



## **VITA VANTAGE**

A Program to enrol 53 million people into  
Vita spiritual philosophy to solve the  
Anthropocene Crisis

by Guy Lane - March, 2021

## Vita Vantage

Vita is a new spiritual philosophy that seeks to prevent the collapse of the global ecosphere and avoid human extinction by advancing the Verdant Age, the potential future time when humans and the biosphere thrive in synergy (Vita, 2021). To achieve this, a radical and widespread transformation of human behaviour and cultural values are called for (Kennel, 2020; Gilding, 2019; Steffan et al., 2018).

The Vita Hypothesis (Lane, 2021) posits that radical pro-environmental behavioural change can be fostered in an individual through a structured program that synergises environmental education with spiritual enlightenment.

*Vita Vantage* is a proposed eight-part online video series designed to foster an ecological epiphany - ecophany - in the individual to inculcate nature-based spirituality. This is achieved by combining environmental education with spiritual enlightenment induced through nature-based peak experience and other spiritual insights, using online resources and a natural area close to the Invant's home, referred to as a Nest. A person who sits Vita Vantage is referred to as an Invant.

## The Nest & Full Moon Rise

The first task for the Invant is to find a Nest. This is a location close to home in a state of nature that the Invant can safely visit in order to take a step away from the technosphere: all things man-made (Zalasiewicz et al., 2017). This could be just a stretch of the local creek where the technosphere is not visible or audible, or an overgrown vacant block. From the Nest, it should be possible to view the Full Moon Rise. The Invant is tasked with visiting this place regularly and comprehending it from an ecological, emotional and spiritual perspective.

The Vita Vantage program takes place over two Full Moons. In Part 2 of the Program, the Invant goes alone to the Nest to observe the Full Moon rise. Vita Vantage culminates with the Invant hosting a party with friends and associates on the second of the Full Moons.

## Production Style

The Vita Vantage videos will feature a narrator against a green-screen that allows for different backgrounds to be cut in during post-processing. The narrator will speak in the first person and share personal stories, seeking to inculcate the sense of a personal relationship with the Invant. The videos will be compelling and engaging to keep the Invant committed to the program. The narrator will Anthropomorphise the Living Planet (give nature human characteristics) as this is a path to having people identify and care for something that is non-human (Tam, 2013).

## The Cassandra Effect

By necessity, Vita Vantage will share the grim news about the state of our Living Planet. Many people are disinclined to listen to or believe bad news: the so-called Cassandra Effect (Lane, 2019). To overcome the Cassandra Effect, it is proposed to a) explain why the grim news is necessary, b) describe the concept of eco-grief as a pathway to ecological enlightenment, c) seek permission from the Invant to share the bad news, and d) advise when the bad news is due.

### Spreading Vita Vantage

Vita Vantage will be promoted online via Google Ads running a week before each Full Moon. Table 1 shows the Vita Vantage program cycle from when the Google Ads run, to the completion of the program.

	Week 0 New Moon	Week 1 Half Moon	Week 2 Full Moon	Week 3 Half Moon	Week 4 New Moon	Week 5 Half Moon	Week 6 Full Moon
Google Ads Running	X						
Program opens to new recruits		X					
Part 1		X					
Part 2			X				
Watch Moon Rise Alone			X				
Part 3				X			
Part 4				X			
Part 5					X		
Part 6					X		
Part 7						X	
Part 8							X
Watch Moon Rise With Guests							X
Program Ends							X

Table 2: The Vita Vantage program cycle.

For Vita Vantage to change the world, it will need to be taken-up by many people. Vita estimates that about 53 million people in the western world that would identify as Vitan if the idea were put to them in a compelling manner (Vita, 2021). Vita Vantage is a pathway to recruiting these people and the program will coach Invants to recruit. For example, at the second Moon Party, the Invant will invite potential recruits. If each Invant

recruits two people to the program, the total number of recruits will increase exponentially, reaching millions of people within just a few years as shown in Table 2, below. This assumes a new recruitment cycle every 8 weeks (i.e. two Full Moon cycles).

