



10 Steps

To Personal Resilience in a Chaotic Climate



Expectations & Norms

The Good Grief Network builds personal resilience & empowerment while strengthening community ties to help combat despair, inaction, eco-anxiety, and other heavy emotions in the face of daunting systemic predicaments.

- I understand that Good Grief is a support group, not a therapy group. This means that emotional authenticity is welcome and appropriate, but using group time for lengthy processing of intense emotional states is not. If I am confused about the difference, I will ask the group facilitators for help.
- I will minimize distractions in order to be present in the meeting (ex: cell phones).
- I will help cultivate love and support focused on collective grief and probable systems collapse.
- I understand that our current situation is complex, and there are many different and valid ways of reacting to it. I also understand that retreating into false optimism or angry nihilism are both ways of avoiding the real emotional work that we need to do in order to confront this crisis and build personal resilience.
- I am of sound mental health, managing my mental health and am not in a crisis, or I am being treated by a professional for a mental illness. Currently, I am not feeling suicidal and I can regulate my emotions. I am attending the group to further my personal and spiritual growth, which may bring up some personal trauma and heavy emotions. If my feelings are difficult to deal with or I feel unsafe, it is my responsibility to find a mental health practitioner and/or a safe person outside the meeting space to help heal personal wounds and traumas.
- I understand the suicide hotline ([1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255)) is a free resource that I can call if I'm feeling unsafe. This resource is available 24/7 and is free and confidential support for people in distress and crisis. They can offer resources for me.
- Participation in the group requires that I help create a safe space for each member. I understand that this is not a space for ranting, convincing others of my beliefs, or providing advice. Instead, I will practice active listening when someone else is speaking and will not interrupt.
- I will listen with compassion and curiosity and without judgment.
- When sharing, I will speak from the heart, speaking my own truth (as I understand it). I will limit my sharing to a few minutes at a time. Before sharing twice, I will create space for each person to speak once.
- Racism, sexism, xenophobia, or any other type of discrimination or hate-talk is not tolerated in our group. We come from a place of love and attempt to understand the roots of the systemic predicaments; we will not scapegoat a portion of the human population.
- If I fail to uphold a meeting expectations or norms, I will be held accountable for my actions by the facilitator. If I become disruptive to the group or fail to uphold these meeting norms, I may be asked to leave.
- (Please feel free to add norms for your own local branch)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Recommendations

Welcome to the Good Grief Network's 10-Step Program to help build personal resilience and empowerment and strengthen community ties. Thank you for your willingness to organize a branch of the Step Program in your community. We have a number of recommendations for facilitation that might make the process easier.

- Each step has been researched and formed using an interdisciplinary approach. The creators are not mental health experts, and you don't have to be either. Please be open with the folks attending meetings that program is not intended to focus on individual grief. Some people may need a therapist in addition to working the 10-Steps.
- Meet weekly for 1 ½ -2 hours each time. Any less than that doesn't allow sufficient time for everyone to share. If the meetings are two hours, we recommend leaving some time at the end of the meeting to mingle and form connections amongst the group.
- Make time for a check in and check out each meeting. Have each person introduce themselves by their first name and use an ice-breaker for them to share. (Ex: Introduce yourself with your first name and one word of what you're bringing to the circle today.)
- Sit in a circle.
- Meet at the same location each week (or at least minimize the number of places you meet at). People get confused and won't come if the location changes each meeting.
- [Optional] Open up the weekly leader position to anyone interested. Each week can have a different leader. We have included the introduction with notes for the facilitator.
- Limit each group to about 10-15 people. Any more than that and authenticity is challenged. We desire to build community and create a safe space to work through tough feelings.
- Read the introduction and closing in each meeting. Ritual is important. The subject of the meeting changes weekly, but having the start and ending the same allows participants to ground themselves.
- After the leader opens the floor for sharing, have participants use a talking piece to and encourage active listening.
- Create space for honesty and integrity. No one is forced to share and everyone who shares should limit their talking to a few minutes to create space for others.
- Decide early on - Will you allow folks to drop into meetings? Will you open the meeting to a cohort of 10-15 folks and then no others? If you do allow drop-ins, promote each weekly meeting on social media and encourage members to invite friends and family.
- Connect regularly to the Good Grief Network hub (via email: goodgriever@gmail.com) to share insights and suggestions for improvement. This manual is an evolution-in-progress, a collaborative process. It's not perfect, but the urgency of this work is more important than perfection. We know what worked for our meetings – but your gatherings will be different. Let us know how they're going. What are obstacles you're facing? What surprises you? Are members offering feedback?

Meeting Script

Introduction

"We welcome you to the **Good Grief Network Step Program** and hope you will build personal resilience and empowerment, and strengthen community ties within this fellowship. This group is not a therapy program nor is it a space to dwell in our heavy emotions. Instead, it is a place to cultivate love, support, and growth focused on collective grief and probable systems collapse. We seek to find the delicate balance between unrealistic optimism and angry nihilism.

We who live with an understanding of climate injustice, the loss of our imagined future, ecocide, and other systemic problems understand as perhaps few others can. We know the world is full of grief and suffering. We feel it and want to practice methods to cope and invest our energy in meaningful ways.

The **Good Grief Network** offers an opportunity where individuals can build resilience that empowers us to face the challenges of these overwhelming systemic issues without succumbing to numbness, depression, or denial. This work is about embracing and navigating vulnerability, our heavy human emotions, and the pain of the living in a destructive culture.

Our goal, when each step has been worked, is to live grounded in wisdom with fresh ideas and perspectives. We awaken and begin to see the world with social constructions broken down and are able to look beyond current systems for solutions. We keep the steps as tools moving forward.

This program may also help lead to **meaningful action**. While action has many definitions, we'll learn to access and strengthen our own unique skills, talents, and experiences. The Good Grief Network doesn't recommend a single course of action, as we realize systemic problems are complex. Instead, we use what we've learned and created to drive change in our own ways.

