

# The Future Is Calling Us to Greatness

with Michael Dowd + 56 Experts



## How Business Can Help Green the World

with Chris Henderson

Big ideas from this session:

- The making of Aboriginal Power: Clean Energy and the Future of Canada's First Peoples
- How he helped green the Olympics and major hotel chains around the world
- Where clean energy, environmental action, and sustainable economic development intersect

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Michael: Well Chris, thank you so much for being a part of this conversation series, this Skype conversation series on The Future is Calling Us to Greatness.

Chris: My pleasure, Michael.

Michael: The last time we talked it was in your dining room and here we are now in Chicago in someone else's dining room. It's been about a year. Connie and I so valued our conversation and our stay with you and Andrea that I wanted to make sure to include you as part of this series because your work at the intersection of clean tech, aboriginal power, sustainability, business is, I think, so vital.

Before, I go on and start asking questions, what I've been inviting all of my guests to do at the beginning – and I'll probably turn my video off just to save bandwidth while you're speaking and then I'll turn my video back on when I speak, but if you could just help us know who Chris Henderson is – give us a sense of how you got to where you are and what you're particularly passionate about and involved in.

Chris: Sure. I would be pleased to. The *Reader's Digest* version is this. My first career was as a hospital administrator, which I started because I had a brain tumor in university and I said, "Well, what could I do about that?" Once I was successfully treated, I became a hospital administrator, which I did for about 15 years.

Then I said, “Well, is there a way I could help prevent illness rather than just simply help treating it?” which got me into the environmental sector, which was very much at the leadership of my wife, Andrea, who was working for Environmental NGO for Ottawa at the time in Canada. As a result of that, I decided to form a company, which is the Delphi group, which is the largest environmental consulting company in Canada where we help, particularly, companies reduce their climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

In the last 10 years, my main focus though has been working with aboriginal peoples in Canada; First Nation, Inuit, Metis organizations; to help them become co-owners of green energy projects, renewable energy projects that, by developing wind or hydro or solar power, we also have a renewable energy solution to climate change. That’s what I’m passionate about. I’m passionate about acting in our environment in practical ways, but also scaling up and involving indigenous people. That’s my startup story.

Michael: That’s great. Fabulous, Chris. You mentioned co-owners. I’d like you to share a little bit more about how you’ve been working with indigenous communities and how they’ve been responding to you and any stories, any fun stories that you’d like to share about that.

Chris: I’d be pleased to. First of all, I work across Canada, so I go from the Arctic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean and everywhere in between. That’s a large land mass.

Michael: I should say.

Chris: This is the second largest land mass country in the world. The indigenous people – every ounce of territory in the United States, Canada and Mexico was indigenous. The aboriginal people were the stewards of the land – the Indians in the United States and the First Nations people here. As a result of that, frankly, that’s their territory. As we start to develop renewable energy resources on this territory, the aboriginal people in Canada said, “Well, hold on a minute. We don’t want to be passive standbys on this. We want to be a part of that solution.”

What I help aboriginal people do is become co-owners of their resources along with utilities, private corporations and energy development companies. As a result of that, we make these projects better. They’re better environmentally. They offer more local benefits. They offer benefits for aboriginal people while, at the same time, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

That’s how we’re trying to change the vector we have in Canada of how we’re emitting greenhouse gases with aboriginal participation.

Michael: Yeah, well it's interesting because when we first had a conversation around this stuff just over a year ago, I was surprised. Actually, surprise isn't the right word. I just hadn't thought about how much diesel fuel needed to be used by people who are in isolated locations and to help communities reduce their amount of diesel fuel and have more sustainable energy is a huge boom at multiple levels.

Chris: Well, let me give you a number on that because actually, last week, I was actually presenting to all the energy and money ministers of Canada, all the states and provinces and territories and saying to them, "Look, can we do something about diesel fuel?" Here's the number. In Canada every year, we consume one billion liters of diesel fuel in off-grid communities that are not connected to provincial grids.

That is a dirty fuel with high greenhouse gas emissions with all kinds of environmental contaminants. There's a movement across Canada to say, "How can we get off diesel fuel?" Next week, for example, I'll be flying from Ottawa up to the east coast of the Atlantic to Labrador where there are a group of aboriginal communities that are off the grid.

