

# Groundswell News Journal

A project of the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice

*We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate Activists.*

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

*A Celebration of Youth. [www.groundswellnews.org](http://www.groundswellnews.org). Issue No. 61: July 2020*

---

## Revolution

Imagine the World  
YOU Want to Live In

Submitted by C.B., Pennsylvania USA

By Surnai Molloy, Ireland

*Parabola*: Spring 2020

There came a time when the square concrete slabs sitting heavy along the suburban streets were pried up with crowbars and the squashed soil beneath sucked in the fresh air and people kneeled down along the stretches of dark earth and said Sorry.

There came a time when all of the lightbulbs in each of the streetlights in each of the streets were unscrewed. And in the night the stars shone down unblinded.

The bricks of derelict houses were pulled from tired walls by many sets of hands and were stacked, like the building blocks of children, in wheelbarrows, to be wheeled away and used again.

Then the foundations of the lonely houses crumbled and were swept away and soil flew in on the breeze carrying dandelion seeds with it, and those many hands with soil in the curves of their fingerprints placed tiny seeds in tiny pressed hollows that grew to be oak and sycamore and birch and ash.

The black smoke that once wheezed from car exhausts and chimneys and seeped up into the sky, staining the white clouds dark, was now only in the burning of fallen branches on beaches from bonfires, and the smoke was grey, not black, and the red sparks wove within it a fiery embroidery that sparkled beneath the unveiled stars.

The trees that lived in their circles in the pavement in the cities now stretched their roots out, stretched the length of them, stretched long and lovely and intoxicatingly as all that concrete was changed to loose earth and so the roots could uncoil and the trees could stand steady.

And in this time, this time that came, on Sunday mornings, people went to the sea and kneeled and saw the waves swell against the cliffs or lap against the stones or soak into the sand. They went to the forest and kneeled and looked at the trees shiver, shake and lose themselves in the wind. They went to the mountains and kneeled and watched, straining their eyes to see the breaths in the earth of the mountains, the mountains that breathe so slowly in their millennial meditation that one cannot see the rise and fall.

And above this breathing, above this spiralling of roots and trickling of water in the hollows in the soil, and alongside the curling of the waves and amidst the frolicking of the dandelion seeds, is the turning, turning, turning of bicycle wheels as people make their way through their day, to the sea or to work or play or school...



Photo Richard Price, Unsplash.com

To school where children have risen from beds to kneel against rows of different beds and gently pluck out weeds and water the seedlings and the growing bulbs, and place potatoes in their patterns and name each one before they bury them...

To school where children solve puzzles with simultaneous equations and build contraptions with blueprints and nimble fingers and then discover the workings of plants, animals, atoms, space,

**Revolution** continued on page 3

# What is the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice?

**Coalition Founders:** John and Iona Conner

**Editor/Publisher:** Iona Conner

**Wire Editor:** Allen Hengst

**Established:** September 2013

**Web site:** www.groundswellnews.org

**Board of Directors:** Jeannette Bartelt, Bill Boteler, Ekwe Chiwundu Charles, Iona Conner, Mr Kennedy Kwelum, Mukesh Nand, Raj Phukan

**Advisory Board:** Dan Adams, Robert Burrows, Fr. Ted Cassidy, Michael Mann, Mar-iam Nabukeera

**Contact:** Grassroots Coalition, c/o Iona Conner, 2170 Route 88, Brick, New Jersey 08724; groundswellnews@pa.net

**Contributors:** Felix Akicho, Ngo Banfogha, Hanson G. Blayon, Fr. Ted Cassidy, Roma Craaaaazywater, Cindy Cunningham, Charles Hughes, Lillian Kabahuma, Herbert Bagyeni Kajoki, John Macharia, Surnai Molloy, Olusanya Temitope Prince, Proshanto Sarker Pros, Bridget Robinson, Ssendendo Yasin Signalaminat, Alibona Tolulope

## Our Slogan

**THE WAY FORWARD:  
CYCLE BACK TO BASICS.**

## Mission of Our Journal

The mission of *Groundswell News* is to be a beautiful, inspiring, uplifting journal which educates and enlightens people about climate change through scientific articles and stories by and about activists who are working to protect life on Earth and preserve natural resources. We are a global family.

## What is the Grassroots Coalition?

John and Iona Conner started this non-profit 501(c)(3) organization in 1990. The mission was and remains “dedicated to creating the critical mass of active participants needed to being ecological justice to this Earth by providing information and resources to individuals which encourage and assist them to make lifestyle changes beneficial to the environment and to effectively grapple with local and global environmental concerns.”

## Who are we trying to attract?

We hope to reach people who are concerned about global warming and realize that they are part of the problem but don't know what to do. We invite them to sign up for our newspaper. Please tell your family and friends about us.

## What are we trying to achieve?

We want to rapidly increase the number

of serious climate activists in the world and inspire them though stories from other activists. Our goal is to keep their spirits up, their energy strong, their hearts open, and their eyes bright and alive.

## Our Values

This journal is based on love for Earth, all people, all forms of life – plus air, clouds, rain, snow, weather, oceans, forests, etc. We love Nature. We respect everyone and are willing to share our experiences, both good and bad, with others who may profit from them.

## Guidelines for Submissions

I do not get directly involved in fundraising. To submit a story, you need to write a regular article about your work and submit it in a Word document with 2 or 3 photos, including captions and photo credits and then email it to me at groundswellnews@pa.net. If you need funding, mention that in your last paragraph and be sure to give your contact information.

Since *Groundswell News* is a climate change activist newspaper, please be sure to mention how your work connects with fighting global warming.

Please email Iona at groundswellnews@pa.net for the full Guidelinds. I'll be eager to see what you submit. Thanks so much.

**Fair Use Law: <https://copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>**

Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses – such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research – as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use. Section 107 calls for consideration of the following four factors in evaluating a question of fair use:

**(1) Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes.**

**(2) Nature of the copyrighted work.**

**(3) Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole.**

**(4) Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.**

Fair Use Logo



## Iona's Column:

*Love, Peace, Beauty, Compassion*



Dear Reader,

Please read “Revolution” on pages 1 and 3 carefully. This young woman expresses so eloquently the way I want the spirit of our newspaper to be from now on. You know the bad things that are happening. Unfortunately, that is what mainstream media thrives on but, as for me, I want to keep envisioning a future that we can create together, one in which the four qualities above prevail. That's the kind of story I'm looking for.

After participating in a workshop called Blessed Unrest sponsored by Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, I now believe that it is most important to practice regenerative agriculture, helping the Earth heal. Decades ago I came to the conclusion that organic farming was *the* most noble profession of all. Since so many of my friends in Africa are doing that (in addition to their climate work and caring for orphans), I will be having a heavy focus on Africa from now on.

We have a wonderful, new international Board (see above). These are great activists I have met over the years. You've seen some of their stories. We are now working as a team to enhance this effort and encourage our teammates around the world. Thank you for being part of our global family.

Love,

*Iona*

## *The Rights of Mother Earth*

[Note from the Editor] Karen Wakeland posted this on Facebook and I love it.

Earth Warriors, I am the soldier of Nature and a warrior of the Earth.

We, the peoples and nations of Earth: considering that we are all part of Mother Earth, an indivisible, living community of interrelated and interdependent beings with a common destiny;

Gratefully acknowledging that Mother Earth is the source of life, nourishment and learning, and provides everything we need to live well;

Recognizing that the capitalist system and all forms of depredation, exploitation, abuse, and contamination have caused great destruction, degradation, and disruption of Mother Earth, putting life as we know it at risk through phenomena such as climate change;

Convinced that in an interdependent living community it is not possible to



recognize the rights of only human beings without causing an imbalance within Mother Earth;

Affirming that to guarantee human rights it is necessary to recognize and defend the rights of Mother Earth and all beings living on/in her and that there are existing cultures, practices, and laws that do so;

Conscious of the urgency of taking

decisive, collective action to transform structures and systems that cause climate change and other threats to Mother Earth;

**Proclaim this Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth and call on all of us to adopt it as a common standard of achievement, and to that end, that every individual and every nation takes responsibility for promoting through teaching, education, and consciousness raising, respect for the rights recognized in this Declaration and ensure through prompt and progressive measures and mechanisms, national and international, their universal and effective recognition and observance among all peoples and nations of the World.**

**So be it.**

**Source:** <https://d.facebook.com/groups/1540093399571742?view=permalink&id=1661625974085150>

**Revolution** *continued from page 1*  
and the rhythms of a story as they read and read and read...

To school where children fill the halls with music and the foot-stomping of dancing and the pounding of running feet and the careful breathing of yoga and meditation as they learn to stretch their limbs and minds and where to stretch them so as to get the most light...

The light that fruit and vegetables have used to swell and ripen, to be gathered then in baskets on bicycles or pooled in cloth bags, and the soil is brushed off with fingers and the slugs are placed outside and the vegetables, each one a different shape, are chopped and cooked.

And the flowers are nourished by that same light, the flowers that were planted in the ground and in boxes and baskets and on rooftops and in the old bulbs of streetlights hanging upside down from loops of twine. The same light that's sprinkled like sugar onto the fields and fields of daisies, fields bursting with daisies, trimmed with pink and centered by their own little suns, and if you look quickly, especially at dusk, it is only pink you see; oh, but how can you only glance? Of all the standards of beauty, there is nothing more lovely than a field full of daisies...

And in a house where all the windows are open a bumble bee has found himself trapped and a young girl sees him and gasps and she runs for a glass. And follow-

ing him on tiptoe through the different rooms of the home, she finally moves the glass over him and places a book on the end and shifts the buzzing bee, buzzing, buzzing, into the garden where he swoops up into the air, pauses, buzzes, and swoops again and disappears.

And though the girl can't see – but can imagine – the bee moseys over miles of green grass, dotted with pockets of gardens and houses and trees, and the bee crisscrosses with swallows who have tuned the sounds of spring to summer with the forks of their tails. And the bee pauses on a sunflower planted in a stretch of space that was once a graveyard, and is still, but the rectangles of gravel and the squares of headstones have been swapped with shrubs and flowers and so bluebells grow from the bodies and the memories of lost ones, who are not truly lost, simply shifted, and their names are painted on pebbles that have been moved from the shore.

And all of that rubbish that dropped from all of those cluttered lives, the rubbish that could not decompose, that could not die – immortal – heaped on top of nature, smothering; and then on top of itself, piling, over and over, minute after minute, until it leaked into the cracks in the planet, filling the gaps and then overflowing until it spilled and spilled into all of the bellies of all of the whales, cleared. It was cleared.

And there came a time when the ocean released that breath it had been holding and eased down a few inches. And the

wounds in the sky were allowed to heal and knit back together and dolphins could sew their threads through the clean, blue waters again.

And there came a time when the tree-tops were patched up and noisy again and orangutans collected their armfuls of fruit again and all that crumbling, wilting, dying turned to growth and the world was fresh and clean, as after a spring rain.

And the poles became solid once more.  
And the famine ended.

And people learned to love this nature. Loved it wholly and completely and unconditionally. And they learned that they are not excluded, that they are nature too. And the indomitable nature within them loved the uncontrollable-ness, the in-suppressible-ness, the irrepressible-ness... loved the wildness of it all, the mess and the chaos; they learned to love the life in it, the life in them, in us, the organic, circular movement of everything.

And we learned to say, Sorry.

*Surnai Molloy was raised on Inis Mór, a small island off the west coast of Ireland, She was homeschooled there along with her siblings. Homeschooling is certainly a way to encourage creativity. Her parents ran an organic garden and housed volunteers. At the age of 15, Surnai went to school on the island. She is currently studying Creative Writing with English and Mathematics in the National University of Ireland, Galway. When we communicated in March, Surnai was studying on exchange in Ottawa, Canada.*



Image: Simon Matzinger on Unsplash

Cuba: Leaving forests alone is a good way to conserve them.

# Natural Forests are Best at Storing Carbon

By Tim Radford  
Climate News Network: May 18, 2020

**Natural forests are a global good. Well conserved, they help combat climate change. But as new research confirms, it's not that simple.**

LONDON, UK – Two new studies have freshly confirmed an argument unchallenged for more than three decades: the best way to absorb and permanently store carbon from the atmosphere is to restore and conserve existing natural forests.

This proposition – successively urged on governments around the world since the first studies of strategy to confront global warming and potentially catastrophic climate change – has more chance of sustained success than any attempts to offset carbon emissions by indiscriminate plantations of new canopy, or even systematic investment in public initiatives such as the Trillion Tree Campaign.

And the argument gets even more support from a closer look at disturbances to

natural woodland: these demonstrate that even simple clearings in forests will create unfavourable local microclimates and disturb the species that flourish in stable forests.

Karen Holl is a restoration ecologist at the University of California at Santa Cruz. She and a colleague from São Paulo in Brazil argue in the journal *Science* that while planting trees can help protect biodiversity, assist in natural water management, and increase local shade, the same act can actually also damage local native ecosystems, reduce water supply, dispossess local landholders, and increase social inequity.

The point she makes is that the wrong kind of tree on the wrong sort of land helps nobody. Nor does a tree that, once planted, is neglected and left to die, or to change the nature of the land it occupies – not even if there are a trillion of them.

“We can't plant our way out of climate change. It is only one piece of the puzzle,” she said. “Planting trees is not a simple solution. It's complicated, and we need to be realistic about what we can and cannot achieve.”

Her argument is that planting trees is not the same as increasing forest cover, and in any case will add up to only a fraction

of the carbon reductions needed by 2100 to keep global temperatures from rising to 2°C above the long-term average for most of human history.

And given that increasing drought and temperatures can lead to widespread tree death, some of the effort could be hopelessly wasted.

## Leave Well Enough Alone

“The first thing we can do is keep existing forests standing, and the second is to allow trees to regenerate in areas that were formerly forests,” she said.

“In many cases, trees will recover on their own – just look at the entire eastern United States that was deforested 200 years ago. Much of that has come back without actively planting trees. Yes, in some highly degraded lands we will need to plant trees, but that should be the last option since it is the most expensive and often is not successful. I've spent my life on this. We need to be thoughtful about how we bring the forest back.”

Just how thoughtful is illuminated by another study, also in *Science*. European scientists looked at temperatures in 100 forest interiors and matched this with 80

**Forests** *continued on next page*

# We Are the World: Past, Present, Future

Submitted by Mukesh Nand  
India

By John Seed and Joanna Macy

I'm as old as all the different creatures that compose you (us) – the mitochondria in the cells, the intestinal bacteria, the life teeming on the surface of the skin. The great symbiosis that is me. The incredible coordination and cooperation of countless beings.

You are that, too, just as your body is part of a much larger symbiosis, living in wider collaboration. Be conscious of that give-and-take when you move among trees. Breathe your pure carbon dioxide to a leaf and sense it breathing fresh oxygen back to you. Remember again and again the old cycles of partnership. Draw on them in this time of trouble.

By your very nature and the journey you have made, there is in you deep knowledge of belonging. Draw on it now in this time of fear. You have Earth-bred wisdom of your interexistence with all that is. Take courage and power in it now, that we may help each other awaken in this time of peril.

In our long planetary journey we have taken far more ancient forms than these we now wear. Some of these forms we remember in our mother's womb, wear vestigial tails and gills, grow fins for hands. Countless times in that journey we died to old forms, let go of old ways, allowing new ones to emerge. But nothing is ever lost. Though forms pass, all returns. Each worn-out cell consumed, recycled . . . through mosses, leeches, birds of prey. . . .

Think to your next death. Will your flesh and bones back into the cycle. Surrender. Love the plump worms you



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/411657222166418798/>

will become. Launder your weary being through the fountain of life. What are you? What am I? Intersecting cycles of water, earth, air and fire, that's what I am, that's what you are.

**WATER** – Blood, lymph, mucus, sweat, tears, inner oceans tugged by the moon, tides within and tides without. Streaming fluids floating our cells, washing and nourishing through endless riverways of gut and vein and capillary. Moisture pouring in and through and out of you, of me, in the vast poem of the hydrological cycle. You are that. I am that.

**EARTH** – Matter made from rock and soil. It too is pulled by the moon as the magma circulates through the planet heart and roots suck molecules into biology. Earth pours through us, replacing each cell in the body every seven years. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, we ingest, incorporate and excrete the earth, are made from earth. I am that. You are that.

**AIR** – The gaseous realm, the atmosphere, the planet's membrane. The inhale and the exhale. Breathing out carbon dioxide to the trees and breathing in their fresh exudations. Oxygen kissing each cell awake, atoms dancing in orderly metabolism, interpenetrating. That dance of the air cycle, breathing the universe in and out again, is what you are, is what I am.

**FIRE** – Fire, from our sun that fuels all life, drawing up plants and raising the waters to the sky to fall again replenishing. The inner furnace of your metabolism burns with the fire of the Big Bang that first sent matter-energy spinning through space and time. And the same fire as the lightning that flashed into the primordial soup catalyzing the birth of organic life. You were there, I was there, for each cell of our bodies is descended in an unbroken chain from that event.

Through the desire of atom for molecule, of molecule for cell, of cell for organism. In our sexuality we can feel ancient stirrings that connect us with plant as well as animal life.

We come from them in an unbroken chain – through fish learning to walk the land, feeling scales turning to wings, through the migrations in the ages of ice.

We have been but recently in human form. If Earth's whole history were compressed into 24 hours beginning at midnight, organic life would begin only at 3 p.m... mammals emerge at 11:30 p.m. . . . and from amongst them at only seconds to midnight, our species.

**Forests** *continued from previous page*  
years of data from 2,955 locations in 56 regions to discover that the routine open space temperature measurements collected by climate scientists do not reflect conditions under a mature forest canopy.

## Avoid Clearings

The denser the leaf cover, the more effectively the forest buffers the wild things that live there from climate change. But as the cover becomes sparser, conditions change and the thermometer goes up by several

degrees.

The implication – supported by other recent research – is that any kind of clearing in some way weakens the integrity of a forest, both as a refuge for otherwise threatened biodiversity, and as a potential store of atmospheric carbon.

Global warming is already increasing what researchers have labeled “thermo-philisation” – that is, a tendency for warm climate species to flourish at the expense of those already at the limit of their preferred temperature.

The implication is that some species will not be able to adapt swiftly enough to ever more intense extremes of heat and drought, and the nature of forest cover is likely to change.

*Tim Radford, a founding editor of Climate News Network, worked for The Guardian for 32 years, for most of that time as science editor. He has been covering climate change since 1988.*

**Source:** <https://climatenewsnetwork.net/natural-forests-are-best-at-storing-carbon/>



Photo: Flickr/cc

*But beauty is more than pleasure and its importance in these times deserves attention. Beauty is intimately and evolutionarily connected to the urge to live.*

## Now Is the Time to Practice Beauty

Beauty is intimately and evolutionarily connected to the urge to live. It is the value associated most keenly with experiences that affirm our vitality in relation to the vitality of other beings.

By Sandra Lubarsky  
Common Dreams: May 21, 2020

In this time of the great disruptions brought on by the coronavirus, the practice of beauty keeps us centered on the ultimate importance and worth of the world in which we live.

Shinichi Suzuki, the founder of the Suzuki method of music, is famous for having said, “Practice only on the days you eat.” It is an admonition repeated often in Suzuki households. (I know because we said it often to our younger son.) Suzuki wanted to make music as much a part of a child’s daily life as the desire and need to eat. More than this, he wanted to help rebuild Japanese society after WWII in a way that would ensure that it would be defined by beauty and morality. “I want to make good citizens,” wrote Suzuki. “If a child

hears fine music from the day of his birth and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline, and endurance. He gets a beautiful heart.”

In this time of pandemic, when our days are frayed by apprehension and so much has been brought to a standstill – and when the sting of loss is sharp – the practice of beauty is a powerful antidote. Under beauty’s spell, we surrender our self-concern and remember that underneath and alongside the present disorder of life are patterns of relations that sustain life.

But in our American culture, beauty is hardly ever declared a principle for shaping lives. Instead, it is mistrusted as a form of sexual and commercial manipulation, demeaned as superficial, reduced to personal opinion, and removed from the public sphere. And yet we pursue beauty in our gardens and on our vacations, in our subscriptions to *House Beautiful* and *Dwell*, and in our postings on Pinterest.

There is no doubt that beauty is one of life’s great pleasures. And because it is, we desire it, seek it out, and sometimes fixate on it. I know a man who almost missed his train stop in Frankfurt, so taken was he with the beauty of the young woman seated across from him. That man was my husband and the only reason he told me this story was to confess the utter thrill-

dom he’d experienced.

