

Dr. Linda Groff, Anticipating Earth Crises in the Anthropocene Age: Alternative Future Scenarios and an Urgent Call to Action

ABSTRACT

This session presents a big picture look at the many crises currently facing the Earth (Part I); proposed solutions (Part II); how Peace with the Earth fits within the broader context of holistic, evolving aspects of peace (Part III); and alternative future scenarios based on how seriously humanity addresses these challenges, concluding with an urgent call to action, given the accelerating severity of climate change (Part IV); followed by audience dialogue on urgency of the issues, their interdependence, & importance of individual, group, & national commitments to policies and actions that can make a difference.

Part I, *Earth Crises* include: advent of the Anthropocene Age, characterized by human dominance of Earth; population explosion in a world of finite world resources; water quality issues; dangers of global warming and climate change; a needed shift from non-renewable to renewable energy sources; and threats to biodiversity and the Sixth Mass Extinction of Species.

Part II, *Possible Solutions* include: a call to international, governmental, community, interfaith, & individual action in support of: the UN Oct. 2018 urgent Climate Report; the Paris Climate Agreement of Dec. 2015; 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2015-2030, following 8 UN Development Goals for 2000-2015; a shift to green technologies & lifestyles; a needed shift to dynamic, interdependent, complex, whole systems thinking; and Eco-Spirituality and Sacred Activism honoring Earth and life as sacred, and calling for human responsibility to be caretakers of Earth (our life support system) and other species .

Part III, *Peace with the Earth as Part of a Holistic, Evolving View of Peace for the 21st Century*: looks at Peace with the Earth, or Gaia Peace—of humans with the Earth and other species, as one of seven evolving aspects of “what is peace” from the Peace Studies Field, with all aspects of peace building on each other and collectively creating a holistic, integrative view of peace for the 21st century, with important contributions from Western, Eastern, and Indigenous cultures and civilizations.

Part IV, *Alternative Future Scenarios for an Earth in Crisis*: based on whether countries, organizations, and humans decide to follow the above proposed solutions seriously (best case), only partially (mixed, but worsening case over time), or reject these solutions (worse case), concluding with an urgent call for action, given the accelerating severity of climate change and other ecological issues.

Part V: Dialogue on urgency of issues, policies each person present can commit to and seek to implement in their lives. Sharing of actions by different people on different system levels to inspire further actions by others on what works and can make a difference. Suggested organizations to connect with in one’s own community. Importance of systems thinking to understand

interdependence of all these issues, & importance of commitment to actions that can make a difference.

More Detailed Outline:

INTRODUCTION: THE EARTH IS IN CRISIS: Introduction and overview of article.

PART I: CURRENT CRISES FACING PLANET EARTH

Introduction

(1) The Anthropocene Era: A New Geological Era Characterized by Human Dominance of the Earth

(2) Population Explosion: Finite World Resources, and the Tragedy of the Commons

Global Population Growth Over Time

R. Buckminster Fuller and an “Eternally Regenerative Universe”

(3) Water Quality Issues Hindering Global Development and Health

(4) Dangers of Global Warming and Climate Change

(5) A Needed Shift from Non-Renewable to Renewable Energy Sources

(6) Threats to Biodiversity and the Sixth Mass Extinction of Species

Summary Conclusions on Current Crises Confronting the World

PART II: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR CURRENT CRISES FACING THE EARTH

Introduction

(7) A Call for Community, Governmental, and Interfaith Action

(8) The UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2015-2030

(9) The UN’s Earlier Millennium Development Goals for 2000-2015

(10) The Paris Climate Change Agreement, December 12, 2015

(11) The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)—New Report, October 8, 2018

(12) Jan. 2019 Report on the Accelerating Rate of Climate Change, Calling for Urgent Change

(13) Green Technologies and Lifestyles, and a Proposed Green New Deal in the U.S.

(14) A Needed Shift to Dynamic, Interdependent, Complex, Whole Systems Thinking and Worldviews

(15) Need to Reintegrate the Importance of the Female Principle with the Male Principle—to Stress Interdependent Thinking and Worldviews

(16) Eco-Spirituality and Sacred Activism in Support of the Earth, with Humans as Caretakers of Earth

(17) Support for Local Ecological Organizations and Efforts in One’s Own Community

Summary Conclusions on Possible Solutions for Dealing with an Earth in Crisis

PART III: PUTTING PEACE WITH THE EARTH WITHIN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF HOLISTIC, EVOLVING ASPECTS OF PEACE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Introduction

Peace with the Earth, or Gaia Peace—of humans with the Earth and other species, and the need for humans to be caretakers of Earth.

Peace with the Earth as an Integral Aspect of Seven Holistic, Evolving Aspects of Peace for the 21st Century. See Fig. 1

Western, Eastern and Indigenous Contributions to a Holistic, Integrative View of Peace: See Fig. 2

Summary Conclusions

PART IV: ALTERNATIVE FUTURE SCENARIOS FOR AN EARTH IN CRISIS, AND AN URGENT CALL TO ACTION

Introduction

* *Best Case Scenario:* humans heed the call and accept the urgency of the Issues of climate change and an Earth in crisis. They proceed to seriously implement policies under suggested solutions in Part II, requiring real changes in lifestyles and worldviews to support such efforts.

* *Worst Case Scenario:* humans fail to respond to climate change and an Earth in crisis, guaranteeing failure and ensuring a worsening future for humanity & other species, with more extremes of climate change, more endangered species, dangers to coastal communities and the mass migration of people, with enormous political and economic implications for disruption.

* *Mixed Case or Most Probable Case Scenario:* humans respond to some issues or half-heartedly to the many issues facing the Earth today, ensuring a worsening situation for Earth, other species, and humanity over time, given the accelerating urgency of Earth issues outlined in recent reports. Periodic catastrophes may wake people up to the urgency of the situation, but actions then may be too late to avert various disasters.

* *Conclusion: An Urgent Call to Action.*

PART V: Dialogue on urgency of issues, policies each person present can commit to and seek to implement in their lives. Sharing of actions by different people on different system levels to inspire further actions by others on what works and can make a difference. Suggested organizations to connect with in one's own community. Importance of systems thinking to understand interdependence of all these issues. Seeing the Earth and life as sacred.

KEYWORDS:

- Earth Crises & Proposed Policies
- Eco-Civilizations
- Eco-Spirituality
- Peace with Earth as Part of a Holistic View of Peace
- Best Case, Worst Case, Mixed Case Earth Scenarios

- Sharing Action Steps and Commitments

**FORMAT: DIALOGUE Session with Powerpoint.
Could also provide paper.**

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