

Four Alternative *Futures*

DDC

Toolkit - new days

During two workshops about future scenarios, the participants constructed four alternative futures based on Jim Dators Scenario Archetypes. The four scenarios are thought-provoking examples depicting radically different versions of what the future might bring.

Welcome to the standing wave

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Before we continue, please choose your subscription. As a premium user, you will experience which wonders modern technology can perform. You will not believe your own eyes. Or rather, your optimized bionic eye implants. If you only subscribe to the basic plan, you will have to wait, settle for or just do without.

Based on the statistics, it is apparent that we have never been wealthier. As our investments in technology started to pay off, we were wrong in thinking the financial growth would come to an end. Using artificial intelligence far superior to the human consciousness, we are pushing the boundaries for what was believed possible: Incredible new treatments, implants, and expansions of physical and mental performance.

For most people, the economy sets health and well-being limitations, not technology. The natural body requires increasing maintenance as we age, but you don't have to be limited by this factor if you have enough money. Look into the beautiful gardens while strolling around in a premium neighborhood, and you will notice perfect bodies moving around. Effortlessly. Not showing any signs of aging. It becomes clear that our civilization has reached new heights. The price is high – especially for some – but is it not worth it in the end?

Our global society has taken shape around trading in quotas, also known as tokens, to distribute resources equally. Everyone has accounts containing an array of rightfully owned tokens allowing for equal emissions and utilization of resources. The tokens are fairly distributed among the citizens. While being designed for equal distribution, the system does allow for trading. If you can do with less or need money, you can sell your rights to tokens on a global digital market. On the other hand, if you have the means to pay and compensate for a certain lifestyle, you are very welcome to do so.

In addition to receiving tokens, citizens and companies can earn modernized rationing labels. For example, intelligent plants that monitor their own photosynthesis have become everyday household items, creating CO2 labels for their owner. The wealthiest regularly invest in extensive algae fields, compensating for a demanding lifestyle.

If you can afford it, your life has no upper limit.

Artifact from the standing wave



Early Prototype

The first-generation AirPlants saw the light of day in 2034. In the years leading up until its release, trade-in private CO₂ tokens had exploded. Many subsidized their limited income by selling tokens. AirPlants met the demand for new methods to compensate for a luxury lifestyle.

On the outside, AirPlants look like regular living room plants but looking through a microscope, it becomes clear how the biology has been thoroughly altered in nanoscale. By the end of the thirties, a small AirPlant could turn over 3% of an average person's CO₂ emission for the price of 5000 DK (2021 rate). Within a few years, the price of CO₂ tokens drops by 90%

Welcome to the blooming ruins

The structures carrying our former society have collapsed. The trust in existing systems' ability to care for us and manage our problems has run out. Concepts like kindergartens, job centers, and nursing homes belong to the past. Rising from the dust and instability of the old ruins, something new and different seems to grow, not taking its final shape yet. The great collapse was severe, and we are all still affected by the chock. Despite being worn down by old structures, the collapse has left a void of uncertainty. Now is the time to act for yourself.

Today, nothing happens automatically. You are no longer another number in the big system – the systems do not exist anymore. You carry the responsibility for yourself and your own. We have found each other in small communities, and within these enclosures, we acknowledge that every human is whole and has something unique to offer. We have moved closer to each other in our locally based societies that resemble tribes more than conventional communes.

The challenges we face include more than social, financial, and cultural aspects. Our former passive approach to the climate crisis has had substantial consequences that we need to adapt to. Our small societies are literally at risk of being turned upside down by extreme weather. We still experience large groups migrating from scorching temperatures and drought to seek a better future.

However, the number of challenges we face is matched by several creative enthusiasts dedicated to finding new paths. For some, the collapse has become the incentive to build a world from scratch that relies on healthier values and a different view of humanity. For others, fear and skepticism stand in the way of imagining a path in the ever-changing ecosystems.

Artifact from the blooming ruins



Mapping the autonomous and local community Birkevig, 2041

The map is an example of an autonomous house-share community. These semi-independent nano states began to emerge in the thirties following the big collapse. Legally, they were still under nationwide governance, but they were actually self-governing.

The citizens of Birkevig were pioneers in declaring their independence in Denmark, but many followed soon after.

Welcome to the collective rhythm

We must take care of ourselves and the world for which we are ultimately responsible. We are disciplined, but not necessarily in an unpleasant, authoritarian, or limiting way. Instead, we follow a pulsating rhythm that guides us. A delicate balance or a beautiful choreography that we seek to perfect throughout our lives.

Everything took off as an everyday movement that spread into society. It was not violent in any way – quite the contrary. Instead, a kind of silent revolution took place where large groups, protesting the race, the noise, and the consumerism, wandered silently through the cities. We now feel connected as parts of a puzzle compared to before, where everyone competed individually. Discipline is deeply rooted in us. Future generations are given rights through the constitution. The same goes for nature. Responsibility is imperative in all decisions.

Everyone receives a universal basic income, but most people still work. Not as a necessity but as a contribution to the common good or the will to help others. We have collectively decided to moderate consumerism and material possession to guide our citizens away from wasting money and resources. There are strict rules that inhibit this sort of behavior. Some feel strangled, controlled, and limited, but future generations must be considered. Virtues like care, knowledge, and creativity are favored over material wealth or the individual privilege to see the world. Today, our youth contribute with community service as part of conscription after finishing high school. This might involve taking care of children, helping the elderly, or supporting the staff at the local library.

Artifact from the collective rhythm



MitPendul packaging, 2034

The pendulum of discipline was invented by Theis R. L. Lauesen, and it was one of the most groundbreaking inventions of its time. The pendulum would be found in most households after just a couple of years. Eagerly used to not burn out in a world of discipline and collective sacrifice, the primary purpose of the pendulum was to help decide whether to tune in on individual needs or the needs of the community.

Welcome to the euphoric think tank

Now, the focus is no longer on simple needs or material wealth. People represent something way more valuable than their bodies, belongings, and physical limits. Today, everything revolves around our communal spirit. We act as one great organism evolving and thriving from the community. Freedom is community.

The technological evolution was steered by money for too long, but now that time belongs to the past. We have reclaimed technology and granted it to the community to focus on a greater common good. Artificial intelligence care for our external needs so we can focus on internal development and the role we play in favor of the community. The AI produces and distributes nutritional pills, administrates infrastructure, and treats our diseases. Everything is brought into justice and balanced by technology.

Time, energy, and technology that was once wasted on meaningless tasks have been released and are now being used to explore the meaningful aspects of life. The nutritional pills eliminate the most fundamental condition of survival, rendering eating into a ritual. Typically, we live closely together with several generations in self-chosen families, but our connection to every living creature on the planet always feels present. We meditate, self-reflect, and fantasize with the help of technology that literally helps us investigate our inner selves. It lets us engage in fantastic virtual spirit worlds where we listen to our ancestors' stories of what once was while our children reveal to us what the future brings. Technology is not merely a medium of entertainment. It expands our collective awareness, supports our creative activity, and enables us to dream with all other living organisms.

Some fear that we are about to lose ourselves.

Artifact from the euphoric think tank



The Omnia Pill is one of the new technologies automating fundamental needs

At the beginning of the thirties, the climate crisis starts having severe consequences, leading to a global food shortage. The food crisis emerges simultaneously with a line of medicinal breakthroughs focusing on health. In response to recent developments, the Omnipill is introduced to the market. One tablet comprehensively provides every nutritional need, strengthening the immune system and leaving only 1% of the footprint of a natural diet.

The pill drastically changed society within a few years, whereas both the food industry and the medical industry were disrupted.