

Teams of Two

A Model for Personal Unfolding, Citizen Activism and Social Transformation

Dennis Rivers , MA – July 20, 2015 revision
<http://www.EarthCitizens.net/library/teams-of-two.pdf>

The Earth Citizens Extended Cooperative Community is a loosely knit network of scholar-activists dedicated to the emergence of a more sustainable and more compassionate world. Our www.EarthCitizens.net web site, ***Resources for the Great Turning***, addresses five interwoven areas of deep concern: peace, ecology, social justice, human rights and green spiritual awakening. We hope to provide people with the resources and encouragement needed to stay involved with difficult issues for long periods of time. A key element of our approach is the recommendation that people pair up in mutual support teams of two to work on the overlapping ecological and political crises of our time. This ***Teams-of-Two*** approach is one possible vision of how we might work on issues of ecological sustainability in ways that are also emotionally sustainable for the participants. ***Teams-of-Two*** is an effort to carry forward and develop the practices that have appeared in recent decades under the headings of “affinity groups,” “accountability partnerships,” and “peer coaching.” All of our Teams-of-Two materials are in the Creative Commons, and we invite peace and ecology organizations everywhere to explore this way of building more resilient teams.

Emotional support in “enduring emergencies”

One of the fundamental principles at work in this approach is the idea that the deeper the task you ask people to work on, the deeper the support you ought to offer them. Many of the topics we confront today are profoundly disturbing of a person’s sense of physical and mental well being and safety. So we are committed to weaving emotional support practices, information, and reflection, into all our presentations of those difficult topics. For example, if we are going to appeal to people to make strenuous efforts for years on end to keep the world from being poisoned by leaking nuclear power plants, then it seems quite compelling to me that we should provide some opportunity for people to express the kinds of distresses they might feel as they master and live with

the facts, issues and implications of radioactive contamination. Many anti-nuclear and climate change groups have not yet begun to operate at this level, but it is greatly to be hoped that this level of support will emerge as ecological advocacy groups evolve and mature. (We are committed to publishing open source teaching documents on the topic, one of which is the 24-step Spiral Journey Resilience Map – see last page of this article.) Eco-philosopher and anti-nuclear activist Joanna Macy is an inspiring pioneer in this area, and her work is featured extensively in the ***Resources for the Great Turning***, online library and the Spiral Journey Resilience Map.

A good deal of ecological activism follows what I think of as the “house on fire” model. Which is to say, “drop whatever you’re doing right now and attend to this, over here” because *this* is the most important emergency. In the case of fighting fire, you don’t give any thought while fighting the fire to the kind of person you hope to become in the course of your lifetime, nor the kinds of strengths that might have made you a better firefighter.



The ecological crises of our time, however, and the chronic wars and global economic inequalities that kill millions of people every decade, may well last longer than our entire lives. They are what you might call *enduring emergencies*. Global warming and Chernobyl and Fukushima include processes of injury that will unfold over hundreds or even thousands of years. In relation to such challenges, *I don’t think we can, or ought, to give up on our quest to become more fully realized persons while we attend to these crises*. They are, for better or for worse, the contexts in which we

will become persons. And it would be self-defeating for us to assume that we already have all the personal strengths, all the personal skills, and all the personal webs of mutual support we need to contribute effectively to the mending of the world.

By way of personal example, most of my life has been over-shadowed by issues involving nuclear weapons and nuclear waste. I grew up practicing weekly atom bomb shelter drills and later lived downwind from a nuclear power plant build on an earthquake fault. Since this is the only planet I've got, I am searching for ways to become a kinder and wiser person in the middle of my activities against nukes and on behalf of the web of life. In the course of my struggles, I have found many interesting and inspiring examples of how this might be done: Gandhi's Karma Yoga, the engaged Buddhism of Thich Nhat Hanh and Aung San Suu Kyi, the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Quaker *Book of Faith and Practice*, and the life of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. When I look at my life from the perspective of decades, the pattern of in-breath and out-breath suggests itself as a model. For every great challenge I face outside of myself, there appears to be a set of corresponding deep strengths that I am being challenged to develop, both inside of myself and within my circle of co-workers.



A twenty-four-part learning agenda

Affinity groups struggle to find a balance between anarchy and rigidity, between no guidance at all and a suffocating set of rules. Participants in the informal Earth Citizens peer mentoring and support network are

exploring how to operate in the creative middle ground between these two extremes. On the one hand, from the experience of activists and advocates over the past century, we have already identified twenty-four of the issues that are going to come up in the course of working on extremely challenging issues.

We know that in the course of working on issues such as nuclear contamination, for example, people will begin to wrestle with such time-honored topics as forgiveness, gratitude for life in the face of tragedy and betrayal, truthfulness, empathy, and so on.

But, on the other hand, we present these and related topics in the twenty-four part Spiral Journey Resilience Map as a menu of resources and invitations to explore, rather than as a pre-flight check-off list that must be completed in a particular order. Even though we know they are coming toward us, there is no one best way for a given person or team to work on these deep topics. So we leave it open for each person and each **Team-of-Two** to invent the way that they are going to make use of the learning agenda, which topics they are going to explore, and how they are going to explore them. Our responsibility is to provide a rich set of resources and inspiring stories in support of each of those twenty-four topics. We operate from the perspective that the deeper levels of human development cannot be **required of** people, they can only be **inspired in** people.

