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Will MacAskill: What are the most important moral problems of our time? | TED Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/will_macaskill_what_are_the_most_important_moral_problems_of_our_time

Advanced Words Only

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Session 1: Word List

capita

n. a Latin word meaning "head," used to express the amount for each person; any head or headlike expansion on a structure, as on a bone

synonym : head, headcount, person

(1) per **capita** sales, (2) the agricultural yield per **capita**
GDP per **capita** shrunk by almost 10 percent for the third consecutive year.

bounty

n. a reward offered for capturing or killing someone or for accomplishing a specific task

synonym : reward, premium, recompense

(1) cash **bounty**, (2) a **bounty** on exports

The **bounty** hunter was hired to capture the notorious criminal and bring him to justice.

altruism

n. the belief or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others; unselfish devotion to the welfare of others often expressed as acts of kindness or charity

synonym : selflessness, philanthropy, generosity

(1) acts of **altruism**, (2) **altruism** in society

His act of volunteering at the homeless shelter was a clear example of practical **altruism**.

solvable

adj. capable of being solved or resolved; able to be fixed or resolved with effort, skill, or knowledge

synonym : attainable, resolvable, achievable

(1) **solvable** problem, (2) mathematically **solvable** equation

The engineers found the technical glitch in the system was quite **solvable** with a software update.

diminish

v. to reduce or be reduced in size, extent, or importance; to make something smaller, weaker, etc.

synonym : decline, dwindle, lessen

(1) **diminish** a reputation, (2) **diminish** swelling

As people get old, their energies may **diminish**.

converge

v. to move or draw together at a specific location; (of lines) to move towards the same point where they join or meet

synonym : congregate, assemble, concentrate

(1) **converge** of a series, (2) **converge** from different points

The two rivers **converge** into one near this area.

measles

n. a highly infectious viral disease that causes fever, red spots on the skin, and other flu-like symptoms, typically affects children

synonym : rash, red measles, rubella

(1) **measles** outbreak, (2) **measles** vaccine

The school sent a notice of a **measles** case in one of the classrooms.

eradicate

v. to get rid of or destroy something completely, especially something bad

synonym : destroy, eliminate, exterminate

(1) **eradicate** the deficit, (2) **eradicate** racial discrimination

We are trying to **eradicate** this disease from the world.

smallpox

n. a highly contagious viral disease characterized by fever, weakness, spots on the skin, and often death

synonym : variola

(1) **smallpox** epidemic, (2) **smallpox** vaccine

An outbreak of **smallpox** occurred in the 1920s.

long-lasting

adj. existing or continuing for a long time

synonym : enduring, abiding, durable

(1) **long-lasting** battery, (2) a **long-lasting** friendship

They finally decided to solve the **long-lasting** problem.

insecticide

n. a substance used to kill insects

synonym : pesticide, bug-killer, rodenticide

(1) **insecticide** spray, (2) **insecticide** residue

The farmer sprayed the crop with **insecticide** to protect it from pests.

opportune

adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

synonym : suitable, timely, practical

(1) **opportune** occasion, (2) an **opportune** remark

The phone rang at the most **opportune** time.

horrific

adj. causing horror or disgust; gruesome and terrifying

synonym : terrifying, alarming, shocking

(1) **horrific** experience, (2) **horrific** condition

The accident scene was **horrific**, with bodies and debris scattered everywhere.

stray

v. to move about aimlessly or without any destination; to move away from the right course or place where you should be

synonym : deviate, err, depart

(1) **stray** beyond the confines, (2) **stray** from a rule

Tourists often get lost and **stray** into a restricted area.

philanthropic

adj. characterized by a desire to promote the welfare of others, especially by donating money or providing charitable aid; of or relating to the practice of philanthropy

synonym : charitable, benevolent, generous

(1) **philanthropic** donation, (2) **philanthropic** mission
The **philanthropic** organization donated millions of dollars to fund medical research.

pandemic

n. an outbreak of a disease that affects many people over a very wide area

synonym: outbreak

(1) flu **pandemic**, (2) global **pandemic**

They fear a **pandemic** of a new type of virus.

derail

v. to cause a train or tram to run off the tracks accidentally; to run off or leave the rails accidentally

synonym: crash, wreck, thwart

(1) **derail** the recovery, (2) **derail** an argument

The train **derailed** because a cow was standing on the tracks.

catastrophe

n. a sudden event that causes extreme ruin and misfortune

synonym: disaster, calamity, cataclysm

(1) **catastrophe** risk management, (2) avoid climate **catastrophe**

The lack of funds has resulted in a **catastrophe** for our university system.

