Future Generation
INVESTMENT & SOCIAL RETURNS

2fold: Investing for Impact podcast

Andrew Denton, Go Gentle

CAROLINE GURNEY: I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today and recognize their continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

ANDREW DENTON: If deep depression is like falling into a hole, then medication is like a ladder to get back to ground level. And then, you know, I'm a believer in cognitive therapy, which is essentially, if you're in that hole, each day you go and do - however small it is - one thing which is life affirming. You go and smell some flowers, or you go and look at the sky, whatever, but you just do something to break that circuit of blackness or blueness.

CAROLINE GURNEY: Hello and welcome to 2fold. I'm Caroline Gurney, the CEO of Future Generation (ASX: FGX and ASX: FGG), and I've got to admit I'm feeling rather intimidated right now, because today I have to interview one of the best interviewers this country's ever produced. It's like I'm bowling to Shane Warne, or perhaps singing to Taylor Swift. He's Australia's answer to the late, great Michael Parkinson, who he, of course, has interviewed, along with the likes of Jerry Seinfeld, Bono and Helen Mirren. Andrew Denton, welcome to the show. Thank you, Caroline. Before we start, I have to ask you, do you get intimidated when you're interviewing someone? Because I know what I'm feeling now.

ANDREW DENTON: I always got nervous. I got nervous before any public appearance. And that's why I did a lot of preparation so that I could ride through nerves to what I wanted to do.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So, who was your most intimidating guest?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, I did once have a silent face off with Chopper Read, which was interesting. The most intimidating experience of interviewing someone was former President Clinton because it was in London. There were these incredible time pressures, we were told we had half an hour and all of that was going to go to air. So, I couldn't get anything that was going to be wasted. It all had to work. And, his minder was very problematic. She stepped in front of our cameras 20 minutes in and said, time's up. And, I protested and said, we've come all the way from Australia. We were told we had half an hour and I've got one more question. And by that time, President Clinton and I had formed a reasonable relationship. So, he said, sure. So, I asked my next five questions and it all went well from there.

CAROLINE GURNEY: That's an amazingly short period of time to actually create a bond with somebody like, especially like President Clinton. How do you do that? How do you get your guests talking?

ANDREW DENTON: It was particularly difficult because he'd brought out his autobiography. Obviously, all anyone wanted to talk to him about was Monica Lewinsky. And I'd watched all of this and, to answer your question, my strategy was actually not to talk to him about Monica Lewinsky. I wanted to talk to him about the most extraordinary desk job in the world, which is being President of the United States. So, I went in that way. He responded. I did have one question about Monica and I prefaced it by saying, I don't want to talk about Monica because I think it's been done to death, but I have one question as a parent, which is how do you tell your daughter. And, anyway, the interview went well, but it was very, very high pressure.

CAROLINE GURNEY: Did you think that he would bring up Monica if you didn't?

ANDREW DENTON: No. And I could tell when he walked in the room, he was over it. He was over the whole thing. He was not a happy camper. The nice thing is by the end of that interview, he stayed longer than his allotted half hour. And he was still talking as we walked out of the room and I could see how pissed off his minder was.

