How Do Connection and Hopeful Action Support Resilient Community?

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How Do Connection & Hopeful Action Support Resilient Community?

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Program in Intercultural Management - 71

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation

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Abstract

This capstone arises from the academic course, Initiatives in Peacebuilding (IPB). As a graduate student focusing on Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation, IPB was a required course whose content propelled me toward the study of conflicts for securing valuable resources of clean water, arable land, raw materials for manufacturing, and traditional fossil fuels. Advancing from that study, I chose to practice strategies to lessen these conflicts by means of positive action. Facing two challenges—that Earth’s natural resources are finite and that excessive use of fossil fuels has caused destructive climate change—I wondered how to help transform human awareness to value the conservation of resources and the abatement of climate change. My research brought me to Joanna Macy, an educator, ecologist, and trainer whose work helps change the culture of resource exploitation to a culture of Earth justice. My research question is: How do connection and hopeful action support resilient community? My efforts to answer this question generated a peacebuilding training that I developed to help people understand positive ways to face the challenges of resource exploitation and harmful climate change.
Introduction

My life’s purpose came to me some years ago when a friend jokingly asked what I wanted to do when I grew up. It was a joke because I was already a mature adult. That question, however, spurred my reflexive response: *to heal and inspire!* If I had given the question more thought, I think I’d have missed that intuitive moment when my intention burst forth. I wondered how long this unarticulated notion of my purpose had been nestled within the folds of my being. I am thankful for probing friends and reflexive moments!

Now I am engaged in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. My focus on community-building has me wondering, “How do connection and hopeful action support resilient community?” By exploring this question, I hope to provide insight for how people can transform personal distress and conflict within a community toward peaceable understanding and collaboration. Defining the terms of my research question, by *connection*, I mean relationships to people, communities, and nature that collectively support physical, psychological and spiritual well-being. By *hopeful action*, I mean working with the expectation of a positive outcome. This is a state of *doing*. It turns *hope* into a verb. By *resilience*, I mean the ability to recover from hardship or prevail amidst challenge.

In the early twenty-first century, three of the biggest challenges that call for resilient community are our overdependence on petroleum, the global warming that results from the massive consumption of fossil fuels, and the stark imbalance between prosperous and impoverished populations (Klare, 2001). How shall we develop renewable sources of energy? How shall we abate global warming’s threats to climate, agriculture, and biodiversity? How shall those who enjoy prosperity find ways to expand justice for those
who struggle to meet basic needs? One answer is to discover how our connections to each other and to nature energize our creativity and motivate our determination to focus on positive solutions.

Review of Literature

Required Reading for Initiatives in Peacebuilding

Among the goals of the course, Initiatives in Peacebuilding (IPB), is the expectation to deepen one's understanding of processes for fostering forgiveness and reconciliation. A book that offered discerning insights about a brutal topic was Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence (Minow, 1998). Assessing the horrific violence of the twentieth century, Minow both aims to reveal the depths of human evil that perpetrated genocide and mass violence and to stimulate thought about various responses to violence and healing. Where possible, trials and sentences support justice and hold perpetrators responsible. Where massive culpability exists, however, justice is not easily served due to the limitations of governmental institutions. Overall, Minow cautions against vengeance, since it perpetuates a culture of violence. She asks instead, when forgiveness is impossible, what helps the survivors? Between vengeance and forgiveness, Minow explores how truth commissions, transparency, admissions of guilt, apologies, education, and accountability can teach societies about the necessary and complex responses to violence. The hope is that, once educated, societies will work to avoid such violence. Minow asks, “Is it possible for individuals to heal in the wake of mass atrocities? Is it meaningful even to imagine the healing of a nation riven by oppression, mass killings, torture?” (Minow, p. 8). Responding to these words, I felt an oppressive inadequacy to offer solutions. Although efforts toward justice and healing are vital after mass violence, what
occurred to me as I was later serving my practicum within the Transition Town Movement, was to try to prevent such violence in the first place. Though maintaining peace is challenging, recovering from violence is formidable. In support of peacebuilding, the mission of a Transition Town guides the community to meet challenges arising from over-dependence on fossil fuel, climate disruption, and the economic uncertainty that results.

With this goal of preventing violence amidst the challenges of living in resource-threatened communities, a model from my IPB coursework came to mind: *The Impact of Climate Change—Two Possible Roads Ahead* (Appendix 1). This model conveyed two scenarios: one showed sustainable adaptation through good governance and integrated planning; the other showed violent conflict resulting from bad governance and patterns that obstructed sustainability. When considering the impacts of climate change, the model shows physical consequences such as melting glaciers, sea-level rise, drought, and desertification. The model also shows socio-political consequences such as insecurity of livelihood, instability of food and water sources, increased poverty, and increased migration. This model’s road to violence was already being paved by events described in other books recommended for the IPB course.


*The future availability of certain key commodities will also be affected by changes in the global environment. The growing accumulation of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping ‘greenhouse’ gases in the environment—itself a product of accelerated fossil fuel consumption—is contributing to a gradual rise in average annual temperatures...and threatening the survival of many plant and animal species* (Klare, p. 20).
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Considering the perils of climate change, Klare warns that ecological challenges, “...of this sort will further inflame the competition between groups and societies over access to vital raw materials” (Klare, p. 20). Augmenting this concern, another book by Klare, Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy, describes a world where countries, large and small, are competing to access the energy and mineral resources that fuel their economies. Nations are learning that petroleum, natural gas and industrial minerals—working as the engines of their economies—are finite resources. Nations, whose manufacturing, trade, and militaries determine global politics, are faced with a humbling realization: their perpetual expansion to maintain wealth and power cannot continue. Now, energy reserves rather than military might create new strategic alliances. Peacebuilders have cause for concern as Klare warns of brinksmanship. He cautions, “As the desire [among major energy-consuming powers] for ever-scarcer energy supplies builds, the potential to slide across this threshold [between peaceful and warlike activities] into armed conflict and possibly Great Power confrontation poses one of the greatest dangers facing the planet today” (Klare, p. 210). Another resource for IPB was the book, World on the Edge: How to Prevent Environmental and Economic Collapse, by Lester R. Brown (Brown, 2011). The scenarios that Brown describes—of the deterioration of vital ecosystems and the threatening consequences—are woefully discouraging. Although Brown’s plan to reverse the failures of ecosystems and economies is encouraging, today—in 2016—it is stalled by both inertia and by deliberate blockage from climate-change deniers in civil and governmental institutions (Stevenson & Krugman).

So—reviewing Minow’s historical retrospective of mass violence, the model of violent impacts from climate change, and the assessments of Klare and Brown regarding
resource scarcities and climate change—the question that gripped me was: How can communities face the challenges of climate change and resource scarcity in a resilient and peaceful way?

Returning from the brink of environmental and economic disaster about which Klare’s and Brown’s books warn, I turn to another theme from IPB—that of the role of individuals building peace. In the book, *People Building Peace: Successful Stories of Civil Society*, the editors stress that

> ...individuals have much to offer to peacebuilding, and individuals working together can often be a powerful force for positive change. That is the optimistic message, but it would be a mistake to presume that just because it can happen, it will. Building peace is very hard work, and it requires more than just courage, commitment, ingenuity, and good intentions. It also requires...strategies, methodologies, organizational skills, a good message and a capacity for communicating it... (Tongeren et al., p. 83).

Though I felt supported by these words in my individual efforts to work toward preventing violence around the threat of climate change, these words also called for considerable personal and professional skills in the realm of peacebuilding. My academic studies provided a springboard for professional development during my reflective practice as an intern within the Transition Town movement. In this context of a grassroots movement, I learned to strategize—as a member of the steering committee—for developing monthly programs that addressed seasonal and communal needs. I practiced methods for contacting, welcoming, and valuing members of the community. I developed organizational skills for managing programs to educate and activate people toward energy conservation. I also honed messages of encouragement and hopefulness, and communicated them via email, newsletter, the Internet, and programming. Also, among an
“inventory of good guidance” (Tongeren et al, p. 85), the editors of *People Building Peace* cite three recommendations that informed my practice. First, they proclaim that, “Positive visions and positive messages are crucial...Especially in grassroots organizing...it is important... to encourage optimism and enthusiasm...” (Tongeren et al., p. 90). This advice sparked relief after considering the dire scenarios from Klare and Brown. Here, my instinct to inspire positive visions was supported. Second, the editors stress that, “Some of the most effective actions [toward peacebuilding] are also the simplest” (Tongeren et al., p. 90). They explain that by the simple practice of honoring people’s dignity, a peacebuilder begins a powerful journey toward justice and peace. With this guidance, I felt reassured that pressing for peaceful ways to abate climate change affirmed the dignity of people who were most at risk, while also placing responsibility on others—who squander fossil fuel resources—to reduce their consumption in the name of justice. Third, the editors explain that, “Creativity is one of the most valuable resources available to those engaged in conflict resolution” (Tongeren et al., p. 90). The editors encourage practitioners to try innovative ways to reach people. This notion encouraged me to trust my creative instincts to stimulate solutions for addressing climate change. In this way, I worked (1) to bring women together to learn a painting method that taps creativity while releasing stress, (2) to encourage the sharing of surplus food from local gardens, (3) to convene an energy fair where adults and children enjoyed music and local food as they learned about weatherizing their homes to reduce fossil fuel consumption in winter, (4) to discuss books and poetry that inspire hopeful action, and (5) to dance and sing in solidarity with environmental activists the world over.
A final text for IPB, *Working with Conflict: Skills & Strategies for Action*, by Simon Fisher et alia, compiles analyses, strategies, actions, and learning from its work as the organization, Responding to Conflict. One of the analytical tools that I found particularly helpful is the *ABC Triangle*. “This [analytical tool] is based on the premise that conflicts have three major components: the context or situation, the behaviour of those involved and their attitudes” (Fisher et al., p. 25). For example, an electric utility company that burns coal to produce electricity works within a context whereby the coal is plentiful, accessible, and affordable. Through the company’s behaviour, it lobbies elected officials for unrestricted use of coal despite its high carbon footprint, and denies the effects of acid rain that kills fish in acidified waters and despoils maple forests. The company’s attitude supports the short-term solution of burning coal as the most cost-effective fuel that guarantees profitability.

The texts and themes that I highlight from the required reading for IPB have stimulated my learning and my practice. They propelled me toward my reflective practice and my decision to develop a peacebuilding training for my capstone project.