We're looking to see how we can replace the diesel fuel with renewable energy through energy efficiency and even local resources like bio mass and replacing the diesel fuel. We have to replace a billion liters of diesel fuel in Canada that's consumed inappropriately with a huge environmental impact.

Michael: Wow. Wow. Wow, that's great. One of the things that I would love to have you share about is something that Connie and I – just for those of you that are watching or listening – Connie and I – Andrea, who is Chris's wife is also a pastor and she invited me to speak to her church and invited Connie and I to stay at their home. Chris is a really amazing cook among other things and so he was just cooking and didn't know who this guy was.

He's just a good chef, a nice husband and that sort of thing and then he started sharing, over breakfast one morning, just some of the things that he and his organization have been involved in over the years. I was just blown out, so Chris, could you share a little bit about some of the things that you're proudest of that you and the Delphi group have been engaged in and succeeded in over the course of the last couple decades or however long it's been.

Chris: Well, what I would say we're proud about – now I do my work through my other company Lumos Energy. I always like lumos because it's the Harry Potter command. When Harry Potter says lumos, his light wand lights up. That's because lumos is light in Greek, so when I was forming my new company, Lumos Energy, which I've been with for a decade, I wanted to pick something that was important to my kids, so I picked lumos and they loved the idea because it's Harry Potter.

With Lumos the thing I'm most proud about is an approach we've taken to renewable energy that we've called restoring the natural and heritage landscape. It's not just doing a renewable energy project like small hydro and [runner 6:57] river hydro or wind power or solar power. It's actually doing it in a way so that you store the natural landscape to what it was before the project was even there.

Last week I was up in the French River, which is near Lake Huron. There is a hydro project that's being built besides some dams that have been there for 100 years, but that hydro project, which is owned 40% by the indigenous community there, is also protecting the [inaudible 7:25] spaces, improving the walleye habitat, making sure that the local community gets benefits from the result of that.

I am proud the most about how the projects we're doing are restoring the relationship between people and the land that existed hundreds of years ago. You develop renewable power, but you also reconstitute and protect nature. You recognize the traditional heritage, the old [portage 7:49] roots that the average [inaudible 7:51] used hundreds of years ago and you also protect species, species at risk and you protect the local economies.

That's sort of an approach that we've coined and developed that I am most proud about. I think [inaudible 8:04] develop renewable energy to replace fossil fuels, but do it in a way that [inaudible 8:08] the heritage, the [inaudible 8:10] and the local economic landscape. That is really value additive.

Michael: Yeah. I agree. It basically does away with the idea that there's one solution and one way and that you've got to attend to both the health of the environment, the health of future generations, the health of the economies, the respect for the traditions and that sort of thing.

Chris: You're actually right Mike, but what that requires is a bit of out-of-the-box thinking. If you think of a renewable energy company or utility they want to build a hydro project or wind farm or solar farm and they go, "Look, we want to build it fast. We want to build it cheap and we want to get it done." But, that's making a pie that's only so big.

You know when you're at Thanksgiving and someone takes the last piece of pumpkin pie and you going, "Boy, I really wish I could get that?" What if the pie was bigger? Restoring the heritage, natural and local economic landscape says we can have more economic benefits, more social benefits by being more collaborative with the indigenous community and the local community.

In that fashion, what you're doing is you're not only bringing renewable energy on board, but you're creating these really deep and profound and sustainable and resilient and restorative benefits that last for generations. That's an exciting story that I'll probably write about in my next book, though I haven't decided to write it yet, but that's what I think we need to

do, not only to bring the renewable energy on board, not only doing it with indigenous people, but doing it in a way that restores landscapes.

Michael: Yeah, that's great. As I recall, you and your organization were also involved in and perhaps, I think it was the first ones that were invited to help green some of the large-scale sporting events and things like that. Say a little bit about that.

Chris: Well, that goes back a bit. About 20 years ago, with my company the Delphi Group, one of my staff came to me one year and said, "I'd like to write a book." I said, "Well David, what about?" He said, "I'd like to write a book about greening sporting events and facilities." I said, "Okay. Go ahead. You write it. I'll publish it." We did. It's called *Greening Our Games*.