unimaginable

adj. beyond what can be imagined or conceived; impossible to comprehend or envision

synonym: unthinkable, inconceivable, incredulous

(1) **unimaginable** horror, (2) **unimaginable** depths

The complexity of scientific theories was **unimaginable** for most people.

curtail

v. to reduce or restrict something; to shorten or truncate; to cut short or bring to an abrupt end

synonym: restrict, limit, cut back

(1) **curtail** spending, (2) **curtail** freedom

Due to budget constraints, the company had to **curtail** its

marketing campaign for the new product.

mammalian

adj. of or relating to mammals, a class of warm-blooded vertebrate animals that typically nurse their young and have hair or fur on their skin; characterized by mammalian qualities, such as nurturing and protective behavior

synonym: animal, mammal-like, warm-blooded

(1) **mammalian** embryo, (2) **mammalian** evolution

Mammalian milk is known to be rich in protein and essential vitamins.

decriminalize

v. to eliminate or reduce the criminal penalties associated with an act or behavior; to make legal or permissible something that was previously outlawed or punishable by law

synonym: legalize, decriminalization, depenalize

(1) **decriminalize** abortion, (2) **decriminalize** public drunkenness

Many activists are pushing for laws to **decriminalize** marijuana use.

intractable

adj. difficult to manage or control; stubborn or obstinate

synonym: obstinate, stubborn, unyielding

(1) **intractable** pain, (2) **intractable** situation

The **intractable** problem defied a solution.

flourish

v. to grow or develop vigorously or successfully

synonym: boom, advance, succeed

(1) **flourish** economically, (2) **flourish** worldwide

The Ottoman Empire **flourished** for over five centuries.

contagious

adj. able to be passed on to others through contact or proximity, especially by infection or disease

synonym: infectious, transmissible, communicable

(1) **contagious** enthusiasm, (2) **contagious** virus

The disease is highly **contagious** and spreads quickly.

geoengineering

n. the study of finding ways to change the Earth's climate system, primarily to reduce global warming; deliberate and large-scale intervention in the Earth's climate system

(1) **geoengineering** technology, (2) **geoengineering** schemes

It is unclear what all of the potential consequences of **geoengineering** could be.

probabilistic

adj. characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks

synonym: probable, statistical, likely

(1) **probabilistic** model, (2) **probabilistic** approach

In a **probabilistic** system, the outcome is uncertain and can vary based on chance.

reassure

v. to cause someone to feel sure; to give or restore confidence

synonym: comfort, soothe, bolster

(1) **reassure** anxious patients, (2) **reassure** market

The pilot tried to **reassure** the customers that the planes were safe.

voiceless

adj. without a voice or the ability to speak

synonym: mute, silent, speechless

(1) **voiceless** consonant, (2) **voiceless** minority

The **voiceless** screams of the victims could be heard in the distance.

paltry

adj. lacking in importance, value, or quality; insignificant; meager or inadequate

synonym: insignificant, worthless, meager

(1) **paltry** sum, (2) **paltry** excuse

After working long hours for a **paltry** paycheck, the employee began to search for a new job.

philanthropy

n. the practice of voluntarily helping the poor, especially by giving money

synonym: altruism, benevolence, generosity

(1) **philanthropy** organization, (2) private **philanthropy**

Tech billionaires often spend the majority of their time on **philanthropy**.

human-made

adj. created or produced by humans; artificial

synonym: artificial, unnatural, manufactured

(1) **human-made** climate change, (2) the worst **human-made** disaster

The bridge is a **human-made** structure and was built to span the river.

policymaker

n. a person in charge of or involved in developing action plans for a political party, business, etc.

synonym: lawmaker, legislator

(1) education **policymaker**, (2) regional **policymaker**

Policymakers struggle to develop various laws and regulations to address international trade conflicts.

infancy

n. the state or period of being a baby or very young child

synonym: childhood, babyhood, juvenescence

(1) **infancy** stage, (2) in early **infancy**

The technology is still in its **infancy** and has much room for improvement.

