

In regard to recent reader emails, I offer this important note: Although I am not a hope-deluded Pollyanna trapped in perpetual optimism, I'm also not a pessimist or "doomer". I do not suffer the afflictions of depression or "brightsideitis". I'd like to make this perfectly clear to the female readers who "worry" about me, or feel the need to "cheer me up"; and to the male readers who feel compelled to save, fix, advise, or otherwise impose their "it ain't so bad" judgement on me.

My truth about myself is as follows: I'm a radical critical thinker with the willingness to see humanity's blind spots—a practical realist who sees the world as it is. I also have no qualms about telling it like I see it, feel it, intuit it, and experience it. I see through people, situations, events, and our entire civilization for that matter. Allowing myself to see it all means that I can more clearly see the writing on the wall and choose to live accordingly. The outcome is a simple life filled with spontaneity, curiosity, presence, laughter, and ease. As Gandhi said, "Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly." In other words, it's easier to see the world as it is and speak my truth than it is to pretend things are different than they really are. I'm unapologetic about my rough edges and refuse to back down from the hard conversations that need to be had. That is who I am. While this tends to disturb many people (particularly deniers, worriers, "savers", Pollyanna's, hope-junkies, and deluded optimists), it makes for a much more joyful and authentic life.

Bottom line: My blog is a means for Self expression; a way for me to organize my thoughts and make sense of my own thinking. As much as I rant about the brutal stupidity of our human-oppressed planet, I live life on my terms and of my own creation. The result is a meaningful life filled with the richness of laughter, tears, frustration, love, compassion, and conscious intention. I would have it no other way.

The Perpetual Illusion of Change

Two Steps Forward, Several Steps Back

While the prevailing global collective dig their heels deeper into sustaining the status quo, many others are becoming activists, enraged by the infinite list of atrocities being committed around the globe. As seemingly more people fight for change these days—with grandiose expectations for governments, corporations, media, and the global public to wake up and do something—notable progress continues to evade us.

With a lifetime of advocacy in my experience, I know well the trenches of activism. Having lived through almost six decades of human potential, I've born witness to, and participated in several activist uprisings. The passion behind these acts of revolt was often so impressive that one could easily be convinced of a shift in collective consciousness. Why then, do we stand in the precarious place that we do today?

An abbreviated timeline of the past 60 years tells an interesting story about the efficacy of activism to create meaningful change in our world.

The '60's brought to us a formidable anti-war movement filled with the promise of peace and love through flower power, hippie subculture, and meaningful music. The Women's Liberation Movement of the '70's seemed unstoppable in its mission toward the creation of gender equality in an oppressive, patriarchal world. From the Stonewall riots in 1969 emerged the Gay Liberation Movement of the '70's and '80's. Social equality for all who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender sparked powerful momentum for today's LGBT movement. The growing environmental movement of the 80's spawned the "green" revolution of the '90's and early 21st Century. In tandem with the green revolution was the burgeoning animal rights movement. Countless celebrities and wealthy philanthropists used their clout to speak up for a more compassionate world through animal rights and veganism. In 2011, the Occupy movement gained significant traction and inspired a new way of thinking about democracy and social justice. While it did little to change the culture of sexism and the mindset of patriarchy, the Women's March of 2017 touched the lives of millions of women around the world. And in 2018, impassioned

survivors of the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting inspired a powerful movement for gun control in one of the most weapon-loving countries in the world.

So much promise. So much “hope”. So much momentum, energy, and passion channeled toward the creation of something more aligned with our better nature. But as Albert Einstein once said, “Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.” Without fail, many of these movements fizzled out only to be swallowed by the oh-so-familiar and oh-so-comfortable dominant paradigm once again. The systems that make up human civilization (political, corporate, social, market, education, religion, health care, mass media, etc.), and the overwhelming inertia of the status quo who adhere to these systems, remain deeply entrenched in the mediocrity of changelessness. The sheer density of this mass consciousness ensures the impenetrable stasis of what has always been.

In the 60-year timeline just mentioned, we have essentially taken two steps forward and several steps back. At a time of rising isolationism, tribalism, racism, and authoritarianism, we currently stand in a place where the [right-to-bear-arms mindset](#) is as deeply entrenched in the American psyche as ever; [ceaseless wars](#) rage on throughout the world; [corporate control](#) has become more globally oppressive with each passing year; [homophobia still runs rampant](#), [racism is as prevalent and ugly as ever](#), and [animals, women](#) and the [natural world](#) are more brutalized than ever before. Let’s face it, the world of carrion-loving, women-degrading, war-supporting, homophobic, Earth-raping, male supremacy is as aggressive and oppressive as it has ever been. We can rail against it all we want, but collective allegiance to the intergenerational conditioning that feeds widespread separation from Earth and Soul is far too great for any movement—no matter how powerful it may be—to have a sustained impact. Separation breeds indifference, and indifference breeds inertia. As Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel once said, “The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”

As well meaning as many activist movements are, there is always one common flaw: they operate within the confines of the box that created the problems in the first place. By attempting to change systems that are not designed to evolve, change remains an elusive dream. The great irony with our current civilization is

that nothing will change until the systems change, and there is no motivation for the systems to change because what already is, is working well for our civilization of separation. It is a self-reinforcing feedback loop that sustains stasis of the global mind, and continued decimation of the planet.

