

Ken Low: A Life of Learning Beyond Convention

Excerpts
from
interviews
with
Ken Low



INSTRUCTIONS:

Follow along with the exhibition
moving from section 1 to 10.

Ken Low often reminded people that the source of learning was not him, but life. He was just a mapmaker, an explorer of the human species pointing to what he observed. He would have hated all this undue attention on him especially an exhibit about him! However, I think he'd be okay knowing that this exhibit is meant to illustrate his life's learning journey and what he was trying to figure out about humanity and life.

Ken was one of those rare individuals who found ways to learn beyond convention in productive ways. He broke free from the Mormon church, challenged mainstream ideas on drugs and addiction, and reconceived how we can think about learning and culture. This is not someone easy to capture in a paragraph or in an exhibit.

Which leads me to the purpose of this brochure. In the spirit of Mark Twain, we didn't have time to write a short exhibit, so we put all the quotes we wanted to include (but didn't have room for) in this brochure. They are organized according to the same theme areas of the exhibit so that you may reference them as you browse, or read them at your leisure.

I would like to give a big thanks to several people that made this exhibit possible in such a short time. First, Mark Hopkins had the foresight years ago to do a recorded interview with Ken about his life story. From that transcript, Elizabeth Dozois pared it down to 33 pages of rich stories and quotes and then she further distilled it down to ten theme areas. Meanwhile, Eyab Alaini scanned through hundreds if not thousands of slides and photos to help find the right images. Bringing it together was Nini Lee, who laid out the graphics for all the exhibit posters you see today. Thank you for giving so much of your time and energy. I also want to thank the Low family for generously allowing us to explore his life this way and share it with others even as they grieve their loss.

Final disclaimer: there are most certainly errors in the exhibit. Forgive us! But I hope the spirit of Ken's life comes across. As he often said, this is an open-ended, transgenerational story. We are a work-in-progress, so let's keep going!

– Chris Hsiung

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I come from a family of eight kids, but out of those eight kids, there are five or six alphas – these fairly high drive

individuals who are, you know, quite competitive and, in a couple of cases, very intelligent.

– Ken Low

THE BIG QUESTIONS OF LIFE

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It appeared to me that there was something about the Holocaust that was very significant for understanding some of the big questions in life about what it means to be alive and human.

– Ken Low

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The absence of attention to the Holocaust made me wonder about the adult world [...] The lack of interest in understanding the causes of conflicts pushed me further in the direction of tracking current events.

– Ken Low

LIVING IN TWO CULTURES: CARDSON AND OTTAWA

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You're exposed to a level of reality in farming that I think is healthy in a way that my peers in Ottawa had not been exposed to anything quite like that.

– Ken Low

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I saw and felt a direct connection between the National War Memorial in Ottawa and Remembrance Day and the War Museum. It all seemed to me to be efforts to take a step in the direction of trying to figure out why things like the Holocaust happened, but also reinforced a sense that something could be done in response to human cruelty and oppression.

– Ken Low

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[My friends and I] got increasingly involved in current events, and especially the events in Cuba [...] and slowly, but very strongly, got onto a track of deciding that we needed to develop our capacity to fight a guerrilla kind of war. And that meant acquiring weapons and learning how to use them. And making explosives and learning how to set them off safely. And that fit in with our science interest and background. It also linked to our drive for a higher level of significance than [...] the standard teenage interests allowed.

– Ken Low

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This was a time when the town's pistol club had two members, me and the constable. [To protect myself from the school's alpha males, I said 'I'm going to start carrying a pistol' The constable said he would check me every time and arrest me. 'Okay,' I said, 'I'll carry a grenade.' Somebody could have been shot or killed, but they didn't; we got close to the edge, but we didn't cross the line. This boosted my confidence to navigate social pressures and the local ecology of authority in a small town – Raymond – that was predominately Mormon.