Some models we are learning from, and some we are struggling against

One challenge that we face in organizing a peer support network is that in Western societies the psychotherapy profession has come to dominate the process of emotional support giving. In recent decades psychologists in the United States even moved to classify all processes of emotional support and discussions of personal development as the unique province of licensed professionals (themselves). (This effort failed in the U.S. because of freedom of speech and religious freedom issues.) For the most part, however, the gradual monopolization of emotional support conversations by psychotherapists has not been the result of a conscious plan on their part. It is much more an unfortunate byproduct of the process of professionalization itself. Whenever one group in society starts specializing in a particular activity (brain

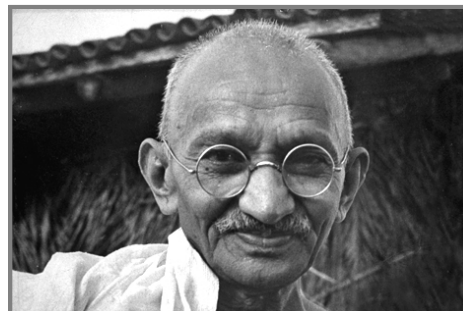
surgery, house wiring, shoe making), they generally do it better than every one else, and most other people stop doing it, leaving it to the experts.

This professionalization brings good results in many areas of life but, I would suggest, terrible results in a few important area. Many of the challenges facing us today, such as chronic war, climate change, nuclear waste, and global disease and early death related to tobacco use, can't be solved by experts and licensed professionals alone. They involve society-wide consensus shifting and the participation of as many people as possible. So we need to learn from examples of wide participation, such as 12-Step groups and the Civil Rights movement. We might even also learn from other examples, such as how specific card games are played around the world with relatively little supervision, how popular songs spread across the world, and the structure of amateur sports, to understand more about how such movements and activities reach out to involve and empower new participants.

There is a natural tension in human societies between excellence and egalitarianism. For their survival, societies need both inclusiveness and excellence, but these two pull in very different directions. Twelve-step groups admit practically everyone who shows up, but they fail in a variety of ways (including that lots of people drop out). Elite medical schools graduate a high proportion of excellent doctors, but exclude most applicants. Our slowly evolving Earth Citizens **Teams-of-Two** peer mentoring and peer support network aspires to nurture both inclusiveness and excellence, but that will require deep creativity on our part.

Three empowering ideas

In searching for resources that could empower a wide range of people to live more courageously, compassionately and supportively, the Spiral Journey Curriculum begins with three ideas from three inspiring “spiritual permission granters:” Mahatma Gandhi, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the eco-philosopher Joanna Macy.



Mahatma Gandhi

From Mahatma Gandhi we receive the idea that we have the power to be the change we want to see. I am convinced that this idea is partly rooted in Gandhi's Hinduism. Hinduism is based on the overarching idea that your individual soul (Atman) is a wave in the ocean of God's Being (Brahman). Therefore, you have infinite resources of love, awareness and understanding within you, although you may not have learned yet how to mobilize these resources for the good of everyone. *But having such resources means that we can stop waiting for someone else to do something wonderful! We can find a way to start doing that something wonderful in our own lives, in our own towns, in our own countries.*

It is possible to express this vision of empowerment as based in nature, as well, for those of us who are not members of a specific religious community. (This brings to mind the nature mysticism of John Muir and Hildegard of Bingen.) Starting in nature, one could say that every cell in your body contains the five hundred million year history of life, therefore you have within you a well of living intelligence to draw on in overcoming whatever obstacles your society faces.

You have the power, in both of these visions, the spiritual and the spirit-in-nature, to begin the change you want to see. And you have the power to stand against the entire world in those times when the world sinks into the confusion of greed and violence. In terms of a mutual support network, Gandhi's vision allows us to see one another as partners in the mobilization of that profound compassionate intelligence, hidden, but yearning to be born, in every human being.



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

From the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., we receive the idea of the “Beloved Community,” a vision of inclusiveness that grows out of the belief in one supremely loving Creator, who has created us all as brothers and sisters. Because of that, our vision of the transformation of society must necessarily include all those people with whom we now disagree, all those people we see as creating society’s problems. In Dr. King’s vision, the power of love reaches out to include everyone, to transform unjust social arrangements, and to lift us up to be the generous and noble human beings we were intended to be by our Creator. In terms of a mutual support network, Dr. King’s vision allows us to see one another as partners in the mobilization of that deep love, hidden, but yearning to be born, in every human heart.



Joanna Macy

From the eco-philosopher Joanna Macy, we receive a profound idea that changes our relationship to the

crises of our time. Our pain for the world, she insists, is not a problem that we should try to be getting rid of. Our society, obsessed with success, views every discomfort is a sign of failure, which must be medicated or therapized out of existence.

