



48. The Confidence Crisis, Part 1

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Future Sense is a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name, broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Hosted by Nyck Jeanes and well-known international futurist, Steve McDonald, Future Sense provides a fresh, deep analysis of global trends and emerging technologies. How can we identify the layers of growth personally, socially and globally? What are the signs missed; the truths being denied? Political science, history, politics, psychology, ancient civilisations, alien contact, the new psychedelic revolution, cryptocurrency and other disruptive and distributed technologies, and much more.

This is Future Sense.

Nyck: You are now tuned to *Future Sense* with myself, Nyck Jeanes, and Steve McDonald this morning. And we're talking about, well, the crisis in confidence across the planet in so many different ways that we could articulate.

Steve: We are indeed. It looks like we're headed for some big milestones in 2020, so it's really a good time to talk about this. It's not something new, it's been coming a long time, and anybody who follows global affairs will have seen a lack of confidence growing around pretty much all aspects of life, to be honest with you. I mean, it's certainly front and centre in politics, but you name it—you name a discipline, an area of life—and there's been a growing lack of confidence, in things like science, medicine.

Nyck: In all the institutions, really. I mean, I've said often that we live in structures that are often hundreds, if not thousands of years old—literally the buildings of our institutions, our universities, of our medical institutions, often our politics and so forth—the structures that we still inhabit are hundreds of years old and still functioning by the same sort of paradigm, mostly.

Steve: That's right, and this is pretty standard, of course, for a paradigm shift. When you're going through a major paradigm shift, there has to be a values clash.

Nyck: There's a standard for paradigm shift? That's pretty cool.

Steve: There is, it's been laid down—somewhat of a template, luckily—so we do in some respects know what to anticipate over the next few years and the next couple of decades, but it's true to say that the new values that are emerging are at odds with the old values in some serious ways, and that's a growing phenomenon.

Nyck: We take some note of, some would say some bizarre sources here and there—some interesting sources, some not necessarily rational sources to some people—but we take them anyway because there's clues everywhere. We look often, these days, at Bobby K., who's an American who does a pretty profound weekly reading of the I Ching. We've mentioned the I Ching here before—a very ancient system of divination and much more than that, probably. One could say you could draw some bows, well, let's go straight there, to quantum physics and beyond—there's a lot of connections with this particular system, interestingly enough, as ancient as it is. In this week's wisdom, he says in this little paragraph here: "the ideas, processes and behaviours that have previously brought you success on the path to abundance, peace of mind and love are no longer valid. They have become obstacles." That's a big statement. "The small bits of darkness that in the past you ignored and thought would go away have grown and can now overshadow all unless you take swift action and return to the light." Another big statement. "You were hoping you could ease up on the reins and didn't have to work so bloody hard to make sense of things. This is the trick of the ego, the shadow, to take you off centre during the most important point of transitional and evolutionary change." A very big paragraph that we're going to sort of unpack, as part of what we're going to do today.

Steve: Indeed, yes. It speaks directly to the values shift that's going on. We've been living for the last few hundred years by a certain set of values which have done wonderful things for the world, and for many of us individually, including allowing us to fly to the moon and back, but as these cycles play out, it's normal that they go through a constructive phase and eventually then a deconstructive phase as we start to transition into the next wave of values, and that's what's happening right now. So naturally, for those people who are starting to experience the emergence of these new values, the old values start to look a bit stale.

Nyck: Absolutely. Of course, as usual, if you'd like to text in on our text line, it comes up right on the screen in front of us here: 0437 341 119. Any comments that you have, any questions that you might have, anything you'd like to say, we'd love to hear from you.

Nyck: Here on *BayFM 999*, you are on *Future Sense* with Nyck Jeanes and Steve McDonald, and we're looking at the crisis in confidence across the world—personally, and right up to the top ends of power.

Steve: Exactly. It's been a long time coming and it's a reflection of the natural cycling change that we get over long periods of time between eras that are individually-oriented and then eras that are community-oriented. You could call that a me-we oscillation.

Nyck: Ooohh! Is that a scientific term?

Steve: I just made it up, actually.

Nyck: Perfect. That's how science works.

Steve: Absolutely. So looking over the long term, of course, we came through the Industrial era and shifted around the revolutions that took place—the Scientific Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the European Enlightenment—and various waves with particular trigger points, milestones, you might say, during that change process, which eventually brought us into this modern Scientific-Industrial era, which has been running for roughly about 300 years in full flight. As we go through this oscillation, the Agricultural era, of course, was a community-oriented era where most things were situated around thinking about community and how we should change ourselves to fit with the world's requirements. In the individual eras, the me-oriented eras like the one that we're just coming to the end of now, the focus is around how I can be successful as an individual and how I can change the world around me to suit what I want.