– Ken Low

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[The caption] next to the photo [in my high school yearbook] was 'I wish the United States and the Soviet Union would grow up.' There weren't any credible adults governing the international community. The degree of rationality we could expect from our leaders was not reassuring.

– Ken Low

YOUNG LIONS: THE CLUB OF MISFITS

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Our common ground to begin with was science, so we formed a kind of science club where we just made stuff – mostly in the direction of explosives – but just discovering what you can do with different acids, making hydrogen generators. [...] We managed to blow up (ever so slightly) a small hydrogen generating rig that sprayed sulfuric acid on a couple of the guys' socks [which] promptly developed big holes where the acid had hit. But no one got seriously burnt or hurt.

– Ken Low

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[We] morphed from a science club to the Young Lions as we started to track global events and tried to imagine how as 15, 16, 17 year olds, we could contribute something to what we saw as being a potential apocalypse. I didn't know who we'd have to fight, but it did seem likely to be a good idea if we learned how to fight and if we had the equipment to fight with. [...] Kicking off from the Cuba situation, we decided what we needed to do was build our capacities [...] to use force to fight for justice. We didn't know who we would fight, but in the absence of anything else to do, [we thought] arming ourselves

to the teeth would be a good idea. We learned how to make improvised explosive devices, nitroglycerine, we reactivated deactivated World War Two machine guns. We went through a period of 18 months to two years having no clue whether we could make a positive difference. We were earnest, thoughtful, and serious enough to recognize that planning to make a difference through the force of arms was foolish, a non-starter – that any conceivable adversary would command greater firepower than this ragtag group of kids – but it remained a powerful learning exercise anyway and supported my ability to resist acculturation of a small town.

– Ken Low

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[As for why] the lions, I'd heard the reference in the context of warfare in the Middle East, and probably the Young Lions referred to a group of Turkish military radicals, I'm not sure exactly. It was an appealing symbolism that we picked up. In order to get the cards printed we went to an artist in Lethbridge and pulled out a ... it was probably a stock drawing of a rampant lion. I printed the cards, and I got a copy of some official looking Alberta

treasury branch paper to put on the backing of the card. Then we took our little pinky fingerprint and everyone signed the oath. [On the card you'll see] 'sagittae' which is Latin for arrows.

– Ken Low

CURIOSITY OF THE HUMAN MIND

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[My dad] was appointed Juvenile and Family Court judge [for] Lethbridge & Medicine Hat. I would drive him to the venue in Medicine Hat, and we would talk about the cases he was judging. I became increasingly aware that he was not conceptually equipped to cope with the kind of cases that he was being exposed to. [...] I pulled out a book on the psychology of crime by Abrahamsen from the Lethbridge library [to try to better understand these dynamics] and saw a path open up to explanations of human conduct. You didn't have to fall back on just labelling people evil or bad or wrong; there was a logic to why they do what they do.

– Ken Low

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Reading about the psychology of crime led me into reading psychiatry [...and] that experience opened up a really big door. Those books helped me understand something about confirmation bias and dissonance, so when it came time to either conform to the expectations of the Mormon mission or follow another path, I could choose not to conform and justify my decision.

– Ken Low

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In trying to assess the origins of the conviction that people expressed about the church and their belief in it, I've found that a very large percentage of people believed simply because they wanted to be in step with family, that they were afraid of being out of step with them, and rejection.

– Ken Low

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I feel it was an extraordinarily valuable learning experience that was unique and that I had those two years of opportunity where [there was time] for study and reflection and reading, exploration, conversations into basically anything that I thought was worth exploring.

– Ken Low

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In interviewing missionaries (and I didn't just interview Mormons to find out about why they believe what they believe), I interviewed everybody that I met that was willing to talk about their religious convictions to find out why they believed what they believe. And I found that it was very common for people's [...] drive [toward maintaining the faith] to be in accord with their immediate family, where they felt that it would just be too difficult to live with the disapproval of their family. So I crossed that bridge in a number of ways.

