



**COMPASSIONATE RISK-TAKING
FOR A
POSITIVE FUTURE**

2019 WRMC

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***"Today, we may be
living in the most
peaceable era of our
species existence"***

***Steven Pinker, The Better
Angels of Our Nature***



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***“We believe that
appropriate risk-taking is a
doorway to trust in
ourselves and others”***

***FROM KROKA EXPEDITIONS NORTH STAR
STATEMENT***



*I've been
guiding for
37 years*



While raising four boys on expedition





*And through hand-made life on a farm and
homestead*



*I have seen a few
things deviating
from a plan*

*And have
little
tolerance
for reckless
risk*





And even less tolerance for risk avoidance and fear-based decision making

THE EDGE EXPERIENCE





**ONCE UPON A TIME THE
TRANSITION FROM
HUNTER-GATHERER
TO AGRARIAN SOCIETY**

TRANSFORMED WHAT IT
MEANT TO BE HUMAN

**TODAY, THE TRANSITION FROM
LIVING IN THE NATURAL PHYSICAL WORLD
TO LIVING IN THE MANUFACTURED VIRTUAL WORLD**

WILL AGAIN TRANSFORM
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

**WE
ARE LIVING THROUGH THIS TRANSITION
WITHIN THE SPACE OF JUST A FEW GENERATIONS**

HOW MUCH TIME DOES AN AVERAGE CHILD SPEND DAILY:

- **PLAYING OUTDOORS**
- **WALKING TO AND FROM DESTINATIONS**
- **HELPING WITH PHYSICAL CHORES**
- **SERVING OTHERS**



“Kids ages 8-18 spend, on average, a whopping 7.5 hours in front of a screen for entertainment each day, 4.5 of which are spent watching TV.”

(Kaiser Family Foundation, March 13, 2017)

“On average, children aged 10 to 16 now spend only 12.6 minutes a day on vigorous outdoor activity compared with 10.4 waking hours being relatively motionless.” (Seattle Children’s Research Institute appearing in the **Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine**)