With our current level of collective consciousness, it would never be enough to change the systems anyway. Attempting to create any meaningful change in the mountain of escalating problems in our world demands total commitment, clarity and cooperation on the part of government, corporations and the entire global collective of humanity. It's never going to happen. The generations of cultural conditioning that have mutated us into the death-creating species we've become, must first collapse. This essentially means redefining ourselves by discovering *what we are*, free of all the stories and beliefs we've been taught to believe about ourselves and our world. It means liberating ourselves from the [Big Lie](#) once and for all. Once we allow ourselves to see the bigger picture we can never "unsee" again. Once we get to know our Selves, we can never not know again. The journey toward Self reclamation is deeply personal, profoundly painful and never ending. As such, it holds little appeal for the majority of humans on this planet. Most people are fine with the way things are, no matter how miserable their lives may be. Besides, it's easier to play the victim role and blame everyone else for the woes of the world than it is to reclaim one's life and create anew.

The reality is that we can never have enlightened governments, corporations, systems, or civilizations until we first transform ourselves. We must be awake, both individually and collectively, to create that. If enough people were to wholly invest in their own personal evolution, our civilization would be forced to change. That is the power of critical mass. Without self-transformation, however, we are only able to create within the realm of the known, thus creating a different version of what we've always had. *The battle for change will always be lost as long as we remain lost to our Selves.*

Fighting and resisting the density and immensity of a collective consciousness moving in the opposite direction of Self-reclamation is not only futile, it is emotionally, mentally and spiritually draining. We are a brilliant species, and we are horrible. And we are brilliant in our "horribleness". Buckminster Fuller said it well, "You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something,

build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” Building a new model can never happen with who we have always been. *We must become different to create differently.* This cannot happen until we claim *all of what we are* and unite ourselves with the Whole of Life.

Simple Thoughts Going Nowhere

More people these days are buying electric or hybrid cars, installing solar panels on their homes, rejecting GMO’s, eating “plant-based (which differs from vegan in that it is a dietary shift rather than a lifestyle transformation), or buying animal flesh and maternal secretions (eggs and dairy) from suppliers other than factory farms. The motivation behind these behavioural shifts is enmeshed in the belief that “simple acts change the world.” Because these shifts are merely at the behaviour level, however, little changes; like moving the deck furniture on the Titanic believing the shift in weight will right the tilting ship. In the end, the very same separation consciousness that drives consumption—albeit with less guilt—still prevails. It’s amazing how many ways we’ve created to deceive ourselves.

On a similar train of thought, someone recently said to me, “if we can harness the power of the sun and use technology to our advantage, maybe we can change everything.” I was dumbfounded by the sheer ignorance of this statement. *How is this going to transform who we are so we stop the madness?* Let’s get real. With so many converging crises underway, one needs only to connect the dots of the bigger picture to see that we are beyond salvation for singular strategies to have any impact other than filling our minds with staggering delusion.

This begs the question: what other mindless, habituated thoughts and behaviours drone on in the background of our self-deceived awareness, feeding into every aspect of climate, ecosystem, ecological, and biosphere collapse? Feeding into the brutality of a global civilization that normalizes the annual slaughter of trillions of birds, mammals and aquatic beings, clearcutting of entire forest ecosystems, mining of whole mountain ranges, poisoning/polluting every drop of water—from the smallest stream to the greatest ocean—from the visible surface to the deepest invisible depths? Feeding into the brutality of ceaseless wars, rampant misogyny and child slave labour for cheap crap designed for rapid obsolescence? None of this will ever stop because we’ve shifted our behaviour from “black to

green”, or because we’ve protested, petitioned, and railed against the changeless entity of government; or because we’ve banned single-use plastics and put stiffer corporate laws into place. Mass consciousness will always find a way around it by creating different versions of the same thing. It can only stop when we evolve our own individual consciousness enough to see the brutality in every nook and cranny; in every crevice and corner; in broad daylight and in every dark, musty shadow. When we finally allow ourselves to see how pervasive it is, it becomes abhorrent and we become unwilling to engage it anymore. We can then more clearly see how *every choice matters* because we are not separate from the outcome of any of these choices. In essence, we grow up. Only then can we consider creating something different, starting with our own lives.

As Albert Einstein once said, “No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.” What this essentially means is that we cannot create a different world without an entirely different consciousness. It’s not about creating different strategies for perpetuating what is known and familiar (i.e. “green” technologies, “humane” meat, dairy and eggs, “sustainable” forestry, “conscious” consumption, etc.); it’s about letting it all go—beginning with the cultural conditioning that severed our connection to our Selves—and uniting ourselves with the Essence of our Being. From there we create very differently. Without this shift in collective consciousness—beginning with each individual—and the willingness to create anew *from this consciousness*, we remain perpetually trapped in the [endless loop of sameness](#).

