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# **WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS**

**A Manual for  
Self-Reliance  
& Planetary  
Survival**

## ***Book References***

**MATTHEW  
STEIN**

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# **WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS**

**A Manual for  
Self-Reliance &  
Planetary Survival**

**MATTHEW STEIN**



**Clear Light Publishers  
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

## REFERENCES

**Trends and Solutions**

***The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight: Waking up to Personal and Global Transformation*, by Thom Hartmann.** 2000, 336 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-609-80529-0. Published by Crown Publishing Group, 299 Park Ave., New York, NY 10171. Lists for \$14.00.

“*The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight* shines like a beacon in the darkness, an education about reality, a needed wake-up call, and a guidebook through the swamps of denial and ignorance into a brighter, sustainable future.” (Dan Millman, author of *The Peaceful Warrior* and *Everyday Enlightenment*)

If you read only one book about the future of this planet, this should be the one. It provides us clear insights about how we got to where we are and how we might influence where we are headed. It also offers great ideas and inspiration for finding our way to a positive, better future for our world.

***Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*, by Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, and L. Hunter Lovins.** 1999, 378 pp. (hardcover), ISBN 0-316-35316-7. Published by Little Brown & Co., Time Life Building, Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10020. Lists for \$26.95.

I wish *Natural Capitalism* were required reading for all engineers, businesspeople, and politicians. This book provides a blueprint for a worldwide business revolution that could go a long way toward providing a sustainable future for our children. *Natural Capitalism* explores changes that could reduce our current use of resources (the “natural capital” of the planet) by factors on the order of 10 to 1, without reducing our standard of living, by applying existing technologies and redirecting the way we do business. A rational, well-documented book with many case examples, it was written by three well-respected members of the ecological movement, including founders of the Rocky Mountain Institute.

***Believing Cassandra: An Optimist Looks at a Pessimist's World* by Alan AtKisson.** 1999, 236 pp. (paperback), ISBN 1-890132-16-0.

Published by Chelsea Green Publishing Company, P.O. Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001. Lists for \$16.95.

“Alan AtKisson is the freshest and wisest voice to emerge from the sustainability movement in many years. . . . This book renews our sense of the possible and expands the dimensions of our collective intelligence, transforming our sense of the future from a curse to a blessing.” (Paul Hawken, author of *Natural Capitalism*)

Tired of gloom-and-doom outlooks? This author takes a realistic look at where we are heading (which does not look good) and sees it as a wonderful challenge for mankind to wake up and do something really meaningful and worthwhile. In Greek mythology, the god Apollo fell in love with Cassandra, bestowing upon her the gift of prophecy. When Cassandra did not return Apollo's love, he revenged himself by cursing Cassandra such that she would see misfortune before it came, but no one would heed her warnings. In spite of her clear vision and best efforts, all of her warnings were in vain. AtKisson sees the salvation of this world in focusing our attention on current Cassandra-like warnings and awakening to action to prevent ecological suicide from becoming our reality. He challenges us to take the bull by the horns and truly transform our planet by accepting a sustainable future as the only viable option.

***Beyond the Limits: Confronting Global Collapse, Envisioning a Sustainable Future*, by Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, and Jorgen Randers.** 1993, 320pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-930031-62-8. Published by Chelsea Green Publishing Co., PO Box 428, White River Junction, VT 05001. Lists for \$16.95. –

“This book is essential reading for everybody who is concerned with the central issue of our times: how to achieve a transition to a sustainable global future.” (Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway and Chairman of The World Commission on Environment and Development)

Back in the early 1970s, a team of young scientists from MIT spent two years developing

and working with a world computer simulation program called "World3," designed to study the potential consequences of current global patterns of growth and consumption. The computer model results were staggering and made quite a stir when announced to the world and subsequently published in *Limits to Growth* by Donella Meadows, Dennis Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and William H. Behrens III. In one scenario after another, the computer model invariably predicted that human population would swell to the point where it overshot the planet's capability to support the population, and then come crashing down as one system after another failed in mankind's final attempts to keep people fed, clothed, and housed. *Beyond the Limits* shows us where we are headed and explores alternatives to change the course from collapse to sustainability. *Highly Recommended!*

***State of the World 2000* by Lester R. Brown, Christopher Flavin, and Hillary French.** 2000, 276 pp., (paperback) ISBN 0-393-31998-9. Published by W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110. Lists for \$14.95.

