

Singularity Insights Part 1: So why did I travel 25hours to San Francisco and Silicon Valley??

A few key words say it all: Singularity, Exponential Thinking and Technologies, Innovation, Learning, Abundance, Solving Global Grand Challenges (GGC) Together, 54 Global participants, Interacting with bright minds and proven innovators, Immersion for discovering personal contribution to the GGC ...and may you could add Napa Valley Wines.

Imagine a world in which we achieve Singularity, in which the boundary between humans and machines are becoming indistinguishable, where we are technologically augmented with artificial intelligence and manufactured parts in our brains, bodies, wearables and even in our emotional responses to our reality. Imagine, we live in a world of abundance, where energy, housing, food, water, communication and education is plentiful, affordable and accessible to all. Humanity lives in harmony each contributing with unique strengths and skills to develop this earth and other colonies to ensure space and resources for everyone.

I am idealist! I am an intentionalist! I am a contributor and collaborator!! I am also a pragmatist!!

I believe that we can create the kind of world where all the above is possible, if we believe and work together. I have seen and heard with my own eyes now the kind of breakthrough technology that is changing the world as we know it. AND I know that we have many challenges standing in the way of this idealized future. What better way than to get a bunch of diverse people from all over the world passionate about learning and how they can make a difference in their own contexts and put them in a space together for a few days with input from different thinkers and innovators ... and see what emerges....More insights to follow.

Singularity Insights Part 2: Personal experience of new technologies and human inspired innovation shifts paradigms

I read and explore a lot. I had read about and seen videos on 3D printing, Virtual Reality, Drones, Mind driven bots, brainwave altering devices, driver-less cars, talking robots, virtual roaming conference attendee, etc. Whilst knowledge is powerful and keeps you informed, it is the experience of something that somehow fundamentally shifts how you see the world and your paradigms. Actually flying a drone, having a conversation with Jeremy who was sitting elsewhere but roaming around the conference, getting into a mind-game over who could get a bot to move forward faster with their mind, rescuing a kitten by walking a moving beam on the 20th floor of a building in construction (and actually feeling the vertigo) with virtual reality, experiencing a Virtual Reality psychedelic sound and mind journey, donning space gear and following a rover to implement an emergency evac on Mars, seeing a 3D printer in action, driving in a Tesla car which self-parks and seeing self-driven cars roaming the streets in Palo Alto....just WOW! I could almost feel my neural networks rewiring during the experience. In addition to the physical experience, there is hearing first hand how these technologies are transforming industries, health, energy, education, etc...with an opportunity to ask questions in breaks with top people in their field. Combine all of this with robust discussions on how we personally and together can apply these new ideas, emerging technologies both now and in the future using moonshot thinking, future pacing, retrofitting, Futures Wheels, SciFi Design, etc. THIS is what real learning is about and the experiences we need to urgently create for all ages so that we all imagine a different world together and create our future reality with intent and belief!

Singularity Insights Part 3: Technology cannot give us the one primary predictor of success in life - our ability to believe!

New exponential technologies can fundamentally change our experience of life - ubiquitous data sensors and AI can now give us real time feedback and response cues on our brainwaves, our emotional state, our facial expressions, our blood glucose levels (diabetes), approaching manic episodes (bipolar disease) See Dr Vivienne Ming talk on these topics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4fxmSdrchs>).

We can also communicate in real time with just about anyone, anywhere, (including with human looking and sounding robots), buy just about anything and have it delivered within a few hours. What we haven't cracked yet, is how to alter our internal experience and how we filter, assess, interpret and respond with ourselves and others and our dreams for greater happiness and life choices. And yet, so far the greatest predictors of life success, is not grades, schools or scores on standardized tests. The predictors are turning out to be motivation to learn and succeed, growth mindset, and an internal motivation or ability to delay gratification (yes, the old marshmallow experiment still applies!). The ones who are most likely to achieve their goals in the long-term are those that are least sensitive to external incentives. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4ckVXyruks>)