**Informing My Practice Within the Transition Town Movement**

For my reflective practice, I chose to work as an intern in a small town in Vermont. Teachers, ministers, students, environmental activists, and other concerned residents had gathered to develop a community consistent with the international Transition Town movement. They sought a way of living that answered the question, “For all those aspects of life that our community needs in order to sustain itself and thrive, how do we significantly increase resilience (in response to peak oil), drastically reduce carbon emissions (in response to climate disruption) and greatly strengthen our local economy (in response to economic instability)?” (Transition Town Movement). The founder of the
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Transition movement, Rob Hopkins, authored *The Transition Handbook: From oil dependency to local resilience* (Hopkins, 2008). This guide to Transition presents its messages through the organic frames of the head, the heart, and the hand—the human components of knowledge, connection and work that combine to forge durable communities. First, one learns about the perils of peak oil, whereby the resource that fuels transportation, agriculture, industry, and modern manufactured goods is diminishing as a natural resource due to overconsumption (Hopkins, pp. 18-30). Next, one learns about the threat of climate change, whereby climates react to increased heat from fossil fuels that are trapped in the atmosphere (Hopkins, pp. 30-40). When this heat causes warmer-than-usual weather, it disrupts stable patterns of climate that support life-as-we-know-it. Climate disruption also generates extremes of rainfall and drought (Hopkins, pp. 30-40).

Compounding the problems of peak oil and climate change, policy makers are not often aware that renewable non-fossil fuels are a solution to both petroleum’s unsustainability and to lessening climate disruption. For example, the Hirsch Report for the Department of Energy in 2005 assessed that, “The peaking of world oil production [by 2020] presents the U.S. and the world with an unprecedented risk management problem. As peaking is approached, liquid fuel prices and price volatility will increase dramatically, and without timely mitigation, the economic, social and political costs will be unprecedented” (Hopkins, p. 41). The Hirsch Report made no recommendation to develop renewable, green energy. Hopkins argued that Robert Hirsch’s “timely mitigation” really focused on a race to secure oil reserves before other global powers could do so. Richard Heinberg warned that Hirsch’s business-as-usual endorsement to develop liquid coal would result in a “climate catastrophe” (Hopkins, p. 41). The shock and gloom that I felt as I read the Handbook’s first
chapter prophesied conditions akin to those of mass violence, resource wars, and species extinctions described in my earlier reading of Minow, Klare, and Brown. My reading of Hopkins refined my earlier decision to develop a peacebuilding training. Now, I knew that I must focus on positive and encouraging responses to the challenges of both reducing petroleum consumption and averting climate disruption. I wondered how to inspire a hopeful message. Otherwise, the dire prognoses were too discouraging for people to endure.

Continuing my reading of the *Handbook*, the information was more uplifting. Topics progressed from assessing ways for our culture to evolve through both energy conservation and resilience, to understanding psychological stresses, envisioning positive change, overcoming doubt, planning, and case studies. For those who can read past the initial doom-and-gloom, the *Handbook* is a trove of information for disentangling our dependence on petroleum, for making creative solutions, building connections, and building resilience through local skills, energy, food, and community.

The Pulitzer prize-winning book by Elizabeth Kolbert, *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, studies five previous mass extinctions over the past 400 million years—and places our current time at the threshold of a sixth mass extinction triggered by human activity (Kolbert, 2014). Kolbert describes how humans’ global transportation has spread invasive species to new biospheres that lack defenses, how increasing human population exploits the Earth’s finite resources, and how massive use of fossil fuels has heated the atmosphere both to cause climate disruption and acidified lakes and oceans that threaten biodiversity. Kolbert joins previous authors in presenting information that challenges our
naïve view of life-as-we-know-it-and-expect-it-to-remain. She explains that Thomas Kuhn, a twentieth-century historian of science, had analyzed

...how people process disruptive information. Their first impulse is to force it into a familiar framework...At the point the anomaly becomes simply too glaring, a crisis ensues—what psychologists dubbed the ‘My God!’ reaction. This pattern was...so basic that it shaped not only individual perceptions but entire fields of inquiry. Data that did not fit the commonly accepted assumptions of a discipline would either be discounted or explained away for as long as possible. The more contradictions accumulated, the more convoluted the rationalizations became. ‘...[N]ovelty emerges only with difficulty,’ Kuhn wrote (Kolbert, p. 93).

A significant part of Kolbert’s message is that our biosphere is in great danger and people are slow or reluctant to accept the call to action. Adding to the sense of urgency, Rob Hopkins explains that, “The warming we are experiencing now is the result of greenhouse gases emitted in the 1970s” (Hopkins, p. 33). With the trend toward global warming having begun its rise less than 50 years ago, a novel problem shouts for a solution: people must become aware of and act to abate global warming now!

Other readings—of opinion pieces—bemoaned American’s inaction to the ecological crisis of global warming. Energy activist Tim Stevenson warns in “Another Response to Climate Change” that:

_Beyond the literal denial of climate change, another more insidious variation of this behavior has come to characterize the American public’s response to this unprecedented crisis. What distinguishes this from the original is that people are aware and concerned about climate change; they don’t refute it and are disturbed by it. But despite their acceptance, they have normalized their awareness to the extent that they’re not acting on it_ (Stevenson, 2015).

Stevenson cites learning from Kari Marie Norgaard’s book, Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life. Although Americans know about climate change, Norgaard says that they disown, “...the psychological, political, or moral implications” that should proceed
from that knowledge (Norgaard, 2011). Whether helplessness, fear, or guilt motivate inaction, Stevenson agrees with Norgaard that, “...working in close community nevertheless ‘reinvigorates people’s life by demonstrating why the facts of climate change matter to them’” (Stevenson, 2015).

Nobel laureate in economics, Paul Krugman, chides the Republican Party, political pundits and media in his opinion piece for the New York Times, “Climate Denial Denial” (Krugman, 2015). Krugman blames these elements for denying or confusing the vital message that Americans must act soon to lessen climate change. Becoming more nuanced, Krugman explains that the few moderate Republicans, who do not deny climate change, nevertheless excuse the dangerous excesses of extreme ideologues by saying that their influence is temporary. Krugman continues, “More important, probably, is the denial inherent in the conventions of political journalism, which say that you must always portray the parties as symmetric—that any report on extreme positions taken by one side must be framed in a way that makes it sound as if both sides do it” (Krugman, 2015). The implication is that “self-proclaimed centrist commentators" will portray legitimate science-based accounts—that call for action against climate change—as equally extreme as the Republicans’ false claims. “...I’d urge everyone outside the climate-denial bubble to frankly acknowledge the awesome, terrifying reality. We’re looking at a party that has turned its back on science at a time when doing so puts the very future of civilization at risk” (Krugman, 2015).

The writings of Kolbert, Hopkins, Stevenson, and Krugman stress the importance of being aware and active in the campaign against climate change. Because the atmosphere was warming before many people knew the hazards—and because the effects are
potentially so threatening—people must act now. My deepening understanding of the urgency to activate people to abate climate change compelled me to do so in a way that mitigates the fear, denial and confusion that our culture brings to the problem. So, the question arose: “How can ecological activists spur a paradigm shift that has humans reducing consumption of finite resources—especially fossil fuels—and building resilient communities?”

Two readings that were more optimistic proposed solutions for me. First, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone co-authored the book, *Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We’re in without Going Crazy* (Macy, 2012). Explaining that hope has two meanings, the authors say

*The first involves hopefulness, where our preferred outcome seems reasonably likely to happen. If we require this kind of hope before we commit ourselves to an action, our response gets blocked in areas where we don’t rate our chances too high...The second meaning is about desire...It is this kind of hope that starts our journey—knowing what we hope for and what we’d like, or love, to take place. It is what we do with this hope that really makes the difference. Passive hope is about waiting for external agencies to bring about what we desire. Active hope is about becoming active participants in bringing about what we hope for. Active Hope is a practice...it is something we do rather than have* (Macy, p. 3).

This book has three sections: (1) The Great Turning, (2) Seeing with New Eyes, and (3) Going Forth. “The Great Turning”\(^1\) describes a movement in the 1980s & 1990s that came from a cultural shift as many people realized that unsustainable growth was destroying human populations and the Earth’s ecology. Macy describes the Great Turning as a movement from the destructive Industrial Growth Society toward a Life-Sustaining Society. The journey through the Great Turning is a process of empowerment. The authors affirm that, “Because this approach helps us restore our sense of connection with the web of life

and with one another, it is known as the Work That Reconnects” (Macy, p. 6). The second section, “Seeing with New Eyes,” explores a wider sense of self. This often comes after a broadening experience has propelled us into a larger awareness of our connections to other people, animals, and nature. The authors ask, “Could the next leap in evolution arise out of a shift in identification, in which we shed the story of battling for supremacy and move instead to playing our role as part of the larger team of life on Earth?” (Macy, p. 100).

We can be conduits of a connected consciousness that works for Earth’s collective welfare. We can share power with others and benefit from a synergy that accomplishes more than we expect (Macy, p. 110). The authors affirm that, “When we follow the path of partnership, a different quality of relationship emerges and, with this, a richer experience of community...[we] look at fellowship and community as forms of wealth that enrich our lives, strengthen our security, and give us a more stable foundation from which to act” (Macy, p. 121). The book’s third section, “Going Forth,” describes the natural progression to pursue one’s vision in support of life—after seeing with new eyes that life on this Earth is interdependent. Vision, therefore, is essential to going forth because it motivates us to grapple with challenges. Imagination inspires vision by allowing outcomes that are different from what we are now experiencing. The authors explain:

*Static thinking* assumes that reality is fixed and solid, resistant to change...like pictures hanging on a wall...With *process thinking*, we view reality more as a flow in which everything is continually moving from one state to another. Each moment, like a frame in a movie, is slightly different from the one before...If something is not in the picture at the moment, that doesn’t mean it won’t be later on. This way of conceiving reality sees existence as an evolving story rather than as predefined. Because we can never know for sure how the future will turn out, it makes more sense to focus on what we’d like to have happen, and then do our bit to make it more likely. That’s what Active Hope is all about” (Macy, pp. 166-67).
Macy and Johnstone frame the inspirational thrust of “going forth” by asking the question: “If you were freed from fear and doubt, what would you choose to do for the Great Turning?” (Macy, p. 198). Invoking words attributed to Goethe, the authors instruct: “Dream it. Commit to it. Begin it. Then, Providence and grace will assist” (Macy, p. 198).

The second optimistic text comes from John Paul Lederach, whereby he analyzes constructive change in his essay, “The ‘Wow Factor’ and a Non-Theory of Change” (Sampson, 2003). Lederach asks, “What creates a catalyst for constructive change?” and “What sustains the change process once it starts?” (Sampson, p. 119). Lederach says that one need not always teach about justice and conflict, nor always develop more skills to solve problems. He explains:

*I find positive approaches to peacebuilding to have the greatest impact when they create a composite moment that draws upon some aspects of the above-mentioned theories [awareness of injustice & problem-solving skills], but with a twist. There are several keys to creation of the ‘composite,’ while innovation and creativity provide the ‘moment’* (Sampson, p. 120).

The first key to creating a composite of various parts toward peacebuilding “…does not define itself by the problem but rather by the quality of the ‘beyond the problem’…It looks for change not in the problem, but in the relational spaces that surround it” (Sampson, pp. 120-21). For example, in story-telling, the expectation of positive change occurs when the narrator says, “This is a true story. Everything in this story is true, except for the parts that haven’t happened yet” (Sampson, p. 126). The “relational space” that opens around the problem, and envisions positive change, makes room for an ending to the story that fosters new visions of a good outcome. The second key to creating a composite for peacebuilding

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embraces paradox as a counter-intuitive notion. “It involves finding a social action that creates energy independent of the problem, but that ultimately affects the problem...The action has to be practical...and also engaging...providing a proactive and hands-on component that people feel and see making a positive difference” (Sampson, p. 121). Here is an example of a creative effort to abate climate change. The action is independent of the problem, yet lessens the problem.