Session 2: Spelling

1. phi_____pic donation
adj. characterized by a desire to promote the welfare of others, especially by donating money or providing charitable aid; of or relating to the practice of philanthropy
2. ho_____ic experience
adj. causing horror or disgust; gruesome and terrifying
3. sm_____ox epidemic
n. a highly contagious viral disease characterized by fever, weakness, spots on the skin, and often death
4. so_____le problem
adj. capable of being solved or resolved; able to be fixed or resolved with effort, skill, or knowledge
5. ho_____ic condition
adj. causing horror or disgust; gruesome and terrifying
6. ma_____an embryo
adj. of or relating to mammals, a class of warm-blooded vertebrate animals that typically nurse their young and have hair or fur on their skin; characterized by mammalian qualities, such as nurturing and protective behavior
7. uni_____ble horror
adj. beyond what can be imagined or conceived; impossible to comprehend or envision
8. per ca___a sales
n. a Latin word meaning "head," used to express the amount for each person; any head or headlike expansion on a structure, as on a bone

ANSWERS: 1. philanthropic, 2. horrific, 3. smallpox, 4. solvable, 5. horrific, 6. mammalian, 7. unimaginable, 8. capita

9. acts of al____sm *n.* the belief or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others; unselfish devotion to the welfare of others often expressed as acts of kindness or charity
10. uni_____ble depths *adj.* beyond what can be imagined or conceived; impossible to comprehend or envision
11. pro_____tic model *adj.* characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks
12. int_____le situation *adj.* difficult to manage or control; stubborn or obstinate
13. me____s vaccine *n.* a highly infectious viral disease that causes fever, red spots on the skin, and other flu-like symptoms, typically affects children
14. flu pa_____ic *n.* an outbreak of a disease that affects many people over a very wide area
15. fl_____sh worldwide *v.* to grow or develop vigorously or successfully
16. cash bo____y *n.* a reward offered for capturing or killing someone or for accomplishing a specific task
17. pa____y excuse *adj.* lacking in importance, value, or quality; insignificant; meager or inadequate
18. er_____te racial discrimination *v.* to get rid of or destroy something completely, especially something bad

ANSWERS: 9. altruism, 10. unimaginable, 11. probabilistic, 12. intractable, 13. measles, 14. pandemic, 15. flourish, 16. bounty, 17. paltry, 18. eradicate

19. op_____ne occasion *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
20. re_____re market *v.* to cause someone to feel sure; to give or restore confidence
21. a lon_____ing friendship *adj.* existing or continuing for a long time
22. de___l the recovery *v.* to cause a train or tram to run off the tracks accidentally; to run off or leave the rails accidentally
23. st__y from a rule *v.* to move about aimlessly or without any destination; to move away from the right course or place where you should be
24. di_____sh a reputation *v.* to reduce or be reduced in size, extent, or importance; to make something smaller, weaker, etc.
25. in_____y stage *n.* the state or period of being a baby or very young child
26. ins_____de residue *n.* a substance used to kill insects
27. me_____s outbreak *n.* a highly infectious viral disease that causes fever, red spots on the skin, and other flu-like symptoms, typically affects children
28. pro_____tic approach *adj.* characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks
29. er_____te the deficit *v.* to get rid of or destroy something completely, especially something bad

ANSWERS: 19. opportune, 20. reassure, 21. long-lasting, 22. derail, 23. stray, 24. diminish, 25. infancy, 26. insecticide, 27. measles, 28. probabilistic, 29. eradicate

30. co____ge of a series *v.* to move or draw together at a specific location; (of lines) to move towards the same point where they join or meet
31. vo_____ss consonant *adj.* without a voice or the ability to speak
32. in early in_____y *n.* the state or period of being a baby or very young child
33. an op_____ne remark *adj.* suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose
34. dec_____ize abortion *v.* to eliminate or reduce the criminal penalties associated with an act or behavior; to make legal or permissible something that was previously outlawed or punishable by law
35. de____l an argument *v.* to cause a train or tram to run off the tracks accidentally; to run off or leave the rails accidentally
36. the worst hum_____de disaster *adj.* created or produced by humans; artificial
37. st__y beyond the confines *v.* to move about aimlessly or without any destination; to move away from the right course or place where you should be
38. private phi_____opy *n.* the practice of voluntarily helping the poor, especially by giving money
39. geo_____ing technology *n.* the study of finding ways to change the Earth's climate system, primarily to reduce global warming; deliberate and large-scale intervention in the Earth's climate system

ANSWERS: 30. converge, 31. voiceless, 32. infancy, 33. opportune, 34. decriminalize, 35. derail, 36. human-made, 37. stray, 38. philanthropy, 39. geoengineering