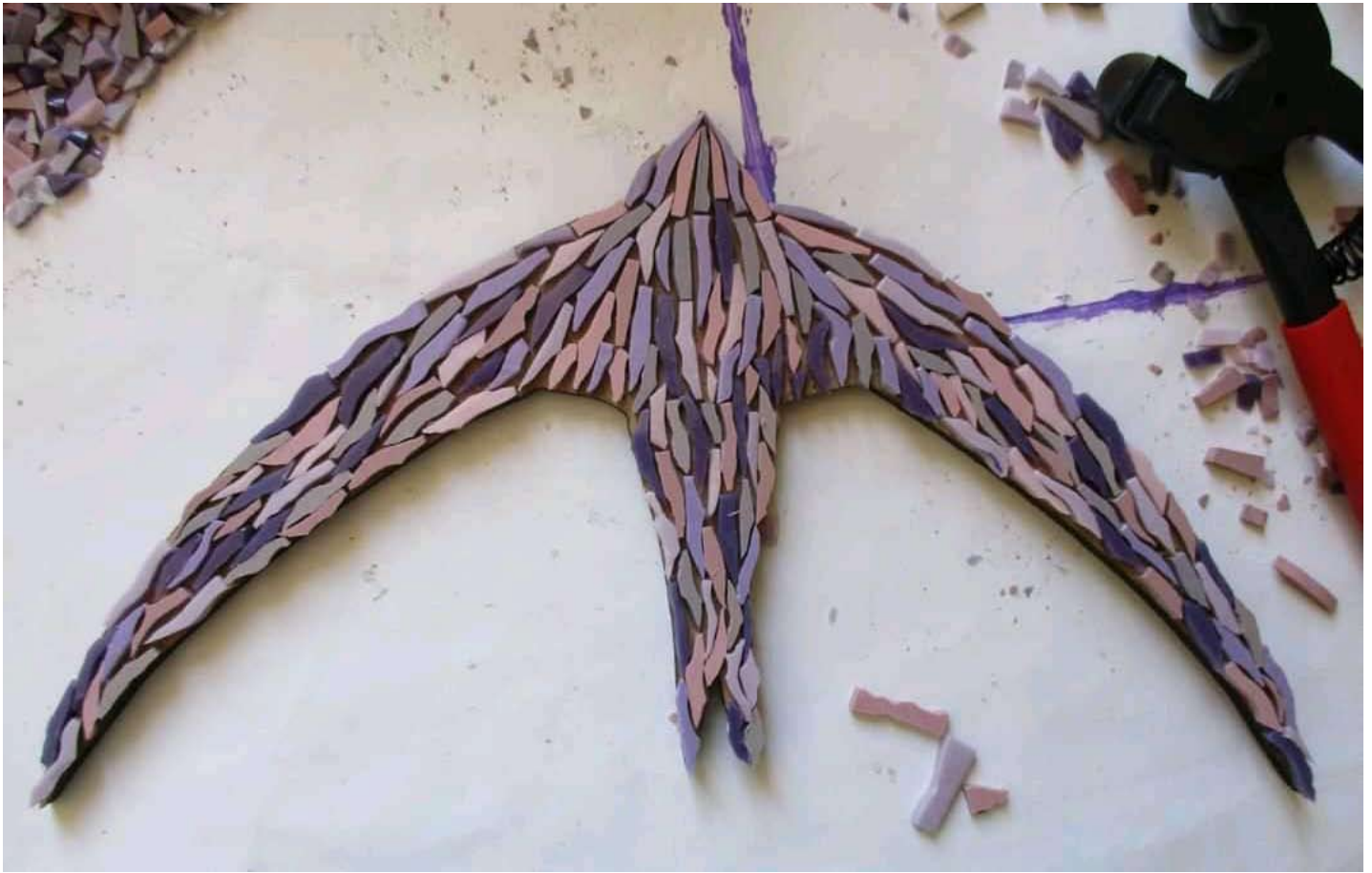
But beauty is more than pleasure and its importance in these times deserves attention. Beauty is intimately and evolutionarily connected to the urge to live. It is the value associated most keenly with experiences that affirm our vitality in relation to the vitality of other beings. In the presence of beauty, we feel more intensely alive.

The practice of beauty, like any other practice, requires intention and repetition. In the ball field behind my house, now off-limits to summer leagues, I heard a father and son at practice. “Watch the ball, watch the ball!” urged the father as he sent a grounder out. “Stay low; use your short hop.” Over and over, they rehearsed the kinesthetic motions until bat, ball, body were no longer unaligned objects and “playingball” was one action.

The practice of beauty is strikingly similar, a fine-tuning of feeling the world. The world comes to us like a fast pitch – directly and all-at-once. To catch it, we have to be as agile as an outfielder, able to coordinate ourselves with life in its abounding forms.

For years, the architect Christopher Alexander devoted several hours each day to an exercise in receptivity, looking at pairs of objects – ceramic bowls, woven

**Beauty** *continued on next page*



## Dedicated to All Swift Lovers

Wood carving by Martine Swiftlady in Belgium, submitted by Paul Claudel (SwiftBoy), Burundi

*Paul posted: "A work done by others sounds easy! Be like a #swift bird because it can fly continuously 200 days without collisions of the Earth and it can fly over the clouds during rain, even a bird can't give up to stop the aviation why SHOULD we?" and then this, "One of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between man and nature shall not be broken." – Leo Tolstoy*

### Beauty continued from previous page

rugs, tiles, metal utensils, etc. – and asking: “Which has more life?” His aim was to feel the energy in the structure of things. He did not ask, “Which do I like better?” a question that sinks us into the quicksand of personal pleasure and human ego – and destroys the connected life of observer and observed. To be attuned to beauty involves a shift away from my feelings about the world and toward the feeling in the world and the world as felt in me.

The ability to feel is synonymous with being alive. “The truth of a thing,” said filmmaker Stanley Kubrick, “is in the feel of it, not the think of it.” In the modern world, we have given a lot of time to disciplining our thinking and hardly any to amplifying our capacity to feel. But beauty’s kinship with life is disclosed through feeling and so the practice of beauty involves training ourselves to feel the rush of relations that support life.

It also involves familiarity with the relational patterns that intensify the

energy embodied in forms. Through his daily practice, Alexander found 15 such patterns, including boundaries, rhythm, contrast, and strong centers that appear in both the human-made world and the natural world. Each pattern enlivens the relations between things. A strong border strengthens both what is enclosed by it and the relation between the one and the many. Think of a garden bed, set off by timber beams; the inside plant life is accentuated while the plant bed as a whole contributes more forcefully to the overall landscape. Attention to these intensifying patterns unites the receptivity of feeling with precision. The vividness of life becomes even more apparent.

The poet Mary Oliver offered these now-famous “instructions for living a life.” “Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.” I think of them as short-hand for practicing beauty. Pay attention to the patterns of relations that sustain, generate, and enhance life. Lose yourself in them. And talk about

them, even though the words are hard to come by.

It takes practice to break old habits and develop new ones. But practice is not just necessary; it is in itself gratifying. In this time of the great disruptions brought on by the coronavirus, the practice of beauty keeps us centered on the ultimate importance and worth of the world in which we live.

*Sandra Lubarsky has taught at Northern Arizona and Appalachian State universities. She writes on beauty and sustainability and advocates for the revival of beauty as a public value. Her most recent book, co-authored with Tom Butler, is On Beauty: Douglas R. Tompkins — Aesthetics and Activism. She can be reached at sandralubarsky@gmail.com.*

*Our work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License. Feel free to republish and share widely.*

**Source:** <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2020/05/21/now-time-practice-beauty>

# Proposal to Mitigate Climate Change Through Capacity Development and Plastic Pollution Management

By Ajibona Tolulope, Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

Our planet is drowning in plastic [UNEP report 2018]. Lagos, an economic capital of West Africa with a population of 21 million [Nigeria population commission 2016], is flooded with plastic, which in turn finds its way to the drainage sometimes blocking the drainage resulting in local flooding, to the rivers, and finally to the Lagoon which Lagos derives its name from.

Thus, the flora and fauna, especially the benthic organisms and others that depend on them, suffer greatly. The beauty and serenity associated with the Lagoon front are disrupted as well as that of the tributary rivers along the travel path of plastics.

In the effort to ensure the right to a clean and healthy [environment], the state government is working on lagoon clean up and the overall waste collection process, but more can be achieved in people's participation in the cleanup process which will further enable biodiversity, eco-restoration, mitigate climate change, and ensure sustainable social and environmental sanity.

## AIM

Our aim is to mitigate climate change by reversing the damage caused by plastic pollution through eco-restoration, creating an enabling environment for biodiversity, and preventing further damage to our ecosystem. This we hope will enable a clean and healthy environment for our human population.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Carbon capture of plastic waste to enable a clean and healthy environment, robust ecosystem, resilient people, and ecosystem, amid global warming threats. Awareness of waste to wealth, carbon trading as a mitigation to climate change.

## METHODOLOGY

Here we divide our operations into two phases

1. Dry season: December-April
2. Rainy season: May-November

Though the same operation will be performed in both seasons, the difference is the rate of operation, because, during the dry season of intense heat, people consume more water and other drinks which usually come in plastic containers. Here, more volunteers might be required compared to the rainy season where there is less demand for drinks.

## COVERAGE AREA

Is an estimated 1,300 +/- 200 hectares (312,000 acres), with an estimated population of 750,000 +/- 200 people. The areas are Isheri, Magodo, and Olowora.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

- GLOVES
- Nose masks
- Collection baskets
- Collection bags
- Bailing equipment
- Weighing scale
- Transportation

## ACTIVITIES

1. Recruit volunteers, all classes of people are welcome irrespective of age, gender, occupation, or qualification.
2. Training of Volunteers. The volunteers will be trained in the following:
  - Health and safety, emphasis on the importance of wearing protective clothing [gloves, nose mask, etc.];
  - Easy recovery, proper use of recovering materials and their maintenance. [bags, baskets, etc.] note re-useable bags;
  - Fast recovery, enough to prevent material from escaping to inaccessible places;
  - Separation based on color and material type;
  - Bailing method;
  - Calibration; and
  - Distribution.

We hope after training they will see hope in planetary restoration and be willing to do their bit and encourage others in the cleanup process.

The collection baskets shall be placed in various locations where plastic bottles are often generated as waste, e.g. restaurants; bars; sport, party, and event centers, etc. This will be picked up frequently and regularly, by different collectors, each covering a specific geographic location for easy and fast recovery. The recovered plastic is sold to plastic recycling factories. Income gen-



Photo by Ajibona Tolulope

Rain washes plastic pollution down to River Ogun, tributary to the Lagoon in Lagos, Nigeria on May 29, 2020.

erated shall be used for volunteers' welfare and to encourage eco-friendly activities in our local community such as awareness on the importance of prevention of plastic pollutions e.g. sign posts, tee-shirts, etc.

## HOW TO MEASURE IMPACT

- Quantity of carbon captured as plastic;
- Number of people engaged in the recovery effort in 6-12 months; and
- Income generated from the sale of recovered materials.

## CONCLUSION

In respect to the above description, volunteers will develop the ability to care for the environment, learn how to transform waste to wealth, and understand the importance of taking a stand for nature. In order to ensure the above, a sum of USD \$2,000 will be required to cover the cost of materials and operational costs including transportation and power for one year to cover the rainy season which comes first May-November and prepares us for the more challenging dry season.

Thank you for reading this.

Kind regards,  
Ajibona Tolulope  
{for friends of firelies}  
lopeajibone@gmail.com  
+2347069262131



**SOIL, WATER  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONSERVATION  
FOUNDATION**



**Non Governmental Organization**

*Empowering the communities lives*

*Email: [swecf100@gmail.com](mailto:swecf100@gmail.com)*

My name is Charles Hughes and I am the new Chairman at Soil, Water & Environmental Conservation Foundation (SWECF) Kenya, with my friend Victor Mutunga being the Executive Director.

I am emailing you today with regards to a proposal for partnership with your organization. We are an NGO based in Mwingi, Kenya. We develop water resource development projects and environmental conservation projects for rural communities across Northern and Eastern Kenya. We have done a number of projects since our origin in 2018; however, we are an expanding organization seeking partnerships or sponsorship to help deliver on more projects.

To date, we have completed a number of sand dams and shallow wells. We also conduct dam repairs and borehole installations. In addition to this, we develop environmental conservation projects, one of which includes our Afforestation Programme in partnership with Seeds of Life Foundation.

We are very proud of what we have done so far but we want to expand and complete

more projects. That is why I am emailing you today to see if you can help us with this great cause which is empowering the lives of many communities.

Our next planned project is for a new sand dam in Kitui County. The project site has already been visited and assessed, we also have developed designs for the dam

All we are doing now is raising sufficient funding for resource materials and for construction. We currently have a fundraising page set up for this project. Typically other organizations require greater funds due to the size of their organizations, etc., but we have great partnerships with the community self-help groups that have been built over time with our director Victor. This means we are smaller scale but we can do these projects directly with the communities in need.

If you would like to visit our fundraising page, please visit: [gf.me/u/xxpt3t](https://gf.me/u/xxpt3t)

Or alternatively, visit our Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/swecfkenya/> and Instagram page platforms: @swecfkenya.

As of April 28, 2022, we have raised £420

(\$538) for our next sand dam, solely through fundraising efforts during lockdown, we are seeking £1800 (\$2,304) in total to completely do the project. However, we want to consistently develop a number of projects for the future and thus also seek long term partnerships with yourselves and your organizations.

We hope that you can help support a great cause and we will recognize and promote your efforts in partnership with us. This means that you can be truly recognized by supporting such great projects for people in need and demonstrating good ethical contributions to communities in need. Any assistance you can provide is truly appreciated, and thank you for taking the time to read this email.

We look forward to hearing a response from you soon and wish that yourself and all your colleagues are well during these difficult times!

Kind regards,

Charles Hughes BSc.

Environmental Scientist CRT

Chairman of SWECF Kenya

Website [swecf-ke.blogspot.com](http://swecf-ke.blogspot.com)

**WHEN YOU CAN'T GO FAR, YOU GO DEEP.**

*- Br. David Steindl-Rast -*

<https://twitter.com/gratefulnessorg/status/1266333982628732928>

# Groundswell Readers Help Orphans



By Ssengendo Yasin Signalaminat, Uganda

Hello mother Iona am so thankful about your support! Through publishing and simple donation where you can! As our problem had been renting and feeding our 45 total orphan kids, we had a friend who used to help but unfortunately we lost him in this pandemic covid! But I thank the lord for the last donation you sent us through Matt. He managed to add some dollars which helped us a lot in feeding!

As you published on your page, one of your friends is j.c. (I won't mention her full name). When she saw your donation, she replied saying, "Ssengendo has huge heart of helping" and she donated

\$250 which managed to buy foods like rice, maize floor (posho), washing soap, sugar, and a few kgs of beans and charcoal.

As my account of Facebook was hacked, I lost hope that I had lost communication with j.c but mother Iona gave me her email. As weeks passed, j.c could not could reply because she had gone for holiday!

Our landlord wanted to chase us out of his house because he had been demanding us 2 months rent yet each moth is \$210 which means \$420. When sister j.c saw the message that landlord is chasing us because of \$420 for the 2 months, she replied to me, "The landlord wants to chase you because of rent?" I said yes! She replied, "I will send you money for rent."

And since she sends through my friend Matt from Nevada, he also sometimes adds some amount. She sent \$600 and Matt added \$70 making \$670 which helped us pay off the 2 demanded bills on rent and managed to buy some things which will take us for some two weeks:

Food which includes:

- Maize floor (posho),
- Rice,
- Beans,
- Washing soap,
- Cassava,
- Potatoes, and
- Cow peas.

We pray that if we could get some simple piece of land which could help on feeding through farming and poultry.

Because land of \$6,500 can be big and change lives of the needy in our community!

So I call upon your help for especially feeding and renting a monthly support of \$1,000 can help to feed the kids and pay rent as well. God bless whoever has helped. God bless you all.

**Contact Ssengendo:** [ssengendo80yasin80@gmail.com](mailto:ssengendo80yasin80@gmail.com).

**Message from Matt to Iona:** Fills me with copious amounts of joy and love to be in a position to help. Meeting you is a blessing.

**Message from Iona to Everyone:** Can we keep this going? The expenses just continue month after month. We got this far.

## OH! MY GENERATION

By Hanson G. Blayon, Liberia  
©Humanitarian Spotlight page  
#Keep following# Son of a native LADY

We will build a tower  
With unbridled spring water attitude  
With promise to build the generation  
For the young and old  
For those who no longer turn focus

We give them power  
Flowing with fires of charity  
For all the suffering multitudes  
Homeless and swallowing poverty  
The generation of tomorrow  
The generation that experiences extreme  
distress

We will build a tower  
One word may mean little  
Poverty is a curse for human society

Poverty prevails there where is injustice  
for the poor  
Poverty is purely man made  
We trust them with power to give us  
blueprints of the future  
Where is my future  
They called us affected youth with no  
future

The society is afflicted with poverty  
Is condemnation of the entire human  
society  
Help us fill pitchers with milk, honey  
Reap the green of crops they have never  
seen

One second might not tell  
But the future is waiting when the  
younger ones will regain their birth  
right.  
Oh! My continent, we will build a tower  
for our generation.



By Bridget Robinson  
Adams, Virginia USA

Last week, we learned that The Women And Children's Empowerment Network in Africa is in dire need of financial support!

A group of AMAZING women have agreed to help raise funds for young girls in Uganda whom we've come to know as family since partnering with them last year.

Women For WACENA (100 women) is an effort to raise funds to support the girls who are currently being served by the organization and who are in immediate need of food, feminine hygiene products, and various other supplies.

We are looking for 100 women who are willing to simply ask 10 friends to donate just \$10 to help the girls NOW.

Thank you, Brandie LivnMove Wright\*, for immediately responding by creating this website, which provides greater detail about the project. We've tested the donation site and it was received almost immediately by the organization as confirmed by their champion Maggie Ndagire.

If you would like to join this effort as one of the 100 Women For WACENA, please place your name in the comments section, and share this post, so that you can be added to the list! I know we will get to 100!

If you want to give, please just inbox me and let me know that you did so we can properly thank you!

#WomenForWACENA

<https://sites.google.com/nn.k12.va.us/womenforwacena/home>

**Women For**  
**WACENA**  
*Creating hope in a hurting world.*

Women Supporting the Women And  
Children's Empowerment Network in Africa

Women  
Empowering  
World  
Changers!

Your donation of \$10 or more will  
provide education, food, and health  
and hygiene products to female champions  
in need.

Give Today!  
invest in the education,  
health, and well-being of  
women and children  
in Uganda, Africa.

<https://wacena.org/donations/>  
@wacenauganda  
<https://wacena.org/>

**WACENA website:** <https://wacena.org/donations/>  
**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/wacenauganda/>  
**Donations:** <https://wacena.org/donations/>



Artwork by Prince Timmy

## Groundswell News Has a "Resident Artist" Meet Olusanya Temitope Prince

By Olusanya Temitope Prince, Nigeria

IF THERE IS NO CHANGE, THERE  
WONT BE ANY BUTTERFLY.

Hi People...here's my first ever pastel pencil painting. I got the materials as a gift from a friend and here...I think I'm off on a good start, right? Let's hope for more lovely creations.

My social media presence on fb is Prince Timmy and in IG its iamartaac.

Imprint is kinda like my stage name because I am also a recording artist... It means to leave a mark behind or as I like to put it... To leave a bar behind. Like a footprint or something significant for others to see

Artaac means Art – art – and – creativity... A. R. T. A. A. C... Sounds like attack but that why I had to creatively change it

I'm working my way up to be among top legends...

It's a process I'm really excited about. I am also not in university yet.

I have been drawing all my life... I've had YouTube to be my guild for about three years and that was when I got a my first phone as a gift.

I've always believed in myself and I always felt like I could do the impossible....

Right from school, my art made me very popular. I will never forget the memories

Why I chose art is because... It's expressive.. I found out that I could easily express myself using my art... Not only through drawing but also poetry and songwriting, singing.

I had a year of discovery where I figured out what exactly I wanted to do with my life and thanks to Mr Johnson Abbaly. He

helped bring out my inner talent. Special thanks to Mr Kennedy also. First time in my life I've had my art work on an international platform.

I have just very few people in my life who I share this vision with and who believe it's possible to achieve...

Don't get me wrong, I failed a few times but I always come back stronger, better. I never make the same mistakes twice... I try not to.

During the process of discovering myself and my talent was when I came up with the name ARTAAC and began the movement.

**How to contact Timmy:** email address and Social media handle... Princetimmyo-

gp@gmail.com

I\_am\_artaac

Artaac\_\_\_\_\_

## Forest Trees Are Growing Shorter and Dying Younger

By Tim Radford

Climate News Network: June 9, 2020

LONDON, UK – There are limits to what forest trees will tolerate; many tropical forests, for instance, can cope with climate change – but only up to a point. Again, they will go on storing carbon from human greenhouse gas emissions – but only to a degree.

But at around the 32°C (90°F) threshold, tree growth halts and trees start to die more frequently, putting carbon back into the atmosphere, to accelerate more global heating, according to a detailed study of trees in more than 800 tropical forests.

And a second, unrelated study of forests worldwide finds separate evidence of the impact of climate change. Thanks to human action, forest trees are now younger – and shorter.

The point of the first study is that, in their natural and undisturbed state, the world's tropical forests can take the heat, but there may be a limit to their capacity for change, and that limit is a daytime maximum of 32.2°C (90°F).

A collective of 225 researchers in South America, Africa, and Asia report in the journal *Science* that they made 2 million measurements of 10,000 tropical tree species in sample plots in 24 countries to examine the capacity of forests to absorb atmospheric carbon in a rapidly heating world.

### Safety Zone

“Our analysis reveals that up to a certain point of heating, tropical forests are surprisingly resistant to small temperature differences. If we limit climate change they can continue to store a large amount of carbon in a warmer world,” said Martin Sullivan, a geographer at the University of Leeds, and at Manchester Metropolitan University, who led the study.

“The 32-degree (90-degree) threshold highlights the critical importance of cutting our emissions to avoid pushing too many forests beyond the safety zone.

“For example, if we limit global average temperatures to a 2°C increase above pre-industrial levels, this pushes nearly three-quarters of tropical forests above the heat threshold we identified. Any further increases in temperature will lead to rapid losses of forest carbon.”

The finding suggests that overall, and independently of species of tree, tropical forest carbon declines with higher temperatures. In all forests, trees flourish and absorb carbon, die back, and release it again. But at their best, forests on balance absorb



Image: By Marek Piwnicki on Unsplash

*Forest trees are not growing as tall now, nor living as long as they used to.*

and store away for centuries more carbon than they release – until the thermometer starts to rise and goes on rising.

“Reductions in forest age and height are already happening, and they’re likely to continue to happen”

A co-author, Beatriz Marimon of the State University of Matto Grosso in Brazil, said, “Each degree increase above this 32-degree (90-degree) threshold releases four times as much carbon as would have been released below the threshold.”

The message is that tropical forests need to be protected from climate change, deforestation, and wildlife exploitation; that way, they protect biodiversity, protect themselves, and protect humankind, for future generations. They can adapt to warming temperatures, but this takes decades, perhaps centuries.

But according to another study, also in *Science*, forest trees the world over are now changing. They are responding to ever higher levels of atmospheric carbon – in effect, they are being fertilized – but also wildfire, drought, windstorm damage, insect attack, and disease have become more frequent and more severe with climate change.

