

'This is the book our children's children will thank us for reading.' - The Edge, U2

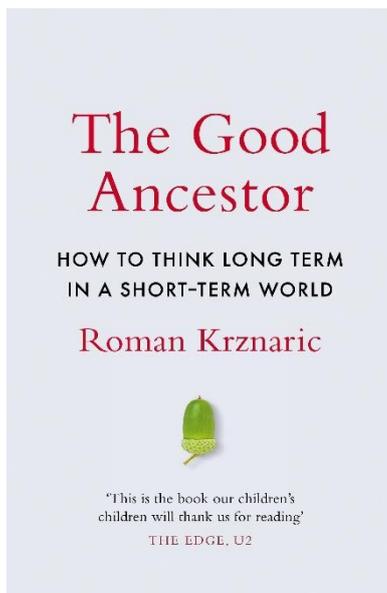
THE GOOD ANCESTOR

How to think long term in a short-term world

ROMAN KRZNARIC

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How can we be good ancestors for those that come after us? One of Britain's most popular public philosophers introduces the six ways we can drastically change the way we think in order to ensure a better tomorrow.



From the first seeds sown thousands of years ago, to the construction of the cities we still inhabit, to the scientific discoveries and medical breakthroughs that have ensured our survival, we are the inheritors of countless gifts from the past. Today, in an age driven by the tyranny of the now – being bombarded with 24/7 news, the latest Twitter feud, and the buy-now button commanding our attention – we rarely stop to consider how our actions will affect future generations. With such frenetic short-termism at the root of contemporary crises, the call for long-term thinking grows every day – but what is it, has it ever worked, and can we even do it?

In *The Good Ancestor*, leading public philosopher Roman Krznaric argues that there is still hope, even as Coronavirus spreads through the world. From the pyramids, to cathedrals, to the NHS, humankind has always had the innate ability to plan for posterity and take action that will resonate for decades, centuries, even millennia to come. If we want to become good ancestors, now is the time to recover and enrich this imaginative skill.

The Good Ancestor reveals six profound ways in which we can all learn to think long-term, exploring how we can reawaken oft-neglected but uniquely human talents like 'cathedral thinking', and the 'acorn brains' that expand our time horizons and sharpen our foresight. Drawing on radical solutions from around the world, Krznaric celebrates the innovators who are reinventing democracy, culture and economics so that we all have the chance to become good ancestors and create a better tomorrow.

'It's a must-read for anyone who's looking for the good news.' - Brian Eno

About the author

ROMAN KRZNARIC is a public philosopher who writes about the power of ideas to change society. His books, including *Empathy*, *The Wonderbox* and *Carpe Diem Regained*, have been published in more than 20 languages. He is based in Oxford, UK.

After growing up in Sydney and Hong Kong, Roman studied at the universities of Oxford, London and Essex, where he gained his PhD in political sociology. He went on to found the world's first Empathy Museum and the digital Empathy Library, and was also a founding faculty member of The School of Life. He is currently a Research Fellow of the Long Now Foundation.

Roman has been named by The Observer as one of Britain's leading popular philosophers. His writings have been widely influential amongst political and ecological campaigners, education reformers, social entrepreneurs and designers. An acclaimed public speaker, his talks and workshops have taken him from a London prison to Google's headquarters in California.



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Praise for *The Good Ancestor*

'Roman Krznaric's book *The Good Ancestor* is full of revelations for everyone who cares about the legacy they leave. This is the book our children's children will thank us for reading.' - **The Edge, U2**

'Beautiful to read, heartfelt and persuasive *The Good Ancestor* is one of those landmark books with the power to shift a mindset. One turns the pages feeling a growing compulsion for change. Krznaric's clarion call for long-term thinking makes him an ancestor all future generations can be proud of'
Isabella Tree, author of *Wilding*

'The individualistic philosophies of the last century have generated huge concentrations of wealth - but at the same time put us on the road to social, political and environmental collapse. This clear-sighted and inspiring book suggests a different view of who humans are and what they really value. It's a must-read for anyone who's looking for the good news.' - **Brian Eno**

'Roman Krznaric addresses the greatest challenge confronting the world: how can humanity survive this century and flourish in the next? He compellingly argues the ethical and prudential case for longer-term thinking. His book, though succinct, covers a fascinating range, in persuasive and eloquent prose. It deserves to be widely read - by policy makers, and indeed by all citizens who care about the prospects for their children and grandchildren.' - **Professor Martin Rees, Astronomer Royal and author of *On The Future***

'An important and fascinating book that asks whether we've got what it takes to become citizens rather than consumers and create an ecological civilisation. *The Good Ancestor* is a triumph'
Sir Tim Smit, co-founder of the Eden Project

'I judge a book's usefulness by how many pages I'm compelled to dog-ear and underline. This book on the pragmatics of long-term thinking earned 50-plus dog-ears'
Stewart Brand, creator of the Whole Earth Catalog and co-founder of The Long Now Foundation

'How timely can a book be? Roman Krznaric fizzles with ideas about how we tackle that cuckoo in the nest, short-term thinking. We need to think today for tomorrow, to give future generations their rightful seat at the table'
Lord John Bird MBE, founder of The Big Issue

'Krznaric's seamless and magical prose delights on every page. Let's engrave his 'six ways to think long' across the gateway to every Parliament in the world'
Professor Tim Jackson, author of *Prosperity Without Growth*

'There could be few more urgent tasks for any thinking person alive today than encountering this book. Read it: with slow deliberate care...'
Professor Rupert Read, UEA, author *This Civilisation is Finished* and *Extinction Rebellion Political Liaison and Spokesperson*

'From the seventh-generation thinking of Native American tribes to legally empowered guardians of the future and citizens' assemblies, Krznaric explores a wealth of ways we can become good ancestors. For anyone who is interested in how we can get today's society to leave the world better than they found it - this is your guide'
Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

'Krznaric asks the defining moral question for our age: how will future generations look back on our legacy? A superb intellectual history and razor-sharp analysis of contemporary politics, this book will change how you think about the world and is a call to action. Read it. You owe it to your children's children'
Kevin Watkins, Chief Executive of Save the Children

'In this persuasive book, one of our leading thinkers Roman Krznaric expands his ground-breaking work on empathy to argue that our only hope of survival is to develop deep empathy for future generations across time and space'
Professor Morten Kringelbach, neuroscientist, Universities of Oxford and Aarhus, Denmark

'A fascinating and inspiring exploration of one of the great relationship questions of the 21st century: how can we extend our circle of care to future generations?'
John Gray, New York Times bestselling author of *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*