Please be respectful of the group and limit your sharing to a few minutes. Before sharing twice, create space for everyone to share once. Help others feel welcome to take part in the dialogue created. Speak from your heart and your truth - we are not here to convince others of our beliefs, but to be witnessed on our journey and help raise consciousness.

This step program is loosely based on the Twelve Steps (adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous), where we try, little by little, one day at a time, to apply to our lives."

GROUP INTRODUCTIONS [the facilitator chooses a type of check in for the meeting].

BUSINESS UPDATES

- “Are there any group announcements?”
- [Optional] “Who is willing to lead next week’s meeting?”

INTRODUCE THIS WEEK’S STEP

Read the introduction from the manual and if the facilitator wants to, share a personal story as it relates to this step. After sharing a story, announce that the floor is now open for others to share.

ANNOUNCE: The Floor Is Open For Sharing

5 Minutes Before Closing The Facilitator Asks:

"As this meeting comes to a close, does anyone have a burning desire to share?"

CLOSING

Announce Next Week’s Step That Will Be Covered.

"In closing, the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest. We’ll be back next week to work the next step. We’d love to see you, too. We’ll end by going around the circle with a check out [the facilitator chooses a type of check out]."

Step 1

Accept The Problem And Its Severity

"Acceptance does not mean surrender. It does not mean resignation. Acceptance means I am finally available to the entire spectrum of creative response."

—Trebbe Johnson

It is in this step where we aim to understand the problematic ways in which humankind operates on this planet. When we catch glimpses of the problems and their severity, don't look away. We must invite the grief to move through our whole animal body. The planet and our species need us to be awake and aware right now. This requires acknowledging the difficult truth of where we're at as a culture.

We've lost our way. Consumerism, pervasive violence, global warming, the sixth mass extinction, water and food shortages, mass-produced propaganda, and skyrocketing rates of depression all point to the errors of our ways. Our systems are failing us.

A delicate balance exists between false optimism and overwhelming pessimism. Reality exists between these two polarities. We aim to live within these two extremes.

Regardless of which collective problem most paralyzes us, remember that balance is a practice. We wobble. We fall. We get up and get to work again. Like any practice, balance gets easier the more we do it.

Now is the time to rise to the challenge. Let's envision new ways of existing, together. First, we accept the problem and its severity. After accurately discerning where we are, we can focus on the path to arrive where we want to be.

Step 2

Acknowledge That I Am Part Of The Problem & The Solution

"Walls turned sideways are bridges."

—Angela Davis

By living within the Western paradigm, we're all responsible for where we're at culturally, socially, ecologically, and politically. We do what we can to minimize our carbon footprint. Still, many of us drive, fly, and over-consume. We buy into the consumerist ideology, failing to notice how the system is designed to enslave us with debt. We must confront the old notion that our ability to consume defines our individual worth.

Once we're aware of these systems and our role in perpetuating them, we can no longer be held captive by our guilt and shame. There isn't time to be suffocated by these feelings about our roles in the problems. We're using the tools provided by this system to help create a just future. With this level of acceptance, we can address and correct these problematic habits little by little and create systems that actually serve our planet and us.

Step 3

Practice Being With Uncertainty

"No one can possibly know what is about to happen: it is happening, each time, for the first time, for the only time."

—James Baldwin

This culture is rigid. We're conditioned to make little, or no, room for uncertainty. We want guarantees, plans, and perfection. We desire to feel secure and think certainty means security. Yet, control is an illusion. We can calculate the odds of every risk, but there is always some amount of uncertainty that exists. We minimize risks by making smart choices and planning, but there will always be external forces beyond our control. We live on a dynamic planet and our perceptions are limited. There is more to existence than we can take in. Can we give up our need to control the outcomes of our actions? The more we convince ourselves of a certain outcome, the less resilient we are. Can you take risks and chances and find meaning in our daily lives knowing that our existence is unpredictable?

Practicing flexibility moves us out of a fight/flight/freeze response when we experience the unexpected. This allows us to respond from a place of patience and compassion. We must befriend uncertainty to exist in this time and place, and to preserve our sanity.

Step 4

Confront My Own Mortality & The Mortality Of All

"A civilization that denies death ends by denying life."

—Octavio Paz

Death is a natural and normal part of every life cycle. You will die, as all living things do. Nothing is free from death—not pets, not that person you're certain you can't live without, not even the sun. Death is natural. Still, the high rate in which we humans are killing off other species feels nearly impossible to take in. We're extinguishing other species so quickly that we've entered the Sixth Mass Extinction event on Earth. Humankind has become the first species to control the course of evolution.

How do we remain present with knowing death is inevitable and avoid becoming obsessed by it or dwelling in the dark? Death and life are interrelated. One cannot exist without the other. It is through death that meaning is made. We are alive for such a short time. Heart attacks, accidents, and illness hurl curve balls at the ones we love and us. Nothing is guaranteed. Once we accept the inevitability of death, we can be more alive in the present moment.

How we die matters and we die how we live. Let's live while we're alive!

Step 5

Do Inner Work

"If you begin to understand what you are without trying to change it, then what you are undergoes a transformation."

—Krishnamurti

Our personal wounds add weight to the heavy emotions we feel on a collective level. We can deny, repress, or run from our personal struggles until we collapse under them. Or, we can face them with courage, recognizing that feelings are both mental and physical experiences that shape, but do not define us. In doing so, we choose to use this extra baggage and its weight for strength-training a little at a time, rather than collapsing underneath it. Our grief then becomes a tool for connection instead of a roadblock to plough through or avoid.

Our culture has deemed some of our feelings acceptable and others taboo. Yet, until we can feel the full range of our emotions, we cannot truly confront these systemic predicaments. Limiting our range of feelings prevents us from being fully alive. All emotions are transient and recurrent. For example, we don't "face our despair," and then never have to think about it again. Feelings are lenses that color our perception of the world. Try each lens on without judgment. What is it about each different perspective that helps create a richer, fuller life?

It's critical to learn methods for processing our feelings, because we're all ultimately alone. Community offers solace and support, but each of us wakes up and falls asleep in our mind. If we can't work through our own feelings, the help of a community is limited. We must each commit to a full life experience and build community from that place.