Worldwatch Institute comes out with a new edition of their excellent *State of the World* every year. *State of the World* summarizes current trends and includes several excellent informative chapters, contributed by different Worldwatch staff members and guest authors, on topics concerning the state and future of the world. *Fascinating and highly recommended!*

***Vital Signs 2000: The Environmental Trends That Are Shaping Our Future*, by Lester R. Brown, Michael Renner, and Brian Halweil.** 2000, 192 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-393-32022-7. Published by W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110. Lists for \$13.00.

Each year Worldwatch Institute also releases a new volume of its *Vital Signs* series, which documents global trends in a broad variety of areas. *Vital Signs* provides an excellent bird's-eye view of the state of the world via numerous brief articles on current trends and findings. Articles are heavily supported

through graphical representations of relevant data. *Highly recommended!*

***The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Advice from the Union of Concerned Scientists* by Michael Brower, Ph.D., and Warren Leon, Ph.D.** 1999, 292 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-609-80281-X. Published by Three Rivers Press, a division of Crown Publishers, Inc., 201 East 50th St., New York, NY 10022. Lists for \$15.00

This book is about doing what counts, doing what matters. As environmentally concerned consumers, many times we are faced with the choice of products and actions that may or may not make a difference in environmental impact. Ever wonder if choosing paper or plastic bags really makes a difference? What about cloth versus disposable diapers? These people have a lot more time and resources than you or I to determine the relative environmental impacts of a huge array of consumer habits and choices. It turns out that a very few things make most of our personal impact on the environment, such as the car we drive, the house we live in, our eating habits, and our travel/recreational choices. Get this book to help you make informed decisions about your everyday habits and major purchases.

***The Heat Is On*, by Ross Gelbspan.** 1998, 278 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-7382-0025-5. Published by Perseus Publishing, Eleven Cambridge Center, Cambridge, MA 02142. Lists for \$13.00.

"Until you've read this book, you are ill-equipped to think about the planet's future." (Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*)

This is a well-documented book about global warming and the coming climate crisis. Frightening, sobering, and illuminating. For those of you who are interested in nitty gritty details, scientific references, and the facts about this No. 1 planetary issue and the megabuck big business and government cover-up, this book is for you.

***The Coming Oil Crisis* by Colin J. Campbell.** 1997, 210 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0906522110. Published by Petroconsultants S.A., P.O. Box

152-24, Chemin de la Mairie, 1258 Perly, Geneva, Switzerland. Lists for \$29.95.

Written by one of the world's foremost authorities on world oil resources, this book is a powerful awakening to the very real probability that we shall soon see an oil crisis of a magnitude and permanence that has never been seen before. The author, Dr. Colin J. Campbell, has been involved in all phases of world-wide oil exploration and management. He offers a clear, well-documented explanation of the basic geology of oil and why production is likely to decline sharply in the not-too-distant future. I suggest that you get this book to educate yourself about coming events that will severely affect our society. In America, you can buy this book from EcoSystems, Box 7080, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; phone: (831) 425-8523.

***Saving the Planet: How to Shape an Environmentally Sustainable Global Economy***, by Worldwatch Institute's Lester R. Brown, Christopher Flavin, and Sandra Postel. 1991, 224 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-393-30823-5. Published by W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110. Lists for \$8.95.

The authors have assembled an excellent work on turning business-as-usual in new, sustainable directions. It is good companion reading with *Natural Capitalism*, though not quite as current.

***Beyond Recycling: A Re-user's Guide, 336 Practical Tips; Save Money and Protect the Environment*** by Kathy Stein. 1997, 164 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-940666-92-8. Published by Clear Light Publishers, 823 Don Diego, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Lists for \$14.95.

Reusing is a major step above recycling in the ecology efficiency "food chain." Get this guide to assist you in your efforts to reduce environmental impact through reusing products (you can send them on to others even if you do not reuse them yourself).