CAROLINE GURNEY: I mean, that, that's an amazing, you know, bond to get with somebody that is. Just so admired at one time, but also would just be so in demand to be able to that's a short period of time. I think that's very impressive. I hope we've bonded. So no, I have to leave now. I have to do a trigger warning before we get started, because I want to let our listeners know we'll be touching on a range of topics today, including voluntary assisted dying and euthanasia, which some people may find distressing. If you find this upsetting, please feel free to skip today's episode and join us on our next one. So, Andrew, I would like to ask you a question we ask all of our guests, but first a little bit of background. This podcast is called 2fold because at Future Generation our purpose is twofold. We want to get the best investment returns for our shareholders and we also want to get the best social outcomes for young Australians by investing in mental health and youth at risk. So, Andrew, what are your two driving purposes in life?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, you've already mentioned one, which is, offering all Australians choice at the end of life, whatever that may be, but not to have it dictated to them by the church, or by doctors who are carrying a crucifix beneath their stethoscope, or by doctors who believe in ‘doctors as God’. So that's number one. And number two, which I guess goes with it, which is more personal, is, as I get older, to be kinder and more generous. So I have more time - to give that time to people that I can help.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So we, I mean, really this podcast, we've had so many generous Australians on, so I'm delighted that you're with us today. But you've mentioned your work, obviously, in voluntary assisted dying and the work has been with Go Gentle Australia, which I follow. So that is all about helping people to die with dignity, which I think is an inherent right. But how did you actually get into this area? Because it's a really a long way from comedy or from what many people would associate with. It's a tough subject matter.

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

ANDREW DENTON: Yeah, it was initially because of the way my own father died and watching him die painfully over three days. That stayed with me. But it wasn't until many years after that, that I read an article in a local magazine about an Australian writer, but her father was Dutch and she was going home for the last week of his life because under Dutch law, he had cancer and he could be euthanized. And she described the unreality of that last week, but also the great dignity and the great joy of it, you know, where he got to farewell his friends, where he got to farewell his family, where he put all his affairs in order. And I compared the death of my father to the death of her father, and I thought, why don't we have that in Australia? So, a friend had asked me to give a talk about something controversial, it was an event in Melbourne, and I said, I'll do it on euthanasia. But I didn't want to be, quote unquote, a celebrity just offering an opinion. So, I decided, I'd moved out of the media. I'd sold my production company. I set myself almost a year to go and research it and I went overseas to where these laws exist. I went around Australia and by the end of that experience, I realised that in Australia there were people dying really badly. Terrible deaths and terrible suicides because of, chronic and terminal illnesses, and that there was a significant series of untruths being peddled chiefly by the Catholic Church and their medical representatives, but also by other doctors, which I thought then and still think are unforgivable. And that significant untruth was that we have the drugs and we have the medical care that can deal with all this. It's not true. It never was true. It most likely never will be true. And so what I was seeing was some of the most defenceless people in Australia - people who are dying - being forced to suffer horribly at the end of life by some of the most powerful people in Australia. And that's why I set up Go Gentle, because I wanted to even up the fight and bring media and other skills to bear.

CAROLINE GURNEY: I think it's true. I mean, I, with many people listening, you know, would be able to relate to that. I mean, I do, because that's what my father went through. And you're right, they're incredibly vulnerable at that time. As you said, you went around the country and you researched it and you had your documentary Better Off Dead. So, speaking to so many people that had similar experiences, what were some of the stories that really got to you that made you realise that what you were doing was so worthwhile?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, it was an incredible privilege because I got to spend time with people who were dying, and their families, and sometimes quite a lot of time. So there were two in particular, a palliative care nurse called Ray Godbold, and it took me some time to actually work out what he told me, to understand what he told me. So palliative care, which is a remarkable profession for which I have enormous respect, they're the only part of medicine who are not there to cure, they're there to help you as you die, and to help you live as well as you can while you die. It's an honourable and important profession. But a lot of palliative care in Australia is owned and run by the Catholic Church, so they were very much in opposition to assisted dying. Ray was a palliative care nurse. He was so lovely with his patients, he'd earned the nickname Velvet Ray. He was so gentle with them. But when I met him, he had stage four oesophageal cancer. And as a palliative care nurse, and I still have his palliative care nursing booklet that he gifted to me, he knew exactly what was going to happen to his body. He knew exactly how he was going to die. And he also knew, and this is the bit that took me some time to understand. He said, I've been there in the hospital, I've seen doctors bring their own personal beliefs into that room. He didn't

