

# TRENDS

## in Global Grassroots Organizing

### Earth Month

March 20 - April 22

Finding Meaning and Resilience  
Planet Heart Earth Day Celebration  
The Rising Storm  
In This Spiritual Springtime  
Building a New World  
Small Steps, Big Impact  
Allowing Miracles?  
and more...

**WELCOME & COMMENTARY**

**MLK – MANIFESTING THE DREAM ROCKED**

**NOW: A PROPOSAL FOR URGENT COLLECTIVE ACTION**



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## WELCOME AND COMMENTARY

# MLK – MANIFESTING THE DREAM ROCKED NOW: A PROPOSAL FOR URGENT COLLECTIVE ACTION

By Rick Ulfik, Founder of We, The World and The WE Campaign at [WE.net](https://we.net)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The viewpoints and opinions expressed by Rick Ulfik in this Commentary are solely his own and do not in any way represent the viewpoints and opinions of the organization We, The World or any individuals associated with We, The World.

I want to start by expressing deep gratitude to all the authors and contributors featured in **TRENDS Magazine**. I and **WE** are excited to share this latest edition with them and with **you**. News about the work being done, which is aligned with each of We, The World's **11 Campaigns for Change**, is always highlighted in each edition of the magazine. Also, I hope you will check out our monthly **Welcome to WE! Show**, hosted by Trends Magazine Editor Robert Levine. His interviews feature the most compelling authors represented in Trends. To receive **WE** Newsletters, announcements and other notices please **Subscribe** at <https://we.net/subscribe>

## We, The World Celebrates Earth Month! Equinox Earth Day March 20th to April 22nd

### Featured Participant Partners include

**Earth Society Foundation - <https://EarthSocietyFoundation.org>**

**Equinox Earth Day March 20th 2025**

Live Presentation - Ringing of the UN Peacebell

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWyrWiGLAQ>**

Featuring Mary Carlin, Sky Phoenix, Rick Ulfik and many others

**Planet Heart - World Peace Earth Day Celebration & Benefit - <https://www.planetheart.org>**

Featuring Andrew Kaen, Christine Marie, Rick Ulfik, Alan Steinfeld, Grandmother Shirley, Rev. Becky Suzik and many others

**The Climate Collaboratory and The Gardens of Global Unity -**

**<https://gardensofglobalunity.org/climate-collaboratory>**

Featuring Sue Blythe & Friends

**A Better World - <https://abetterworld.net>**

**Earth Day 2025 - <https://abetterworld.net/events-2>**

Featuring Mitchell J. Rabin, Dr. Jill Stein, Gary Malkin, Kristin Hoffman, Itzhak Beery, and many others

**Earthman Lanny Smith & The Planet Earth Project for All - <https://www.earthman.tv>**

Featuring Lanny Smith and Friends

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## WELCOME AND COMMENTARY

### Our MLK – Manifesting The Dream Broke All Previous Records!

As you may know, We, The World convened our annual MLK – Manifesting The Dream. This year it was **massive** – a Global Convergence of **53 Broadcasts and Programs** carrying forward the work and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. We actually broke ALL our previous Records with over **20,000 Volunteer Participants** doing various kinds of Community Service activities this past January and February!

I think so many people and organizations approached We, The World to work with us because of the expanding crisis happening in the USA, since late January, which is harming tens of millions of people here, and around the world.

### A National Crisis with Global Consequences

Since January we have witnessed unexpected ferocity and cruelty of Human Rights Violations, Constitutional Infractions and the disregard of the Rule-of-Law that allowed the targeting of the most vulnerable populations. The attacks have even gone *beyond* those vulnerable populations to include Federal Workers, Law Firms, Ivy League Universities, Retirees, as well as Public Service Agencies, Institutions and their workers that serve *everyone*. There is even now talk of transferring detainees without legal due process – even if they are US citizens – to the custody of a foreign government if they are labelled a threat to US Foreign Policy.

We are seeing defunding of crucial Scientific and Health Practices, and Research, especially in Universities, affecting people in the USA and worldwide, as well as the collapse of US-funded distribution systems of life-giving Food and Medicine used by people in poverty around the world. Large numbers of people have been projected to die because of this. We have also seen major challenges to our collective ability to address Climate Disruption, to protect the Environment and to expand Renewable Energy.

All this has been fueled by Lies and Hate Speech of many of society's most powerful and wealthy leaders, and it is echoed in much of the Media – helping to normalize an US vs THEM Culture of Intolerance that these leaders use to rationalize their actions.

Though the scope of all this seems difficult for most of us to comprehend, we have to realize that the damage we are seeing is also connected to why so little is being done to reduce the ongoing military violence and displacement affecting millions of civilians (mostly women and children) in Sudan, Israel, Ukraine, Lebanon, Congo, Myanmar and elsewhere.

### “Business As Usual” Won’t End This Crisis

“Business As Usual” is not sufficient to stop and reverse the harms affecting millions of people in the USA and worldwide. It is not sufficient to protect the many Agencies and Institutions being defunded and dismantled that were created to serve the Public.

As you may know, **Indivisible** organized over 1,300 Protest Rallies across the USA that took place on April 5th. Involving as many as 3 million people, it was the largest collective protest since January. Also, the **50501 Movement** organized protests on April 19th in every state. Other protests, some focused on specific areas such as Science, Health, Environment, Human Rights, etc are continuing to get occasional attention.

I saw that a peace activist named Mark Stansbery wrote “Protest without movement is shouting into the wind.” I am inclined to agree. Perhaps Albert Einstein could help: “A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move to higher levels”. I think that such a new type of thinking could be based on “WE Consciousness” – utilizing radical inclusion rather than force - taking collective action in consideration of the well-being of ALL. Here is a strategy using this new type of thinking that could actually turn things around.

# WELCOME AND COMMENTARY

## A Proposal For Urgent Collective ACTION

Contact [info@WeTheWorld.org](mailto:info@WeTheWorld.org) to get involved

This **Collaborative Strategy Proposal** is based on an expansion of We, The World's widely endorsed **WE Power America Campaign** – see <https://we.net/wepoweramericapresentation>

### Overview

#### The **WE Power Campaign**

*It is through the power of WE that society can be transformed*

Working on many levels, the **WE Power Campaign** is a *Non-Partisan* Strategy that uses a Major Media Ad Campaign purchasing airtime in major media markets nationally. The Campaign is designed to engage millions of people to take immediate and *ongoing* action to address the crisis in the USA. Additionally, imagine the largest Social Justice and Environmental organizations (plus 1000s of smaller ones) actually *working together* in an ongoing coordinated campaign – setting a collective agenda that galvanizes their millions of followers to realize that they have the “**WE Power**” to stop and reverse the harms affecting so many people in the USA and around the world.

The cost of launching this extraordinary Campaign is \$1 Million - a VERY low amount to actually start to turn things around!

Expressing a unifying message, this Campaign focuses on what most people **want**, what we are **for**, not who we are **against**. The goal is to end and reverse the recent harms affecting so many people, while consciously creating the Cultural *Shift* from “ME” to “WE” - seeding change for a better future.

#### Important:

If you think this Strategy Proposal could make the changes needed, would you be willing to reach out to people you know, who have financial resources, and who might be excited to help launch such a Strategy and Campaign? WE are seeking Major Sponsors and Benefactors who together can raise at least the \$1 Million we need to launch this Campaign. Contact us at [info@WeTheWorld.org](mailto:info@WeTheWorld.org) or go to [WE.net](http://WE.net) Thank You!

#### There are 3 Parts to this Strategy:

##### **WE Power Campaign Strategy Part 1: A Major Media Ad Campaign**

- Purchase Airtime in Major Media Markets Nationally, running beautifully produced Public Service Announcements – PSAs – sometimes with celebrities, reaching at least 10 million people, under the **Non-Partisan Banner** of the **WE Power Campaign**
- Build a Powerful Media Message and Inspiring Narrative showing millions of people working together In Service to the Public and the Common Good.
- Powerfully address extreme political polarization with a unifying message about how **WE** have so much more in common than what separates us.
- Each Ad concludes with an invitation to join the movement and become a WE Power Campaign *Connector* who will galvanize each of their own networks to regularly take collective action - coordinating with the rest of the Campaign members.

#### Sample of a Public Service Announcement broadcast by the WE Power Ad Campaign

(VISUALS: Present Day. Sequence of Workers in a variety of work environments. Individual then Group Voiceover statements. Upbeat Music throughout.)

WE Inspect your Food

WE Run Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid

WE Find cures for Cancer

WE Help Vets find Housing



# WELCOME AND COMMENTARY

## **WE Power America!**

WE Teach your Children  
WE Predict the next Hurricane and Wildfire  
WE Install your Solar Panels to reduce your Electric Bill  
WE Pick the Apples you eat to stay Healthy

Together, **WE POWER AMERICA!**

### **WE Power Campaign Strategy Part 2: Engage at least 1000 WE Power Campaign Connectors**

- The Ad Campaign will reach at least 10 Million people with an invitation to join the movement and become a WE Power Campaign *Connector*.
- We anticipate getting a Response Rate of at least 1% of 1% = 1000 WE Power Campaign Connectors.
- With an average network size of 2000-3000 followers, each Connector will have the goal of galvanizing their own network members to each take at least one action per month – in coordination with the rest of the Campaign groups.
- Together this means at least **2 Million People** (and hopefully many more) could take action *monthly* on an ongoing basis!
- Actions could include: Attend a Town Hall in your District, send messages to your Representatives, contact CNN, contact your local TV Station, contact Major Faith Leaders and Groups, Universities, write a Letter to the New York Times, the Washington Post or another Media Outlet, write about the **WE Power Campaign** to your favorite Influencer, send a Message of Support or a Donation to one of the **WE Power Campaign Partners**, etc.
- With **2 Million Actions Per Month**, Organizers and Partners will begin to realize the unprecedented POWER of 2+ Million people taking action consciously, collectively and regularly. This will make the possibility of ending and reversing the Crisis we are in *within reach*!

### **WE Power Campaign Strategy Part 3: The Largest Social Justice & Environmental Groups Working Together**

Imagine the largest Social Justice and Environmental organizations (plus 1000s of smaller ones) inspired by the **WE Power Campaign** to work together activating their vast networks in conjunction with the WE Power Campaign Connector Network Actions to set a schedule of Collective Actions and Goals to build public support and political will. **We, The World** has contacts with most of these organizations.

#### **Campaign Objectives:**

- 1) Begin to make positive change immediately,
- 2) Slow down and reverse the worst of the current harms in the short term, and
- 3) Create a Cultural Shift that seeds change for a better future - away from the “US vs THEM” Culture with Winners & Losers, and towards a “WE Consciousness” Culture that prioritizes the Common Good with Peace, Justice, Dignity and Respect for ALL.

**We, The World** is uniquely suited to carry out this large-scale collaborative plan (with proper funding).

Up to this point, reactions to the barrage of attacks and harms inflicted have been one-offs by specific groups, court injunctions, lawsuits, etc. The massive protest events of April 5th, April 19th and subsequent protests, have been very important, however they are partisan focused and likely not sufficient to turn things around.

The **WE Power Campaign Collaborative Strategy** offers a Non-Partisan message with the possibility of engaging literally millions of people to take action, on a regular basis, in a wide variety of ways, and not just through marches and rallies. ALL these approaches are important at this moment of crisis in our society.

Thank you for considering helping with this Proposal – especially by reaching out to anyone you know who might be able to bring in some of the funding needed to launch this Campaign. Contact us at [info@WeTheWorld.org](mailto:info@WeTheWorld.org) or go to **WE.net**

I and **WE** look forward to hearing from you about this or any of the other articles in this edition of Trends Magazine. **Submit a Letter To The Editor: [Editor@Trends.WE.net](mailto:Editor@Trends.WE.net)**

Thank you for reading **TRENDS Magazine**, for watching our monthly **Welcome to WE! Show** and getting involved with all the other programs of **We, The World** at **WE.net**!

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In the United States, in response to the industrialization of the country in the nineteenth century a conservation movement began to preserve natural resources and to ensure that large swathes of wilderness was preserved and protected from being exploited and destroyed. Among the forces critical to this movement were: John Muir who helped establish Yosemite along with other national parks; Aldo Leopold who was a pioneering wildlife biologist whose writings were foundational to environmental thinking; Gifford Pinchot who was the first chief of the US Forest Service; and President Theodore Roosevelt who established the Forest Service and expanded the national park system. All of their efforts did not stem the tide of the toxification of the natural environment, and the polluting of the air and water. In 1962 a marine biologist by the name of Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* which exposed the dangers of commonly used pesticides and their effect on all living things. Rachel Carson's contribution, as well as the contributions of so many others, in inspiring the development of the modern environment movement is well documented in the books included in the Recommend Books section of this issue. Understanding those who came before us, and the changes they inspired, is pivotal to understanding the role each of us has to play as we work towards addressing Climate Change, the greatest environmental challenge we will ever face.

## Submit a Letter to the Editor: [editor@trends.we.net](mailto:editor@trends.we.net)

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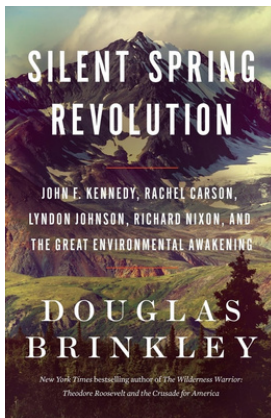
## Get Inspired, Informed and Involved with TRENDS!

Whether you're a committed activist or new to the world of social change, Trends can deliver a mega-dose of optimism while connecting you to unique and inspiring Change Agents working locally and globally for a better world. Trends focus on the [11 Campaigns For Change](#) which, developed from [11 Days of Global Unity](#). Together, they form a comprehensive blueprint for global transformation. Would you like to help us Inspire, Inform, and Involve millions more people to create a better world? Here are three ways you can be part of this effort:

- Join the [WE Team](#) that creates Trends and does so many other things! Sign up to become a Volunteer Coordinator here: [we.net/volunteer](http://we.net/volunteer)
- Submit your Trend Report for possible publication in Trends! Tell us whose transformative work for social change inspires you - including your own! Send to [Trends@We.net](mailto:Trends@We.net)
- Please make a generous tax-deductible contribution to help We, The World continue and expand our global networks of collaboration and action! [Click here](#) to make a secure donation, or go to [WE.net/donate](http://WE.net/donate) to see an address to send a check.