At that time, it was the first book about how sporting events and facilities could be greened. As a result of the book, the international Olympic committee, the Ryder Cup, the World Cup, the Super Bowl, hired us to say, "Well, how can we green our operations, both event and facilities?" which we did. We greened the Beijing Olympics. We greened the Sydney Olympics. David then set up a separate company called Green and Go, which still exists, which does that.

That's become a, frankly, the way it should be done. Now if you develop a recreation center or you're on a college campus with a sports facility or you're doing the Olympic games or you're doing a sporting event, you've got to do it to protect the environment. There are some great organizations like Champions for Clean Air, former Olympic athletes who promote this as well. It's something we did 20 years ago.

I'm not too much involved with it now. I'm really glad I was involved with it to start it off. I think if we can green sectors of the economy like that, that make sense, they do stay there forever. It's not just a one-time change. You change the practice of, in this case, sporting events and greening forever.

Michael: Yeah and weren't you also involved in something similar with the hotel industry?

Chris: Yeah, that even goes back further 25 years ago when we first started our company, the Delphi Group. We were starting out and a woman came to me looking for a job. We weren't hiring them, but about three months later she called me and I said, "We're still not looking for people." She goes, "No, no I want to hire your company." I said, "We're just starting up." I asked her, "What do you want to hire us for?"

She goes, "Well, I now work for CP [inaudible 11:51] now owned by Fairmont, the big chain. We want to green our hotel chain." I said, "We don't know anything about that." She said, "Well, no one does either. Can you help us look at it?" We did. I did an audit of a few

hotels and I found out there were 18 things you could do from recycling oil from the fleets to growing gardens on the rooftops that could be in the kitchens of the hotels, to not changing sheets every day if someone stays for a week, for example.

We went to see the CEO and he said, “Chris, you’ve done the study, fine. Why should I spend several hundred thousand dollars to implement it?” He was giving me all the excuses why he couldn’t. Finally I said, “Bob look, in every one of your hotels every week, there’s an employee who gets an eye injury from using a cleaner or a product that’s more hazardous or toxic than it needs to be. That’s costing you money and your employees are getting harmed and their health is being hurt.” He says, “Done, let’s do it.” Then we did the first test hotel, the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, a big hotel, several hundred rooms.

We went to the nursing aids and said, “Look, you don’t have to change the sheets every day,” but they still kept doing them every day if Michael Dowd stayed for a week. Finally we said, “You don’t have to do this?” They said, “Well, we lose our jobs?” We said, “No.” In fact, the ladies were illiterate in English. They were Spanish and Italian and Portuguese ladies, so we did a symbolic program of change this bed. Don’t change this bed.

Then they implemented the program, which saved that hotel half a million dollars a year in detergent and water and a lot of impact on the environment. Not only that, those rules about hanging your towels up if you’re staying a few days and putting them in the bathtub if they should be cleaned, those are all our ideas. We did Sepia hotels, then we did Doubletree, then we did Sheraton, now Fairmont does it.

Every hotel chain in the world did it. The story there, Michael, is that a simple idea, a good idea, if it makes sense, you’ve got to push a bit to change it, but once you change it, it becomes part of an operation of an organization. It’s there forever. You’ve made the change. Now hotels around the world are saving water and detergent all with a simple idea.

Michael: That’s great and saving energy too. You touched on a principle that I want you to really go into a little bit more because I think it’s a broader way of thinking about sustainability than many of us think, which is how to shift systems, actually how to shift systems such that the system then continues to move in the right direction or continues to engage in some way. I know you’ve had experience with that, so anything you can change about that.

Chris: Sure. The mantra we use in that, Michael, is let’s change things...forever. Here’s a really, really interesting example. About 15 years ago another one of my staff came to me and said, “Look, I’ve got an idea.” I said, “Well Bruce, what’s the idea?” He said, “Well, why don’t we go to Boy Scouts of Canada and help them create a climate change badge?” I said, “Well, we don’t do that.”

He said, “Well, why not?” I said, “Okay, we’ll go see them.” We went to see Boy Scouts and said, “Would you start a climate change badge?” They said, “We don’t, but okay, let’s do it.” We set up the standards of – you know how Boy Scouts love getting badges?