To the contrary, Joanna Macy insists, our pain for the world bears a secret witness to our love for the world. Our pain for the world is not a failure, it is the best part of us yearning to be expressed. Even more, our pain for the Web of Life and the obliteration of countless species, is the Web of Life speaking through us, moving through us, and calling us to a life of heroic service. The way forward, in Joanna Macy’s vision, is not to avoid our pain but to enter into it fully and consciously, and to find the love that is hidden within it. Empowered by that love we can go forth and participate in the healing of the world. In terms of a mutual support network, Joanna Macy’s vision allows us to see one another as partners and companions in the radical transformation of personal pain into courageous love.

Three visionaries of peer support

Another strong source of inspiration for the Teams-of-Two vision is the work of Carl Rogers, a 20th-century psychologist, university professor and scholar of human development. In the course of analyzing hundreds of psychotherapy transcripts, Rogers discovered that there were three underlying attitudes on the part of the therapist that seem to help the client take the next step in their developmental journey. These three attitudes were *caring, sincerity, and an actively voiced empathy*, a nonjudgmental effort to see the world through the eyes of the client, and reflect that world back to the client.

Rogers built on his experience to propose that *these three attitudes are the universal ingredients of developmental encouragement*, whether between therapist and client, teacher and student, parent and child, minister and parishioner, spouse and spouse, or friend and friend. Rogers’ discovery offered the possibility that we might grow toward becoming a more empathic civilization, because these attitudes could be adopted (with some conscious effort, of course) by everyone.

The need for developmental encouragement is more than merely the need of individuals. The developmental problems of individuals become the developmental problems of entire societies, and vice versa. A society permanently at war, such as the one I live in, becomes a society in which the cruelty and deceptions of war become the norms of everyday life. (Citizens of the US are at war in three ways: at war with other countries, at war with the Earth through savage resource extraction, and at war with each other through in a society organized around relentless competition.) As we work to steer our lives toward kindness and truthfulness, following the path opened up by Carl Rogers' research, we work not only to improve our own lives, but also to steer our culture out of the self-perpetuating labyrinth of war.

Unfortunately, Rogers' discoveries about caring, sincerity and empathy collided with the needs of the emerging psychotherapy profession, which needed, in order to justify its professional existence, to have access to specific tools and techniques that were by definition beyond the reach of the "unlicensed" laypeople. Although Carl Rogers did not succeed in his efforts to universalize the three attitudes he had documented, it is not too late to develop the life-enhancing implications of his work. A small but steady stream of psychologists and psychotherapists have been doing so over the past forty years.

Such is the case with the following three writers, who have encouraged me with materials that could be used to deepen mutual support communities.

Gerald Goodman, now emeritus Professor of Psychology at UCLA, did research in the 1960s that led to his 1972 book, *Companionship Therapy*, which focused on the beneficial effects on troubled ten- and eleven-year-old boys of being in the regular presence of a "supportive other," in this case a university student. Goodman went on to write *The Talk Book*, a popular communication skills self-help book intended to empower us all to become "supportive others" in one another's lives.

Lawrence Brammer, a professor at the University of Washington, and author of *The Helping Relationship: Process and Skills* (2002). Brammer points out that most people who are experiencing distress in life are not mentally ill. They simply need the presence of a

supportive other in order to help them mobilize their coping resources. We could all learn specific skills and attitudes that would allow us to be more supportive of one another in times of acute distress and disorientation. Brammer documents these skills in great detail. What I would add to Brammer's analysis is that widespread knowledge of how to be a supportive presence does not fit well into the dominant script of professional success in our society, which requires that one master a rare specialty, and focus on people with spectacular distresses.



The co-arising of human personhood

Another writer who has done a wonderful job of carrying forward the work of Carl Rogers and his associates is Jacqueline Small. Her book, *Becoming Naturally Therapeutic: A Return To The True Essence Of Helping*, is a kind of universal guide to being a helpful companion on the bumpy road of life.

The strength of all three of these books is that they unfold the process of being a supportive companion in great detail. The limitation of these three books is that they generally conceive of the helping relationship as being primarily between a skilled helper and a person in need. Our challenge is to translate these ideas into a vocabulary of mutual support rather than one-way helping.

Three-Part Learning Companions

The *Teams-of-Two* vision, which is part of both the open source Spiral Journey Resilience Map and The Earth Citizens Extended Cooperative Community, grows out of a three-part understanding of what it means to be on an equal footing with another person.

In my experience, it seems that we have at least three different relationships with every person we meet. And those three relationships call to us to play three different roles, somewhat like a chord of three notes played on the piano.

- There are some areas and topics in life where you know more than I know and you have lived more than I have lived. In relation to those areas I am your student.
- There are some areas and topics in life where we know roughly the same amount and we've had roughly the same amount of experience. In relation to those areas, I am your companion and co-explorer.
- And there might be some areas and topics in life where I know more than you do, or have had more experience than you have had. In relation to those areas, life calls me to be your servant-mentor. My task is to support you and encourage you in your learning and exploration.