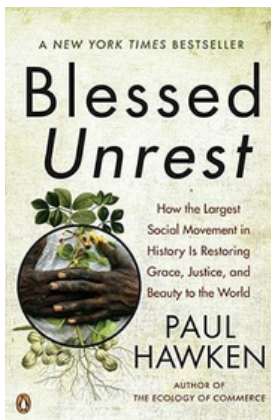
# RECOMMENDED READING

*In an interview he gave to the NBC News Program Meet the Press in August 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that "Demonstrations serve the purpose to bring the issues out in the open. I never felt demonstrations could actually solve the problem, they call attention to the problem." What Dr. King said points to the importance of bringing a critical issue to the attention of the public at large as well as to the policy makers and policy makers across the US and around the world. His quote applies not only to the civil rights and anti-war movements in the 1960s, but to the emergence of the environmental movement that brought major legislative initiatives into existence for clean water and clean air. The following three books directly address the role that social movements and grass roots played in the movement to bring attention to and begin the effort to save the planet.*



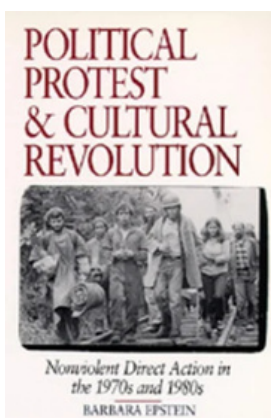
[Silent Spring Revolution: John F. Kennedy, Rachel Carson, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and the Great Environmental Awakening by Douglas Brinkley, Harper, 2022](#)

This comprehensive narrative provides a chronicle of the environmental transformation of the 1960s and early 1970s, a period the author calls the "Great Environmental Awakening." The book highlights how the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962 (previously listed as a TRENDS recommended book, galvanized public concern over environmental issues. This ultimately led to significant political and legislative actions. Brinkley examines the interplay between grassroots movements and presidential leadership, illustrating how citizen activism influenced policies under administrations from Kennedy to Nixon. This book explores the synergy between social movements and governmental response in advancing environmental protection.



[Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming by Paul Hawken, Viking, 2007](#)

The author explores the emergence of a vast, decentralized network of organizations and individuals committed to environmental and social justice. He demonstrates how a leaderless movement, comprising countless NGOs and community groups, represents a powerful force for change, even if it lacks formal recognition. Hawken traces the roots of this movement to earlier social activism, emphasizing its role in addressing environmental degradation and advocating for sustainability. The book offers a compelling look at how collective action, often operating below the radar, does contribute to significant societal shifts.



[Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s by Barbara Epstein, University of California Press, 1991](#)

Though this book does not focus solely on the environmental movement, it is a favorite of mine and is important toward understanding the criticality of direct-action movements to bring about social change. In this book, Barbara Epstein examines the emergence of nonviolent direct-action movements in the U.S., including peace, anti-nuclear, feminist, and environmental activism. The author explores how these movements, many of which arose in the wake of the 1960s counterculture and civil rights struggles, developed new forms of organizing and protest rooted in participatory democracy and collective empowerment. The book does pay special attention to how environmental activism, especially anti-nuclear and anti-toxics campaigns, grew out of and was shaped by these broader social movements. The author highlights the role of community-based activism and critiques of state and corporate power, making a compelling case that the environmental movement inherited and transformed strategies from earlier protest movements.



# THE ACTION TOOLKIT: SUPPORT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



The upswell in grassroots organizing throughout the world and in the United States since the presidential election is a sign of the growing awareness among people in all the nations across this planet that we can each make a difference in determining the direction of our nations and our planet. Amazing organizations are working on a vast myriad of issues, along with so many inspired to generate many more to join in the ongoing evolutionary change to save our world and each other.

To support and inspire each other, WE, THE WORLD is initiating a new effort to generate the resources and the tools we can share to organize our fellow travelers on our journey through the universe. This Action Toolkit is the inspired idea of Mahika Halepete, whose ideas and hard work were so critical in launching our first issue of Trends.

The Action Toolkit can provide information and resources on how to perform outreach, engage with organizations and individuals to raise critical funds, reach out and share our ideas with like-minded people, to advocate to elected officials, motivate people to take action, and support each other to be active change agents.

Within WE, THE WORLD we are graced with many talented and influential people and organizations that have been making positive change for decades. Join us in developing this critical resource to encourage and support many others working to make this a better world.

As the legendary community organizer Fred Ross eloquently said, "A good organizer is a social arsonist who goes around setting people on fire." Work with us to light thousands, if not millions, of beacons of change.

Have recommendations or resources for taking action?  
We encourage you to submit them on the activism bulletin board where they'll be seen by thousands and also be considered for the upcoming publication!

<http://trends.we.net/activism-bulletin-board/>

# BECOME A WE CAMPAIGN MEMBER



## Campaign Membership

The **Campaign Membership Program** is a vibrant community of changemakers dedicated to creating a world that works for all. By joining, you become part of a global network committed to peace, justice, and sustainability.

Our **Campaign Membership Program** offers exclusive access to resources, events, and a platform to amplify your voice. Members collaborate on initiatives that drive social transformation and have the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals and organizations worldwide.

### Why Join Us?

- **Connect:** Network with leaders and activists from around the globe.
- **Collaborate:** Work on impactful projects and campaigns.
- **Contribute:** Play a vital role in shaping a better future.

Are you ready to make a difference? Join our **Campaign Membership Program** today and be part of a movement that is changing the world. Together, we can achieve the extraordinary!

Visit <https://wetheworld.gumroad.com/l/wemembership> to learn more and sign up. Let's unite for a better tomorrow!

Have recommendations or resources for taking action?  
We encourage you to submit them on the activism bulletin board where they'll be seen by thousands and also be considered for the upcoming publication!

<http://trends.we.net/activism-bulletin-board/>

## ST. MARK'S CHURCH: MANIFESTING THE DREAM OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ACTION

This article draws from a recent discussion as part of the "MLK Manifesting the Dream" program by WE, The World, featuring **Reverend Ann Marie Witchger**, the rector, and **Jeannine Otis**, the director of Music at St. Mark's Church in the Bowery, Manhattan, New York City. The conversation, hosted by **Rick Ulfik**, the founder of WE, The World, explored how St. Mark's Church actively carries forward the work and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by serving the community, particularly vulnerable populations, and addressing issues of racism and civil rights. <https://youtu.be/KO-AxY4WajY>

### A Legacy of Welcome, Worship, and Witness

St. Mark's Church boasts a rich history in New York City, with **400 years in the city and 225 years as an Episcopal Church** within the Diocese of New York. Having just celebrated its 225th anniversary, the church has been reflecting on its history, time, change, and legacy, considering its role in shaping the future of both the church and the wider world.

From its beginnings, St. Mark's has been a **community deeply committed to the Arts and social justice**. The church has always seen its presence in the neighborhood as an opportunity to **welcome the wider community and work together for peace and justice**. The arts, encompassing poetry, music, and visual arts, have long been central to the identity and witness of St. Mark's.

Reverend Witchger highlighted three core aspects of St. Mark's mission: **welcoming everyone, worship, and witness**. In a world where divisions are increasingly emphasized, St. Mark's firmly commits to **welcoming all people**, embracing diversity and inclusivity as both a matter of principle and a reflection of God's creation intended for loving relationships. This commitment echoes Dr. King's vision of the **Beloved Community**.

The church's worship is conducted **in the round**, fostering connection among congregants. Music plays a vital role in their worship, serving as a **sign of God's love within the community and a love to be shared with the world**, providing nourishment during challenging times.

As a community that **witnesses to the world they know is possible**, St. Mark's embodies relentless hope while acknowledging the current imperfections of society. They strive to **hold leaders and each other accountable** to a better way, painting a picture of that potential future while recognizing the gap between the ideal and reality. In these challenging times, Reverend Witchger finds resonance in Dr. King's quote about seeing the stars in darkness, emphasizing the importance of holding onto faith, community, and the stories of past justice advocates.

### Serving the Community: The Welcome Center

Driven by their commitment to welcome, St. Mark's established the **Welcome Center** about a year ago in response to the significant influx of migrants and asylum seekers arriving in New York City. Responding to a call from downtown faith communities, St. Mark's opened its doors **once a week to provide a warm space, charging stations for cell phones, and respite for people seeking food and shelter assignments**. The initial week saw almost 150 people, and the program has continued to grow, serving both those who initially sought refuge and newcomers. St. Mark's is dedicated to being a **place of safety, care, and sanctuary** for all, especially as vulnerable populations face increasing threats.

Jeannine Otis emphasized the church's support for the Welcome Center, with **choir members occasionally serving food and providing music**. A notable event was the **celebration of Eid at St. Mark's**, highlighting the church's inclusive spirit.

## The Power of Music in Building Beloved Community

Jeannine Otis, who has a long history of collaboration with Rick Ulfik, sees her ministry as integral to supporting the priest, the mission of St. Mark's, and the community. She believes that **music serves as a powerful tool to build and sustain the Beloved Community**, nurture individuals, and encourage them to expand their voice and expressive sense. She feels the music ministry has been successful in encouraging the "light of God" to shine more brightly in everyone.

St. Mark's hosts significant musical events like the **Good Friday Blues**, co-created with Bishop Kathy Rosin, which uses music and sermons to reflect on life in the light of Christ, offering a path back to faith and preparing for the veneration of the Cross. The recent celebration of **Three Kings** also exemplified the collaborative spirit, with a new piece by Thomas Rosa. Otis highlighted that the music at St. Mark's aims to **support and catalyze people to find their voice** and actively participate in the church's mission to be a beacon of light for the community.

## Reflecting on History: The Bert Williams Project

The discussion also touched upon Larry Marshall's ongoing project about Bert Williams, a significant figure who, despite using blackface, was a pioneer in uplifting his race through his comedic material and insights into the African-American experience. Marshall first presented his one-man show at St. Mark's almost 20 years ago at a King dinner and has continued to develop it. This project underscores the importance of reviewing and understanding our history.

## A Call to Action: Staying Grounded and Living Prayerfully

When asked about a call to action in the face of current societal challenges, Reverend Witchger emphasized the importance of staying grounded in who we are and not losing sight of our values amidst chaos. She cautioned against becoming so overwhelmed by constant onslaughts that we lose ourselves and our connections to each other, which she believes can be a deliberate strategy. Instead, she urged listeners to pay attention to themselves, their own well-being, and then to check in with each other, ensuring that loved ones are not fading away during these difficult times. She acknowledged the necessity of organizing, advocating, protesting, and other forms of action, believing these will emerge, but stressed the foundational need for self and community care.

Jeannine Otis echoed this sentiment, sharing her mother's belief that "prayer is action", emphasizing that how we live, treat one another, and treat ourselves is a form of prayer. She believes that this inner connection to God and the universe will guide us and sustain us in whatever actions we are called to take.

## Moving Towards a "WE" Society

In closing, Rick Ulfik reiterated the program's focus on moving from a "me" society to a "we" society, aligning with Dr. King's vision of the Beloved Community. He highlighted the mission of we.net in fostering this collective spirit. The conversation with Reverend Ann Marie Witchger and Jeannine Otis showcased how St. Mark's Church actively embodies this "we" through its unwavering commitment to community service, social justice, and carrying forward the dream of Martin Luther King Jr.



**Campaign Membership**



## FINDING MEANING AND RESILIENCE IN LIFE'S SACRED RHYTHMS: A DISCUSSION ON BREATH, TRANSITION, AND TRANSFORMATION

In a recent WE, The World event, **Jana Larsen** welcomed **Amarie B Thomas Brown** and **Katie Benway** to illuminate the profound interplay between breath, transition, and transformation. Their discussion, centered around navigating life's inevitable changes, including the final event of death, explored how embracing paradoxes and connecting with our inner selves can lead to deeper meaning and resilience.

<https://youtu.be/9e0JqWjRT78>

### Embracing Life's Paradoxes

The conversation began with the fundamental paradox of birth and death, presence and loss, and how understanding these can enrich our lives. Amarie reflected on the shared experience of entering and leaving this dimension with a breath, emphasizing that we are all connected to a deeper essence. Jana shared a personal experience of her mother's passing, highlighting the sacredness of witnessing that final breath. Katie built on this by noting how spiritual teachers have long emphasized paradox, the holding of competing truths, as a source of great lessons. She suggested that experiencing death, even vicariously, brings together the physical reality with the mystery of the unknown, requiring emotional stamina and courage. Amarie added that being able to hold the tension between the physical and the infinite, especially when supporting others through loss, is an honor.

### The Sacredness of Death and Transition

The discussion touched upon the fear often associated with death and the crucial role of support during this transition. Katie emphasized the beauty of hospice and the importance of the "Unseen World" revealed when physical distractions are stripped away. Jana recounted a dream she had when her daughter passed, which Katie interpreted as her soul being present on the other side, offering comfort in the face of human grief. Amarie highlighted her role as a "breath doula," holding space for the energy of both entering and leaving life. Her philosophy centers on the idea that we are here until we go home, and that our dream state allows us to visit our "Soul State".

### Life as a Series of Deaths and Rebirths

Katie described life as a continuous cycle of deaths

and rebirths, a concept mirrored in nature. She advised embracing these cycles rather than resisting them, suggesting that our human experiences act as a "movie theater of our soul," showing us where we need deeper understanding. Katie believes that suffering often catalyzes this learning, but ultimately, accepting life's transitions as a normal part of evolution can reduce suffering. While acknowledging the validity of emotions like anger in the face of loss, she pointed to anger as a purifying force.

### The Power of Stillness and Silence

Amarie shared her personal journey that led her to guide others in stillness and silence. A profound personal transformation in 2007, marked by tangible, inexplicable experiences, shifted her focus to the power of breath as an anchor. She emphasized that we all enter this dimension with a breath, and focusing on this fundamental act can help individuals reconnect with a sense of something more. Amarie sees her work as holding the space that was once held for her in an intangible dimension.

Katie recounted her own powerful experience with breathwork, where simply focusing on her breath led to visions, guidance, and a profound sense of connection beyond narrative and labeling. She highlighted the intimacy of such experiences, whether in breathwork, birth, or death, as they strip away distractions and bring us to a core truth.

### The Profoundity of Breath

Amarie elaborated on the significance of breath, noting the shift from deep belly breathing as infants to shallow chest breathing as we age. Reacclimating to belly breathing acts as a "constant reset," fostering a calm, almost sleep-like state while awake, and facilitating a remembrance of our true selves and connection to our source. Both

Amarie and Katie emphasized the immediate impact of conscious breathing during moments of stress, bringing us back to the present. Katie added that deep belly breath resides "below the stories" that cause suffering, leading to a place of deeper truth.

### **Remembrance and Reconnecting with the Soul**

Amarie discussed her work of "remembrance," guiding individuals back to their conception and the energy surrounding that time, highlighting the power of breathing into that space to reconnect with the self before having a physical body. Katie shared how guided meditation can take people even further back, to the womb or before incarnation, revealing the "blueprint of the soul" and fostering acceptance of life's challenges as part of a larger plan. Amarie likened this process to an "Ultimate Reset," returning to our foundational state. She shared personal experiences of loss and how understanding a pre-birth agreement can shift the perspective on adversity.

### **Finding Meaning in Suffering and the Concept of Opportunity**

Connecting the discussion to the "MLK event," Katie addressed the concept of redemptive suffering. Drawing on Martin Luther King Jr.'s

belief, she suggested that difficult experiences can lead to deeper meaning when met with love and understanding. Katie emphasized the human need for the "illusion of beginnings and ends" as opportunities to start anew, with breath serving as a constant reminder of this possibility. She stressed the importance of self-forgiveness and recognizing that every moment offers a chance for change. Jana shared a personal anecdote about learning to view challenging situations as "opportunity," a perspective that has remained with her. Both speakers acknowledged the privilege of having access to resources and encouraged those facing hardship to seek the many free resources available, emphasizing the inherent value of the soul and the potential for suffering to teach us.