***Pillar of Sand: Can the Irrigation Miracle Last?*** by Worldwatch Institute's Sandra Postel. 1999, 313 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-393-31937-7. Published by W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10110. Lists for \$13.95.

A sobering look at the world's water usage and growing irrigation crisis, *Pillar of Sand* points the way toward conservation efforts aimed at protecting rivers and vital ecosystems as we work to feed a projected world population of over 8 billion people by the year 2030.

***The End of Nature***, by Bill McKibben. 1989, 226 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-385-41604-0. Published by Anchor Books, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036. Lists for \$14.00.

"McKibben's eye-opening plea ...is likely to prove as important as Rachel Carson's classic *Silent Spring* or Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth*. *The End of Nature* may convert you, or it may infuriate you. But the world will never look the same to you after you've read it." (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*)

*The End of Nature* is a groundbreaking piece of compelling and illuminating environmental journalism. Since it was written in 1989, there is mounting evidence to support the real and present dangers of global warming and other major environmental threats.

***Diet for a New America: How Your Food Choices Affect Your Health, Happiness and the Future of Life on Earth***, by John Robbins. 1998, 423 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-91581-181-2. Published by H.J. Kramer Inc., P.O. Box 1082, Tiburon, CA 94920. Lists for \$14.95.

This is a very powerful, engrossing, and eloquent book about the staggering social, ethical, environmental and health impacts of eating meat. Until reading this book, most people (me included) have no idea of the magnitude of the hidden costs for supporting a heavy meat diet. This book has converted many people to vegetarianism who had not previously given it much thought. —

***Reworking Success: New Communities at the Millenium***, by Robert Theobald. 1997, 119 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-86571-367-7. Published by New Society Publishers, P.O. Box 189, Gabriola Island, BC Canada V0R 1X0.

Robert Theobald has been on the leading edge of fundamental change issues throughout his 40-year

career as a well-known educator, futurist and world policy specialist. This provocative book urges us to redefine the current definitions of economic and political success that we might stem the tide of increasing consumption and move towards a sustainable future before it is too late.

***Rolling Thunder Speaks: A Message for Turtle Island***, by Rolling Thunder, edited by Carmen Sun Rising Pope. 1999, 250 pp. (paperback), ISBN 1-57416-026-5. Published by Clear Light Publishers, 823 Don Diego, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Lists for \$14.95.

A Native American healer, teacher, and activist, Rolling Thunder is known to millions of people all over the world. *Rolling Thunder Speaks* is a major legacy of his extraordinary life and the summation of his teachings in his own words. This is not as much a “how to” book as it is a book about Native American philosophy, spirituality, and living in harmony with the planet. It delves into sustainable living, visions of the future, healing with medicinal plants, and an earth-honoring spiritual message.

***The Way It Is: One Water . . . One Air . . . One Mother Earth***, by Corbin Harney. 1995, 232 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-931892-80-5. Published by Blue Dolphin Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 1920, Nevada City, CA 95959. Lists for \$16.00.

Corbin Harney, the spiritual leader of the Western Shoshone Nation, writes about the future of our world and how we must care for it. He felt obliged by Spirit to become politically active to try to influence people to honor our planet before it is too late.

## Prophecies

***Black Dawn, Bright Day: Indian Prophecies for the Millennium That Reveal the Fate of the Earth***, by Sun Bear with Waban Wind. 1992, 237 pp., (paperback) ISBN 0-671-75900-0. Published by Fireside, Simon & Schuster Building, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. Lists for \$12.00.

“One of the most important visionaries of our time teaches people why and how they must heal them-

selves and the earth now. I recommend this book wholeheartedly.” (Elizabeth Kubler Ross, M.D.)

This is one of the better books on Indian prophecies, written by a well-known Indian healer and spiritual leader.

***Coming Earth Changes: The Latest Evidence***, by William Hutton. 1996, 265 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-87604-361-9. Published by A.R.E. Press, 215 67th St., Virginia Beach, VA 23451. Lists for \$14.95.

