



RESEARCH2REALITY

Shining a light on research & innovation.

The Curious Engine of Discovery

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What is the role of a scientist in modern society?

We wonder why everything happens. Why does the sun rise? Why do kids look like their parents? Why do flowers grow from seeds? And all of that has fascinated me since I was a teenager.

The reason that we wake up in the morning is to advance knowledge, and advance knowledge towards practical applications. And so the goal is to make life better for all of us.

We're always thinking, we're always inventing, we're always creating. So it never leaves us. We are like artists.

How will research influence our future?

Of course science is all about trying to push things into the future. We all understand that science has led to major changes in the way we live day to day, and in the general well-being of society. But it's almost never done so with that aim originally in mind. Science can be turned into practical applications but only by valuing the science itself at the same time, by thinking of it as a creative endeavour which will lead to unanticipated discoveries that may then turn into the next computers, or the next spaceships, or the next Tang, or whatever the benefits of the Space Race have actually been.

So I worked in industry before I came into academia, and I realized working in industry that if academia doesn't take on the biggest challenges, then nobody else

will. And so, we are working in, you know, the central nervous system, the brain, the spinal cord, the eye, the retina. These are big, big challenges. What we're trying to do with basic science is make life better. So what we're trying to do is really connect the dots from the basic science to the applied science, and translate them into products that will make a difference in people's lives.

TODAY'S RESEARCH. TOMORROW'S REALITY.