There are fairly inevitable outcomes of each of those two ways of living, and if we look back at how the world has shifted and changed through the various paradigms, we can see the same patterns playing out over and over again. They're never the same because every time they play out, the world is a different place—it's more complex, we have new and more complex technologies, different ways of thinking—and so every time the shift plays out, it has a different flavour to it, but the underlying themes are fairly consistent. We go through a change process that takes us from being comfortable—and let's look at the previous paradigm shift. We were comfortable in the Agricultural way of living and all of the communal institutions that grew up around that, including, of course, our major religions, which were very influential and still are; and then that comfort sort of morphed into an annoyance.

Nyck: An annoyance. I like that.

Steve: And the annoyance got worse. For that particular shift, the annoyance was essentially a frustration with the long timescales required for change to happen. In that particular Agricultural paradigm, which is Layer 4 in Clare Graves's model if you're following from that perspective, then Layer 4 always has delayed rewards, and all of the thinking—it doesn't matter whether it was business thinking, it was like, 'yes, well you do your job and fulfil your duty, and then if you do that long enough, you can retire with a gold watch'—or in a religious sense, 'live a good life, follow God's rules and then you'll be rewarded, not now, but later when you die.' It was always that later thing, and over time, that's one of the things that just gets frustrating, and people start to think, no, actually I'm done waiting. I'd really like something now! I think someone wrote a song about that.

So this annoyance grows and grows and grows. It's very much tied to the increasing complexity, and right throughout history, the complexity of our universe, our world, life, society, has slowly increased—that's the key driver. That annoyance eventually gets to the boiling point and we have a crisis and eventually there will be revolutions—and we just listed a few of the revolutions that happened during that previous shift—and they lead to breakthroughs. It's never really just one revolution and one breakthrough, it's always a series over time—it's a complex arrangement of tipping points—and then once the breakthroughs happen, with every breakthrough, there's a bit of relief and people go, 'oh, okay, that's better, I'm feeling a bit more freedom now, a bit more instant action, instant rewards, and then eventually we come back to being comfortable again where the paradigm is peaking. Everything's working well, we've solved all those old problems of frustration, in that case, and we can sit back and we can enjoy our good life, where we've earned money and we've got our rewards now—we have the boat in the yard and the fishing rod and whatever else we wanted—and then so we sit back and become complacent for a while.

Nyck: Which is really the Australia that particularly I grew in up at my age, in the fifties and sixties—the sort of halcyon days where everything was perfect. We were very rich, we were very comfortable, everything seemed easy, war was over, and at that time, in the 50s of course, the 'leisure society' was the big claim—that was the last piece—now that we've got the technology, very soon we'll all be just at leisure and robots and things will be doing our work for us. Well, yes, robots; AI machinery is doing a hell of a lot of stuff, but we are busier and crazier and more complex than we've ever been, so what we thought was going to happen has not happened.

Steve: Yes, and Clare Graves, when he wrote about his model—his theory of human evolution, the spiralling pattern—he said that every time we think we're just about to crack it, something changes and we realise that 'oh, no, actually, we have to take a fork

in the road and go down another path'. Consequently, when they published his research notes—it was actually a draught of a book that he was writing when he passed away—they decided to call it *The Never Ending Quest*, because it is a never ending quest. Just when we think we're about to nail it and everything's going to be done and we can sit back, everything changes and we have to start over again, but in a new way.

Nyck: So probably it's worthy for our intelligent listeners, or for anybody, to be aware that any time any of us claims that they, or you, have the answer—the final solution to something—that you question that because it's highly unlikely. That's the truth.

Steve: And this is why the sages are always kind of sitting back on a park bench smiling and watching, because they know the pattern.

Nyck: I don't know whether you're referring to *Waiting for God* or *Forest Gump* or somebody. Anyway, all the same sort of figure, that's for sure.

Steve: It's really, really important at this time for us to take notice of these patterns, and arguably—well, I think it's not arguable at all, it's a definite thing—this is the first time that we're going into a global paradigm shift where we have global communication which is instant and we have this knowledge available to us. We can actually talk on a global scale about the change dynamic itself, and rather than be just carried along, like we've been tossed in a river and bumped around by the currents of the river, we can actually sit on the river bank and watch the currents and say, okay, well, we've been here before, we know this part of the river and we know how the currents run, because last time we crossed over we went through all that and we were actually getting bumped around and we felt a bit out of control, but this time we do have the option to sit and watch and learn from what we know about paradigm shifts, these change dynamics, how they play out—there's always a set sequence. We can't predict exactly what's going to happen but what we can predict is that there will be a sequence of themes and a progression of change from stability through stress, chaos, breakthrough, a renewal, and then new stability. That kind of change process is not synchronised right across life or the whole world—it's happening in different phases in different places.