**THE
MODERN
APPROACH
TO LIFE:**

**EASE
COMFORT
CONVENIENCE
CONFORMITY
INDIVIDUALISM
SAFETY FIRST**

**A
RISK-TAKING
APPROACH TO
LIFE:**

**CHALLENGING
UNCOMFORTABLE
INCONVENIENT
NON-CONFORMING
ALTRUISM
BEING ALIVE FIRST**



Healthy Risk-Taking

**develops healthy and compassionate
human beings**

**who are critically needed
in the world today.**



HEALTHY RISKS

- *PROACTIVE*
- *AUTHENTIC*
- *CONSTRUCTIVE*
- *ACTIVE*



UNHEALTHY RISKS

- *REACTIVE*
- *CONTRIVED*
- *DESTRUCTIVE*
- *PASSIVE*

outdoor edge activities
direct political action
authentic personal sharing

drugs
driving under influence
internet

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THE NATURAL WORLD PROVIDES AN IDEAL PORTAL FOR HEALTHY RISK TAKING

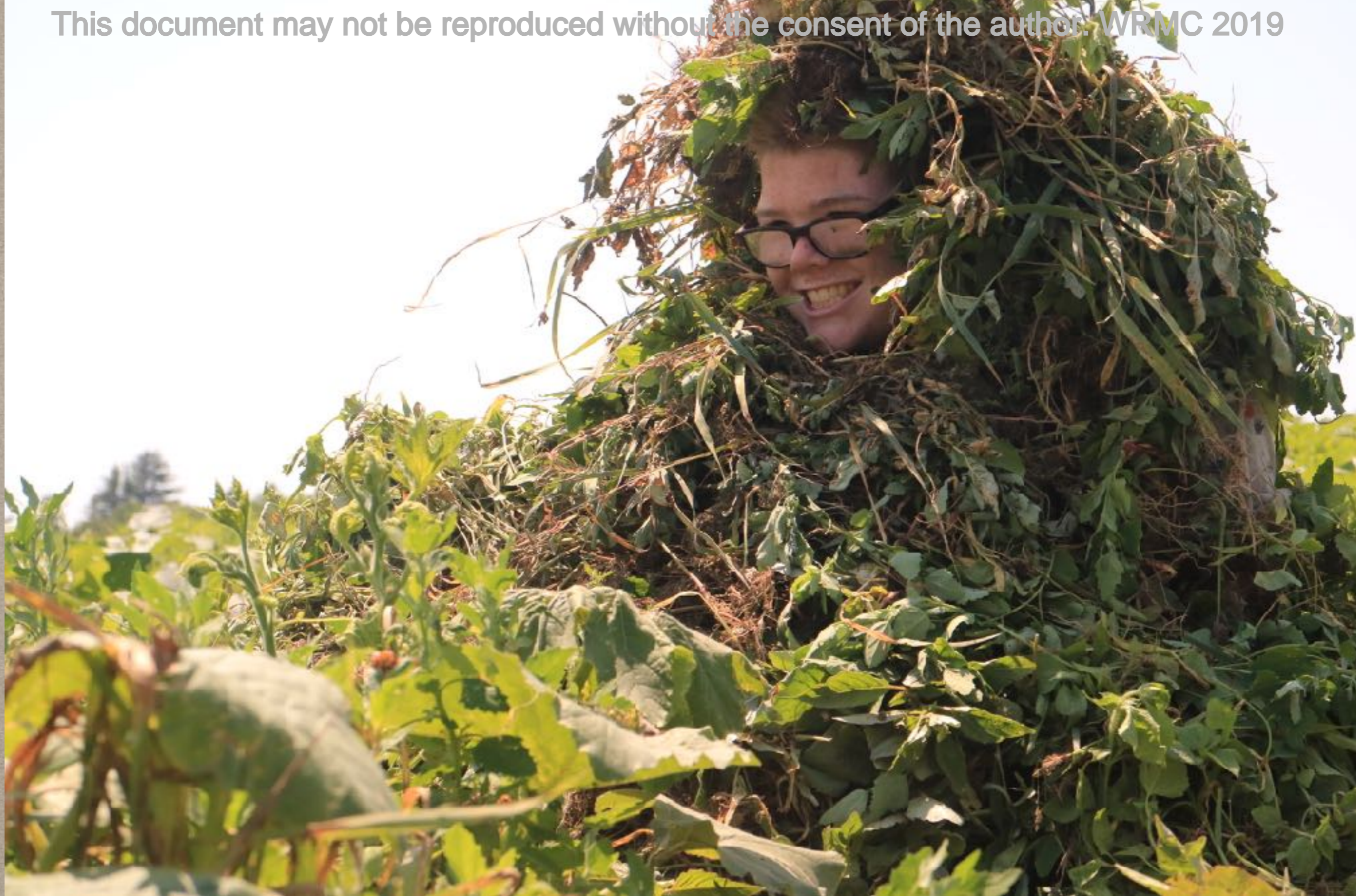


HOW DO HEALTHY RISKS INFORM HEALTHY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?