And then there has been the direct impact of human economic demand: clearance, disturbance, and economic exploitation.

In consequence, U.S. and European scientists conclude, from detailed satellite data and from reviews of more than 160 previous studies, that there has been a “pervasive shift” in forest dynamics, and a

dramatic decrease in the age and stature of the forests. The world's trees on average are younger, and shorter.

### Drastic Change

“This trend is likely to continue with global warming,” said Nate McDowell, of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, who led the research.

“A future planet with fewer large, old forests will be very different than what we have grown accustomed to. Older forests often host much higher biodiversity than young forests, and they store more carbon than young forests.”

So direct and indirect human action have – in the big picture – affected the way forests shelter new seedlings, the growth of all trees, and the rate of death of those trees. Mortality is going up, while recruitment and growth are faltering.

“Unfortunately, mortality drivers like rising temperature and disturbances are on the rise and are expected to continue increasing in frequency over the next century,” Dr McDowell said.

“So reductions in forest age and height are already happening, and they’re likely to continue to happen.”

*Tim Radford, a founding editor of Climate News Network, worked for The Guardian for 32 years, for most of that time as science editor. He has been covering climate change since 1988.*

**Source:** <https://climatenewsnetwork.net/forest-trees-are-growing-shorter-and-dying-younger/>



Photo courtesy Per Liljas

Monica Gerth, Microbiologist for the United States stepped up to a microphone in a large white tent in Waipoua Forest, some 90 miles (140 kilometers) from the northernmost tip of New Zealand.

## Indigenous Maori & Western Scientists Team Up to Save Threatened Species

Threatened by a foreign pathogen, iconic kauri trees find allies in cross-cultural collaboration.

By Per Liljas  
Ensia: May 19, 2020

On a weekend in March 2019, Victoria University of Wellington microbiologist Monica Gerth stepped up to a microphone in a large white tent in Waipoua Forest, some 90 miles (140 kilometers) from the northernmost tip of New Zealand. The sun was baking the surrounding trees. A creek gently rippled across the glade. More than 50 scientists, activists, artists, and Māori elders were gathered to share knowledge and inspiration on how to save an iconic tree species, kauri, from a lethal pathogen, *Phytophthora agathidicida*.

Elder Tohe Ashby had just finished a presentation on the kinship between the kauri and whales. Ashby had recently returned from Taranaki province, where a pod of sperm whales had been beached. In his words, they had sacrificed themselves after hearing the agony of their kauri brethren, and he had traveled there to recover their remains. Now, their bones

would be ground up and used in a potion to heal the trees.

“If you believe, the power of prayers can open doors,” he said. Then he ended with a somber comment on the relation between Western and indigenous views. “Some things might gel, but I don’t think our realms can work or fit together.”

A few years earlier, Gerth would have felt far out of her depth to follow that speech. But on this day, she beamed.

“I don’t think that’s true,” she opened. “I think it’s all about finding the right people.”

Despite centuries of colonization, finding Māori culture in New Zealand takes no effort. All rugby games start with the traditional war dance haka. Māori language is mixed into everyday speech, and elements of their art are ubiquitous. However, marginalization is still a fact of the day, and cross-cultural collaboration is anything but frictionless.

Spending a year reporting on Māori influence on conservation work, I found myself wading into a scene rife with conflict. Eventually, though, the conflict also struck me as a sign of vigor.

### Decimated Giant

It would be fair to some extent to call

kauri the redwood of New Zealand. Like its distant North American cousin, kauri is a giant conifer that can live to be over 2,000 years old. It and its ancestors dominated its habitat – about 30,000 square kilometers (12,000 square miles) across the northern tip of New Zealand – for over 100 million years, successfully coexisting with the first people of that area.

Then, in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans started arriving in numbers with modern tools and a price on the tree’s head. In little over a century, over 95% of the kauri forests were logged or burned. The remainders are fragmented and surrounded by pastures and monocultures. This has left them vulnerable to pests, climate change and infection by organisms carried by international trade.

Phytophthoras are particularly good travelers. These moldlike organisms can hitch rides on nursery plants or outdoor equipment, staying dormant through long voyages until, when released into soil, they are able to propel themselves toward their prey. Phytophthora was first detected in New Zealand kauri in 1972, but incorrectly identified first as *P. heveae*, and later *P. cinnamomi*, a species that has caused rampant damage on plantations and woodlands across the world, especially in neighboring

**Saving Trees** continued on next page

**Saving Trees** *continued from previous page*

Australia.

In 2006, the New Zealand strand was finally recognized as a distinct species targeting kauri, and in 2015 it was named *P. agathidicida*, “kauri killer.”

There is no cure for phytophthora. Kauri plantations can be replaced with more resistant varieties, but that is no way to save existing forests. This is one reason New Zealand is trying a novel approach: The government and indigenous people are tackling the problem together.

Monica Gerth is familiar with both Māori and kauri. She arrived from the United States in 2007 for a postdoctoral fellowship at Massey University in Auckland on chemotaxis, the science of how cells sense and move toward chemicals. When she first heard about *P. agathidicida*, she figured there must be some chemical that attracts the pathogen to kauri. And if so, there might also be a way to lead it astray. Perhaps another plant could send out a “smell” that would disrupt its path. The question was where to look.

“I’m not a plant person, so I didn’t have the faintest idea where to start,” she says.

Casual conversations opened her eyes to Māori knowledge about the local ecosystem. For example, she learned that the first step in harvesting timber is to listen for birdsong early in the morning. A particular call will mean that there are insects burrowing through a recently deceased tree. That means the tree is also ripe for harvest, as the Māori practice is to only pick dead or dying trees.

“All of that really excited Monica,” says Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru, a carver who told her the story. In turn, he says that her talk of chemotaxis interested him. “We have a similar way to describe this movement of water and proteins through root membranes. Simply put, chemotaxis are how plants talk to each other.”

Step by step, the two started getting to know each other and talking about how they might work together. Chris Pairama, another Māori knowledge-holder, joined too. It was eventually agreed that the two



Photo courtesy of Per Liljas

*New Zealand’s largest kauri, known as Tane Mahuta, grows in Waipoua forest. It’s estimated to be 1,250 to 2,500 years old and is more than 51 meters (160 feet) tall.*

men would identify a number of plants that grow in proximity to healthy kauri, and Gerth would sic *P. agathidicida* on them in her lab to see what effect it would have. A proposal to that effect received funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment.

“The premise of the experiment wasn’t to look at the mold or the host,” says Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru, “but at companion plants and their connection through the soil.”

**Indigenous Traditions, Sustainable Management**

Many scholars around the world have lifted up indigenous traditions as an exemplary way to sustainably manage forests. In New Zealand, one might think the promotion of Māori values should

come naturally, since they are enshrined in an 1840 treaty between the Brits and Māori. But despite the treaty, for a long time, intercultural relations were dominated by newcomers wresting land from iwi (indigenous communities). Forests were turned into pastures. Aspects of indigenous culture was banned. At the turn of the last century, New Zealand scholars suggested that both the Māori and the kauri would soon be extinct.

Over the last couple of decades, however, there has been a resurgence. The Treaty of Waitangi has gained the stature of a constitutional document. Its principles of “partnership, participation and protection” of Māori culture run through much of society. Many iwi have settled lengthy court battles and moved back home.

The struggle for the kauri is a potent testing ground for an even deeper range of influence. Most kauri stand on land over which Māori hold customary rights or for which Māori are an integral part of the management team.

Waitākere Ranges, a regional park in the outskirts of Auckland, is one such place. This forested swath of low mountains cascading into the Tasman Sea is the home or weekend destination of many outdoor enthusiasts. After almost being forced out of existence, its historic guardians, the Te Kawerau ā Maki iwi, are not as prominent.

Yet the iwi settled its differences with the Crown in 2014, and is now a treaty partner, granting it a significant say on the stewardship of the land. As the iwi’s management felt little heed was taken to the worsening kauri dieback and its connection to off-track hiking, they imposed a rāhui, cultural prohibition, against entering the woods. After a lengthy battle against authorities, and very vocal protests from hikers, this prohibition has largely started to be enforced, and offenders have been prosecuted in court.

“We knew we’d get a lot of shit, but it was a crisis situation and nothing was happening,” says Robin Taua-Gordon of Te

**Saving Trees** continued from previous page



Photo courtesy Jeff P | Flickr, licensed under CC BY 2.0

*Waitakere Ranges, a regional park in the outskirts of Auckland, is home to threatened kauri trees as well as a magnet for outdoor adventurers.*

Kawerau ā Maki. She emphasizes that they are not looking at the well-being of this generation of Aucklanders or the next, but rather the health of the whole ecosystem. “As responsible stewards, our perspective has to be hundreds of years.”

In Waipoua Forest, home to the largest kauri, the Te Roroa iwi is managing one of the greatest tourist attractions of New Zealand’s far north. Since it regained management over the forest, it has taken the lead on the security of and accessibility to these trees, even considering largely restricting or banning visits. “It’s all about

being a good ancestor,” says Taoho Patu-awa, science adviser for the iwi. Another way in which Māori perspectives are actively promoted is through state funding to projects such as Gerth’s.

This has all played a part in shifting views on the environment. When the Tūhoe iwi in 2014 regained rights over Te Urewera forest, in the far east of the North Island, for example, it declared it a legal person and started assessing its health by customary means, such as the amount of awe a flock of kereru – a native forest pigeon – inspires.

New generations are starting to bring Western and indigenous knowledge together. Amanda Black, a senior lecturer in bioprotection at Lincoln University, Christchurch, is part Tūhoe. She points to the importance of younger Māori such as herself coming through the educational system while still being rooted in their culture.

“Māori get a lot of airtime superficially, which frustrates me,” she says. “A lot of environmental issues fly under the radar while people mind their daily business. But New Zealand could really lead the way. There are policies in place to bring out Māori research and unlock whatever potential,” she says.

## Respect and Trust

Mixing worlds is not unproblematic. For one thing, there is the colonial baggage. Indigenous people may be less objectified these days, but Western academia still extracts and monetizes new findings.

“The threat of rape and pillage of our traditional knowledge is always there,” says Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru. On his insistence, Gerth fought her university not to claim intellectual ownership of her study. It took a good couple of months, but she succeeded.

The only way researchers know to halt a phytophthora attack is to inject a tree with phosphite, which stops the internal rot. Some iwi have refused this treatment,



Photo courtesy Per Liljas

*Members of the Te Roroa iwi welcome participants to a four-day conference on the health of kauri, an iconic New Zealand tree.*

**Saving Trees** continued on next page



**Saving Trees** *continued from previous page*

though, since they find it too intrusive.

“You have to respect that,” says Ian Horner, a plant pathologist with Plant & Food Research, a New Zealand science company, who has led a project to inject thousands of kauri. “We have to come up with solutions that make cultural sense to the people living with these trees.” Applying ground-up whale bones to the lesions of ailing kauri could even be beneficial, he says. “For all I know, the calcium could have a positive effect.”

Few elders are willing to let scientists test their methods without first earning trust. Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru thinks this guardedness sometimes goes too far, and tells of an argument in a board of elders about his collaboration with Monica Gerth.

“Two of the ladies were saying ‘don’t tell everyone everything, this is really secret stuff, we should keep it to ourselves.’” In his mind, they should let it go after the lengthy dispute he had championed against the university on intellectual property. “Sometimes we’re just too long in the tooth.”

My own experience illustrates the importance of trust, too. I met up with Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru at his home in Auckland. In the back, by his power tools, were bone pieces from that whale salvaging operation in Taranaki. He showed me pictures of a helicopter hauling the jaws and vertebrae over a cliff next to the beach.

I asked him about the healing potions, but he told me quite sternly that my presumption that he was involved with them was wrong. It was often like that during our conversations. He generously shared of his expertise and then, inadvertently, I said something he found ignorant or disrespectful, and he delivered a reprimand.



**Photo Courtesy Kathy Warburton from Wikimedia, licensed under CC BY 4.0**

*New Zealand’s Kānuka, one of four plants selected by Māori for study, shows promise for potentially helping kauri fight off *P. agathidicida*.*

“Many people would stop talking to you if you said something like that,” he could say after a long pause. “Consider that a rap on the knuckle.”

Gerth laughs when she hears of how Te Rangitākuku Kaihoru tested me. Challenges are not necessarily a sign of distrust for Māori, but also an educational technique and a cultural feature in order to size each other up.

“I have been challenged more in this project than in any other research I’ve been involved in,” she says, “and that’s been very good.”

She describes how conferences hosted by iwi, such as the one in Waipoua Forest, put a lot of emphasis on personal relations, so it’s important to introduce oneself by describing one’s family and lineage.

“The first few times, it was very confusing and outside my comfort zone. I would typically only talk about my research at a conference, not put myself out there.” Now, she has started doing a short version of this when lecturing too. “You can see connections happening, people being more engaged and more ready to ask questions.”

**Strengthened Understanding**

That day in Waipoua Forest, Gerth went on to present the results of her study on the chemotaxic effect on *P. agathidicida* of extracts from the plants Māori elders had selected. According to traditional knowledge, forest

regeneration happens in three waves, with the first one involving plants that cleanse, prepare, and connect the soil for future generations of plants. Therefore, four plants that are involved in this wave in kauri forests were selected for the study.

The effectiveness of these four plants was much higher than that of over 100 commercially available antimicrobial compounds that previously had been tested. Also, the most effective plant – kānuka, a native shrub of the myrtle family – dramatically outperformed all competition in its ability to slow down *P. agathidicida*’s propulsion through the soil.

“Woo-hoo,” one of the participants yelled and clapped her hands.

These are still early results produced in a laboratory. But Black is now working with Gerth, and planning to use her expertise in soil health and cultural practice to test if kānuka can be used in the wild to repel phytophthora from kauri.

Over the years it has taken to reach this point, the understanding and connections between Western and Māori advocates for kauri health have strengthened. These are slow changes, and not all are persuaded that this is the right path for Māori, Western science, New Zealand, or environmental conservation. But on the scale that matters to this iconic tree and its stewards, perhaps there is time to work all that out.

UPDATED 5.21.20: Māori elders selected the plants for study.

**Source:** <https://ensia.com/features/new-zealand-indigenous-maori-scientists-kauri-tree-forest/>



# The Path Beyond Extinction and Escape: Return to Earth, Regenerate, and Share *Message for World Environment Day, June 5, 2020*

With the money Musk is pouring into Space X, millions would be fed and engaged creatively in regenerating the Earth, our common home, making it livable for present and future generations, everywhere.

By Vandana Shiva  
Common Dreams: June 5, 2020

On May 31, while people were dying during the Corona Pandemic, while millions had lost their livelihoods and were going hungry during the “lockdown,” while millions were marching in city after city in the USA to protest against police brutality and police violence after the killing of George Floyd by the police in Minneapolis, billionaire Elon Musk launched Space X.

For me this was a brutal display of the hubris, indifference, and power of the 1% who have pushed ecosystems, communities, countries, and humanity to the brink.

Musk wants to create a “self sustaining” Space X city on Mars over the next century for a privileged faction of humanity. He ignores the fact that there is no Planet B, that the Earth is our only living planet, she is Gaia, she is alive.

Musk talked about being emotional during the launch of Space X. Powerful men have “emotions” for their machines, not for people or other beings. They talk of humans becoming a “space bearing civilization and a multi-planetary species.” They are still in denial that we are all earthlings who share life with other beings on the Earth, our common home.

The billionaires who have violated Planetary boundaries and contributed to the

destruction of the Earth and injustice and inequality in society, seem to want to “escape” from their humanity and the threat of extinction they helped create.

As members of the Earth community they have the responsibility to care for the Earth, not exploit her and when the damage is done, decide to abandon her to colonize other planets.

With the money Musk is pouring into Space X, millions would be fed and engaged creatively in regenerating the Earth, our common home, making it livable for present and future generations, everywhere.

The sixth mass extinction is a manmade phenomenon: It is driven by the limitless greed of the few.

Take just one example, even when it is painted “green” – the limitless appetite of Musk’s electric car industry for Lithium has led to the expansion of lithium mines in Northern Tibet, Southern America and Chile, and Bolivia. With the demand for electric cars, the demand for lithium is expected to more than double by 2025 with exponential damage to the environment and surrounding communities.

According to Evo Morales, the former President of Bolivia, the coup against him was a lithium coup. The coup came a week after Morales nationalized lithium on November 4, 2019, saying it belongs to the Bolivian people, not to multinationals, and cancelled the December 2018 agreement with Germany’s ACI Systems Alemania (ACISA) following weeks of protests from residents of the Potosí area which has 50% to 70% of the world’s lithium reserves in the Salar de Uyuni salt flats. ACISA provides batteries to Tesla owned by Leon Musk and the coup resulted in a massive rise in the company’s stock.

When the rich and powerful destroyed

the binding Climate Change treaty in Copenhagen in 2009, Evo Morales addressed the Conference of Parties, reminding everyone that governments were supposed to be negotiating ways to protect Mother Earth, not the rights of polluters. As a countermeasure, he announced he would call a people’s Summit on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. I was honored to work with the group created by the Government of Bolivia to prepare a draft Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth.

As Earth Citizens we have a choice – to either follow the market’s laws of greed and unlimited profit or the laws of the Earth.

As we make shifts to a post Covid economy, we need to take into account the full ecological, social, and political costs of what is being offered and what choices we make. Rendering invisible the real costs to the Earth and people is how the mega corporate world accumulates its wealth, polarizing society further, denying millions their fundamental rights, undermining democracy, and increasing their ecological footprint, leaving these costs to be borne by the Earth and vulnerable communities.

As always, colonizers leave the places and spaces they have destroyed and polluted, and find new colonies to occupy and extract from, touting them as the next step of progress, as solutions to the ecological and poverty crises they have contributed to, finding other places and other people to dominate and plunder.

Cecil Rhodes who colonized Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) stated frankly, “We must find new lands from which we can easily obtain raw materials and at the same time exploit the cheap slave labor that is available from the natives of the colonies.

**The Path** *continued on next page*

**THE ASSUMPTION OF SUPERIORITY OF HUMANS OVER OTHER SPECIES, AND SOME HUMANS OVER OTHERS OF A DIFFERENT COLOR, GENDER, OR RELIGION IS AT THE ROOT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, BLACKS, AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE.**

- Vandana Shiva -

### **The Path** *continued from previous page*

The colonies would also provide a dumping ground for the surplus goods produced in our factories.”

This is still the model of the economy of the 1%. The tools of extraction and the colonies might change but the patterns of colonization remain unchanged – grab and steal what belongs to others, make it your own property, collect rents from the original owners, transform the displaced into cheap slave labor to provide cheap raw materials, and turn them into consumers for your industrial products.

For Elon Musk, the colonies are both other planets like Mars and countries rich in lithium. For Bill Gates and Big Tech, the new colonies are our bodies and minds – as spelled out in WIPO’s (World Intellectual Property Organization) patent no. WO2020/06060 which the billionaire has just been granted at the peak of the Corona virus and in the midst of lockdown at the end of March. This is the next step in the tech giants’ plan for the digitalization of the world where people and their work are being rendered “useless” and are being reduced to “users” of the “machines.”

A digital dictatorship based on the premise that 90% of humanity is disposable has no obligation to social justice and human rights. A digital dictatorship is not a life-generating and livelihood-supporting economy. It can work through extraction of data from our minds and bodies for a few years as “surveillance capitalism,” but because it does not create the generative conditions that support life in nature’s economy and the sustenance economy of people, because it does not nourish our health, our bodies and minds, or our creativity, our freedom or our Earth being – it will destroy the ecological and social base of the economy and our future as a species.

Denial of ecological processes that support the economy, and externalizing social and ecological costs, creates conditions for ecological collapse.

Economy and Ecology are both derived from the same word “oikos” our home, both our planetary home as well as the particular places we call home. Yet what is called economy today is destroying our common home.

Aristotle defined “oikonomia” as the “art of living.” He differentiated it from the “art of money making” which he referred to as “chrematistics.”

The game billionaires play is not worthy of being called economy, either as care for the home, or as the art of living. It is extractive, naked money making, at war with life and creativity.

The Digital Giants are misleadingly creating the language of “dematerialization,” as

if the digital economy will run on thin air, with no resources, no energy. However, a digital economy is very energy intensive and has a very heavy social and ecological footprint. Digital technologies now emit 4% of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and their energy consumption is increasing by 9% a year. Data traffic is responsible for more than half of digital technology’s global impact, with 55% of its annual energy consumption. Every byte transferred or stored requires large scale and energy-greedy terminals and infrastructures (data centers, networks). This traffic is currently increasing by more than 25% a year. How long will it take before the ecological load of the digitalization of every aspect of our life will push the remaining ecosystems to collapse, driving the surviving species to extinction?

All democratic societies and citizens need to assess these costs, and ensure that the “Precautionary Principle” and “Polluters Pay Principle” are applied to the digital economy. That polluters do not “escape” their ecological and democratic responsibilities, and dictators do not impose their “surveillance capitalism.”

There are options beyond colonization, beyond extinction, which first pushed other species and other cultures to extinction – and is now threatening the extinction of the entire human species.

Instead of the rich ignoring and fleeing from the Earth, the path as humanity we should be following is to Return to Earth, in our minds, our hearts, and in our lives – as one Earth Community with a potential to co-create, co-produce, and regenerate and allow the Earth to provide for all. This is the path to reclaiming our creative powers to shape our economies and democracies from the bottom up. This is the practice of Earth Democracy.

We need to shift from Anthropocentrism (regarding humankind as the central or most important element of existence, especially as opposed to God or animals) to the recognition that all humans and all beings are members of one Earth Family.

The assumption of superiority of humans over other species, and some humans over others of a different color, gender, or religion is at the root of violence against women, blacks, and indigenous people. It has justified extermination of species and cultures. It is what led to the brutal killing of George Floyd, and many others before him. And this assumption of anthropocentrism is at the root of the extinction crisis.