Nyck: Or even in one community, of course, it's running at different rates—different currents are running in the same river.

Steve: Exactly, and this is why it's so hard to see unless you really know what to look for. You get overlapping change processes where something will be halfway through change and something else will be just beginning change and the two subjects or items

get mixed up in this cross influence and those sorts of things, so it's never that simple, but we do have the keys to unlock this now, and that's a really important thing. Of course, it's why this podcast and radio show exists, is to talk about these change dynamics.

Nyck: Absolutely. It's interesting too, of course, the paradox. Referring back to Bobby K. who we talked about with his *I Ching* reading, just for this week, this is what came up, is that the time for action is now while things are still ripe. The benefit is to examine each action, person and process on your path and dissect your relationship and then make a judgement. If it is working with you for the greater good, it can remain. If not, you've got to get rid of it. This is interesting because on one hand, the paradox is that we have the capacity now to sit by the river and observe this change process; on the other hand, there's still action that's required at times.

Steve: That's right. We still have to cross the river ourselves—we should never lose sight of that—but let's cross it as gracefully as we can.

Nyck: Absolutely.

Nyck: You are now tuned to *Future Sense* with Steve McDonald and Nyck Jeanes. Thanks for your texts and you can text us at any time. Please speak to us, bring us your wisdom. Here's one text: "Hi Nyck and Steve, Confucius say 'he who knows all the answers has not been asked all the questions.'" Thanks to Rod in Bangalow. True that.

Steve: Very good.

Nyck: We're talking about uncertainty, and perhaps you'd like to text us in about how your confidence has crashed with regard to aspects of your reality. It might be personal, it might be, well, obviously, I don't think very many of us have much confidence in politics anymore, but how does it particularly apply to you? You might ask that question. Where are you troubled by the fact that things just don't seem to be right in your world, somewhere or other? Text us in.

Steve: Indeed.

We can learn from our previous paradigm shift, which I guess is really the only good one that we have a solid record of—the shift from Layer 3 to Layer 4, which was from a

martial way of living, and I guess we could think of the classic example of Genghis Khan there—into the Agricultural era. I have never found a good academic reference that really pins a date to that. I think some of the latest research I've seen sort of puts the Agricultural Revolution's early stages around about 10 to 12,000 years ago, where we started to crop on a large scale, and part of the reason, I'm sure, that we don't have a good historical record is that also roughly around that time, we had that Younger Dryas event, which a lot of people are starting to uncover more information about now. It was a major, major environmental catastrophe, which looks like it was at least partially triggered by climate impact and gave rise to all of the great flood stories that are embedded in pretty much every civilisation around the world. Consequently, we've lost memory there—we've lost our history—and we can only work with what we have.

We do have a reasonable record of the transition from the Agricultural to the Scientific-Industrial, though. Some core aspects of what the Agricultural era said to us were things like 'the truth comes from above', and that 'above' can have many meanings; it can mean in a spiritual sense—the truth comes from God or whatever it is that you imagine takes that place in your culture. The agricultural era said 'follow the rules and everything will be fine', and those rules also came from above; and it said, 'do your duty and you'll be rewarded ... later.' As it turned out, much later.

Nyck: We're still waiting.

Steve: And then as the world became more complex, that paradigm decayed into a reckless righteousness. When a paradigm decays, there's always this backslide to the previous paradigm, so if the Agricultural era is Layer 4, then during its decay there was a backslide to Layer 3, which was the wild martial power-oriented individual way of being.

Nyck: Yes, I'm thinking there the great battles over the city of Jerusalem, for example, over 5,000 years, that articulated this battle between the agricultural-situated tribes, and the claim over a religious icon of a place, the histories and stories, the narratives that most people lived through at that time.

Steve: That's right, and a key part of that decay of the Agricultural era was known, of course, as the Dark Ages. The Modern Scientific-Industrial is going through the same patterns, so it's kind of laid down some words of advice and rules, if you like, and they were that 'you can find the truth yourself'. That, of course, is what became science as we know it; and that replaced this truth coming from God or some spiritual source.

Nyck: Which was an evolution, but not without its own problems, of course.

Steve: Absolutely.