Year	Cycle					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 0:	1	2	4	8	16	32
Year 1:	64	128	256	512	1,024	2,048
Year 2:	4,096	8,192	16,384	32,768	65,536	131,072
Year 3:	262,144	524,288	1,048,576	2,097,152	4,194,304	8,388,608

Table 2: Number of Invants having completed Vita Vantage assuming each Invant enrolls two others.

## Level of Performance & Knowledge

As the Vita Vantage program was conceived in Australia and will be initially promoted to Australians, the education component is designed with reference to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF, 2013). The Vita Vantage program will be pitched at AQF Level 7 - the level of a Bachelor degree. According to the AQF, “Graduates at this level will have broad and coherent knowledge and skills for professional work and/or further learning” (AQF, 2013, p. 13).

## Target Audience

Vantage will be targeted at English-speaking degree qualified females. This demographic has been chosen as it is believed that females will be more in-tune with the Vita spiritual philosophy than males; and the degree qualification will increase the chance that they will easily grasp the shared ideas, many of which will be new and complex.

## Continual Improvement

The key performance indicator of Vita Vantage’s success is whether the program leads to pro-environmental behavioural change. This can be assessed by way of a post-program survey asking for the Invant’s honest feedback. This feedback will be used to continually improve the Vita Vantage program.

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes of the Vita Vantage program include:

- Explain why our Living Planet is dying and what scientists predict for the future.

- Describe how the spiritual philosophies held by Western people contribute to ecological collapse.
- Explain how Vita spiritual philosophy can answer the major challenges of the Anthropocene.
- Describe whether you identify as Vitan, and why.
- Share your testimony of your spiritual journey through Vita Vantage: where you started and where you are now.
- Share what you plan to leave behind when you die.

## Program Overview

The following sections of this paper describe the content and learning outcomes for each of the eight parts of the Vita Vantage program.

## Part 1 - Introduction

The first video introduces Vita Vantage program to the Invant, and has them set up with the necessary apps and equipment, specifically:

- Google Earth
- Lunar calendar
- Google maps
- Notepad and pens
- Printouts of key documents

Vita Vantage seeks to use the peak experience associated with a Full Moon Rise to help foster spirituality change. For this reason, the Invant must be able to assess when and where the Full Moon rise will occur and find a suitable place to observe it. The Invant will also be tasked with finding a Nest, nearby, and Google Maps can help with this. Once the nest has been located, the Invant is tasked with learning about its ecological characteristics.

## Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the time and resource commitments necessary to complete the program.
- Demonstrate competence in using: Google Earth, online lunar cycle calendar, Google maps.
- Demonstrate the ability to plan a safe Private Moon Party.
- Accept that Vita Vantage program is going to share some grim news about the state of our Living Planet and the future.
- Commit to following the Vita Vantage program to the letter all the way to the end.

- Describe the Nest's ecological characteristics (i.e. what species call it home).

## Part 2 - Spiritual Philosophies

In Part 2, the Invant is taught about spirituality change as described in the Vita hypothesis. The content will analyze Christian theology and New Age religious concepts such as *spiritual but not religious*, and peak experience, timelessness, and fundamental questions of the afterlife and higher powers.

### Tasks

Following the video, the Invant will go and have their Private Moon Party where they will be invited to spend time in quiet contemplation and reflect upon their inner-self (their motivations and drivers, etc.). They will have with them a template in which to write down answers to questions such:

- What do they hold to be sacred?
- What experiences give them a sense of awe and wonder?
- What is the meaning of their life?
- What five things do they deeply regret having done?
- What five things do they really relish having done?
- What will they leave behind when they die?

### Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate that the Private Moon Party has been properly planned, and is safe.
- Describe common spiritual affinities held by western people, what spiritual philosophy is and how spiritual philosophies direct behaviour.
- Identify some core aspects of your own spirituality.
- Share how you think you came to adopt these beliefs.
- Explain what you will leave behind on Earth when you die.