In a society based on competition and merit examinations, there is a powerful focus on knowing more than other people know. To the degree that I succumb to that influence, I would tend to focus almost entirely on the areas where I know more than you do. But if I do that, not only will I become an unpleasant person to be around, I will also be seriously out of touch with you, missing most of the creative possibilities in our conversations. In relation to the complex journey of becoming a person, no matter how much I imagine that I might know, you still have much to share, much to teach me. You have had many life experiences that I have not had, and you have struggled through many situations that I have not yet encountered.

Co-mentoring: A Different Way of Teaching

Radical empowerment: Within the peer support network of people who are exploring the Spiral Journey Resilience Map, *everyone is empowered to start teaching the day they show up*. We may as well accept that responsibility, because *we are already teaching all the time*. I may not be teaching algebra all the time, but every waking moment that I'm in the

presence of other people I am teaching by example how to be a person. So in relation to the basic qualities of being a person, and the human strengths of being an advocate, such as gratitude, forgiveness, empathy, etc., the division of any human group into teachers and learners covers up something really important. ***We may not be teaching particularly inspiring lessons, but we are all teaching each other and all learning from each other all the time!*** We are already fully on the stage of the world, so we may as well learn to sing better. This for me is one of the most important messages implicit in the discovery of “mirror neurons.” Human beings are designed to imitate one another, so all behavior is instruction, As Gandhi once said, “my life is my lesson.”



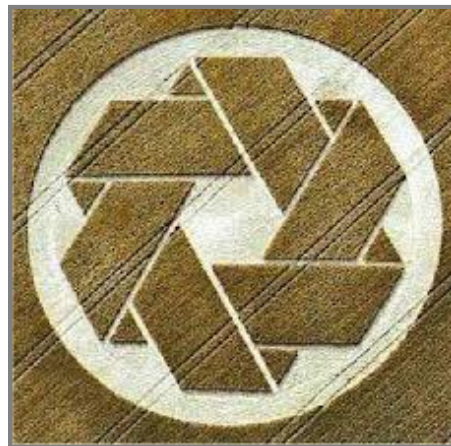
Of course, you can only teach in an uplifting way, as much as you both know and have lived. The approach of the Spiral Journey Curriculum, following Carl Rogers, is to encourage people to grow from wherever they are in their developmental journey. The further you go along the path of human unfolding, the more you realize that at any given moment a challenge could come along that would be so large that it would cause you to fail. So at a deeper human level, all the beginners and all the experts in this world are really in the same human boat. We are all perpetual beginners, each of us facing our own multiple horizons of the unknown. That is why we have chosen the chambered nautilus as one of our guiding images. We are never finished evolving. All the great human virtues (and each of the twenty-four dimensions in the Spiral Journey Resilience Map) call us toward open horizons.

Life would be a whole lot easier and simpler, if we could just take all the important lessons of a lifetime, turn them into simple declarative sentences, and get

people to memorize and affirm them. But the truth is that people have been trying to do that for a long time; and it doesn't work. (In the wars of the past hundred years, 1914 to 2014, you can see the limits of what kind of wisdom can be put into words, as we make the same tragic mistakes again and again.)

As wonderful as it is, human language is really limited. We know much, much, more than we can say. So the best that words can do is to point us in a good direction, up the mountain, as it were. They can't carry us up the mountain. We have to hike up the mountain ourselves. The best wisdom that can be expressed in words sets the stage for us to grow into something much larger than words. If I squeeze an orange, I will actually get orange juice. But if I repeat the word, "lovingkindness" (which is one of my favorite words), over and over again, that repetition by itself will not automatically make me kinder. In the course of my life I have become convinced that in order to know the meaning of the word, "lovingkindness," I must actually try to practice it, I must go outside of my wordy comfort zone and find new ways of interacting with people, and I can't be sure how things will work out.

All of this has deep implications for teaching resilience in the face of ecological catastrophes. It suggests that however inspired one person's discoveries about resilience might be, there are severe limits as to how much of those discoveries can be transferred with words into the minds of others. (Songs and pictures increase that transferability a bit, but not nearly as much as one would hope.) What we can do is walk along beside one another in a journey of exploration and discovery. And that walking-along-beside can be a powerful, life-giving form of encouragement, even though it tends to unfold in quiet ways and focuses on ongoing questions rather than dramatic answers. An analogy from sports would be to say, I can't run for you, no matter how good a runner I am, nor you for me, but running together we can encourage each other to run further than either of us would have run alone. We are co-mentors.



Interwoven to form a new pattern --
a crop circle reportedly from
extraterrestrial intelligences

Coming back to the theme of lovingkindness, it may be true that lovingkindness is THE answer to all personal and global crises. But it won't be OUR answer until we have helped one another learn to cultivate it. We invite you to explore the radical view that we need to hold the classics of compassion in one hand and our own tentative learning processes in the other, as messy as they may be. The ordinary view is that the classics are all important and your particular learning processes hardly matter at all. In the Teams-of-Two and Spiral Journey model, our learning processes are in the foreground. No matter how great lovingkindness may have been in the hearts of the beautiful saints and teachers who have gone before us, lovingkindness will only live in the world today to the degree that we make it our own. So we are as important as all those beautiful saints and teachers! We are not merely passive observers of other people's greatness, we are active participants in the evolution of humanity, however much of a beginner each one of us may feel ourselves to be.