– Ken Low

TRUTH

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If you pray to know that [the Church of the Latter Day Saints is the true church], that's where you're gonna end up. When I would pray, I would pray to know the truth – full stop. I just need to know the truth, what's actually going on here so that I wasn't being pulled down the path I saw other young men and women being pulled down. And that begins the two-year walkabout, the mission.

– Ken Low

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Truth is a judgment about the accuracy of correspondence. Is that map a true representation of the landscape? Is that picture a true representation of a person? Is that statement about what

you saw as a witness true? [People, in general,] are concerned about truth. The problem is that we then don't go further to investigate. What does it actually take to create accuracy of correspondence when we're drawing maps or when we're understanding things?

– Ken Low

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It is strange how people assume that no training is needed in the pursuit of truth.... We should recognize that for this pursuit anyone requires at least as much care and training as a boxer for a fight or a runner for a marathon.

– B.H. Liddell Hart

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS

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Albert Schweitzer had a big impact on me earlier in the journey. He had this philosophy of reverence for life that was another version of biophilia. That represented a sensitivity that I certainly felt and wanted to develop and extend out.

– Ken Low

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Ethics is the activity of man directed to secure the inner perfection of his own personality... By its means man is to become capable of acting among men and in the world as a higher and purer force, and thus to do his part towards the actualization of the ideal of general progress.

– Albert Schweitzer

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The answer is to rely on youth — not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease... The cruelties and obstacles of this swiftly changing planet will not yield to the obsolete dogmas and outworn slogans. They cannot be moved by those who cling to a present that is already dying, who prefer the illusion of security to the excitement and danger that come with even the most peaceful progress.

– Robert F. Kennedy
eulogy for his brother

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I worked through all of the six [Mormon] missionary lessons one by one [before the Mission] one spring in Riley Park. [I was] marking up the lesson book and ex-ing out virtually all of the conclusions because none of them logically flowed – they were all leading questions. And I realized at that point, you might as well be selling vacuum cleaners [...] – this is a sales technique. This has got nothing to do with guiding people to truth and enlightenment. So that depressed the hell out of me. And to cheer myself up, I stumbled downtown, walked into the first movie theater I came to, and it just happened

to be playing *Judgment at Nuremburg*. [In] the final part of the film, the American jurist is visiting the cell of the former German Minister of Justice [who] is ashamed [that he sentenced so many innocent people to execution]. But he's also protesting that he was innocent of the big crimes because, as he said, 'We did not know what it would come to.' And it was the response of the Spencer Tracy character [that impacted me], when he said, 'It came to that with the first innocent man you sentenced.' That just stuck with me so clearly, with such a clear historical statement of confirmation bias. And it also was a great big flashing sign that told me the direction that I needed to go to understand the origin of the Holocaust and much of the rest of human suffering, is that inability of human beings to assess the quality and the veracity of their understanding of situations, and the refusal to do that in the face of external pressure.

– Ken Low

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I wasn't looking for a degree. I was not really thinking about [university as anything] other than just a continuation of [my] inquiry and study [of life]. [...] I enjoyed the conversations and the exploration. The classes not so much. [...] I would ask [my profs] how their studies of psychology and their PhDs helped them to become better human beings.

– Ken Low

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I didn't finish up the grad degree because I had worked as a technical advisor on at least a dozen masters dissertations and masters theses and a couple of doctoral dissertations. And just observing the process, I couldn't see that it was anything that was worth the trouble and in fact I saw the kind of contortions that graduate students had to endure in order to get their ticket punched, to get through the system as being [similar to the Mormon church, so] I didn't care that much about the formal qualifications.