‘Round and ‘Round and ‘Round We Go

The most recent activist tour-de-force comes from Greta Thunberg and her “Friday’s for Future” school strike climate movement (modelled after the Stoneman Douglas High School gun-control activists), and the passionate folks of Extinction Rebellion, valiantly fighting against the collapse of Life on Earth (good luck with that). Another era, another powerful social movement. While it may seem impressive and exceptional, there’s one important pattern to note: it always repeats. Like bell-bottoms, you think they’re gone and “whoomp there they are” one more time.

With the wave of momentum still cresting for Greta and devotees of the Extinction Rebellion movement, one could be tempted to believe in the greater potential for a shift in consciousness this time around. The sheer number of people involved in these intersecting global movements certainly makes it seem plausible. But let's look at this realistically. There may be more people involved than with any other social movement, but there are also exponentially more humans on the planet. It makes sense that there *should* be more people involved. Essentially, the population of activists is proportionate to global population. When it comes down to the sheer density of mass indifference on the planet, however, there really is no net gain. John Lennon hit the spot when he said, "If everyone demanded peace instead of another television set, then there'd be peace." Mass indifference has certainly made for bigger, higher definition television sets, but peace remains perpetually elusive.

While I commend the courage of Extinction Rebellion activists for the outward expression of their passion, I also know that nothing will change. And as much as I respect the vegan voice of Greta Thunberg, she is not what the world needs. The world does not need another grief-stricken activist to publicly rail against an unchanging system. History has repeatedly proven that Goliath always wins. Greta's power lies not in her attempts to change the unchangeable, but rather in the full, unapologetic expression of her Self. If only she knew that [this was enough](#).

What the world needs—and has always needed—is an evolution of consciousness on a mass scale. (Have I made myself clear yet?!) This can only happen with each person's willingness to turn inward and do the painful work of reclaiming the unconditioned Essence of their Being—their True Self—their Soul.

Throughout history, there have been many versions of Greta who have attempted to inspire a more beautiful world that will never be. It can't. Until each and every one of us is willing to do the work on ourselves to reclaim *All of What We Are*, everything we do with our consciousness of separation will only create more separation, no matter how well-meaning we may be. Henry David Thoreau once said, "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root." Activism is merely hacking at the branches. The root of all "evil" is the cultural conditioning—beginning with parenting—that installs into every one of us the mindset of separation from animals, the natural world and our Selves. Until we

transform that within ourselves, separation will always defines us, and all efforts to change anything outside of ourselves will be futile.

When I look back on my many years of animal rights and environmental activism, I see how externally driven it was. It was always directed at the great “out there”; effortful, frustrating, and in the end, virtually useless. When I finally allowed myself to see that the efforts to create the more beautiful world I longed for were all in vain, I often felt like there was nobody more disillusioned than me. When I think of the minimal progress that was ever made in the direction I craved, I see how it was often inches away from being crushed by the stroke of a politicians pen. Often it was. Until the roots of evil (as mentioned above) are eliminated, or until humans stop breeding (and parenting), and we either die out or go extinct, the brutality of our separation will only continue to grow.

Rather than dance around the edges of this important conversation, I’m going to tell it like it is: every child is born into a world that severs all connection to their Souls—the core of *what they are*. Nobody is exempt. It begins with the deeply-rooted conditioning imposed on us by our parents to “be someone worthy”, in relation to the standards of our sick civilization. This very same conditioning is perpetuated in every system thereafter. Our educational system is finely-tuned for streamlining us into a lifetime of service to a global culture whose sole purpose is consumption. Under the guise of sustaining “a healthy economy”, we allow ourselves to be no wiser. Like hypnotized slaves, we blindly go through the motions to “become someone” while abandoning our deepest yearning to know what matters most: our Selves. Socrates said it succinctly, “Know Thyself.” This has always been our true power. Until we know our own Selves, however, every thought, choice, behaviour, and action perpetuates the paradigm of separation. In our Self-ignorance, we collude because we know no better. Is it any wonder why we continue to do what we do to Life on this planet?

How can we honestly expect anything to change with a species that teaches Self-disconnect to its young? Can we truly believe we can be different when every system—beginning with the family system—pummels connection and compassion out of us from the moment of our birth? How can we ever expect to “[foster \(global\) compassion within systems designed to reward those who aren’t compassionate?](#)”

Our intergenerational commitment to teaching separation to our children—that girls are inferior, boys are superior, and animals and nature are useful only as resources—is our greatest downfall. We have learned well how to objectify Life.

We've created a world where children are mentally, emotionally, and spiritually cannibalized; women are sexualized; animals are mechanized, and nature is commoditized. With no connection to one's Self, there is no connection to anything else.

As a species, we are incapable of creating a different world because we are incapable of creating authentic, Life-affirming, and connected lives for ourselves. The world will always be a reflection of the lives we have chosen to live, and if we choose to live in rigid adherence to antiquated belief systems based on separation from our Selves, and by default, separation from the Web of Life, that will always be the world of our creation.