Step 6

Develop Awareness of Brain Patterns & Perception

"Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while, or the light won't come in."

—Isaac Asimov

We think we are rational creatures, but we are not. We construct our reality based on the information collected and processed by our instincts, cognitive biases, five senses, and complex thinking. The combination is limiting. We can't know what we don't know and if we never learn how our brain overcompensates for our limitations, we are held captive by the illusion that we are rational.

An untrained brain will always react without awareness of our limitations, but we can help our minds become calmer, steadier, and less reactive. This is essential when confronting our wicked systemic predicaments. Practices like meditation, yoga, gratitude, mindfulness and creating beauty and meaning help rewire our brains, creating new neural pathways helping to overcome reactions from instincts and cognitive biases.

In other words, we must learn how to cultivate a non-reactive state of being instead of allowing our limited perceptions to be in control.

Step 7

Practice Gratitude

"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction."

—Rachel Carson

Through tools like meditation, mindfulness, yoga, and utilizing gratitude, we can train our brain to respond to external stimuli in a non-reactionary way. Between the sensationalized daily news, intra- and interpersonal drama, and the weight of our collective problems all competing for our attention and reactions, each moment can seem overwhelming. Through mindfulness practices, we fight the paradigm of stress and speed and drop into the slower parts of our brain where we have better control over our reactions. We can observe our thoughts instead of identifying as them. We remove ourselves from the daily hype that leaves us reaching for our next addictive fix to cover up the intensity of our problems. These practices gift us moments of calm and lucidity amidst the chaos.

Beauty and meaning are not optional; we need them to survive. Creating meaning and finding beauty are matters of perspective. They are available to us if we make the decision to pursue them. Terry Tempest Williams writes that, "Finding beauty in a broken world is creating beauty in the world we find." No matter the situation, we can find a beautiful action, connection, scene, or moment. Beauty and meaning sustain us as reminders that there is something outside of us worth living for.

Desperation, depression, and threats to our safety may make it seem that meaning and beauty aren't available, but as long as there is life, they exist. We only have to make the effort to look and remember times we have encountered beauty and meaning to help sustain ourselves.

Step 8

Take Breaks & Rest As Needed

*"Caring for myself is not a self-indulgence, it is self-preservation,
and that is an act of political warfare."*

—Audre Lorde, *A Burst of Light*

Each of us has personal limitations that we must respect. When our mind or body requires rest, take a break. Being in a place of awareness and vulnerability is taxing, and because we've committed to feeling our feelings and working through past trauma, we'll have cultivated enough self-awareness to know when each of us needs to take a step back for a moment and regroup. Do what you need to do to refresh yourself and return to the work. Otherwise, we risk burning out. We need you and your energy.

Are you willing to give yourself this moment to recharge? The work will be there when you return.

Step 9

Show Up

"The moment that you feel that, just possibly, you're walking down the street naked, exposing too much of your heart and your mind and what exists on the inside, showing too much of yourself. That's the moment you may be starting to get it right."

—Neil Gaiman

Now that we have done some healing through self-reflection and building self-awareness, we need to turn the focus externally. When we're feeling vulnerable, we're quick to downplay our experiences by hiding or internalizing that which makes us feel exposed. Part of the human condition involves encountering these uneasy situations and instead of shying away, we lean into the discomfort, showing up for what makes us vulnerable. We cannot allow the fear of pain or humiliation stop us from participating in life. There is strength in pushing through that which makes us uncomfortable. There is power and energy in asserting that we're not going away. Life exists in the moments we show up. To shy away from these experiences is to miss the essence of being alive. So, we must be brave. We must take chances. And we must commit to being the main character in each of our lives.

Show up for yourself.

Step 10

Reinvest Myself Into Meaningful Efforts

*"You never change things by fighting the existing reality.
To change something, build a new model that makes the
existing model obsolete."*

—R. Buckminster Fuller

The final step is to use the wisdom, energy, and resilience that we've cultivated through the other steps to inform our every action. When we're open to our interconnectedness to all beings and the natural world, we make decisions based on compassion and insight instead of egocentric motivations. Instead of thoughtless and selfish actions, we reinvest ourselves with an understanding of the consequences to the larger world. This new type of effort must come from our inner stillness and from our Love for each other, the natural world, and ourselves. It will be well-intentioned and well-informed, colored by how we see the world. Unless we've undergone an intensive process that forces us to seek truth from within ourselves, instead of having "truth" pushed on us, any action with regard to our collective problems will perpetuate the same social and economic systems that are failing us.

Now is the time for each person to find her/his opportunity to be powerful. Action and power don't have to mean risking arrest or giving up on civilized society and living in a yurt. Action and power exist in the decisions we make with respect and Love toward other beings, the natural world, and ourselves.

Our next moves must be made from a place of inner calm and outward reverence. A truly just and sustainable world is made up of awake, resilient, and connected people.

Supplemental Material

Step 1: Accept The Predicament & Its Severity.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- IPCC Results/Current News Coming In
- Biodiversity and ecosystem losses - 6th Mass Extinction, Sexism, Racism, Classism, Xenophobia, Mass Violence, Police Brutality, Collapsing Democracy, Food Systems
- No one knows the outcome. Best to work toward a shared vision of a new paradigm (based on cooperation and connection)

Suggestions For A Check In:

- What Are Your Hopes/Expectations For This Group?
- What Brings You To This Group?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one thing you're taking away from this meeting?