NINE STEPS – An Invitation to participate in the Earth Citizens Extended Cooperative Community (ECE).

***The Web of Life is our classroom
the future of all life on Earth is our project***

Who are the Earth Citizens? All of us! The phrase "Earth Citizens Extended Cooperative Community" has two levels of meaning. At one level it means a specific web of friendships: the twenty people loosely associated with the production of the Resources for the Great Turning online library at www.EarthCitizens.net. At a deeper level it means all of the Web of Life working together to sustain the Web of Life. At this deeper level, every person, tree, mountain, fish and river is already a member. No one organization can claim to exclusively represent the Web of Life and all the peoples of the Earth, and we do not, but every individual, team-of-two, and group can serve the cause of protecting all life, in a time when the Web of Life & Humans is under attack on many fronts.

Our goals are learning, attitude change, skill development, public advocacy, emotional support and community building, that will allow us...

- to appreciate and serve the Web of Life more deeply
- to resist the poisoning and destruction of the biosphere more creatively and compassionately
- to build a sustainable world that works for everyone

We invite you to make use of the resources presented here, and join our extended community, by forming or joining one or more independent [Teams-of-Two](#), working groups and/or study circles. We hope you will help us expand the side-by-side multi-faceted role of the "LEARM" and "learning" (lifelong-learner-encourager-activist-researcher-mentor) as a new step in the evolution of ecology and peace organizing.

Many of the topics that we address here at ECE, such as global warming, nuclear contamination, and the

global extinction crisis, have profoundly challenging aspects, beyond the range of ordinary college subjects:

First, they are often emotionally challenging topics to think about, evoking grief, rage and hysterical denial. So all of our activities are interwoven with invitations to understand, give, and receive emotional support in the forms of acknowledgement, witnessing and companionship. In this we are especially inspired by [Joanna Macy](#).

Second, these topics will almost always challenge us to develop new skills and strengths as advocates, negotiators, informed citizens and just plain survivors. So all of our activities at ECE are interwoven with invitations to develop your personal strengths and skills, and to accompany other in that same process. In this we are especially inspired by Gandhi and Carl Rogers.

[The Spiral Journey Resilience Practice](#) of twenty-four skill and strength areas is one possible resource for developing the personal strengths needed to stay involved with difficult topics. We develop and recommend it here at ECE with the understanding that it is only one of many possible ways to think about those strengths, and we invite you to explore and/or invent other ways as well.

Here are nine suggested steps for becoming a ECE Independent Learner-Co-Mentor-Activist:

1. Review the topics that we explore and develop, as listed in our [Resource/Study Areas by Topic](#) page. (You are invited to become a volunteer librarian/translator for any of our topic pages.)

2. Review the scholar-activist-mentors whose work we explore and promote by visiting our [Resource/Study Areas by Person](#) page. (You are invited to become a volunteer librarian for any of our mentor pages.)

3. Pick a topic or person that you would like to make the focus of your independent study and advocacy activities. Here are some suggestions and reflections

about picking a topic (from Step 17 in the Spiral Journey Resilience Map):

- Faced with all the contending appeals for help in the world, I suggest that you commit yourself to the topic/issue that most inspires you to love more deeply and to live more fully. (Inspired by sayings of St. Teresa and St. Augustine)
- A person who follows their deepest calling with love is much more likely to awaken the love and sense of calling in others, thus increasing the total amount of love energy moving in and through the world.
- Only the causes that move us to love, will move us to master the details and disciplines of our area of concern. Thus, the more we are moved to love, the better advocates we may become.
- The Shamanism of Lovingkindness: What we care about deeply fills us with its power and cares/acts through us to mend the world. (Thanks to Joanna Macy for this deep idea.)

4. Read our orientation documents, which outline our Earth Citizens guiding principles, goals and **Teams-of-Two** vision of ecological study and advocacy:

- If you have not already done so, please read our [Mission Statement](#).
- [Teams-of-Two: A Model for Personal Unfolding, Citizen Activism and Social Transformation](#), explains our vision of organizing our participants into independent supportive pairs.
- [The Spiral Journey Resilience Map](#): Review the twenty-four skill and strength areas and note the areas in which you would like to develop.
- [Companions in the Storm, Companions in Blessing](#): Explores the role of deep friendship in the mending of a broken world.

5. Reach out to at least one other person who is interested in your study topic. For example, you can use the Internet to host a local “meet up” focused on your topic. Or you can use your Facebook page, or a local newspaper, to announce that you are interested in that topic and would like to find a study partner. (For safety reasons, ECE strongly recommends meeting your study partners online via Skype or Google Hangout, or in public places such as bookstores or cafés.)