Fellow Canadian author and animal rights activist, Anthony D. Williams is quoted as saying, "There are millions of animal species, but man is the only animal capable of destroying them all." He paired that quote with another simple, yet powerful statement, "When humans act with cruelty we characterize them as 'animals', yet the only animal that displays cruelty is humanity. No animal is capable of destroying earth except man." Sadly, I cannot disagree. I would add that women have also played their part with their willingness to compulsively breed offspring for man's brutal civilization.

The Prodigious Monster of Denial

Divorced from the natural world and animals, living in denuded, unnatural city scapes, wide swaths of people have lost any reference point to nature—to Life. The result is a planet overrun with the walking dead; thinking, choosing and acting like everyone else, mindlessly embracing this fatal disease of body, mind and Soul. Most people's lives are a testament to scarcity, fear and runaway consumerism; far removed from the simplicity, intimacy and freedom that comes with Self connection. This distraction from one's Whole Self leads to denial of everything meaningful and real, from the state of our lives to the state of our world.

While the majority of people on this planet live in some state of denial, I believe they deny our global predicament because they can't help it. When steeped in the

blindness of Self-separation, it is not some kind of moral weakness that has people eating like gluttons, shopping insatiably, and distracting their selves from their Selves with pills, booze, food, porn, work, tv, social media, and the endless array of other possible distractions in our modern world. It's a spiritual vacancy; a separation from one's Whole Being that leads to a physical, emotional and psychological addiction to the familiarity of a disconnected civilization that, for generations, we've been conditioned to normalize. People love their comfort, even when that very same "comfort" will cause nothing but chaos and death in the near future. And let's face it, when people don't want to change or be wrong, they dig their heels in deeper while [amping up the infantile behaviour](#) causing the destruction and brutality in the first place. When a message fraught with turmoil disrupts the conditioned mind, attacking the messenger is the standard modus operandi. It's an age-old tactic utilized by the opposition and an easy way to energize the status quo while distracting from the real issues at hand.

As a global collective, we have been well taught to be childish victims. Our propensity toward entitlement, denial and blame ensures the stasis of a juvenile consciousness that shields us from the power of our deepest inner wisdom. We believe ourselves to be victims of our broken lives and broken world while denying our role in their creation. In her book, *The Individual and the Nature of Mass Events*, Jane Roberts wrote:

"As long as you believe that either good events or bad ones are meted out by a personified God as the reward or punishment for your actions, or on the other hand that events are largely meaningless, chaotic, subjective knots in the tangled web of an accidental Darwinian world, then you cannot consciously understand your own creativity, or play the role in the universe that you are capable of playing as individuals or as a species. You will instead live in a world where events happen to you, in which you must do sacrifice to the gods of one kind or another, or see yourselves as victims of an uncaring nature."

She went on to write:

"If Christianity saw man as blighted by original sin, Darwinian and Freudian views see him as part of a flawed species in which individual life rests precariously, ever at the beck and call of the species' needs, and with survival as the prime goal—a survival, however, without meaning. The Soul's grandeur

is ignored, the individual's sense of belonging with nature eroded, for it is at nature's expense, it seems, that he must survive. One's greatest dreams and worst fears alike become the result of glandular imbalance, or of neuroses from childhood traumas."

As long as we believe ourselves to be victims of our neuroses and childhood traumas, our bodies, our aches and pains, habits, thoughts and beliefs; our financial status, relationships, jobs, and social environments; our stories and histories; our governments, corporations, economy, and on and on it goes, we remain perpetually trapped in an infantile consciousness with nowhere to go but denial and blame. "Tranquilized by the trivial," as Kierkegaard said; plodding along as helpless babies in the bodies of mindless adults. While a helpless baby is benign, a baby in an adult body is anything but.

As the degraded consciousness of denial and blame become more prevalent in our crumbling world, many others have taken the cause of [peddling the illusion of hope](#). As I wrote in my most recent book, *Beyond Hope*, however, hope is denial in drag. Clinging to hope in a fatal predicament that cannot be changed not only makes hope a burden, it inspires deeper denial through self-delusion. Denial wears many faces. Hope is one of its most cunning.

There are times when I still get lost in the overwhelm of brutality and breakdown in our world. When I allow myself to connect the dots on what's going on around the world, not just what I notice in my own backyard, it's amazing that we are still here. We've activated so many feedback mechanisms that it's ridiculous to believe or hope that we have the capacity to stop anything, especially something as powerful as a planet that has been around longer than our capacity for comprehension. We are witnessing the escalation of Earth's response to our brutality, and the acceleration of that escalation. We are looking at realities that can no longer be denied as having already profoundly shifted. It's already over. The question is, what does the world look like if we own and claim that it's over rather than hurtling over the cliff in ignorance and denial?