We need to shift from the assumption that violating planetary boundaries, ecosystem boundaries, species boundaries,

and human rights is a measure of progress and superiority – to creating economies based on respecting ecological laws and ecological limits, and respecting the rights of the last person, the last child.

We need to shift from seeing money and technology as masters in a new religion of money making, “chrematistics,” to recognizing they are mere means that must be governed and regulated democratically for higher ecological and human ends.

We need to shift from extractivism as the basis of the economy to solidarity and giving as the basis of circular, solidarity economies of permanence.

We need to shift from enclosure of the commons by the 1% to recovery of the commons for the common good and well being of all. Humanity must opt for staying alive by caring for our common home, the Earth and each other, rejuvenating the Planet, and through it sowing the seeds of our common future.

“Only as one Earth community and one humanity, united in our diversities, can we hold ourselves together and step away from the precipice, and escape the destructive, ecocidal, genocidal rule of the 1% and the hallucinations of the mechanical mind. The 1% have brought us to this point, like sheep to slaughter. But we can turn around and walk away, to our freedom. To live free. To think free. To breathe free. To eat free. Seeding the Future is in our minds, our hearts, our hands.”

*Dr. Vandana Shiva is a philosopher, environmental activist, and eco feminist. She is the founder/director of Navdanya Research*



*Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology. She is author of numerous books including, Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis; Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply;*

*Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace; and Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development. Shiva has also served as an adviser to governments in India and abroad as well as NGOs, including the International Forum on Globalization, the Women’s Environment and Development Organization, and the Third World Network. She has received numerous awards, including 1993 Right Livelihood Award (Alternative Nobel Prize) and the 2010 Sydney Peace Prize. Her new book is Oneness vs 1% – Shattering Illusions, Seeding Freedom, Women Unlimited.*

**Source:** <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2020/06/05/path-beyond-extinction-and-escape-return-earth-regenerate-and-share>

# Permaculture Farm in Kenya Grows Food for Community

By Iona with help from Felix Akicho, Kenya

Long, long ago during the height of my environmental career, I gave some thought to different jobs and silently evaluated them in my head and heart. Having worked as a nurse caring for people dying of cancer, as an air pollution inspector in the middle of New Jersey, and in the Superfund program at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, I was well aware of the damage many industries and jobs related to them create.

What can we do?

That's pretty much been my question all through life as an activist. What can we do? How do we get people to care?

After studying the problems I was

witnessing, I came to the solid conclusion that the MOST NOBLE CAREER OF ALL IS ORGANIC FARMING. I hold that view to this day.

Mind you, I know very little about farming, other than the work I did with my husband in his huge vegetable garden, so when I participated in the Blessed Unrest conference sponsored by Biodiversity for a Livable Climate, I learned a LOT more. There were many speakers who either were farmers or were helping farmers around the world.

Regenerative Agriculture is the name used often as a way of giving the Earth a chance to heal and replenish the soil. In Africa (as well as other places) it's a way to fight hunger and poverty, too, when crops can be sold.

Felix Akicho worked with me to prepare

this photo essay. He was extremely patient with this novice who asked for clarification on some of these terms.

Felix sais this, "I'm just looking on how to complete poverty in the community through organic farm, not for me alone but even all members in the community."

That is the kind of compassionate spirit I love and am trying my best to illustrate in *Groundswell News Journal*.

Thank you, Felix and his friends!

Contact Felix at +254792824689, [felixakicho2000@gmail.com](mailto:felixakicho2000@gmail.com) or on Facebook at Felix Akicho and Kakayando Organic Farm.

The original Bill Mollison "Permaculture Institute" in Tasmania can be found at <https://www.permaculturenews.org/what-is-permaculture/>

*(bottom left) Jevan Omondi is digging banana guild in Kakayando Organic Farm. A guild is a three-foot deep hole dug for planting bananas around it and is used to store water for the bananas planted around it. Photo by Felix Akicho. (bottom right) Felix Akicho is propping his bananas up with a strong stick. Photo by Felix Ouma.*





*(top) Victor and Steve planting a key hole garden with kale. It is a circle garden having an indentation and a compost bin on it for keeping manure. Photo by Felix Ouma.*

*(bottom left) Pappans growing. Photo by Felix Akicho  
(bottom right) Felix Akicho cooling off under a Tipi Garden, a small place with shade built with climbing beans and other climbing plants, used for resting after hard work on the farm. Photo by Dina Upendo*



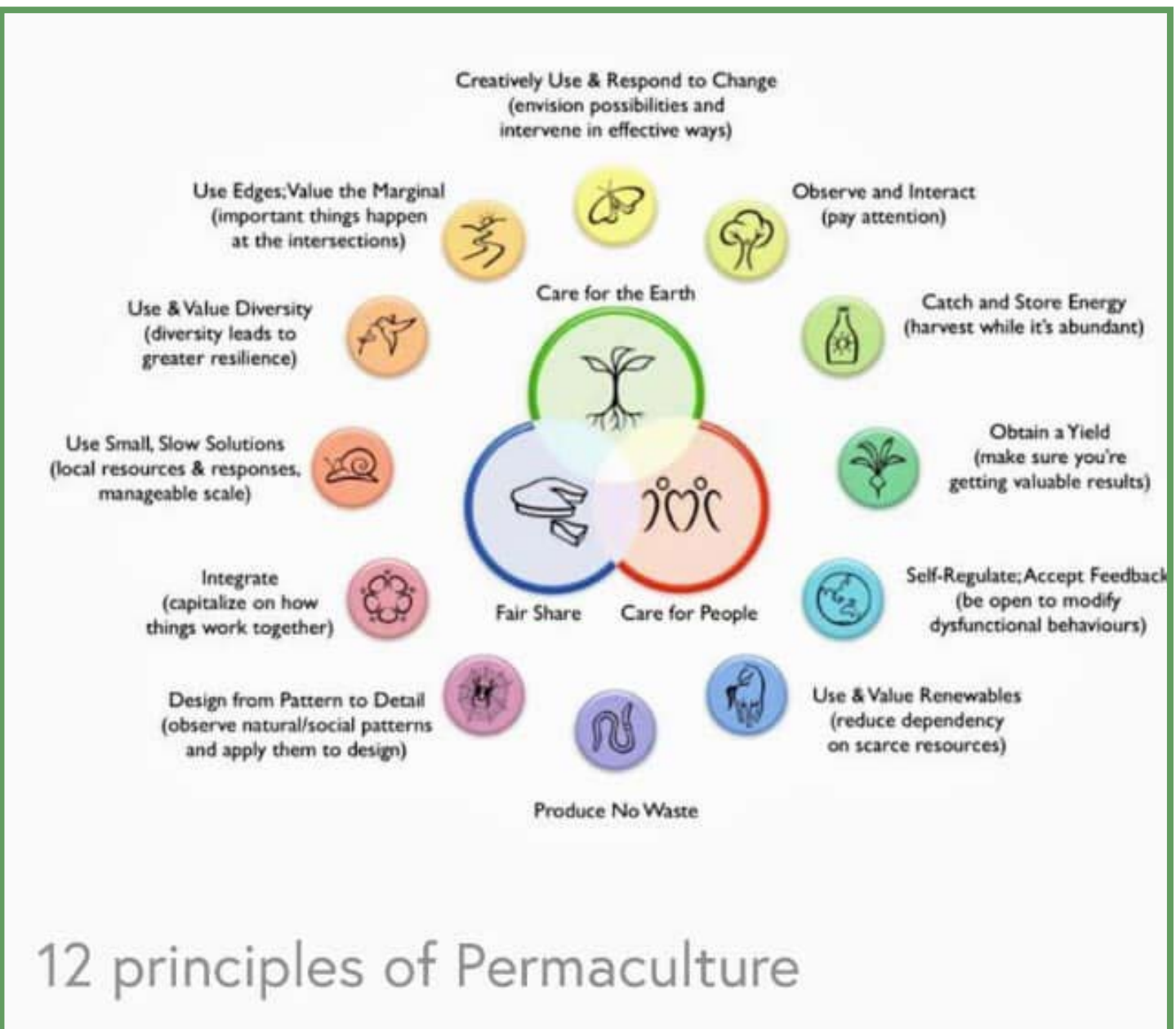




Photo by Big Boy and Art by Roma

*Fundraising poster on Facebook to help raise enough money to fence in a permaculture farm and develop other great programs on the land. Marbunga and Godfrey pose at the Umuntu Plot in Mount Darwin.*

## HEY, BIGBOY! FENCE THAT DREAM!!! He got free land but must fence it.

By Roma (or craaaaaazywater), Australia

At the young age of 44, Musemwa Bigboy of Zimbabwe is already on the path of becoming a Permaculture Super Hero!

His Permaculture Community Gardens, Seed Swapping Parties, and Tree Planting Teams are pumping in Harere, Zimbabwe.

Young people look up to him from the end of a Mattock. Elders wrap their arms around his big shoulders like he is a prize fighter for the Community. He is!

But today, Musemwa Bigboy is anxious.

He stays up late. Looking at his old phone to see if his BIG PERMACULTURE DREAM is about to come true! The Fundraiser to "Fence Our Dream" is underway on Facebook and it's "make-or-break time."

He has been offered 7 Hectares (17.3 acres) on the Land of His birth! His Beloved Mount Darwin District.

Bigboy has a big dream for this land.

Teaming up with his good friend Ngonidzashé Marowa, and the Earth Repair Team to turn this land into a pumping resource for the surrounding communities. Trees and Homes will rise, Seeds and Food Forests will be raised, Gardens, A Community Centre, a Meditation space, a Permaculture School for Children...the full colours of Nature and Community in what can only be described as "UMUNTU!" blossoms in Bigboy's mind.

His Team have been ordered to fence the land or risk losing it. Land is Precious and many want to claim it, of course.

In this time of immense ecological uncertainty, big Permaculture Dreams need to take root and Musemwa Bigboy is our Man for the job in Zimbabwe!

Hey Bigboy, you go FENCE THAT DREAM!

Claim this Dream together with Bigboy!

If you can, please donate or share the "Fence our Dream!" fundraiser on FaceBook at <https://www.facebook.com/donate/729912447752237/>

**Watch Bigboy and the Earth Care Team Grow on their FB Page**

<https://www.facebook.com/Zimbabwe-Umuntu-Permaculture-Projects-100743338294089/>

The UMUNTU Movement is all about

**Fence** *continued on next page*

Fence continued from previous page



Photo by Theresa Fadila Musemwa (Bigboy's daughter)

(left to right) Michael, Stembile, Bigboy, and young Tinotenda helping harvest vegetables in the Komani Estate Food Forest Garden, April 2020.

being and working “together, for a better world.”

WE are gonna REPAIR THE EARTH!!!  
WE are gonna collect SEEDS!  
WE are gonna grow TREES! LOTS OF TREES! ALL SORTS OF TREES!

WE are gonna make a beautiful COMMUNITY CENTRE for EVERYBODY TO

SHARE!!

WE are gonna train EVERYBODY in PERMACULTURE especially our CHILDREN!!

WE ROCK ZIMBABWE WITH UMUNTU!!! (From the Heart)

TOGETHER FOR A BETTER WORLD  
Our idea is to develop the land to a community center where

there will be a meditation centre, permaculture training centre, preschool, orchard, organic garden, et cetera. It needs fencing.

We hold a temporary claim on this magical land, but we must fence it as soon as possible or we will lose our chance!

Land is 7 Hectares in size (17.3 acres). The cost of wire is \$700 (10 rolls x 50kg x 2mm@\$70); Fencing poles \$150 and Cement \$50. The total cost is \$900.

Learn about Bigboy and UMUNTU on the web: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ZimbabwePermacultureTrust/>

ZimbabwePermacultureTrust/

CLAIM THIS DREAM WITH US!!

If you would like to team up with our projects please visit us at:

Facebook fundraiser: <https://www.facebook.com/donate/676657402912479/>

PayPal donations: <https://www.paypal.com/pools/c/8pmWe7lCJO>

I am Bigboy Musemwa, 44 years old and a member of the British Permaculture Association. I run the Repair Earth Project, where we grow trees for distribution to communities to raise awareness of the value of trees and reduce environmental desertification. I also run a permaculture demonstration garden in the Chihota District. I have a PDC from the Fambidzanai Permaculture Institute. Please come and Join in with our Online FB Community at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ZimbabwePermacultureTrust/?ref=share>

Hi I am Roma Banks. The one writing. I think I am a Visionary Art Activist and Enthusiastic Student of Permaculture. I am Global Flame Keeper of the \$1 Community Project. An Inclusive and Creative Online Grassroots Project working to bring Land and Tools to the Hands and Feet of Everyone who wants to Care. Don't be a stranger! Join forces with me and other friends on this wild and uplifting adventure at <https://www.facebook.com/theonedollarcommunityproject/>



Photo by Theresa Fadila Musemwa

The Earth Repair team at the Greendale tree planting event in Harare, November 2019. Benson, Christopher, and Bigboy on the left, giving a tree to a woman passing by and her gardener on the right.



# Schools and Permaculture Programme (SCOPE)

By John Macharia, National Coordinator  
Excerpts from brochure "SCOPE in 10 Minutes"

## About SCOPE Kenya

SCOPE Kenya is a local capacity building Organization founded in 2014 by 14 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) working with schools communities. The main purpose being to strengthen and scale up work on promoting environmentally sound land use practices, to improve food and nutrition security situation, biodiversity conservation and resilience to climate change, through permaculture/agro-ecology practices.

## Mission

To transform schools into dynamic learning centres of sustainable land use in support of holistic community development.

- Currently the SCOPE Kenya network has a Membership of 16 Civil Society Organizations working with a total of 133 schools across 13 counties in Kenya.

- The SCOPE Kenya office is located in BOMA estate along Kenyatta road off Thika super highway.

- SCOPE Kenya is a member of Regional Schools and Colleges Permaculture Programme (ReSCOPE), with other country chapters in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, and Uganda.

## SCOPE Kenya Slogan:

**Reconnecting school communities with nature, culture and their history for abundance and resilience.**

## Member Organizations

1. Community Rehabilitation and Environmental Protection Programme (CREPP) –Kisumu county
2. Bio gardening innovations (BIOGI) -Vihiga County
3. Manor House Agriculture Centre (MHAC) -Trans Nzoia county
4. Sustainable Mobilization of Agriculture Resource Technologies Initiatives (SMART) - West Pokot County

5. Rural Initiative Development Programme (RIDEP) -Tharaka Nithi County
6. Institute for peace Development and Innovations (IPSIA) – Meru County
7. SEED SAVERS Network – Nakuru County
8. Youth Action for Rural Development (YARD) - Murang'a County
9. Resources Oriented Development Initiatives (RODI) -Kiambu County
10. Community Sustainable Development and Empowerment Program (COS-DEP) - Kiambu County
11. Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya (OACK)-Murang'a County
12. KIINI Sustainable Initiatives – Nyeri County
13. Katoloni CBO Machakos - Machakos County
14. Ngaatho Community Foundation - Kiambu
15. Caritas - Nyahururu Diocese - Laikipia County

## Why SCOPE Kenya Works With Schools

- To integrate young people in sustainable utilization and management of Natural Resources activities, to enhance their participation and contribution towards livelihoods and biodiversity conservation.
- Equip teachers and caregivers with knowledge and skills in sustainable land use management, to improve their understanding and capacity in transferring this information to young people.
- Support schools communities to redesign and maximally utilize the land, by establishing sustainable edible landscape through agro ecology practices.
- Make schools learning focal point and sources of developmental information among surrounding communities
- To influence mind-set change towards agriculture among young people,

to nurture a generation of producers and consumers (PRO-SUMERS)with "enviro-preneurship" skills.

- Use schools as entry points to communities, through learning and transferring of knowledge and skills to communities by young people.

- Promote intergenerational learning among schools communities by integrating young people and adults in development activities.

- Strengthen the country's food security situation and management of natural resources.

- To connect learners with nature and culture, hence improve learning and academic excellence among learners.

## Achievements

- SCOPE Kenya has contributed towards improved Organizational capacities to work with schools communities in land use practices for food production in schools.

- Trained a pool of 18 ToTs (Trainer of Trainers) to become change agents and promote land use practices through use of Integrated Land Use Design approach. This is a team of trainers who have been taken through intensive training to improve their knowledge and facilitation skills, so that they become key trainers in schools and at community level.

- Trained 17 school teachers to play lead roles in promoting permaculture in schools and surrounding communities.

- Initiated and supported the process of transforming 12 schools across Kenya, to become centres of excellence/model permaculture schools.

- Contributed to enhanced access to nutritious food and fruits in schools and at the community level.

**Website:** <https://www.scopekenya.net/>

**Email:** [scope@scopekenya.net](mailto:scope@scopekenya.net)

**Telephone:** +254 706 972 084





Photos by Manyindo Elijah (Lillian's son)

*Lillian Kababuma giving trees to plant to the district people, so that they can protect the environment.*

## Woman Sells Goats to Buy Bikes so Her Team Can Teach People About the Environment



**Baby trees to help save the Earth**

By Lillian Kabahuma, Uganda

I have an organization for women, Rise and Shine Women Initiative for Environment Protection and Conservation, so when you talk of the environment I really see if the lockdown continues, it can help the environment in many things, but the only problem is, like if the lockdown is done, things will continue the same, but if I was the President I would change many things.

I wanted to let you know that in Uganda we came out as a team to fight the environment, but the government was not supporting us as such, but now things are turning to them.

The floods finished many of government things including hospitals.

Now we are busy and allowed to go teach door-to-door, how to protect the environment in my district.

We are not getting support but we have to do the work. We have masks and we are allowed by the government. They told us to move with masks and sanitizers.

We were allowed to move only two of us. We are riding bicycles to the village, but I really feel so happy of my land.

I sold my goats and bought two bicycles, so we are using those to move. I know with time we shall get more and more bicycles so that we can move as a team when

the lockdown is over.

*(Iona's question on Facebook)* That will be wonderful. I was wondering if you normally raise goats for milk or to sell or both?

Of course, because I wanted bicycles, love my land sister, I can do all to save my land. We don't take goats milk here in my district, me I raise goats to save my money and in case I'm in need of money I sell the goats to help me in any situation.

Here we are not allowed to move with cars due to lockdown; all cars are parked.

I was giving people the tress to plant everywhere so that we keep our environment.

The last two weeks it rained and people died in floods. Here the sun now is too much, it's burning.

**June 10:** Very, very sad news. Lillian lost 28 of her goats in the flood (photo on next page). Only eight survived. Sales of the goats help her pay her son's school fees in addition to helping her do her environmental work.. She posted some horrible videos of the floods.

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Rise-And-Shine-Women-Initiative-For-Environment-Protection-Conservation-110772456998597/>

**Bikes** *continued on next page*

Bikes continued from previous page



Photos by Manyindo Elijah

(above) Lillian Kabahuma (center) with her team going door-to-door teaching people how to protect the environment. (bottom left) Houses in floods in Uganda. (bottom right) The goats Lillian keeps to sell when she gets challenges.





Photo: Radio Tamazuj

Women undergoing tailoring training in Yei. The instructor in the background is Moses Ghonda.

## Training Program to Address Gender Based Violence in Sudan, Women Made Over 2,000 Masks

By Daniel Friday Martin, Radio Tamazuj

A local NGO named Yamora has launched a tailoring program to empower young women economically to fight domestic violence and poverty in Yei River State.

Justoson Victor Yoasa, the organization's team leader, told Radio Tamazuj on Friday that the rate of gender-based violence against women remains high due to their inability to provide for their families.

He said the best way to address gender-based violence is to train women to be economically independent.

"When women can get money, their

husbands begin to value them and that will be the beginning of peace at home. We are also looking at helping single mothers and school dropouts with empowerment initiatives so that they can raise their families peacefully," he said.

Victor said empowering women who are victims of horrific gender-based violence will help them to overcome the trauma caused.

"We are appealing to partners to support such local initiatives so that women can provide basic services for themselves and their families," he urged.

He said after completing the training, the beneficiaries will be given startup

resources to begin their businesses.

The six-months training program is funded by the Miakodang Charity Organization based in Austria.

**Email:** [Info@@yamora.org](mailto:Info@@yamora.org)

**Facebook:** <http://yamora.org/>

This activity is done by the Department of Women Economic Empowerment of Yamora. The women would like to make 10,000 masks. "We ask well wishers to support Yamora to enroll and Change the lives of many women," says Justoson.



(left) Vivian Sunday has been trained by Mama Veronika Tailoring group of Yamora. She is sewing masks. (above) Maneno Jackline is sewing masks. Photos: Courtesy Yamora

# Bangladesh Hit Hard by Climate Change, Flooding, AND COVID-19 – Group of Students Helps

I'm Proshanto Sarker Pros from Bangladesh. Personally I'm so happy meet to you in Facebook. Our organization is a voluntary organization established 2015.

Bangladesh experiences different types of Natural Disasters almost every year because of Global Warming as well as Climate Change. I attached some pictures of flooding affected in my area. We're safe but in our community, a lot of people lost their own home made by soil.

We are working for women's employment improvement and to reduce cast discrimination, and for Gender Equality, Education for every Child, and good

governance. We have no national or international funds. We have a small group here and the members are students. We try and have a dream to do something for the development of our community.

I want to share with you that my organization did relief distribution for this COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period in Bangladesh. We provide rice, salt, and soap. The total is 100 families in two villages where people are getting this relief.

We have a dream to do something for this cyclone Amphan suffering people in Southeast part of Bangladesh, but our organizations have no funds for emergency

relief. If anyone can be help us, we can help the helpless people in Bangladesh.

On behalf of AMEN Bangladesh, we are requesting to give a helping hand to those who are in life-risk. If anybody would like to help, please contact me.

God bless you and your family.