6. Meeting as a **Team-of-Two**, Working Group or Study Circle, **develop a three-month to one-year project agreement**, a study and advocacy goal, in relation to your chosen topic. If you decide to read a book by Gandhi, for example, you could write a book review and contribute it to the ECE online libraries. Please consider participating in and cooperating with existing local or national peace, ecology and human rights organizations such as Earth Island Institute, 350.org, Sierra Club, ACLU, Center for Constitutional Rights, etc. But participate as at least a Team-of-Two, always connected as a companion-in-conscience to at least one other person on an ongoing basis. Many of these organizations have inspiring goals, but not much in the way emotional support for long term engagement with difficult issues.

7. Work on your project with your **Team-of-Two** partner or Working Group. As your project continues, invite others with similar interests to join with you. Introduce them to the ideas of personal strength development and emotional support for long term engagement with difficult issues. Consider volunteering to coordinate a Working Group / Study Circle / “Virtual Campfire” for your topic. (We are in the process of installing the software to host Virtual Campfires). Use MeetUp.com to organize a public meeting, or series of meetings, on your topic. Set aside time for emotional expression. Make inquiries of one another about what feelings are coming up in the course of the project. At least once a month, review all the twenty-four topics in the Spiral Journey Resilience Map as way of bringing up issues that may need expression.

8. Share the results of your Team-of-Two activity with a larger community by circulating your work with friends, posting it on Facebook, starting a blog that documents your activity, and contributing a written report, mp3 or video to the ECE Libraries.*

9. Reflect, learn, plan. At the end of your agreed-upon time frame, reflect together on what you have accomplished, what you have learned, and what you would do differently. Consider continuing your existing project agreement, Team-of-Two, or Working Group. Consider creating a new one of any of these, possibly with new participants. And, consider taking a time out to assimilate lessons learned. If you decide to continue, return to Step 1, above.

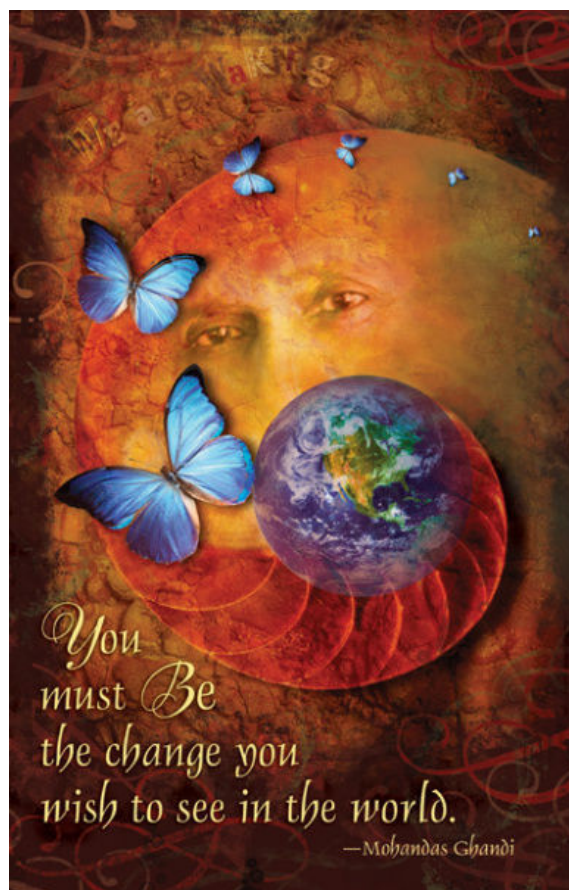
Summary

The purpose of the **Teams-of-Two** organizing model, the attached Mandala of Reverence for Life, and the Spiral Journey Resilience Map (all copyable and modifiable free of charge through Creative Commons licenses) is to support people in “running further” with the difficult issues of our time. Working together and sustaining one another in ongoing **Teams-of-Two**, and larger groups, we can encourage each other to do more, to carry more, and to become more, than would be possible if we were acting alone.

Most of the twenty-four topics included in the Mandala of Reverence for Life (see next page) and the Spiral Journey Resilience Map (see last page) have been around for centuries. (Gratitude, forgiveness, empathy, inner truthfulness, etc.) We are happy to offer one possible affirmation and arrangement of them, one focused on a kind of partnering that we feel is especially empowering for peace and ecology activists. Because each person’s life includes many unique elements of temperament and experience, we encourage each person and each **Team-of-Two** to explore and rearrange how the various pieces fit together for them.

We hope that seeing each person you meet as a three-part learning companion, combined with Carl Rogers’ big three (caring, sincerity, and actively voiced empathy) will strengthen every group in which you participate, in widening circles.

*Please note: Acceptance of a document, MP3 or video into the ECE Libraries is at the discretion of the Page Editor/Librarian. For a variety of reasons we may not be able to accept and publish every contribution.

