

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

*Laozi, Dao De Jin*



**ACTIVE HOPE & SPIRAL THAT RECONNECTS.**

# SENTENCE STARTERS.

I am grateful...

I want to thank...

Looking towards the future, my concerns are...

Facing these concerns, what inspires me are...

Looking to the future we are heading into, what I hope for is...

A part I'd like to play in this is....

A step I'd take towards this in the upcoming week is...

# notes.

## ACTIVE HOPE.

The future is filled with volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Let's say, "Things are getting crazy out there!" In a world facing numerous challenges, it's crucial for each of us to meaningfully engage with the big problems that will impact not only our lives but also the future of our planet.

How do we get started? The Spiral that Reconnects invites us to embark on an adventure: firstly, to uncover hope and then to summon the courage to act upon it.

Hope captures our enduring human Spirit; it is our nature to imagine a brighter future. Active Hope is not just about hope in the passive sense; it's about active participation in bringing about what we hope for. Cultivating active hope asks all of us to embody *the Activists* by taking stock of where we are, identifying what we hope for, and then taking a step in that direction.

## CALL TO ACTION.

Our current "industrial growth society" worldview is not sustainable. Some key issues that threaten to unravel the fabric of our society, as listed in the World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report (2024), are,

- Extreme weather conditions.
- Shift in critical life-giving systems.
- Collapse of biodiversity.
- Rise of misinformation.
- Involuntary migration.
- Cyber insecurity.
- Natural resource shortages.
- Global health threats and response.
- Global and regional economic inequality.

- AI & Technological disruption.
- Geopolitical tensions.
- Social polarisation.
- Equitable economic opportunities.
- ...

These pressing issues demand our awareness, hope and action. If not us, if not you, who? If not now, when?

The concepts of "The Great Turning," "Business as Usual," and "The Great Unravelling" are central to Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone's book *Active Hope*. These terms represent different strategies for making meaning of and having an impact in a challenging world.

## THE UNRAVELLING.

"Unravelling" is a helpful term because it implies a process rather than an event, a progressive loosening of a system's coherence until it eventually falls apart. We are called to acknowledge our crisis, the damage still being done, and the urgent need for change.

## BUSINESS AS USUAL.

"Business as Usual" refers to our tendency to react from our dominant worldview: economic growth above all else and often at the expense of environmental health and social equity. Most of us spend some of our time in this narrative. We find ourselves thinking,

- "I don't believe it's that dangerous."
- "It's not my job to sort this out."
- "I don't want to stand out from the crowd."
- "The alternative threatens my political or commercial interests."

- “This won’t impact me”.
- “It is too upsetting – I prefer not to think about this.”
- “I feel paralysed – I am aware of the danger, but I do not know what to do.”
- “There is no point in doing anything. It will not make a difference.”
- “It's too late.”
- “I’ve worked hard for what I have.”
- “This is how it's always been.”

Which of these crutches have you relied on? We must identify and counter the voices that hold us back for change to happen through us.

## THE GREAT TURNING.

The choice is no longer “Will we or won't we engage?”. The choice before us today is “How will we engage?”. "The Great Turning" is described as an epochal shift from an industrial society rooted in doing and having to a more sustainable, life-affirming way of Being in the world.

Transformational change is inevitable, but the outcome and how that change unfolds are in our hands. We are called to choose our part in the turning: reflective and proactive or adversarial and reactive.

## WHAT ARE YOU CALLED TO DO?

Suppose three dimensions determine whether the transition will prove positive or negative: holding actions, new life-sustaining systems, and our degree of consciousness. These factors demonstrate both the need for leadership in shaping our direction and the need for individual contributions that drive us in

this direction. The “Great Turning” sits in the middle of these three factors. Where are you already playing a part? Where are you called to participate?

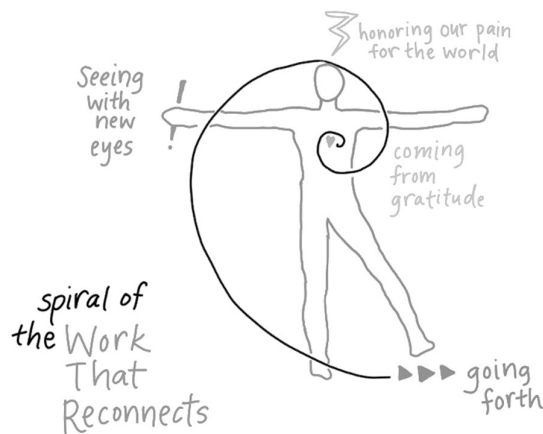
**PERFORM HOLDING ACTIONS.** We hold back and slow down the damage caused by our prevailing worldview and take care of those engaged in this work alongside us.

**ESTABLISH LIFE-SUSTAINING SYSTEMS & PRACTICES.** We rethink how we live, collaborate in business, and organise in societies. We actively manage the change journey from existing to new systems, minimising suffering, pain, fear, and hate.

**ELEVATE CONSCIOUSNESS.** We spread love, deepening our awareness of interconnectedness and enhancing our ability to respond with compassion and empathy.

## FINDING HOPE.

Joana and Chris designed a practice to empower individuals and communities to act for the betterment of our world. It invites us into our *hearts*, where we are most connected to one another and our life-giving planet. We are also asked to take control of our *minds* instead of letting them control us. We must overcome barriers to action and find innovative solutions to move forward. Finally, the practice shifts our awareness into our *bodies*, inviting us to commit to small actions. We know that small actions, over time, compound to a significant impact.