Quotes & Poems:

Society is like a stew. If you don't stir it up every once in a while then a layer of scum floats to the top. —Edward Abbey

Better a cruel truth than a comfortable delusion. —Edward Abbey

Without adequate emotional and spiritual preparation for the collapse of industrial civilization, the human psyche is very likely to be overwhelmed to the point of madness or death. — Carolyn Baker

If we see that something is wrong we have no choice but to oppose it—for the sake, if for nothing else, of our own souls. And yet, in so destructive an age as ours, it is possible for our sense of wrong to become an affliction. —Wendell Berry

Compassion hurts. When you feel connected to everything, you also feel responsible for everything. And you cannot turn away. Your destiny is bound with the destinies of others. You must either learn to carry the Universe or be crushed by it. You must grow strong enough to love the world, yet empty enough to sit down at the same table with its worst horrors. —Andrew Boyd

Only when the last tree has died and the last river has been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realize we cannot eat money. —Cree Indian Proverb

But man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself.
—Rachel Carson

Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding. —Khalil Gibran

I feel this strange internal conflict between what I know is true – what every cell in my body tells me is true—and what I am told is true from the outside. —David Edwards

The intuitive mind is a sacred gift, and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a world that honors the servant, but has forgotten the gift. —Albert Einstein

Problems cannot be solved at the same level of awareness that created them. —Albert Einstein

Understanding shatters old knowledge to make room for the new that accords with reality. —Thich Nhat Hanh

This unwillingness to face the truth about our time is another form of silencing. Before we can fix our troubled relationship with nature, we must be willing to look at it.
—Derrick Jensen, ix, *A Language Older Than Words*

Reform versus revolution is a false dichotomy. The first answer is that we need both: Without a revolution the planet is dead, but if we simply wait for the revolution the planet will still be dead before the revolution comes. —Derrick Jensen

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. —Martin Luther King, Jr.

The constant assertion of belief is an indication of fear. —Jiddu Krishnamurti

“It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.” —Jiddu Krishnamurti

“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds.” —Aldo Leopold

“If you want to live the truth, then you must be prepared to pay the price for it.”
—Richard Rohr, *Simplicity*

“Sit, be still, and listen,
For you are drunk,
And we are at the edge of the roof.”

—Rumi

“We make our world significant by the courage of our questions and the depth of our answers.” —Carl Sagan

“Nature shrinks as capital grows. The growth of the market cannot solve the very crises it creates.” —Vandana Shiva

“The environment is so fundamental to our continued existence that it must transcend politics and become a central value of all members of society... Every breath is a sacrament, an affirmation of our connection with all other living things, a renewal of our link with our ancestors and a contribution to generations yet to come. Our breath is a part of life's breath, the ocean of air that envelops the earth.” — David Suzuki

Just as the body loves exercise, though it complains, the soul loves awareness. —Alice Walker

"How to Tell the Truth"

by Paul Williams

Listen as if you can't always tell
what the truth is.

Listen as if you might be wrong, especially when you know you're right.

Listen as if
you were willing to take the risk of growing beyond
your righteousness.

Listen as if
love mattered.

"Being human, especially being a self-aware human, entails facing bitter truths about existence. The price one pays for self-awareness is to see the dark side - not so much to dwell there, but to penetrate, to somehow get through and actually affirm your destiny."
—Irvin Yalom

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”
—Mother Teresa

The Breeze At Dawn
by Rumi

*The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.*

*You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.*

*People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.*

*The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.*

“Let This Darkness Be A Bell Tower”
Sonnets to Orpheus II, 29
Poem by Rainer Maria Rilke
Translation by Joanna Macy and Anita Barrows

Quiet friend who has come so far,
feel how your breathing makes more space around you.

Let this darkness be a bell tower

and you the bell. As you ring,
what batters you becomes your strength.

Move back and forth into the change.

What is it like, such intensity of pain?

If the drink is bitter, turn yourself to wine.
In this uncontainable night,

be the mystery at the crossroads of your senses,

the meaning discovered there.
And if the world has ceased to hear you,

say to the silent earth: I flow.

To the rushing water, speak: I am.

Step 2: Acknowledge That I Am Part Of The Problem & The Solution.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Neoliberalism Blaming Individuals For Collective Problems
- We're born into the dominant culture and have known no other ways of existing. Now that we know better, we can begin to do better.
- Meaningful Solutions (Drawdown.org, inclusivity, local communities, starting tough discussions)

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Tell us about a time you felt that you were part of the solution.
- What are you reading right now?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one thing you're taking away from this meeting?
- What is one thing you're grateful for?

Quotes & Poems:

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen. Winston Churchill

"If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time." —Marian Wright Edelman

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. Anne Frank

"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that make the existing model obsolete." —R. Buckminster Fuller

Our goal must be nothing less than the rediscover of what it means to be a human inhabitant of this world into which each of us is born. The planet is waiting to be allowed nothing more than the simple right to be. —Derrick Jensen, *A Language Older Than Words*

"In our time, when such threatening forces of cleavage are at work, splitting peoples, individuals and atoms, it is doubly necessary that those which unite and hold together should become effective..." —Emma Jung

"You can hold yourself back from the sufferings of the world, that is something you are free to do and it accords with your nature, but perhaps this very holding back is the one suffering you could avoid." —Franz Kafka

"Fight like hell. But be a witness, too. Go see the whales, the rainforests. There's no guarantee we'll save them all. Memorize this great world, the one we were born into. Tell others in the future. Their mistakes might be fewer if they know the greatness we once saw." —Bill McKibben, 2005, speech at Middlebury College

"There must be those among whom we can sit down and weep and still be counted as warriors." —Adrienne Rich

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." —Alice Walker

"I do not believe we can look for leadership beyond ourselves. I do not believe we can wait for someone or something to save us from our global predicaments and obligations. I need to look in the mirror and ask this of myself: If I am committed to seeing the direction of our country change, how must I change myself?" —Terry Tempest Williams

"Grief dares us to love once more." —Terry Tempest Williams

We Must Be Saved

By [Reinhold Neibuhr](#)

*Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime;
Therefore, we are saved by hope.
Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense
in any immediate context of history;
Therefore, we are saved by faith.
Nothing we do, however virtuous,
can be accomplished alone;
Therefore, we are saved by love.
No virtuous act is quite as virtuous
from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own;
Therefore, we are saved by the final form of love
which is forgiveness.*

Step 3: Practice Sitting With Uncertainty.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Certainty is an illusion created by Western culture
- Let go of expected outcomes
- Learn to be flexible

Suggestions For A Check In:

- What is a peak (high point) and valley (low point) from the past week?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one thing you'll take from this meeting?