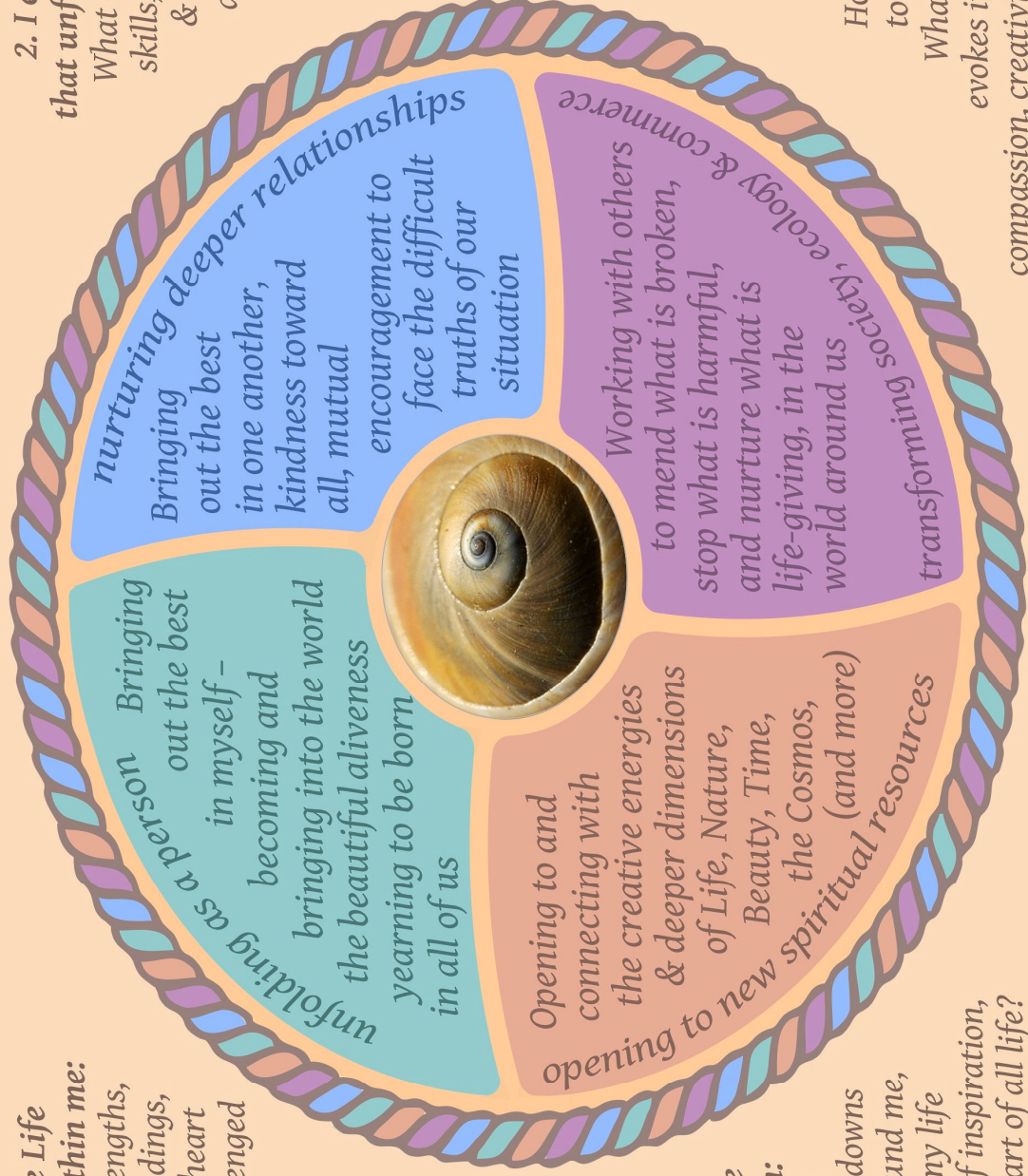


REVERENCE FOR LIFE AS A SPIRITUAL PATH: A SPIRAL OF CREATIVE QUESTIONS AND BEAUTIFUL POSSIBILITIES

1. I embrace the Life that unfolds within me:
 What deeper strengths, skills, understandings, and qualities of heart am I being challenged to develop by the ecological, economic and political crises in the world around me?

2. I embrace the Life that unfolds between us:
 What deeper strengths, skills, understandings, & qualities of heart are the ecological, economic and political crises of Planet Earth challenging us to nurture in one another? as friends? as co-workers? as family? as citizens?

4. I embrace the infinite depths of Life, of which my life is an expression:
 Confronted with the severe breakdowns in the world around me, how will I open my life to new sources of inspiration, to the hidden heart of all life?



3. I embrace the Web of Life that surrounds and sustains us:
 How do I feel called to mend the world? What particular work evokes in me the greatest compassion, creativity and kindness?

The Spiral Journey Resilience Map

- ➔ 24 creative steps/dimensions --
- ➔ a fractal-complexity/sacred geometry vision of
- ➔ ecological activism,
- ➔ creative resilience,
- ➔ compassionate
- ➔ resistance, and
- ➔ personal development
- ➔ in the context of ongoing
- ➔ ecological & political
- ➔ breakdowns

Each step supports all the others. Which steps do you see as especially related to particular other steps?