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

want to be caught in a system where he had no choice and other people decided what should happen to him at the end of his life. So he, illegally, because there was no law in Australia, obtained a drug called Nembutal from overseas. But despite all his knowledge and experience, the will to live is so strong, and Ray left it too late. And when I spoke to his three adult children and his wife, who was a nurse, about his death, they were so traumatised by what they'd witnessed, and Ray will always stay with me, because it was a great example of it's never an easy path. Even with a law to help you, it's not an easy path. Our greatest urge is to live, and to die is not easy. And I'm so grateful to Ray for what he taught me, and for his bravery, and for his, and his family's bravery. And I still remember going to visit. It would be a couple of months between visits and he'd deteriorated physically a lot from when I'd last seen him. And I'd never really, other than my own father, sat with somebody who was so openly dying. And we were just sitting on his bed, in the bedroom while the family were in the kitchen preparing lunch. We could hear their laughter and all the family noises. And he said to me, I know they love me and I couldn't ask for more, but it's lonely dying. That stayed with me too.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So you've mentioned the laws in this country. So briefly, what are the laws and where are they at the moment?

ANDREW DENTON: So right now, every state in Australia has a law for voluntary assisted dying and the ACT will be considering and almost certainly passing legislation this year. The Northern Territory, which ironically was the very first place in Australia to have this kind of a law, looks like it will be last. We might come back to that.

ANDREW DENTON: Possibly next year. The In essence, the laws in Australia, they do differ in some ways from state to state, but in essence, they allow for, an Australian who is over the age of 18, who is mentally competent and who can demonstrate that through an application process - and who is dying of a terminal illness with six months or less to live, or in the case of a neurodegenerative illness such as motor neurone disease, twelve months or less to live - they can apply and go through a process of assessment by two doctors independent of each other, who will confirm that they are expected to die within that set time frame. And then they have the right to a medication, which they can choose to take or not. And a third of the people that get the medication don't take it, either because they die before they do, or they feel they don't need it. Having that level of control is enough. And that medication, should they take it, will lead you to die peacefully, usually within an hour. And you can, as many people do, choose not just when and where you're going to die, but who you want with you and how you want to do that, which is a very powerful option to offer people. So that, that in essence is the law and it's been in existence in Australia, in Victoria since 2017.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So, from my understanding, it also rules out two very important areas. The first is people suffering with Alzheimer's, which is a really horrific disease. Can you also see a way for the laws to cover this because 1 in 10 Australians over 65 has Alzheimer's?

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

ANDREW DENTON: Well, it's the second biggest killer of people over the age of 80 in Australia. I've seen it in my own extended family. It's absolutely and has been since I first started on this path a decade ago, the number one subject raised. Our laws currently don't allow for it because you've got to be mentally competent, you've got to demonstrate that throughout an application process. There's no question that this is a question that needs to be answered. When I travel to the Netherlands, where they have a different basis for their law - so our law is based around an expected time till death, which is an imperfect science. In the Netherlands and in Europe, their law is based around unbearable and untreatable suffering, which can be a range of diseases, and it might mean that you could have another 15 years to live, but it's going to be all horrendous. So, you can make that choice. The difficulty with Alzheimer's is that mental competency is at the core of the law. And if you can't freely demonstrate that this is your wish, to ask a doctor to act on that when they can't be 100 percent sure is a very, very difficult thing to do. So, what I saw in the Netherlands was they have a specialised clinic, which deals with these difficult cases. A particular case that I followed, it was a woman who had Alzheimer's, but she was still able to, and they really put her through the hoops, even up to the night before she died, confirm that she knew what she was doing, and that this was her wish. We're a long way from that point in Australia, but I don't think it's a question that's going away. I think the difficult bit, as I said, is asking a doctor to act on, even with an advanced care directive or a videotape, to act. It's a momentous thing for a doctor to end someone's life, even for all the best reasons. And to do that without being, being able to be a hundred percent sure that this is the person's wish at that time is very difficult.