Michael: Yeah.

Chris: We created the standards for a climate change award of doing a home energy audit, doing a solar product and so on. Then we said, “Well, why don’t we take it around the world?” I went to the World Scouting Jamboree into Tunisia and presented the idea. Well today, Michael, the idea of a climate change badge is practiced in 140 scouting federations around the world.

Once you put the badge in place, it’s there forever. It doesn’t need funding next year. The next group of Boy Scouts and [girl/guys 15:22] that come in, they use the badge again. In Indonesia, every girl and boy – this is interesting for an Islamic country – has to, by law, interesting, join Boy Scouts. That means every kid in Indonesia has the opportunity to learn about climate change and earn a climate change award every year, forever.

The point of systems is that rather than doing something every year that you’ve got to do for climate change or action with environment, try to change people’s hearts and minds and make it part of the operating practice of a home, a community, a company, an organization. Once you’ve done that, like we did for Boy Scouts, I know today there are tens of millions of young people around the world who are earning their climate change badge because we came up with a simple idea that changed things forever.

Michael: Yeah, that’s fabulous because what that does is it also, as we all know, those of us who are parents, like you and like I, we know how much kids can shift their parents. Kids come home with values and especially if it speaks to the heart, if the parents know that the child is onto something important, even though it may be awkward or inconvenient at first. There’s also that good feeling that you have when you make some changes in your life that you know are in the right direction.

Well, one of the things that you also shared a year ago – and I wanted to ask you about it because many of us in the green movement and sustainability movement can be anti-business or anti-corporations. There’s a lot in government and corporations and business to be anti, of course, but there’s also ways in which the business community is really leading or can lead some of the entrenched government.

I know that on the issue of taxing carbon, getting a fair playing field, anything that you could say about how business either can or could or has been leading, please.

Chris: I would say business organizations and individual corporations will be the number one champions for action for carbon a neutral future. I say this in an informed way. Most businesses have made the switch. They realize that energy is a cost. Carbon is a cost. Waste is a cost. They have a natural, vested interest to reduce the amount of energy they consume. They have a natural, vested interest to increase the amount of renewable energy the consumer because [inaudible 17:49] source of power that reduces their waste emissions.

As a result, what we're seeing is that companies are driving very hard in this direction. What companies want is a level playing field, to your point. They want to say, "Look, treat us all the same and we'll bring the [inaudible 18:03] and the technology, the capital, the ingenuity to make a change. In November I'm going to be down in Georgia visiting with Interface. That used to be run by a real visionary gentleman called Ray Anderson.

Interface is one of the largest flooring manufacturers in the world. Ray decided 20 years ago he was going to make it waste neutral. He was going to produce carpets without producing any waste while using only renewable energy and Ray's company has done that. We're taking about 20 companies down from Canada to go and study how they've done it down there because those companies want to learn.

I would say to people, while you can rage at corporations and certainly with some of the terrible things that have happened on Wall Street and capital markets certainly should be railed against and I do, as you, the reality is most companies are partners in taking action on the environment. Engage them. Sometimes there's a bit of a tension.

Sometimes there's a bit of a tug and pull, but I have found that most companies want to go in the direction of reducing their environmental footprints and going to a carbon neutral future. By bringing business together, we may actually get governments to move.

Michael: Yeah, exactly. Chris, one of the things that I love about our time with you and just the work that you do is that you interact with so many different people in different contexts and have gathered some stories over the years. How do you stay inspired? What is it that allows you to do the work that you do on a day-by-day, week-by-week basis in the face of some pretty scary stuff? How do you stay inspired and any inspiring stories that you can tell that might inspire people that are listening or watching in on this series?

Chris: For sure. I think you have to take pleasure from accomplishments. Some of the things I've explained on the phone here, on Skype, are those accomplishments. Those always fill my cup. The other thing about the environment that is interesting, I was telling someone that recently. I said, "Look, a lot of spheres – there's a lot of dynamism when you first start out and then it sort of peters out."