- **Strengthens willpower and initiative**

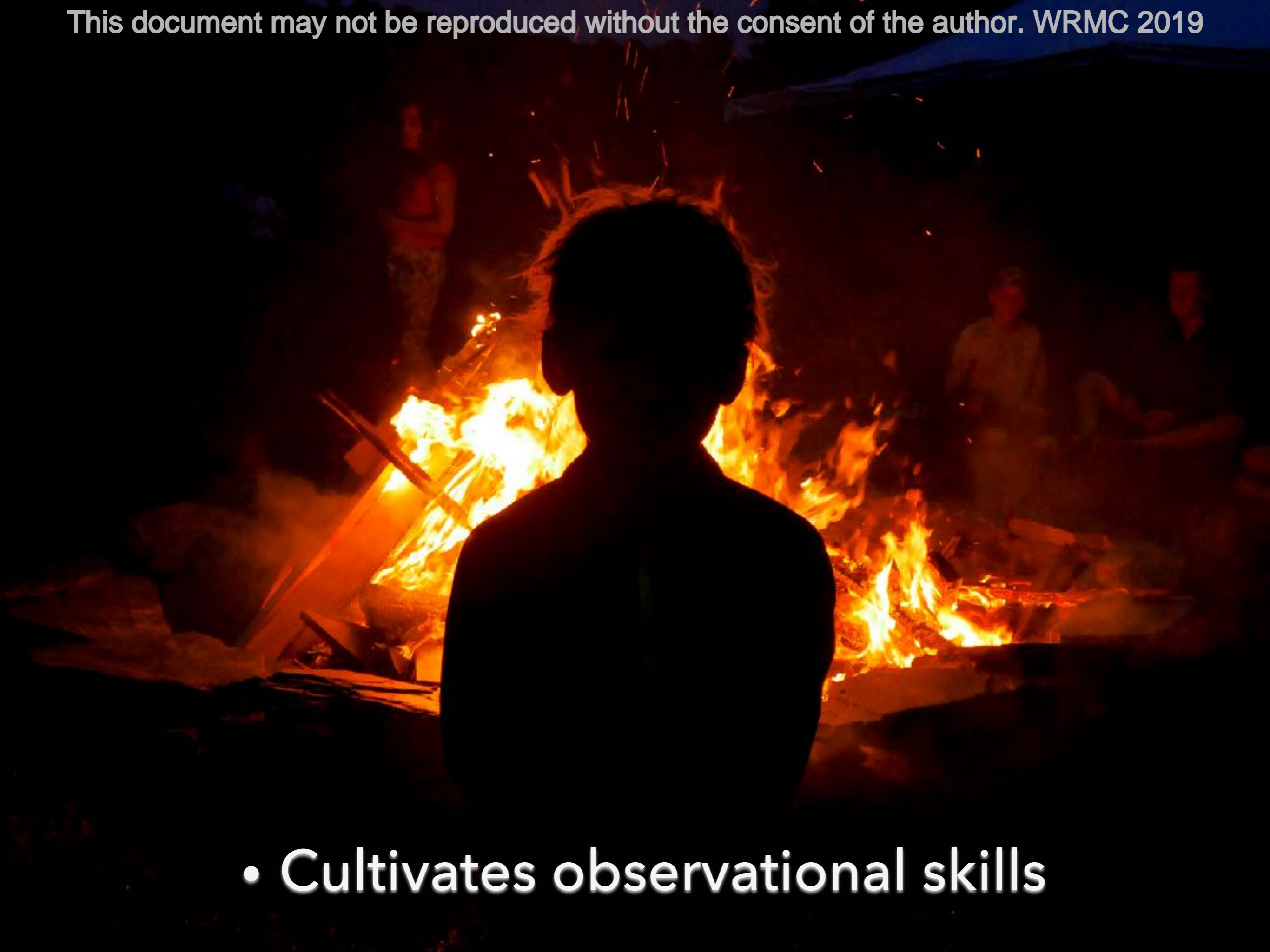




- **Builds self esteem from life experience rather than appearances or material possessions**