The most frightening piece of research was that the primary reason for people not taking up opportunities for further education (even when offered sponsorship or free learning programs) is that they don't believe! They have not been to exposed to life experiences that convince them that it is better to sacrifice short-term highs, social acceptance, fun, immediate gratification (food, drugs, sex etc), etc for a long-term investment in self-development which takes enormous effort, dedication, perseverance and failing many times. There are not enough role models that people can relate to of people who make it out of their circumstances and stay out. Not surprisingly, parent's attitude to learning, effort, homework, technology and their own growth or fixed mindsets, are fundamental to children's behaviour. In a recent study examining adoption rates of new educational technology (EdTech) it was found that the greatest predictor of adoption and use of new educational apps that really do enhance learning, was the growth mindset of the primary parent. We can supply all the latest, user-friendly learning apps or programs or tests, however we need to spend more time, effort and attention on building the underlying belief system that enables continuous learning as a critical path to success. In the working world this is a tougher ask as neural pathways, programs, beliefs and habits are well formed, evidence collected over decades and therefore harder to mould into new possibilities. This is the real challenge – creating transformational experiences that shift beliefs, combined with social support and/or mentoring to make the change stick!



Singularity Insights Part 4: we have to get unstuck from teaching and assessing primarily knowledge and skills to growing, demonstrating and recognising the 6Cs

Much of our education and training systems in the past have been about transferring, memorising and regurgitating content or concepts. The time has come to recognise that most of the content we need is available at a touch of a smart screen, and what we really need are the skills to learn continuously with curiosity and in collaboration and community with others. This requires an understanding of the importance of learning, the motivation to be a self-driven learner and the skills to work with technology and relationships to optimise the time we have to learn.

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” Alvin Toffler

Michael Fullen, Ontario's education researcher guru, has studied learner success over many years and has recommended 6 Deep Learning Competencies (6C's), as the skill sets each and every learner needs to achieve and excel in, in order to flourish in today's complex world. These are communication, collaboration, culture, creativity, connectivity and critical thinking. <https://michaelfullan.ca>



These are summarised below.

- **Character** — honesty, self-regulation and responsibility, perseverance, empathy for contributing to the safety and benefit of others, self-confidence, personal health and well-being, career and life skills.
- **Citizenship** — global knowledge, sensitivity to and respect for other cultures, active involvement in addressing issues of human and environmental sustainability.
- **Communication** — communicate effectively orally, in writing and with a variety of digital tools; listening skills.
- **Critical thinking and problem solving** — think critically to design and manage projects, solve problems, make effective decisions using a variety of digital tools and resources.
- **Collaboration** — work in teams, learn from and contribute to the learning of others, social networking skills, empathy in working with diverse others.
- **Creativity and imagination** — economic and social entrepreneurialism, considering and pursuing novel ideas, and leadership for action.

Whilst these may not sound particularly new, they have become significant differentiators for success in our increasingly complex and digital world. We need to bring these skill sets into all learning environments for sustained learning outcomes and enhanced performance in the workplace.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." William Butler Yeats

Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, in her *New York Times* Bestseller book *Becoming Brilliant* supports the importance of the 6Cs for young people to navigate careers that look nothing like those we know today. Backed by the latest scientific evidence she introduces a similar view of the "6Cs" but this time outlining the following 6Cs: collaboration, communication, content, critical thinking, creative innovation, and confidence. The 2 slightly different Cs here are content and confidence.

- **Content:** competencies in subject areas but also in learning to learn.
- **Confidence:** the ability to learn from failure, to persist in a problem, and to have grit.

Another really great TedTalk is Grit: the power of passion and perseverance by Angela Lee Duckworth <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H14bBuluwB8>



https://www.amazon.com/Becoming-Brilliant-Successful-Children-Lifetools/dp/1433822393#reader_B01I27W4L0

We look forward to coming up with an innovative “learning how to learn” immersion that connects people with their vision and passion, challenges mindsets and beliefs that might limit openness and curiosity to learn from anyone and any situation, enhances self-awareness and insight into how we can contribute to a learning culture in our families and organisations, create opportunities to “play” with new technologies and learning apps that facilitate faster learning and ultimately build the motivation and skills for sustained self-driven continuous learning and mentoring. Watch this space!!