Imagine that an ecologically-minded TV producer creates a comedy series that takes place on a trans-continental train. An appealing multi-generational cast provides humorous and benevolent solutions to day-to-day situations of relationships, employment, and aspirations. After screening for one year as a popular series, demographers note that ridership on trains has increased. A significant population is no longer using air and auto travel—translating to a social trend that lowers transportation’s carbon footprint. Seeing themselves beneficial to the environment, these new riders encourage more people to join them in sensible travel by train.

A third key to approaching peacebuilding in a positive way creates a “moment” that employs innovation and creativity. Lederach calls this the “wow factor,” resulting from an intuitive, artistic process whereby, “In its small wholeness, a deep truth about something [a painting, poem, theater, photo, etc.] is revealed and understood” (Sampson, p. 121). For example, a photo from outer space of our blue-green planet Earth instills in many of us a sense of unity that inspires protection of the biosphere. Lederach asserts that with these three keys—looking for change in relational spaces outside the problem, acting independently of the problem in a way that lessens the problem, and showing a new and holistic view of the problem—“...something is created that engages people, provides an avenue for meaningful action, and adds something new and creative to the situation” (Sampson, p. 122). Lederach describes this positive approach to peacebuilding as a

...non-theory in that it is not designed to systematically go ‘straight at the problem’...When you create a catalyst that goes beyond the problem, you spark a
creative process of engagement that is independent of the problem and yet changes the environment, the people and the relationships, and ultimately, the problem itself (Sampson, p. 122).

Of the literature that informed my practicum with the Transition Town movement, the pessimistic themes were necessary to define the scope and urgency of the problem of climate change. I appreciated, all the more, the optimistic themes from *Active Hope*, and the prescriptive analysis from “The ‘Wow Factor’” due to their encouragement and creative guidance. All the texts from my practicum guided my continuing research toward creating a peacebuilding training that strives to answer the question: “How do connection and hopeful action support resilient community?” Notably, resilient community offers a way to avoid violence in the face of climate change.

**Informing My Learning as a Trainer for Resilient Community**

Based on the optimistic message in *Active Hope*, I decided to explore encouraging ways to energize people toward increasing connection and resilience in their communities. I found abundant guidance in the important training resource, *Coming Back to Life*, by Joanna Macy and Molly Brown (Macy & Brown, 2014). Since both *Active Hope* and *Coming Back to Life* emphasized the Great Turning, I also read David Korten’s book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* (Korten, 2006). My learning from *Coming Back to Life* and *The Great Turning* empowered me to develop a peacebuilding training entitled, “An Introduction to the Teachings of Joanna Macy.”

In her preface to *Coming Back to Life*, Macy instructs us that:

*This is a guidebook. It maps ways into our innate vitality and determination to take part in the self-healing of our world. It presents a form of group work that has grown steadily since the 1970s, helping hundreds of thousands of men and women around the globe find solidarity and courage to act, despite rapidly worsening social and ecological conditions* (Macy & Brown, p. xxiii).
The book sets a context for trainers—that we can choose a life-sustaining world; that we must beware a pessimism that closes our hearts and minds to the promise of this better world; that we are empowered by systems theory, psychology, and spiritual traditions; that this knowledge and practice are the foundation of *the Work That Reconnects*; that certain training and administrative practices benefit those who guide this work. Progressing from this context, we learn specific practices for guiding a group; a model for reconnecting or coming back to life; understanding how gratitude, pain, insight and inspired action are components of reconnection; connecting with youth and communities of color; assessing resources that enrich the training’s practices.

Several themes are especially important for understanding the Work That Reconnects. One theme, the Great Turning, presents three narratives. The first narrative, *Business As Usual* describes practices of the Industrial Growth Society that press unsustainably to exploit resources and promote consumerism. The second narrative, the *Great Unraveling*, describes how world populations will collapse into chaos if the Industrial Growth Society continues. The third narrative—taking its name from the larger movement—is the *Great Turning*. This describes the movement toward a Life-Sustaining Society that focuses on ecological balance and human cooperation. A second theme of the Work That Reconnects is Deep Ecology. This concept departs from Judeo-Christian thought that puts the biosphere under human dominion and too often invokes a license for exploitation rather than stewardship. The authors explain: “Often expressed as biocentric, this perspective [of Deep Ecology] holds that we must break free from the species

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3 *The Work That Reconnects* is a generic and appealing description of Macy’s & Brown’s work. They chose it as the title for their original, 1998 edition of the book they now call *Coming Back to Life*. 
arrogance that threatens not only humans but all complex life-forms within reach” (Macy & Brown, p. 43). A third theme is the importance of Systems Theory as “a way of seeing” the biosphere’s connectedness. Macy explains that, “As systems we participate by virtue of constant flow-through in the evolving web of life, giving and receiving the feedback necessary to the web’s integrity and balance” (Macy & Brown, p. 41). A fourth theme is the experiential model of the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects. The Spiral presents the four phases that animate the Work That Reconnects: gratitude, pain, insight, and inspired action.

The final text of this review is The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community, by David Korten. This book is an important resource that defines contexts for both Empire and Earth Community—ultimately building the case for Earth Community. Korten defines three turnings that comprise the Great Turning: a cultural turning, “...from money and material excess to life and spiritual fulfillment”; an economic turning that doesn’t measure wealth by material belongings but, “...by the health of our families, communities, and natural environment”; a political turning, “...from competition for individual advantage to cooperation for mutual advantage” (Korten, p. 22). Of five parts to this book, the first part focuses on “Choosing Our Future.” We have a choice between two competing paradigms: Empire and Life Community. Korten asserts that

*The defenders of Empire teach that we humans are by nature limited to a self-centered and ultimately self-destructive narcissism. Their favored organizing model suppresses development of the higher orders of human consciousness and thereby creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. The organizing model of Earth Community, by contrast, nurtures expression of the higher-order human capacities for responsible service that Empire denies. A convergence of imperative and opportunity unique to the present moment in the human experience sets the stage for an intentional collective choice to put the way of Empire behind us as we live into being a new era of Earth Community* (Korten, pp. 25-26).
Continuing with “Choosing Our Future,” Korten lists five stages in the development of human consciousness: (1) Magical Consciousness of the 2- to 6-year-old; (2) Imperial Consciousness of the 6- to 7-year-old; (3) Socialized Consciousness of the 11-year-old to young adult; (4) Cultural Consciousness of the mature 30-year-old; (5) Spiritual Consciousness of the elder (Korten, pp. 43-48). Korten explains how civilization degenerates when many people fail to mature beyond the three lower levels of awareness. Conversely, a high level of cultural and spiritual consciousness empowers a humanely and ecologically prosperous civilization. The book’s second part, “Sorrows of Empire,” assesses past civilizations and contrasts the feminine-influenced culture of nurturance with the violence of early and modern empires that replaced that nurturance. Korten’s assessment

...reviews the conditions that led humans in an earlier time to turn away from a reverence for life and the regenerative power of the feminine to pursue the path of violence and domination. A synopsis of the imperial experience illustrates the self-replicating social dynamics of Empire, charts the transition from the institutions of monarchy to the institutions of the global economy as the favored instruments of imperial rule, and reveals the costs of Empire’s often overly idealized accomplishments (Korten, p. 23).

In the third part, “America, the Unfinished Project,” Korten evaluates the United States’ humble beginnings, its rebellions, its hidden imperial agenda, its fights for justice, its surprising vulnerability, and the present urgent need to expand popular democracy. He warns that, “Those who control the stories that define the culture of a society control its politics and its economy...The leaders of the New Right view the world from the perspective of an Imperial Consciousness that holds elite rule to be the only viable option for maintaining social order” (Korten, p. 237). The fourth part, “The Great Turning,” examines old patriarchal religions and the science of the Enlightenment to explain biases that the modern era is turning from.

He cautions that
The last century was a time of extraordinary advance in human understanding regarding the origins of the universe, the evolution of life, and the developmental path of the human individual. For the most part both science and religion remain wedded to stories of older origin that incorporate nothing of this new knowledge. These outdated stories impair our vision of the possibilities of our higher nature, our connection to life, and our place in Creation (Korten, p. 253).

The book’s fifth and final part, “Birthing Earth Community,” presents a plan to create an era of life-affirming civilization. Rather than trying to fix the dysfunction of Empire, the Earth Community—with its massive appeal—will draw people away from Empire toward, “...an agenda of cultural, economic, and political democratization that roots power in people and liberates the creative potential of the species” (Korten, p. 24). To build a viable political culture, Korten contends that people must discern how Empire creates false stories that lead people to act against their common interests. Once aware, people can act effectively to manage their cultural, economic, and political environments. When people change the stories that exploit them, they can change their futures with stories and actions that build Earth Community.

In summary, the literature that I considered in my review ranged across three areas of interest and development. First, I read material from the course, Initiatives in Peacebuilding. Second, I delved topics relevant to my practicum in the Transition Town movement. Third, I focused on points of history, theory, and practice that informed the peacebuilding training that introduces Joanna Macy and that serves as my capstone project.

Course-Linked Capstone’s Requirements for Option 2
A Major Product: A Peacebuilding Training

Most of the capstone requirements for my Master’s degree are linked to my academic course, Initiatives in Peacebuilding. These capstone requirements steered my research between a choice for Option 1, an extensive case study of a peacebuilding
CONNECTION & HOPEFUL ACTION

intervention, or Option 2, a training session that constitutes a major peacebuilding product. I chose to develop Option 2, a peacebuilding training. With that choice, I am required to address the following nine points that describe and assess my training.

1) Background and Analysis of the Conflict

   Background of the Conflict

   The conflict that I address results from the ongoing depletion of petroleum, from global warming, and from the stark imbalance between prosperous and impoverished societies. Emissions from the over-consumption of petroleum, and other fossil fuels, have heated Earth’s atmosphere to cause global warming (Klare, 2001). Among the natural consequences of global warming are melting ice caps, a reduction of fresh water, climate disruption, and threats to biodiversity and agriculture. These natural consequences create social disruptions due to rising sea levels, floods, droughts, desertification, and migrations. Political conflicts occur when nations compete for the dwindling resources that fuel their economies (Klare, 2008). This can’t go on! People who understand this are working to awaken governments and societies to reduce unsustainable consumption and global warming (Macy & Brown, 2014). These interesting times we live in—once wished upon people as a curse—now herald the challenge to quickly change our ways. The industrial growth society will not change to a life-sustaining society without new understanding (Macy, 2012). The ability to build connections and make hopeful strides toward strengthening our responses to global warming will not occur without inspired leadership. These challenges call for a paradigm shift from unsustainable empires to Earth community (Korten, 2006).