- **Develops wisdom and self-knowledge for sound judgement**



- Cultivates observational skills



- **Highlights preciousness of life through near-miss experiences**



- **Diminishes false confidence**

ASSESSING HEALTHY RISK

PROBABILITY



CONSEQUENCES

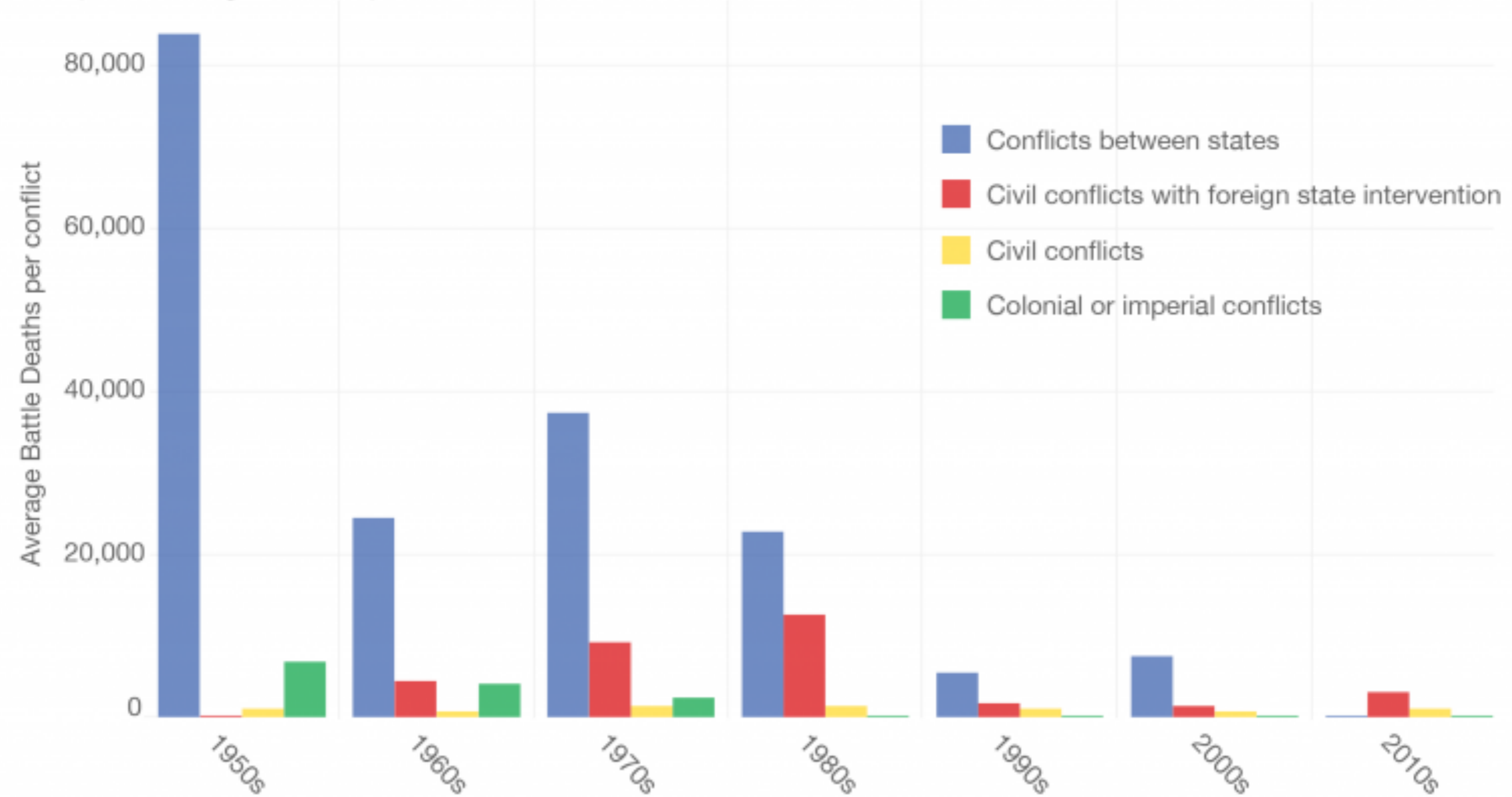


THE WORLD THAT MOST OF US LIVE IN IS SAFER THAN EVER BEFORE IN HUMAN HISTORY:

- Freedom from war
- Professional law enforcement and emergency response services
- Modern medical technology and procedures
- Antibiotics and vaccination against diseases
- Consumer protection and product safety
- A safely designed environment (guardrails, handrails, ramps, signs)
- Safety awareness (lifeguards, seatbelts, helmets, designated drivers)

Average number of battle deaths per conflict since 1946, by type

Only conflicts in which at least one party was the government of a state and which generated more than 25 battle-related deaths are included. Deaths due to disease or famine caused by conflict are excluded. Extra-judicial killings in custody are also excluded.