40. pa___y sum *adj.* lacking in importance, value, or quality; insignificant; meager or inadequate
41. mathematically so_____le equation *adj.* capable of being solved or resolved; able to be fixed or resolved with effort, skill, or knowledge
42. phi_____opy organization *n.* the practice of voluntarily helping the poor, especially by giving money
43. fl_____sh economically *v.* to grow or develop vigorously or successfully
44. ins_____de spray *n.* a substance used to kill insects
45. con_____us enthusiasm *adj.* able to be passed on to others through contact or proximity, especially by infection or disease
46. re_____re anxious patients *v.* to cause someone to feel sure; to give or restore confidence
47. al_____sm in society *n.* the belief or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others; unselfish devotion to the welfare of others often expressed as acts of kindness or charity
48. dec_____ize public drunkenness *v.* to eliminate or reduce the criminal penalties associated with an act or behavior; to make legal or permissible something that was previously outlawed or punishable by law
49. ma_____an evolution *adj.* of or relating to mammals, a class of warm-blooded vertebrate animals that typically nurse their young and have hair or fur on their skin; characterized by mammalian qualities, such as nurturing and protective behavior

ANSWERS: 40. paltry, 41. solvable, 42. philanthropy, 43. flourish, 44. insecticide, 45. contagious, 46. reassure, 47. altruism, 48. decriminalize, 49. mammalian

50. a bo___y on exports *n.* a reward offered for capturing or killing someone or for accomplishing a specific task
51. global pa____ic *n.* an outbreak of a disease that affects many people over a very wide area
52. geo_____ing schemes *n.* the study of finding ways to change the Earth's climate system, primarily to reduce global warming; deliberate and large-scale intervention in the Earth's climate system
53. the agricultural yield per ca___a *n.* a Latin word meaning "head," used to express the amount for each person; any head or headlike expansion on a structure, as on a bone
54. cu_____l spending *v.* to reduce or restrict something; to shorten or truncate; to cut short or bring to an abrupt end
55. di_____sh swelling *v.* to reduce or be reduced in size, extent, or importance; to make something smaller, weaker, etc.
56. con_____us virus *adj.* able to be passed on to others through contact or proximity, especially by infection or disease
57. cat_____he risk management *n.* a sudden event that causes extreme ruin and misfortune
58. education pol_____er *n.* a person in charge of or involved in developing action plans for a political party, business, etc.
59. sm_____ox vaccine *n.* a highly contagious viral disease characterized by fever, weakness, spots on the skin, and often death

ANSWERS: 50. bounty, 51. pandemic, 52. geoengineering, 53. capita, 54. curtail, 55. diminish, 56. contagious, 57. catastrophe, 58. policymaker, 59. smallpox

60. phi_____pic mission *adj.* characterized by a desire to promote the welfare of others, especially by donating money or providing charitable aid; of or relating to the practice of philanthropy
61. hum_____de climate change *adj.* created or produced by humans; artificial
62. vo_____ss minority *adj.* without a voice or the ability to speak
63. cu_____l freedom *v.* to reduce or restrict something; to shorten or truncate; to cut short or bring to an abrupt end
64. regional pol_____er *n.* a person in charge of or involved in developing action plans for a political party, business, etc.
65. int_____le pain *adj.* difficult to manage or control; stubborn or obstinate
66. co_____ge from different points *v.* to move or draw together at a specific location; (of lines) to move towards the same point where they join or meet
67. avoid climate cat_____he *n.* a sudden event that causes extreme ruin and misfortune
68. lon_____ing battery *adj.* existing or continuing for a long time

ANSWERS: 60. philanthropic, 61. human-made, 62. voiceless, 63. curtail, 64. policymaker, 65. intractable, 66. converge, 67. catastrophe, 68. long-lasting

Session 3: Fill in the Blanks

1. The _____ organization donated millions of dollars to fund medical research.
adj. characterized by a desire to promote the welfare of others, especially by donating money or providing charitable aid; of or relating to the practice of philanthropy
2. The _____ problem defied a solution.
adj. difficult to manage or control; stubborn or obstinate
3. Due to budget constraints, the company had to _____ its marketing campaign for the new product.
v. to reduce or restrict something; to shorten or truncate; to cut short or bring to an abrupt end
4. _____ milk is known to be rich in protein and essential vitamins.
adj. of or relating to mammals, a class of warm-blooded vertebrate animals that typically nurse their young and have hair or fur on their skin; characterized by mammalian qualities, such as nurturing and protective behavior
5. As people get old, their energies may _____.
v. to reduce or be reduced in size, extent, or importance; to make something smaller, weaker, etc.
6. The accident scene was _____ with bodies and debris scattered everywhere.
adj. causing horror or disgust; gruesome and terrifying
7. The complexity of scientific theories was _____ for most people.
adj. beyond what can be imagined or conceived; impossible to comprehend or envision