## Part 3 - The Anthropocene Crisis

Part 3 is a crash course in the Anthropocene Crisis, including content on:

- The scientific method
- Earth system science
- The Anthropocene
- Planetary Boundaries
- Abrupt climate change
- Gaia Theory
- The Sixth Extinction

The Invant will be introduced to key scientific papers that illustrate the Anthropocene Crisis, including:

- *Underestimating the Challenges of Avoiding a Ghastly Future* (Bradshaw et al, 2021).
- *Atmospheric homeostasis by and for the biosphere: the Gaia hypothesis* (Lovelock & Margulis, 1974).
- *Trajectories of the Earth system in the Anthropocene* (Steffen et al., 2018).
- *The unique ecology of human predators* (Darimont et al, 2015).
- *Current Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation weakest in last millennium* (Caeser et al, 2021).

Part 3 seeks to inculcate a fascination for the environmental sciences and discipline the Invant to seek information from these sources, rather than conspiracy theory, or sources with vested interests.

The Invant will be asked to return to the Nest and take some time for quiet contemplation to ponder the significance of these learnings.

### Learning Outcomes

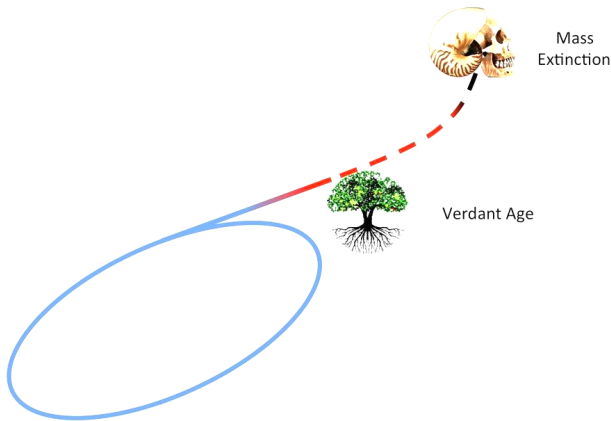
- Defend the argument that the Earth has departed the Holocene Epoch and entered the Anthropocene.
- Demonstrate that you understand the profound difficulty facing humanity of avoiding the worst fate of ecosystem collapse in our lifetimes.
- Recite the figures regarding atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, including what the level was at beginning of Industrial Revolution, the maximum safe amount, and the total today (e.g. 275ppm, 350ppm & 415ppm).
- Demonstrate that you can find a contemporary Keeling Curve diagram online, and assess total sea ice cover in the Arctic using the Charctic website to monitor the Blue Ocean Event.

## Part 4 - Spiritual Philosophies in the Anthropocene

Part 4 describes how the spiritual philosophies common to the western world say nothing about the Anthropocene, and how this is a root of the Anthropocene Crisis. It will introduce the concept of 'belonging' i.e. western culture does not belong on a planet with a biosphere.

The video asks the Invant to ponder how most things that pass as spiritual philosophy in the

Western world distract people from the important work of changing the trajectory of human civilization to avoid collapse, and explains the meaning of the Vita Diagram (below).



### Induced peak experience

The Invant will be directed to watch a number of youtube videos that help forge the link between nature and spirituality by inducing awe, wonder and amazement:

- Underwater video of sailfish chasing sardines while the sealion watches on.
- Plankton Meditation (guided meditation with narrative about the role that plankton play in our lives).
- Time-lapse photography of seeds sprouting.
- The *Nature is Speaking* series, where Hollywood actors recited short pieces, speaking on behalf of nature (e.g. Julia Roberts is Mother Nature, Harrison Ford is the ocean etc).
- *Octomom*, about the octopus mother who protects with her body a brood of eggs for four years, over a mile deep in the ocean.
- Watch the youtube video: *The Insane Biology of the Octopus*.

