

Edgewalker Café #3: AI from an Edgewalkers' Perspective

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Hosts: Ximena Vidal, Bill Kirst, Prasad Kaipa, and Brian Gorman (first-time guest)

Contact information:

- Ximena Vidal (ximena.m.vidal@gmail.com)
- Bill Kirst (bill.kirst@gmail.com)
- Prasad Kaipa (prasad.kaipa@gmail.com)
- Brian Gorman (Brian@transforminglives.coach)

1. Key Insights captured during session:

Brian Gorman:

- *"Organizational change is a misnomer; it's people that change not organizations and organizational change is individual change at scale."*
- *"We are heading into a disruption as significant as the introduction of the industrial age and how we respond to AI will determine the future of work for a long time to come."*
- *"Wisdom is located at every level of the organization. It always has been."*
- *"Change is emotional, change is heartfelt, change hits us in the gut."*
- *"Lead not to control but to liberate. Lead not to be followed but to walk together. This is the work, this is the way, this is the age of wisdom."*

Bill Kirst:

- *"Risk-taking... we're at this place we've never been before... there's no manual."*
- *"We show up to any change in a state of dancing with grief or negotiating loss."*
- *"If I did have that ability [like a bird with two voice boxes], what would that look like to create harmony?" (Note: Learn more about bird voice boxes in this [NPR article](#).)*
- *"Awe is a great teacher, so is loss and grief."*

Prasad Kaipa:

- *"Manifesting is what happens... turning the AI vision into action."*
- *"Focusing - the ability to pause and discern, which is discernment is again a wisdom skill."*

- *"Organizational wisdom is emergent, it is relational, and many times it's very fragile."*
- *"Wisdom and fear do not coexist at any time."*
- *"Am I reacting from fear or am I responding from presence?"*
- *"How can we make change become a creative emergence, not just surviving, but flowering and flourishing?"*

Ximena Vidal:

- *"What kind of knowledge are we privileging in education?"*
- *"AI is a mirror, and we are the light." (Note: I was referencing Prasad's insight from our [first AI – Edgewalkers dialogue](#).)*
- *"Wisdom that comes out of human interactions... can't be replicated with AI."*

Amy (Audience Member):

- *"Schools teach us how to think... but they don't necessarily teach how to emotionally feel, they don't teach how to sense, they don't teach how to intuit."*

2. Key Quotes:

On [Edgewalker Skills](#) and AI:

- **Bill Kirst:** *"Risk-taking... because we're at this place we've never been before... to use these tools is a little bit like taking a risk"*
- **Prasad Kaipa:** *"Manifesting skill... is probably going to be one of the most important in organizational transformation"*
- **Prasad Kaipa:** *"Focusing - the ability to pause and discern... rather than the speed or cleverness which AI brings"*

On Organizational Wisdom:

- **Brian Gorman:** *"AI is disrupting the hierarchy because it is driving the ability to act more quickly than we can send things up the chain"*
- **Bill Kirst:** *"You can't get to wisdom without living something, without embodying something... going through the trials and tribulations and frustrations and scars"*
- **Prasad Kaipa:** *"Organizational wisdom... arises out of interactions and culture... it is transpersonal"*

On Leading Through Change:

- **Bill Kirst:** *"We show up to any change in a state of dancing with grief or negotiating loss... even if it's an exciting change"*
- **Brian Gorman:** *"Joseph Campbell called it the hero's journey... there is a constant journey through every change"*
- **Prasad Kaipa:** *"How do we become the face of what we don't know"*

On Education and Human Development:

- **Amy:** *"How do we change the system in order to be able to deal with this AI?"*
- **Prasad Kaipa:** *"Education is going to radically change"*
- **Brian Gorman:** *"Our educational system is another vestige of the industrial age"*

3. Core Themes & Questions:

Theme 1: Organizational Wisdom in the AI Era

Key Question: *"Where is this wisdom in an organization? Is AI upending where organizational wisdom is located?"* (Ximena Vidal)

Participant Responses:

- Brian emphasized wisdom exists at every organizational level, not just C-suite
- Bill distinguished between data, knowledge, and wisdom - wisdom requires lived experience
- Prasad described organizational wisdom as emergent, relational, and transpersonal

Perspectives:

- Traditional hierarchy vs. distributed wisdom
- AI disrupting decision-making chains
- Wisdom as embodied experience vs. information processing
- Trust as foundational for wisdom emergence