While the majority of people on the planet mindlessly carry on with business-as-usual, denying that anything out of the ordinary is occurring with the planet, there are others who have allowed some semblance of awareness into their

consciousness. This “lesser degree of denial” may have people noticing inconvenient weather patterns or strange natural occurrences. Beyond that, belief in a massive singular-event apocalypse—much like those portrayed in Hollywood disaster movies where a hunky white male hero saves the world in the 11th hour—still prevails. The reality is that there is no hunky white male hero coming to save us, and *the* “apocalypse” is a process that has been underway for decades; a process that is accelerating in its unfolding in tandem with our separation-based “progress”. It is also a process that cannot be stopped. Is it any wonder why denial prevails?

In her essay, *Facing Extinction*, Catherine Ingram writes:

“You may find yourself in the company of people who seem to have no awareness of the consequences we face or who don’t want to know or who might have a momentary inkling but cannot bear to face it. You may find that people become angry if you steer the conversation in the direction of planetary crisis. You may sense that you are becoming a social pariah due to what you see, even when you don’t mention it, and you may feel lonely in the company of most people you know. For you, it’s not just the elephant in the room; it’s the elephant *on fire* in the room, and yet you feel you can rarely say its name.” She goes on to write, “It is helpful to realize that most people are not ready for this conversation. They may never be ready, just as some people die after a long illness, still in denial that death was at their doorstep.”

“Denial that death was at their doorstep” is something I know personally. My mother died this way. Never were my sisters and I permitted to utter a single word about her rapidly failing health. Never were we allowed to talk about our grief and our fear of losing her, or the love that transcended it all. My mother was always “getting better and better” as the old adage goes. But much like our planetary predicament, “better and better” was not the case. I craved honest conversation. I wanted to walk with her, and travel together to the places that ached inside. I wanted to openly cry and tell her how much she meant to me. I was desperate to say goodbye, and I was repeatedly denied. I learned then that denial is an unfathomable beast that cannot be slayed, even with death breathing audibly in the shadows. My mother’s untimely death helped me understand the immovable power

of denial. She helped me understand why it is the coping mechanism of choice in our broken, dying world. Denial is easy. Acceptance is not.

Catherine Ingram once again says it well in, *[Facing Extinction](#)*:

“It is a mystery as to who can handle the truth of our situation and who runs from it as though their sanity depended on not seeing it.” She follows this with powerful words about the greatest deniers of all: parents. “There is one category of people that I have found especially resistant to seeing this darkest of truths: parents. A particular and by now familiar glazed look comes over their faces when the conversation gets anywhere near the topic of human extinction. And how could it be otherwise? It is built into the DNA that parents (not all, of course) love their children above themselves. They would sacrifice anything for them. So to think that there will be no protection for their children in the future, that no amount of money or homesteading or living on a boat or in a gated community or on a mountaintop or growing a secret garden will save them is too unbearable a thought to hold for even a second. I have also noticed a flash of anger arise in the midst of the distracted look on their faces, an almost subliminal message that says, ‘Don’t say another word on this subject.’”

And so it is. The dominant civilization that we’ve adhered to for far too long is both our lifeline and our executioner. In a mindless global collective grasping at the lifeline, denying the executioner will always prevail. Even while we walk the plank toward extinction with no option for turning back, our self-designed sense of omnipotence shields us from our infallibility. Blindness of the psyche has created a dissonance from our bleak reality that cannot be remedied. Without the deeply personal desire to look within, there is no climate scientist, spiritual guru or activist movement powerful enough to break the spell of denial.

Unstoppable Acceleration

With so many powerful movements throughout history, how did we reach a place where rebelling against extinction has even become a consideration? There’s obviously something about activism that isn’t working for us to have reached this critical juncture in time. (Personal sidenote: at this late hour in our collective

predicament, rebelling against extinction is about as useful as rebelling against exhalation. And it's important to note, we are in a predicament of which there is no solution. We are no sooner going to become an awakened collective of compassionate vegans than we are going to stop biosphere collapse.)

When we look closely at our separation-based creations over the last few thousand years, we can more clearly see the downward tailspin of our collective diminishment. The agricultural age led to the domination and mass brutality of animals and nature. The industrial age led to overpopulation and the commoditization of Life. The current technological age has caused widespread distraction and the dumbing down of humanity. And if we don't first go extinct, the emerging artificial intelligence age will render us obsolete. One way or another, humanity is disappearing in the near-term, and by its own hands no less.

The compound effect of each successive global age has had a profound effect on the degradation of mass consciousness. The timeline for each successive era has been significantly shorter, feeding into the exponential acceleration toward our final "break point". As Peter Russell writes in his essay, [What if There Were No Future?:](#)

"A system can tolerate only so much stress before it breaks down. Spin a wheel faster and faster, and the increasing stress will eventually break it apart. In a similar way, as rates of change grow ever faster, the systems involved will reach a point where they too begin to crack and break. Whether it be our own biological system, our social, economic, and political systems, or the planetary ecosystem, the stress of ever-increasing change will eventually lead to breakdown.

Thus the acceleration will finally come to an end—but to an end of its own making. It ends not because we change our ways, or control innovation. It comes to an end as we spiral into the center of our temporal whirlpool—a moment in time we started heading toward as soon as the evolutionary engine of innovation was put into our own hands and minds."