– Ken Low

ETHOLOGY: A LOVE OF CRITTERS

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To understand intelligence, you really needed to understand the relationship between the animal and the environment. In the Experimental Psych division that I was in at the university, we did study animals, almost exclusively rats, and these rats were kept in cages but [only] one rat per cage with a water bottle and a food tray, and nothing to chew, nothing to do. [...] And they would put these rats in various learning challenges and then study them to see [how they

did], which struck me as just being a really bizarre make-work program that had little or no relevance to anything because these are crazy rats that have been made crazy by their solitary confinement in a cell, completely divorced from their natural environments. And the tasks that the researchers were having them do bore little or no relation to what the rats were actually equipped and wired to do. It just seemed to me to be another waste of time. But I really

liked the idea of studying animals, so I started developing my own collection of animals. [...] I created a terrarium [...] made out of plexiglass and full of interesting things for the mice to explore and do.

– Ken Low

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I became very taken with a field of study in biology known as ethology or animal behavior. [...] What ethologists do [is] attempt to understand how animals work, and the critically important dynamics of evolution and adaptive development recognizing that behavior and the conduct of different species is part of that bigger picture.

– Ken Low

FINDING PATTERNS IN THE NOISE

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The universe is so complex, there's an awful lot of noise and we don't know what to attend to and what not to attend to. Without some kind of index system and some way of overlaying examples, everything just comes across as noise – interesting and intriguing noise for sure, but ultimately confusing. So that provided a framework for much of my inquiry in looking for patterns in human behavior, patterns of intelligence, patterns of autonomous power.

– Ken Low

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As it turned out that four months down in Houston was particularly significant for reasons that I've shared already learning the tactical process of signal averaging and signal detection and noise reduction. It was very helpful, very powerful, as it provided the foundation for the kind of pattern searching that I had committed to doing but had no idea how to do and even didn't have a clear idea of how I'd begin to identify the patterns when I got into it and what kind of criteria you'd use for identifying the patterns. So I was looking for a conceptual framework that would be helpful in doing that.

– Ken Low

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I got married in the fall. I met Janice in Introductory Sociology course, and I had just come from gym so I was all hot and sweaty and she would sit behind me so whenever I turn around I'm just seeing her knees behind me. And she came down to Houston for the last week or two that I was there and we traveled back to Calgary on the bus together and then got married just four or five months later so it was a pretty whirlwind kind of relationship. I think the attraction with Janice was clearly she was just a very attractive person, but she also had a way with kids that I found particularly significant.

– Ken Low

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My dad always had all kinds of critters, and he was so caring for all of them. We'd go to the zoo and he would sneak Kleenex in [to give to the rodents]. I asked why and he said “they're bored! They need enrichments.” He was feeling bad for the little critters in the zoo so he's sneaking in Kleenex so they can make better nests. [...] He had a natural respect for all life. He showed us that there's a lot you can learn from life – even from a mouse, that all life has intelligence.

– David Low

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I remember when I was a teenager, dad asked me ‘What would you do differently if you were me.’ He treated me like an adult – so that was special. [...] He respected our capabilities – sometimes in ways that weren't warranted. He just really wanted the best for Dave and I.

– Jason Low

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I started in the first year [of grad school] to get interested in the drug scene. [...] I was interested in what it seemed to me to be a paradox or a fault in the literature on drug use in that almost all of the literature referred to drug use as a form of deviant behavior. That was the general classification of what was happening here, so it was treated as a form of social deviance [...] But I knew just from looking around me that the vast majority of people – students who were using drugs and the profs who were using drugs – were not social deviants. If anything, they were very normal or more than normal people. I started to investigate and [...] put together [...] a questionnaire that I printed up many hundreds of copies for and then distributed through the drug dealers. Every time they sold a bag of grass, they would hand out a questionnaire too. [...] I was just trying to find out just who are these drug users, and do they show any sign of deviance, and why are they doing what they're doing, and is this drug use a problem or an advantage for them?