The Scientific-Industrial era also said 'you can change the rules to suit yourself'; and it said 'if you work harder and faster and smarter, you can win'. Now we know that only one percent of us has actually won, but like the previous advice of the Agricultural era—that the rewards come later—these things often become apparent after the fact.

As this Scientific-Industrial era is decaying, it's decaying into what we are now calling 'surveillance capitalism', which is really a regression to Layer 4 where we're seeing this rigid, absolutistic, authoritarian behaviour that's characteristic of 4.

Nyck: But focused through this Layer 5 technology and this capacity for us to communicate at rate and in any way that we want to. In fact, the phrase one could use for this late stage is 'anything goes'; 'anything goes that wins'.

Steve: That's right. You can change the rules to suit yourself and that's just running to an extreme—everything's running to an extreme.

So we know how these things play out. This is the pattern. There are rules that are laid down, they work really well for a while, then after a while, they don't work so well, and then eventually things start to decay and we backslide to the previous paradigm for a while. And then, what's next, we know, is chaos and revolution—and that is pretty much inevitable. The only way that could ever be avoided is if enough people were conscious of the dynamic and they knew that unless we actually do 'this', we're going to go through 'that' chaos again, and we're on the verge, as a species, of that point at the moment, but I don't think enough people are there yet, or aware enough yet, to actually avoid the chaos. Therefore, I think chaos within the next decade or two is inevitable, and then revolution in many, many different forms is inevitable; and so, also, is a breakthrough and then a renewal into the next layer—the next paradigm that's emerging. Most immediately, that will be Layer 6, which Clare Graves described as relativistic, humanistic—so a very human-centred, communally-oriented paradigm that's network-centric and very much built around the architecture, the scaffolding of our interconnected technology. That's a very important key aspect of it.

Nyck: Indeed. It brings my attention to an article which we passed around in our group—in our little tribe, so to speak—recently from *Forbes* magazine, which talks about the most valuable commodity today being, in fact, information (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/cognitiveworld/2019/07/21/its-time-to-fight-back-for-data-sovereignty/?sh=10723a131ccc>). Of course, that information is a never-ending resource, whereas all of our economies in the last thousands of years, but particularly in Layer 5 that we're talking about here, are based on the scarcity of certain resources—gold is very valuable because it's relatively scarce and so on and so on and so on—and that change now from the economics of scarcity and value derived from scarcity, to the

value derived from a plethora of information—a never-ending wealth of information, which clearly the large corporations like *Google*, *Facebook* and the others are mining at will and without very much restraint at all—and this is a big moment, isn't it, in this change process?

Steve: It is a big moment, and it's important just to reflect on the word 'values' there, because the paradigm shift is essentially a values shift—it's a change of values—and so the things that have been valued previously will no longer be valued as much, and new things are emerging as more valuable.

Nyck: Yes, and by the way, folks, when we do quote some of the references that we have, we will be posting them on our *Twitter* feed, which is @futuresenseshow, and on our *Future Sense Facebook* page as well. And just while I'm on that topic, you can always hear edited versions of our show podcast at www.futureseense.it—that's a portal to various platforms—or you can just go to your own platform and do that.

Steve: People who listen to the show regularly will recall that I talk about the poker game as an analogy for the Scientific-Industrial era, and it's such a good one, which is why I keep bringing it up all the time—this idea of having to restrict the information that everybody in the game has access to. So you've got your hand of cards that you've been dealt and you may also have an Ace up your sleeve if you're a good player, and you don't show anybody your cards because if you show your cards, then it actually collapses the entire game, because the information that you can see on your cards is key to winning the game and competing successfully against all the other players. The idea, of course, in a poker game is that somebody wins and the rest of the people lose, and this is why it's such a good analogy for the whole Scientific-Industrial era, because this is how we've been playing life over the last 300 years.

With the emergence of our Layer 6-influenced technology—the Internet and social media and all these things that have been like mushroom mycelium; like the roots growing into every corner of your life and illuminating them—they've destroyed the capacity that we used to have to hold information close and secret. Once upon a time, there was such a thing as a corporate image, which was the thing that the corporation chose to expose to the world—it was like a billboard that you put out front of the building saying, 'this is who we are and this is what we look like and here's how we do our business'—and then what actually happened inside the building was usually quite a different story.

Nyck: Think of the Marlboro Man, for example.

Steve: Exactly.

Now, because everybody's on social media and everybody can talk, everybody can publish globally instantaneously and whatever they write or post as a picture can be seen around the world straight away, then it's really impossible now for anybody to put out—I mean, people still try, of course—to put out a public image and have that not to be consistent with your actual life that you're living. It's very, very difficult. This is like everybody being told to put their poker cards down on the table so everybody can see their cards, and of course, it just completely collapses the game, so you can't continue to play poker—and we can't continue to play Scientific-Industrial. It just don't work anymore. Simple as that.