He goes on to write:

"When we look at what is happening to our world it is easy to get angry at the corporations, the politicians, the wealthy, the Church, the military, the terrorists, or anyone else we think is to blame for our predicament.

Or we may look to the past and blame the European Enlightenment when human activities took precedence over nature; to the Industrial Revolution; to the legalization of usury and the charging of interest, leading to economies wedded to continual growth; to the advent of civilization and the movement away from the land to living in cities; or to the Agricultural Revolution itself, when we moved from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle based on coexistence with nature to one in which the world was ours to control and exploit. All of these undoubtedly played a role in our present-day condition. But nowhere did we take a wrong turn. There is no one to blame; no group at fault. It is the inevitable accelerating pace of change, with all its consequences, that has brought us to this point. We'd have ended up in similar situation whatever path we took."

The bottom line is that we can declare #ClimateEmergency, #EcologicalEmergency, #ClimateBreakdown as much as we want, but the course was already charted long ago. We are already long past the point of no return. Anyone with the *willingness* to connect the dots can clearly see this by now. We'd be better off disengaging from the minutiae of the daily dramas of our lives and the world and instead, immersing ourselves in the magic of every moment of Life. In this deep connection to our Selves, our separation disappears and Life becomes more tender, beautiful and meaningful.

Turning Ourselves Outside In

Most activists are considered "extreme" relative to the collective capacity to feel. The less able the masses are to feel, the more "extreme" or "radical" the behaviour will be to capture mass attention. Using Extinction Rebellion as a current example, as long as the activists in this movement continue to believe that biosphere collapse is going to be addressed through civil disobedience or non-violent action, by marching in the streets and by changing legislation, they can all sit comfortably in the belief that they didn't create it; that it is entirely the fault of the governments, corporations and everyone else who "did this" to them.

The problem with most activists is their inability to look within. Activism, as we've come to know it, is predicated on finding an enemy. Once the "bad guys" are

identified, the battleground is set, and “enemies” are campaigned against in a plethora of different ways. It is an us vs. them mindset of separation that allows the offloading of personal responsibility based on the righteousness of cause-based beliefs.

But what if we are all “bad guys”?

What if *you* are the one eating the flesh, dairy and eggs of brutalized animals? What if *you* are the one who brought another civilization-perpetuating consumer into the world through your compulsion to procreate (excluding the selflessness of those who have chosen to adopt, that is)? What if *you* are the one supporting fossil-fuel and other Earth-destroying corporations by flying in airplanes, driving in cars, using heating, air conditioning, and copious amounts of water for trivial things? What if *you* are the one buying useless crap that you don’t need? What if *you* are the one sustaining collective fear through your interest in stories delivered by corporate media? What if *you* are the one perpetuating brutality through your mindless purchasing decisions? What if *you* are the one doing meaningless work that numbs your Soul?

What if you are the one destroying the planet, which you are.

And so am I.

And so is every other human being on this Earth.

This is not a blame game. It is not the fault of the “wealthy elite” or any one person, government, or corporation. By virtue of being born human into a world that rips us apart by severing our connection to the *Whole of What We Are*, we can be nothing but destroyers, ultimately creating the perfect conditions for our eventual demise. While we may believe that we can blame someone else for the ills of our world, or that we can indefinitely “gorge on the cake and not get fat”, reality tells a different story. We all pay the price for being human in a civilization based on an immovable [Big Lie](#).

Saving Our Selves from Ourselves

There is so much talk these days about the overwhelming litany of collapse: extinction of insects, birds, amphibians, mammals, carbon, methane, loss of sea ice, dead oceans, unprecedented heatwaves, droughts, floods, storms and wildfires, Brexit, Putin, Trump, and endless more yada, yada, yada (thank you [Marianne](#)

[Williamson](#)). We must lower our carbon emissions. We must eat less meat. We must use less plastic. We must clean up the oceans. We must have fewer children. We must plant trillions of trees. On and on and on it goes. Insurmountable strategies too impossible to ever be employed. Never is it said, however, that we must awaken and become different.

As we continue to move into a world that is increasing the pressure for us to wake up, chaos—external and internal—becomes more prevalent. On the comatose side, there is so much ignorance; so much denial. On the aware side, so much panic; so much despair. On both sides, so much division; so much fear.

So many distractions to prevent us from accepting that nothing can ever change until we do. We can blather on about the endless horrors unfolding on a planet sagging under the weight of a species with no connection to anything, or we can turn inward and answer the challenging questions these unprecedented times are imploring of us. What do our lives look like if we accept that it's over? Rather than carry on with the habituation of who we've always been, who do we then become? As far as I'm concerned, everything about the collapse of civilization and our entire biosphere is a provocation to turn myself outside in and become a better, more connected human Being. This is what drives my hunger for personal evolution, a hunger to become seamlessly intimate with my Self, and by default, to All. I call this "evolutionary activism".