CAROLINE GURNEY: I understand it from both sides. The other one that I find incredibly hard to sort of work out how it'd work is for children. When they're suffering from terminal cancer, their parents, you know, they're watching them suffer. I mean, where do you think we would get to on that?

ANDREW DENTON: Yeah, that's a very emotive question because people's automatic response is, well, you can't. ‘You can't kill children’ will be the language used. Again, in Europe, there are exceptions to the existing law, which allow for minors to be euthanized and the thinking is, and I don't think it's incorrect at all, is that if you're 17 and have terminal cancer, you're not suffering any less than someone who's 18 and legally allowed to be euthanized. But what they put in place there, because there's a different level of maturation and the brain is in a different space when you're in teenage years, there's a whole lot of other tests on top of the regular ones. So, to demonstrate that, the minor understands what they're seeking and what they're doing, and also the parents have to be involved in that process. But to answer your question, I think I would like to see a point at which a minor who is suffering that much can also be helped. Having seen how even the most basic question of somebody who's 78 years old and riddled with cancer and suffering, how that can be weaponized as some sort of horrible assault by the state to murder people, which is what I saw argued constantly. I know how much a question about minors being assisted to die would also be weaponized. But I don't think there is a good answer to that question. Why should a 17-year-old be forced to suffer in a way an 18 year old is not?

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

CAROLINE GURNEY: You're right. It's very contentious from many sides, especially working out what that child also wants.

ANDREW DENTON: Yeah. And there's a thing called the Gillick Competency Test, which is used with minors. And it's quite a different standard of comprehension required to show an understanding of a minor of whatever is being asked of them. So, there are clinically ways to do this, but also the parents have to be involved. And as you could imagine, in the countries like Belgium and the Netherlands where such laws exist, even though these laws have been in existence for more than 30 years, the number of minors who've been euthanized is tiny because you can imagine what it's also like for the parents. The parents in the end have to approve it. And can you think of anything harder?

CAROLINE GURNEY: I can't imagine it. I really can't. So, in terms of these laws, are you scared that they could be repealed?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, first of all, could they be repealed? Absolutely. And in fact, the leading groups that oppose assisted dying in this country, who again, you can pretty much source back to the Catholic Church, they said from day one, we will work to see these laws repealed state by state. And I think we saw in the US with, uh, the abortion laws, Roe versus Wade. Don't ever assume that these laws can't be repealed. Don't ever assume that hard won, popularly supported reforms can't be wound back by a highly resourced, implacable, deeply vested interest group such as the church. So, I certainly don't assume it. No one that advocates for these laws assume they can't be repealed. Point one. The three chief arguments made against are one, that we just need to give more resources to palliative care because they can take care of this. Now that's, that's just a plain untruth. I certainly support more resources for palliative care, as I said before, it's a deeply admirable and important area of medicine, but their own statistics and their own words say, no, we can't deal with this. So, thank you. That's just a plain untruth. The second chief argument ranged against these laws is that vulnerable people will be coerced to their deaths. What we've seen from the existence of these laws in Australia now for almost six years is the opposite is true. In fact, the coercion is all from families wanting people not to do it. And also from doctors trying to discourage people, or in some cases, simply block them from doing it. Which doesn't mean to say you ignore the possibility of coercion, but it. It's a very hard process to go through and it requires real determination and, the thought that somebody could be feebly coerced through this process is, - nothing is impossible - but the odds are very, very long. The third argument ranged against it is that this is a slippery slope. The minute you start these laws, where do they stop? Well, I think you could say If I was an opponent of these laws, well look, it's true, now they're talking about dementia, now they're talking about children. I think there are two ways to respond to that. One is to say, the laws written in this country were written very conservatively because that was the only thing that was politically possible. So they weren't the end. They were the start of an important conversation. And the second thing to say is the Slippery Slope depends entirely on where you're standing on it. So, if you're of the belief that a single assisted death is a terrible thing, that it goes against God's will, that it's state sanctioned suicide, a single death is the Slippery Slope. Everything is the Slippery Slope. If you're down the bottom of that hill, If you're terminally ill, or if you're a family