Proshanto Sarker Pros

National Leader

AMEN Bangladesh

**E-mail:** [info.amenbd.org@gmail.com](mailto:info.amenbd.org@gmail.com)

**Phone:** +8801751-199719

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/AMENBANGLADESH/posts/2998456416905454>



Photos by Proshanto Sarker Pros





Photos by Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki

Guests from Germany and long-horned Ankole cows on one of Herbert's expeditions in Uganda. A park ranger from Lake Mburo National Park is standing on the right. They also went to Bwindi National Park for Gorilla tracking, and to Queen Elizabeth National Park. Herbert was in a vehicle taking this photo.

## For a Unique Vacation or Volunteer Experience, Visit Uganda in Africa with One Village Tours

I am Rotarian Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki from the Rotary E-Club of Carolinas District 7750, South Carolina, USA. I am in the classification business (Tourism). I am the director of One Village Tours based in Kabale, Uganda – Africa.

**One Village Tours & Travel** is based in Kabale, Uganda. This business company is dedicated to serving clients or tourists from the world over by promoting Uganda. However, our goal is for Africa destinations. The company takes the opportunity and pride in our expertise to provide the



Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki

most memorable vacations/trips that answer your interests, timeframe, budget, desire, wonder, and realities of visiting Uganda, the pearl of Africa.

One Village Tours receives tourists/guests/clients from across the world and provides them with tailor-made tours/trips within Uganda. They come with wonder, fear, desire, worry, etc., and leave with great joy, an unforgettable experience after exploring, experiencing, and enjoying the vibrant and varied land, Uganda.

We offer unforgettable experiences combined with the opportunity to interact with the people who call Uganda home (the friendliest people in the whole world). Our knowledgeable guides, custom-designed tours, and commitment to both customer service and giving back to the community will ensure a memorable adventure.

This whole travel experience brings you to supporting a community indirectly whereby the profit made out of travel goes to community development through education and agriculture or directly through supporting a family in need.

**Voluntourism** in relation to agritourism is a unique way through which tourists are subjected to home stay events, seasons,

household experience, community project development as well as classical tourism combined. Travel volunteers/tourists will have enough time with the community, families, projects, learn a language, teach a language, feed an animal, participate in the garden, learn how to plant a seed/crop, and experience a culture or country that is different from theirs.

**Travel Volunteer opportunities.** Most volunteers come to make their contributions to local communities. But you really should see Uganda while you are here with us!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Volunteering packages only include the services mentioned on the next page, while the other packages are inclusive with excursions i.e. The Minimum, The Full Adventure packages give the best



Tours continued on next page

Tours continued from previous page



insight into Uganda's wildlife, fresh water, and beautiful sceneries. Other excursions can be added as optional extras.

**Volunteering Combined Package**

1 week \$200; 2 weeks \$300; 3 weeks \$400; 4 weeks \$520

Includes accommodation, 3 meals per day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) with local food. NOTE: The above packages attract a non-refundable placement booking fee of \$100 and no excursion, but airport pick up and drop off are included with local transport means.

**Minimum Adventure Package**

1 week \$660; 2 weeks \$760; 3 weeks \$860; 4 weeks \$960

Includes excursions like Lake Bunyonyi canoe/boat cruise experience, sight seeing, Echuya forest walk, kisizi falls, adventure tours.

**We offer cultural in the form of event tourism.** The photos are a cultural give-away ceremony, where traditionally a girl is sent for marriage witnessed by relatives and friends.

You can choose from our customized array of ready-to-sell packages/tours covering different interests and destinations. Our forté lies in tailor-made tours for both individual and group travelers, as well as travel volunteers to our communities.

**Our Goal/Objectives and Vision**

Our tours and travel business company's goal/vision/objectives are to be the leading tour/travel business service provider in Africa as well as supporting our community as follows:

1. To donate profit share to community development projects in areas of education, agriculture, and conservation, to cre-

ate a sustainable tourism thereby raising income in rural communities.

2. To organize trips/tours which would give our clients the best possible Africa's experience.

3. To put into practice the requests of our clients to arrange some of the best trips in Uganda – Africa.

4. To make sure that our trips/travels are personalized with clients' own interests, budgets, timeframes, and other requirements.

**We are specialists in the following:**

- Student trips/experiential
- Bird watching
- Agritourism that outweighs ecotourism and community tourism
- Gorilla tracking
- Chimpanzee tracking
- Wildlife and game drive safaris.
- Volunteer opportunity trips
- Mountain Hiking
- Photo safaris
- Nature/jungle walks
- Cultural heritages
- Water cruises
- Hotel/accommodation bookings
- Car/vehicle hire or rental

The tour and communities, cultural tours offer airport pick up and drop off using local means.

**Full Adventure Packages**

2 Weeks \$1,385  
3 weeks \$1,850  
4 weeks \$2,270

Includes city tours in Kampala, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Lake Mburo National Park, Lake Bunyonyi excursion, cultural museum, culture immersion,

Hiking Mt. Muhabura; airport pick up and drop off.

**What is not included?**

You need to budget for your travel air ticket, health arrangements, and personal spending money. Insurance malaria prevention (much as we use mosquito treated nets), other vaccinations. You will need \$40 - \$100 for personal expenses each week. A gorilla tracking permit is \$600, chimpanzee permit is \$250 (Kibale National Park), Queen Elizabeth National Park is \$50. All these are exclusive of the above volunteer combinations, so arrange with us for this program.

We encourage a minimum number of two volunteers because of a rural accommodation set up much as security is guaranteed but social part of our life.

However, if you have any other interest in excursions/travel of any kind while with us, communicate to us before your arrival and costs done to avoid disappointments while you have arrived.

For more information about our volunteer and internship program, please contact us at:

www.onevillagetours.com  
info@onevillagetours.com  
Herbert@onevillagetours.com  
Onevillage2013@gmail.com  
Whats App: +256701233725  
or +256772692569



Reuse and  
recycle

2020 Circular Fashion System Commitment

Photo: <https://www.esprit.com/en/company/sustainability/reuse-recycle/circular-fashion-system-commitment>

*A crucial part of closing the loop is being intentional about material reuse and recycling. (Esprit website)*

## Go Circular or Get Left Behind: Redesigning Strategy for Fashion's Sustainable Future

Submitted by Jeannette Bartelt, USA

By Judy Chen

Sourcing Journal: October 1, 2019

With current looks and trends changing on a regular basis, the fashion calendar for consumers is outdated in a matter of weeks. This phenomenon has accelerated the trend for fast fashion and it's no longer enough to update one's wardrobe every season. However, such styling trend standards have also created alarming environmental, social, and economic impacts.

As part of the fast-fashion trend, this linear "take-make-waste" model is causing harm to the environment. In the U.S. market alone, an average American throws away approximately 80 pounds of used clothing per year, with up to 95 percent of the textiles that could actually be recycled ending up in landfills.

Since consumers have become increasingly concerned about eco-responsibility and sustainable lifestyles, fashion's detrimental impact on the environment poses a serious challenge to how the industry can adapt, sustain, and succeed in the long run.

According to a 2018 Nielsen research report on global consumers' perceptions of sustainable shopping, a staggering 81 percent of consumers felt strongly that companies should act responsibly for the environment. This is a signal that the fashion industry must act promptly and make the necessary business changes to

meet consumers' demands, or else be left behind.

To initiate this kind of industry change, brands must redesign and rethink business strategies across their textile value chain.

This is where the idea of circular economy comes in. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, a charity that focuses on environmental issues, circular economy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.

Such a model will keep materials in used-rotation for as long as possible, with huge benefits for fashion businesses. Companies will be able to minimize costs and increase productivity while demonstrating stronger eco-consciousness and reducing the negative impact on the environment.

At the Copenhagen Fashion Summit 2017, the industry recognized the potential and necessity of a circular economy with 90 big-name designers, suppliers and retailers, including ASOS, H&M, and Nike, signing the "2020 Circular Fashion System Commitment" aimed at accelerating the industry's transition to a more sustainable and circular system.

The commitment set targets across a number of areas: designing for circularity, increasing the volume of used garments and footwear resold and collected, and raising the share of products made from recycled post-consumer textile fibers.

To uphold the business eco-transforma-

tion trend, the industry has made collective efforts to drive growth towards a circular fashion system, be it the apparel, innerwear, or home wear segment. For example, H&M has made an ambitious goal to convert to 100 percent circular or sustainable materials across the company's supply chain by 2030 and U.K.-based charity.

**Against Breast Cancer** initiated a bra recycling scheme, taking unwanted bras that would normally end up in landfills, to help support small businesses in Africa through their textile recovery project. Apart from efforts made by retailers and charities, industry suppliers who play a key role in the value chain, are also making improvements to become more eco-friendly.

**Lenzing** is proud to stand at the forefront of sustainability, driving change with contributions towards the circular economy through eco-fiber innovations. One of its pioneering advancements is the award-winning REFIBRA™ technology, which involves upcycling a substantial proportion of cotton scraps and wood pulp to produce new TENCEL™ Lyocell fibers in a closed-loop process.

TENCEL™ Lyocell fibers produced by REFIBRA™ technology are not only used for apparel, but also can be found in intimate-wear collections. Derived from renewable sources and with Eco Soft technology, TENCEL™ Intimate cellulosic fibers provides long-lasting softness to help

**Clothing** *continued on next page*



"I love you so much & have been waiting  
150 years for you to Slow Down."  
~ Mother Gaia



"It is time now for you to  
come home to me. xoxox"

"The Great Mother Bible"

Channeled Messages from Mother [www.marecromwell.com](http://www.marecromwell.com)

*Submitted by Mare Cromwell on FB*

**Clothing** *continued from previous page*

the wearer's skin feel pleasantly cool and dry throughout the day and night. This is an example of how a product can be both sustainable and functional. Leveraging the use of innovative technologies, Lenzing can produce high-quality eco-products while driving circular economy at the backbone.

Making the transition to achieve circular

fashion is not an easy task and will require the industry's continuous efforts. While the current pace of the industry's sustainability performance might not be fast enough to balance the negative environmental impacts, it is still encouraging to witness that a change for the better is taking place.

With collaborative efforts made by fashion industry contributors, the industry can unveil new sustainability standards and

produce eco-friendlier economic, environmental, and societal outcomes. Lenzing is on track with pursuing these goals and will work closely with industry stakeholders to input mechanisms for a greener planet.

**Source:** <https://sourcingjournal.com/topics/thought-leadership/circular-economy-fashion-apparel-sustainability-lenzing-tencel-refibra-168961/>

# Obituary: George Floyd

December 21, 1960 to May 25, 2020

“Friends say George Floyd always went out of his way to help people who were less fortunate.”

“He was articulate.

He was grounded.

He was spiritual.

He was an athlete.

He was an organizer.

He was a comforter.

He was an encourager.”

By Amber Jamieson

BuzzFeed: May 27, 2020

“One day it’s going to be you and God. You’re going up or you’re going down,” George Floyd says in a video circulating on social media in which he calls on young people to avoid gun violence.

Floyd, 46, died in police custody on Monday after a white police officer pushed his knee into his neck on the ground outside a supermarket in Minneapolis. Video footage showed Floyd saying “I can’t breathe” until he became unresponsive, but even then the officer continued to keep him in a neck hold.

Floyd’s family did not immediately respond to BuzzFeed News’ request for comment, but they, along with friends, have been sharing stories of his life online and with the media.

Floyd, also known as Big Floyd, reinvented himself over and over again. In the 1990s, he was part of a rap crew from Houston’s Third Ward, working with DJ Screw, a well-known local musician.

“Floyd was my brother. We called each other ‘Twin,’” former NBA player Stephen Jackson said in a video posted to Instagram on Tuesday. Jackson, who grew up with Floyd in the Third Ward and shared photos of him in his high school football uniform.

“Made it to state championship,” Jackson wrote. “Bruh wasn’t no bum. Had hoop game too.”

The mother of his 6-year-old daughter told the *Houston Chronicle* that he’d received a football scholarship to Florida



George Floyd, 2016 . Photo: Wikipedia.org

State University after playing for Yates High School.

In recent years, Floyd moved to Minnesota.

“He was changing his life,” Jackson said in the Instagram video. “He went to Minnesota. He was driving trucks. I just sent him up two or three boxes of clothes. My boy was doing what he was supposed to do.”

Vanita Williams, a friend, met Floyd through his work driving trucks and as a security guard at a downtown Salvation Army homeless shelter.

“He was sober. He showed me resources,” Williams said. “He gave us hugs and told us it was going to be OK. He told us we could make it. He was such a big brother to me.”

Williams said Floyd embraced people of all backgrounds, including trans people, sex workers, people experiencing homelessness, and people with addictions.

“He gravitated towards the less fortunate,” Williams said, “the downtrodden, the ones they said wasn’t going to make it.”

She said Floyd would give people a few dollars, new clothes, or whatever small thing he could.

“Whatever he needed to do, he would help you,” she said.

He also worked as a security guard at Conga Latin Bistro in Minneapolis.

“This person was my employee, and a very good friend,” Jovanni Thunstrom

wrote on Facebook.

Thunstrom also told local station KSTP that Floyd would drive patrons who were drunk home to make sure they were safe.

“He wanted me to teach him how to Bachata dance,” Thunstrom said. “And I gave up because I couldn’t turn him because he was [6 feet 6 inches].”

His former girlfriend Christina Dawson shared photos of Floyd smiling, wearing his security T-shirt, and cuddling a dog.

“They really killed my baby!!” she posted.

“THAT KING DID NOT HAVE TO DIE BEFORE HIS TIME.”

Floyd was popular with women because of his charm and height, Williams said.

“There’s going to be so many women going to come out of the woodwork when they hear,” she added. “He was a big teddy bear.”

She added, “You could talk to a thousand people and nobody is going to have anything bad to say about him.”

His brothers and cousin also spoke to CNN’s Don Lemon about their search for justice after the four officers involved were fired.

“It definitely warms my heart to see we have so many people willing to support and to protest and to give him a voice,” said his cousin Tera Brown, “and keep this going because he was a very loving person. And he didn’t deserve what happened to him.”

His friends agreed.

“He was articulate. He was grounded. He was spiritual. He was an athlete. He was an organizer. He was a comforter. He was an encourager,” Williams told BuzzFeed News. “I could just go on and on and on about who he was.”

**Amber Jamieson is a reporter for BuzzFeed News and is based in New York.**

**Source:** <https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/amberjamieson/george-floyd-obituary>

# George Floyd: America's Racial Inequality in Numbers

By Nellie Peyton and Anastasia Moloney  
Thomson Reuters Foundation: June 1, 2020

Statistics show that black and white Americans have vastly unequal levels of wealth, education, home ownership, and more.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Protests over the death of George Floyd, an unarmed black man who died while in police custody in Minneapolis last week, have spread to dozens of cities in the United States and other world cities.

Floyd's death, at the hands of a white police officer who knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes, has reignited anger over longstanding social and economic inequality between the country's white and black communities.

More than 40 million black people live in the United States, making up about 13% of the nation's population.

From education to home ownership, here are 11 statistics that show inequality among black and white Americans:

**1.** Black adults, especially black men, are far more likely to end up in jail than white adults. In 2018, there were 1,501 black prisoners for every 100,000 black adults - more than five times the rate among whites.

**2.** About three in every five black men say they have been unfairly stopped by the police because of their race, according to a 2019 survey by the Pew Research Center. Also, about eight in every 10 black people, with at least some college education, say they have been discriminated against because of their race.

**3.** The home ownership gap between blacks and whites has widened since 2004 and black families are less likely than white families to own their own house. Today, 41% of black households own their own homes, compared with nearly 72% for whites.

**4.** Black households have only 10 cents in wealth for every dollar held by white households, according to 2016 data. In 2016, the median wealth of non-Hispanic white households was \$171,000 – 10 times the wealth of black households (\$17,100).

**5.** COVID-19 has disproportionately affected black men and women in terms of deaths from the disease and unemployment rates during the pandemic.

**6.** By the end of May, the COVID-19 mortality rate for black Americans (1 in 1,850) was 2.4 times as high as the rate for white Americans (1 in 4,400).

**7.** In April, the black unemployment rate was nearly 17% compared with a white unemployment rate of 14%.

**8.** Over the past two decades, the wage gap between black and white workers has grown significantly. For example, in 2018 the median weekly earnings for full-time workers was \$694 for black Americans, compared to \$916 for white Americans.

**9.** In 2017, black women earned less than white women, with the median annual earnings for full-time black women workers was just over \$36,000 – 21% lower than that of white women.

**10.** Black women in the United States are more than 3 times as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women.

**11.** Black students are less likely to graduate from high school than white students. In 2018, 79% of black students graduated from high school in comparison to 89% among white students.

**Sources for statistics:** Pew Research Center, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The Economic Policy Institute, APM Research Lab, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

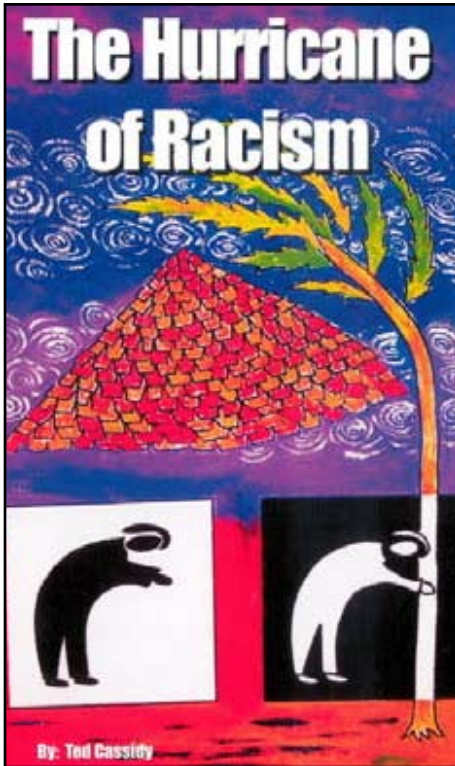
**Source for article:** <https://news.trust.org/item/20200601213023-p1dkx/>

**THE MORE THAT WE ALLOW OUR HEARTS TO EXPAND TO LOVE, DEEPLY APPRECIATE, AND FEEL INEXTRICABLY TIED TO THE PLACES, THINGS, AND PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD, THE MORE WE ARE LIKELY TO TAKE A STAND ON BEHALF OF WHAT WE VALUE.**

- Kristi Nelson -

<https://www.facebook.com/Gratefulness.org/photos/the-more-that-we-allow-our-hearts-to-expand-to-love-deeply-appreciate-and-feel-i/10156173742123454/>

# The Nature of Racism and How We Conquer It



By Fr. Ted Cassidy, SM, Ohio USA  
Written in 2006.

## Chapter 3: Becoming a Person Free from the Co-opting Influences of Racism – Becoming Differentiated

{**Note from the Editor:** *We published the Introduction to this book in our January 2020 issue; Chapter 1 in our February issue; and Chapter 2 in our March issue.*}

Deacon Bill Johnson is an African-American gentleman I have come to know and work with very closely in anti-racism work. Bill is a retired postmaster, husband, and father of two married sons. He grew up in segregated South Carolina where he was forced to use separate public facilities for coloreds and suffered the other well-known humiliations that people of color suffered. He has become a deacon in the Catholic Church and a strong leader fighting the types of racism we have today. His two sons graduated from a South Carolina military school that was formerly segregated. He develops programs to educate and lead the people of South Jersey, where he lives, to overcome racism. Bill is a very good example of a leader who relates well with people and at the same time opposes the insidious dimensions of racism.

The first principle for changing the emotional system of racism is to be a leader like Bill Johnson, someone who is emotionally non-agitated by the system and remains differentiated from the system. Bill has led people away from racism, including his family, members of the white community where he is deacon, and those in his workplace.

This “differentiation of self” is the cornerstone for changing any dysfunctional system. All people can be placed on a continuum of differentiation from the highest to lowest level of human functioning. At the highest level are those who can “differentiate” between emotional and intellectual functioning. People at the lowest level have intellect and emotion so fused that emotion controls their lives. People on the higher level have a “solid self” with a differentiation fixed by forces inside the self, while those on the lower levels have a “pseudo-self” or functional self that is determined by relationship forces. Functional levels can be assigned for individuals or for members of a family determined by the head of the family or for a society determined by prevailing environmental forces.

Bowen, speaking about lenient parents, maintained that there is a general trend toward leniency in society today. Such parents are usually intelligent, over-devoted people who make a project of doing the best for their children. In a sense, these parents try to give the child total love. The child, in turn, expects this total love.

The process continues until the family becomes exhausted because it cannot meet the child’s demands. The child eventually moves from the influence of the parents and society and becomes the parent. The child then seeks from society the type of love that is impossible for society to give.

To break this pattern, the obvious answer for the parent is to understand that lenient discipline is actually the parent’s need to emotionally attach himself or herself to the child. The child needs a discipline that helps him or her become goal oriented and not emotionally fused with the parent.

Bowen speaks about the emotional level of self-differentiation needed in society. Self-differentiation is the way an individual functions whereby he or she operates from ego strength and not from an emotional fusion with another. In 1973 Bowen said that, for the previous 25 years, society was

slipping into a functionally lower level of differentiation or an emotional regression.<sup>7</sup>

When he compared the amount of functioning happening from the determined self with functioning happening from feeling orientation in society, the overall mode of operation in the past decade had been one that was over-lenient and from a type of “no-self” parent. By this he meant that after the mid-1960s there was more evidence of a lower level of societal functioning. There was little evidence of strong, long-term principle planning; rather, there was a type of “rights” thinking and less “responsibility” thinking.

He further states that the overall pattern through the 1960s was like a family with a problem child, which gave into emotional demands and hoped the problem would go away. He maintained that society was in a state of being “an undifferentiated family ego mass.” People were operating more emotionally dependent on each other rather than as autonomous individuals. Bowen addresses what happens in large urban centers where the patterns of strong ego-differentiation are few and, yet, the closeness and the emotional ties are strong. These people tend to be functioning not from a reasoned and calm appreciation of the strength of the individual, but from a functional fusion of emotional ties.