– Ken Low

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The explorations of drug users and drug use fit in with my standing interest in the nature of consciousness. What is it, how does it work, and how is it controlled and modified, and by what methods? [...] But the interest in consciousness was not confined to the issues around drug use. It was mainly tied to the attempt to find out why human beings conduct themselves the way they do. So it's part of a larger story. [...] Consciousness plays an instrumental role, and [it's] a role that we're not equipping people to understand and deal with at all well. That was clear. The primary concern was to try to understand how human beings could become better than human beings.

– Ken Low

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In that second year [of grad school], I got involved with the Calgary and Region Mental Health Planning Council that was looking at a wide range of mental health issues in the city. I was Vice Chairman of the Council. One of the focus areas was drugs [...] and there was a recognition that we didn't have good facilities to deal with adverse drug reactions or to educate people about drugs and drug use.

So we decided to create [...]the Drug Information Center. [We] purposely named [it that] because we thought that the major problem with drugs was not the drug use as such. It was the prejudice and the misunderstanding surrounding drugs and drug use – both on the part of users, who were often naïve or misinformed about what they were doing and on the part of the general public in the way they were treating drug user as being purely a criminal. The [...] other function of the drug center [was] to handle any form of distress. The center is now

called The Distress Center. We put in a 24-hour hotline, and initially we didn't have somebody manning the location 24 hours, so we'd put the phone on forwarding. So I'd get calls in the middle of the night from people who were needing some form of assistance. [...] The experience at the Drug Information Center was invaluable in a whole lot of ways because it exposed me to levels of challenges and problems that I would not have seen otherwise.

– Ken Low

SKILLS FOR LIVING

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While I was with the school board, I kept one foot in the addictions and the altered states of consciousness terrain. The bigger engagement was developing a context and a rationale for understanding how to develop increased levels of responsible autonomy, so that the core of the hunting license that I had with CBE was the investigation into what it would take to equip people to be resourceful, resilient, and responsible human beings beyond the boundaries of convention, so that they could take charge of their own learning.

– Ken Low

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The mechanics of the addictions are this: it's a destructive dependency. So the critical issue here is how do you develop a productive independence? [...] If young people were making poor choices we had to ask why, and what could we do to help them make better choices in life?

– Ken Low

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Then, when it became apparent that everybody and their dog was calling what they were doing 'living skills', I changed it to Action Studies, on the basis that that was really the most obvious missing element in the

schooling experience. The operational applications of the knowledge that the kids were acquiring in the school was not touched on at all. There's no development of responsibility and no connection between learning and ongoing operations. All of the learning is done in the context of learning to pass tests. And the function of the test is to grade you, so that you're going to be slotted into the right place in the institutions. So I figured that the single biggest missing ingredient in education was the action study, the ability to learn from one's life experience and the life experience of others. And that was when the switch to action studies occurred. I was hired in 1970 and by 1975, '76, we had switched to the Action Studies team, with this very broad mandate of exploring what it would take to develop resourceful, resilient, responsible kids. I didn't use

the term 'life-ranging' at that point. But I used the three R's – resourceful, responsible and resilient – as being the more appropriate foundation than the reading and writing and arithmetic – which were important, but not important by themselves.

– Ken Low

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I was trying to take in as much as I could about the context and the lives of young people and the kind of pressures and uncertainties that they are under and what they were doing to survive and to make their lives meaningful and interesting. We built our programs around those kinds of learning engagements.

– David Low

CAN DO: A PROGRAM FOR EMPOWERING YOUTH

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I would argue that if you wanted the kids to understand levers [and] mechanical advantage, using a desktop science apparatus was not the way to do it because there's no way that the forces you're going to get with any small piece of equipment are going to be impressive, so who cares. [... But] lifting a 250-pound block of cement up in the air and holding it up

with one hand, now that's impressive. [...] I've got scores of pictures of kids lifting themselves up to the top of the climbers in the gym on a 'kid lifter' or a chair that we just took to a block and tackle, and the look of amazement. We'd invite the teachers to do the same thing. Sit on the chair, lift yourself up, and it's magic. Just how often do you get to lift yourself up off the floor by

your own muscle power? And I could just see them studying the ropes and trying to figure out how the hell is this happening? Reflecting on this, just the magic of discovery.