The beauty of building a greener economy is that every day, almost every day, I get contacted by a young person who wants to work in the field and they bring energy. They bring an enthusiasm. They bring their own ingenuity and creativity, so I find it's very easy to be enthusiastic and be positive when you see that your cup is always being filled. It's not running out.

In order to make sure that happens though, I think all of us, particularly those of us that are older, in maybe the latter third of our careers, we have an obligation, so when that young person calls or emails you and asks for a bit of time or is looking for a mentor or looking for a bit of help on where they should go in their job search, we have an obligation to give them that time and to give them our wisdom.

If we do that, the cup keeps filling up. If we don't, the cup will not keep filling up. Therefore, in order to be enthusiastic we need those young people coming in, but they need our time as well.

Michael: Yeah. That's great. I took some notes based on our previous conversation with you and there were a couple things that you mentioned back then that I wanted to make sure I asked you about. One of them was something like 1,000 solar rooftops or something like that and then also the 3i Summit and any other projects that you want to share about.

Chris: I'm a firm believer in the global local aspect of sustainability so the work I do in my day-to-day job with Aboriginal Power and Lumos Energy is very global, in a sense, in the Canadian sense, but we're doing large projects. They may be \$50 million or \$1 billion in size of renewable energy, but I also have a local interest here in Ottawa and a couple things define that. One is that action on environment.

A couple years ago we were trying to use solar energy more in our term. I brought in all the solar energy companies and the NGO's and I said, "Look, we're not making enough progress." I put the number 1,000 on the board and I said, "How about we, within two years, we have 1,000 solar rooftops in Ottawa with solar power?" People said, "Well, that's impossible. We only have 100 right now. We could never get there."

I said, "It's a target. Let's go for it." Well, I'm happy to report, Michael, we're at 950. We're almost there. If you set a target and say, "let's get there," people want to go there. If people want information about that they can go to [1000solarrooftops.ca](http://1000solarrooftops.ca) and they'll get to that site. They'll see information about it.

3i Summit was to say we need to make sure that we fill the local cup of ingenuity as well for environment sustainability. About two and a half years ago we brought everybody together in Ottawa, which is a community of about a million people. We brought in 300

environmental activists, green businesses and others and said, “What should we do to go forward? What’s the next horizon of things we should work on?”

3i stands for Ideas, Innovation and Implementation. If you look at 3i and 3 is a number. I is a smaller I like iPod. You can get to 3i Summit. You’ll see the things that we did. What I’m happy to report, that happened two years ago. Actually, the week after next, on September 18<sup>th</sup> we have a reunion event of the 3i Summit, which is 3i Fall Forward and we had identified in the summit 30 different initiatives to move forward, everything from an eco-central district or an eco-talent network to a manager initiative called Tree Ottawa.

I can tell you that of those 30 initiatives, 25 are being implemented because you create a local force of people, you keep revisiting it and you look at how you collaborate, so that’s some of the local things I get involved with to make sure that, while I do my business stuff across Canada, I make sure the local community is taken care of as well. In that, the initiative I’m now involved with most right now is something called Tree Ottawa, which is trying to re-tree the landscape.

In Ottawa, we’re going to lose – this is a really big number, a nasty number, Michael – we’re going to lose 40 million trees from the Emerald Ash Borer, 40 million trees. That’s one in every four trees are going to die because of Emerald Ash Borer, therefore, we’ve decided to plant millions of trees. In fact, what we’re going to do, Canada is going to celebrate its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a country in 3 year’s time.

We’ve agreed that we’re going to plant one tree for every Ottawa resident, that’s a million trees, and more to come. You can go to Tree Ottawa the website, [treeottawa.org](http://treeottawa.org). You can find things like – you know how when you drive the highway – and you do it because you and Connie travel – and you see that people can adopt a mile of highway?

Michael: Yes, exactly.

Chris: I thought that was kind of nice, but couldn’t you adopt a tree? You can go to the Tree Ottawa website and say, “I want to adopt a tree in my yard or in front of my business or in a park.” Through GPS software, that’s now your tree. You can look after it. If something goes wrong with it, you can call the city and say, “Hey listen, I think there are some pests there. Can you take care of it?”