### **Final Thoughts and Connection**

In closing, Jana asked for final thoughts and information on how to connect with the speakers. Amarie can be found on Facebook under "Amarie B Thomas Brown" and "Poetically speaking many voices one breath," and can be emailed at [nrpiiescade@gmail.com](mailto:nрпиессаде@gmail.com). Katie's business is Intrepid 11:11 ([intrepid111.com](http://intrepid111.com) or [katybenway.com](http://katybenway.com)), and she can be emailed at [katie@intrepid111.com](mailto:katie@intrepid111.com). The discussion concluded with gratitude for the insightful exchange and a reminder to participate in service at [we.net](http://we.net) MLK.



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# THE RISING STORM: HOW EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS ARE RESHAPING AFRICA'S FUTURE

*by Musandiwa Sinyosi*



## Introduction

Africa is at the forefront of climate change. Everything from hurricanes, and heatwaves, to scorching drought-covered landscapes, Africa's climate has become an increasingly hostile environment. The economical and humanitarian toll is unprecedented and on the rise as the severity of extreme weather events increases.

In recent years, the frequency and severity of wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, and heatwaves across the globe have set upon an unprecedented surge. The directly resulting crises are severe loss of lives, displacement of millions, food insecurity, and dire downtrends in the economy. This article seeks to highlight the impact of extreme weather phenomena in Africa and the dire need for adaptations to the ever-increasing severity.

## The Growing Threat of Extreme Weather in Africa

Extreme weather in Africa is of spearheading

concern purely due to its region's geographical and climatic diversity. Understanding the sensitive issue of climate change is hard enough for developed nations, so Africa, with its limited infrastructure, economic restraints, and high dependency on nature, is even more prone to these extremes. The last decade alone has experienced right to rebuild their lives startling numbers of shocking natural catastrophes.

While hurricanes are typically linked to the Atlantic and Pacific, Africa hasn't escaped the ravages of cyclonic storms either. Cyclone Idai was among the most lethal tropical storms to strike the continent in 2019, affecting areas in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Over 1,300 people died and hundreds of thousands were displaced. An economic loss has estimated to in billions, entire city submerged; infrastructure damaged and food supplies lost.

Climate change has warmed ocean waters, increasing the intensity and frequency of these storms. Coastal nations of the east—including Madagascar and Tanzania—are especially vulnerable. If they don't prepare and mitigate properly, the impacts of future storms will be more devastating.

Africa has traditionally been a hot continent; however, recent years have seen more severe and longer heatwaves. Northern Africa — particularly Egypt, Algeria and Sudan — has seen record temperatures often surpassing 50 °C (122 °F). Serious health hazards are posed by extreme temperatures, causing dehydration, heat strokes and deaths.

Heatwaves affect agriculture as well and significantly so. Extreme heat causes crops to wither and leads to lower yields, higher food prices. In areas like the Sahel where subsistence farming is practiced heatwaves—which last for extended periods of time, threaten food security and livelihoods.



Africa, a continent known for its diverse landscapes and vibrant ecosystems, is now at the frontline of climate change. From intensifying heatwaves in North Africa to devastating hurricanes along its coastal regions, the impact of extreme weather events is escalating at an alarming rate.

In recent years, the frequency and severity of hurricanes, heatwaves, droughts, and wildfires have surged, bringing severe economic and humanitarian crises. The consequences are dire: loss of lives, displacement of millions, food insecurity, and economic downturns. This article explores the increasing occurrence of extreme weather events in Africa, their impact, and the urgent need for adaptive strategies.

### **Droughts and Water Scarcity: A Disaster Looms**



Droughts are becoming more frequent and longer, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The Horn of Africa; Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have had severe droughts and millions are on the brink of starvation. The on-going drought in the region has resulted in crop failures, livestock deaths and rising food prices and worsening the humanitarian crisis.

In South Africa, Cape Town narrowly avoided 'Day Zero' in 2018 when the water reservoirs almost ran dry. Although measures were put in place, the event was a wake-up call on the need for sustainable water management. Parts of the Eastern Cape and Free State have had years of drought and it has been devastating for agricultural production.

As water becomes scarcer, the competition between different sectors is growing. Farmers, industries and municipalities are all fighting for limited water and it's creating conflicts that threaten social stability. Rural communities are the hardest hit; many of them rely on communal boreholes that dry up frequently.

Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies; it employs over 60% of the population. But drought has reduced the productivity of staple crops like maize, millet and sorghum. This has led to hunger and malnutrition especially among children.

The agricultural sector uses about 60% of the country's water and is highly vulnerable to water shortages. Without irrigation, farms can't sustain production and it leads to more food availability. Urban centres are also feeling the pinch; water restrictions are becoming common in major cities like Johannesburg and Durban.

As climate change pushes temperatures up, some of the essential agricultural regions in South Africa — Western Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal — are now seeing decreases in crop yield. On average, maize will be slammed hardest. It is the staple food for millions and can easily register yield reductions of up to 30% in much of the country.

The economic losses are staggering. In East Africa, drought-related losses have been estimated to be in the billions of dollars through loss of both livestock and harvests by the farmers. With unpredictable patterns of rainfall, communities that depended on farming during the rainy season, struggle to change because the rains have become erratic.

### **Wildfires: Africa's Burning Crisis**

Wildfires are getting more and more frequent in places such as South Africa, Algeria, and Democratic Republic of Congo where normally it never happened. These fires are usually initiated due to high temperatures and dry conditions and in turn lead to giant forests being completely destroyed plus loss of biodiversity with an evicted wildlife population.



In 2017, one of the worst wildfire seasons to ever hit South Africa destroyed thousands of houses and claimed many lives, which happened in the Western Cape. Aside from its threat on human settlements, the increase in wildfires worsens the quality of air, thus contributing to respiratory diseases.

The impacts of wildfires damage much more than the immediate devastation. The forests play a major role in absorbing carbon dioxide; thus, their loss fast-tracks climatic change. The destruction of farms and farmlands by fires also worsens the hunger situation and pushes communities deeper into poverty.

### **Extreme Weather Events' Impacts on Humanitarian and Economic Conditions**

The consequences of such extreme weather would go beyond the immediate damage since it has a very long-term effect on human lives and economies.

Extreme weather events emerged as the primary driver of displacement in Africa. In a year, millions of individuals have to move away from their respective homes because of crises that relate to climate. Most times, it is a question of homes in coastal communities facing the risk of high tides and hurricanes.

Urban migration of climate migrants imposes more pressure on over-expanded resources to create redundancy through more unemployment, housing deficit, and social conflict. Africa's economy depends significantly on agriculture, tourism, and extractive industries, which are all very susceptible to the impacts of climate change. For Africa, every extreme weather event translates, in effect, into the reversing of development gains with monies that could otherwise have been directed to education, healthcare, or infrastructure.



After all, Mozambique, for example, had to devote precious resources to post-cyclone Idai reconstruction, slowing down other strategic development initiatives. Likewise, the current drought in East Africa has produced hundreds of economic losses of billions of dollars.

### **Strategies for Mitigation and Adaptation**

But while the effects of extreme weather events are terrifying, there are things African nations can do to mitigate them. Governments need to put money into infrastructure that can survive extreme weather. This encompasses flood

defences, upgraded drainage networks, and cyclone-resistant housing in susceptible areas.

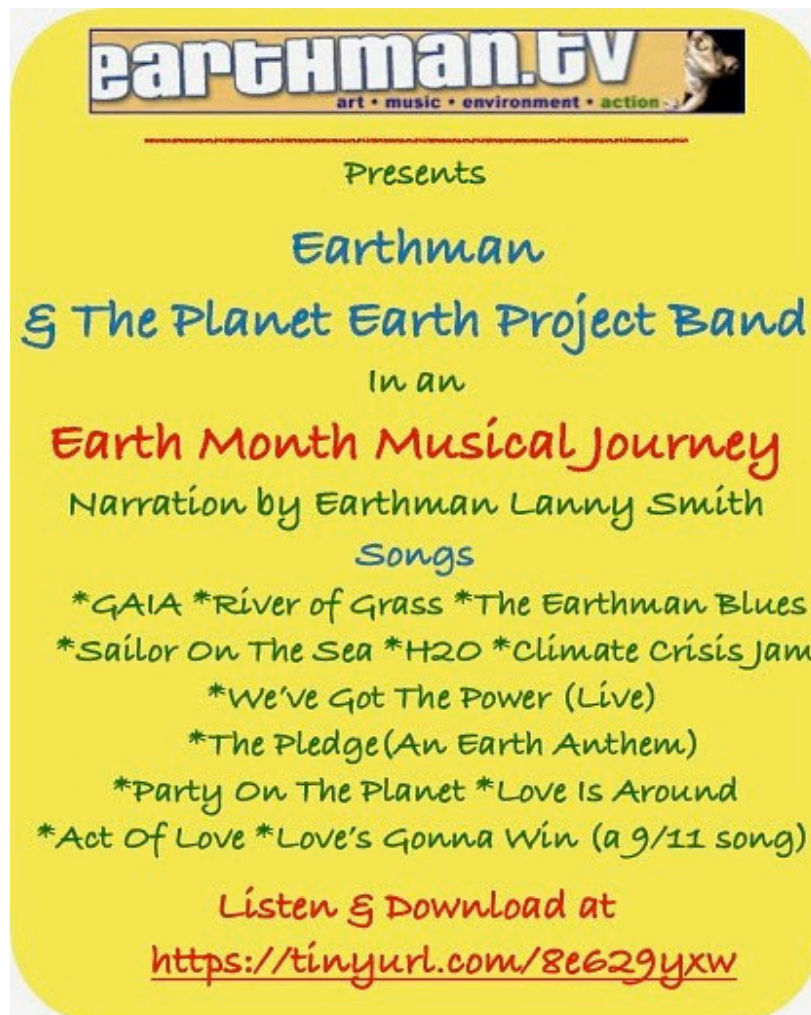
The detection of these calamities from afar prepares the nations, communities, and localities to defend themselves from disasters. The advancement in technology, specifically issued in meteorological research, allows governments to be proactive rather than reactive when it comes to the welfare of its citizens.

In order to mitigate climate change's negative effect, African countries will have to implement food secure as well as climate smart countries. This requires the use of hybrid crops that thrive during drought seasons, advanced farming methods, and the retention of rain water for irrigation purposes. Africa is in need of worldwide assistance in order to handle these challenges. Developed countries must also attend to their

climate finance obligations, providing Africa with the needed funds that would enable these countries to bolster their defenses against the changes in climatic conditions while transition to a renewable energy sourced economy.

### Conclusion

Placing an immediate solution is paramount, if Africa is to avert harsh consequences such as food security, economic depression, and social conflict. By adopting advanced and modern mitigation strategies on climate change related issues, Africa will thrive and grow in the eyes of the world. Meeting international standards while also providing food and water security is crucial, not just for indiscriminately protecting the national interest, but achieving sustainability over the long term.



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# EARTH DAY: A CALL FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTALISM AND LOCAL ACTION

*by Khotso Mogotlane*



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
HOTLANE ORG NPO 258-618**

**OCEAN CONSERVATION  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATE**

Earth Day is more than just a date on the calendar—it's a reminder that our shared planet needs urgent and collective action. As we confront climate change, pollution, and environmental degradation, the importance of global environmentalism has never been more critical. However, meaningful change does not start at the global level; it begins with local communities, youth activism, and initiatives that inspire long-term impact.

## **From Awareness to Action: The Role of Youth and Higher Education**

As an environmental advocate and founder of Hotlane Organization, I have witnessed the power of young people in shaping the sustainability agenda. Through our engagement with institutions like the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC), we have encouraged students to take an active role in conservation efforts.



During discussions with students, I have seen firsthand how knowledge can inspire action. Many who previously saw sustainability as a theoretical issue have since become actively involved in conservation efforts. At CPUT, students took the initiative to participate in cleanup activities after being motivated by our conversations on environmental responsibility. UWC students have similarly engaged in climate action projects, proving that education paired with engagement leads to lasting impact.

However, while many students are passionate about the environment, there is still a gap in higher education's emphasis on sustainability. Universities must integrate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into curricula, ensuring that graduates are not only aware of climate challenges but are also equipped to build solutions. The transition to green and blue jobs—careers in renewable energy, conservation, and sustainable industries—must be a key part of academic and career planning.

## **Community-Driven Solutions: The Khayelitsha Zenzele Project**

Beyond universities, grassroots movements play a crucial role in environmentalism. The Khayelitsha Zenzele Project, an initiative I helped establish, is one example of how communities can take ownership of sustainability. This project began as a simple idea: mobilize residents for neighborhood cleanups. Today, it has evolved into a six-month program involving over 150 volunteers dedicated to restoring public spaces, creating awareness, and fostering a culture of accountability.

Support from stakeholders like PlasticsSA, which donated 4,000 refuse bags, has allowed us to scale our efforts. Additionally, our collaboration with local government officials has strengthened the initiative, showing that when the public sector and communities work together, real change happens.





## A Global Challenge with Local Solutions

While Earth Day is a global observance, its essence lies in the power of localized action. Whether through youth-led sustainability projects, academic institutions fostering green innovation, or community-driven cleanups, we all have a role to play.

This Earth Day, let's move beyond discussions and commit to action—whether by participating in environmental initiatives, holding institutions accountable for sustainability, or simply making choices that reduce our ecological footprint. The planet cannot wait, and neither should we.





<https://www.reverbnation.com/earthmanlannysmiththeplanetearthproject/song/34892145-earth-month-musical-journey-for>

Lanny Smith is known as "Earthman" to millions of youth and adults for using music and the arts to sing about issues involving the environment and peace on our planet. He has been honored with many awards including the SESAC International award for a project that went up in the space shuttle. His music is powerful especially now as we travel down these difficult times. To see his music videos, go on the web to [Earthman.Tv](http://Earthman.Tv).

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# IN THIS SPIRITUAL SPRINGTIME

by Sue Blythe

Hello, it's me, the Sage in Gramma Sue Blythe.

As I approach my ninth decade on this Earth, my body is not letting me run around in the world, or even in my community any more. Heck, I can hardly make it down the street before I have to turn around to get back to my comfy recliner. So I'll have to do what I can from right here in my chair, connecting to the world through my laptop.

I have a story to tell, "On the Road to 2030, 2050, and Beyond." It's been growing in me for a quarter century, since I first saw the opening words of the Earth Charter.

*We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future.*

For 25 years, I've talked with people who are living the 16 principles expressed so beautifully, almost poetically, in the Earth Charter. At first those people were few and far between. The best way to find them, I found, was through the Internet. In 2018, I was overjoyed to find We, the World. Right away, Rick, Jana, Heidi and Karen were willing to play in my collaborative storytelling adventure. They became characters on the Road to a sustainable, just, and peaceful future, connecting the network of networks in the movement of movements for a world that works for all. I could begin to see the way that the transformation could be made visible. We were learning to live together in peace on and with the Earth -- like the wish, the hope, the prayer of the closing words of the Earth Charter.

*Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.*

By 2020, I felt like I was juggling so many puzzle pieces that I couldn't figure out how to put them together in a coherent picture. For the last five years I've been wondering how in the world to do that. Somehow my storybook characters -- and

real people -- could tell the story, "On the Road to 2030, 2050, and Beyond."

Now it's 2025. The story is coming clear. With the help of young people I met through the Earth Charter Initiative and the Star Center Theatre, we have a series of short trailer videos to introduce the story. In this spiritual springtime, we're "Building the Martin Luther King, Jr. World House" right here in Alachua County, Florida. We are part of "Alachua County's Bicentennial Climate Story." In April 2025, I'm learning to tell the story as a podcast so I can share with my grandchildren and all grandchildren my own vision of how our human family is in the process of creating peace on and with the Earth.

That vision first came to me in 1985. I was a new Baha'i, asking for guidance on how I could help to hasten the day when we would have the peace promised throughout human history. Baha'is all over the world presented "The Promise of World Peace" to leaders of thought. I studied the document with a delegation of five Baha'is who met with our Congressman, Dante Fascell. We told him,

*World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet.*

Soon after that, I had a late-night front-porch epiphany. I could suddenly see thousands of years into the past on my left, and thousands of years into the future on my right. All the bits and pieces I'd learned through my semi-religious upbringing seemed to fall into place on that continuum and make wonderful sense. And right in the middle was me, the full-time mother of three young daughters, inspired by songs and stories for the human family. I made a commitment to teach peace through children's songs. And that's what I've done, in so many ways. In Spring 2024 I took a course in Digital Storytelling and was able to tell my story in song.

My family inspires my storytelling. The



Serendipity Sage in me loves the way that my brother Bill, the family historian, introduced me to two AI podcasters (on Notebook LM), just in time to make my family Christmas present in December 2024. The AI podcasters looked at my jumble of letters and notes and Seed Ideas, and put all into a narrative that made sense. I added pictures and recordings of my children and nine grandchildren. And I shared it with my far-flung family on Zoom on Christmas Day.

Today, in the spiritual springtime, I'm planning a podcast that puts together all the puzzle pieces I've collected over the years. I'll present the first episode in April as my final project in April, and share the first few episodes in September during 11 Days of Global Unity. And I'll invite people who listen to co-create our collaborative storytelling adventure. Everyone has a role to play.

We're all on the Road to 2030, 2050, and Beyond. We each have a story to tell as we learn to live in harmony with nature. We're living the next chapter in the story of life on Earth. Let's make our story a good one!

\*\*\* Watch this video summary of Gramma Sue's climate story, with help from her grandchildren.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvbfSweA27k>

\*\*\* Read The Promise of World Peace  
<https://www.bahai.org/documents/the-universal-house-of-justice/promise-world-peace>

**JOIN US on the Road to 2030, 2050, and Beyond!**

\*\*\* **REGISTER NOW** to help tell our collaborative storytelling adventure.  
<https://forms.gle/V7SZcUQKAy8WvAPM7>

# Climate Collaboratory





# 2024 AND BEYOND: TACKLING SOUTH AFRICA'S ENERGY CRISIS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

*by Musandiwa Sinyosi*

## Introduction

South Africa's electricity sector, which has historically relied on coal-fired power plants, complemented by hydropower, is now at the intersection of climate and systemic crises. Rarely have the two rivals of rising world temperatures and extreme weather-caused events reverberated more than in the past few years in streamlined old-fashioned power generation.

The end result is a snowballing crisis manifest in chronic load shedding, skyrocketing production costs, and extreme stress on the national grid. This article explores the various challenges encountered by South Africa in 2024 and 2025, as well as the short-term solutions currently being put in place and the long-term strategies laid out, including government pacts for a more integrated energy future.



## The State of Energy in South Africa

For decades, South Africa has turned to coal to produce roughly 80% of its electricity, a reliance that spurred industrial growth but also destruction of the environment. Hydropower, while a smaller element of that equation, has acted as an alternative renewable energy source, but the output is extremely sensitive to the seasonal rainfall and water availability though. Climate change undercuts conventional forms of energy production, raising questions about the nation's energy security and economic stability as the crisis escalates.

## Challenges Faced

Southern Africa saw record-breaking heatwaves in late 2024, and unseasonal storms and on-going droughts have persisted into 2025. Coal-fired power plants can only operate efficiently in a relatively narrow temperature window. In recent years, South Africa has seen record breaking temperatures impact the operations of critical power stations such as Medupi and Kusile. High ambient temperatures led to:

- Higher temperatures led to more outages and unplanned downtime, which dragged down overall production.
- Coal plants use large quantities of water for cooling. Prolonged droughts meant less water was available to the plants, which meant it also couldn't use this plant material to maintain optimal cooling, leaving them less efficient.
- Increased ambient temperature undermined the functionality of turbines, decreasing electricity generation capacity and contributing to prolonged periods of load shedding.

Over the years, South Africa's dependence on hydropower resources has been under strain, and this pressure dramatically increased in 2024 and 2025. Uncertain precipitation patterns, directly caused by climate change, have resulted in harsh droughts in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal regions. Some of the key challenges include:

- Reduced precipitation has resulted in unregulated water levels in the key reservoirs, and this has restricted the capabilities of the hydroelectric dams to produce energy.
- Competitive water shortages have surfaced conflicts between the agricultural, urban, and power production sectors, thus negatively affecting the span of water provisions.
- As hydropower output decreases, the coal-fired plants have picked the slack, which worsens the existing fuel inefficiencies and adds more stress on the energy system.

Extreme weather events in South Africa have

seemingly become the norm, as they have had a deleterious impact on energy production and infrastructure. In 2024, the heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding destroyed vital transmission lines, and power stations. These events resulted in outages and periods where long-term repairs were needed, which guaranteed further grid instability.



The energy crisis in South Africa has a domino effect, which is particularly concerning in major industries that depend on constant power supply like mining, agriculture, and manufacturing, which have all seen a downturn of great magnitude; suffering pandemic levels of power outages. Most small and medium enterprises (SMEs) do not have contingency plans for prolonged outages.

Energy power outages affect business processes on a greater scale, blasting the average South African's quality of life. The increase in load shedding has had an alarming impact on the activities of schools and universities which primarily depend on digital tools for teaching the quality of education suffers catastrophically.

During an outage, the hospitals and clinics that rely on critical medical equipment are particularly vulnerable as they face massive threats. These facilities may endure severe patient management issues during prolonged cuts, which can increase mortality rate. Extended power cuts can also pose security issues. Inactive street lights and non-functioning security systems can increase crime, which put a lot of innocent and vulnerable regions at risk.

These issues have heightened pressure from the public and environment. In a bid to solve global

issues like climate change, South Africa is getting more stringent on reducing the carbon emissions. The persistent dependency on coal-fired plants is not aligned with these objectives, creating problems at the regulatory and global diplomatic level.

### Responses from Private Sector and Government

Strong funding was issued in 2024 for the servicing and technological upgrading of currently operational coal fired power plants. These strategies tend to increase productivity, minimize the breakdown of infrastructure, and crank up the overall life expectancy of the vital facilities.



By working with independent power producers, and countries bordering South Africa, Eskom has secured energy supply dealings. The Independent Power Purchase Agreements (IPPAs) has aided in load shedding mitigation alongside peak period relieve.

The Energy Action Plan (2024-2025) sets forth plans and goals to achieve supplementation of the energy supply. The focus now shifts to timely realization of projects on grid renewables acceleration, expansion on modernization of the grid, and deeper partnership with the business. There are currently a number of joint investment initiatives in renewable energy for the transformation of energy regions where solar and wind resources are situated.

There are efforts from government institutions which aim to address the general reduction in energy demand through public education campaigns on efficiency. Processes aimed at

energy consumption moderation including energy efficient appliances, smart meters and time dependent tariffs have been developed and are being implemented.

In light of these various difficulties, actions have been taken to solve the energy sector issue as an emergency while providing for the possibility of more comprehensive reform after. The government together with the business has moved to make renewables more accessible to the grid faster because fossil fuel dependency is becoming more and more unsustainable:

- Through the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP), various solar and wind initiatives have been expedited. These projects support the diversification of the energy mix while simultaneously diminishing the reliance on coal and hydropower.
- In addressing the gap in renewable energy sources, investment in enhanced battery storage assets have increased. The assets are designed to capture excess energy produced during the peak operating periods, ensuring that there is reliable supply during periods of high demand, or low renewable generation.
- There has been increased activity in the installation of rooftop panels on homes and businesses, which reduces reliance on the centralized grid and provides localized electricity backup during outages.

### **Future Plans and Government Agreements**

South Africa's government aims to improve its energy mix and its reliability towards future impacts of climate change. This steps towards a future equipped with a flexible energy system strongly hinges on the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan (JET-IP). The plan seeks to boost the share of renewable energy in the energy mix to no less than thirty percent by 2030. This goal is imperative in achieving the desired emission reduction targets, boosting energy independence, and moving away from environmentally detrimental conventional fossil fuels.

Plans have been set in motion to reconstruct the

existing worn-out transmission lines and sub-stations. Better infrastructures are expected to be more climate-proof and be able to enhance the flexibility of the energy mix. On the other hand, in far-removed and underserved areas, technologies will be deployed using decentralized micro-grids which will offer locally suitable solutions.

South Africa's energy policy is becoming more involved in the global fight against climate change. The government is participating in international climate funding, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF), to obtain finance for renewables projects and grid resilience.

New energy laws will be enacted in order to attract investment into renewables and obsolete, inefficient coal-based technologies are being phased out. The goal of these changes is to foster an environment that favors' innovation and sustainability.

South Africa is raising power generation standards for environmental protection in accordance with global climate aspirations. This regulatory effort helps drive cleaner energy production as well as sustains environmentally sound projects in the future.

The government is putting systems in place to make energy management more transparent and accountable. To ensure energy policies are effective and fair, regular audits, public reports and stakeholder consultations must be conducted.

### **Conclusion**

The path South Africa is taking from energy instability to a sustainable future can be difficult and motivating. By using renewables, upgrading infrastructure and building strong international ties, the country is primed for an energy revolution. The resilience and innovation of 2024-2025 are just the beginning, paving a transformational path that will see South Africa not only persevere but prosper in an age of climate uncertainty.

# BUILDING A NEW WORLD: AN EXPLORATION OF THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

In a compelling discussion hosted by WE, The World, **Jack Strasburg**, a long-time peace, justice, and environmental activist, and **David Cobb**, coordinator of the US Solidarity Economy Network, delved into the urgent need for and the practicalities of building a solidarity economy – a framework that prioritizes people and planet over profit. This conversation, part of WE, The World's annual remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr. and his vision of a beloved community, underscored the idea that creating a just and sustainable world necessitates a fundamental shift in our economic paradigm. <https://youtu.be/oznMEY1H0I4>

Jack Strasburg initiated the discussion by highlighting his decades-long work towards a new world paradigm. He emphasized the challenge of achieving this while being reliant on the existing power structures for basic necessities. For Strasburg, a world that works for all requires an **economy that works for all**, and he believes this must be created by the people themselves, as the current capitalist system does not inherently support this goal. He expressed surprise at the relative obscurity of the widespread **solidarity economy networks** operating across six continents and Oceania, and his aim was to bring greater public awareness to this movement.

David Cobb built upon this foundation by defining the solidarity economy as a **new system that puts people and Planet above profit**. He clarified that the root of the word "economy" comes from the Greek "oikos," meaning home, and "nomos," meaning management or study – essentially, the management of our home. Cobb argued that the capitalist framework has abstracted us from our connection to each other and the Earth, leading to extraction and destruction. In contrast, the solidarity economy aims to meet everyone's needs without exploitation or environmental destruction. It is a **post-capitalist framework** grounded in the values of economic and social justice, diversity, cooperation, self-management, and ecological sustainability.

Cobb outlined **five core principles** of the solidarity economy:

- **Pluralism:** Recognizing multiple paths towards an ecologically sustainable and socially just world, without a dogmatic approach.
- **Solidarity:** Emphasizing collective practices such as cooperation, mutualism, gifting, sharing, reciprocity, love, and care as economic practices.
- **Equity:** Opposing all forms of oppression, power over, dominance, including global imperialism, colonization, and discrimination.

- **Sustainability and Ecological Connectedness:** Upholding principles of regeneration over extraction, drawing on indigenous perspectives of living in harmony with nature.
- **Participatory Process:** Recognizing the right of individuals to influence decisions that affect their lives, fostering collective decision-making at the local level.

To illustrate how these principles translate into practice, Cobb provided concrete examples of a democratic economy at the policy level:

- **Worker-owned cooperative businesses:** Empowering labor and collective ownership of the means of production. The US Solidarity Economy Network website ([usn.org](http://usn.org)) offers resources on this.
- **Public banks:** Democratizing finance by using public funds for infrastructure projects like roads, hospitals, and affordable housing, potentially reducing costs by 30-40% compared to private financing.
- **Universal Basic Income:** Guaranteeing a basic level of income to ensure everyone can survive and thrive, with evidence suggesting it can reduce reliance on other forms of public assistance.
- **Community Land Trusts:** Removing land from the private commodity market and holding it collectively to treat housing as a human right, while allowing individuals to own homes or apartments on the land.

Cobb emphasized that these "non-reformist reforms" are already happening in various locations across the US, though often disconnected. He advocated for networking these initiatives into a broader movement to democratize the entire economy. He also gave a "hat tip" to the organization Move to Amend, which calls for abolishing corporate constitutional rights, arguing that a truly democratic legal and political economy is essential for achieving a better world. Addressing Jack's question about the success of the



movement and ways to improve it, Cobb expressed deep concern about the accelerating ecological collapse, citing collapsing fish stocks, soil erosion, and extreme weather events. While acknowledging the enormity of the global challenges, he stressed the importance of **"think globally, act locally"**. He highlighted his support for worker cooperatives and Community Land Trusts as tangible areas of agency. He also mentioned his involvement with the California Public Banking Alliance in passing legislation to allow the creation of public banks.

Cobb urged listeners to visit the **US Solidarity Economy Network website (usn.org)** to get involved. He also invited people to join them in **Atlanta from May 2nd to 4th, 2025, for an event called "Resist and Build"**.

Reflecting on the rapid pace of global challenges, Cobb quoted Tom Robbins, noting that the world is falling apart "quickly enough to be really exciting". He framed the current moment as a race between the collapse of the existing system and the ability of ordinary people to create and connect new, bottom-up systems. He warned that the ecological collapse has already begun, and the inherent contradictions of capitalism are preventing it from solving these problems. Cobb argued that capitalism's requirement for unlimited growth on a finite planet is unsustainable, comparing it to the ideology of a cancer cell.