Theme 2: Edgewalker Skills for AI Integration

Key Questions: *"Which Edgewalker skills can organizations lean into successfully with AI? Where are the biggest growth opportunities?"*

Participant Responses:

- **Risk-taking** (Bill): Operating without a manual in unprecedented territory
- **Manifesting** (Prasad): Turning AI vision into purposeful action beyond efficiency
- **Focusing** (Prasad): Pausing and discerning with wisdom vs. speed
- **Sensing the future** (Prasad/Brian): Grounded in silence and intuitive sensing

Concerns Raised:

- Organizations implementing AI from fear rather than purpose
- Need for contemplative practices alongside technological adoption
- Balancing speed with discernment

Theme 3: Leading Through Technological Disruption

Key Question: *"What's timeless about leading through change amidst major technological disruptions?"*

Participant Responses:

- Bill: Humans always show up to change "dancing with grief or negotiating loss"
- Brian: Change is emotional and follows the hero's journey pattern
- Prasad: Acting from dharma, coherence, and resonance rather than fear

Timeless Patterns Identified:

- Need for emotional processing space
- Importance of Flamekeepers and Hearthtenders
- Journey through uncertainty and transformation
- Human response regardless of technological catalyst

Theme 4: Educational Transformation

Key Question: *"How do we change the system in order to be able to deal with this AI?"* (Amy)

Participant Responses:

- Prasad: Start with families, teach sensing and feeling alongside thinking
- Bill: Model emotional leadership and lead with awe, loss, and grief
- Brian: Educational system is industrial age vestige needing transformation

- Ximena: Revalue human interactions, debates, dialogue, arts, theater

Concerns Raised:

- Schools emphasize thinking over feeling, sensing, intuiting
- Children mesmerized by screens, losing human connection
- Need for experiential, hands-on learning approaches
- What knowledge should be privileged in AI era?

Theme 5: Fear vs. Presence in AI Adoption

Key Questions: *"Am I reacting from fear or am I responding from presence?"* (Prasad Kaipa)

Participant Responses:

- Prasad: Wisdom and fear cannot coexist
- Organizations often integrate AI from fear of being left behind
- Need for grounding in dharma and purpose
- Consciousness and awareness as antidotes to reactive implementation

Concerns Raised:

- Fear-driven AI adoption creating chaos rather than co-creation
- Outsourcing agency vs. evolving consciousness
- Identity transformation required, not just skill adaptation

Theme 6: Trust and Human Agency

Key Examples: University students paying for private AI subscriptions rather than using institution-provided tools

Participant Responses:

- Bill: Trust as foundation for wisdom emergence
- Students don't trust institutional AI tools, seek "safer playground"
- Need for environments where people can "try and fail and learn and fall and be caught"

Concerns Raised:

- Will humans outsource agency to AI?

- How to maintain human decision-making capacity?
- Creating trustworthy spaces for AI experimentation

4. Emerging Themes for Future Exploration:

1. **KOrganizational Archetypes in AI Transformation:** How do Flamekeepers, Hearthtenders, and other Archetypes of Change navigate AI disruption?
2. **Transpersonal Organizational Consciousness:** Exploring the “field” or consciousness beyond individual interactions
3. **AI and the Hero’s Journey:** How does organizational AI adoption follow transformation patterns?
4. **Embodied Wisdom vs. Information Processing:** What gets lost when wisdom is digitized?
5. **Family and Early Childhood AI Education:** Starting human-centered AI relationships from birth
6. **Energy vs. Time Focus:** Shifting from time management to energy management in AI era
7. **Dharmic AI Implementation:** Purpose-driven vs. fear-driven AI adoption strategies

5. Questions Requiring Deeper Exploration:

For Future Sessions:

1. How can organizations cultivate transpersonal wisdom in AI-enhanced environments?
2. What practices help leaders respond from presence rather than fear during AI implementation?
3. How do we design educational systems that privilege human interactions alongside AI capabilities?
4. What does "leading with emotion" look like in AI-driven organizations?
5. How can recognizing and embracing the Archetypes of Change contribute to conscious AI adoption?
6. What governance structures support distributed wisdom rather than hierarchical control?

For Research/Writing:

1. How does organizational wisdom emerge differently in AI-enhanced vs. traditional environments?
2. What are the neurological and psychological impacts of outsourcing cognitive tasks to AI?
3. How might educational assessment change when AI can handle content knowledge?
4. What family practices support healthy human-AI relationships from early childhood?