As my friend, [Louise LeBrun](#) says, "We are the Void, we are the Whole. We are not a unique expression of the Whole, *we are the Whole expressing uniquely*. We are not a piece of anything. We are the whole thing expressing through a piece of reality." This goes against everything we've ever been taught about who and *what* we are. Once we remember this truth, however, it becomes difficult to relate to the limitations of our oppressive world because we know that we are so much more, and in that, everything changes.

When we evolve, the world evolves.

My own discoveries have shown me that personal evolution is not about seeking to become more (because we already are that), it's about emptying ourselves of all we've been taught to believe ourselves to be and trusting the emptiness. In that emptiness we are liberated, free to create ourselves, day-by-day, moment-by-moment. There is no longer any need to define ourselves by the rules of society,

the habituation of old beliefs, or the conditioning that has held us hostage to inauthentic lives of fear, shame and Self-separation. From this place of liberation, emergence is boundless, and the dividing line between our Selves and the natural world dissolves. There is no longer any cause to fight for or against because in that deep connection to Life, we naturally make more Life-affirming choices. Our trust in the natural intelligence of the unfolding story of our world then prevails.

My journey of personal evolution eventually revealed to me a painful realization: that activism is one of innumerable avenues for Self-separation; a distraction from the shame and worthlessness that lurks just below its surface. When the unexpressed grief of one's sense of worthlessness is projected externally, it becomes outrage. Perfect fuel for activism! And a perfect distraction from allowing the deep wisdom of expressed grief to reveal itself. Activism is cunning; an unconscious numbing mechanism created to lose one's self in virtuous addiction; addiction fuelled by righteousness under the guise of "selflessness" and "service". How do I know this? Because I've been there.

When we finally decide to know our Selves more, it's amazing what we discover. Consider asking yourself these questions: Who would I be if I let my cause go? Who would I be if activism was no longer part of my life? The answer will be immediate. No need to overthink it. (FYI, if you are thinking about it, you are most likely lying to yourself.) The same questions apply to those who don't consider themselves to be activists. You can easily replace the words, "cause" and "activism" with words such as, "work", "alcohol", "medication", "marriage", and so on.

In most cases what comes up are feelings of lostness ("I would be nothing"), lack of self-worth ("I would be useless"), and shame ("I would be unworthy of life").

In my life, activism was a self-defeating attempt at distancing myself from the shame of my feelings of worthlessness. It duped me into believing in a sense of self-worth. Activism was a "selfless" distraction from my wounded Soul. It was easier to fight for a cause than it was to face my Self. It was easier to "save the world" than it was to save my Self.

Letting go of activism meant letting go of a false sense of identity that served well to shield me from the pain of getting up close and personal with my shame. When I finally decided to stop and fully claim my life, I confess that I even felt

myself going through a type of “withdrawal”. It was filled with shame and guilt. Old patterns/habits/distractions often die hard.

Ironically, the greatest ways to create the changes in the world that activism does not, is Self-compassion, Self-intimacy, and Self-evolution. It runs counter to everything we’ve ever been taught about “selflessness” and “service”, but Gandhi knew well when he said, “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” He didn’t say, “Go out and fight and shame others with your marches, protests and petitions *so that they* create the change you wish to see in the world.” He inspired us to take personal responsibility by connecting with our Selves and expressing that into the world. The simple truth is that when we change our own world, the world changes.

We cannot live the fullest expression of Gandhi's phrase until we learn to love our Selves (to coin a cliché phrase). With that deep connection to our Self, compassion becomes who and what we are. Everything we then do—every thought, choice, and action—becomes an expression of that. The authentic expression of *what we are* lived out loud is where *real* change is made. There is no need to fight and resist anything anymore, regardless of how insane the world may be. Just be yourSelf, unapologetically speak your truth and live that out loud. [Trust that this is more than enough.](#)

If we were to turn our externally motivated activist efforts inward, they would reflect back to us so much about who and what we are. In our willingness to look this closely at ourselves, we develop an intimacy with the Self that knows no separation. This is where our true power resides. In claiming the deepest part of our Selves, we become so much more. It is in the expression of this that change—in our lives and all who we touch—becomes effortless. No more fighting and resisting required.

I personally believe that if every activist on the planet—whether it’s animal rights, environmental activism, social justice, human rights, or whatever else—invested the same amount of energy in their own personal evolution, we would have had the critical mass required to shift collective consciousness. If the world were filled with people who chose to reclaim their Selves, we would never have reached our current predicament. Even though it’s too late, however, Self-reclamation is the greatest form of spiritual activism, and the greatest gift we can give to ourselves and to our broken, dying world.

The Ripple Effect of Turning Inward

I recently received a moving email from a reader who felt compelled to share with me his inner struggles; struggles which I know all too well. I share with you an excerpt of what he wrote:

“...You are not alone. I too have known the truths you lay bare in *Beyond Hope* for most of my life. I too have been utterly baffled, flummoxed, heartbroken and despairing over the issues you expose so well. This has been the single most profound source of persistent emotional distress that I’ve had throughout my (now approaching long) life. My impotence to impact any of it has too been a stomp contributor to the sadness. And too, the perennial recognition that the vast majority of other humans are oblivious to this offers precisely zero solace. I vacillate between surrendering to utter acceptance, to the puny mollification that at least I am doing the best I can, and the desire to act as fiercely as possible, even knowing deeply that the tsunami carries a potency many orders of magnitude greater than my unitary ability to dampen it. It is difficult to know precisely how to live in the face of the impending, indeed actively unfolding inundations.