He further highlighted the rise of fascism globally, drawing parallels to the 1930s where economic disruption led to the emergence of authoritarian, hyper-nationalistic movements. Cobb believes we are at a critical juncture, moving from an industrial society to a post-labor era with increasing economic inequality, leading to a choice between an **eco-socialist/indigenous/solidarity** economy future or a **dystopian fascist** one. He stressed that the solidarity

economy offers a concrete plan, unlike neoliberalism, and that addressing the economy is fundamental to achieving broader societal change.

Jack Strasburg then raised the important point of **organizing customers** to support the solidarity economy. He suggested creating databases to connect consumers who want to support worker-owned cooperatives and other solidarity economy initiatives with these businesses. He emphasized that many people are willing to support this new economy but lack the information on where and how to direct their resources.

David Cobb enthusiastically endorsed Jack's idea during his concluding remarks. He reiterated his appreciation for the conversation and the viewers' engagement, emphasizing the power of collective action to create change. He again promoted the US Solidarity Economy Network (usn.org) and the "Resist and Build" event in Atlanta. Importantly, Cobb announced an upcoming **participatory workshop with Emily Kano**, a co-founder of the US Solidarity Economy Network and a key figure in the movement, hosted by WE, The World. He encouraged participants to bring specific suggestions, including ideas like Jack's, to this workshop. Cobb concluded with a powerful message of hope and agency: **"It's up to us. There's nobody coming to save us. It really is us, but that's okay because we're enough"**.

The discussion concluded with gratitude expressed by Jana Larson from WE, The World, highlighting the urgency of the issues while maintaining a sense of optimism and encouraging continued action and engagement. The conversation served as a valuable introduction to the principles and practices of the solidarity economy, offering both a critical analysis of the current system and a hopeful vision for a more just and sustainable future built through collective effort.



# RESIST AND BUILD: A MOVEMENT BUILDING PROCESS CENTERING THE SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

by Emily Kawano and Mike Strobe

This article was originally published by NPQ online, on February 26, 2025, <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/resist-and-build-a-movement-building-process-centering-the-solidarity-economy/>. Used with permission.

The solidarity economy movement finds itself at a critical juncture. The opportunity for a breakthrough amid crisis is real, even as social change movements today face increasing repression, fragmentation, and resource scarcity. Our challenge is survival while growing **permanently organized communities** to resist structural oppression and build the systems necessary for a just future.

Addressing these challenges will be a central theme of an upcoming gathering likely to attract hundreds of solidarity economy practitioners from across the country. Taking place in Atlanta at the beginning of May with the theme “Solidarity at Scale: Converging our Movements for System Change,” this **Resist & Build Convening** aims to both refine the movement’s vision and plan concrete actions in the coming years. What Does “Solidarity Economy” Mean to Us?

As detailed before in NPQ, the solidarity economy is a global movement to build a world that centers people and the planet rather than private profit and blind growth. It’s not a blueprint that has been theorized by academics in ivory towers. Rather, it is grounded in concrete, real-world community practices that exist around us—some are old, while others are emergent innovations.

The following definition draws on both the work of the US Solidarity Economy Network (USSEN) as well as RIPESS (Red Intercontinental de Promoción para la Economía Social y Solidaria, or the international network for the promotion of the social and solidarity economy), which led a two-year international consultation process to build a shared understanding of the solidarity economy.

While there is tremendous latitude within the solidarity economy to encompass a wide range of approaches—grounded in the local realities of culture, language, history, political-social-economic contexts, and the environment—here are some core elements of the definition that apply across these specificities:

1. The solidarity economy is a *framework*.
2. This framework connects *solidarity economy practices* (see below for examples).
3. Solidarity economy practices are aligned with solidarity economy *values*, which are:
  - Solidarity
  - Participatory democracy
  - Equity in all dimensions—race, class, gender, ability, and so on
  - Sustainability
  - Pluralism, meaning that this is not a one-size-fits-all approach, or as members of the Zapatista movement would say, “A world in which many worlds fit.”

All of these elements articulate a *post-capitalist vision*, which holds that we cannot achieve the just, sustainable, democratic, and cooperative world that we seek by reforming capitalism. We do not reject reforms, but we do insist on the importance of seeing them as part of a longer-term process of fundamental system change. In the absence of a deeper post-capitalist strategy, reforms end up strengthening capitalism.

## Understanding Our Moment: Crisis and Opportunity

We recognize that we live in a historic moment. Rarely has there been a convergence of so many crises. A growing number of scientists believe that humans are fueling our headlong rush toward what is being called the sixth extinction—the fifth extinction wiped out the dinosaurs.

We face the challenges of emerging from one pandemic even as the probability of more is rising, a mounting climate crisis, historic levels of inequality in wealth and income, increasingly virulent racism and nativism, and an alarming slide toward fascism.

These are scary times, but crises also create opportunity. We are now in a period where people’s faith in the status quo is shaken. There’s a growing openness to new narratives, new models, and new paradigms. In this context, the solidarity economy offers a transformative pathway to a new system beyond capitalism.

## Key Challenges

The post-2024 landscape, of course, presents many obstacles. These include the rollback of labor protections; environmental regulations; and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies. We also face deepened economic precarity. Furthermore, the increased criminalization of activists and growing state repression put direct pressure on movements working to build economic alternatives.

Additional threats loom. For example, many corporations are taking off the gloves. Businesses that previously sought to co-opt the language of economic democracy while maintaining extractive business models have discarded even the appearance of belief in a more open society. Additionally, social media platforms are tightening their control over content algorithms and surveillance increases, movements that once relied on these tools must reimagine digital organizing strategies.

The biggest challenge for movement groups is not the threat and reality of repression but the need to build greater capacity and coordination. While the solidarity economy movement has expanded, it remains underfunded and fragmented. Without sufficient financial resources, infrastructure, and cross-movement alignment, cooperative economic models will struggle to scale and become the widely viable economic pathways that they need to be.

## Strategic Questions

The solidarity economy movement must navigate shocks (sudden crises), slides (structural declines), and shifts (strategic interventions) to remain resilient. The COVID-19 pandemic was one such shock followed by a shift, revealing both the failures of capitalism and the power of mutual aid.

However, the challenge remains: How do we transition from crisis response to long-term systems building under a more restrictive organizing environment? Here are a few key ideas we are grappling with:

- **Building Movement Infrastructure for Future Crises:** This means building the institutions critical for community-based economies—institutions like worker cooperatives, community land trusts, and public banking.
- **Bridging Movement Silos:** This means engaging in explicit alliances and coalition building with other movement groups with overlapping goals—especially movements for labor rights, abolition, climate justice, and Indigenous sovereignty.

- **Balancing Defensive and Offensive Strategies:** The need to balance offense and defense is not, of course, unique to solidarity economy movement activists, but it is present in our movement. Internally, we often describe this movement tension as balancing “holding the line” with “building the future.”

## A Path Forward

Although the solidarity economy framework is explicitly post-capitalist, we do not claim to have all the answers, nor that there is “one right way” to get to a post-capitalist world. Having said that, the upcoming gathering in Atlanta has several concrete goals. Among these are the following:

- **Strengthen relationships.** Build trust and deepen connections to amplify our collective impact and sustain our movements.
- **Sharpen analysis around systemic change.** Engage in rigorous dialogue to deepen our understanding of post-capitalist, solidarity economy futures and non-reformist strategies.
- **Connect efforts.** Bridge resistance and creation by connecting movements that challenge oppression with those building solidarity economy alternatives.
- **Shared learning.** Exchange insights, celebrate victories, and weave together diverse movement experiences.
- **Collaborate for systemic change.** Practice collaboration through real projects, honing our collective ability to create transformative solutions and systemic change.
- **Cultivate transformative culture:** Foster a joyful, principled community that embodies solidarity economy values and empowers the implementation of liberatory practices. Part of this work includes a “Carnival Beyond Capitalism,” part of the gathering in Atlanta to create a space that embodies the transformative culture we aim to build.

We aim for a space to deepen conversations, align strategies, and collectively define the next phase of our movement. And we invite organizers, cooperatives, and community members to engage—to share, strategize, and commit to the long-term work of building beyond capitalism.



# SMALL STEPS, BIG IMPACT: SIMPLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES FOR A HEALTHIER YOU

*by Robert M. Oliva, ND, LMSW*

Making important changes to your lifestyle can seem daunting and overwhelming. Many a resolution to become healthy and fit has hit the trash because too much was taken on too soon. One way to meet this challenge is to entertain the taking of small steps that are manageable, reasonable, and fit your circumstances.

In this article, I'm addressing how to implement small steps to accomplish big goals. I will discuss the basics of the small step idea and how it can be applied to diet, exercise and stress management.

I've personally applied the small step idea to my own life and have found it to be realistic and helpful in my attempts to make transformative changes.

Keep in mind that you can apply these steps to any resolutions or tasks you have set for yourself.

Let's get started!

**"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." — Arthur Ashe**

## Step One: Drop the big stuff

Decisions to make huge lifestyle changes have a high fail rate, increase stress levels, and deepen a sense of personal inadequacy.

The desire to become super fit, lose 50 lbs or meditate for an hour every day can become so intertwined with your self-esteem that every workout session or step on the scale becomes a potential indictment of your willpower and self-worth. For the most part, these unrealistic decisions only serve to reinforce a sense of inadequacy. Why? Because the decision to make big changes is undoable, unrealistic, and prone to failure. This happens over and over again. Look at the failure rate of New Year's resolutions.

Taking small steps may be an antidote to this problem.

Adopting a small step approach increases the likelihood of success by breaking a daunting task into its component parts. Each of which can be accomplished within a realistic time frame. Taking a small step is realistic, doable, and easier to accomplish before moving on to the next small step.

Drop the big stuff!

My task here is to help you make realistic decisions that are good for you emotionally and can help you establish healthy habits for the long-term.

In the next two sections, I will show you how to apply the small step approach to diet, exercise, stress management, and relationships. This can act as a guide for you to attain your worthy goals and sustain a healthy emotional balance.

**"...small steps can be the beginning to better mental and physical health."**

## Step Two: Choose something doable

A great way to establish a healthy lifestyle while not compromising your mental health is choosing something easily attainable.

**Diet:** Rather than resolving to lose 50 lbs or more on a rigorous diet (Keto, Paleo, Vegan) and most likely failing and feeling bad about yourself, it may be easier to start by just deciding to be healthier. Here are some small but doable steps that can start you on the path:

Attempt a Meatless Monday. Something that you feel you can really do. After a month or more of this you may consider adding another healthy behavior or extending meatless meals to other weekdays.

Decide to eat fewer donuts and bagels in a week or add one more fruit and vegetable to your weekly menu.

Read up on the Mediterranean Diet for simple and healthy meal plans that you can use at your discretion. Try one new meal a week.

There are lots of small steps you can choose from. It's up to you. Over time, you will have established a series of healthy behaviors that are sustainable, lead to weight loss while bolstering your sense of accomplishment.

Remember to only add a new healthy diet behavior after you have successfully established the preceding behavior. Meatless Monday can be extended to other week days while fewer donuts can be consumed each week.

You will lose weight, establish a healthy behavior, and feel good about yourself. And eventually lose those 25 lbs.

Be patient.

**“True success is not born from one, big, lucky step. It's birthed from daily, small, consistent steps.” — Kent Julian**

**Exercise:** Resolving to run a marathon or join an expensive gym can be daunting and lead, for most of us, to failure. Rather, start with something you feel is doable.

Something as simple as a ten minute walk 3 times a week may suffice. After you have accomplished this for a month add 5 minutes.

You might go on YouTube and find a fitness video at your level that you can do a few times a week. Increase the difficulty level after a month or more.

Purchasing a set of resistance bands that you can use at home for a fraction of a gym membership would be well worth it.

Whatever you choose, be reasonably certain it is something you can sustain and increase over time. Maybe you will eventually do that marathon when you are ready, if you so choose.

**“It's always your choice where to start...”**

**Stress Management:** All of us face lots of chronic stress these days. From Covid to inflation, crazy

drivers, low wages, political turmoil, you name it, it's happening.

A great place to start is to cut down on watching the news. Habitual news watching is highly stressful. Give yourself specific times of day to listen to the 24/7 cable news scene.

You can learn a relaxation technique and practice it a few times a week. Or use a breathing technique to calm down when you are driving or facing a tense situation at work.

Learning mindfulness meditation might be a good approach. Start with a few minutes a day. Get out in nature for a few minutes a day is another stress management approach that really works. It decreases cortisol.

Improve your sleep by cutting down on late night caffeine or reading a book at bedtime instead of scrolling.

Listen to calming music.

When you have mastered one of these behaviors you can add a few minutes to your practice. Over time the techniques will become second nature. It's always your choice where to start and when you are ready to expand the time you spend on the activity. As you succeed, you will be more relaxed and be more confident in your ability to face stressful situations. You will gain a sense of mastery and over time feel better about yourself.

Remember, start with something that is relatively easy for you to do. Take a month before moving on.

**“Start simple. Build on your successes.”**

**Relationships:** Research has shown that the quality of our relationships is one of the most powerful ways to be happy and healthy.

Reach out to friends and family members each week. Schedule a phone call, Zoom meeting or family dinner. Whatever is most manageable.

Make a regular lunch or brunch date to catch up and strengthen the emotional bonds with others. Do a date night with your spouse.

Get involved with activities in your church, civic association, or in a topic you might be interested in so you can regularly meet like minded people.

Have a movie night with a friend just to have some fun.

Hangout with the grandkids.

Interacting with others, being social, can lessen feelings of depression and anxiety. Go slow, if you have to. Schedule a few interactions that you feel you can handle and that won't add undo stress to your life. Expand out as you feel more confident.

### **Step Three: Create a support system**

It helps immensely to create ways to track your progress in making these small changes to your lifestyle.

Start a journal where you can write down each of the small changes you are making and how you feel as you progress.

Create a habit tracker where you list the changes you are making and enable you to check off what you have accomplished.

Download a calendar or buy a wall calendar on which you can note what you are doing on what date and at what time. Virtually, create a progress chart.

Join with a like minded friend or group to discuss challenges and compare progress.

### **Final Thoughts**

This post is about helping you create small incremental changes to your lifestyle that can potentially lead to bigger changes that are transformative. These small steps can be the beginning of better mental and physical health. The decision is yours as to where to start. The rule of thumb is to start small, establish the new behavior in your repertoire and then add to that behavior once you are confident you can add to it.

I've given examples of where you might start but it's up to you to decide which is best for you. As I mentioned above, it's not necessary to commit to losing 25 lbs, being the perfect parent, going to the gym 3-4 times a week or running a marathon.

Start simple. Build on your successes. Your confidence will lessen the feelings of depression and anxiety. You will be on your way to being healthier and fit.

Let me know what you think and how you are doing with adopting a small steps mentality to your health and fitness efforts.

Much of what I talk about in this post can be deepened in the sources I've listed below. Good luck!

### **Related**

A wonderful [Youtube video](#) by therapist Emma McAdam talks you through how to take small steps toward mental health.

James Clear, author of [Atomic Habits](#), gives a great [Ted-talk on atomic habits](#), on how to choose small steps and how to use them.