   Analysis of the Conflict
The course syllabus for Initiatives in Peacebuilding presents John Paul Lederach’s definition of conflict transformation:

Conflict transformation represents a comprehensive set of lenses for describing how conflict emerges from, evolves within, and brings about changes in personal, relational, structural, and cultural dimensions, and for developing creative responses that promote peaceful change within those dimensions through nonviolent mechanisms (Initiatives in Peacebuilding Syllabus, p. 1).

The conflict that arises from petroleum depletion and its associated global warming emerges as nations unsustainably consume various fossil fuels that emit more carbon dioxide than Earth’s atmosphere can accommodate to support life-as-we-know-it (Klare, 2001). Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone explain:

As our world heats up, deserts expand and extreme weather events become more common. Human population and consumption are increasing at the same time as essential resources, such as fresh water, fish stocks, topsoil, and oil reserves, are in decline. While reversals in the economy have left many feeling desperate about how they’re going to manage, trillions of dollars are spent on the making of war. Given these adversities, it is no surprise if we experience a profound loss of confidence in the future. We can no longer take it for granted that the resources we’re dependent on—food, fuel, and drinkable water—will be available. We can no longer take it for granted even that our civilization will survive or that conditions on our planet will remain hospitable for complex forms of life (Macy, p. 1).

This conflict evolves to create instabilities in the world’s national defenses and economies (Klare, 2008). New to this problem are threats to biodiversity that endanger humanity’s well-being (Kolbert, 2014). Questions arise about how communities and governments will face these challenges. Humans, however, experience a psychological barrier that slows their acceptance of novel ideas (Kolbert, 2014). Strengthening that barrier is the fact that we are facing such frightening novel ideas—of petroleum depletion and global warming—that the newness of these ideas causes us to disbelieve them. We cannot, however, remain slow to respond. Beneficially, there are ecological
activists who are energizing populations to change humanity’s destructive behavior and embrace the bio-centric culture that may preserve human life (Macy & Brown, 2014). Rob Hopkins, the founder of the Transition Movement—an experiment in sustainability—explains:

*Transition is not a known quantity. We truly don’t know if Transition will work. It is a social experiment on a massive scale. What we are convinced of is this: (1) If we wait for the governments, it’ll be too little, too late; (2) If we act as individuals, it’ll be too little; (3) But if we act as communities, it might just be enough, just in time* (Hopkins, 2011, p. 17).

The creative responses that humanity requires in order to transform the conflicts arising from petroleum depletion and global warming are emerging. My research focuses largely on the ideas that Joanna Macy, David Korten, and Rob Hopkins promote. Macy works to reconnect humanity in healing ways that employ active hope and non-violence to regain a life-sustaining society. Korten works to shift our human paradigms from empire-building to Earth community. Hopkins works to activate a grassroots movement that builds resilient communities. Macy, Korten, and Hopkins approach these conflicts with a visionary scope. Beyond their vision, their activism calls us to work according to our abilities as agents of vitally necessary change.

2) **Reasons for the Training**

Humanity faces huge challenges relating to our destructive impact on the biosphere. A growing population, unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, and global warming threaten the Earth (Macy, 2012). Many experts, who know the dangers we face regarding climate disruption, sound the alarm by listing the dire scenarios that will result from increased global warming (Brown, 2011). My experience is that alarmist news, while accurate, is not helpful toward motivating people to act in preserving
Earth’s viability. My reasons for developing this training are (1) to energize communities to face a challenge that must unite humanity in reclaiming the ecological balance of the Earth, and (2) to show that this task can be invigorating.

In my search to find optimistic ways to motivate people toward positive action, I discovered the book, *Active Hope* (Macy, 2012). This book frames the dilemma of unsustainability in organic and inspiring ways that explain how humans can choose a life-sustaining community, can discover motivating connections, and can choose to act from their unique yearnings and talents to heal our Earth. When concerned people talk about how the unsustainable growth of human activity contributes to climate change and a doubtful human future, Macy says:

> We often hear comments such as ‘Don’t go there it is too depressing’...The problem with this approach is that it closes down our conversations and our thinking. How can we even begin to tackle the mess we’re in if we consider it too depressing to think about?

> Yet when we do face the mess, when we do let in the dreadful news of multiple tragedies unfolding in our world, it can feel overwhelming. We may wonder whether we can do anything about it anyway.

> So this is where we begin—by acknowledging that our times confront us with realities that are painful to face, difficult to take in, and confusing to live with. Our approach is to see this as the starting point of an amazing journey that strengthens us and deepens our aliveness. The purpose of this journey is to find, offer, and receive the gift of Active Hope (Macy, p. 2).

With Macy’s encouraging words, I knew there was a way for me to be part of the energized effort to build connection and work optimistically to increase human resilience.

3) **Target Group to Be Served by the Training**

I launched this training by accepting an invitation from a program director within a faith community in Brattleboro, Vermont. I was invited to facilitate an introduction to Joanna Macy’s model of “The Spiral of the Work That Reconnects.” The group that I
planned to address espouses ethical and spiritual principles of respect for humankind and its place in Earth’s interdependent web of existence. This group supports values of justice, equity, and compassion, and also works for peace and liberty in world community.

Observing the protocol of full disclosure of a researcher’s bias, I must say that I am a member of this group and knew most of the people who attended the training.

I published the following invitation to the group in the newsletter, the West Village Voice, in September of 2015.

You are invited to the forum, “Connection & Hopeful Action: Foundations of Resilience,” facilitated by Catherine Gormley from 9:30 – 11:30 A.M. As we strive to lead ethical lives, how many of us become discouraged by the things we cannot influence? What if we could bounce back by reframing our understanding of what assails us? If we accept that resilience is a key element of healthy living, we can learn how connection and hopeful action strengthen our recovery from challenges to our well-being. Even beyond that, we can apply our unique talents toward positive change. Welcome to this introduction to the teachings of Joanna Macy, an inspirational teacher and environmental activist. Refreshments served at 9:00.

Also, there were other roots to this training. While learning from my course, Initiatives in Peacebuilding, and from my practicum with the Transition Town Movement, I encountered many examples of impending environmental collapse, of resource conflicts, and of agitated populations in denial, fear, or paralysis concerning climate disruption. My reaction to these messages of doom was a realization that fear was the wrong motivator for positive change. Being optimistic by temperament, I had already learned that a positive attitude contributed to my own resilience when facing life’s challenges. I chose to seek hopeful perspectives for facing environmental challenges. Indeed, many others were doing the same thing. Having discovered Joanna Macy’s message of active hope, I trained with her for eight days. A colleague in my Transition community had
trained previously with Macy. My colleague and I presented the first iteration of this training to our Transition group in November of 2014. Our goal was to introduce Macy's view of active hope to support resilient community.

4) Goals & Objectives of the Training

The goal of this training is to guide participants in discovering that connection and hopeful action support resilient community. Here, I reiterate from my introduction a definition of terms. Connection secures relationships with people, larger communities, and nature—this bond stimulating our positive efforts to support mutual well-being. Hopeful action is the practice of doing something of one's choosing with positive intention. This is a state of doing, rather than of having. It is hope as a verb, rather than a noun. Macy instructs that, “Since Active Hope doesn't require our optimism, we can apply it even in areas where we feel hopeless...Rather than weighing our chances and proceeding only when we feel hopeful, we focus on our intention and let it be our guide” (Macy, p. 3). Resilience is the ability to recover from hardship or to prevail amidst challenge. Holocaust survivor, Boris Cyrulnik, reveals the paradoxical power of resilience when he says, “The pearl inside the oyster might be the emblem of resilience. When a grain of sand gets into an oyster and is so irritating that, in order to defend itself, the oyster has to secrete a nacreous substance, the defensive reaction produces a material that is hard, shiny and precious” (Cyrulnik, p. 286). By community, I mean people living within a culture of supportive relationships.

The tool for guiding this discovery—of connection and hopeful action that support resilient community—is Macy’s four-step model called, “The Spiral of the Work That
Appendix 2 shows a metaphorical rendering of this model by illustrating the growth cycle of a living plant.

As a trainer, my objectives are to facilitate the participants’ understanding of the four phases of the Spiral.

i) Explore the experience of coming from gratitude.

Macy tells us, “That our world is in crisis...in no way diminishes the wonder of this present moment. For the great open secret is this: gratitude is not dependent on our external circumstances...The originating impulse of all religious and spiritual traditions is gratitude for the gift of life” (Macy & Brown, p. 92). So, our experiencing gratitude is a starting point. Gratitude prepares us to continue our journey along the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects.

ii) Once aware of gratitude as a grounding in well-being, explore what causes us suffering by opening to our pain for the world.

Macy reassures us that, “Pain for the world is normal, healthy, and widespread” (Macy & Brown, p. 66). Macy warns that we block our pain in various ways, such as denying the problem, refusing to help where needed, avoiding controversy, clinging to delusion, avoiding upset, feeling debilitated, and feeling hopeless (Macy & Brown, pp. 60-64). The authors continue:

Avoidance easily becomes a habit. And when avoidance of emotional distress becomes the habit of a culture, this low level of confidence in our ability to cope creates a barrier to publicly acknowledging upsetting information (p. 68).

It is our consistent experience that as people open to the flow of their emotional experience, including despair, sadness, guilt, fury or fear, they feel a weight being lifted from them. In the journey into the pain, something foundational shifts; a turning occurs (pp. 69-70).
iii) After exploring our pain for the world through the lens of gratitude, consider how to see with new eyes a vision of our deep connection to humanity & the web of existence. Often, we “see with new eyes” after a broadening experience that sends us to a larger awareness of our connection to other people, animals, and nature. Macy explains:

We move into the next stage of the Spiral as we realize from personal experience that it is from our connectivity that our pain for the world arises. The very distress that, when we hid it, seemed to separate us from the other people, now uncovers our connective tissue. This realization, whether it comes in a flash of insight or a gradual dawning, is a turning point. We shift to a new way of seeing ourselves in relation to our world and a new way of understanding our power (Macy & Brown, p. 135).

iv) Develop an opportunity for going forth to act as a resilient agent of beneficial change. The infusion of energy that comes from “seeing with new eyes” drives a person to action. Reflecting upon that drive is a vital step. One must assess talents, the world’s needs, available resources, and obstacles when discerning how to go forth to create positive change. Nurturing one’s intention is also vital. Developing a cause to pursue requires taking time to imagine a better future. One can begin with the future goal and work backwards to decide the methods. Avoiding distraction and keeping a record of ideas is important (Macy & Brown, pp. 165-69). The authors stress that

Our dreams and visions for the future are essential for navigating through life because they give us a direction to move in...Moreover, moving toward a destination that excites and inspires us energizes our journey, puts wind in our sails, and strengthens our determination to overcome obstacles. The ability to catch an inspiring vision is therefore the key to staying motivated. When we’re moved by a vision that we share with others, we become part of a community with a common purpose (Macy & Brown, p. 163).