– Ken Low

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Just enhancing their sense of connection to the human story. It seems to me that that's got to be the foundations of education. Whatever else we seek to accomplish with kids, we should be seeking a way to solidly connect them to the human story and to the adventure of the human story.

– Ken Low

THE REALIZATION PROGRAM: A PROGRAM FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN

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The last program I ran when I was with the Calgary Board was the Realization Program for adult women, where we taught them how to ride motorcycles and do oxy-acetylene welding, [...] and] black powder musket shooting, and operate chainsaws and power tools. It was, I think, a wildly successful program. The YWCA had been running a program called Contemporary Women, which was designed for women who are facing significant life changes. [...] The coordinator from the Calgary Board of Education, that was running these programs for the YW came to me and said, 'Look, we've been running this program for a number of years. Frankly, it isn't that effective. Could you design something that would really enhance the personal efficacy of adult women?' So we sat

down and thought about what could we offer. It was just a combination of the things we were running in our action studies program anyway. It worked remarkably well and I learned so much from that few months when we were, everyday, working with these adult women.

– Ken Low

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I would not take contracts unless they would connect with either the research that was already in place or new potential areas of research they could open up.

– Ken Low

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As president of C-CAT, I was mainly trying to push for the deeper understanding of the dynamics of an ecology of innovation and what that meant for cooperation between government, education and industry.

– Ken Low

WORKING WITH THE INUIT

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In thinking about education and its purpose, it is helpful to go back to the basics. Not the basics of schooling, which is a relatively modern invention, but the basics of human survival and cultural adaptation. From this fundamental perspective, education can be seen as everything a society does to prepare its people to handle the problems and opportunities of their time and place in history. The providers of education would naturally be those people or institutions who had the best understanding of the current problems and opportunities, and education was closely tied to the ongoing tasks of living.

– Ken Low, *Educational Design for the 21st Century*

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Working with the Inuit up in Arctic Quebec [was] soul searing in a number of ways, in that the exposure to death and illness in a community was something that the average Inuit communities live with constantly but there's just a whole different register of life where they're things that you hear about, read about from time to time, but typically don't encounter in your own life unless you're really unfortunate, where almost everybody up there has seen that almost all the time.

– Ken Low

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The Inuit contract happened in the early 90s, so it was before the leadership program, but [it gave me] a clear sense of the challenge of bringing people into a level of understanding and exploration that would support

systemic adaptive levels of learning and development. The difficulty of doing that just became really clear in working with the Inuit.

– Ken Low

⑧ The Motorcycle Accident

1989

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It hit me on my left side. That threw the motorcycle. It threw me through the air but I maintained consciousness. In fact, I had enough awareness to do an assessment while I was flying through the air, to try to get myself oriented so I didn't land in such a way that I was going to break my neck. So then I could try to land spread out a bit. So, I landed on my hands and my knees. But the car had crushed my left leg and tore it apart, just below the knee, and crushed my left foot. [...] I was hospitalized for about nine weeks and had open bleeding wounds I had to attend to for close to a year afterwards just because there was so much tissue that was torn. And it also meant that I, from there on out, had to learn how to live with chronic pain. So that became part of my life story.

– Ken Low

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I decided that I'll just learn how to live with [chronic pain], and then I'll interpret it in a different way. So I just use it as a reminder of the fact that every day there are tens of thousands, millions of people who have far more real pain in their lives than I do. So it becomes a connector between me and the rest of humanity that's experiencing pain. Many, most, with more grace and humour and tolerance, and persistence than I have. So it becomes a positive thing. So it becomes a friend. Not entirely a welcome friend, but a friend that I've had to learn to live with. And a helpful friend, because I can use it as a reminder of other things that are terribly important.