ANSWERS: 1. philanthropic, 2. intractable, 3. curtail, 4. Mammalian, 5. diminish, 6. horrific, 7. unimaginable

8. After working long hours for a _____ paycheck, the employee began to search for a new job.

adj. lacking in importance, value, or quality; insignificant; meager or inadequate

9. The bridge is a _____ structure and was built to span the river.

adj. created or produced by humans; artificial

10. The technology is still in its _____ and has much room for improvement.

n. the state or period of being a baby or very young child

11. The two rivers _____ into one near this area.

v. to move or draw together at a specific location; (of lines) to move towards the same point where they join or meet

12. They fear a _____ of a new type of virus.

n. an outbreak of a disease that affects many people over a very wide area

13. It is unclear what all of the potential consequences of _____ could be.

n. the study of finding ways to change the Earth's climate system, primarily to reduce global warming; deliberate and large-scale intervention in the Earth's climate system

14. The phone rang at the most _____ time.

adj. suitable or happening at a time that is suitable or convenient for a particular purpose

15. The disease is highly _____ and spreads quickly.

adj. able to be passed on to others through contact or proximity, especially by infection or disease

ANSWERS: 8. paltry, 9. human-made, 10. infancy, 11. converge, 12. pandemic, 13. geoengineering, 14. opportune, 15. contagious

16. The farmer sprayed the crop with _____ to protect it from pests.
n. a substance used to kill insects
17. The school sent a notice of a _____ case in one of the classrooms.
n. a highly infectious viral disease that causes fever, red spots on the skin, and other flu-like symptoms, typically affects children
18. The _____ screams of the victims could be heard in the distance.
adj. without a voice or the ability to speak
19. The train _____ because a cow was standing on the tracks.
v. to cause a train or tram to run off the tracks accidentally; to run off or leave the rails accidentally
20. Many activists are pushing for laws to _____ marijuana use.
v. to eliminate or reduce the criminal penalties associated with an act or behavior; to make legal or permissible something that was previously outlawed or punishable by law
21. The pilot tried to _____ the customers that the planes were safe.
v. to cause someone to feel sure; to give or restore confidence
22. The _____ hunter was hired to capture the notorious criminal and bring him to justice.
n. a reward offered for capturing or killing someone or for accomplishing a specific task
23. _____ struggle to develop various laws and regulations to address international trade conflicts.
n. a person in charge of or involved in developing action plans for a political party, business, etc.

ANSWERS: 16. insecticide, 17. measles, 18. voiceless, 19. derailed, 20. decriminalize, 21. reassure, 22. bounty, 23. Policymakers

24. In a _____ system, the outcome is uncertain and can vary based on chance.

adj. characterized by the influence of chance or probability; involving the use of statistical models or methods to estimate likelihoods or risks

25. The Ottoman Empire _____ for over five centuries.

v. to grow or develop vigorously or successfully

26. His act of volunteering at the homeless shelter was a clear example of practical _____.

n. the belief or practice of disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others; unselfish devotion to the welfare of others often expressed as acts of kindness or charity

27. They finally decided to solve the _____ problem.

adj. existing or continuing for a long time

28. Tourists often get lost and _____ into a restricted area.

v. to move about aimlessly or without any destination; to move away from the right course or place where you should be

29. We are trying to _____ this disease from the world.

v. to get rid of or destroy something completely, especially something bad

30. An outbreak of _____ occurred in the 1920s.

n. a highly contagious viral disease characterized by fever, weakness, spots on the skin, and often death

31. The lack of funds has resulted in a _____ for our university system.

n. a sudden event that causes extreme ruin and misfortune

ANSWERS: 24. probabilistic, 25. flourished, 26. altruism, 27. long-lasting, 28. stray, 29. eradicate, 30. smallpox, 31. catastrophe

32. GDP per _____ shrunk by almost 10 percent for the third consecutive year.
- n.* a Latin word meaning "head," used to express the amount for each person; any head or headlike expansion on a structure, as on a bone
33. The engineers found the technical glitch in the system was quite _____ with a software update.
- adj.* capable of being solved or resolved; able to be fixed or resolved with effort, skill, or knowledge
34. Tech billionaires often spend the majority of their time on _____.
- n.* the practice of voluntarily helping the poor, especially by giving money

ANSWERS: 32. capita, 33. solvable, 34. philanthropy