When “going forth,” one benefits by embracing Macy’s question, “If you were freed from fear and doubt, what would you choose to do for the Great Turning?” (Macy, p. 198).
5) Complete Training and Materials Outline

Three components comprise the organizational structure of this training: an agenda, an outline, and a list of materials. The agenda is a comprehensive matrix that encapsulates the training for quick referencing. The agenda tracks the activities according to the time when they occur, their duration, their purpose, and short notes of emphasis (Appendix 3). Although the timing appears quite precise in the agenda, it is only a guide for deciding how to proceed with the activities. The interaction with participants takes on a life of its own, and I must decide from time to time whether to abbreviate or expand certain activities.

The outline is a summary of the main activities of the training (Appendix 4). First, the Welcome & Guidance focus on warmly greeting the participants, making introductions, breathing meditatively, and learning about Joanna Macy. Second, comes Discovering Gratitude, an experiential exercise for participants to recall encouraging support from the natural world, from a benefactor, and from one's self. Third, comes The Spiral of the Work That Reconnects—the focus of Macy's teaching. The four phases of the Spiral are: gratitude, exploring our pain for the world, seeing with new eyes, and going forth to work for positive change. Within this exercise we also explore the Great Turning, a staple of Macy's teaching that explains the current paradigm shift from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining society. Next, we focus on phases two and three of the Spiral, Opening to Our Pain for the World & Seeing With New Eyes. Here, we explore the pain of the Chernobyl disaster and then—after learning an inspiring folk dance—explore the concept that connecting in solidarity for a sustainable Earth gives us relief. The next exercise, Going Forth, focuses on a video that one of Macy's students made to bring Macy's teachings to a wider audience. The next exercise, Systems Theory, explores how all life is connected—
whether as a cell or within the entire biosphere. Continuing with the training, the next exercise again focuses on *Going Forth*—this time as a personal reflection that examines how we will go forth in hopeful action. Nearing the end, we focus on *Affirmations* by sharing some personal models of resilience. Next come the *Review, Thanks & Farewell* whereby I reassess the main themes, thank the group for its participation and prepare to end the training. The final exercise is completing the *Evaluation Form*, whereby the participants assess how they have been educated in the training’s objectives.

Appendix 4, entitled Outline of the Training, abbreviates 25 pages of my detailed notes that suggest a step-by-step flow for presenting activities that address the objectives of the training. Within the detailed notes are many quotes by Macy and her sources. With these notes as a resource, I can choose to read Macy's words for emphasis, or to paraphrase them.

Also, within the outline of the training’s activities (Appendix 4), are references to several more appendices. One may review these appendices to learn more about signage (Appendix 6), informed consent (Appendix 7), instructions for the Elm Dance (Appendix 8), the Macy video (Appendix 9), the experiential learning cycle (Appendix 10), a handout that lists resources relating to the training (Appendix 11), and the participants’ evaluation form (Appendix 12).

The *list of materials* consists of a table that shows the training’s activities and links them to the various items needed to present each activity (Appendix 5).

6) Training Evaluation by Participants

The participants’ evaluation of the training serves two purposes. First, it helps assess whether or not a participant grasps the objectives of the training. Second, the
evaluation offers a participant’s appraisal of the trainer’s ability to present meaningful material.

I designed the evaluation to gauge the success of the training by measuring the level to which participants agree with statements that support the training’s objectives. The evaluation is short, consisting of five statements, for which a participant can register a level of agreement. Each of the five statements features a Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" (with a value of 5), "Agree, Neutral, Disagree," to "Strongly Disagree" (with a value of 1). Since this is a qualitative evaluation, I use the Likert scale to help respondents refine their assessments, rather than my conducting a quantitative statistical analysis. The participants have an option to write thoughts, feelings or comments in an additional open-ended statement.

I also explain that candid responses help me improve my presentation of the program. Asking for candor is important. Within the protocol for disclosing bias, I must explain that I am an engaged, rather than a detached trainer, as I reiterate that I am a member of the organization that invited me to present the training.

Concerning the mechanics, I conducted the evaluation after the programming. Because I knew the participants, I assured them of anonymity. I instructed them to place the completed form face down in a box as they left the room.

The evaluation's five Likert statements track how well the participants agree with the objectives of the training. Statement 1 says, “Reflecting about what I am grateful for can increase my sense of personal power.” The first statement attempts to measure the extent to which the participant experienced feelings of gratitude during the exercise of

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4 American psychologist, Rensis Likert (1903-1981) developed this measurement to represent people's attitudes about a topic.
Open Sentences. These gave the participant an opportunity to reflect about feelings of being alive and vibrant, about growing confident through someone’s encouragement, and about personal talents that provide a sense of self-worth.

Statement 2 says, “Gratitude for elements of well-being can realign personal suffering toward positive perspectives.” The second statement attempts to measure the extent to which the participants felt supported enough by gratitude to attempt an exploration of painful elements in their lives and in the larger world. Macy teaches that, “...pain is the price of consciousness in a threatened and suffering world...it is an absolutely necessary component of our collective healing...” (Macy & Brown, p. 21).

Statement 3 says, “With insights gained from understanding gratitude and from facing the pain of the world, I am more confident to create personally meaningful positive change.” This third statement attempts to measure the extent to which a participant has learned to discover and energize intentions to become an agent for positive change, based on her/his talents and perspective. Macy says that Going Forth is the phase of the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects that propels us “…into the actions that call each of us in keeping with our situation and gifts” (Macy & Brown, p. 68).

Statement 4 says, “Being in a strong community and practicing hopeful action can help me face challenges in positive ways.” The fourth statement attempts to measure the extent to which a participant understands that connecting with others and working optimistically are foundations of resilience. Macy says that, “When we follow the path of partnership, a different quality of relationship emerges and, with this, a richer experience of community” (Macy, p. 121).
Statement 5 says, “Insights from today’s forum can help increase a good quality of life.” This fifth statement attempts to measure the extent to which a participant can learn to build contexts, attitudes and behaviors—around connection, hopeful action, and resilient community—that contribute to a positive life. My hope is that when challenges arise the participant will remember that connection and positive expectations can lead to solutions.

Statement 6 is open-ended, allowing the participant to share discoveries, challenge ideas, or make suggestions relating to the training. The statement says, “Other thoughts or feelings that I have about this forum are...” A list of the participants’ responses to this statement appears in Appendix 13.

Analysis of Evaluations

A high score of Strongly Agree or Agree indicates that the participant either already supports the objective, or has come to understand and accept the new material or experience within the training. A response of Neutral indicates that the participant did not engage with an objective. If a participant gives one or more neutral responses on the evaluation form, I may either be working with someone who is skeptical or discouraged, or did not understand or experience the objective to the extent that other participants did in order to either agree or disagree. In future trainings, I would do well to prepare more activities that engage the various learning styles, to give participants more choice for ways to cover the material, and to watch the participants’ body language for cues of engagement or disengagement. A low score of Disagree or Strongly Disagree indicates that the participant either has attitudes that are counter to the objective that I presented or did not understand or experience the objective as I presented it. If a participant
accrues consistently low scores on the evaluation form, I must decide what to do differently in the next training to improve the chances of a participant's increased understanding or acceptance of objectives.

**Conclusions Regarding Evaluations**

The evaluations indicate that the participants generally agree with the training's objectives. My review of the objectives assesses how much the participants accept the teachings of the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects. First, do the participants have a grounding in gratitude? Statement 1 of the evaluation links to this first objective by saying, “Reflecting about what I am grateful for can increase my sense of personal power.” The average response calculates to a score of 4.0—showing that the participants agree with the statement and support the objective. Second, being supported by gratitude, are participants able to explore what causes suffering by opening themselves to their pain for the world? Statement 2 links to this second objective by saying, “Gratitude for elements of well-being can realign personal suffering toward positive perspectives.” The average response calculates to a score of 4.38—showing that the participants agree solidly with the statement, and thereby support the objective. Third, after exploring their pain for the world through the lens of gratitude, do participants have insight to their deep connection with humanity and the web of existence? Statement 3 links to this third objective by saying, “With insights gained from understanding gratitude and from facing my pain for the world, I am more confident to create personally meaningful positive change.” The average response calculates to a score of 4.21—showing that the participants agree solidly with the statement, and thereby support the objective. Fourth, do the participants value the importance of going
forth to act as resilient agents of beneficial change? Statement 4 links to this fourth objective by saying, “Being in a strong community and practicing hopeful action can help me face challenges in positive ways.” The average response calculates to a score of 4.58—showing that the participants agree very solidly with the statement, and thereby support the objective. The evaluation shows that the participants supported the training’s objectives overall.

Going beyond the objectives, I move to the overarching goal of building connection and hopeful action to support resilient community. After my focus on the training’s four objectives, Statement 5 now links to the goal. Statement 5 says, “Insights from today’s forum can help me increase a good quality of life.” The average response calculates to a score of 4.32—showing that the participants agree solidly with the statement. I thereby conclude that the training was a success and that the participants learned how commitment and hopeful action support resilience. What the participants gain from this training is an understanding of how practicing connection to gratitude, pain, insight, and hopeful action can increase a community’s resilience.

7) Impact of the Training in Relation to Goals

*Context:* My assessment requires an explanation. The *goal* of the training is to guide participants in discovering that connection and hopeful action support resilient community. I cannot assess the impact of this goal based on the training. The impact will show in the future as participants work in committed relationship and in confidence to build a group that responds to and recovers from challenges in flexible ways. A test of the goal’s success is to evaluate at a future time how communities influenced by this
training respond to hardship. As the trainer, I can instead assess the training’s impact in relation to the objectives that support the goal.

Objectives: Have the participants shown that they espouse the objectives? My analysis below—taken from the participants’ evaluations—explains the level to which the participants accept the training’s objectives. I also link to the data cited in Appendix 14, Response to Statements for Evaluation, to support my conclusions.

i) The first objective is: Explore the experience of coming from gratitude.
   - My hope is that once the participant delves into this realm, she/he experiences gratitude for the world, for being in encouraging relationships, and for awareness of personal ability—and that such awareness is empowering.
   - The evaluation’s statement that tracks this objective is, “Reflecting about what I am grateful for can increase my sense of personal power.” The twelve responses range from 5, Strongly Agree to 2, Disagree. The average of these responses is 4, Agree—indicating that most participants accept the objective.

ii) The second objective is: Once aware of gratitude as a grounding in well-being, explore what causes us suffering by opening to our pain for the world.
   - My hope is that the participant understands that pain is normal and universal. This helps in discovering that humanity is deeply connected through its pain. This connection builds empathy as an antidote to suffering.
   - The evaluation’s statement that tracks this objective is, “Gratitude for elements of well-being can realign personal suffering toward positive perspectives.” The twelve responses range from 5, Strongly Agree to 4, Agree. The average of these
responses is 4.38, higher than Agree—showing that the participants solidly accept the objective.

iii) The third objective is: After exploring our pain for the world through the lens of gratitude, consider how to see with new eyes a vision of our deep connection to humanity and the web of existence.

- My hope is that once the participant understands the power of partnership, she/he will create community alliances that strengthen bonds of cooperation that can meet challenges effectively.