with dementia, or a family, heaven forbid, with a 17 year old dying of terminal cancer or some other terrible disease, that's not a slippery slope. That's actually a really hard hill that you're having to climb. Reality is, as in many things, our society has changed, and has changed in a way that powerful organisations such as the Catholic Church find impossible to accept. And one of those really significant changes, which is not about fashion or mores, its reality, is that we live longer than we ever did. We die of chronic diseases rather than communicable ones that we used to die of and medicine, for all its improvements. cannot deal with all that suffering and in fact is often the cause of that suffering because of the side effects of the many brilliant drugs people are put on. So, those are realities and, and our generation and your generation, many of us have in our families, or amongst our friends, we have witnessed prolonged deaths which we do not wish on ourselves or anyone else. And that's what's driving this change. It's not about - I've heard myself and others described as woke and I thought, what's woke about death? I mean, it's universal. There's a great one liner joke, which is, I want to die peacefully in my sleep like my father, not screaming in terror like his passengers. No one wants to die screaming. It's just a universal thing.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So, for Future Generation Andrew, we are one of the biggest private funders of mental health in Australia. You must feel an awful lot of pressure in terms of what you've done for voluntary assisted dying to actually get it onto the agenda and to make so much change. Just talking about death day in day out, how does that affect your mental health?

ANDREW DENTON: Not just mine, but all the people that work in this field. I have a team of five working with me at Go Gentle. There are other advocacy groups around the country, the dying with dignity groups, many of whom have been engaged longer than I have. And I think for all of us, there are times where you just need to step away and be life facing. I've talked about Ray Godbold before. I remember sitting in a hotel room in Melbourne, preparing for what was a very, very savage, political battle to pass that law. A story came on the news, which featured his daughters. And unexpectedly, I just found myself weeping. I mean, totally weeping. And, the thing is, to do this kind of advocacy, particularly the legislative battles, you're not just carrying your own grief and anger, you're carrying a lot of other people's. And there are people at work in all kinds of spaces, domestic violence, homelessness, mental health, youth mental health, who would absolutely relate to what I've just said. So you do have to take care of yourself and you have to look out for the people around you, and each of us at different times have taken a step back for our own care.

CAROLINE GURNEY: You've publicly acknowledged that you've had mental health issues. Would you mind talking through those if you can, but also how do you protect yourself for the future?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, when I was in my early thirties - and before that, but it was the first time it became really problematic - I went through significant issues with depression. And, you know, looking back on it, and this is a wonderful change in our national conversation. I'd never heard the word depression. The first time I ever heard it was when my local doctor raised it almost casually. There was certainly no broader conversation about it. It wasn't until I was in my mid-thirties that I addressed something which had been a problem for me at different times in my life. I've learnt over the years what the triggers are. Often, it's just working myself too hard. And I do a few things.

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

First of all, I try not to put myself in that situation. Secondly, I find that green is a very good response to blue. So being outdoors is excellent. If I'm really struggling, although I haven't had to do this for many years, then I will go and see somebody and get some medication. Medication doesn't solve your problem, but if deep depression is like falling into a hole, then medication is like a ladder to get back to ground level. And then you know, I'm a believer in cognitive therapy, which is essentially if you're in that hole, each day you go and do, however small it is, one thing which is life affirming. You go and smell some flowers, or you go and look at the sky, whatever. But you just do something to break that circuit of blackness or blueness. All of those work, and of course, finding someone good to talk to. Because a mistake we all make is that we think our brain is smart enough to fix our brain, which when you think about it, doesn't make sense at all.

CAROLINE GURNEY: That's very interesting. I agree with you there. The Future Generation companies (ASX: FGX and ASX: FGG), we're dual purpose, but one of the big things that we are really excited about is the government talking about doubling philanthropy by 2030. You've worked with your not-for-profit, Go Gentle. What have you learned about philanthropy in this country and what do you think we can do more of?