– Ken Low

⑨ Leadership Beyond Convention

1999 AND ONWARD

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It was an amazing experience, and the meta-framework would not have existed if it wasn't for that incubator, really as it was there that the basic lines of inquiry were laid out and the foundations for the pattern identification were hammered out. [...] Every program was a probe, a pilot, a test, just to see what worked, what didn't work, and where we are getting hung up and where we could find more promising work, at least something promising to work on.

– Ken Low

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There was enough success in the programs even though the programs were challenging to run and difficult. It was apparent that something much better than what existed could be done. So that then pushed the search for more elements to the meta-framework and then, eventually, to find a way of capturing those elements such that they could be built on.

– Ken Low

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“[In the movie *Clockwise*, John Cleese's character says] 'It's not the despair. I can handle the despair. It's the hope I can't handle.' And that was my reaction when I first started getting positive feedback from folks in the leadership program, where they were actually picking up and integrating the constructs to some extent and enough so that they could speak about it and speak to it.[...] I was emotionally geared to be able to carry on without that hope and without that feedback so when the positive feedback started to occur, I really didn't know what to do with it.

– Ken Low

HUMAN LEARNING ECOLOGY: A NEW DISCIPLINE OF STUDY

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We are human ‘becomings,’ not human beings because our species is young and we are still shaping it. We are the only species that has the potential [to do that, and] the only species that can shape our path of development through conscious control. It’s hard, but we can do it if we set our minds to it. Human learning ecology provides the basis for outlining the human venture, a disciplined framework for understanding human folly, progress and resistance, the adaptive challenges facing humanity at our time of place in history and what it will take to meet them. So this is [...] about the human venture, about the frontiers of human social development and what it takes to navigate on these frontiers and why we have to do it and what will happen to us as a species if we’re not successful.

– Ken Low

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In order to accomplish what we need to accomplish, we need a new discipline. [...] What I’ve been involved with for the past 45 years is developing this new discipline. Human Learning Ecology is a new integrative discipline that draws on life systems and the record of human striving, achievement, and failure across periods of history, cultures, disciplines, and fields of

endeavor in order to map out the structure and nature of adaptive power and intelligence and the dynamics of how they’re developed, applied and extended and or constrained in or degraded in human systems from individuals, primary groups, organizations to societies, cultures and civilizations. Lots there. Right?

– Ken Low

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We can only understand learning by looking at it as that ecology of influences. You’ll often hear people say everything is connected. That’s a good entry point, but it’s a terrible stopping point. Yeah, everything is connected. The critical question is how is it connected, and what are the critical aspects of those connections, and what do those connections have to do, and what makes for a strong vital connections? What makes for a weak connections? Because yes, everything is connected [and] we recognize that life is a web [but] that isn’t going to help unless you understand what that web has to do.

– Ken Low

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We all die, but each one of us is part of something much bigger – the human venture. We contribute to the venture by searching to figure out what our collective story is about and striving to realize the best of humanity in ourselves.

– Ken Low

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A beautiful wave was rushing toward the shore. ‘Alas,’ he cried, for he saw the rocks. ‘I shall crash and be destroyed forever.’ A voice behind him advised, ‘Relax son. You won’t be destroyed. For you are not a wave; you are the ocean.

– Anonymous

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Don’t take life and death too personally. We’re all part of a much bigger picture, most of which is beyond our individual control. Develop an honourable peace treaty with the universe and use this to put short-term difficulties into perspective. [In the way of the samurai, they] must, from the hour they arise in the morning until the last hour and looking forward to the new, keep before themselves the fact of their death. If they do not, they will put off until

tomorrow that which should be done today, and they will allow small things to become big things in their lives.

We have this precious time to use in whatever we choose. We should learn to choose wisely.

– Ken Low

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Life is not about you. You’re about life. We’re all going to die. We’re all part of something much bigger. Don’t take life and death too personally.

– Ken Low