Quotes & Poems:

“Be open to the outcome, not attached to the outcome.” —Angeles Arrien

“No one can possibly know what is about to happen: it is happening, each time, for the first time, for the only time.” —James Baldwin

“We're in a free-fall into future. We don't know where we're going. Things are changing so fast, and always when you're going through a long tunnel, anxiety comes along. And all you have to do to transform your hell into a paradise is to turn your fall into a voluntary act. It's a very interesting shift of perspective and that's all it is... joyful participation in the sorrows and everything changes.” —Joseph Campbell

“One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, ‘What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?’” —Rachel Carson

“It takes a lot of courage to release the familiar and seemingly secure, to embrace the new. But there is no real security in what is no longer meaningful. There is more security in the adventurous and exciting, for in movement there is life, and in change there is power.” —Alan Cohen

“Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different way.” —Edward de Bono

“If you begin to understand what you are without trying to change it, then what you are undergoes a transformation.” —Krishnamurti

“One is never afraid of the unknown; one is afraid of the known coming to an end.”
—Krishnamurti

Nature constantly revises and rearranges itself in the face of novelty and surprises, its imperative of “order” demands a rugged, healthy turmoil, the compulsions of divers and complex creatures trying to stay alive even as circumstances change. —Ellen Maloy

To live in this world
you must be able
to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it
against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.
From “In Blackwater Woods” by Mary Oliver

All spirituality is about letting go. How to let go of our security, how to let go of our good reputation, how to let go of our identity and our self-image. —Richard Rohr, Simplicity

Don't be afraid! Fear comes from a need to control. And we are not in control anyway.
—Richard Rohr, Simplicity

Life is a balancing act of holding on and letting go. —Rumi

The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance. —Alan Watts

Chaos is necessary to new creative ordering. This revelation has been known throughout time to most human cultures; we just needed the science to help us remember it.
—Margaret Wheatley

The Peace Of Wild Things

by Wendell Berry

When despair grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting for their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

What Kind of Times Are These

by Adrienne Rich

There's a place between two stands of trees where the grass grows uphill
and the old revolutionary road breaks off into shadows
near a meeting-house abandoned by the persecuted
who disappeared into those shadows.

I've walked there picking mushrooms at the edge of dread, but don't be fooled
this isn't a Russian poem, this is not somewhere else but here,
our country moving closer to its own truth and dread,
its own ways of making people disappear.

I won't tell you where the place is, the dark mesh of the woods
meeting the unmarked strip of light—
ghost-ridden crossroads, leafmold paradise:

I know already who wants to buy it, sell it, make it disappear.
And I won't tell you where it is, so why do I tell you
anything? Because you still listen, because in times like these
to have you listen at all, it's necessary
to talk about trees.

Step 4: Confront My Own Mortality And The Mortality Of All.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Death is a part of life. It's natural, though our extinction rates are unnatural. How can we sit with this tension?
- What does it mean to be mortal?
- Does having a finite life bring more meaning?

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Share one word about where you're at (mentally/heartspace)?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one thing you're taking away from this meeting?
- What is something recent that made you laugh (movie, book, personal story)?

Quotes & Poems:

To be fully alive, fully human, and completely awake is to be continually thrown out of the nest. To live fully is to be always in no-man's-land, to experience each moment as completely new and fresh. To live is to be willing to die over and over again. —Pema Chödrön

Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live. —Norman Cousins

My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those
who age after age, perversely,
with no extraordinary power,
reconstitute the world.
—Adrienne Rich

We try so hard not to die, sometimes we forget to appreciate life. —The Spill Canvas

i don't pay attention to the world ending.
it has ended for me many times
and began again in the morning.
—Nayyirah Waheed

My refuge exists in my capacity to love. If I can learn to love death then I can begin to find refuge in change. —Terry Tempest Williams, Refuge

When Death Comes

by Mary Oliver

When death comes
like the hungry bear in autumn;
when death comes and takes all the bright coins from his purse

to buy me, and snaps the purse shut;
when death comes
like the measles-pox

when death comes
like an iceberg between the shoulder blades,

I want to step through the door full of curiosity, wondering:
what is it going to be like, that cottage of darkness?

And therefore I look upon everything
as a brotherhood and a sisterhood,
and I look upon time as no more than an idea,
and I consider eternity as another possibility,

and I think of each life as a flower, as common
as a field daisy, and as singular,

and each name a comfortable music in the mouth,
tending, as all music does, toward silence,

and each body a lion of courage, and something
precious to the earth.

When it's over, I want to say all my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.

When it's over, I don't want to wonder
if I have made of my life something particular, and real.

I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened,
or full of argument.

I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.

Step 5: Do Inner Work.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- It's part of the whole human experience to feel our full range of feelings.
- It's countercultural to feel!
- We must heal our past traumas. As the collective grief gets worse and threatens our personal safety, our individual traumas will resurface.

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Share one word about where you're at (mentally/heartspace).

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- Share one characteristic you admire in yourself.