In the early 1900s Edgar Cayce, the famous American psychic, predicted the stock market crash of 1929, the devastation of WWII, and numerous accelerating earth changes that would lead to a shift of the earth’s poles sometime around the new millennium. Geologist William Hutton compares predictions in the Cayce psychic readings with the latest geophysical research findings, and points to patterns predicted by Cayce, as early as the 1930s, which appear to be coming true.

***The End Times: Prophecies of the Coming Changes, Including Prophecies and Predictions from the Bible, Nostradamus, Holy Mother, Edgar Cayce***, by John Van Auken. 1996, 168 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-87604-363-5. Published by A.R.E. Press, 215 67th St., Virginia Beach, VA 23451. Lists for \$12.95.

An interesting look at biblical prophecies, the prophecies of Nostradamus and Edgar Cayce, and the visions of Mother Mary. For a more traditional gloom-and-doom look at biblical prophecy, consider one of Hal Lindsey’s books.

***The Millennium Book of Prophecy: 777 Visions and Predictions from Nostradamus, Edgar Cayce, Gurdjieff, Tamo-san, Madame Blavatsky, the Old and New Testament Prophets and 89 Others***, by John Hogue. 1997, 400 pp. (paperback), ISBN 0-06-251077-0. Published by Harper San Francisco, 1160 Battery St., 3rd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94111-1213. Lists for \$14.00.

Modern prophecy guru John Hogue, featured on the TV series *Ancient Prophecies*, has assembled 777

visions and prophecies from over a hundred of the world's most accurate prophets and seers. This volume is a giant collection of predictions for what may be in store for humankind in the year 2000 and beyond. Beginning some 8,000 years B.C., and ending well into the 38th century, *The Millennium Book of Prophecy* covers aspects of the future—religion, politics, war, and natural disasters—with a breadth unlikely to be topped anytime soon.

## RESOURCES

**Worldwatch Institute**, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-1904; phone: (202) 452-1999; fax: (202) 296-7365; web site: [www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org). The web site contains lots of information and links to other informative sites.

Check out WI's books and web site for some accurate and enlightening information on the state of the world. WI is dedicated to fostering the evolution of an environmentally sustainable society—one in which human needs are met in ways that do not threaten the health of the natural environment or the prospects of future generations. The Institute seeks to achieve this goal through the conduct of interdisciplinary nonpartisan research on emerging global environmental issues, the results of which are widely disseminated throughout the world.

**Rocky Mountain Institute**, 1739 Snowmass Creek Road, Snowmass, CO 81654-9199; phone: (970) 927-3851; fax: (970) 927-3420; web site: [www.rmi.org](http://www.rmi.org).

Rocky Mountain Institute is a nonprofit research and educational foundation with a vision across boundaries. Its mission is to foster the efficient and sustainable use of resources as a path to global security. The Institute creates, and helps individuals and private sector businesses to practice, new solutions to old problems—mainly by harnessing the problem-solving power of market economics and of advanced techniques for resource efficiency. These people are real movers and shakers in the movement to create a sustainable future for our planet.

**Union of Concerned Scientists**, 2 Battle Square, Cambridge, MA 02238-9105; phone: (617) 547-5552; fax: (617) 864-9405; web site: [www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org).

UCS is an independent nonprofit alliance of 50,000 concerned citizens and scientists across the country. They augment rigorous scientific analysis with innovative thinking and committed citizen advocacy to build a cleaner, healthier environment and a safer world. Search their web site for numerous well-documented articles on environmental topics, including global warming. They publish a quarterly journal and unite scientists, engineers, and citizens as a positive political force for change.

**World Resources Institute**, 10 G Street, NE (Suite 800), Washington, DC 20002; phone: (202) 729-7600; fax: (202) 729-7610; web site: [www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org). The World Resources Institute's mission is to move human society to live in ways that protect the earth's environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

**Greenpeace USA**, 702 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20001; phone: (202) 462-1177; fax: (202) 462-4507; web site: [www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org).

This is one of the oldest and most popular organizations devoted to environmental education, awareness, and activism. Their web site search engine offers access to a tremendous volume of archived environmental information plus a multitude of links to other related sites.