ANDREW DENTON: I've learned that a lot of the philanthropy space seems to be peopled by people who were or are merchant bankers, so I've decided in my next life that's obviously the place to be. First of all, it's a very competitive space because Australia doesn't have a big public tradition of philanthropy, which I think is a shame. You know, you look at places like the U. S. where philanthropy is a popular sport. Public display, not necessarily for ego, though I'm sure that's in there, but it's considered to be something that you do. In Australia, there seems to be more, it's more a private thing. It was like going through a doorway to a whole different world seeking support for Go Gentle. I got into some of the most rewarding and intense conversations, sometimes in groups, sometimes one on one. Not always with people that supported or were willing to support what I was doing, but I didn't mind those conversations either. Because it was talking about something so profound and elemental. Essentially, I found a really interesting and engaged group of people who, for different reasons, but largely I think because they believe in giving back, having worked for such good fortune. I found not only a very fascinating group of people that subscribe to philanthropy in Australia, but I believe it's a growing community. And I speak to someone like Daniel Petre, who I have a lot of time for, who's doing, I think, very important work in speaking to a younger generation about philanthropy, the place and value of philanthropy, and I strongly support that.

CAROLINE GURNEY: I think it's really important to talk to younger people as well about philanthropy. I suppose with our models, we try to make everybody an everyday philanthropist, and you can actually buy it on the ASX. But I'm curious to know what you think about these types of (investment) vehicles, you know, the fact that you make an investment and a social impact as well. And do you invest and what do you look for an investment?

ANDREW DENTON: I mean, I have shares and things like that, if that's what you're asking, but in terms of philanthropy, my wife and I have set up our own philanthropic fund, through an

organisation that helps us do that. And the way we're going about that is we put in double the amount we disperse each year. So the aim is that within 10 years, that fund will be kind of a self-saucing pudding. So that when we die, not that that's going to happen to me, but may happen to my wife, when we die, it can continue to distribute. So, the way we do it is we basically say a third of It's yours, Jen, a third of it is mine, the other third we jointly disperse. And the rule is, whatever Jen wants to do, I'm never going to question that and vice versa. So we tend to make choices depending on what's happening in the world around us. But there are bigger questions, and one of the questions is, and you know, it's a big question in Australia right now about intergenerational wealth. What do we want our accumulated to do after we've gone, because it's not all going to go to our son, he knows that. You know, I hope our work will be able to do social good after we've gone.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So hopefully you'll invest in Future Generation. But actually, what I really wanted to say to you was you've had this amazing life. You've been a comedian, you've been a television presenter and you've done so many things. What have been, what's been a highlight for you besides setting up your not-for-profit.

ANDREW DENTON: What's been a highlight? Gosh, I feel like I've had so many highlights in my life. Where do you start? I'm not going to bore you by going through all of them. Do you want a personal highlight or a professional highlight? It's hard to beat, and this will sound very small, but it's actually very big. It's hard to beat. Just having a big laugh with my son, you know. As any parent will attest, being a parent is a testing thing, and you don't always pass the test. My son's 30 this year, and to have a relationship where, beyond the unconditional love, there's genuine friendship and a love of each other's company. It's hard to beat that for a highlight because when I'm on my deathbed, I'm not going to be thinking about work, that's for sure. I may be thinking about some of the extraordinary places on the planet I've experienced, in particular Antarctica. I'm quite sure that what I will be thinking about are my wife and my son and my family and the hard business of saying goodbye.

CAROLINE GURNEY: I think, you're right, I think a relationship with your children is incredibly special. You've mentioned Bill Clinton, you've mentioned, Chopper Read. What was your other favourite interview and because what did you learn the most from?