Drawing inspiration from Joanna Macy's

"Work That Reconnects," *

12-step programs, the life of St. Francis, Gandhi and M. L. King's "Satyagrah/

Nonviolence," Albert Schweitzer's

"Reverence for Life," Narrative Therapy,

Appreciative Inquiry, Sacred Geometry,

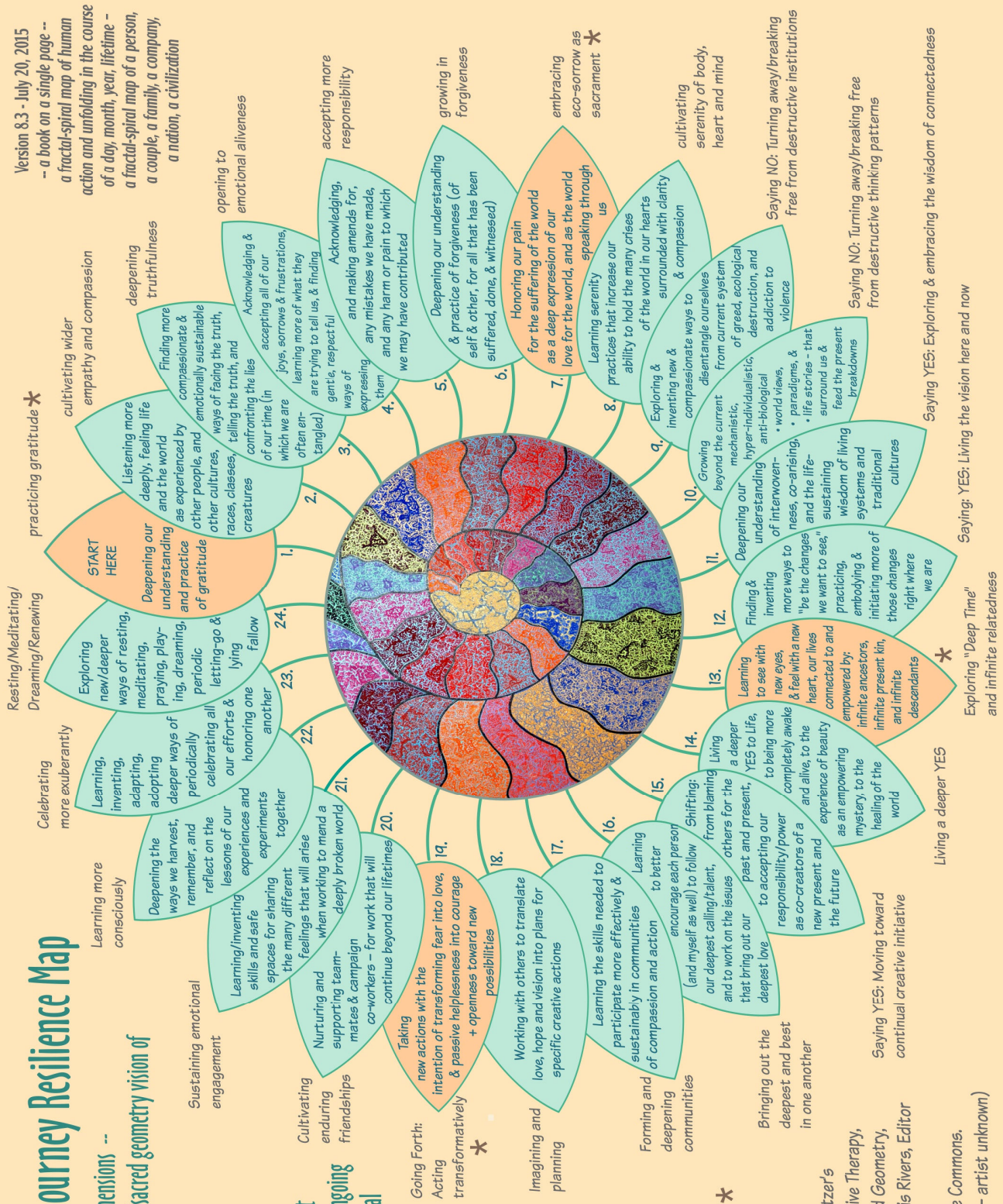
and Systems Theory. Dennis Rivers, Editor

www.EarthCitizens.net

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(Ammonite Spiral painting – artist unknown)

Version 8.3 - July 20, 2015
 -- a book on a single page --
 a fractal-spiral map of human
 action and unfolding in the course
 of a day, month, year, lifetime --
 a fractal-spiral map of a person,
 a couple, a family, a company,
 a nation, a civilization



Resting/Meditating/
 Dreaming/Renewing

practicing gratitude *

cultivating wider
 empathy and compassion

deepening
 truthfulness

opening to
 emotional aliveness

accepting more
 responsibility

growing in
 forgiveness

embracing
 eco-sorrow as
 sacrament *

cultivating
 serenity of body,
 heart and mind

Saying NO: Turning away/breaking
 free from destructive institutions

Saying NO: Turning away/breaking free
 from destructive thinking patterns

Saying YES: Exploring & embracing the wisdom of connectedness

Saying YES: Living the vision here and now

Exploring "Deep Time"
 and infinite relatedness

Living a deeper YES