus, or maybe even humanity neutral, how do you edge them, move them towards humanityplus? How do you widen your circle of we, your circle of what you decide is your family? Is your family just the people in your country, or is your family the collective human race? How can you grow up into integral thinking and heal the rift within this nation? And finally, will you stand up for unity?

Thank you.

If you enjoyed that talk, I encourage you to check out Mindvalley events. There is a ton of events that we do all around the world that are really, really cool. And we like to keep



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---



our events at really high levels of intellectual conversations, so you're not gonna come to a Mindvalley event and learn about what I call kindergarten personal growth, you know, like law of attraction and things like that. No, we're gonna go into deep, deep intellectual stuff. We don't shy away from discussing philosophy and politics or how organized religion needs to be upgraded.

If you are a person who enjoys personal growth at a high intellectual level, you gotta come to a Mindvalley event. Now, a couple of events you might wanna check out, the first is Mindvalley Reunion. Go to [mindvalley.com/reunion](https://mindvalley.com/reunion). It happens once a year in San Diego. And this is where this particular talk was first given.

Next, check out Mindvalley U. Go to [mindvalley.com/u](https://mindvalley.com/u). This is a new invention to basically replace the need for colleges. It is something you wanna check out if you believe that modern education needs to be disrupted. Again, it's [mindvalley.com/u](https://mindvalley.com/u).

And finally, Mindvalley has a massive global event. It's not for everyone because that's a highly curated community, and you do have to apply. It's sort of like TED where the talks are free for everyone to watch online, but you got to apply to attend in person and be part of the tribe. And it's called A-Fest. You can learn about it on [afest.com](https://afest.com).

So again, those URLs are [mindvalley.com/reunion](https://mindvalley.com/reunion), [mindvalley.com/u](https://mindvalley.com/u), and finally, [afest.com](https://afest.com). Go check these out if you're ever interested in being part of our real life events at Mindvalley.



**Vishen Lakhiani On Lessons From 5 Philosophers That Will Change The Way You View The World** [podcast.mindvalley.com/6](https://podcast.mindvalley.com/6)

---