References

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<http://markwickens.blogspot.co.za/2015/03/the-6-cs-for-21st-century-teacher-and.html>

<https://mindfulbydesign.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/mindset-continuum.jpg>

Singularity Insights Part 5a: Access to the internet and learning resources is not enough

Imagine a future where access to quality learning experiences with recognised outcomes is a basic right for people of all ages and socio-economic status. This is a dream and a vision of mine and for many others at the Resolve Learning Summit. So how do we work together to solve the global education, skills and talent crisis? Whilst there are many projects and businesses already working on this, we are still a far way off. Google currently has 5000 vacancies that it cannot fill. We need relevant, applicable skills, thinking and behaviour now! They have just announced a massive incentive for the project that can Pure access (internet plus device) is nearly here. The # of smart phones in Africa As high speed internet access expands its reach, and cost of devices plummet to almost \$0, the ability for anyone to learn via the internet’s many free resources is exponential. But is this enough? The current drop-out rate of MOOCs is close to 95% and from flipped classrooms where teachers teach at home via the net is close to that at about 85%. People need personal motivation, belief and social/emotional support to sustain any learning process. They also need a new mind-set and skill – learning how to learn! A new genre of face to face and digital learning journey facilitators, coaches, mentors, peers and learning groups is required to facilitate large scale learning results. See Sugatra Mitra (school in the cloud – the Granny Cloud concept). What if we could create an eco-system of “each one, teach one”, on a grand scale in all schools organisations and communities where mentoring, content creation and sharing were highly sought after and rewarded roles in society. We also need the right nutrition, health, social conditioning and economic opportunities (jobs, roles, entrepreneurs) to make it worth the while.



About the Author:

Debbie Craig – a passionate adventurer, global traveller and mountain climber, curious dolphin swimmer and ocean lover, philosophical dreamer, hopeless romantic, dysfunctional over-achiever, compulsive seeker & sharer, courageous difference maker, patriotic South African, author, facilitator, yoga nut, wine snob, dog lover, guardian mom, step mom, wife and friend

Some interesting tit bits: travelled to more than 60 countries, hiked to Machu Pichu, Kilimanjaro and Everest Base Camp, over 60 swims with dolphins, over 5 trips to India to explore her inner world, facilitated over 50 personal transformational workshops, facilitated business workshops with people from over 30 countries in 5 continents, written 3 books, guardian mom to 3 kids, step mom to 2 kids

Also: adventured through life's darker parts including divorce, unhealthy relationships, sequestration, retrenchment, loss of loved ones, betrayal, broken bones and inner struggles to over-come self-doubt and be our best selves

The usual stuff

Debbie has over 20 years' experience in the field of strategy, leadership development, change management, talent management, high performance teams and organisational development. She has worked and consulted at leading local and global organisations in the private and public sector throughout Southern Africa and internationally in the UK, Australia, South East Asia, South America, Mexico, China, Canada, Europe and the USA. Debbie is a skilled strategist, design architect, team builder, a powerful facilitator, change agent and executive coach. Her passion is transformation and empowerment which she facilitates through individual coaching and empowerment workshops, team-development workshops, corporate training and consulting assignments and organisation wide strategic change interventions. Debbie is the founder and Managing Director of Catalyst Consulting which she has grown into a successful consulting company (now 21 years old). She is also the founder of World Alive, a personal empowerment and transformation company. She is a registered Master HR Professional through the SA Board for People Practices (SABPP).

Debbie has published 3 books "I am Talent", "I am Alive" and "Accelerated Learning", written numerous articles, appeared on radio talk shows, presented at conferences and does public talks. Debbie is a warm and down to earth facilitator, leader and life coach. She has many real examples in her own life and in many of her delegates on creating a fulfilling life of abundance. She is an engaging presenter with practical advice and information that is easy to apply.

Some unusual stuff

Debbie is a regular hiker and has hiked to Machu Pichu, Kilimanjaro and Everest Base Camp. She swims regularly with dolphins in the wild and resonates with their playful, sensual, energy, their intelligence, their focus on protection and survival and their complex yet fluid social patterns. She looks after 3 guardian children and 2 step kids. Debbie is passionate and deeply committed to her own personal development journey, reads extensively and has participated in numerous in-depth transformation experiences including many trips to India where she has studied mindfulness and living a life of fulfilment, abundance and flow including mediation, dance, yoga, tai chi, art and experiential workshops. Debbie has designed and facilitated over 50 Personal Transformation workshops. She is passionate about South Africa and making a difference to People's lives.