- The evaluation’s statement that tracks this objective is, "With insights gained from understanding gratitude and from facing the pain of the world, I am more confident to create personally meaningful positive change." The twelve responses range from 5, Strongly Agree to 3, Neutral. The average of these responses is 4.21, higher than Agree—showing that most participants solidly accept the objective.

iv) The fourth objective is: Develop an opportunity for going forth to act as a resilient agent of beneficial change.

- My hope is that once the participant discerns a talent for making positive change, she/he becomes energized to realize that goal.

- The evaluation’s statement that tracks this objective is, “Being in a strong community and practicing hopeful action can help me face challenges in positive ways.” The twelve responses range from 5, Strongly Agree to 3, Neutral. The average of these responses is 4.58, more than half-way between Agree and Strongly Agree—showing that most participants very solidly accept the objective.
The results of the participants’ evaluations show that the training met the objectives. On average, the participants showed solid support for the training.

8) Critique of Training Design & Delivery

An effective training requires a well-designed format and a compelling delivery.

Design

Seven important elements of the design are (1) to introduce Joanna Macy to people who are curious about positive ways to build resilient community in the face of environmental challenges, (2) to build experiences around Macy’s Spiral of the Work That Reconnects, (3) to foster a welcoming and safe space for self-discovery and experiential learning, (4) to help participants learn experientially and through a preferred learning style, (5) to review the learning, (6) to evaluate the presentation, and (7) to manage the materials that I use in the training. First, the introduction to Macy required much discernment to winnow relevant material to fit within the allotted time. I had to focus on main themes and provide enough time for participants to capture the objectives. Second, the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects required the most focus, as the model around which the learning builds. My task was to decide what exercises would partner well along the four phases of the Spiral, while staying within the timing’s constraints. Third, the setting and ambiance must put participants at ease. Despite the counterintuitive reality that people learn better when they are a bit beyond their comfort zones, the comfort zone must be a reliable refuge. Providing food and drink, comfortable seating, spaciousness, legible signage, and a welcoming ambience are all elements that support a congenial setting. Fourth, an understanding of the Experiential Learning Cycle and different learning styles informs design that distributes activities to
appeal across a spectrum of understanding (Changing Minds, n.d.). As a trainer, I strive to reach those who learn best either as divergers (who reflect about concrete experience), as convergers (who experiment with abstract concepts), as accommodators (who experiment with concrete experience), or as assimilators (who reflect about abstract concepts) [Appendix 10]. Fifth, concluding the training with a period for reviewing the material helps to integrate the new learning. The signage on the walls is a good resource for the review. Sixth, the participants’ evaluation helps me learn whether or not the training meets its objectives. Questions should track the objectives, and answers should convey a level of acceptance or understanding. If results imply rejection or misunderstanding, I must discern better ways to present the objectives in the future. Seventh, keeping materials itemized, in good repair, and assigned to carrying-crates is helpful for assuring simplicity in setting-up and taking-down, and to insure that all necessary items are present.

**Delivery**

Four intentional components of my delivery require it to be (1) organized, (2) welcoming, (3) engaging, and (4) clear. First, organization must convey the objectives in ways that flow logically and transition well to the next phase. (I felt reassured when two comments from the evaluation praised my organization.) Second, a welcoming ambience supports the participants and gives them the ease to focus on the objectives. With the intention of being welcoming, I strive to convey a warmth and generosity of spirit that encourages participation. (My encouraging fruitful discussion is part of being welcoming. After the training, when reviewing my welcoming stance, I decided to allow more time in future trainings to foster the participants’ discussion.) Third, a delivery that engages the
participants assures that it is stimulating and memorable. By combining lecture, discussion, reading, physical activity, relaxation, music & film, the mix supports an experience that, hopefully, motivates the group. (One criticism that a participant gave me during a casual discussion after the program was a sense that I read from my notes too often.) Fourth, clear instructions allow participants to focus on the training’s objectives, rather than the mechanics. My aiming for simplicity, and rehearsing to achieve it, helped me give clear instructions during the training. One participant’s evaluation of the training, however, suggested a preferable way to teach the dance steps. This I interpret as a difference in learning styles, since the way I taught the dance suited my style. Next time, I can be more flexible and ask if someone prefers another approach to the choreography.

9) Lessons Learned

Trainers are always learning as they present their programs. Keeping a notebook of lessons learned, and asking participants for evaluations are two ways to improve presentations. Here are lessons that I learned from presenting my training.

**Time Constraints:** A trainer who develops a presentation that is rich and full in content faces the challenge of not being able to present all the material. The trainer must make choices about what to abbreviate or eliminate. Although the trainer carefully measures the timing for presenting various components, such programming is for an ideal situation. By definition, *practice* departs from the *ideal*. Human interactions intervene as an important element of the training. One way to limit disruptive digressions, however, is to explain in the introduction about guidelines for time-management. The trainer can then tell attendees to expect a review of the guidelines later. In this way, the review is
expected and does not target for potential embarrassment a particular person who may be speaking often and at length.

**Welcoming:** A participant’s openness to new ideas hinges a great deal upon a sense of feeling welcome and unhurried during the training. A sense of unease occurs when a trainer seems impatient. Self-discovery occurs, however, when a participant has time to reflect upon and discuss the ideas that support the objectives. I discovered the need to maintain a welcoming atmosphere and decided to expand this training from its initial two hours to two-and-a-half hours. The extra time allows for more gracious listening during discussion and for gentler transitions.

**Different Behaviors:** A trainer also discovers that attendees bring different levels of participation to a program. For attendees who are experienced with protocols of helpful participation—such as arriving before the starting time, avoiding side conversations, and following directions for sharing in discussions—the trainer can present most of the material without disruption. When some attendees are less experienced with protocol—arriving late, engaging in side conversations, interrupting, arguing, or dominating the discussion—the trainer is less able to cover all the material. Whether or not attendees follow polite protocols is not so important as the fact that they are present and hoping to learn from the training. Some participants, who exploit opportunities to be heard, may be hearing themselves for the first time—and are engaging in important learning.

**Deserving Respect:** Whatever a person’s level of awareness, all attendees deserve the trainer’s respect and forbearance. An adept trainer keeps the experience focused on the objectives as much as possible while modeling respect for the attendees. If the trainer
offers the group a choice to veer from the topic to explore a different point, attendees experience democracy and agency. In this way, the trainer models respect for the group.

**Handout:** Knowing that human dynamics can intervene to prevent all material on the agenda from being covered, I include a handout with a list of resources. Toward the end, I can indicate what topics have not been fully covered and how to explore them through the resources listed in the handout.

**Personal Care:** An occupational difficulty of being a peacebuilding trainer is my engagement with conflict. Also, I must persuade participants in these trainings to delve onerous situations while opening to compassionate insights. Keeping positive requires self-care. I must stay healthy and fit. I must also remain calm and flexible when planning and facilitating the many details of a program. If a situation goes awry, I must model the peace that I espouse. This is easier said than done.

**Conclusion**

To reiterate my reasons for developing this training, I strive to energize communities to face a challenge that must unite humanity in reclaiming the ecological balance of the Earth, and to show that this task can invigorate us. When we participate in the Great Turning from an industrial growth society to a life-sustaining society, we recognize the Earth as our sustenance. We actively hope that our efforts return us to a thriving biosphere. The resilient community that our connections and positive actions maintain is our support and refuge in challenging times.

As Lederach says of a story that ends well—in support of solutions *in the spaces around* the problem: “This is a true story. Everything in this story is true, except for the parts that haven't happened yet” (Sampson, p. 126). Regarding the parts that haven't
happened yet—toward building resilient community—let’s make a continuation of the story, rather than an ending. Let’s support a continuum of resilient communities within a bio-centric Earth. Can this happen? Let’s hope so! And when the time comes for each of us to complete our cycle on this Earth, may we anticipate comfort in the eulogy, below, that Pete Seeger sang in recognition of our human journey (Seeger, 1964).

To my old brown earth,
and to my old blue sky,
I now give these last few molecules of I.

And you who sing,
and you who stand nearby,
I do charge you not to cry.

Guard well our human chain.
Watch well you keep it strong,
as long as sun will shine.

And this our home
keep pure and sweet and green.
For now I’m yours
and you are also mine.
CONNECTION & HOPEFUL ACTION

References


Karuna Center for Peacebuilding. The Impact of Climate Change: Two Possible Roads Ahead. Adapted from International Alert. 2007.


The Impact of Climate Change: Two possible roads ahead

Physical consequences of climate change
- Melting glaciers
- Sea-level rise
- Loss of usable land
- Drought
- Floods
- Desertification
- Spread of disease and pestilence
- Changes to crop seasons and output

Socio-political consequences of climate change
- Livelihood insecurity
- Food insecurity
- Increased social tension
- Less access to usable water
- Decreased trade
- Decline in human health
- Increased poverty
- Decreased physical security
- Increased migration

Good governance and integrated planning for adaptation

Risk reduction and peacebuilding

Sustainable and non-violent adaptation to consequences of climate change

Strengthen good governance

Bad governance and institutions/patterns of violence/conflict

Violent Conflict

- Hinders climate change mitigation
- Blocks adaptation
- Halts development
- Exacerbates social tension

- Exacerbates physical impacts of climate change
- Exacerbates consequences of climate change
- Weakens already bad governance
- Locks states into repeating cycles of conflict

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Appendix 2

Joanna Macy’s Spiral of the Work That Reconnects – Rendered by Dori Midnight
0.1—Set-Up for Training 8:00-8:50 A.M. – 50 minutes

Preview: Review the venue with a service provider before the date of presentation.

Set-up Place signage on walls (Appendix 6). Set up equipment, food, and seating.

0.2—Meet & Greet Before Opening of Training 9:00-9:25 – 25 minutes

Activity: Informal Meet-and-Greet during refreshments to create a welcoming and relaxing atmosphere for participants.

1—Welcome & Guidance 9:30-9:34 A.M. – 4.5 minutes

Announce Rest rooms; break-out time; being at edge of comfort zones; consent form (Appendix 7); protocols for courteous participation

Breathing Exercise 9:34-9:36 – 3 minutes
Brief Intro of Self as Guide 9:37-9:39 – 1.5 minutes
Brief Bio of Joanna Macy & Main Themes 9:39-9:43 – 3 minutes

2—Discovering Gratitude Total Time: 9:43-10:05 – 22 minutes

- Explain Activity: Complete 3 open sentences with a partner & discuss.
  9:43-9:44 – 2 minutes

Exercise Open Sentences 9:45-9:57 – 12 minutes

Processing: 9:58-10:05 – 8 minutes

3—The Spiral of the Work That Reconnects Total Time: 10:06-10:13 – 8 minutes

Draw The Spiral (leaving phases two, three and four blank for now)
  10:06-10:11 – 6 minutes

Exercise Give context for first two phases: Gratitude & Opening to Pain of Our World

Exercise Three Stories of Our Time 10:12-10:13 – 2 minutes
(1) Business As Usual, (2) The Great Unraveling, (3) The Great Turning
Outline of Training

4—Opening to Our Pain for the World & Seeing With New Eyes
Total time: 10:14-10:34 – 20 minutes

Exercise  Opening to Our Pain for the World  10:14-10:17 – 3.5 minutes
- Explain: Gratitude fortifies to face pain; we connect to Chernobyl Disaster.
- Add opening to our pain to the graphic of the Spiral.