Then we’re going to say, “Okay, can you plant a tree?” Can you plant a tree on your property or support the Boy’s and Girl’s Club or Boy Scouts? What you want is you want to work with people in a new, digital framework, a new reality of saying use digital tools, like GPS software, like adopt a tree and others. I’m really pleased that part of my life is the local, environmental activism.

If you find like-minded people and bring them together, amazing things can happen. People want to see that in our community of Ottawa. Go to things like 1000solarrooftops.ca. Go to the 3i Summit. Go to Tree Ottawa and if anyone has any questions they can always email me at chenderson@delphi.ca. Pleased to answer questions and also learn from others because we've learned – the 1,000 solar rooftops stuff, we learned from stuff in the U.S.

We learned from stuff that Portland, Oregon was doing about trees, so we can do a lot of connection across Canada, the U.S., with these local environmental activities and these national ones and that's just going to make us a whole better, greener continent. How about a greener continent, not a greener community – well, tens of thousands of greener communities, greener countries and a greener continent.

Michael: Amen. Well, again, what you're pointing to is the importance of both local and global, both action and consciousness. Most of us don't have the networks or connections to have a global impact, but we can do it locally, but because you've been working with the various indigenous communities around Aboriginal Power, I'm wondering if you could just share a story or two of something that you've found particularly inspiring in that larger scale work that you've also been doing.

Chris: Yeah. The key to aboriginal, indigenous communities is culture. Their culture is defined by the gifts that the creator have given them, their land, their territory and that includes the air, the water, the sun, the wind and, ironically, those are sources of renewable resources too. One of the things we pay particular attention to when we work with indigenous communities, which is my day-to-day work is I always look to culture.

I always look to the elders to tell us how we should be wise in the way we use a renewable resource like hydro power or wind power. We always look to aboriginal traditions to inform how we recognize those gifts, the traditional ceremonies of thanking the creator for these gifts. We always want to look at how, even the physical planning of these facilities reflect culture so that it doesn't look like a hydro plant or a wind turbine.

It looks indigenous. It looks that it's rooted in culture. Then we often ask the indigenous communities to share their culture with their partners, their partners in renewable energy companies or utilities. I think with indigenous communities, the key here is listening and listening to culture and listening how culture is expressed.

If you do that, wonderful things happen. Wonderful things get uncovered that you did not know and sometimes they weren't fully aware of too. Take time though. Culture is not understood quickly. It's not just going to a powwow. It's not just reading a book. It's not just going to watch a [inaudible 28:01]. It takes time and there's a humbleness in that that one

must be aware of. You may learn one thing now, but you will always learn something else a few months from now, if your heart is open to it.

Michael: Yeah, beautiful. Beautifully said. Well, there's a question that Connie has invited me to ask all of my guests in the series and it's a little odd, but it's resulted in some absolutely interesting and fascinating responses.

That is if you could have dinner with any three people in human history, either all four of you together at a part or a one on one over a glass of beer or cup of coffee or meal or whatever, but if you could have a one on one in a comfortable setting that was nourishing at multiple levels, with any three people in history, who would those three people be and why would you choose them?

Chris: It's a great question – a tough question to answer, so many choices. I'd have to say one would be Nelson Mandela, one because of all the spirit that he had and the way he restored democracy in his country and the way in which the style he had it. At that time, 30 years ago, when apartheid was rife in South Africa, I was very active in international development communities and [inaudible 29:19] nations, the former British Commonwealth, fighting that.

I'd love to spend a dinner with Nelson Mandela. The other two would be one, Ray Anderson. The good thing about Ray Anderson, who ran Interface Flooring before he passed away about two years ago – I actually did spend time with Ray a couple of times and I remember once chairing a [inaudible 29:40] of a conference in Vancouver. Ray was the panelist and he came with a bunch of CEO's with their speeches.

They were there before the session, five minutes before the session. I said, "Ray, is that your speech?" Ray had this Georgia drawl. He goes, "Well Chris, it is." I said, "Can I see it, Ray?" Ray handed me his speech and I ripped the paper up. Ray said, "Now Chris, why would you do that?" Behind him was this horrified communications person. I said, "Ray, we're not going to give speeches. We're just going to talk and listen."