ANDREW DENTON: Oh, well, favourite and learnt the most from, probably different things. There was a man called Lee Stringer. And probably most people haven't heard of him, but Lee Stringer was a black American author, and he had worked in the advertising industry and he got a very bad crack cocaine habit, and ended up literally living under Grand Central Railway Station, New York. And, one day he was looking for something to push the crack down into his pipe and he found a pencil, and he had a hit, and he passed out, and when he woke up there was no crack but there was a pencil and he was bored, so he started writing. And he sent off his story to New York equivalent of Big Issue magazine and they published it and then - it's amazing how the world spins - some time later a publisher was on a train in New York and there was a blackout and he was stuck there and there was an old issue of whatever the magazine was called, at his feet. He picked

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

it up, read the story by Lee Stringer, went through the magazine to find him. Anyway, Lee Stringer came to Australia, having had this remarkable journey as this lionised author. When I interviewed him, normally I interview people in front of an audience, but because of his schedule it was in an empty studio. So a television studio with only two people in it is a very, very large, empty barn of a place. It takes a really powerful person to fill that space up. And Lee did. He was very quiet. You could see all the pain of his life on his face. He didn't look like a man that was suddenly on easy street. I suspect he'll never be on easy street. And I said to him, if you could go back and take young Lee by the hand, what would you want him to know? And he said, I wouldn't change anything. He said, everything that we do is what makes us what we are. I'd just say keep going. And I like the way he had embraced the pain of his life without letting it overwhelm him.

CAROLINE GURNEY: And how old was he when you met him?

ANDREW DENTON: Lee would have been in his 50s, probably around 54, 55.

CAROLINE GURNEY: So he'd learnt a lot in that time?

ANDREW DENTON: He had.

CAROLINE GURNEY: And your other one? You know, your favourite one, because I assume you learnt quite a lot from him.

ANDREW DENTON: Well, it's very hard to go past the British actress Miriam Margoyles. Who - she's amazing - many Australians would know. She's done a few series on the ABC recently. She was Professor Sprout in the Harry Potter films. And Miriam is the embodiment of no filter. So, with Enough Rope, my producers would do a long research brief and they'd always start it with two or three quotes, from the person to summarise who they were. In Miriam's case, there was a page and a half of quotes and they were so extraordinary. I just built the interview around those and it didn't really matter what quote I threw at Miriam. She just was totally, unapologetically wonderful. So I think one of the questions was from her quote, you say you like picking your nose in public. What is it that you like about picking your nose? And she paused and she went, ‘discovery.’

CAROLINE GURNEY: Of how people will react, or?

ANDREW DENTON: No, I think just what you find out there. Am I allowed to use bad language?

CAROLINE GURNEY: Yeah, go for it.

ANDREW DENTON: Yes, this is an adult concept trigger warning.

CAROLINE GURNEY: We've done a trigger warning.

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

ANDREW DENTON: Yes, this is a different trigger warning. She talked about being at Cambridge, she was there with the Pythons, some of the Python team, who she didn't like,

CAROLINE GURNEY: Really?

ANDREW DENTON: Yes. She found them rather snobbish and boyish, but she said, my parents always told me 'as a good Jewish girl, don't f***, suck'. Outrageous. She talked about being told to shut up by the Queen. I'd never met anyone like that. But then on the other hand, I'd read, her mother had dementia, which loops the conversation back around, and I'd read she'd written an article where she talked about losing her temper and hitting her mother. And we got talking about this and she told the story, this was in front of an audience. There's two kinds of silence. There's the kind of polite silence and sometimes the bored silence. Usually you can tell it's boring because people are coughing. Or there's a deep silence and this was a deep silence of people absolutely in that moment. She talked about taking her mother into a supermarket. And her mother had had a stroke, terrible stroke, and couldn't communicate. She seemed to be trying to indicate something, but Miriam could not work out what it was, so in frustration she parked her in the aisle and went off to get something else. And she's two aisles away and she hears this strangled voice call out 'Jaaaam!'. And she said that's the last word I ever heard her say. But she didn't tell it as a funny story, she told it in a way that was heartrending, as what she saw as a failure of her duty of care. So you couldn't write a better interviewee than Miriam Margulies.