Exercise  Seeing With New Eyes  10:18-10:19 – 2 minutes
- Explain: Opening to Our Pain creates empathy & connection; all life is connected.

Activity  The Elm Dance: connecting to heal the biosphere. (Appendix 8)  11 min.

Teach  Seeing With New Eyes  10:31-10:34 – 3.5 minutes
- Explain: After opening to our pain, we See With New Eyes of connection & empathy.
- Add seeing with new eyes to the graphic of the Spiral.

5—Going Forth (Video)  Total Time: 10:42-11:28 – 46 minutes

Teach  Going Forth  10:42-10:45 – 3.5 minutes
- Explain: After seeing with new eyes, we are energized to Go Forth in hopeful action.
- Add going forth to the graphic of the Spiral.

Introduce  Video re Going Forth  10:45 – 0.5 minute
- The title is: Joanna Macy and the Great Turning.
- Filmmaker is Christopher Landry, Macy’s student.
- Landry made this film as an exercise of his going forth.

Screen  Landry-Macy Video  (Appendix 9)  10:46-11:12 – 26 minutes

Stretch  Light exercise after sitting for video  11:13 – 1 minute

Discuss  Review Video via Experiential Learning  (Appendix 10)  11:14-11:28 – 15 m.
- Experiencing: The group has just experienced the video.
- Sharing Impressions: “What are first thoughts or feelings about the film?”
- Processing: “What themes from Macy’s discourse or cinematography?”
- Generalizing: “How does what you’re discovering apply to the world?”
· Applying: “What might you do to improve our world?”

Appendix 4 – page 3 of 4

Outline of Training

6—Systems Theory  Total Time: 11:28-11:38 – 11 minutes

Introduce  Systems Theory  11:28-11:33 – 6 minutes

- Explain: A new way of seeing connections in biosphere; self-organizing; emerging.

Exercise  Participants Share Feelings of Connection  11:34-11:38 – 5 minutes

7—Going Forth (Reflection)  Total Time: 11:39-11:47 – 9 minutes

Exercise  Questions for Reflection and Writing

- Explain: Give brief & intuitive time to answer questions  11:39 – 1 minute

- Questions:  11:40-11:43 – 4 minutes
  1) If you knew that you could not fail, what would you most want to do for the healing of our world?
  2) What step—no matter how small—can you take this week to move you toward this goal?

Sharing  All take turns reading their answers.  11:44-11:47 – 4 minutes

8—Affirmation  Total Time: 11:48-11:50 – 3 minutes

Exercise  Reflection  11:48 – 1 minute

- Explain: Think about resilient communities and choose one important trait.

Exercise  Sharing  11:49-11:50 – 2 minutes

- Explain: Speak in turn and, in one sentence, tell what trait of resilience you chose.

9—Review, Thanks & Farewell  Total time: 11:51-11:53 – 3 minutes

Exercise  Review  11:51-11:53 – 2.5 minutes

- Review: Macy’s Work That Reconnects; Spiral of the WTR: gratitude, pain, new insight & positive action; Active Hope; the Great Turning to a Life-Sustaining Society; Systems Theory

Exercise  Thanks & Farewell  11:53 – 0.5 minutes
- Provide: A handout that lists resources for more information (Appendix 11).

Outline of Training

Appendix 4 – page 4 of 4

10—Evaluation Form (Appendix 12) Total time: 11:54-12:00 – 7 minutes

Exercise Participants Learn about Evaluation Form 11:54 – 1 minute

- Explain: The form tracks professionalism; anonymity encourages candor.

Exercise Complete the Evaluation Form 11:55-12:00 – 6 minutes

- Explain: Completing the form ends the training session.
## Appendix 5

### List of Training Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Greet</td>
<td>Food, beverages, utensils, music – as listed above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Signage: Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sign Consent Form</td>
<td>Consent form – as listed above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breathing Exercise</td>
<td>Timer; brass bowl and striker (“chime”).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brief Bio of Joanna Macy</td>
<td>Signage: Macy Bio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discover Gratitude</td>
<td>Signage: Open Sentences; timer, chime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intro Spiral of WTR</td>
<td>Signage: prepared for drawing Spiral, broad marker. Signage: Great Turning &amp; Three Stories of Our Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Open to Pain for World &amp; See With New Eyes</td>
<td>Signage: Spiral of the Work That Reconnects. Music for the Elm Dance; signage for Widening Circles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Going Forth - Video</td>
<td>Screen, projector, audio, DVD. Signage: Cycle of Experiential Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Systems Theory</td>
<td>Signage: Systems Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Going Forth - Reflection</td>
<td>Paper &amp; pen from participants’ folders; timer, chime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Affirmation</td>
<td>Signage: <em>Active Hope</em> – three sections of the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Signage for review: Spiral of WTR, Great Turning, Active Hope, Systems Theory. Handout re resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thanks &amp; Farewell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Evaluations</td>
<td>Evaluation forms &amp; pencils.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONNECTION & HOPEFUL ACTION

Appendix 6
Signage for Training

Agenda:
- Welcome
- Introductions
- Settling
- Exercise 1
- Exercise 2
- Discussion
- Movement
- Break
- Film
- Discussion
- Close
- Evaluation
- Scholar
- Buddhism
- Environmental Studies
- Rilke

Joanna Macy Bio:
- Teacher
- The Work That Reconnects
- Active Hope
- Activist
- The Great Turning
- Systems Theorist

“How do connection & hopeful action support resilient community?”

Framing the Question:
- Hope is a verb
- Resilient – able to recover quickly from challenge or misfortune; flexible

Open Sentences:
- Something I love about being alive in the world is...
- Someone who helped me believe in myself is / was...
- Some things I appreciate about myself are...

Spiral of the Work That Reconnects:
- Gratitude
- Opening to Our Pain for the World
- Seeing with New Eyes
- Going Forth

Three Stories of Our Time:
- Business As Usual
- The Great Unraveling
- The Great Turning

Widening Circles of Connection:
- Family/Group
- Community
- Human Society
- Web of Life

- A Way of Seeing
- Humans Flow in the Evolving Web of Life
- Life Self-Organizes

Systems Theory:
- Each System – from Atom to Galaxy – is Whole
- Open Systems Balance Amidst Flux
- Gaia Theory—Earth’s Biosphere Is a Self-Organizing System
- Challenged by Environment, a System Adapts or Disintegrates

Active Hope:
- The Great Turning
- Seeing With New Eyes
- Going Forth

Experiential Learning Cycle:
- Concrete Experience
- Reflective Observation
- Abstract Conceptualization
- Active Experimentation
Informed Consent: For the Participant to Keep

Thank you for participating in this introduction to Joanna Macy’s work—“Connection & Hopeful Action: Foundations of Resilience”—on September 19, 2015.

Please remember to hold personal exchanges from this gathering as confidential.

Your responses to the Evaluation Form, at the end of the program, are voluntary and confidential.

As a participant, I have read and understand the information above. I am over the age of 18 and I have participated in this forum voluntarily.

Name: ____________________________  Date: ______________

Informed Consent: For the Facilitator, from Each Participant

Your copy of the Consent Form is at the top.

Thank you for participating in this introduction to Joanna Macy’s work—“Connection & Hopeful Action: Foundations of Resilience”—on September 19, 2015.

Please remember to hold personal exchanges from this gathering as confidential.

Your responses to the Evaluation Form, at the end of this program, are voluntary and confidential.

As a participant, I have read and understand the information above. I am over the age of 18 and I have participated in this forum voluntarily.

Name: ____________________________  Date: ______________
The Elm Dance

Music: *Kā Man Klājās? (How Does Your Life Go For You?)* from the album, *Spogulis*, sung by Ieva Akurātere


Duration: 3:09 minutes

Choreography: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8E1hOma_Ag

Blue text: specifies movement

Round 1: 0:00-0:45
- Start on R foot when singing begins: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to L; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps backward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to R; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps forward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Face forward; start on R foot: take 4 steps forward.
- Release hands & raise arms like boughs; start on R foot: sway arms & legs in place for 4 beats.
- Start on R foot: rejoin hands & take 4 steps backwards.

Round 2: 0:46-1:23
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to L: start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps backward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to R; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps forward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Face forward; start on R foot: take 4 steps forward.
- Release hands & raise arms like boughs; start on R foot: sway arms & legs in place for 4 beats.
- Start on R foot: rejoin hands & take 4 steps backwards.

Round 3: 1:24-2:01
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to L: start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps backward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to R; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps forward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Face forward; start on R foot: take 4 steps forward.
- Release hands & raise arms like boughs; start on R foot: sway arms & legs in place for 4 beats.
- Start on R foot: rejoin hands & take 4 steps backwards.

Round 4: 2:02-2:39
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to L: start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps backward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to R; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps forward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Face forward; start on R foot: take 4 steps forward.
- Release hands & raise arms like boughs; start on R foot: sway arms & legs in place for 4 beats.
- Start on R foot: rejoin hands & take 4 steps backwards.

Round 5: 2:40-3:09
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to L: start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps backward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Turn sideways to R; start on R foot: move counter-clockwise, taking 4 steps forward.
- Face forward; start on R foot: sway in place for 4 beats.
- Face forward; start on R foot: take 4 steps forward and end in the center.
Introduction:  (0:00-1:58)
- Macy says, "Carl Jung said that, 'Running through each life like a thread is a question that you come to answer.'"
- Macy's question is, "How do we be fully present to our world at a time when the suffering and the prospects for conscious life forms are so grim?"

1) “Everything Is Connected”  (2:03-4:25)
- Macy says, "We go back to the teachings in the Buddhist tradition that are very meaningful to me. Central to that way of perceiving the world, just as it is central to systems thinking, is the apprehension that everything is connected.”
- John Muir said, “When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”

2) “How Did We Get Into This Mess?”  (4:26-6:36)
- Macy says, “What I see as really propelling [this mess] at this moment—this moment of collective insanity of wasting our world—is actually our economic system, our political economy which—thanks to the phrase of Norwegian deep-ecologist Sigmund Kvaløy—I too call the Industrial Growth Society.”

3) “Dealing with the Pain of This Time”  (6:37-12:09)
- Macy says, "We’re going through a hard passage in the journey of humanity...And we see it as a journey in which we are—through our suffering with our world—we are seeing the immensity of the life in us."
- “All through human history there was this tacit assumption that life would continue on this planet...And that’s what’s lost now. And that loss of certainty for the ongoing-ness of life is the pivotal psychological reality of our time, I believe.”
- “It’s that knife-edge of uncertainty where we come alive to our truest power.”