Bowen maintains that society after World War II operated from a somewhat high level of emotional differentiation. However, 25 years later, the level of differentiation had dropped. He said that human beings have used physical distance as a way of escaping emotional pressures. With the advances in communication and travel and the increased population growth after World War II, the world became closer, and there has not been a sufficient emotional adjustment to this new reality. How to be differentiated with the new pressure this closeness brings has not yet been set to healthy patterns.

Bowen developed a scale of ego-differentiation. At the more differentiated level, a person can both know with his or her intellect and be aware of, or feel, the situation emotionally. At this high level of ego differentiation, a person is a leader in a social system. As one gets lower on the scale, one is able to know some facts, but most of the person’s intellect is under the

**Racism** *continued on next page*

**Racism** *continued from previous page*

operational control of the emotional system. There is less differentiation between the intellect and the feelings as one sinks lower on the scale. Bowen maintains that the majority of the population probably is in the center range of emotional differentiation. People at this level do not have a critical grasp of the difference between intellectual and emotional functioning. They would not clearly understand the difference between truth and fact, fact and feeling, or rights and responsibility. At the lower levels of differentiation are those whose intellects are submerged in the emotional system.

Bowen discovered that there is wide evidence that most of the population is below fifty (out of a possible one hundred) on the scale of ego-differentiation. The population is distributed with most people in the 20 to 35 scale range, with a small percentage above 50, and the highest levels in the decreasingly smaller group up in the 65 to 70 range.<sup>8</sup>

Take a look at yourself. Are you emotionally detached from the racist power influencing you? The way most Americans treat people of other races today is by being polite. This has become the acceptable manner. However, there are many entrenched ways that racial patterns influence us. For example, suburbs are beginning to become integrated, but the emotional fear in white people is very deep.


During a workshop I led, an African-American Catholic sister explained that when a suburban school goes beyond 50 percent students of color, the white families begin to withdraw their children. Leaders at such a school need a strong sense of differentiation to stay above the emotional fear operating in the school community. If the leaders maintain calm and help the clientele to sort out the pressures they are dealing with, the leaders will guide the community to maintain a good educational institution not dominated by racial fears.

Edwin H. Friedman, when introducing the chapter on leadership, states this well:

*The overall health and functioning of any organization depends primarily on one or two people at the top, and this is true whether the relationship system is a personal family, a sports team, an orchestra, a congregation, a religious hierarchy, or an entire nation. But the reason for that connection is not some mechanistic, trickle-down, domino effect. It is, rather, that leadership in families, like leadership in any flock, swarm, or herd, is essentially an organic, perhaps even biological, phenomenon. And an organism tends to function best when its "head" is well differentiated. The key to*

## Healthy Self-Identity = Differentiation of Self

- ▲ *A person who determines own goals and values apart from pressure*
- ▲ *Who remains non-anxious in an anxious system*
- ▲ *Who takes responsibility for own destiny and emotional well-being*
- ▲ *That person will lead the whole system out of dysfunction*



*successful spiritual leadership, therefore, with success understood not only as moving people toward a goal, but also in terms of the survival of the family (and its leader), has more to do with the leader's capacity for self-definition than with the ability to motivate others.*<sup>9</sup>

The way out of any dysfunctional system is the ability of a person to be different from the dysfunction. If a member of the system can remain firm, non-agitated, and self-directed in the midst of what is happening, he or she will be able to move the rest of the system. A leader of course has much influence. The leader or any member wishing to bring about a change has to remain active in the system.

Father Clarence Williams, who gives racial sobriety workshops, helps participants develop their ability to be differentiated by a simple method, which he calls the I BEAM Method. When confronted with a racially unjust situation, the person clarifies his or her feelings and writes down the reason for the feelings and finally how he or she wishes to act. Here is an example.

When I read about the ethnic cleansing in a foreign country, I feel very angry because my government and other forces can put pressure to make it stop. Therefore, I will become active in Amnesty International and work for change.

Those who really want to make changes can join support groups that enable them to become better differentiated.

Companies, churches, schools, and other institutions can change the racist system by becoming more and better dif-

ferentiated.

I can speak of the experience I had at the retreat house where I work. Four years ago we sponsored a workshop for our staff, which was all white, and for a number of people of color in the area. We studied the nature of racism. The director of the retreat house gave a presentation on our mission and goals. Then we asked the group what we could do to welcome people of diverse races and cultures to our house and take part in our programs. They suggested changing the pictures in the house and making the house known in the area as a place where all cultures and races are welcome.

For four years we have been developing retreats for African-Americans and Hispanics. We changed the atmosphere of the house so that other cultures – beside the white community – feel welcome. We invited people in the community (Anglo, African-American, and Hispanic) to come to an annual potluck supper. We have speakers and programs to discuss how to work against racism. We call the evening a "Diversity Gathering."

The result has been that the African-American community has come to feel at home at the house. Hispanics are also beginning to feel the same. The local newspaper has printed a number of articles about the effort of our center to work against racism. The openness of racial and cultural positions at the center has become accepted and appreciated by the community.

Differentiated racial leadership is espe-

**Racism** *continued on next page*

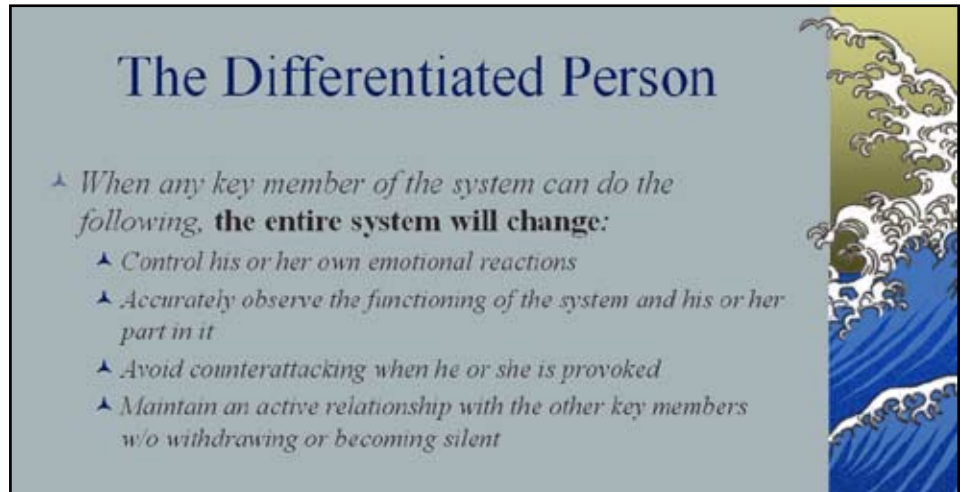
**Racism** *continued from previous page*

cially needed today with the new type of racial discrimination we are experiencing. Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, in their book<sup>10</sup> presenting a method to analyze society, describe the stages of racism in America. They scientifically identify the shifting forms of racism in the United States. The first form, paternalism, came during the plantation economy. A new form of racism came with emancipation: discrimination with its two-tiered or dual-labor market in an industrial economy, with blacks usually at the bottom. Now, a third form of racism is developing: marginalization. "With a shrinking industrial economy, 'structural unemployment' is heavily concentrated among non-whites. An urban 'permanent underclass' is developing – a class of people who are isolated from the economic mainstream and ignored."<sup>11</sup>

Because of the third stage we are now experiencing, Holland and Henriot forecast a grim future for healthy race relations in our country. The two deep structures of this stage are capital and technology.

Capital, the control of money, is becoming transnational and, as such, does not have the restraint on it that national governments once had.. Nations are at the mercy of international conglomerates that can shift their financing at will to cheaper labor markets, leaving regions literally helpless.

Technological advances in machinery, computers, and energy are taking over human labor, leaving structural unemployment or permanent marginalization. "We



## The Differentiated Person

▲ *When any key member of the system can do the following, the entire system will change:*

- ▲ *Control his or her own emotional reactions*
- ▲ *Accurately observe the functioning of the system and his or her part in it*
- ▲ *Avoid counterattacking when he or she is provoked*
- ▲ *Maintain an active relationship with the other key members w/o withdrawing or becoming silent*

are witnessing the creation of a permanent underclass in the so called 'developed' world, a class that will never enter the mainstream of productive life in contemporary society."<sup>12</sup>

The differentiated leadership called for in this new stage can help transform the systems so that capital and technology serve basic human needs and fundamental rights are accountable to the community at every level.

Differentiated individuals and communities are models for bringing about this change. In every institution in the country, small groups of poor, middle class, and wealthy people need to become creative actors. Those closest to the problems have their creative imaginations stimulated and set the pace for change that gives leader-

ship to all they contact. This may be a slow process, but it is organically transformative.

The fourth chapter will deal with the dynamic of triangulation that is operative in the racial hurricane.

### Footnotes:

7 Ibid., p. 438.

8 Ibid., p. 442.

9 Friedman, p. 221.

10 Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis, Linking Faith and Justice* (New York: Maryknoll, 1994).

11 Ibid., p. 29.

12 Ibid., p. 80

*A pdf of The Hurricane of Racism is available for free at <https://www.nacms.org/epubs/special-articles/hurricane-racism>.*

## Voices from the Protests

Excerpts from *The New York Times* Daily briefing, June 3, 2020

...Here are some of the voices from the protests, which have included many people who say they've never protested before:

"In every city, there's a George Floyd," said Michael Sampson II, 30, of Jacksonville, Fla.

"It could be my father, my brother, my uncle, my cousin, my friend," said Victoria Sloan, 27, of Brooklyn. "It makes me angry."

"I'm speaking for everybody, all my kinfolk, all my brothers and sisters who've gotten beaten up by police," said Cory Thomas, 40, who said the police beat him when he was a teenager in Brooklyn. "I don't condone the violence," or the looting, he said, "but at the end of the day, no 14-year-old should be beat up by police."

"If we don't fight for change we're not going to get it," Douglas Golliday, a 65-year-old resident of a Minneapolis suburb, told *The Star Tribune* while waiting to be taken to jail along with his 44-year-old son, Robert, and other protesters...

Read full article at <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/02/us/protester-profiles-floyd-minneapolis.html>



Photo by Nsah Divine Sunjo, Communication Officer for H4BF

*Children were taught how to wash their hands at least 20 times daily as they play, singing a birthday song while washing to ensure lengthy and thorough hand washing.*

## Hope For A Better Future (H4BF) Cameroon, Launches Awareness Campaign Against COVID-19 Pandemic

By Ngo Banfoga, Cameroon

Hope For A Better Future (H4BF) Cameroon, launches her awareness campaign against COVID-19 pandemic.

We reached out to six displaced female headed families around Bamenda. In a bid to step up mitigative measures against the spread of corona virus, we therefore engaged on the immense need to sensitize these families about the severity of the pandemic (COVID-19) and the necessary obligation to implement the safety measures stipulated by WHO and the Cameroon Ministry of Public Health.

Some packages of washing utensils and detergents were donated to these families. These included tap buckets, soaps, etc. And in a bid to ensure the consistent hygiene habits in these families, they were given advice as part of the preventive measure to deliberate amongst themselves one person

who will be in charge of going out to get food and other items for the rest of the family, in order to limit careless interaction with the public.

The family will also ensure at this juncture that, while this person comes back home, he/she is not supposed to have an interaction or contact with another family member, but goes straight to remove his/her worn clothes, soak them in detergent for washing and must take a bath before he can have a direct contact with any other family member.

We thought as a very fundamental endeavour to build the children's self consciousness to avoid their parents or visitors when they come back from the market or any form of outing until they've taken their thorough bath. They were even taught to remind their parents to bathe or wash their hands as soon as they come home from outings.

The children were also taught how to wash their hands at least 20 times daily as they play, singing a birthday song while washing their hands to ensure lengthy and thorough washing of hands. Some parents and children were trained to manage the Wash Kits and ensure availability of water in the tap buckets all day round.

This campaign will continue and other activities like sharing of food items to the most vulnerable families to enable them survive quarantine will be inclusive.

Join us to limit the spread of the COVID 19 in Cameroon at <https://www.givingway.com/project/e6a6d>.

**Website:** <http://www.h4bfcooperative.com/>

**Email:** [info@h4bfcooperative.com](mailto:info@h4bfcooperative.com)

**Mailing address:** Hope for A Better Future Cooperative (H4BF)  
S Bend Mile 3 Nkwen  
Bamenda 00237 Cameroon

## How Village of Hope Uganda Started in 2007 Giving Orphans from War-Torn Communities New Life

By Cindy Cunningham, Texas USA  
[Children's names have been changed.]

It started with a whimper, and then a quiet cry, a cry for help from a child from Northern Uganda. A child who had seen their parents brutally murdered by a mad man by the name of Joesph Kony. A man who lead an army of murderers who were committed to killing every last Acholi. That cry joined hundreds and thousands of other cries. The cry became a loud scream, a scream asking, "God please help us."

It started with a young 8-year-old girl... THE GREAT MASSICURE woman named Marie. A woman who had heard the cries of hundreds and thousands of children, orphaned by a mad man, a brutal killer, a war lord in Northern Uganda. A man who called himself "God."

Marie went to university to train in social work and trauma counseling and then left the safety of her home and family to travel the dangerous roads to Gulu, in Northern Uganda. She arrived at the town of Karuma on the south side of the Nile River. It would usually take three hours to arrive to Gulu. She joined a caravan of men. Even though she was warned the road ahead was treacherous and no place for a woman, she went anyway.

The caravan crawled as they faced land mines, ambushes from the LRA (Kony's army). The soldiers wheeled their guns, killing anyone who would enter their terrain. They were protected on both sides by the Ugandan soldiers. Many were killed along the way, but not Marie. What once took three hours took three days.

Marie returned to the horrors of her youth. Once she finally arrived in the dark streets of Gulu, she saw the desperate, impossible conditions the children who were faced with overwhelming odds. She slept in the streets with the children so they wouldn't be snatched away by the cruel arms of the LRA vicious army. Most of the

time she stood over them and prayed for their safety and healing.

Marie cried out, "God, please help us."

It started out with a little 4-year-old girl in America, by the name of Cindy, who dreamed of going to Africa, who would cry as she watched starving children with bloated bellies in various parts of Africa. Who at the age of 18 heard a message from Dr. Miley, a missionary in the Ivory Coast in West Africa. She prayed, "Lord, use me. Send me to Africa."

Little did she know it would take her 40 years before her feet would touch African soil. In 2006 God led her step by step to Northern Uganda. This was not a part of the plan laid out for her when she made the month-long itinerary going through Kenya, Rwanda, the Congo, Uganda, and the Southern Sudan. But it was God's itinerary.

Cindy arrived late in the evening in Gulu after a long and grueling nine-hour drive from Kampala, through potholes the size of compact cars. Most of the trip was spent driving on the side of the road than on the road.

She was introduced to a young woman caring for hundreds of children attacked and scared (outside and in) by this evil man, Joseph Kony, and his viscous army.

Marie took her to an IDP (Internally Displaced People) camp. There were close to 7,000 people who had relocated from their homes, which had been burned to the ground. They had nowhere safe to go except these IDP camps. As far as the eye could see, it was a vast sea of huts.

"Why do they live here?" Cindy asked Marie. "They have nowhere else to go." Everywhere she looked there were children, little children, starving children with bloated bellies, standing, sitting, with dark, hollow, non-responsive eyes.

"Who takes care of these children?" Nobody, they are alone, their parents have died, they are all orphans. Many have younger brothers and sisters that they take

care of. They are a child-headed household. Many were former child soldiers.

"What? What is that?"

As they sat for breakfast, Marie told story after story, horror after horror. The stories were unbelievable, unfathomable, especially to an American mind.

As the day continued and the stories progressed, Cindy cried out; "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

Over the years I have started this story with my trip in 2006; but the story really began by the prayers of the children, by the prayers of Marie. The story began when God began HIS good work to rescue the children and He invited me to join Him. He could have invited a number of people; for all I know He did. But when He invited me, my heart was so overwhelmed by the need, I couldn't not do something. The eyes of the children, the eyes of a little boy named Solomon pierced my very soul and I joined what HE began... to be a part of their cry for help.

The journey has been the greatest and the hardest thing I have ever been a part of. But like Dottie McDowell said to me shortly after I returned, "Cindy, for such a time as this, God has used everything in your past to bring you to such a time as this."

The cries of the children, the cries of Marie are REALLY how it all began. God merely uses me as His tool. And I am sooooo thankful that He invited me to be a part of His glorious work to reduce, restore, and heal their lives and hearts.

Cindy Cunningham

Founder & International Director

Village of Hope Uganda: Where God transforms children of war into children of hope.

<http://www.villageofhopeuganda.com>

P.O. Box 700126

Dallas, TX 75370

[cindy@villageofhopeuganda.com](mailto:cindy@villageofhopeuganda.com)

817-715-0465



### BUYING BRACELETS AND OTHER PRODUCTS HELPS THE CHILDREN IN UGANDA

**Short story by Iona.** When I went for my first doctor's visit in New Jersey, she had large posters of African children on her wall. She had been to Uganda to help these orphans and was selling beautiful, hand-made bracelets made by the women. She gave me the one on the left, made from rolled-up magazine paper. I contacted Cindy to learn more and will be publishing three other stories along with other products you can buy at [www.villageofhopeuganda.com](http://www.villageofhopeuganda.com). This is a Tabitha Artisans Conqueror Bracelet selling for \$8. Popular for both men and women, this comfy bracelet is a stretchy elastic band of carefully handmade paper beads. You can choose multi-colored, turquoise, orange, green or beige. All items are handmade in Uganda by the women of our Tabitha Artisans Project. 100% of your purchase goes to support the children of the Village of Hope and the Tabitha Women. [www.villageofhopeuganda.com](http://www.villageofhopeuganda.com).



# Village of Hope Uganda Helping Orphans Deal With COVID-10

[Email from Cindy June 6, 2020] Due to COVID we are trying to provide COVID kits (sanitary kits) to over 1,400 of our orphans... including the guardian & other orphans in their household. It will provide for around 10K men, women (mostly women), and other orphans. It costs \$12 for an entire month. They also need food due to the lockdown; they are unable to work to provide for their needs and therefore unable to pay for food. It costs \$30 per month for one of our children (again divided amongst an entire household). The photos are of their kids receiving food and kits taken by a staff person at Village of Hope Uganda.



**Photos by the staff at Village of Hope Uganda**

*Village of Hope Uganda is run entirely by Ugandan people. Rose Aber, Director, was born and raised in Uganda and as a child lived in the town of Gulu, only to have to flee to safety from Rebel attacks. After Rose graduated college, she returned to Gulu with World Vision where she counseled, fed, and loved the orphans. Rose is completely devoted to the children and widows of Gulu. In February of 2007, World Vision wanted to relocate Rose, but Rose told them she could not leave the children and resigned from her position. Since March 1, 2007, Rose has been working with Village of Hope. She is a huge asset to the work in Gulu. Her responsibilities consist of registering the organization with the government, buying land, overseeing all the building, hiring, and logistics of getting the Village ready to move the children into.*



Photo: Digital Citizen Fund

*Afghan Girls Robotics Team works on a prototype ventilator in Herat, Afghanistan on May 25, 2020.*

## With Bike Chains and Car Parts, Afghan Girls Build Ventilators

By Stefanie Glinski  
Thomson Reuters Foundation: June 4, 2020

### Teens bring temporary relief to COVID-19 patients struggling to breathe.

KABUL, Afghanistan – With pliers in hand, a group of Afghan girls fashion make-do ventilators from car parts, bike chains, and machine sensors, an imperfect solution to the country’s looming coronavirus crisis.

The five teens, who live in Herat near the border with Iran, are part of the Afghan Girls Robotics Team, an initiative that teaches schoolgirls programming and computer science.

“We had to be creative when it came to sourcing material,” said Somaya Faruqi, the team’s 17-year-old captain. “Our machines are built out of a combination of Toyota Corolla motors, chains from motorcycles,

as well as separate pressure, heat, and humidity sensors,” she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation via WhatsApp.

While the devices cannot replace medical ventilators, they should bring temporary relief to coronavirus patients.

“It’s not a perfect device, but it can do two things: control the volume of oxygen entering the body, and count and control the number of breaths per minute,” said Faruqi.

Infections are rising in a country of 35 million, with more than 16,500 infections, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Experts say the real figure is likely to be far higher.

Kabul’s mayor Daoud Sultanzyoy fears half the capital’s 6 million residents are infected as people defy lockdown. Similar estimates hold for Herat, home to about a million.

“Every day, the number of sick people is increasing and in the near future, we will have neither enough ventilators nor hospi-

tal equipment,” said Faruqi.

For two months, her team - wearing masks and gloves - has worked five long days a week to complete their prototype. “We were quite scared by the prospects of the pandemic, so we decided to try to do our part,” said Faruqi.

Before the coronavirus outbreak, the girls built robots, studied programming, and prepared for their final year of school under an initiative set up in 2015 to teach girls tech skills and instill confidence through science.

Computer scientist Roya Mahboob – founder of the Digital Citizen Fund – says she wanted to “give them a digital voice” in what is a conservative country, where many girls stay home.

The team – who wear long black dresses and headscarves along with their anti-virus masks and gloves – has been celebrated across Afghanistan and won prizes in the West.

**Ventilators** *continued on next page*

**Ventilators** *continued from previous page*

### TOUGH FIGHT

More than 3,000 girls in Herat have studied at the Digital Citizen Fund, and the city's university now has its largest body of women pursuing computer science, topping 500.

Afghanistan's literacy rate for women remains low at about 30 percent, according to the United Nations, with many girls in rural, conservative communities unable to attend school.

"It's slowly changing," said Faruqi, but only for some.

Families like hers are more liberal, she said, otherwise it would have been impossible to leave the house and work on the breathing machines.

The girls hope to finish their device by mid-month and sell them for about \$600 – 50 times cheaper than medical ventilators – as a stopgap for Herat's main COVID-19 hospital, a government facility.

"In a country where medical supply is largely lacking, we are prepared to look into such alternative options," Qadir Qadir, general director of the Ministry of Public Health, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

He said Afghanistan had about 480 ventilators available, but about 40 belonged to the military and dozens to non-profits.