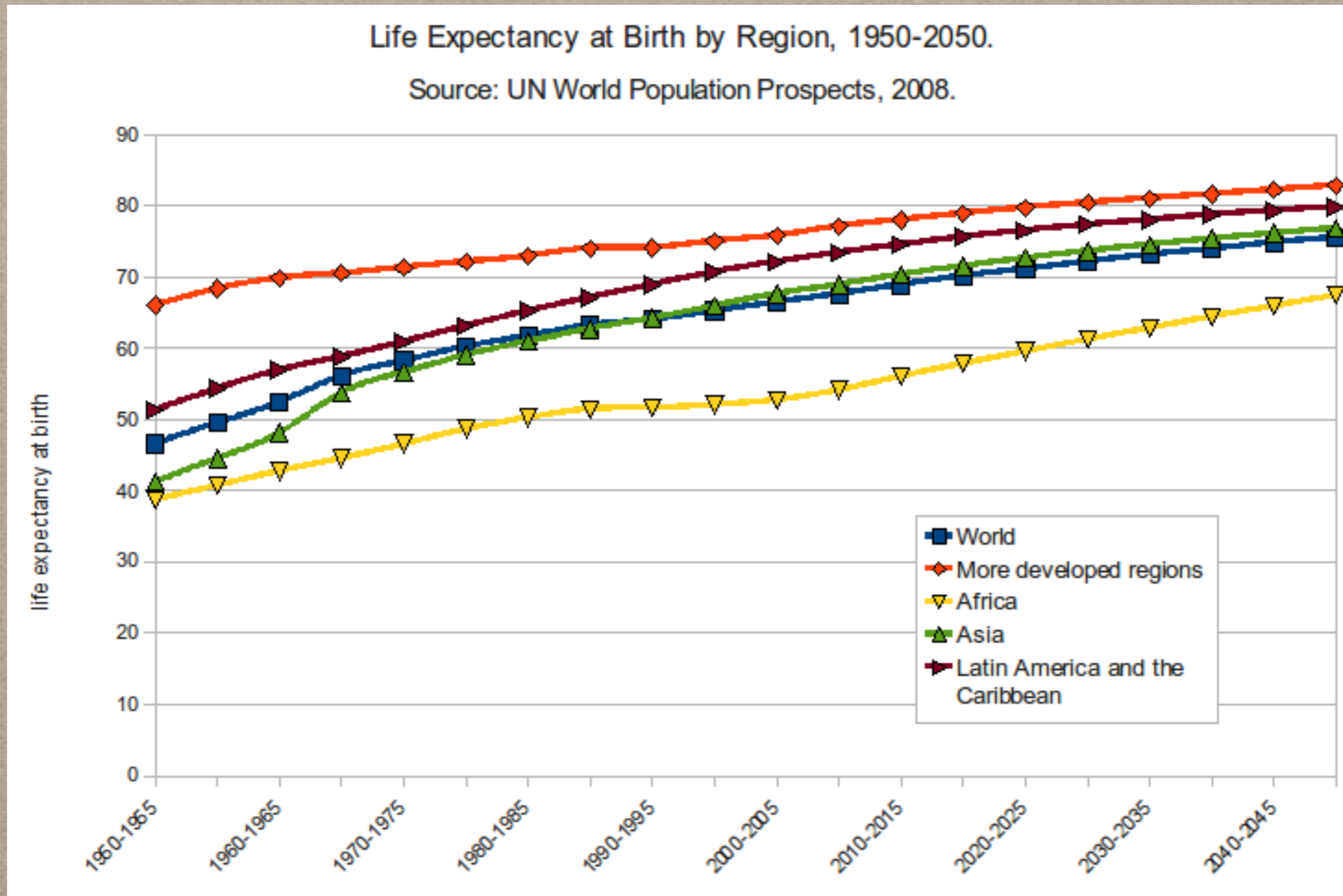


Source: UCDP/PRIO

OurWorldInData.org • CC BY-SA

Note: The war categories paraphrase UCDP/PRIO's technical definitions of 'Extrasystemic', 'Internal', 'Internationalised internal' and 'Interstate' respectively. In a small number of cases where wars were ascribed more than one type, deaths have been apportioned evenly to each type.

LEADING TO THE HIGHEST-EVER LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR HUMANS:



YET WE ARE MORE FEARFUL AND DISCONNECTED THAN EVER:

- Constant use of cell phones & GPS devices
- Need to drive large heavy vehicles (trucks & SUV)
- Unwilling to encounter strangers
- Desire to defend homes with gated communities, alarm systems, and personal firearms.
- Need to be highly insured for all aspects of life
- Reductionist approach to risk management

PERCEPTION OF RISK

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN



ONE DEADLY SHARK ATTACK ON CAPE COD CLOSED BEACHES FOR WEEKS, BUT HIGHWAYS REMAIN OPEN AFTER 180 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED WITHIN THE SAME YEAR

*WE ENJOY OUR POSITION ON TOP OF THE
FOOD CHAIN AND DON'T LIKE TO GET
EATEN!*

COLLECTIVELY WE ARE TAKING UNPRECEDENTED UNHEALTHY RISKS

- **decreasing biodiversity**
- **depleting natural resources**
- **changing climate**

THE WORLD NEEDS PEOPLE WHO:

can compassionately see the needs of others

**can take calm and
deliberate action
in times of distress**

**can take initiative
and follow-through
to accomplish what
needs to be done**



**can live peacefully and sustainably
without an excess of materials and energy**

RISK EMBRACING INSTITUTIONAL HABITS

- Practicing Heart-felt holiday rituals
- Designing an "Inconvenient" campus
- Including elders and people with disabilities
- Cultivating Encounter mindset
- Encouraging cooperative driving habits and unplugged navigation
- Training for development of intuition and common sense
- Mentoring skilled generalists
- Developing rhythms and rituals
- Jumping in the cold water
- Modeling manual labor and rigorous exercise
- Sharing device-free meals
- Embracing scarcity and discomfort



RISK- EMBRACING ADMIN PRACTICES

60/40% RETURNING STUDENTS RATIO ON EXPEDITIONS

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BASED ON TRUST

CREATIVE PROTOCOLS FOR HIGH-RISK ACTIVITIES

**FLEXIBLE EXPEDITION
PLANS TO
ALLOW FOR
SERENDIPITOUS
ENCOUNTERS AND
TIME TO WAIT OUT
THE STORM**

**ELIMINATE USE
OF ELECTRONICS
IN THE FIELD**



RISK EMBRASING PARENT EDUCATION



Family orientation

Parenting workshops

Family adventures

Parent weekends

Parent involvement

Community work days



TAKE AWAY



Start of 2019 Kroka Annual Staff Adventure race

***Some of the best
bike rides***



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End up with a swim



So, don't forget your rope next time you go climbing



And always stay hydrated!



THE END!





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