4) “Building the New in the Shell of the Old”  (12:10-13:54)
- Macy says, “And now we see that this system [the Industrial Growth System] is becoming ever more fragile. And as this system is beginning to crumble...the mortgage prices...our eco-systems...our farm systems. Just as that is being less and less responsive to human needs, there’s something quite wonderful happening...People are perceiving to build the new within the shell of the old. There are new ways emerging...we can meet our needs without destroying our world...We’re learning how to care. Our ancestors passed that knowledge on to us.”
- “That’s revolutionary [rebuilding in the shell of the old] because...what proponents of the system [the Industrial Growth System] are saying...the only way we’re going to be able to survive is through permanent war and destruction of our environment.”

5) “The Third Revolution”—after the Agricultural & the Industrial Revolutions  (13:55-18:56)
- “The Great turning is the transition from the Industrial Growth Society to a Life-Sustaining Society, because we are seeing that what we have been living in allegiance to and dependent upon is wrecking ourselves and our world.”

- Holding Actions: Activism to slow the destruction of the Industrial Growth Society.
- Sustainable Structures: New patterns of collective, sustainable behaviors.
- Conscious shift: Cognitive revolution changes perceptions of reality from stuff to relationships so we see “...Our planet is a living system...not a sewer and a warehouse to be despoiled.”
Appendix 10

Models of Experiential Learning Cycle and Learning Styles
Connection and Hopeful Action: Foundations of Resilience

An Introduction to the Work of Joanna Macy

Saturday, September 19, 2015 — 9:30-11:30 A.M.

Facilitated by Catherine Gormley

Resources:


*Joanna Macy and the Great Turning*, a film by Christopher Landry, [www.videoproject.com](http://www.videoproject.com).

Website about Joanna Macy’s work: [http://www.joannamacy.net](http://www.joannamacy.net)

For each statement, please mark the oval to the left of the term that best describes your opinion.

1) Reflecting about what I am grateful for can increase my sense of personal power.
   O Strongly Agree   O Agree   O Feel Neutral   O Disagree   O Strongly Disagree

2) Gratitude for elements of well-being can realign personal suffering toward positive perspectives.
   O Strongly Agree   O Agree   O Feel Neutral   O Disagree   O Strongly Disagree

3) With insights gained from understanding gratitude and from facing the pain of the world, I am more confident to create personally meaningful positive change.
   O Strongly Agree   O Agree   O Feel Neutral   O Disagree   O Strongly Disagree

4) Being in a strong community and practicing hopeful action can help me face challenges in positive ways.
   O Strongly Agree   O Agree   O Feel Neutral   O Disagree   O Strongly Disagree

5) Insights from today’s forum can help me increase a good quality of life.
   O Strongly Agree   O Agree   O Feel Neutral   O Disagree   O Strongly Disagree

Comment, if you wish:

6) Other thoughts or feelings that I have about this forum are:
CONNECTION & HOPEFUL ACTION

Appendix 13

Participants Respond to the Evaluation’s Open-Ended Statement

“Other thoughts or feelings that I have about this forum...”

C = Case, where a Case Represents a Specific Participant

C1) Great job! Extremely worthwhile.

C2) Loved the Spiral—ever increasing instead of a closed circle.

C3) Very well organized session—a model for future ones.

C4) Thanks you. I’m sure the ripples of this forum will be just one more part of the Spiral.

C5) Participant gave no response. Likert results are between “Agree” and “Greatly Agree.”

C6) It would be helpful to teach the dance by initially getting into a circle, demonstrating the
    movements and putting on the music. See how it works to teach once without the initial
    verbal talk through—not so necessary to intellectualize it—just move & enjoy the
    movements/music & rhythm.

C7) Participant gave no response. Likert results are slightly above “Agree.”

C8) Participant gave no response. Likert results are slightly above “Agree.”

C9) Good to see the film and get a multi-cultural vision. Also inspiring to see those
    magnificent views of the planet.

C10) I wish I felt as hopeful as Joanna—maybe it will come...?! Thank you for your efforts!

C11) Participant gave no response. Likert results are slightly below “Agree.”

C12) I found the experience most rewarding, our facilitator well prepared and well organized.

    All of these issues are complex and require much more contemplation, by each individual
    and the group as a whole. (Perhaps some action will follow this contemplation!) Thanks!
How Do Connection and Hopeful Action Support Resilient Community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>P Average</th>
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<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>4.32</td>
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</table>

- The above table shows how the twelve participants responded to five Likert Statements. Each participant is a separate Case, along a row (C1 to C12). Scores for each Likert Statement appear in separate columns (S1 to S5).

- The term “Strongly Agree” has a value of 5. The values decrease until “Strongly Disagree” has a value of 1. A Case that shows a score of 4 or higher implies agreement with the objective.

- The right column shows the average score for each Case. For example, Case 1’s score of 5 shows complete agreement with the statements, showing the highest acceptance of the training’s objectives. Case 11’s score of 3.8 shows the lowest acceptance of the training’s objectives.

- Each column—labeled S1 through S5—shows the responses of each participant to that statement, on the scale of 1-5. The bottom row shows the average score for each statement over all the participants. A statement’s high score shows high agreement within the training group for the particular objective.

- Conclusions from the Training:
  - The average range of Statements—from 4.32 to 4.00—shows that participants generally agreed with the training’s objectives.
  - The average range of Cases—from 5.00 to 3.8—spans from strong agreement to not full agreement with the training’s objectives.
  - With statements ranging from 1 unanswered, 1 disagree, 4 neutral, 32 agree, and 22 strongly agree, a strong majority of the participants agreed with the training’s objectives.
## Appendix 3: Agenda of Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>25 (m)</td>
<td>Informal Meet-and-Greet during Refreshments</td>
<td>Help participants leave their hurried lives and enter a space of</td>
<td>Invitation says refreshments provided before training starts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gracious support. Provide food &amp; drink if people haven’t eaten yet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>4.5 m</td>
<td>Welcome, Guidance &amp; Intro All</td>
<td>Build Safe Container for Training:</td>
<td>Lecture portion: Prepare talking points well, since time is short &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>there’s no time to stray.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 m</td>
<td>Breathe</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intro Activity fosters a sense of belonging:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guide’s bio re coming to JM &amp; WTR</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Say your name; others say, Welcome and repeat person’s name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 m</td>
<td>Bio JM &amp; main themes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:43</td>
<td>2 m</td>
<td>Setup;</td>
<td>Rather than say, “Let’s see how grateful we are,” lead activity that</td>
<td>We don’t name Gratitude as the first step in Spiral of WTR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>elicits experiences &amp; beliefs as foundations of gratitude. Guide the</td>
<td>Guide participants to discover &amp; name Gratitude themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>participants themselves to name “gratitude,” since this naming is part</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 m</td>
<td>Open Sentences;</td>
<td>of their discovery and learning. With this experience, people will</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>trust they are capable of exploring the Spiral’s next step, “Opening</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>8 m</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>to Our Pain of the World.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:06</td>
<td>6 m</td>
<td>Spiral WTR</td>
<td>- Draw model of Spiral &amp; name the phases; (try to elicit the</td>
<td>Lecture portion: expect good experience with gratitude has built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>understanding of the flow, e.g., as how Gratitude fortifies one for</td>
<td>interest in the Spiral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 m</td>
<td>Exploring Our Story: Biz as usual; Great</td>
<td>opening to pain, etc.): Graphic shows Gratitude at 90°; Opening to</td>
<td>- at “info wall” trace Spiral in marker over pencil lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unraveling; Great Turning</td>
<td>the Pain of the World at 180°; Seeing with New Eyes at 270°; Going</td>
<td>- show graphic: Exploring Our Story &amp; 3 options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Forth at 360°.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Intro concepts of: “Exploring Our Story” from (1) Business as Usual,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:14</td>
<td>3.5 m</td>
<td>(1) Opening to Our Pain for the World: intro</td>
<td>Focus on (1) Opening to Our Pain for the World with story of Novozybkov:</td>
<td>- Focus on phases 2 &amp; 3 of Spiral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) OTOPFTW</td>
<td></td>
<td>Russia’s leaders seed clouds to drop Chernobyl’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 m</td>
<td>16.5 m</td>
<td>Novozybkov re Chernobyl. (2) <strong>Seeing with New Eyes:</strong> Novozybkov learns Elm Dance; we learn Elm Dance. - Teach context of Seeing With New Eyes.</td>
<td>radioactive rain on parts of Ukraine to prevent from reaching Moscow. (2) Seeing With New Eyes: Elm Dance as boost—with social solidarity, music and dance, plus inspiration from nature. - Teach context for Seeing With New Eyes: pain brought people deeper into relationship; confident that connection enlarges us; music movement help to feel &amp; relieve grief.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:35</td>
<td>7 m</td>
<td>Break for comfort.</td>
<td>Group breaks for food &amp; bathroom; set seating at screen, DVD Set chairs &amp; cue DVD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:42</td>
<td>46 m</td>
<td>3.5 m – intro GF .5 m – cue film 26 m – screen 1 m - stretch &amp; return to circle 15 m – discuss</td>
<td>- Revisit graphic of Spiral. - Animate group with dancing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:28</td>
<td>6 m - General Systems Theory</td>
<td>5 <strong>Going Forth:</strong> Video - Intro: Going Forth &amp; CL’s experience. - Screen: “JM &amp; the GT” - Discuss impact of film.</td>
<td>- Explain from <em>Active Hope</em> how we are called to Go Forth; how Christopher Landry was called by his vision &amp; intention. - Watch film: <em>Joanna Macy and the Great Turning</em>. - Discuss via Experiential Learning Cycle &amp; Spiral of WTR: (1) Experience film; (2) Reflect via Opening to Our Pain for World; (3) Conceptualize abstractly via Seeing With New Eyes; (4) Apply Action via Going Forth.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:39</td>
<td>6 m - People tell their various connections</td>
<td>6 <strong>Systems Theory:</strong> - Tell how the WTR is not only JM’s work but OUR work as well. - Participants give examples of their connections.</td>
<td>- Systems Theory: patterns of social, biological connections. - Reinforce the continuum from JM’s to <em>our</em> WTR. Emphasize: with connected community &amp; hopeful action, we continue the WTR and support our community’s resilience. - Discussion: “What are communities you feel connected to?” “What draws you to them?” - Lecture portion: General Systems Theory. - Emphasize: WTR is <em>ours</em> now; we are connected. - Facilitate for brevity as we come closer to the end.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:48</td>
<td>3 m</td>
<td>7 <strong>Going Forth:</strong> Reflection - Questions for reflection and writing</td>
<td>Experience the power of intention without limitation. Participant may choose not to share with the group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:51</td>
<td>3 m</td>
<td>8 <strong>Affirmation:</strong> Resilience; Reflect &amp; Share</td>
<td>Give opportunity to affirm traits of resilient community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:54</td>
<td>6 m - evaluation form</td>
<td>9 <strong>Review</strong> - Thanks &amp; Farewell</td>
<td>Review helps to reinforce new concepts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 m</td>
<td><strong>Evaluation Form:</strong> Participants complete</td>
<td>Evaluation Form helps facilitator learn what works well and what not.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>