"Whether the girls' product can be used is yet to be determined. It would need to



**Photo:** Thomson Reuters Foundation/Stefanie Glinski

*Robotics Team works on a prototype ventilator in Herat, Afghanistan on May 25, 2020.*

be tested and can't immediately be used in patient care," said Qadir.

Faruqi is undaunted, her team is working all out to finish their low-cost, low-tech prototype.

"We've seen a lot of encouragement from

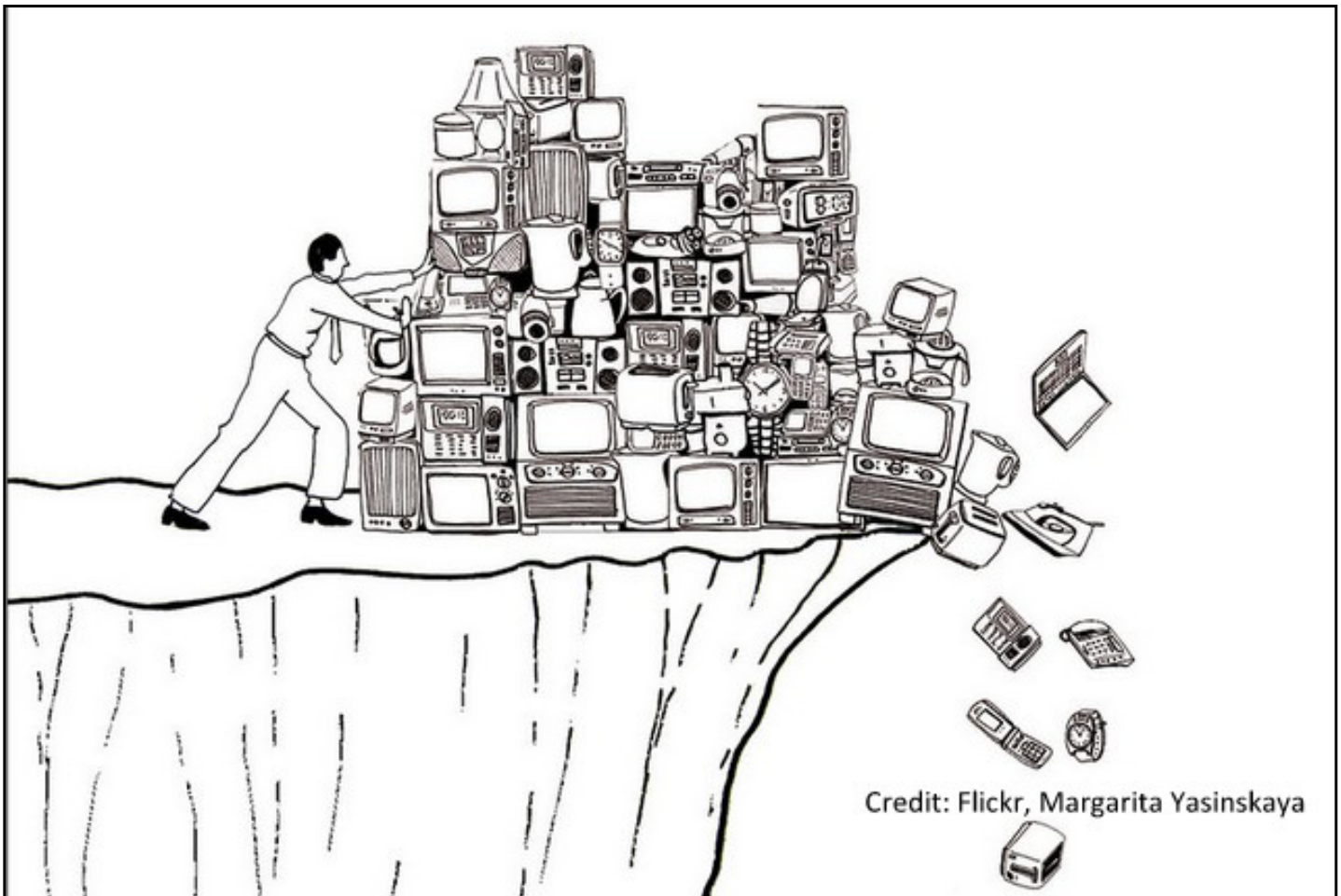
people, but our biggest drive is the current situation: Afghanistan is in crisis and we want to do what we can to help," she said.

**Source:** <https://news.trust.org/item/20200604095222-8ebj6/>

**Photo:**  
**Digital  
Citizen  
Fund**

*Afghan Girls  
Robotics Team  
works on a  
prototype  
ventilator in  
Herat,  
Afghanistan  
on  
May 25, 2020.*





Credit: Flickr, Margarita Yasinskaya

# Mass Consumerism Is the Roadblock That Stands In Our Way

Submitted by Rolly Montpellier, Canada

By Brad Zarnett  
Below 2C: June 6, 2020

*In a previous article, Brad Zarnett asks if “our ape brains are poorly configured to address a slow moving crisis with speed.” One might be quick to point out that the world is reacting with speed to the coronavirus threat. But then, COVID-19 is a real-time crisis and merits an immediate response. Climate change, on the other hand, is a slow emergency that does not “trigger a change in our climate-destroying behaviours,” says Zarnett. In this article, mass consumerism is exposed as the major roadblock that stands in the way of a future with a stable climate.*

## Mass Consumerism: The Roadblock

I used to be certain that government was failing us in our fight for a stable climate, and for the most part I still do, BUT thanks to COVID-19 I’ve gained new

insight into the underlying roadblock that’s standing in our way.

### Polls

There have been several polls lately about how people don’t want to go back to “normal” – how they’ve come to appreciate cleaner air, quieter roads and working from home. Sure...why not, it’s a poll – it’s not like you’re being asked to give something up or pay extra for your dream of a better future. So while we’re at it, let’s have Mondays off, free ice-cream, and a baseball team that never loses.

To call these polls flawed is an understatement. To imply that a positive response says anything about people’s willingness to change is dubious at best. It seems to me that the value of a poll of this nature lies more in starting a conversation of how we can do better, rather than incorrectly concluding anything about our readiness to change.

### It’s Not That Easy

Let’s face it, the “conveniences” and cheap products that we’ve come to enjoy are the reason why we have so much environmental destruction, and whether we like it or not, one way or another, we need to give them up. We don’t even have to take responsibility for our contribution to the harm – we can simply blame it on a billion dollar advertising industry and start our new eco-friendly lives tomorrow. Unfortunately it doesn’t quite work that way.

### Own It

The first step in addressing a problem is admitting that you have one. We need to be honest with ourselves. We’re addicted to a whole host of planet-destroying products and “conveniences” that have been sanitized by a system that has done a masterful job of keeping the extent of the harm neatly hidden behind the curtain of capitalism. If the system wasn’t so danger-

**Consumerism** *continued on next page*

**Consumerism** *continued from previous page*

ous we could sit back and marvel at the mastery of a business model that gives us just enough plausible deniability to “pretend” to be blissfully ignorant. And for the most part, we’re OK with this.

## Dear Climate: You Don’t Scare Us!

As a species we’re just not scared of Climate Change – it moves slowly, the worst impacts won’t be felt for decades and it will mostly affect other people in some distant developing country. It’s actually a perfect recipe for inaction. There’s no fear to trigger a sudden release of collective adrenaline guiding us all to take drastic actions and reject the “conveniences” that are destroying the planet.

The truth is that we’re not even close to admitting our addiction, let alone quitting. We would rather rationalize our behaviour and rally behind hopelessly ineffective strategies like the Paris Accords (COP) or the sham of CSR and ESG...rather than take the hard steps to get “clean.” And what’s worse is that, due to decades of delay, we’ve squandered the chance to solve this problem with incremental thinking.

## Better Questions Get Better Answers

Based on our track record, humans seem unwilling or unable to address climate change in a meaningful way...now it’s time to take a look in the mirror and ask: Does the problem lie with us?

Now let’s get back to the poll. Imagine that the question wasn’t some vague option for a better world but rather two direct questions.

Do you believe that the way we live our lives is incompatible with a stable climate and that urgent action is required?

What cheap products and “conveniences” are you willing to give up tomorrow to protect against the worst impacts of climate change?

Try it on a friend – you’ll most likely get silence or award winning rationalizations. Perhaps one of these:

“I tried being a vegetarian but it wasn’t for me.”

“I think it’s great that people take public transit, carpool, or bike to work but it’s impractical for my job.”

“I think it’s great that people use reusable mugs and water bottles but I never know what my day will bring and I have so many things to carry already.”

“I think it’s great that there are people out there who repair their clothes rather than buy new, but I like new styles and I’m not prepared to give it up.”

It’s as if they’re saying, I fully support

that we should give up environmentally destructive behaviours...as long as it doesn’t inconvenience me. And with a little more digging you learn about how they could give it all up anytime but they don’t think it will achieve anything or how they need to fly for work or perhaps this oldie but goodie – yes I do drink bottled water but I always recycle.

## COVID-19 and The Economy

It’s interesting to see the similarities between those who answered in the poll that they don’t want to go back to “normal” and those who are beating the drum to restart the economy.

One group isn’t quite ready to give up their conveniences BUT they’re all-in when it comes to others doing it. And the other group (those with the power in society) want to get the people back to work... as long as it’s not actually them or their kids who are putting their lives in danger on the front lines. In both cases...it’s good for others to do it.

## This Time It’s Different

The lie of Capitalism is that we can technofix our way out of our current dilemma. We can keep the profits coming and we’ll figure it out as we go, after all, that’s the way we’ve always done it. But this time it’s different – the clock is ticking and our challenges are literally...everything.

We need to change our entire transportation system, manufacturing processes, farming methods, and electrical grid in 10 short years and even that doesn’t guarantee that we can keep the planet from exceeding 1.5 degrees of warming. If you haven’t noticed, rainforests continue to be cut down at an alarming rate and the Arctic is melting and absorbing more heat by the day. We don’t have the luxury of time – the crisis has already begun.

## Finding Peace

So what’s it going to be? What are you willing to give up in the post COVID-19 world? Well...that’s actually a trick question because it doesn’t really matter. Reducing the impacts of climate change isn’t about individual products or services. Stopping to produce plastic bottles or coffee cups or carpooling to work or even riding your bike won’t actually make a difference...because climate change isn’t a problem that can be

solved individually in the marketplace. It’s a global societal problem that can only be solved with government leadership.

So what was the whole point of discussing the idea of giving up products? The point is, that we need to be prepared or better yet, at peace with giving up all of those wasteful and polluting activities. All of them! Only then will we be ready to vote for the type of government that will strategize, plan, and budget around climate protecting programs and policies.

This point cannot be overstated; expecting society to vote for a Green Leader, before the majority of us have come to peace with the end of our addiction to the “perks” of Capitalism...is a pipe dream. It’s in direct conflict with our individualistic capitalism soaked brains and furthermore, most voters don’t want to be treated like children and told which of our “rationalized addictions” can no longer be enjoyed...and I don’t blame them.

## What Now?

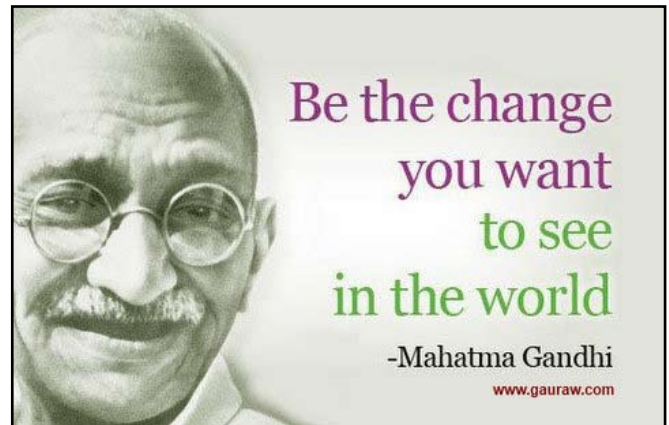
Every country on this planet has had a “green” option to lead their governments through the climate crisis but for the most part we don’t choose them. We tend to choose Liberals or Conservatives that tell us half truths and who see the world through the lens of business rather than the lens of life – and we can see where that’s gotten us. So here we are...what now?

It’s simple to say but very hard to do... our species needs to have a collective awakening and to find peace with walking away from our addiction. This has to be the first step, and who knows...it just might lead us to happier lives.

Gandhi was right – you need to be the change that you want to see in the world.

(This article was first published in *Medium*).

**Source:** <https://below2c.org/2020/06/mass-consumerism-is-the-roadblock-that-stands-in-our-way/>



WE'RE AGAINST RACISM. WE'RE AGAINST SEXISM. WE'RE AGAINST AGEISM. WE'RE AGAINST ANY OF THESE DISCRIMINATORY, ARBITRARY, OPPRESSIVE, DOMINATING THINGS. AND WE'RE AGAINST SPECIESISM BECAUSE IT'S THE SAME PRINCIPLE. WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER. STRIP AWAY THE FUR, FINS, AND FEATHERS. WHO HAVE YOU GOT? YOU'VE GOT A FEELING, SENTIENT BEING.

- Ingrid Newkirk, founder of PETA -

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/peta-founder-animals-need-somebody-to-stick-up-for-them-no-matter-if-its-uncomfortable/2020/01/27/274c644c-2db3-11ea-9b60-817cc18cf173\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/peta-founder-animals-need-somebody-to-stick-up-for-them-no-matter-if-its-uncomfortable/2020/01/27/274c644c-2db3-11ea-9b60-817cc18cf173_story.html)

# Consumer Liberation

Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

*Email Iona at [groundswellnews@pa.net](mailto:groundswellnews@pa.net) and she will put you on our email list to receive monthly issues of our climate activist journal. "Every new one makes us stronger," sings Pete Seeger.*



## Groundswell News

An activist publication bringing readers struggles and successes as well as climate-change news in the U.S. and around the globe. People everywhere are working to make change. Our beautiful journal will inspire and encourage you. Learn more at [www.groundswellnews.org](http://www.groundswellnews.org). Email [groundswellnews@pa.net](mailto:groundswellnews@pa.net) to be put on our e-list.. It's free but donations are gladly accepted. A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Photo <https://www.google.com/search>

## Groundswell News Now Accepting Ads

Please consider placing your ad with us. As we are an alternative source of news, we have an alternative ad policy. Send me your material and pay what you feel is reasonable, depending on how much space your ad needs. If your ad requires some of my time to create it for you, there will be an extra charge. If you can afford \$50 for half a page and \$100 for a full page, that will be wonderful. Our distribution is small now but we hope to grow quickly and our readers are wonderfully supportive people!

*Thank you.*



*Remember your dreams.*



## Messages from Our Friends



Hello my dear friend! I am okay and I am doing well with all my family members. I am Francine from Burundi exactly in Gitega province political capital and I study at the Gitega Paramedical Institute in the community development section. Besides my studies, I am a local representative of an association called World Merit Burundi in my province. World Merit Burundi is an association of change makers focused on 17 UN SDGs.

I created something called Kids Bank where children learn how to save money and how to manage it. It is an amazing job. From December till now we formed four groups of children. There are now 350. After that we launched another group of some of their mothers called Girl Up project. We planted potatoes.

Now I am thinking how to open a hair cut salon where hair will be cut by girls or women.

**Francine Nzokira**, Burundi

I am sure I can find all kinds of ways to help save our planet and its living things as I keep at it.

**Bill Boteler**, Washington, DC, USA

The *Groundswell News Journal* is very educative about the conservation of our environment, afforestation is encouraged. I like it. I will try to search about Ssengendo Yasin since I am also coming from Mafumbira subcounty Jinja district and I am also running a community-based organization called Good Shepherd Child Care Foundation. We empower our children with education support, the needy, orphans, support girl child education, promotion of health, encourage planting of trees, etc.

Let's pray one day you will come to Uganda and pay a visit to us.

**Nagudi Barbra**, Uganda

Today is Earth Day and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first one! Unfortunately, in these 50 years, things have gotten much worse in many ways. Global warming is on track to become disastrous. We are in the middle of a rapid extinction of many spe-

cies. (I am particularly concerned with the reduction in the number of bees and other pollinating insects.) Wildfires, droughts, and floods are becoming worse and more frequent. The sea levels are rising and will cause big problems in many heavily populated, low-lying areas of the world.

The growth in the use of solar and wind power to generate electricity is an encouraging sign, and so is the trend toward electric motors for vehicles of all sorts.

I have solar panels on the roof of my house, and they have been quite effective. In less than a year, they have generate almost 10 Megawatt-hours (MWh) of electricity. That has saved over 3,800 kg of CO2 according to the solar panel company, but I am a bit skeptical about that number. Saved compared to what? Compared to if the electricity was generated by a coal-fired plant?? We don't have those in Sweden! Anyway, it reduces the electricity bill.

Be safe and keep up the good fight! (I'm looking forward to the next issue of your *Journal*.)

Best regards,  
**Anders Eklof**, Sweden

Ok, thanks mother for publishing me so I believe I will get more good people like Jacquie. God bless you!

Ssengendo Yasin Sigalaminat, Uganda  
(See page 10.)

Oh wonderful, I have really loved the newspaper, it's awesome, you're really my sister, you will teach me more. I love you. I thank God to connect us together.

**Lillian Kabahuma**, Uganda (See pages 26 and 50.)

Am very happy to meet you too, and for the stimulating and highly educating conference that introduced us, am grateful [Blessed Unrest sponsored by Biodiversity for a Livable Climate].

I see you are working on Africa, though am yet to go through your activities, I will get back to you sometimes this week. I am sure this is an opportunity to demonstrate my abilities and love for my Country, con-

tinued, and the overall planetary health.

Besides there is much to learn from an experienced person or organization like yours.

I was thrilled being a correspondent. I hope to be an ecological hero, cheers to your gentle guide.

I hope you are enjoying your vacation, also your hip am sure it's healing, swimming in the ocean is a great idea for the healing process.

Having gone through your activities I am so fascinated about the heroic acts of the young people as well as other friends of the Earth groups in your publication.

I'll like to research, write, and even try to create a hero among us here in Lagos, through environmental education and outreach. Perhaps there are other areas I can work with you, I never thought of, please do not hesitate to let me know.

I am working with my small group on plastic pollution a major environmental challenge here in Lagos. I see the clean-up process as an opportunity to engaged idle youth in waste-to-wealth process.

I hope my write up meets with your publication style because I really would want my activities published. I'd like to be an Earth hero myself,

On your last mail you explained that I can submit my proposal to you to help attract grants to catalyze my activities, all I need is the go-ahead and you will have it on your table. Looking forward to your Gentle support.

A lot of people commented on John, all good comments, hurts I never had the chance to meet him, the world misses him, that tells me he's an extraordinary guy, you must be missing him above all. But please be renewed the Earth needs you now.

I must say I really love the expression in your magazine describing the true hierarchy that says not man above Mother Earth but rather Mother Earth first, then others, not man above all others. Good to know.

Stay blessed.

Kind regards,

**Ajibona Tolulope**, Nigeria (See page 8.)

**Messages** continued on next page

### Messages *continued from previous page*

It's important that you understand that I cannot send anyone any money. I am asked most days. My only income is the UK state pension. Learn with Grandma has no income and no funds

I have decided that the best way I can help is by sharing ideas and making practical suggestions of things you could do that are Achievable, Affordable, and Sustainable. I also think that at my age (78) and imperfect health it would be very wrong of me to encourage people to rely on my financial support.

However I have invited you to join Learn with Grandma International (LwG) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1489818234620407/?ref=ts> & USA [https://www.facebook.com/groups/LearnwithGrandmaUSA/?source\\_id=57056163746](https://www.facebook.com/groups/LearnwithGrandmaUSA/?source_id=57056163746)

As a member you are welcome to share news, events, achievements. Please share anything that fits with LwG aims. The main aim is share ideas of how to use the Internet as a bridge to reunite the generations and help break down the digital age gap by sharing skills, love, and knowledge across the generations. Good projects are happening in many countries.

1. To protect and cherish our people; our community and Planet – it's our home.
2. To reunite the generations using IT as a bridge.
3. To record all that is good from our histories, culture, traditions, heritage, and skills, etc.
4. To encourage parents and grandparents to instill a love of learning, create lasting memories, and have fun together.
5. To encourage respect between the generations and show that each generation has skills they can learn from the other.
6. To encourage Intergenerational Learning & Active Ageing projects.
7. To research, create, and provide learning material and resources and encourage a reading culture.
8. To create a Digital international library, accessible to all.
9. To work with organizations in other countries to promote these aims internationally.

With 54 groups around the world I don't have time to look at all my friends timelines!!

But PLEASE remember that many people who are members of LwG either work for not for profits or already support various charities. We all understand that all organizations need money but too many appeals are counterproductive!!

I started Learn with Grandma as my retirement project. I just floated my ideas

of Intergenerational Learning & Active Ageing on Facebook never expecting that people in so many countries around the world would start a group for their country.

It's all happened so fast. I started sharing ideas in the autumn of 2014 and now good projects are happening in so many countries – it inspires me to keep on sharing the message that doing stuff together is fun. We elders can learn a lot from our young people – especially about all this digital stuff! We elders also have so much knowledge to share. We are not a problem – we are a RESOURCE!

God Bless & Keep safe!

**Valerie Wood-Gaiger**, Wales

I'd like to be a member of your Grass-roots Coalition! You do such great work!  
**Doug Davis**, New York USA

This is a piece I wrote for an NGO in Africa. My name is Lynn Dostal, and I am 78 years old and retired, living in Florida, USA. I have actually retired twice. I spent 30 years as a business leader in operations and human resources-labor relations, and then as a middle grades special education teacher. I have always had a passion for gardening.

When I retired from teaching, I started an aquaponic grow operation at my home. About two years ago I saw a Facebook post for Revive a Rural African Child and its school in Namaganda, Uganda. So, I started doing volunteer advising with them. Others in Africa started sending me friend requests and the whole concept exploded to where I was advising over 40 mentees on farming, education, and economic growth, in an attempt to end poverty, hunger, and illiteracy.