### Learning Outcomes

- Explain how contemporary western spiritual philosophies have contributed to the Anthropocene Crisis.
- Describe the origins and meaning of the Vita Diagram.
- Share your thoughts about the diagram.
- Share your feelings about what humans have done to the global ecosystem.

## Part 5 - Vita Spiritual Philosophy

Through a deep dive into Vita spiritual philosophy, a new worldview will be described, including: Vita's cosmovision, answers to the Big

Questions, the Golden Rule, Solastalgia, the future possibilities of Mass Extinction or the Verdant Age.

**Tasks:** watch the Vita explainer videos. Read the Vita website

**Spiritual insight:** revisit your Nest and spend some time in quiet contemplation of the Vita vantage program. Consider how your life interacts with Living Planet, and the extent to which your life to-date has either helped or hindered the Living Planet.

### Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate that you understand the key tenets of Vita spiritual philosophy.
- Explain how the uptake of this Vita spiritual philosophy can help solve the Anthropocene crisis.
- Explain how the Verdant Age is different from the Anthropocene
- Differentiate James Lovelock's concept of Gaia and the Vita concept of *Vitae-planeta*.
- Describe your feelings about your body breaking down in the soil and returning your minerals to the biophysical flux.
- Describe what you think is the meaning of your existence
- Share your feelings about the idea that a person's spirit is simply what they leave behind, and not some immutable, eternal sub-element of their body.
- Describe how you feel about the concept that you are a cell in a planet-sized super-organism.
- Recite Vita's Golden Rule and describe how it differs from the Golden Rule of most of the world's spiritual philosophies.

## Part 6 - What's Coming Down the Pipeline

In Part 6 the Invant is asked to contemplate what the future looks like for themselves and those they love under the scenarios of collapse of the global ecosystem and abrupt climate change including:

- The Blue Ocean Event - when the Arctic sea ice melts, effectively switching off the planet's air-conditioning plant and destabilising global climate systems (Marques, 2020).
- Multi-bread basket failure caused by extreme variability in the Arctic jetstream (Kornhuber, *et al*, 2020).
- Slowdown of the AMOC - a major ocean current that could halt or reverse at short

notice leading to climate chaos. (Caesar et al, 2021).

This section directs the Invant to watch interviews with leading female figures in the public discourse on collapse, including:

- **Greta Thunberg** - climate activist
- **Naomi Klein** - climate activist and author of *Shock Doctrine*
- **Gail Bradbrook** - co-founder of the Extinction Rebellion
- **Margaret Klein Salamon** - founder of Climate Mobilization
- **Christiana Figueres** - former head of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- **Inger Anderson** - Executive Director United Nations Environment Program
- **Gail Tverberg** - researcher on finite world issues
- **Lierre Keith** - feminist and environmental activist
- **Deb Ozarko** - author *Navigating Earth Grief and Biosphere Collapse*
- **Karen Schragg** - overpopulation activist and poet
- **Blyth Pepino** - founder of the Birthstrike movement
- **Helen Caldicott** - anti-nuclear campaigner
- **Jennifer Hynes** - climate researcher and youtuber

**Spiritual insight:** The Invant is invited to consider ecosystem collapse from the perspective of a Vita spiritual philosophy, and how they are indeed a part of the Living Planet, no different from the whales or the snails, the bees and the trees.

#### Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate familiarity with the works and ideas of some of the female activists and authors listed above.
- Clearly enunciate an understanding of the implications of abrupt climate change and ecosphere collapse on their lives and plans for the future.
- Answer questions about your emotional reaction to the concept of collapse. How does it make you feel? And what does it motivate you to do?
- Explain what you want to leave behind after your death.

## Part 7 - Personal Development

The Invant will be introduced to various concepts and tools for personal development and growth. This is important because the realisation of collapse is usually accompanied by eco-grief and

solastalgia, and moving through grief and into expedient action calls for emotional and personal growth.