Quotes & Poems:

You can't study the darkness by flooding it with light. —Edward Abbey

Grief drives men to serious reflection, sharpens the understanding, and softens the heart. —John Adams

We gather strength from sadness and from pain. Each time we die we learn to live again.
—Author Unknown

Two things define you: your patience when you have nothing and your attitude when you have everything. —Author Unknown

When you are in the grips of an emotion, control is impossible. By allowing the emotion to spread out, to empty out in the heart you admit your futility, your inability to control what is happening in that moment, and you join with the vibrating essence of life. —Eric Baret

I must remember to forgive myself. Because there is a lot of grey to work with. No one can live in the light all the time. —Libba Bray

Owning our story and loving ourselves throughout that process is the bravest thing that we will ever do. —Brene Brown

I know now that we never get over great losses; we absorb them, and they carve us into different, often kinder, creatures. —Gail Caldwell

It is not half so important to know as to feel. —Rachel Carson

The cure for anything is salt water - sweat, tears, or the sea. —Isak Dinesen

Life will break you. Nobody can protect you from that, and living alone won't either, for solitude will also break you with its yearning. You have to love. You have to feel. It is the reason you are here on earth. You are here to risk your heart. You are here to be swallowed up. And when it happens that you are broken, or betrayed, or left, or hurt, or death brushes near, let yourself sit by an apple tree and listen to the apples falling all around you in heaps, wasting their sweetness. Tell yourself you tasted as many as you could. —Louise Erdrich, *The Painted Drum*

Something we were withholding made us weak; until we found it was ourselves.
—Robert Frost

I live on earth at present, and I don't know what I am. I know that I am not a category. I am not a thing – a noun. I seem to be a verb, an evolutionary process – an integral function of the universe. — R. Buckminster Fuller

Many of us spend our whole lives running from feeling with the mistaken belief that you can not bear the pain. But you have already borne the pain. What you have not done is feel you are beyond that pain. —Kahlil Gibran

Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without. —Siddhartha Guatama

You can't calm the storm. So stop trying. What you can do is calm yourself. The storm will pass. —Timber Hawkeye

It's okay to be happy, it's okay to live your life exactly the way you want it... It's okay to find what makes you happy and then to fight for it. To dedicate your life to discovering who you are. —Derrick Jensen

There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. —Carl G. Jung

Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darkness of other people. —Carl G. Jung

Lift the veil that obscures the heart, and there you will find what you are looking for.
—Kabir

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness in the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you. —L.R. Knost

The more you know yourself, the more clarity there is. Self-knowledge has no end - you don't come to an achievement, you don't come to a conclusion. It is an endless river.
—Jiddu Krishnamurti

Should you fear that with this pain your heart might break, remember that the heart that breaks open can hold the whole universe. Your heart is that large. Trust it. Keep breathing. —Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone, *Active Hope*

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom. —Anais Nin

When one is pretending, the entire body revolts. —Anais Nin

Attention without feeling, I began to learn, is only a report. An openness — an empathy — was necessary if the attention was to matter. —Mary Oliver

Grief is praise, because it is the natural way love honors what it misses. —Martín Prechtel

“Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”
—Rainer Maria Rilke

You will not grow if you sit in a beautiful flower garden, but you will grow if you are sick, if you are in pain, if you experience losses, and if you do not put your head in the sand, but take the pain and learn to accept it, not as a curse or punishment, but as a gift to you with a very, very specific purpose. —Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Should you shield the canyon from the windstorms you would never see the beauty of their carvings. —Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

The wound is the place where the light enters you. —Rumi

Yesterday I was clever and tried to change the world. Today I am wise and try to change myself. —Rumi

Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself. —Leo Tolstoy

in our own ways
we all break.
it is okay
to hold your heart outside of your body
for
days.
months.
years.
at a time.
-heal
Nayyirah Waheed

grieve. so that you can be free to feel something else.
—Nayyirah Waheed

i am throwing my weeping at the stars
-anger (grief poems)
—Nayyirah Waheed

Only if we can stop the terrorism in our own hearts will we be able to stop the terrorism in the world. —Alice Walker

Grief is our common bond. Opening to our sorrow connects us with everyone, everywhere. It is sacred work. —Francis Weller

A shadow is never created in darkness. It is born of light. We can be blind to it and blinded by it. Our shadow asks us to look at what we don't want to see. —Terry Tempest Williams

My voice is born repeatedly in the fields of uncertainty. —Terry Tempest Williams

To be numb to the world is another form of suicide. —Terry Tempest Williams

Until we have met the monsters in ourselves, we keep trying to slay them in the outer world. ... For all darkness in the world stems from darkness in the heart. And it is there that we must do our work. —Marianne Williamson

“Wild Geese”

By Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
You do not have to walk on your knees
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
You only have to let the soft animal of your body
love what it loves.
Tell me about your despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
Meanwhile the world goes on.
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
are moving across the landscapes,
over the prairies and the deep trees,
the mountains and the rivers.
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
are heading home again.
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting --
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.

Step 6: Develop Awareness of Brain Patterns & Perception.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- The human mind is full of biases, which shape the way each of us engages with the world. Here are some examples of the many biases we have:
 - Confirmation Bias: We tend to agree with people who agree with us. We unconsciously reference and look for information that reaffirms our beliefs. We discard information that doesn't align with our beliefs or values.
 - Status-Quo Bias: Humans are creatures of habit. We don't like change. We often make choices
 - that guarantee that things remain the same.
 - Bandwagon Effect: We love being a part of the crowd, part of the "ingroup." We tend to make decisions that are congruent with the values and beliefs of our group (however we identify it). We then create and perpetuate social norms and behaviors that fit within this framework, regardless of information.
 - Availability Heuristic: Our brains use shortcuts to help us make decisions. The information that easily stands out helps shape the decisions we make (for better or worse). The readily available information does not always lead to the best decisions being made.
 - An easy [meme to share is available here](#).

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Tell us about a time your brain pleasantly surprised you.
- What is one thing you're grateful for?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one thing you're taking away from this meeting?
- What are one or two things that bring you meaning?

Quotes & Poems:

Your assumptions are your windows on the world. Scrub them off every once in a while or the light won't come in. —Isaac Asimov

What counts is the ability to slow down and act from clarity and compassion rather than projection and selfishness. —George Draffan

Without awareness, we are dancing around in a cage of our habitual patterns, thinking we're free. —Diana Hamilton

In order to be a 'radical' one must be open to the possibility that one's own core assumptions are misconceived. —Christopher Hitchens, *Letters to a Young Contrarian*

We do not see things as they are, we see things as we are. —Anais Nin

Step 7: Practice Gratitude

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Practicing gratitude opens us up to looking for beauty and meaning. These are strategies for resilience that are always available to us, we just have to learn how to look for them.
- We can train our brains to be less reactive. Humans respond to threats like climate devastation in our reptilian parts of our brain (fight/flight/freeze), but practicing gratitude, mindfulness, or meditation can help us create new neural pathways causing us to respond in the prefrontal cortex. This part of the brain is capable of nuance, abstract thought, future planning. It's best to respond from this part of the brain while dealing with long term problems.

