



Theme: The Wounded Earth
Basis: The Work that Reconnects
Leaders: Kathy Shea and Hope Horton

GRATITUDE

Gathering and Community Building –

Music: Bruce & Brian BecVar, The Magic of Healing Music, CD2, track 2

With music in the background, people gather and are invited to browse through the earth objects located in several areas around the room. These can be stones, plants, symbols or water, animal statues, feathers, shells, dried leaves, branches, etc. Each individual is asked to choose one object that reminds them of a “beloved interaction with the natural world,” find a partner, introduce themselves, and share those stories with each other. Then the objects are returned and another object is selected, a new partner is located and stories are shared. Depending upon the size of the group and the amount of time available, 2 or 3 rounds of this can be accomplished. Then with a few minutes before the beginning of the formal Celebration, people are asked to select an object that represents something they have lost from the natural world. This time, they are asked to bring it with them into the circle of chairs without discussing it with anyone and hold it for use during the ceremony.

Greeting music is stopped.

A Gong or Bell is sounded to bring people into the sacred space

FORMAL RITUAL/CEREMONY BEGINS

Welcome/Introduction to NCIPL Earth Sabbath Celebration (*Kathy*)

HONORING OUR PAIN

Setting the stage: We remember that today is the full moon, a time of deep emotion and a wonderful energy for accessing and honoring our deepest sadness and hope for the communion of life on earth. We continue with the spiral with a Cairn of Mourning. (Hope)

First Reading: The Earth is Alive (*Kathy*)

Cairn of Mourning with tolling bell

Individuals are invited to bring their objects one by one into the center and place on the wooden platter with a brief explanation of what loss or sadness the object represents for them. A bell or bowl is sounded after each offering, as well as at the beginning and then end of the Cairn ritual.

Second Reading: Poem from Page 38 of the Work that Reconnects (*Hope*)

SEEING WITH NEW EYES – a story of transformation (*Hope*)

5-10 minute story of healing our relationship with the wounded Earth. Today will be Hope's experience with the "Radical Joy for Hard Times" model (<http://radicaljoyforhardtimes.org/>) in finding a new way of viewing the parking lot under construction next to her home which required the felling of many trees and destruction of habitat for countless creatures.

Chant: Om Mani Padme Hum (Hope)

Encircle objects (bring beauty) with beautiful cloth(s)

GOING FORTH

The telling of the Shambhala Warrior Myth (*Kathy*)

Playing/Listening/Singing of "Rest in the Cradle of the Dawn" by Libby Roderick

COMMISSIONING – chanted responsively (*Hope*)

Full Moon Blessing/benediction or simple song – sending out into the full moon to continue the work.

Bell or Bowl is sounded to release sacred space

Materials needed:

Bells, singing bowls, chimes, gong as available

CD player

Libby Roderick song

Opening music: Music: Bruce & Brian BecVar, The Magic of Healing Music, CD2, track 2

Objects depicting nature

Places for these objects to be displayed (we are using swathes of fabric on the floor in several locations around the perimeter of the room.

Central space to build Cairn of Mourning (we are using a simple low table with neutral colored clothes and a few votive candles)

Space:

This can be done inside or outside. During formal ritual, people are seated in chairs or on the ground in a circle.

Resources:

Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're in without Going Crazy. Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone.

Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World. Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown.

Claiming Earth as Common Ground; the Ecological Crisis through the lens of Faith. Andrea Cohen-Kiener

Commissioning / Sending Forth

Leader: Grant us a spirit of concern for the future of our environment; Bring an end to the exploitation of the earth's scarce resources; Encourage us to be responsible stewards of your Creation.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

Leader: Grant us a spirit of respect, recognizing the value and integrity of all creation; Encourage us to be accepting of ourselves and of others.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

Leader: Help us become advocates of peace, bringing an end to conflict and division; Renew our commitment to challenging the causes of injustice.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

Leader: Grant us a spirit of openness to see God within and around us; Help us to rejoice in the good we have experienced as we move forward to the future; Help us use our senses to celebrate beauty and creativity in the world.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

Leader: Grant us a spirit of truth to recognize failings, which have hurt us, others and the world; Give us the humility to ask forgiveness for our part in any wrongdoing.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

Leader: Grant us a spirit of generosity to reach out in trust to those who encounter; help us to embody God's love in our relationships with one another and with all Creation.

Response: Make us prophets of our time.

The Earth is Alive

The Earth is Alive and she breathes.
The winds of the world and the leaves of the vegetation;
The gills of fish and the brachia of all species, these are the breath of the Earth.

The Earth is Alive and she eats.
The bacteria of the soil and the guts of worms;
The teeth and flesh and bowels of all life, these are the digestive tract of the Earth.