A well done [article by Kara Swanson](#) looks at the pros and cons of the small steps approach. A good read.

Caveat:; The information in this article is for educational purposes only and not meant to diagnose or treat any disease or health condition. Consult your medical provider about any medical conditions you may have.

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# CULTIVATING LITTLE PEACEMAKERS: TEACHING MEDIATION SKILLS TO CHILDREN

In a recent WE, The World event honoring Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, **Jana Larsen** hosted a compelling discussion on teaching mediation skills to children with two distinguished guests: **Rita Marsh**, a former nurse practitioner specializing in well-being and conflict resolution, and **Barbe Chambliss**, a longtime trauma therapist and mediator. The conversation centered on Barbe Chambliss' extensive experience in developing and implementing programs to equip children from grades 4 to 12 with the vital skills needed to resolve conflicts peacefully. <https://youtu.be/qpJKOb-TgEQ>

## The Genesis of a Peacemaking Program

Barbe Chambliss recounted the origins of her work, which began in a local school district in the North Fork Valley of Colorado. Initially asked to work with a small group of middle school girls experiencing social challenges, the request quickly expanded to encompass the entire school. This led her to design a program focused on teaching mediation skills to fourth graders. A pivotal moment in her development of this program was taking a training from Barbara Porro, a second-grade teacher who had created an early conflict resolution course to address tattling in her classroom. Porro's work, which she generously allowed Chambliss to adapt, became a cornerstone of the curriculum.

## Empowering Children to Resolve Conflicts

The core philosophy of this approach is rooted in the belief that **children are capable of learning and applying conflict resolution skills**, shifting away from the teacher as the sole arbitrator. This not only reduces the burden on educators but also empowers children to take ownership of their disputes. Chambliss emphasized the critical need for these skills, placing them alongside reading and writing as foundational elements of education. The program aims to create **win-win situations** where all parties feel heard and a resolution is achieved through mutual agreement.

## A Three-Stage Approach to Learning

Chambliss detailed a structured three-stage teaching process:

- **Introduction of the Idea:** The teacher introduces a specific mediation skill, such as using "I-messages" for effective communication.

- **Worksheet Application:** Students engage with worksheets that provide practical scenarios, prompting them to apply the newly learned skill. For example, a worksheet might ask a child to rephrase a blaming statement into an "I feel...when you...because..." message.
- **Coached Role-Playing:** Students participate in role-playing exercises, simulating real-life conflicts with the guidance of coaches. Initially, parent volunteers were recruited and trained to act as coaches, highlighting the parents' own unmet need for these skills.

## Key Mediation Skills Taught

The curriculum focuses on seven essential skills for conflict resolution:

- **Warming Up or Cooling Down:** Recognizing and managing emotions before engaging in conflict resolution. Techniques include counting backwards, making faces, or physical activities to release anger, and breathing exercises to calm down.
- **Talking So Others Want to Listen:** Using "I-messages" to express feelings and needs without blame.
- **Listening So Others Truly Feel Heard:** Employing active listening techniques such as facing the person, staying quiet, thinking about what is being said, nodding, and restating the speaker's thoughts and feelings in different words.
- **Determining What You Need:** Helping individuals identify their underlying needs rather than just focusing on what they want.
- **Brainstorming:** Generating a variety of potential solutions without judgment.
- **Voting on Brainstorm Ideas:** Allowing all parties to express their level of agreement with each proposed solution, often using visual cues like thumbs up/down or smiley/grumpy faces.

- The focus is on finding solutions that receive positive votes from everyone involved.
- **Fine-tuning Solutions:** Developing a concrete plan of action by addressing questions of who, what, when, where, and how the agreed-upon solution will be implemented and ensuring it feels fair to all.

### Creating a Supportive Environment

The program also involves establishing **peace place centers** within classrooms, providing a designated space for students to mediate their conflicts with the help of trained peer mediators. Furthermore, Chambliss emphasized the importance of teaching the **language of conflict resolution** to the entire school community, including principals, staff, parents, lunchroom personnel, and bus drivers, to reinforce the children's skills and create a more cohesive and peaceful environment.

### Addressing Different Age Groups and Challenges

Chambliss noted that while the core principles remain the same, the implementation and complexity of the curriculum are adapted for different age groups. Younger children require simpler language and shorter resolution times, while older students may present more resistance and require more in-depth explanations. The program also addresses the importance of recognizing different perceptions in conflict and moving away from a right/wrong mentality.

### Rewards and Recognition for Peacemakers

The discussion touched upon the significance of rewarding and recognizing children for their peacemaking efforts. While initial incentives like name tags for peer mediators can be effective, the ultimate goal is to foster an intrinsic motivation where individuals recognize the personal and relational benefits of resolving conflict peacefully. Ideas for broader recognition included incorporating peacemaking badges in scouting, recognition by community organizations, and highlighting acts of peacemaking in schools.

### The Vision for a Comprehensive Curriculum

Barbe Chambliss' current endeavor is focused on consolidating her years of experience and materials into a comprehensive, age-appropriate curriculum that can be readily accessed and implemented by teachers. This curriculum would cover different grade levels (K-1, 4-7, 8-12) and provide teachers with the necessary tools and guidance to effectively teach mediation skills. Despite the challenges of organizing her extensive materials, Chambliss is determined to bring this valuable resource to a wider audience, driven by her passion for fostering peacemakers and creating more harmonious communities.

The discussion concluded with a call to action, encouraging viewers to support WE The World's initiatives and to express their interest in Barbe Chambliss' forthcoming curriculum. The hope is that by equipping children with these essential mediation skills, a future grounded in peaceful conflict resolution can be realized.



## Campaign Membership

[WETHEWORLD.GUMROAD.COM/L/WEMEMBERSHIP](http://WETHEWORLD.GUMROAD.COM/L/WEMEMBERSHIP)

# ADDRESSING THE CRITICAL NEXUS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH AND GENDER EQUALITY IN INDIA

A recent discussion hosted by WE, The World, featuring Dr. Juhi Garg, a professional with extensive experience in human empowerment, gender equality, and financial inclusion, and moderated by Subrata Banerjee, an International Development professional, shed light on the crucial intersection of public health and gender issues in India. The conversation, held in memory of Martin Luther King Jr., underscored the urgent need to address the health concerns of women and girls, recognizing their vulnerability and the profound impact their well-being has on the nation's progress. <https://youtu.be/qOGTvBLdL9A>

## The Landscape of Indian Healthcare: Growth and Persistent Challenges

Dr. Juhi provided a comprehensive overview of the Indian healthcare sector, highlighting its significant growth and potential. The Indian Healthcare Market, valued at US\$ 110 billion in 2016, is projected to reach a staggering US\$ 638 billion by 2025. This burgeoning sector is also a major employer, currently engaging 7.5 million people with further growth anticipated. India's healthcare professionals, particularly doctors and surgeons, are recognized globally for their expertise.

Despite this promising outlook, critical challenges persist. A significant concern is the **discrepancy in the doctor-patient ratio and the shortage of nurses**. While some research suggests an improvement in the doctor-population ratio, others indicate a significant gap when considering the doctor-patient ratio, falling short of WHO standards. Similarly, the availability of nurses remains critically low, with only 1.7 nurses per thousand people.

Furthermore, while the government has implemented numerous policies and schemes, **poor implementation and corruption remain major obstacles**. This hinders the optimal utilization of existing healthcare infrastructure, including Public Health Centers (PHCs) and Community Health Centers (CHCs), which are often understaffed and under-resourced despite their widespread presence. The difficult terrain in **Himalayan states like Uttarakhand** exacerbates these challenges, limiting accessibility to healthcare services and making it difficult to retain healthcare professionals due to a lack of adequate living infrastructure. Consequently,

these regions experience a heightened demand-supply gap in healthcare. India also ranks low in gender disparity in healthcare, at 142nd out of 147 nations surveyed by the World Economic Forum.

## The Vulnerable State of Women's Health

The discussion particularly emphasized the **vulnerability of Indian women to various health disorders**, especially during their reproductive and economically active years (20-65/70). Key concerns include:

- **Cancers:** Breast and cervical cancer are major threats, with a concerning statistic indicating that one in eight women may be affected by breast cancer. Despite the possibility of early detection for breast cancer and the availability of cervical cancer vaccines, lack of awareness and slow implementation hinder progress. Colon, liver, and oral cancers also pose significant risks.
- **Other Diseases:** Asthma, rheumatoid arthritis, and epilepsy are prevalent among women. **Mental health disorders**, often stemming from violence and societal pressures, are also a critical concern.
- **Lifestyle Diseases:** Diabetes and hypertension are increasingly affecting both men and women, with a significant impact on women who often juggle multiple roles within and outside the home, often without pay.

## Government Initiatives and Potential Solutions

The Indian government has taken several steps to address these healthcare challenges. These include **opening All India Medical Institutes (AIIMS) in every state and upgrading existing hospitals**. Public expenditure on healthcare has also seen an increase, reaching 1.9% of GDP in FY24 and

projected to rise to 2.5% by FY25. The healthcare sector has also witnessed significant private equity and venture capital investments, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic.

A particularly promising initiative highlighted was the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)** launched in 2018 under the Digital India scheme. This aims to create a comprehensive digital ecosystem for healthcare, including:

- **Registration of citizens with Ayushman cards (a public insurance scheme).**
- **Registration of all medical practitioners (including alternative medicine) and healthcare facilities.**
- **Integration of health insurance schemes.**

The ABDM has already seen significant adoption, with over 73 crore individuals registered and a substantial number linked with their health records. Platforms like **e-Sanjeevani** provide free telemedicine support to citizens.

Dr. Juhi also outlined potential solutions, emphasizing the need to:

- **Optimize the utilization of existing healthcare infrastructure through regular audits and gap assessments.**
- **Foster public-private partnerships** in areas like telemedicine, mobile clinics, and healthcare facilities in underserved locations.
- **Develop community-based healthcare systems and empower Community Health Councils.**
- **Focus on AYUSH (traditional medicine systems) and preventive care through mass sensitization drives, especially in schools and communities.**

- **Create special medical zones to boost medical tourism and provide comprehensive facilities.**
- **Address the poor human resource policy to ensure adequate staffing and retention of healthcare professionals, potentially learning from models like Assam that provide on-site residences for doctors.**

Mr. Banerjee further emphasized the paradoxical situation where India possesses immense talent and resources but struggles with effective policy implementation and retaining its top medical professionals who often seek opportunities abroad. He stressed that the **suffering caused by these systemic issues disproportionately affects women, children, and adolescent girls** due to social pressures and traditional societal structures. He underscored that neglecting women's health and their access to education and workplaces will ultimately **hamper the national economy**.

### **Conclusion: A Call for Concerted Action**

The discussion clearly highlights the critical link between women's health and gender equality in India and the nation's overall development. While significant progress has been made and promising initiatives like the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission are underway, persistent challenges related to infrastructure, human resources, policy implementation, and deep-rooted social inequalities need to be addressed with greater urgency and focus. Prioritizing women's health through improved access, awareness, and effective healthcare systems is not only a matter of social justice but also a fundamental prerequisite for India to realize its full potential.



[WECAN.WE.NET](http://WECAN.WE.NET)



# TIGERS STILL AT THE GATES

*by René Wadlow*

The world citizen philosopher F.S.C. Northrop in his path-making book, “The Taming of Nations” (1953), likened nation-states to wild animals largely driven by instincts of power – the tigers at the gates.

The task of the world society as expressed through the United Nations and the positive actions of world-minded intellectuals is to civilize that instinct by increasing the rationality of governmental decision-makers and by setting world-wide norms of conduct such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As Northrop wrote “There is no orderly society except as a majority of the people in it agree upon at least some ideological principles – some specific economic, political, moral and legal rules that they are to use to order themselves normatively with respect to each other and to nature.”

Nations have become partly tamed, although the old instincts of the jungle are only slightly below the surface. Nations are still dangerous and can easily crush us by their weight if they get out of political or economic control. Nations are still reluctant to develop policies for the greater good or to live according to the norms that they have themselves set. The task of domestication still goes on to overcome the short-sighted cynicism and narrow national interest that is too often the working habits of states.

Fortunately, there are deeper currents at work in the world society that do not come from governments. Spiritual, cultural and social currents flow across state frontiers with little help from governments – and sometimes against the will of governments. New values and a new awareness of the oneness of life have spread from person to person, from group to group across frontiers. These currents of new values of an ecological perspective are transforming old institutions and helping to create new processes. As non-governmental voices become more creative, more universal in outlook, more discerning of the deeper currents of the world society, such voices will grow in influence.

Looking at the armed conflicts and strong tensions in the world society today, we see that the tigers are still at the gates. Our tasks of domestication are urgent.

René Wadlow is a member of the [TRANSCEND Network for Peace Development Environment](#). He is President of the Association of World Citizens, an international peace organization with consultative status with ECOSOC, the United Nations organ facilitating international cooperation and problem-solving in economic and social issues



## VOICES OF CHANGE: DANIELA GIOSEFFI ON LITERATURE, JUSTICE, AND THE FIGHT FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

In a vibrant discussion hosted by WE, The World, **Daniela Gioseffi**, a distinguished author, poet, and activist, shared profound insights into her life's work, weaving together themes of social justice, environmentalism, and the urgent need for collective action to secure a sustainable future. Hosted by **Jana Larsen**, the conversation explored Gioseffi's formative experiences, her unwavering commitment to human rights, and her passionate advocacy for climate justice, painting a picture of a life dedicated to positive change.

[https://youtu.be/5\\_ZLBDGfjMg](https://youtu.be/5_ZLBDGfjMg)

Gioseffi's journey as an activist began early in life, marked by a poignant childhood encounter with poverty and racial segregation. This early exposure fostered a deep-seated empathy and a belief in the inherent anti-racist nature of humanity. However, her formal entry into activism occurred at the age of 20 when she was assaulted by the Ku Klux Klan for integrating Selma's first television station, three years before Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic march. This traumatic experience became a catalyst, propelling her into a lifelong commitment to human rights, voting rights, and, more recently, climate justice.

A central theme in Gioseffi's perspective is the **indivisible link between social justice and environmentalism**. She emphasizes that the fight for clean air and water is inherently a human right, intertwined with voting rights and broader social equity. Her book "On Prejudice: A Global Perspective" includes an essay by Al Gore on environmental racism, highlighting this crucial connection. Gioseffi received a climate leadership diploma from Al Gore in 2022, further solidifying her commitment to addressing the climate crisis.

The urgency of **climate action** is a recurring and emphatic point in the discussion. Gioseffi stresses that the climate crisis affects all of humanity, transcending race and nationality, as we are all "earthlings" sharing a fragile planet. She warns of the dire consequences of inaction, citing extreme weather events and the narrow window of approximately six years to make significant changes. The dangers of fossil fuels, the explosion of microplastics, and the phenomenon of "greenwashing" by corporations are highlighted as critical challenges. Gioseffi advocates for a rapid transition to clean, renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and geothermal. She also expresses concern over the USA's withdrawal from the Paris

Agreement and initiatives like "Project 2025," which she believes threaten environmental progress.