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Tell us about a recent frustration in your life.

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- Tell us one or two things you are grateful for.
- How will you help rewire your brain in the next week?

Quotes & Poems:

You see something beautiful and it reminds you it's possible to see something beautiful.
—Author Unknown

Look for magic in the daily routine. —Lou Barlow

Meditate. Live purely. Be quiet. Do your work with mastery. Like the moon, come out from behind the clouds! Shine. —Buddha

We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world. —Buddha

If we could see the miracle of a single flower clearly, our whole life would change.
—Buddha

To see a world in a grain of sand and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour. —William Blake

People say we're all seeking a meaning for life. I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I believe we're seeking an experience of being alive. —Joseph Campbell

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction. —Rachel Carson

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature – the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter. —Rachel Carson

I'm going to make everything around me more beautiful – that will be my life. —Elise de Wolfe

Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty. —Albert Einstein

When you live in beauty and look from beauty, everything points in different ways to your wholeness. —Jean Klein

You must understand the whole of life, not just one little part of it. That is why you must read, that is why you must sing, and dance and write poems, and suffer, and understand, for all that is life. —Krishnamurti

Perhaps this is all a person can try to put into each of her days: attention to the radiance, a rise to the full chase of beauty. —Ellen Maloy

To live meaningfully is to be at perpetual risk. —Robert McKee

Reality always come with beauty. —Bill McKibben

To pay attention, this our endless and proper work.—Mary Oliver

Hold onto what is good

Even if it is a handful of earth

Hold on to what you believe

Even if it is a tree that stands by itself

Hold on to what you must do

Even if it is a long way from here

Hold on to life

Even if it is easier to let go

Hold on to my hand

Even if I have gone away from you

—Pueblo Blessing

Spend the day with a mystic, lunatic, or writer. Or, for that matter, a child (who, if school and society don't manage to weld shut his door to amazement, will no doubt one

day become a mystic, lunatic, or writer). These people have their heads screwed on sideways and hobble around gobsmacked by the beauty and despair of the world.
—Munju Ravindra, *Hope Beneath Our Feet*

Let everything happen to you
Beauty and terror
Just keep going
No feeling is final —Rainer Maria Rilke

We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: We have the power to imagine better. —J.K. Rowling

I am seeking, I am striving, I am in it with all my heart. —Vincent Van Gogh

The work of the mature person is to carry grief in one hand and gratitude in the other and to be stretched large by them. How much sorrow can I hold? That's how much gratitude I can give. If I carry only grief, I'll bend toward cynicism and despair. If I have only gratitude, I'll become saccharine and won't develop much compassion for other people's suffering. Grief keeps the heart fluid and soft, which helps make compassion possible. —Francis Weller

Every hour of the day and night is an unspeakably perfect miracle. —Walt Whitman
“Song of myself”

Finding beauty in a broken world is creating beauty in the world we find. —Terry
Tempest Williams

The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper.
—W.B. Yeats

“The Summer Day”

by Mary Oliver

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean-
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead of up and down-
who is gazing around with her enormous and complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?
—Mary Oliver

Step 8: Take Breaks & Rest (As Needed).

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Taking breaks and resting is anti-capitalistic. No buying. No doing. Just being.
- “You cannot pour from an empty cup”/”Secure your mask before helping others”
- Self-care is essential

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Share one word about where you’re at (mentally/heartspace)?
- Share one highlight from the last week.

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one leisure item that you will put on your To Do list between now and next week?
- What is one thing you’re taking away from this meeting?

Quotes & Poems:

Every person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. On that day we need to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us. —Maya Angelou

Sometimes you have to let life turn you upside down, so you can learn how to live, right side up. —Author Unknown

Some days are for living. Others are for getting through. —Malcolm Forbes

Caring for myself is not a self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare. —Audre Lorde, A Burst of Light

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time. —Sir John Lubbock

It is a serious thing just to be alive on this fresh morning in the broken world. —Mary Oliver

It's exhilarating to be alive in a time of awakening consciousness; it can also be confusing, disorienting, and painful. —Adrienne Rich

Any who undertake real mourning return with gravita, wisdom gathered in the darkness. —Francis Weller

“Clearing”

by Martha Postlewaite

Do not try to save the whole world
or do anything grandiose.
Instead, create
a clearing
in the dense forest
of your life
and wait there patiently,
until the song that is your life
falls into your own cupped hands
and you recognize and greet it.
Only then will you know how to give yourself
to this world
so worthy of rescue.

Step 9: Show Up.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- Show up for yourself. No more going to events because you think it's the right thing to do or you're afraid of being judged.
- Show up as your most authentic, vulnerable self. Leave the shame and guilt behind. No more playing small.

Suggestions For A Check In:

- Share one word about where you're at (mentally/heartspace)?
- How did you take a break or rest in the last week?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What is one way you'll show up for yourself this next week?

Quotes & Poems:

It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent. —Madeleine Albright

Seize this very minute! Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. —John Anster

You can best serve civilization by being against what it usually passes for. —Wendell Berry

Healing is impossible in loneliness; it is the opposite of loneliness. Conviviality is healing. To be healed we must come with all the other creatures to the feast of creation. —Wendell Berry

It may be that when we no longer know which way to go that we have come to our real journey. The mind that is not baffled is not employed. The impeded stream is the one that sings. —Wendell Berry

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

I hope you will go out and let stories happen to you, and that you will work them, water them with your blood and tears and your laughter till they bloom, till you yourself burst into bloom.” —Clarissa Pinkola Estes

The moment that you feel that, just possibly, you're walking down the street naked, exposing too much of your heart and your mind and what exists on the inside, showing too much of yourself. That's the moment you may be starting to get it right. —Neil Gaiman