Still, is there anything to be gained from still trying? Your book is an example of that. ...is there anything to be gained by quickly creating a movement, identifying allies, working to educate and then through legislations? Does it even matter now...even if we did this here, would that impact what people are doing in Africa, where habitats disappear at a dizzying pace and the glory of nature crushed under the hubris of acquisition and control. I don’t know Deb. In my heart, I feel any such efforts are, will be, futile, and yet, I have an exceedingly difficult time in simply lying down.”

An excerpt of my reply follows:

“Like you, I used to feel ‘the puny mollification that at least I am doing the best I can’, but I see things differently now. How do I know that living a simpler life aligned with my internal truths is puny? Just because we’ve been

taught to believe this to be so, doesn't necessarily make it so. In fact, I no longer believe this to be the case.

I offer you a brief personal example:

I am a long-time volunteer at a local wildlife rehab sanctuary. I don't rehabilitate animals to change the world. I know it won't make a spec of difference in the rapacious pace of land development and the habitat/ecosystem desecration that follows. I know it won't make a spec of difference in changing the indifferent, distracted mentality of humans who care only about their iPhones. I know it won't make a spec of difference to impatient drivers who could care less if they maim/kill animals on the way to their next hurried distraction. I know it won't make a spec of difference to the use of pesticides and poisons that indiscriminately kill en-masse. It won't make a spec of difference to the ignorant masses who label these animals as pests and beings to hunt, poison, trap, and otherwise cause suffering to. **But**, it makes me feel better, and it makes a difference to me. And that is all I have. Regardless of our planetary predicament, I still care and I need an outlet for that. This is one of my outlets. I would love to live in a world where animal sanctuaries were unnecessary, but I don't.

For me, it's not as much about rescuing and caring for the animals as it is about having an outlet for the expression of my compassion. The wonderful thing is that the animals benefit in a beautiful way simply because I'm honouring my Self. This is also what drives my choice to live a simple, quiet life as a compassionately-motivated vegan. I don't live this way to change the world; I live this way to honour *who* and *what* I am. That is my place of power.

It's not about fighting like hell to save anything (which I feel is arrogant). It's about allowing myself to express authentically as who I am meant to be."

We've been well trained, particularly as women, to not put ourselves first. After all, that is not what we've been taught about "selflessness" and "service". But what would it be like if you did put yourself first? What would it be like if you did prioritize personal evolution? What would it be like to live a life of Self-intimacy and Self-trust; where you are no longer distracted by the futility of the fight? What

would it be like to trust the ripple effect—seen and unseen—of your willingness to be yourSelf and trust that the unapologetic expression of this is more than enough?

The questions I feel worth asking myself now are, "Who would I be if I allowed myself to let it all go?" "How would I choose to live my life if I allowed myself to trust the Natural Intelligence of Life?" I'm realizing that as much as I've let go in so many areas of my life, "allowing" is the ultimate act in trust. That is where I now choose to live.

Since I've let go of all expectations that anything I say or do will change anyone but me, I've realized a freedom like never before. While I've let go of my identity as an activist, I know that every choice that I make matters. Does it matter in the world "out there"? I don't know. But it matters to me.

To quote Gandhi once again, "It's the action, not the fruit of the action, that's important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there'll be any fruit. But that doesn't mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result."

I don't pick up the garbage of others because I think it will make a difference on a toxic, filthy planet. I do it because I care, and because I don't want to live on a toxic, filthy planet. I don't live a minimalist life because I think it will change the world. I live a simple life because it connects me to my Self, and in my Self connection, I'm connected to so much more. I'm not vegan because I think it will save the planet or make the miserable lives of animals any better. I'm vegan because I care deeply about animals, the planet and mySelf. I know that I am not separate from any of it.

I know that I am the Whole—a godforce, as Louise LeBrun says—expressing uniquely in a physical world. There is no longer any question of that in my life. A godforce living in a physical world does not choose brutality; does not choose separation. A godforce in a coma makes these mindless choices, but a godforce awake does not. Obviously I haven't yet perfected Self-reclamation or I'd be a pillar of white light floating in the ether of bliss, but I am dedicated to continued movement in that direction.

In the end, I choose to live a life that is more compassionate, intentional and connected for no other reason than because that is who I am—regardless of the

final outcome on this planet. Living a life of Self-connection means more to me than anything else. I also know the ripple effect of this choice matters.

To conclude this lengthy essay, I leave you with this beautiful quote from Louise LeBrun, "Make choices that do no harm and live in a way that creates ease." So compassionate. So simple. So impactful. I couldn't agree more.