Drawing inspiration from figures like Martin Luther King Jr. and Tolstoy, Gioseffi underscores the importance of **nonviolent action** in driving social and environmental change. She cautions against violent approaches, emphasizing the need to broadcast a commitment to nonviolence. Gioseffi believes that empathy, compassion, and love for fellow humans and the planet are essential motivators for creating a better future.

**Education and awareness**, particularly among young people, are presented as vital components of the movement for a sustainable future. Gioseffi shares her positive experience engaging with high school students on climate issues and emphasizes the importance of open and honest conversations with children about the challenges and solutions. She is involved with Ecopoetry.org, a platform for poets worldwide who care about environmental issues, using creative expression as a tool for raising awareness. She also collaborated with environmental scientist Dr. Marian Glenn to deliver educational talks on climate science. When asked about staying motivated in the face of daunting challenges, Gioseffi acknowledges the need for breaks and self-care. She emphasizes the importance of remembering that **one is not alone** in this fight and the power of teaming up with others who share the same concerns. She finds strength in the inherent human capacity for kindness and the scientific basis for feeling good when helping others.

In her concluding remarks, Gioseffi calls for **collective action at all levels**, urging individuals to contact their government representatives to support pro-environmental policies and hold

those who are misled by fossil fuel interests accountable. She stresses the need to discern truth from disinformation, particularly in the age of artificial intelligence. Gioseffi encourages everyone to join the "tsunami of nice caring good people" working towards a better world, echoing the spirit of collaboration embodied by "WE, The World".

Daniela Gioseffi's powerful voice resonates with a lifetime of commitment to justice and a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of humanity and the planet. Her message is one of urgency, hope, and the enduring power of collective, nonviolent action to create a sustainable and equitable future for all earthlings. She can be contacted at [authorandactivist@gmail.com](mailto:authorandactivist@gmail.com).

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You are warmly invited to gather in sacred circle online for  
**Planet Heart's 17th Annual World Peace Earth Day Celebration**

## **Honoring Mother Earth**

Tuesday, April 22, 2025 | 5:30–9:30pm EST  
(Climate pre-show from 5:00–5:30pm)

Come sit by the virtual fire with **Grandmother Shirley**, a wisdom keeper, and her powerful circle of **indigenous Sundancers and Earth visionaries**, walking the sacred path and doing heartwork for our world. Let their songs, stories, and prayers uplift the spirit of unity and peace.

We will also share a glimpse of the powerful Pop Nation through its trailer — a visionary film directed by **Christine Marie**, who will also guide the evening as MC. This sacred creative offering features spiritual leaders such as **Rick Ulfik, Alan Steinfeld, Priestess El, Andrew Kaen, and Rev. Becky Suzik**.

Out of this ceremonial co-creation, **produced in part by Lakshmi**, it has become clear that all future distribution must flow through a Lakshmi **Collective collaborative effort**. As Pop Nation evolves into a full **Pop Nation Series**, any streaming media involving Lakshmi Collective members transitioning into this movement will be aligned under that umbrella.

**Let us walk gently together upon the Earth and raise our collective prayers for peace, Oneness, and transformation.**

For details, visit: [www.planetheart.org](http://www.planetheart.org)  
Streaming live at: [facebook.com/theWECampaign](https://facebook.com/theWECampaign)

# Bridging Divides: Cultural Intelligence and Ancestral Wisdom in Navigating Conflict

A recent discussion hosted by WE, The World brought together a panel of accomplished individuals – Lilian Calvache, Mitzy Clementina, and Great-grandmother Shannon CrossBear – to explore [\*"The Nature and Future of Conflict: Community, Culture, and Indigenous Wisdom"\*](#). The conversation, facilitated by Jana Larsen, Deputy Director of WE, The World, delved into how cultural intelligence and ancestral wisdom can serve as powerful tools for healing and building stronger communities in these conflictual times.

## The Importance of Reframing Our Relationship with Conflict

The discussion opened with Lilian Calvache emphasizing that **conflict is an inherent part of community evolution**. Drawing on a winter solstice message from Hereditary Chief Phil Lane, she highlighted that the current increased time of chaos presents an opportunity for rebirth and a new paradigm shift. Shannon CrossBear echoed this, sharing that her father impressed upon her that **"I disagree" were the first words in any process of learning**, suggesting that conflict can be a catalyst for doing things differently. She further pointed out that the English language often frames conflict as something to "work through" towards a "resolution," while in Ojibwe, the emphasis is on **"how are you working with conflict?"**, acknowledging that some conflicts may be long-term and require managing rather than simply resolving them.

Both Shannon and Lilian challenged the notion that every conflict needs a resolution. Lilian suggested that we need a **reframing of our relationship with conflict**, viewing it not necessarily as something to eliminate but as a dynamic to work with. Shannon emphasized the importance of not rupturing relationships in the process of engaging with conflict and having processes for repair if ruptures occur.

## Cultural Intelligence as a Bridge

Lilian Calvache, specializing in economic Justice and cultural intelligence, introduced the concept of **cultural intelligence as a crucial bridge** for connecting divides. Her forthcoming book and the Global Nexus of Communications podcast aim to explore how understanding diverse cultures and histories can foster unity. She posed the central question: "How can we Bridge divides heal community unities and create a lasting unity in a

world that is often often divided by conflict?". Lilian explained that cultural intelligence involves understanding and engaging with people from different cultures in a meaningful way, even within a marriage, which constitutes a diaspora of two different cultures. She stressed the importance of **knowing one's own roots, cultural awareness, and identity** as a foundation for connecting with others. Her model of a bridge emphasizes that it is "meaningless without those willing to cross it," highlighting the necessity of active participation in understanding and connecting with others.

## Ancestral Wisdom and Indigenous Perspectives

Mitzy Clementina, a medicine carrier in the Andean tradition, underscored the value of **integrating indigenous perspectives with modern conflict resolutions**. Her work focuses on guiding individuals back into harmonious relationships with themselves and the interconnected world. She highlighted the Andean practice of **"chanin chai"**, which translates to being equal or bringing back whole, as a strategy employed when conflict resulted in disharmony or loss. This practice involved dialogue, mediation, and collaborative solutions, emphasizing fairness and respect for people, nature, and the community. When conflict could not be resolved, the **"bumpa chai"** ceremony, meaning flattening the land, was used to restore energies.

Shannon CrossBear also emphasized the rich wisdom embedded in **ancestral stories** and the importance of learning from how those who came before us worked with conflict. She highlighted the **Seven Grandfather teachings** (humility, respect, love, wisdom, bravery, honesty, and truth) as a pathway for working with conflict while honoring differences.

## Tools and Strategies for Working with Conflict



The panelists discussed various tools and strategies for navigating conflict:

- **Active Listening and Empathy:** Lilian stressed the difficulty of active listening in today's fast-paced world and its importance in truly hearing the feelings of others and creating space for empathy.
- **Dialogue and Shared Solutions:** Engaging in open dialogue and working towards shared solutions were identified as crucial modern tools.
- **Restorative Practices:** The concept of restorative processes, both internal and communal, was mentioned as a way to heal after conflict.
- **Hoponopono:** Lilian introduced the Hawaiian practice of hoponopono, using the four phrases "I'm sorry," "Forgive me," "Thank you," and "I love you" as a way to seek reconciliation and understanding, even without the person being physically present.
- **"LOVE" in Action:** Shannon shared a powerful acronym for LOVE: **Listen, Offer, Validate, and Empathize**, suggesting a practical way to implement love in conflict situations.
- **"Anina":** Shannon shared a practice from a community facing internal conflict where they created the word "anina," meaning "do over," to provide a non-judgmental opportunity to change negative communication patterns.

### The Power of Language and Perspective

Shannon highlighted the significance of language, noting that indigenous languages often inherently reflect interconnectedness and a different way of

thinking about relationships. She pointed out how even removing the personal pronoun "me" from a statement of grievance can shift perspective. She also shared an elder's view that the English language can be the "most violent language in the world". This underscores the importance of being mindful of the language we use and offering grace when learning new ways of communicating.

### Moving Towards a Future of Unity

Despite acknowledging the challenging times, the panelists expressed optimism for the future. Mitzy highlighted the supporting energies around us and encouraged focusing on right action, right loving, and right seeking. Lilian echoed this, expressing hope that 2025 would bring a shift towards greater unity and peace. She emphasized the need to build inclusive systems, address global challenges collectively, and remember the wisdom of our ancestors, taking what works from different cultures to create our own path forward. Shannon concluded by emphasizing the importance of finding the place where one resonates and actively participating in moving towards a world that looks at conflict differently.

In closing, the discussion emphasized the vital role of both cultural intelligence and ancestral wisdom in navigating conflict and building stronger, more harmonious communities. By reframing our relationship with conflict, actively seeking to understand different perspectives, and utilizing practical tools grounded in empathy and respect, we can all become "bridge builders" and "bridge tenders," fostering a future where unity prevails.



[WE.NET/WPA](https://www.wenet.net/wpa)

# INNER PEACE IS THE CATALYST FOR OUTER PEACE EVERYWHERE

by ShaRon Rea

If we want a more peaceful world, it begins with healing what's inside us.

Inner peace isn't just a fairytale fix from a child's storybook—it's the real deal when it comes to creating outer peace in your community and the world. Think about it: Have you ever met a truly peaceful person who's also out there starting arguments in the grocery store checkout line? Nope. Exactly, me neither. When we heal our inner chaos, we stop adding to the world's stress levels. This requires us to deliberately let go of old grudges, self-doubt, preconceived judgments or the need to clap back at every little thing.

Are you ready to take action?

Start here: Take a deep breath before automatically reacting to something irritating and use the practice of **No Judgment. Just Love.®** Catch yourself before diving into that self-justified but unhelpful rage. Take your foot off the gas, check your **G.P.S.™** (**Greatest Personal Shift™**) and let it guide you to your highest self. That's the place where you'll know your actions have tangible consequences on our collective ability to create peace. Let that moment of pause give you space to think, speak or do something less harmful to yourself and others. This practice gives you—and the rest of us—a much-needed exhale.

Inner peace is like a good stretch—uncomfortable at first, but it makes everything flow better. Let's explore the shifts that can turn inner peace into global peace—one choice, one conversation and one act of kind compassion at a time.

When you reconcile the following emotions within yourself, peace has a greater chance to show up in our world:

- 💡 Shame—Releasing shame allows you to embrace your worth without hesitation.
- 💡 Greed—Letting go of greed creates space for generosity and abundance.

💡 Fear—Healing fear frees you to live boldly and love fully.

💡 Revenge—Choosing forgiveness over revenge breaks the cycle of pain.

💡 Gossip—Replacing gossip with kindness elevates connections and trust.

💡 Disregard—Honoring others' existence affirms the dignity we all share.

I invite you to ponder the following three thought-provoking questions to dive deep and uncover what to release or change in your life to experience more inner peace:

✅ What recurring thoughts, past experiences, or negative beliefs have been keeping you feeling stuck, guilty, or unworthy? Explore how you would feel when they no longer block your full enjoyment of life.

✅ When do you feel most at ease? What small, intentional choices can you make daily to experience more of that ease?

✅ If your heart could speak, what would it tell you to let go of right now—without overthinking or justifying it? What's one loving step you can take to start that process today?

♥ The world is a reflection of our inner landscape—so let's nurture love from within. When we all practice **No Judgment. Just Love.®**, we cultivate the peace we wish to see. This creates the ripple effect that transforms not just our own lives, but the world around us.

Sing along with Gladys Knight – Let There be Peace on Earth <https://youtu.be/pF8oBdvvTVQ>

May WE all live in Peace,  
ShaRon Rea - Chief Communications Director - We, the World  
Founder No Judgment. Just Love.® - A Global Social Enterprise  
[www.ShaRonRea.com](http://www.ShaRonRea.com)



# ALLOWING MIRACLES?

by Kurt Krueger

A number of years ago I helped create what some people consider a miracle! If I or another can do it, can you also think that you can too? I even did it again a number of years after!

One of the world scriptures says: **“if you had the faith of a mustard seed, you could move mountains...”**

I tried it in South Africa, no - not moving mountains! while playing beach volleyball with the locals, me being from Los Angeles. A young, tall and talented African man spiked the ball beautifully yet came down wrong... you could hear a LOUD “POP” – indicating that he had badly torn his connective knee tissues. As a common courtesy, I dragged him off the court ~ so that everyone else could continue to play. I asked him if I could help – he gave permission. I began using my skills as a teacher of Practical Sports Psychology and knowledge of anatomy. I slowly guided him through a detailed breathing, relaxation, and visualization process. It sounded a little like this:

“Breathe in deeply and slowly through your nose. This brings the oxygen to the lower lobes of your lungs, where more of the air sacs are. The air sacs bring the oxygen to the blood. The brain is so smart that it sends more oxygen to the damaged area to heal it faster.

Imagine breathing out also allows the damaged cells to be released...”

At the same time, I gently placed my hands on his knee saying that the caring human touch has been proven to heal people/animals up to 30% faster.

I was then inspired to and periodically thank God for having healed him. I had never done this kind of thing before. Affirming that God cured the man, just like Jesus - the Master did. Within 45 minutes, IT WORKED – he got up and walked away... I never even got his name.

This was not just a one off event either!

A number of years later, it happened again. A young scout badly twisted/sprained his ankle

while backpacking with a Troop of Boy Scouts. He walked with a staff up to me as we consolidated the hikers. I asked the same thing, and it worked again! If I can do it, you can too... just give it a go so that you too could be a vehicle for someone’s healing. It was a simple act of a little faith. Just attempting it, emulating a Master, except that He knew what the result was going to be, I just tried it. The Faith of a Mustard Seed Effect! I was inspired to take the scripture and use it and share it with others. How about you? Are you ready to experiment with emulating a Master?

The Power of the Word People of the Balkan’s and Middle East and further East have a practice of thumbing or fingering a stone or seed/bead. Some call them worry stones/beads. Many repeatedly use an affirmation or silent prayer. Some use: “Jesus Christ Lord have mercy on me...” others in India use Mala beads – much like a Catholic Rosary, and repeat, “OM Namah Shivaya” – I Honor My Inner SELF... while others...

The Way of the Pilgrim and the Pilgrim Continues His Way is a book describing some amazing experiences of people able to walk in the winter snows of Russia without shoes on – simply repeating the Jesus Prayer, “*Jesus Christ Lord have mercy on me...*”

INspiration guided me to think about lacquering Mustard Seeds on specially selected small, smooth stones – as from a stream, lake or ocean. Then keep this small rock in your pocket. When the mind doesn’t need your attention, as walking from one place to another, take it out and repeat the Affirmation: “God is my Rock. I have the faith of a mustard seed,” as you thumb/finger the rock. As often as your mind doesn’t need to focus on a problem/ or task at hand, simply take out the Mustard Seed Rock and finger or thumb it – feeling the minuscule seeds and mentally repeat, “God is my Rock. I have the faith of a mustard seed.”\*

There is an advanced practice – beyond Affirmations, from a book called Affirmations. It too uses a scriptural quote, “*Ask and it will be*

*given.*" So simply repeat: Why is God my Rock? Why do I have the faith of a mustard seed?" Just making the choice and try to allow a healing (or other improvement) and thanking God before it happens is having a small amount of faith... Knowing that God is your Rock, affirms that He alone is "All-Powerful," and He is the focus of your life (as He should be, according to believers). When you repeat this mantra/prayer/affirmation/affirmation it reinforces your faith and God's place in your life, and allows God to be more and more present and active in your life.