First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win.
—Mahatma Gandhi

There is a force in the universe, which, if we permit it, will flow through us and produce miraculous results. —Mahatma Gandhi

I survived because the fire inside me burned brighter than the fire around me. —Joshua Graham

I've observed that people tend to live at one of two extremes in the spectrum of life: those who live on the edge, and those who avoid the edge. Those who live on the edge are hanging out in the most dangerous and unstable places – yet they're also often the most powerful agents of change, because the edge is where change is happening; away from the edge, things are naturally unchanging. Thom Hartmann

When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, 'Look for helpers. You will always find people who are helping.' —Mister Fred Rogers

Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible. —St. Francis of Assisi

Be humble for you are made of earth. Be noble for you are made of stars. —Serbian Proverb

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters. —Margaret Wheatley

To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all. —Oscar Wilde

“To Be Of Use”

By Marge Piercy

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

Marge Piercy, "To be of use" from *Circles on the Water*. Copyright © 1982 by Marge Piercy. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Source: *Circles on the Water: Selected Poems of Marge Piercy* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1982)

Step 10: Reinvest Into Meaningful Efforts.

Suggestions For Talking Points:

- What makes you come alive? What are you passionate about? Where do your skills lie?
- What will the new paradigm look like? How can you help us get there?

Suggestions For A Check In:

- How did you show up in the last week?

Suggestions For A Check Out:

- What are you taking away from this program?
- What is your next step?

Quotes & Poems:

In my dream the angel shrugged and said, if we fail this time, it will be a failure of imagination. And then she placed the world gently in the palm of my hand. —Bryan Andrea

Action is the antidote to despair. —Joan Baez

The Great Work before us, the task of moving the modern industrial civilization from its present devastating influence on the Earth to a more benign mode of presence, is not a role we have chosen. It is a role given to us, beyond any consultation with ourselves. We did not choose. We were chosen by some power beyond ourselves for this historical task. Yet we must believe that those powers that assign our role must in that same act bestow upon us the ability to fulfill this role. We must believe that we are cared for and guided by these same powers that bring us into being. —Thomas Berry, *The Great Work*

The real work of planet-saving will be small, humble, and humbling, and (insofar as it involves love) pleasing and rewarding. Its jobs will be too many to count, too many to report, too many to be publicly noticed or rewarded, too small to make anyone rich or famous. —Wendell Berry

First you jump off the cliff and build your wings on the way down. —Ray Bradbury

There's an alternative. There's always a third way, and it's not a combination of the other two ways. It's a different way. —David Carradine

A lot of people are waiting for Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi to come back - but they are gone. We are it. It is up to us. It is up to you. —Marian Wright Edelman

Action is the thing. We are what we do and do not do. —Ralph Ellison

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. —Clarissa Pinkola Estes

We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us. —E.M. Forster

I'm not trying to counsel any of you to do anything really special except dare to think. And dare to go with the truth. And dare to really love completely. —R. Buckminster Fuller

When I am working on a problem, I never think about beauty... but when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong. —R. Buckminster Fuller

In a gentle way, you can shake the world. —Gandhi

Go forth and set the world on fire. Ignatius of Loyola

If we listen carefully enough I believe our bodies, the land, and circumstances will tell us what to do. —Derrick Jensen, *A Language Older Than Words*

There is much work to be done. What are you waiting for? It's time to begin. —Derrick Jensen

Trust that which gives you meaning and accept it as your guide. —Carl Jung

Action on behalf of life transforms. Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us. —Robin Wall Kimmerer

There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right. —Martin Luther King JR

You cannot buy the revolution. You cannot make the revolution. You can only be the revolution. It is in your spirit, or it is nowhere. —Ursula K. Le Guin

It's it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when we look back everything is different. —C.S. Lewis

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. —Margaret Mead

Once you start to awaken, no one can ever claim you again for the old patterns. Now you realize how precious your time here is. You want your work to become an expression of your gift. You want your relationship to voyage beyond the pallid frontiers to where the danger of transformation dwells. You want your God to be wild and to call you to where your destiny awaits. —John O'Donohue

Before you tell your life what you intend to do with it, listen for what it intends to do with you. —Parker Palmer

Again and again in history some people wake up. They have no ground in the crowd and they move to broader, deeper laws. They carry strange customs with them and demand room for bold and audacious action. The future speaks ruthlessly through them. They change the world. —Rainer Maria Rilke

To succeed you have to believe in something which such a passion that it becomes a reality. —Anita Roddick

Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. —Carl Sagan

To be an activist is to plunge into the unknown and into a world where guarantees of results do not exist. —Jim Shultz

Participating—that's what's going to save the human race. —Pete Seeger

Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive. —Howard Thurman

We Are the Ones we have been waiting for. —Alice Walker

To be a revolutionary means, by definition, to be willing to sacrifice. —Alice Walker

The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time. They are kneeling with hands clasped that we might act with restraint, that we might leave room for the life that is destined to come. To protect what is wild is to protect what is gentle. Perhaps the wilderness we fear is the pause between our own heartbeats, the silent space that says we live only by grace. Wilderness lives by this same grace. Wild mercy is in our hands. —Terry Tempest Williams

The world is already split open, and it is in our destiny to heal it, each in our own way, each in our own time, with the gifts that are ours. —Terry Tempest Williams

What we have loved
Others will love
And we will teach them how. —William Wordsworth

Another World is Possible

by Rose Flint

Another world is possible.
We can dream it in, with our eyes
open to this Beauty, to all
that Earth gives each of us, each day
those miracles of dark and light --
rainlight, dawn, sun moon snow, stormgrey
and the wide fields of night always
somewhere opening their flower-
stars---this, this! Another world is
possible. With river and bird
sweet and free without fear, without
minds blind to harmony, to how
we can hold. we have been too long
spoiled greedy children of Earth,
life of rocks and creatures
slipping out of our careless hands.
We must stand now and learn to love
as a Mother loves her child, each
precious heartbeat of her that is
ourselves, our path and our journey
into our dream of the future, where
another world is possible
cradling this one in its arms.