6. Community Connections:

New Connections:

- **Brian Gorman:** Certified Edgewalker facilitator, author of upcoming book "Leading Change in the Age of Wisdom"
- **Amy:** Teaches energy mastery skills from Aikido, works with major companies

Cross-Community Links:

- **Educational Networks:** Multiple participants interested in AI's impact on learning
- **Corporate Leadership:** Interest in organizational wisdom and change management
- **Spiritual/Consciousness Communities:** Focus on presence, dharma, and consciousness in AI adoption
- **Family/Child Development:** Concerns about early childhood AI exposure

7. Practical Applications:

Current Examples Shared:

- **OpenAI government partnership:** 438 agencies receiving enterprise ChatGPT for \$1/year (\$2.16B foregone revenue)
- **University AI trust issues:** Students paying for private AI subscriptions instead of using institutional tools
- **College ethics professor:** Replacing written exams with teaching juvenile delinquents ethics
- **Corporate energy mastery:** Bringing Aikido-based practices to major companies

Frameworks Introduced:

- **Four Places of Acting:** Conflict, Dharma, Coherence, Resonance (Prasad Kaipa)

- [Five Edgewalker Skills](#): Sensing future, Risk-taking, Manifesting, Focusing, Connecting
- [Five Archetypes of Change](#): Edgewalkers, Flamekeepers, Hearthtenders, Placeholders, Guardians
- **Hero's Journey**: Applied to organizational change cycles (Brian Gorman)

8. Unanswered Questions:

1. **Prasad's challenge to Brian**: How does individual change at scale account for emergent, transpersonal organizational consciousness?
2. **Educational transformation**: Concrete steps for integrating sensing, feeling, and intuiting into curricula
3. **Trust and institutional AI**: How can institutions build trustworthy AI environments for learning and experimentation?
4. **Energy vs. time management**: Practical implications of shifting focus from time to energy in AI era
5. **Family AI education**: Specific practices for teaching healthy human-AI relationships from early childhood
6. **Organizational dharma**: How do organizations discover and implement purpose-driven AI strategies?

9. Resources & References:

Books Mentioned:

- ["From Smart to Wise"](#) by Prasad Kaipa (12 years ago)
- ["Leading Change in the Age of AI"](#) by Bill Kirst (Out now!)
- ["Leading Change in the Age of Wisdom"](#) by Brian Gorman (forthcoming)

Concepts Referenced:

- **Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey** (Brian Gorman)
- **P.G. Wodehouse novels** - AI as "Jeeves" (Prasad Kaipa)
- **Kurt Lewin's Field Theory** (Prasad Kaipa)
- **Celtic traditions** - liminal spaces and harvest season (Judi Neal)

10. Final Takeaways

- **Prasad's Four Places of Acting:**
 1. Conflict (ego-driven, creates chaos)
 2. Dharma (appropriate, enlivening, leads to co-creation)
 3. Coherence (alignment of head, emotion, body, spirit)
 4. Resonance (generative, creative place)
- **Key Questions for Practice:**
 - *"Am I reacting from fear or am I responding from presence?"* (Prasad Kaipa)
 - *"Will I outsource the agency or evolve my own consciousness?"* (Prasad Kaipa)
 - *"If I did have that ability, what would that look like to create harmony?"* (Bill Kirst)
 - *"How can we make change become a creative emergence, not just surviving, but flowering and flourishing?"* (Prasad Kaipa)
- **Brian/ChatGPT's Closing Reflection:** *"May you lead with courage when the path is unclear. May you listen for what wants to emerge even in the quiet. May you remember that the wisdom you seek is already within you and also among you. May your leadership be an act of love, your presence a source of grounding and your vision a light for the path ahead. Lead not to control but to liberate. Lead not to be followed but to walk together. This is the work, this is the way, this is the age of wisdom."*

11. Upcoming Events:

- **August 21, 11am ET:** "Celtic Season of Harvest" Café with Monica Ross and Rhona Graham (experiential session on bridging worlds). Click [here](#) to join.
- **August 27, 11am-12:30pm ET:** Conscious Leadership Guild's AI Dialogue Monthly sessions, an ongoing generative dialogue exploring intersections of AI, consciousness, and spirituality. All welcome! To register, click [here](#).
- **October 24–26, 2025:** Edgewalker retreat in Fayetteville, Arkansas (closest to Halloween for liminal space exploration). For more information, click [here](#).
- **Website:** <http://www.edgewalkers.org> for all event information