The Spiral That Reconnects consists of four stages that participants move through in a cyclical process, each reinforcing and deepening the last. The Spiral is a dynamic, ongoing process that individuals and groups can return to repeatedly, at any time, gaining strength and clarity each time.

## GRATITUDE.

Gratitude grounds us in what we already have rather than what we lack, helping us to anchor our journey positively and to open our eyes to opportunity. Do you see the flowers right in front of you?

### I VOICE MY TRUTH.

The following sentence starters invite us to express our gratitude:

- I am grateful for...
- I want to thank...

### I LET MY LIFE SPEAK.

The following suggestions invite us to deepen our practice:

**TODAY.** You showed up; thank you!

**TOMORROW.** Affirm and appreciate someone.

**THIS WEEK.** Show yourself (mind, body, and Spirit) care and kindness, and celebrate how you showed up for the Great Turning.

**THIS MONTH.** Consume mindfully.

**THIS YEAR.** Pay it back or pay it forward.

## MOVE FORWARD, WITH PURPOSE...

Practising gratitude reduces stress and increases our resiliency. It short-circuits negative thought patterns and allows us to think creatively. Being thanked and appreciated tends to re-energize and resource us.

### ... TOGETHER!

Interpersonal gratitude, appreciation, and affirmation invite compassion and empathy, encourage a culture of generosity, and ask us to move toward cooperation and collaboration.

### THE MINDSET SHIFT.

The darkest paths are illuminated by the sparks of light we embody in the Present moment.

## HONOURING OUR PAIN.

Amidst the ecological and societal crises, let us find the strength to rise above. By shining light on our sadness, fear, hatred, grief and anger, we diminish their hold on us and pave the way for a brighter future.

### I VOICE MY TRUTH.

The following sentence starters invite us to honour our pain:

- Looking towards the future, my concerns are...

## I LET MY LIFE SPEAK.

The following suggestions invite us to deepen our practice:

**TODAY.** Being vulnerable is hard work. Good job!

**TOMORROW.** Reflect on which lies you tell yourself and others to remain comfortable.

**THIS WEEK.** Meditate on the interconnected self. Where do you stop and the next person begin?

**THIS MONTH.** List 20 issues that you are concerned about. What is the outcome that you wish for?

**THIS YEAR.** Invite yourself to a different table (engage in conversations with communities you would not typically consider yourself part of).

## MOVE FORWARD, WITH PURPOSE...

Accepting and embracing our emotions allows us to mindfully transform and transmute them without being overwhelmed. As we integrate past traumas, we become stronger and more resilient. Through pain, we gain deep insights into our desires, fears, and what drives us.

## ... TOGETHER!

Recognising shared trauma, loss, and grief cultivates empathy and compassion; when we see ourselves as the victim, the villain, and the hero, we can share in the responsibility of justice, healing, and restoration.

## THE MINDSET SHIFT.

Through clear perception, we are moved towards meaningful action.

## SEEING THE WORLD WITH new eyes.

Take a step towards new possibilities. We are encouraged to wash away old thought patterns to explore opportunities from new perspectives.

## I VOICE MY TRUTH.

The following sentence starters invite us to look at the world differently:

- o Facing these concerns, what inspires me are...
- o Looking to the future we are heading into, what I hope for is...

## I LET MY LIFE SPEAK.

The following suggestions invite us to deepen our practice:

**TODAY.** You are doing *the work that reconnects* right now; well done!

**TOMORROW.** Use an internet search to deepen your understanding of the “Spirit of Ubuntu”.

**THIS WEEK.** Use the Internet to research the “Clock of the Long Now” and use this as an invitation to meditate on Time.

**THIS MONTH.** Discover and explore new parts of your ancestral story.

**THIS YEAR.** Regularly ask yourself, “Who am I?”

## MOVE FORWARD, WITH PURPOSE ...

An expanded perspective empowers us to think differently about problems, solutions, and our relationship to them. Adaptive and creative thinking is crucial for personal growth and resourcefulness.

## ... TOGETHER!

When society embraces new viewpoints, it can lead to revolutionary ideas and solutions that address complex challenges, enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience on a larger scale.

### THE MINDSET SHIFT.

Nothing that is worth achieving can be achieved alone or overnight. I know what mine is to do, and I am committed to doing it.

## GOING FORTH

The phase is about action. We each commit to playing our part. Inspired, we move forward together, with intention, resourced, and encouraged by the steps we have just taken and the work we have done in this moment. We are moved to act.

### I SPEAK MY TRUTH.

The following sentence starters invite us to commit to taking action:

- A part I'd like to play in this is....
- A step I'd take towards this in the upcoming week is...

### LET MY LIFE SPEAK.

The following suggestions invite us to deepen our practice:

**TODAY.** You are doing *the work that reconnects* right now; well done!

**TOMORROW.** Use an Internet search to deepen your understanding of the "Spirit of Ubuntu".

**THIS week.** Use an Internet search to explore the "Clock of the Long Now". What world do you envision in 10000 years?

**THIS month.** Discover and explore new parts of your ancestral story. How have small actions by those who came before you shaped your path?

**THIS year.** Regularly ask yourself "who am I?"

### MOVE FORWARD, WITH PURPOSE ...

This stage motivates individuals to apply their renewed understanding and commitment daily, driving meaningful action and personal fulfilment.

## ... TOGETHER!

This phase cultivates a proactive engagement and responsibility culture, where communities are inspired to implement sustainable changes and advocate for future-oriented policies.

### THE MINDSET SHIFT.

Everything on earth has its own time and its season.