Part 7 considers the ancient Greek philosophy of Stoicism plus ideas from a range of books including:

- *Thick Face, Black Heart* (Chu, 1994)
- *Seven Habits of Highly Influential People* (Covey, 2004)
- *Six Thinking Hats* (Bono, 1985)
- *Never Split the Difference* (Voss, 2016)
- *How to Go Viral and Reach Millions* (Romm, 2018)

Part 7 also draws on the author's personal experiences with the Landmark Forum, a 3-day intensive personal development program that seeks to foster enlightenment over a long weekend.

These tools will help the Invant purposefully integrate the learnings and feelings of Vita Vantage into their lives and into society, and to recruit new Invants to the Vita Vantage program.

**Tasks:** Tear up the piece of paper on which you wrote down the five things you deeply regret doing. Pin to the wall the piece of paper that describes the great things you did. Go online and find out when the next Landmark Forum is running in a city close to you.

#### Learning Outcomes

- Describe the concept of *inventing possibility*.
- Share your insights from the personal development teachings and whether this has helped you get clarity and enlightenment.
- Contemplate your personal shortcomings that hold you back from being all you believe you can be.
- Describe what eco-grief and the Vita concept of Solastalgia Care.
- After a period of quiet contemplation, outline how you think you can use these tools in your life.
- Draw-up a list of the most persuasive insights you have had from Part 7 and contemplate how to bring these into your life.

## Part 8 - Spreading Vita & Death Literacy

Part 8 has three components:

- review of Vita Vantage
- spreading Vita

- death literacy

The review of the program is intended to show how all the pieces fit together and that what comes next in the program provides good closure. Invants is taught that for Vita to help avert collapse, it must be spread widely and quickly. They will be taught the R-naught basic reproduction number (Diekmann, 1990), can be applied to the spread of Vita, and how to get Vita's R-naught above 2.

The major part of Part 8 features a conversation about death literacy, about the inevitability of death, eco-friendly burial technologies, and how to have a good death. This section also reviews Terror Management Theory, Symbolic Death Transcendence, and the Mortality Salience Hypothesis (Vail, *et. al.*, 2012).

- Terror Management Theory considers the psychological coping mechanisms that control anxiety that arises from the knowledge of our mortality. These mechanisms include maintaining faith in a cultural worldview (e.g. such as those described in Vita spiritual philosophy) and attaining self-esteem by living up to the standards of value that those worldviews provide (e.g. by acting in accordance with Vita spiritual philosophy).
- Symbolic death transcendence is an idea that you can live-on symbolically after death through what you leave behind (e.g. books you wrote, or trees you planted and nurtured, or even the Invants that you recruited).
- Mortality Salience Hypothesis holds that making mortality salient (i.e. receiving regular reminders of your mortality) should motivate people to defend and adhere to their worldviews and strive for self-esteem (e.g. be a good Vitan).

**Spiritual insight:** The question about the meaning of your life has been answered. You are here for the same reason as every other living thing, to contribute to the wellbeing of the biosphere. Our planet and its biosphere ought to be the locus of your spiritual affections. All things die, and sometime in the next few billion years, Vita will die. It is natural and inevitable. You are now trained to spread this message.

**Tasks:** Share Vita through your social media, connect with other Vitans. Host the Moon Party with friends and use this event to share Vita and recruit new Invants.

- Describe how Vita can rapidly spread around the world using the concept of R-naught replication number.
- Draw a list of people for whom you want to share Vita, and contemplate how best to reach them.
- Describe how you, personally, achieve symbolic death avoidance
- Describe a version of your own Good Death.
- Develop a plan to enmesh promoting Vita Vantage throughout the rest of your life.
- Passionately share your feelings about the Vita Vantage program.
- Describe how you would like your body to be dealt with after your death.
- Elucidate how the rapid spread of Vita spiritual philosophy could help prevent human extinction and ecosphere collapse.

## Learning Outcomes

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