

# The Work that Reconnects

Fall 2017-Spring 2018

Join us for semi-monthly group work in “The Work that Reconnects,” a program developed by Buddhist scholar, author, teacher, Joanna Macy, and facilitated by Caya Tanski-French (first and third Tuesdays at UUCC, 2615 Shepard Blvd., Columbia MO 65201, from 7 to 9 p.m.). The central purpose of the Work That Reconnects is to deepen our relationship with each other and with the self-healing powers in the web of life, taking us from despair and helping to motivate and empower us to reclaim our lives, our communities, and our planet. For more information, contact Caya at [cayasadhana@yahoo.com](mailto:cayasadhana@yahoo.com).

The central purpose of the Work that Reconnects is to bring us into new relationship with each other and our world, to empower us to take part in The Great Turning, and to reclaim our lives from corporate rule. “The Great Turning is a global awakening to the dis-ease of our planet, our love of life and the revolution that can heal our world.”

## **To do this, The Work That Reconnects:**

- Provides perspectives and practices drawn from systems science, deep ecology and spiritual traditions that reveal our interbeing through space and time.
- Reframes our pain for the world as evidence of our mutual belonging and hence our power to act on behalf of life.
- Wakens stamina and buoyancy to live with full awareness of both The Great Turning and The Great Unraveling and to embrace the uncertainty
- Affirms that our intention to act for the sake of all being can become the organizing principle of our life.
- Helps us identify the strengths and resources we can mobilize in our commitment to self-healing and healing of the world
- Presents The Great Turning as a challenge that every one of us, in collaboration with others, is fully capable of meeting in our own distinctive ways.

## **Basic assumptions of the work:**

- This world in which we were born and take our being, is alive
- Our true nature is far more ancient and encompassing than “the separate self” defined by habit and society. We are as intrinsic to our living world as the rivers and trees, woven of the same intricate flows of matter/energy and mind. Having evolved us into self-reflexive consciousness, the world can now know itself through us, behold its own majesty tell its own stories –and respond to its suffering
- Our experience of pain for the world springs from our connectivity with all beings, from which also arise our powers to act on their behalf.
- Unblocking occurs when our pain for the world is not only acknowledged, but experienced.
- When we reconnect with life by choosing to bear our pain for it, the mind retrieves its natural clarity. Not only do we experience our interbeing in the community of Earth, but also mental eagerness arises to match this experience with new paradigm thinking.
- The experience of reconnection with the earth community arouses the urge to act on its behalf.

### **The value of working in groups:**

- Ongoing Groups provide focus and duration
- Group work provides support
- Ongoing groups provide safety. In the group exercises, we learn to hear each other's deepest feeling about this planet-time, without wanting to contradict or fix them. We can express our dreads without trying to shield others, and our dreams without having to explain them.
- Workshops and ongoing groups support truth-telling. Practices we use permit us to tell the truth of what we feel, know, and see is happening to our world, without having to explain or defend ourselves.
- Group work is synergistic. What occurs in the life of a group, even over a short period of time, is creative in unpredictable ways. From the interactions, connections are woven that are unique to each mix of people.
- Group work generates community.
- Groups working together demonstrate the characteristics of systems. They become more integrated and, at the same time, reveal themselves as more differentiated. This allow them to exhibit increasing cohesiveness and, in the same measure, more flexibility.

Personal reflections and reasons for wanting to do this work in our community:

I sense in myself and so many people the Pain of separation (by class, by race, by gender, by country, by patriarchy, by power, by corporate greed, by systems that accelerate us into growth and that often spiral us into numbness and denial, *in addition* to the separation from our natural world). By recognizing this pain, and by coming together to establish deep connection to heal these divides, we can restore our spirit, our sense of well-being, our sense of community, and support our motivation to act, as well as our actions themselves. The web of life, with which we are in deep communication because we are part of it, can more effectively act through us when we are conscious of all the aspects and systems that mutual affect each other.

Also, by seeing this suffering from a larger spiritual perspective and doing the spiritual practices to be able to both hold the pain, as well as transform and transcend the pain, our work helps bring healing to ourselves, our communities, our country, and the world.

– Caya Tanski-French