Then Ray looked at me and he went, "I can do that." Ray's story about how he had to rebuild his company and then he decided he would build it through a natural philosophy, would be great to talk to. Finally, I would choose a gentleman called Chief William Commanda, which is spelled like commando, but with an A at the end. Chief William Commanda was a chief of the Algonquin Nation here in central Canada.

His first job was actually as a fishing guide in northern Quebec and, actually, I have pictures of him from then. He [inaudible 40:48] years. He only passed away about eight years ago. In the last 60 to 80 years, he said, "Let's bring together the nations together to restore the world that we're in." He created a philosophy that tens of thousands of people subscribe to, his own Algonquin, and a lot of people are not Algonquin who are non-aboriginal.

He said, “All nations must come together.” He wanted to heal. It’s my pleasure now to also be, in fact, a clean energy advisor to his tribes, the Algonquin nation, both here in Ontario and in Quebec, looking for clean energy projects that restore this natural heritage, this landscape we need to build. I would love to have dinner, individually or together with Nelson Mandela, Ray Anderson and William Commanda.

They’re all men, by chance, but my next list will be three women, but that’s my answer, Connie. I’d love you guys to join us if we could ever do that, here or in the life ever after.

Michael: Thanks. That sounds like a plan to me. I guess the last question I’d love to ask you is if you were talking to someone – actually, I’ll make it two different people because I realize your answer may be different depending upon age.

Somebody who’s over 50, who’s just really struggling or depressed or overwhelmed with the state of the world and the things the direction seems to be going in – what would you say to them that would be encouraging, enlivening, hopeful? Then also somebody, maybe in their young twenties, late teens or young twenties, again that’s perhaps overwhelmed by the challenges? What would you say to each of them independently that would be a word of encouragement, a word of hope or a sustenance?

Chris: To the elder I would say go walk in nature. Nothing is more restorative than holding, even to hug a tree. Let the tree wash, the forest, wash you. Listen to the insects. Listen to the animals. With that, you know that when you pass, that will still be here. Nature will endure. It might change. It may change through natural pressures and made through unnatural ones like through climate change, but nature is incredibly resilient.

Nature will give legacy. Nature will be the gift the creator has given us, living today and forever. If you feel the world is not going the direction you would want it to – and I would share a bit of that, in fact a lot of that. Go in nature because nature restores you personally. By you being in nature, you help nature restore itself.

Michael: Beautiful.

Chris: To the young person, I would say don’t choose a career even though a career may choose you. Choose passion. Choose to make mistakes. Choose to not worry about where you will earn the next dollar because if you think about it too hard, the dollar becomes more important than the things that you do. If you choose passion, you will encounter incredible failures. You will encounter incredible [inaudible 33:57].

You will discover that your ideas that you thought were good may not be as good as you thought. It doesn't matter. It's the whole journey of discovery, the whole chance of taking chances, of seeing how, in fact, your passion is going to uncover whatever they will uncover. It's so empowering that you will never have regrets. When you are 50 and you walk in nature, you will be walking in a restorative world you've helped create that will be there when you are ashes and dust. We are all ashes and dust because nature never will be.

Michael: Yeah. Wow. Well, that's a wonderful note to end on. If people want to go deeply into some of your ideas and some of the things that you've shared, any particular websites? Obviously, mention the title of your book again.

Chris: Right. If you want to learn more about how indigenous communities are involved with clean energy, go to [aboriginalpower.ca](http://aboriginalpower.ca). Lots of resources there. The book's profile is there. Starting next month I'll be putting on blogs every month and you can get to them. If you want to look at how solar power is being dealt with in our community go [1000solarrooftops.ca](http://1000solarrooftops.ca). If you want to learn about community activism, go to [3isummit.ca](http://3isummit.ca).

You'll get the information there and if you want to get the information about trees, go to [treeottawa.org](http://treeottawa.org). Always, you can always contact me at [chenderson@delphi.ca](mailto:chenderson@delphi.ca). I'd love to talk and exchange and share stories and share celebrations with folks.

Michael: Fabulous. Fabulous. Well Chris, thank you so much. Love and blessings to you and Andrea and your boys.

Chris: Likewise to Connie.

Michael: I look forward to seeing you again.

Chris: Peace.

Michael: Okay, peace to you.

Chris: Amen.