CAROLINE GURNEY: She is, she's a very fascinating character, I agree. I'd love to meet her. Maybe she can be the next interviewee too. But obviously you've interviewed so many amazing people. How do you prepare for an interview? You've talked about being nervous before you actually do an interview, but what makes a great interview?

ANDREW DENTON: Well, first of all, a great interviewee. I think to answer your first question first, I prepare very thoroughly. A research brief for me for an interview would be anywhere between 80 and 150 pages. And I'd always listen to the voice of the person and watch them and just try and get a sense of how they were. And then I'd work with my production team, we'd come up with a script of questions. And sometimes even just one word, would make the difference to how somebody heard a question. So a lot of thought went into that interview. But I did all that preparation so that if something better happened, I could just throw it out. It was like a roadmap, which was going to get me to where I wanted to go. But often the best interviews were the ones where the guest just was completely unexpected. And my background, as you mentioned, was comedy. Improvisation. And so, for me, it was incredibly good fun when suddenly there was no script and we're into unexpected territory. And I had an occasion where the British actor Richard E. Grant - we have mutual friends, and I thought they may have put him up to this. But I found out later it's just what he's like. He doesn't know small talk, he only knows big talk. And so he turned the interview around and started asking me very personal questions. And I thought, well, you know, I can't ask people personal questions then when I'm asked them, not respond. So we had this really extraordinary exchange where his questions were deeply personal, impertinent questions, which I was trying to answer honestly, but also trying to work out how to get the interview back. And it

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202

was, it's one of my favourite ever exchanges. made even better by the fact that in the middle of all this, someone in the audience started having a huge coughing fit. So we both left the set and went up into the audience and tried to negotiate a Heimlich manoeuvre. And it was hugely enjoyable. And so what makes a good interview is also a good guest. What makes a guest good, and this goes back to the preparation is, if you want someone to be interesting, then ask them something interesting.

CAROLINE GURNEY: You already have. I mean, thank you so much for your time. It's been a pleasure. You are a brilliant interviewee and obviously a brilliant interviewer. One thing I do want to ask you, which probably won't be for this is, what do you want to do next? What is really going to draw you for your next 10 years?

ANDREW DENTON: That's a great question to which I don't have a great answer right now. I'm, I'm sitting out and having a think. I've actually been asked to do a lot of podcasts and I've said no to pretty much all of them. And the line I'm using is by the musician John Cage, which I think is brilliant. I have nothing to say and I'm saying it. So I'm having a good think right now.

CAROLINE GURNEY: Well, thank you very much for taking the time today.

ANDREW DENTON: Thanks, Caroline.

CAROLINE GURNEY: Thank you, Andrew. We hope you enjoyed today's episode. For those interested, the Future Generation Companies are companies that are able to provide investment and social returns. We offer a unique opportunity for shareholders to invest with leading Australian and global fund managers, while supporting high impact, youth focused, not-for-profit organisations. Today the companies have more than one billion in assets, managed by over 30 leading Australian and global fund managers. These fund managers generously manage our funds pro bono and don't charge the usual management or performance fees. This allows us to give one per cent of our net tangible assets each year to carefully selective, not for-profit-organisations. To date, Future Generation has given more than $75 million, making us one of Australia's top 30 corporate philanthropists. This is made possible through the expertise and generosity of the Future Generation pro bono fund managers Service providers, board directors and investment committee members, all of whom waive their usual fees. For more information about Future Generation, visit our website www.futuregeninvest.com.au

[ends]

Level 26, Governor Phillip Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000
Future Generation Investment Company Limited ABN 97 063 935 553
Future Generation Global Investment Company Limited ABN 52 606 110 838

W. futuregeninvest.com.au
T. +61 2 9247 9202