**EarthSave International**, 600 Distillery Commons, Suite 200, Louisville, KY 40206-1922; web site: [www.earthsave.org](http://www.earthsave.org).

EarthSave is based on the principles developed in John Robbins's book *Diet for a New America*. EarthSave promotes environmental well-being and improved human health through positive food choices. It raises awareness of the vast ecological destruction resulting from the unsustainable production of animal foods, promoting instead a delicious planet-friendly diet.

**International Forum on Globalization**, Building 1062, Fort Cronkhite, Sausalito, CA 94965; phone: (415) 229-9350; fax: (415) 229-9340; web site: [www.ifg.org](http://www.ifg.org).

The Forum advocates equitable, democratic, and ecologically sustainable economics. It was formed in response to the current worldwide drive toward a globalized economic system dominated by supranational corporate trade and banking institutions that are not accountable to democratic processes or national governments. These current trends toward globalization are neither historically inevitable nor desirable. The goal of the IFG is twofold: expose the multiple effects of economic globalization in order to stimulate debate, and seek to reverse the globalization process by encouraging ideas and activities that revitalize local economies and communities and ensure long-term ecological stability.

**Alternative Energy Institute, Inc.**, P.O. Box 7074, Tahoe City, CA 96145; phone: (530) 583-1720; fax: (530) 583-5153; web site: [www.altenergy.org](http://www.altenergy.org).

The Institute was organized to educate the public about the impending nonrenewable energy crisis, the search for solutions, and to improve the climate for development of new energy technologies. They are a group of concerned people who believe solutions can be found when people are aware of the problems facing the world. They are focused on finding solutions and encouraging both citizens and public entities to act responsibly for the planet's future. Check out their web site for many informative reports and articles on world energy usage, coal, gas, oil, solar, current trends, new energy technologies, and so forth. This is an excellent source for information and green links to other sites. Sign up for their informative Alternative Energy web-based newsletter (it's free, and it is very good!).



# WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS



## A Manual for Self-Reliance & Planetary Survival

*"Stein's excellent guide to simplifying your life, reducing your environmental impact, and pulling yourself out of a jam is sure to gather no dust on your bookshelf. . . This book is a personal and planetary empowerment tool."*

—Richard Heede, Ph.D., author,  
*Homemade Money: How to Save Energy and Dollars in Your Home*

*"A marvelous guidebook for helping us through the worst of times, and even improving on the best of times ..."*

—Thom Hartmann, author, *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight*

*"I liked this book. It's carefully researched, comprehensive, well illustrated, and readable. It presents much needed alternate information, for, in my opinion, technology has already 'failed' . . . So replacement of polluting 'high' technologies with non-polluting 'low' ones is urgent, and Matthew Stein's handbook systematically and accurately surveys a wide array of possible low-tech options. Much hard work, time, and talent went into the building of this basic reference survey of low-tech options."*

—Carla Emery, author, *The Encyclopedia of Country Living: An Old-Fashioned Recipe Book*

*"We may all need a survival reference when technology fails. Matthew provides one—fact-filled, with useful tips on all aspects of survival, clothing, food, shelter, water, etc., including such vital subjects as grazing and the green pharmacy."*

—James A. Duke, economic botanist, USDA (ret.) and author of *The Green Pharmacy*

*"WHEN TECHNOLOGY FAILS is a massive project done well. First the book gives a superb presentation of WHY one should be more aware and prepared—and then HOW one should go about this. The scope of this book . . . is thorough. Not only is the information presented well, but a solid bibliography can carry the student as far as he desires in any particular area of interest."*

—John McPherson, author, *Primitive Wilderness Living & Survival Skills*

*"The depth of this book, covering everything from building materials to spiritual healing, is astounding. It is a one-stop source . . . to create a self-sufficient, earth-friendly lifestyle. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in preserving the health of themselves and the planet—and moving toward a sustainable, sane way of living."*

—Robyn Griggs Lawrence, editor-in-chief, *Natural Home* magazine

*"Whether you are seeking self-reliance and a simpler life or fear the collapse of social services, this compendium of practical information for sustainable living belongs on your bookshelf. . ."*

—Fred C. Walters, editor, *Acres U.S.A.* magazine

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