The Earth is Alive and she has a circulatory system.
The waterways and aquifers, the clouds and the rain,
The pulse and blood of all life – these are the circulatory system of the Earth.

The Earth is Alive and she knows.
The nervous system of all beings,
The frontal lobes of the higher mammals,
These are the Earth's capacity to know herself.
We are the thought of the Earth.

The Earth is Alive and she breathes.
The exhaust of our engines and the fumes of four garbage heaps;
The scarred and cancer-filled lungs of all life, these are the breath of the Earth.

The Earth is alive and she eats.
The diminished range of species and the engineered seeds,
The Captive livestock and roadside carrion, these are the digestive system of the Earth.

The Earth is alive and she has a circulatory system.
The Drano and detergent in our drains,
The acid and metals in our gentle rain, these infuse the bloodstream of the Earth.

The Earth is Alive and she thinks.
The discomfort in our guts,
The ache of our spirits,
The desolation of our disconnection –
These are Earth's capacity to know herself.
We are the thought of the Earth.

From CLAIMING EARTH AS COMMON GROUND
Andrea Cohen-Kiener
Skylight Paths Publishing, 2009
Page 5

A Psalm by Anita Barrows

And I would travel with you
to places of our shame

The hills stripped of trees, the marsh grasses
oil-slicked, steeped in sewage;

the blackened shoreline, the chemical-poisoned water;

I would stand with you in the desolate places, the charred places,
soil where nothing will ever grown, pitted desert;

fields that burn slowly for months; roots of cholla & chaparral
withering with underground explosions

I would put my hand
there with yours, I would take your hand, I would walk with you

through carefully planted fields, rows of leafy vegetables
drifting with radioactive dust; through the dark,
of uranium mines hidden in the sacred gold-red mountains;

I would listen with you in drafty hospital corridors
as the miner cried out in the first language

of pain; as he cried out
the forgotten names of his mother I would stand
next to you in the forest's

final hour, in the wind
of helicopter blades, police

sirens shrieking, the delicate
tremor of light between

leaves of the last
time Oh I would touch with this love each

wounded place

COMING BACK TO LIFE
PRACTICES TO RECONNECT OUR LIVES, OUR WORLD
Joanna Macy, Molly Young Brown
New Society Publishers, 1998
Page 30

NOTE: Please tell this story rather than read it. Joanna believes it is more alive that way.

“The Shambhala Story” by Joanna Macy

There will come a time of enormous chaos in the world. At this time, two great powers will have arisen, one in the western hemisphere and one in the East. These two powers will each have spent and squandered their wealth in preparation to try to govern the whole world, and annihilate the other power. Yet the two powers will also have much in common, including weapons and technology of vast destruction, and their own humanity. In this time, when the future almost seems to hang in balance, the Kingdom of Shambhala will emerge.

This Kingdom has no situ; it is not a place. It exists only in the hearts and minds of the Shambhala Warriors. Nor can you recognize a Shambhala Warrior when you see him or her, for these Warriors wear no uniforms or insignia. They have no barricades on which to climb to threaten the enemy, or behind which they can rest to hide or regroup. They haven't even any home turf.

Great courage, moral and physical, is required of the Shambhala Warriors, for they must go into the very heart of the great powers, into the congresses and board rooms and ivory towers where the weapons are kept. To dismantle these weapons, in every sense of the word, the Warriors must go into the corridors of power where decisions are made.

The Shambhala Warriors have the courage to do this because they know that the weapons of these powerful factions only appear to be made of steel and plutonium. In fact they are made by the human mind. And as such, they can only be unmade by the human mind. The Warriors know that the weapons arise from the choices, lifestyles, work-styles, and relationships that the people who govern these powerful factions have chosen to have with one another.

So the Warriors go into training, using two weapons of their own: wisdom and compassion. These weapons are certainly not conventional, nor do they seem very forceful. And yet they are tremendously powerful weapons. Why wisdom and compassion? Here is what the legend says.

Compassion gives us the juice, the power, and the passion to bring awareness and vision to the world. Awareness allows us to see things for what they are, including noticing our own conditioned reactions and being at choice about whether to employ different ones – like those in service of more curiosity, understanding and productivity – and, ultimately, peace. But compassion itself is not enough because it will burn us out. So we need the other weapon, which is wisdom. Wisdom enables us to comprehend our interconnectedness and see that it is not really a battle between good guys and bad guys at all, but rather that the line between good and evil runs through the landscape of every human heart. With compassion we can be at choice with our words and our deeds; with wisdom we can understand how our actions have wide-reaching repercussions beyond anything we can measure or discern. By employing wisdom and compassion, the Shambhala Warriors become agents of awareness, vision, and, ultimately, transformation.