Nyck: Interesting, with you using the gambling, the poker analogy, I'm thinking of *Crown Casino* in Melbourne, which is, of course, going through a rather tough time—God bless you all down there. We're noticing, of course, that our politicians of both ilks are basically silent, ignoring it, because they're implicated; because somehow or other, some cards have been held up the sleeve, cards are not being shown, and eventually we're going to hopefully see some revelations about what's actually going on down there.

Steve: Yes, that's an absolutely classic example. Also, it's a really important time for politics in Australia—and all credit to our government-sponsored *ABC News* agency for being able to publish this—but I think the energy of the moment is actually creating an opportunity for us to point to and speak to these things as they're becoming so obvious because of this collapsing of the veil. This fact that you just can't hide this stuff anymore really is a massive opportunity for us as the general public to speak to what we're seeing and call out the misdemeanours, the hidden agendas, the lawbreaking in many cases that is going on within our institutions, including but absolutely not limited to politics, and then to pursue real and effective change; and change in the direction of the emerging values. Those values are, of course, the Layer 6 values, which are community-oriented; they're very much around building community—rebuilding community because community has been collapsed by the previous individually-oriented era playing itself out—values that are oriented around deep human connection and authenticity, truthfulness, being transparent and speaking your truth, and allowing people to speak their truth; and also to regather the rule of law. I think we've covered a number of times on previous shows how the community-oriented layers—these paradigms like the Agricultural, and previous to that, the Traditional-Tribal, and now the emerging Layer 6 Relativistic—these are the issues that really lay down structures of law. Because they are community-oriented eras, they are all about following standards and complying with standards. In between those eras, when the me-oriented individual issues play out, they are often tweaking, corrupting, sometimes completely collapsing those community standards, and that also has a purpose in an evolutionary sense. When you've got everything fully compliant and you don't get any novelty arising—or

you get a much lower degree of novelty arising within a society—where everything is the same and is enforced to be the same, and of course, that's something that governments are very aware of now and that's why there's so much enforcement and compliance being attempted around the world at the moment, because the novelty's emerging.

Nyck: And they don't like the novelty—these eruptions of unusual things occurring everywhere. It's not liked. It's uncontrollable.

Steve: Exactly, because when we're going through a paradigm shift, the new stuff emerges as novelty, of course, and so it's important for us now as we're moving back into a communal era, to regather the rule of law. I think it's pretty obvious if you look back over the last few decades, one of the biggest examples that stands out for me is around politics and also international conflict, and how the rule of law has just been thrown out the window. Our country here, Australia, has been committed to wars that have very, very shaky, if any at all, legal standing—and that's the result of ongoing debate—and we're on the verge of committing ourselves, it looks like, to another enforcement action in the Middle East, believe it or not.

Nyck: Believe it or not. Just for those who haven't heard, apparently there's discussion between the defence departments of this country and the United States regarding some sort of new Middle East force over there. I'm not sure where or exactly what mission they may be getting, but it's certainly a troubling development.

Steve: Yes, but there is this window of opportunity that is opening right now for us to actually pounce on things like this story in the current media in Australia where the government looks like it's been caught out—another case of corporate capture where money has had influence over political power. The government's gone quiet and my goodness, what a great time it is to put some pressure on them for the truth to actually come out.

Nyck: Exactly. Yes, it's interesting with this article from the *ABC* regarding the *Crown Casino* situation (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-03/crown-casino-corruption-silence-major-parties/11379226?nw=0>), because the dynamics have changed according to this article: "The push for a parliamentary enquiry may have failed, but the revelations have changed the dynamics of the parliament nonetheless. The crossbench", and it's a crazy bunch of people in the crossbench there, but "[t]he crossbench in the Senate and the House now have a cause on moral grounds and a pragmatic interest in using the issue of an anti-corruption body to both reinforce to voters the value of their presence in the Parliament to raise issues that the major

parties won't—classic "keep the bastards honest" territory—and as a bargaining chip for the government's legislative programme" of course. Also on this, the number of politicians from both sides of politics that have ended up for working for *Crown Casino* is a big question, but the notion that the crazy crossbench there actually have the sort of moral stamp here to do something about it, and are willing to actually stand up to both parties—silent parties—with regard to this issue makes a difference, hopefully.

Steve: That's right. Yes, that's the novelty emerging, coming in a small percentage of people to start with.

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