*"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."* John 14:12-14

Focusing on the highest, focusing on God brings wonders. Others may say only Jesus can do miracles – what makes you think He doesn't work through His example and His grace? Letting go of self or other imposed limitations. God has no limits, no restraint.

In the West a repetitive prayer, in the East, they call it a Mantra, in Psychology, it is called a cue word or even an affirmation, or concentration practice. It works and has for centuries. The Mantra has been used for thousands of years by millions of people each year by chanting and mentally repeating it with the same intonation thus creating a powerful vibration. It is said that when you repeat it, it acts like a cosmic tuning fork, allowing your mind to rapidly become focused.

Brother Lawrence and his book, *The Practice of the Presence of God*; and *The Gentle Art of Blessing* by Pierre Pradervand; and *Affirmations* by Noah St. John were also inspirations for this practice.

\* = OR use another affirmation or prayer of your choice.

**For Agnostics, Atheists, or Strict Scientists.**

Check out the HeartMath Institute, Institute of Noetic Sciences, the Monroe Institute, and others.

Nasim Harriman's focus.

Dr. Bruce Lipton,  
*The Biology of Belief, Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter & Miracles* (2005). His groundbreaking work on the connection between biology and belief.

*The Honeymoon Effect: The Science of Creating Heaven on Earth* (2013). Focuses on the biology of relationships and personal transformation

Gregg Braden

*The Divine Matrix: Bridging Time, Space, Miracles, And Belief* (2006). One of his most well-known works. Explores the connection between consciousness, reality, and spirituality. *The Spontaneous Healing of Belief: Shattering the Paradigm of False Limits* (2008). Focuses on the power of belief in shaping our reality

Dr. Joe Dispenza

*Becoming Supernatural* (2017). Most updated book. Explores how "common people are doing the uncommon". Discusses accessing deeper levels of reality. Aims to show readers their "supernatural" nature

*You Are the Placebo* (2014). Explores the placebo effect as a physiological phenomenon. Demonstrates how thoughts can change physical responses. Includes research and exercises to shift mindset

Nassim Haramein

"The Connected Universe." A documentary film featuring Haramein's work, which can be considered a visual representation of his theories involving unified physics, the nature of reality, and the connection between consciousness and the physical universe.

**PeaceMakers Miracle Making Practice**

If a miracle can be created for one by one, what happens when two or more are gathered? All in the same prayerful resonance? Could we dramatically increase the reach and effect (instead of simply loaves and fishes) by experiencing heaven on earth by saying, "Thank You for Peace IN Everything, Everything AS Peace?" BRING HARMONY TO LIFE. BE a PeaceMaker for your own wellbeing AND OTHERS.



## HERE'S THE PRACTICE:

When prompted, pause at least three (3) times in your day, and repeat at least three times while breathing IN: *"Thank You for Peace IN Everything,"* and breathing OUT: *"Everything AS Peace."* The more we repeat this, the calmer the breathing, the calmer the brainwaves become and the better we feel.

## START NOW!

Then read onward...

Jesus thanked Allah for having healed a person. What happens when His children follow His example? The synergistic effect is exponential!

### For a meditation practice...

The PeaceMaker Meditation practice basics: use as many of these as you feel guided to at any time of day. In other words, use the one(s) that resonate or works for you.

1. As you awaken, Listen to the first action you take ~ pay attention to your breath's movement and mentally repeat, *"Peace IN everything"* with each In-breath; and *"Everything AS Peace"*, with the Out-breath. It is best repeated in your 'Home' language.
2. After your morning bathroom routine, sit comfortably erect with the eyes closed. If you need to be in another position, it is fine. If thoughts come up during your meditation time, smile and watch them go then simply return to the sound of the breath with *"Peace IN everything"* flowing in and, *"Everything AS Peace"* returning out.
3. Experience the space between the breath grow as you enjoy the *"Peace IN Everything, Everything AS Peace"* vibrating through the breath, through the day.
4. Meditate for about 20-60+ minutes each day. Honor yourself and others with a regular practice of this valuable activity any time of day, simply pay attention to the breaths repeating *"Peace IN Everything, Everything AS Peace."*
5. We can 'embody' the meditation using movement:
  - Backward and Forward OR Side to Side OR moving a Body Part
    - Backward and Forward ~

- Backward as you breathe in Peace IN Everything, touching your hands to your heart, and
- Spreading your hands forward as you breathe out Everything AS Peace. REPEAT....
- Side to Side ~
  - Leaning to the Right side as you breathe in Peace IN Everything, touching your hands to your heart, and
  - Leaning to the Left, Everything AS Peace. REPEAT....
- Moving a Body Part ~ because of health or other circumstances, you may not be able to move anything but opening and closing the hand(s). So,
  - As you bring the fingertips to the heel of the hand, breathe in, Peace IN Everything.
  - As the hand is opened, Everything AS Peace. REPEAT...

6. Listen to the last action that you consciously take in a day repeating, "Peace IN everything" with each In-breath; and "Everything AS Peace," with the Out-breath. And experience a deep peaceful sleep and a more peaceful life. Should you awaken in the night, simply pay attention to the breaths repeating "Peace IN Everything, Everything AS Peace."

NOTE: In 'troubled times' how is Everything AS Peace? Accepting the Stoic path allows one to Love what happens. "Everything AS Peace." It's going to sometimes be unpopular or troublesome. We may as well enjoy how it inspires us to make life ever better. If troubled people don't feel calm and loving expressions from others who will be their models?

### Inspirational resources:

What One Man Can Do, John Denver,  
<https://youtu.be/2jtd-ls5sQk?si=AM8lxL6uciT3jcPo>

Find Your People, Drew Holcomb.  
<https://youtu.be/yDVl3WHoyml?si=InvdYioTlXVoA222>

We pay it forward in the new society, and in this current society we could use any investment in our cause for bringing *Peace IN Everything, Everything AS Peace*. You may help continue spreading the messages by investing in our efforts. Pay It Forward as we do. <https://account.venmo.com/u/Kurt-Krueger-3>. Follow your guidance/heart, all investments are useful.



## INTRODUCING THE GLOBAL PEACE YES CAMPAIGN AND APP

*A historic peace baton is passed and a muscular new peace movement is born.*

In our crisis-ridden modern world beset by division, conflict, and violence, what does it take for an ordinary global citizen to become a powerful peace champion and positive force for humankind? How can one transcend hopelessness and helplessness? How can people from every walk of life develop the muscles of peace required to stay peaceful, kind, and mentally healthy no matter what comes their way? At [GLOBAL PEACE YES](#), we say that it starts with a resounding YES, first individually, then collectively.

At our brand-new Culture of Peace non-profit, answering these crucial questions and many others like them with compassion and precision guides every decision we make. This quest also informs the design of our simple yet significant call to action: Vote YES for Global Peace using our delightful GLOBAL PEACE YES app and then engage in our empowering platform of peace practice offerings.

What we have found through our team's rewarding research is that when we "practice peace together", our personal lives and the world in which we live improve. With this in mind, through an innovative embedded partnership with a B-Corp venture studio team of world class Silicon Valley developers, we are creating a mobile app platform for practicing peace with digital tools and networking that will help global citizens further the GLOBAL PEACE YES Campaign and become the peace champions our world deserves and needs.

On the international level, to change the direction humanity is traveling, tipping point theory confirms that the adoption by 15-25% of a target group is necessary before it spreads across the entire population and affects lasting change. Therefore, to accelerate the tipping point for Global Peace, we must get at least 1 billion people to verifiably vote YES for Global Peace and commit to daily peace practices. This vote will also support the establishment of Ministries and

Departments of Peace in governments worldwide to help heal conflict before it becomes violent.

Through our downloadable mobile app, our peace champion end users will participate in volunteer-driven embodiment events across the world in which they will be inspired to contribute and count 1 billion kilometers walked in pilgrimages for peace, 1 billion hours danced for peace, 1 billion hours meditated for peace, 1 billion hours of yoga for peace, 1 billion hours volunteer served for peace, 1 billion artworks created for peace and 1 billion dollars donated for peace. Over time, these small peace-centered acts of service will add up to affect large complex systems of change.

As we build out our digital platform, we plan to keep track of these peace offerings through our Peace Points system with which our growing community can see other people's contributions via each member's Peace Points tally and develop a new form of self-esteem based on service. As an added incentive, these Peace Points will eventually be redeemable at our online Peace Store and participating peace-certified businesses.

Overall, our vision at GLOBAL PEACE YES is to co-create a unified, compassionate, and thriving world in which positive peace is the operating principle for individuals, communities, organizations and nations. To help achieve this, GLOBAL PEACE YES recently merged with the esteemed 14-year-old non-profit PeaceNow.com and took over the baton for its wonderful body of work which includes the "one billion signatures for peace" campaign and The Muscles of Peace Global Resolution in Support of Infrastructures for Peace in Governments Worldwide. This acknowledgement of the significance of Infrastructures for Peace in all states is widely endorsed by the UN's New Agenda for Peace 2023, peacebuilding experts, civil society organizations, youth, key political figures, community leaders, academia, and global citizen signatories from 192 nations. The time is now to

pursue the implementation of these peace infrastructures in all governments, which will further enable peaceful societal transformations in education, economies, conflict resolution, and healing.

PeaceNow.com's work also includes the iconic, award-winning peace entertainment film "Admissions", starring Academy Award nominee James Cromwell, and the powerful cyberbullying peace entertainment film "The Principle", starring 4-time Grammy Award nominee Mickey Guyton, slated for release in 2025. GLOBAL PEACE YES has also assumed PeaceNow.com's UN NGO Consultative Status.

For our peace champion end users, the next step after casting their verified vote YES for Global Peace is to "practice peace together" through A.I. coached, intellectual activities in our app that will include wisdom offerings, sound therapy and biohacking tips for greater health and well-being. This A.I. is being trained with peace resources in conflict resolution, peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding (please contact us if you have access to applicable libraries and databases to integrate) and will learn from the user-generated content inputs it receives. GLOBAL PEACE YES will also provide an unending offering of in-person, live events. How exactly do we practice peace? We rely on the tried-and-true teachings and methods from ancient times until today: walking, meditating, dancing, yoga, breathing exercises, artworks, giving, and serving.

We utilize world class digital technology and cultivate peacepreneurship to grow the Economy of Peace. We produce peace entertainment featuring positive, life-changing storytelling. We create brilliant educational programs and positive

message campaigns that have dynamic impact. We fundraise abundantly and will offer generous grants. We convene and advocate. We measure and report and then peacefully stand up strong and walk together and experience the invigorating journey to a better world.

We also bring in the healing power of music to bridge cultures and generations and speak a universal language to hearts and minds everywhere. Every peace movement needs peace anthems. Bob Marley's son Ky-Mani Marley helped to create our inaugural anthem and it is called Freedom Riders, produced by the legendary 8-time Grammy Award winner Commissioner Gordon, to be released soon by Sony Music.

In the end, it all adds up to a lot of good, historic, world-changing fun. Therefore, we warmly invite you to visit [GlobalPeaceYes.org](http://GlobalPeaceYes.org) and cast your verified vote YES for Global Peace and join our loving community. Your vote will be officially counted, and you will receive a certificate commemorating this empowering act on behalf of the greater good, the first of many, we are sure. Then stay tuned for our mobile app. We are excited to welcome you into our hearts as we unify for the cause of Global Peace and enjoy the enduring benefits of practicing peace together.

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## WE LEARNED

*by Robert Levine*

From the start of recorded time,  
and before, over the  
Millennia we learned  
to hunt, to make tools, to create language, to  
domesticate animals, to farm, to build communities,  
to come together to survive and prosper (as we learned  
from the great, saintly Kropotkin).

We also learned to kill each other, to devastate forests,  
to wage war, to burn villages, to rape, to pillage, to  
destroy cities, to burn worlds, irradiate the planet and  
poison the water and air, to make species disappear,  
to destroy Gaia (our blessed Earth).

We have learned to listen to the land,  
to listen to air and the waters,  
to look at the sky,  
to see the stars,  
to know the immensity of the universe,  
to see the atom and beyond,  
to know we are all made from the stuff of stars, from  
the Big Bang  
(before and long after our universe ceases to exist).



# CREATIVITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

*By Robert Levine*

I still remember my first day of college. I had always been interested in politics and the first time I volunteered to work on a political campaign was in 1965 when I was seven years old. Growing up in the 1960s and early 1970s was a fascinating time to be interested in politics, not just in the US but around the world. I vividly remember the civil rights demonstrations, and anti-war demonstrations, and the emergence of the movements for the rights of Women and the LGBT+ community. So when I entered college my plan was to become a political science major and my scheduled included Introduction to Political Science which met every Tuesday and Thursday morning.

You can imagine how crushed I was when I walked into class to find the subject matter tedious and boring. I couldn't understand how politics in the world can be so vital and exciting yet be so boring in the classrooms. So I dropped the class and changed my major, eventually graduating as a History major, English minor, with a concentration in Women's Studies (in the late 1970s that is where all of the exciting work was being done).

While my academic interest in Political Science waned, my interest in politics as a practice continued to grow. During my four years I became involved in almost every group on the political left on campus, even becoming the founder and President of many of them.

Rather than regale you with the story of my life, I eventually found my way back to Political Science and during the 1990s I was studying for a doctorate in the subject (I took a break for personal reasons right before taking my orals and have yet to go back.) Over the years I came to realize that my problems was not with the field

itself, but with the way it was being taught by too many instructors. Mid-way through my studies I had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate class on the American political system.

To be fully honest, my very first class was a bust. I sat at the front desks reading the lesson I prepared to a group of over twenty students who were just as bored as I was. I knew I had to do something different to make it a positive experience for the students as well as for myself. I didn't want to be as boring as the instructor I had twenty years ago. I called a friend who was an art teacher (no matter what the subject teaching is teaching) and she told me that first I shouldn't just sit there. I should get up walk around the room and make eye contact with each student. Second, don't read the lesson. She said that I knew the subject matter and I should only use my written lesson as a reference.

The next day I went back (after the first class I considered quitting) and did everything she said. It worked! The students were engaged; I was engaging. A subject matter that I loved came alive for me and for the students. I taught them something I learned in my years as an activist and my study of history and politics; politics just doesn't happen. It is created over time by people engaging with each other, with the political institutions of the country they live in and with their traditions and belief systems. Politics is a living process and change can only happen as citizens and actors engage. Each of us is an actor in the political process, whether we participate or not.

I have never been great at predicting the future, but I do know that each of us can make a difference if we take action and create new visions for ourselves, our communities, our nations and our world.

March - May 2025

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