I finally partnered with a minister in Kenya. I oversaw him buying a well-drilling truck, helped him build and manage an orphanage, become a CBO, and generally work toward self-sufficiency. He now has a motorcycle, a van that needs repairs to be operable, a chain saw for cutting wood to sell, and several permanent building for living and schooling.

This road has not been easy to navigate. But we are making progress. People in his community have donated a 10,000-liter water tank for rain catchment and sale, as well as domestic use. Others have donated sand and cement for permanent rock-walled buildings. We have a bore hole, but no pumping system yet. We are planning to add a store where we will buy bulk products and sell smaller retail amounts.

Many of my other brothers are permaculture farmers. I have helped them by sending seeds for citrus trees and other

growies.\* I have helped introduce drip irrigations in a drought-prone area of the world. I have helped rebuild chicken-egg operations with how to grow food vs. buying food, and much more.

I am having such a good time now trying to make Africa a better place to live. In the future, if my wife pre-deceases me, I am thinking of retiring to Africa. I hope you like my story and will publish it as an example of what can be done, so to inspire others to surpass what I have done.

\*Growies = any plant; flowers, veggies, or whatever.

(second email 3/8/20) I hope this inspires other to support the needs in Africa. Now spear-heading a drive to make cooking stoves.

Every little bit helps.

**Lynn Thomas Dostal**, Florida USA  
ldostal@tampabay.rr.com

The current world situation is a manifestation of our dysfunctional relationship with nature. We have been warned that depletion of wildlife habitats paved the way for emergence of pathogens like HIV, Ebola, and coronaviruses.

India is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the draft agreement, published in January and likely to be adopted in October, calls for protection of at least 30% of land and sea areas to stop catastrophic loss of biodiversity by 2030. This commitment will require creation and regeneration of new protected areas, prioritizing areas of abundant biodiversity. Yet, we want to destroy the richest biodiversity abundant areas like Dibru Saikhowa, Dehing Patkai, and Dibang valley in northeast India! Giving precedence to extractive industries over natural forests is regressive and will increase GHG emissions and add to the climate crisis.

We can do better than this for the sake of the future generations struggling to cope with an uncertain future due to the unprecedented health and climate crisis.

**Rituraj Phukan**, Secretary General of Green Guard Nature Organization & National Coordinator, The Climate Reality Project India

Today I decided to get garden supplies from Home Depot since the locally-owned garden center is permanently out of essential stuff.

But soon I realized there was way too much stuff at Home Depot - pages and pages of seeds and stuff - overwhelming.

Generally, this is what the big box stores are like, this is what the internet is like - an unmanageable, growing amount of everything. This cannot go on forever. Rich

**Messages continued on next page**



### Messages *continued from previous page*

nations already have too much of everything even though half their citizens are struggling for basics.

To save the planet we have to end growth, end capitalism, and redistribute wealth by 2050. Politically very hard to do. We have geometric growth of stuff and it will soon be even more overwhelming, including packaging waste.

<https://theconversation.com/ive-seriously-tried-to-believe-capitalism-and-the-planet-can-coexist-but-ive-lost-faith-131288>

<https://www.google.com/amp/s/theconversation.com/amp/ive-seriously-tried-to-believe-capitalism-and-the-planet-can-coexist-but-ive-lost-faith-131288>

**Bill Boteler**, Maryland USA

By the way, I love the newspaper you are doing. It wowed me, too. Great work again Iona! So sad to hear of your Beloveds "death". May all hearts find each other again.

Yes please send me that book about the tree.

Will be in touch on all matters.

**Rome Banks**, Australia

Thanks Iona, very captivating, I look forward to being part of your team.

From the word go...to me, it must be a wonderful group, with focused mind.

May I wish you a quick recovery from swollen hip...so as you continue with your routine work, of which...to me is a calling.

Best Regards,

**Isaac Wabuge**, Kenya

All the fun is for me Iona! I want my dedication to the environmental challenge given that all the young people of the years 1990-2020 (20th and 21st centuries). We have the right to have a healthy environment requiring the energy transition in order to have a future Zero Fossil generation.

Being an environmental activist, I tell myself to remember that the Coronavirus is a sign before all damage, the natural disaster of climate change air pollution, and the rise of high Marin (Atlantic Ocean). I would make an effort to leave you at least five emails per week. Always help where you need with my emails.

I am always dedicated to fighting climate change with my community and young people. because today the ecologists of the world health crisis must be motivated to denounce all fossil energies and to make the energy transition. Today it is the electronic equipment that the com-

munity needs for the masses of campaigns and awareness raising across West Africa. Someday I will be honored to contact you physically, Iona.

**Issouf Pazini Kone**, Ivory Coast

Hello Dear Iona Conner,  
Hope this mail finds well. I'm happy to read you.

So, as I told you on Facebook, I'm Me Jacques Hicintuka; I'm 32 years old from Burundi in Africa. I'm a lawyer. In 2011, I created an association called: Burundian Diabetics Association. I have a national project of helping the vulnerable prisoners in Burundi. I'm searching for a sponsor or partner to support my project.

Best regards,

**Me Hicintuka Jacques**

My WhatsApp number: +25775680894

Phone number: +25772462175

Your Board is full of such wonderful, experienced, hard-working people for the good of our Earth!!!! I'm so impressed!!!! Thanks for sharing this with me! You've done and continue to do such great positive work!!!! I love it and the Earth loves it!

**Linda L.**, Idaho USA

I'm always happy to volunteer for Humanity. I'm a serial volunteer, SDG Advocate, Global peace Ambassador. I volunteer for different non-profit organizations across the state. Embark on small project #Education for all. (Educate a female initiative).

I'm really happy to meet you, do endeavor to message me anytime. I'm also open to any opportunities.

Thanks for connecting with me once again. Indeed, it a great time.

Thick forest of thanks,

**Aliu Olatunji**, Nigeria

[*In reference to seeing Francine working in her garden on Facebook*] Well done my friend, I love seeing women doing agriculture. We can save the planet Earth together, make it a better place for everyone and promote agriculture.

Cheers,

**Solomon Oluwaseun Samson**, Nigeria

### **Hello Everyone.**

In light of the seriously adverse impact of the COVID-19 coup on humanity's survival prospects, including because of the reduced aerosol masking effect caused by the sudden reduction in industrial activity and the consequent rapid rise in temperature that is now occurring, I have outlined the interrelated problems in this article and suggested how we can tackle them strategically to give us some prospect of

surviving in our rapidly shortening time-frame. In doing this, I readily acknowledge that an increasing number of scientists are convinced that it is now too late.

You are welcome to share the article as widely as you like.

'COVID-19: Breaking the Lockdown, Defeating the Coup, Averting Extinction'

<https://www.transcend.org/tms/2020/05/covid-19-breaking-the-lockdown-defeating-the-coup-averting-extinction/>

'TRANSCEND Media Service: Solutions-Oriented Peace Journalism', Germany/Switzerland, May 4, 2020.

For life on Earth;

**Robert Burrowes**, Australia

Good to speak with you today. How I admire your passion and commitment. I am so glad to hear of the school being named for John.

Regarding anti-racism groups, the Southern Poverty Law Center I believe is one of the best organizations working against racism and against extremist groups.

Also, there is a Catholic bishop, Bishop Seitz from El Paso, Texas who has written what I think is one of the best letters on white supremacy and racism. It is entitled "Night Will Be No More."

There are many organizations working against racism that can be found on Google.

I personally find the two I mentioned above very, very profound. I hope this helps.

As we go through the experience of the Coronavirus, we recognize the suffering of so many in our world. Suffering is not final when we authentically recognize it for what it is.

Two of the Brothers in my community here in Dayton have ministered at our program, which cares for abandoned children in India. At Easter dinner, they told the story of a baby found by rag pickers who sort garbage. Caring for him, they gave him milk and then brought him to our REDS (Ragpickers' Education and Development Scheme). This boy has grown to be healthy and receive an education. I heard in the storytelling a tone of profound joy from those who saw this child develop. The suffering is indeed real but the possibility of bringing health and new life is also real.

I love the way so many good people are sharing with the nation and the world how we are to work through this terrible crisis we are going through. I see and hear so much help coming forth on various levels of expertise and caring, not from ideolo-

Messages continued from previous page

gies nor from prejudices. They speak of the correct realities that we all need to follow and show care. I admire so much how they lead us to see the authentic big picture. They are leading us to recognize that in caring for each other in the correct way, we will eventually find a solution.

Love and Blessings,

Fr. Ted Cassidy, SM, Ohio USA (See *The Hurricane of Racism*,

page 36.)

Hello, my dear, my green sister, hope you're doing well over there.

I have really loved the newspaper, it's awesome. You're really my sister, you will teach me more. I love you. I thank God to connect us together. We shall keep in touch dear,

Lillian Kabahuma, Uganda (see below and page 36.)



Photo by Manyindo Elijah

Lillian Kabahuma wrote this: "Here last week was giving food to the people who are not working due to lockdown, here people are dying of hunger, but I sold 10 goats and bought food for some people around me." She and her team bought cassava, bananas, and charcoal to donate to people in their community.

**ACCEPTANCE IS THE UNIVERSAL  
CURRENCY OF REAL FRIENDSHIP...  
IT DOES NOT WARP OR SHAPE OR  
WRENCH A PERSON TO BE ANYTHING  
OTHER THAN WHAT THEY ARE.**

- Joan Chittister -

<https://www.inspiringquotes.us/author/4564-joan-d-chittister/about-acceptance>

# Update on Victim of Police Brutality



**Photo: Video screengrab via WBFO Note from the Editor: DO YOU SEE ANY OFFICERS BENDING DOWN TO HELP HIM????** (Religion News Service, article June 9, 2020 by Yonat Shimron headline, “Martin Gugino is a Catholic peace activist, not an ‘Antifa provocateur,’ friends say.”) – Is Martin Gugino an Antifa provocateur? Or a beloved Catholic peace activist who was the victim of police brutality in Buffalo, New York? A Tuesday morning (June 9) tweet from President Donald Trump suggested the former, drawing a wave of shock and outrage from friends of the 75-year-old activist who was shoved to the ground by Buffalo police during a protest last Thursday outside City Hall. The incident, captured on video, went viral and has become symbolic of the kind of police brutality that has sparked calls for fundamental reforms to American policing. In the video, an officer is seen shoving Gugino, who falls to the sidewalk, biting his head. As Gugino lies unmoving and bleeding, the officer who pushed him is seen hurrying away. **Source:** <https://religionnews.com/2020/06/09/martin-gugino-is-a-catholic-peace-activist-not-a-antifa-provocateur-friends-say/>

## Martin Gugino is out of the ICU but remains hospitalized, his attorney says.

By Diane Herbst, *excerpt*  
People: June 12, 2020

Martin Gugino, the 75-year-old man shoved to the ground by Buffalo police last week at a protest, has a brain injury and a fractured skull from the fall. He is starting physical therapy, but is not able to walk yet, according to his attorney.

“As most of you know, Martin is a soft spoken but thoughtful and principled man. As heartbreaking as it is, his brain is injured and he is well aware of that now,” attorney Kelly Zarcone said in a statement Thursday. “He feels encouraged and uplifted by the outpouring of support which he has received from so many people all over the globe. It helps,” she continued. “He is looking forward to healing and determining what his ‘new normal’ might look like.”

The two officers involved were quickly suspended and charged with assault after a video of what happened went viral. They have pleaded not guilty. . . .

Photo at right by Bill Jacobson (Notice Martin is holding his glasses in his left hand.) **Source:** <https://people.com/crime/buffalo-protester-pushed-down-by-police-has-brain-injury/>





Photo: Tyler School of Art and Architecture

Up right now! An installation in the Tyler School of Art and Architecture's courtyard at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania USA, created by Kara Springer, a Sculpture graduate student! @TylerSchool

## 75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice

Submitted by C.B., Pennsylvania USA

By Corinne Shutack, Working towards a world where pain and suffering isn't caused by a fellow human. @corinne\_shutack

Medium: Aug 13, 2017; updated 2020

Note: There are several links in the article which don't show up here; they are underlined.

**Note 1:** This article is continually updated to ensure each item is accurate and needed today.

**Note 2:** Achieving racial justice is a marathon, not a sprint. Our work to fix what we broke and left broken isn't done until Black folks tell us it's done.

1. Google whether your local police department currently outfits all on-duty police officers with a body-worn camera and requires that the body-worn camera be turned on immediately when officers respond to a police call. If they don't, write to your city or town government representative and police chief to advocate for it. The racial make-up of your town doesn't matter. This needs to be standard everywhere. Multiply your voice by soliciting others to advocate as well, writing on social media about it, writing op-eds, etc.

2. Google whether your city or town currently employs evidence-based police de-escalation trainings. The racial make-up of your town doesn't matter. This needs

to be standard everywhere. Write to your city or town government representative and police chief and advocate for it. Multiply your voice by soliciting others to advocate as well, writing on social media about it, writing op-eds, etc.

3. More and more stories of black folks encountering racism are being documented and shared through social media – whether it's at a hotel, with the police, in a coffee shop, at a school, etc. When you see such a post, call the organization, company, or institution involved to tell them how upset you are. Then share the post along with the institution's contact information, spreading the word about what happened and encouraging others to contact the institution as well. Whether the company initiated the event or failed to protect a POC (Person of Color) during an onslaught by a third party, they need to hear from us.

4. If you or a friend is an educator, buy said friend books that feature POC as protagonists and heroes, no matter the racial make-up of the class. A few good lists are here, here, here, here, here, here, and here. And/or purchase educational toys that feature POC, such as finger puppets, Black History Flashcards, etc. for their classroom. Use these items year-round, not just in February. The racial make-up of students doesn't matter – kids of every race

need to know American history and be exposed to people from different races, religions, and countries. If the friend is interested, buy them for your pal's classroom. Don't be shy to ask Facebook friends that you haven't actually talked to in 10 years.

5. If you or a friend or family member is an educator, watch or share this video of Neil deGrasse Tyson speaking about his experience as a black student telling people he wanted to be a scientist and astrophysicist. Tyson's experience reminds me of a black friend whose high school teachers tried to dissuade her from taking AP classes, because, with the best of intentions, they thought the AP classes would be "too much" for her. Be an educator who supports and encourages, not one who dissuades. Talk to educators you know about being educators who support and encourage, not educators who dissuade.

6. Work on ensuring that black educators are hired where black children are being taught. If you want to know more about why and how this makes a difference for black children, check out this episode of Malcolm Gladwell's podcast. There are some really good nuggets in there about how schools can support the achievement of black students – from ensuring black students aren't closed out of gifted pro-

75 Things continued on next page

### 75 Things *continued from previous page*

grams by using test results instead of white teachers' recommendations to the influence that having a black teacher has on a black student's education to the importance to fostering a school ethos wherein black students think, "This school is here for me."

7. Many companies have recruiting channels that are predominantly white. Work with your HR department to recruit Americans who are descendants of enslaved Africans. Recruiting from HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) is a good start. Work to put descendants of enslaved Africans already hired under supportive managers.

8. Donate to anti-white supremacy work such as your local Black Lives Matter Chapter, the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, the NAACP, Southern Poverty Law Center, United Negro College Fund, Black Youth Project 100, Color of Change, The Sentencing Project, Families against Mandatory Minimums, A New Way of Life, Equal Justice Initiative, and Dream Defenders. Join some of these list-serves and take action as their emails dictate.

9. Support black businesses. Find them on WeBuyBlack, The Black Wallet, and Official Black Wall Street. Another great list is here.

10. Bank black. It doesn't have to be all of your checking or savings. Opening up an account with some money is better than no account at all. You can use the link from #9 (type "banking" in the Category field) or this site to find a bank. At the very least, move some or all of your checking, savings, mortgage, etc. out of Wells Fargo as a part of the divestment movement to protect Standing Rock.

11. Don't buy from companies that use prison labor. [Find a good list here](#). Stand outside of these stores with a sign that reads "[Company] uses prison labor" even if for 30 mins a few times a month. Others will take a shift.

12. Read up about mandatory minimum sentences and watch videos about this on Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM's) website. FAMM's website includes work being done at the federal level and state level. Call or write to your state legislators and governor about reducing mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent drug crimes.

13. To reduce mandatory minimum sentences on a federal level, call or write to your federal legislators in support of the bipartisan (sponsored by Sen Lee (R-UT)) Smarter Sentencing Act (S. 2850) which reduces the length of federal mandatory

minimum drug sentences by half, makes the Fair Sentencing Act's crack sentencing reforms retroactive, and expands the "safety valve" exception to mandatory drug sentences.

14. To reduce mandatory minimum sentences on a federal level, call or write to your federal legislators in support of the bipartisan (sponsored by Sen. Rand (R-KY)) Justice Safety Valve Act (S. 399, H.R. 1097), which would allow judges to give sentences other than the mandatory minimum sentence for any federal crime.

15. To reduce mandatory minimum sentences on a federal level, call or write your federal legislators in support of another great criminal justice reform bill, the Second Look Act, which would make reduced sentences for crack convictions from the previously passed Fair Sentencing Act retroactive, reduce mandatory minimums for people convicted more than three times for drug crimes from life without parole after the third offense to 25 years, reduce mandatory sentences for drug crimes from 15 to 10 years, limit the use of solitary confinement on juvenile prisoners, etc.

16. Call or write to your state legislators and governor to support state-wide criminal justice reform including reducing mandatory minimum sentences, reducing sentences for non-violent drug crimes, passing "safety valve" law to allow judges to depart below a mandatory minimum sentence under certain conditions, passing alternatives to incarceration, etc. Study after study shows that racism fuels racial disparities in imprisonment, and most of the U.S. prison population are at the state and local level.

17. Call or write to state legislators, federal legislators, and your governor to decriminalize weed. No, not because black folks use weed more frequently than white folks. Because black Americans are arrested for marijuana possession far more frequently than whites.

18. Call or write to state legislators to require racial impact statements be required for all criminal justice bills. Most states already require fiscal and environmental impact statements for certain legislation. Racial impact statements evaluate if a bill may create or exacerbate racial disparities should the bill become law. Check out the status of your state's legislation surrounding these statements here.

19. Find and join a local "white space" to learn more about and talk out the conscious and unconscious biases us white folks have. If there's not a group in your area, start one.

20. Join or start a Daughters of Abraham

book club in your Church, mosque, or synagogue.

21. Join your local Showing up for Racial Justice (SURJ) group. There is a lot of awesome work going on locally. Get involved in the projects that speak to you.

22. Do deep canvassing about race and racial justice. Many SURJ groups are organizing them, so many people can do it through your local SURJ group. If they're not already doing it, start it.

23. Research your local prosecutors. Prosecutors have a lot of power to give fair sentences or Draconian ones, influence a judge's decision to set bail or not, etc. In the past election, a slew of fair-minded prosecutors were elected. We need more.

24. Call or write to state legislators, federal legislators, and your governor to end solitary confinement in excess of 15 days. It is considered torture by the UN, and it is used more frequently on black and Hispanic prisoners. [For more information on solitary, two good overviews can be found here and here.](#)

25. Watch 13<sup>th</sup>. Better yet, get a group of friends together and watch 13<sup>th</sup>.

26. Watch "The House I Live In." Or get a group of friends together and watch it.

27. Read Ta-Nehisi Coates' article, "The Case for Reparations." The U.S. has already participated in reparations four times. Thank you to Clyanna Blyanna for suggesting this addition.

28. Participate in reparations. [One way is through this Facebook group](#). Remember reparations isn't just monetary – share your time, skills, knowledge, connections, etc. Thank you to Clyanna Blyanna for suggesting this addition.

29. Read *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander. Better yet, get a group of friends together to read it like a book club would – read, then discuss.

30. Read *Caught* by Marie Gottschalk. Better yet, get a group of friends together to read it like a book club would – read, then discuss.

31. Read *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Yep, get a group of friends together to read it like a book club would – read, then discuss.

32. Read *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn. Thank you to Steve Senatori for suggesting this addition.

33. Read *Orange is the New Black*. The information the author shares about the ease with which one can be charged with "conspiracy" to sell drugs, the damage done from long sentences that don't fit the crime due to mandatory minimum sentencing, the ever-present threat of soli-

### 75 Things *continued from previous page*

tary confinement at a Correction Officer's whim, and other specific harmful practices in the prison system are well done. Get a group of friends together to read it like a book club would – read, then discuss.

34. Read *The Color of Law*. Get your friends on board reading it, too.

35. Especially if you or a friend is an educator, read or share bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress*.

36. Read Nikole Hannah-Jones' *The 1619 Project*.

37. Buy books, choose TV shows and movies, and opt for toys for your kids, nieces, nephews, etc. that show people from different races, religions, countries and that teach real American history. A few ideas: the books, toys, and flashcards from #4.

38. Decolonize your bookshelf.

39. Listen without ego and defensiveness to people of color. Truly listen. Don't scroll past articles written by people of color – Read them.

40. Don't be silent about that racist joke. Silence is support.

41. Follow @OsopePatrisse, @opalayo, alicia garza, @bellhooks, Luvvie Ajayi Jones, Melissa Harris-Perry, @VanJones68, @ava, @thenewjimcrow, @Lavernecox, DeRay Mckesson, The DiDi Delgado, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, @dribram, @killermike, Ally Henny on Facebook, and Lace on Race on Facebook. Follow them with the intention of listening and learning only. Pay lesser known activists like The DiDi Delgado here, Ally Henny here, and Lace on Race here for their teaching, time, and work.

42. Follow Blavity, Madame Noir, The Root, and The Griot with a desire to learn and understand better the lives of black Americans.

43. Find out how slavery, the Civil War, and the Jim Crow era are being taught in your local school. Advocate that history is taught correctly and certain parts are not skipped over or barely mentioned. Advocate that many voices be used in the study of history. Is the school teaching about post-Civil War convict leasing, the parent to our current mass incarceration system? Talking about slavery alone, is your school showing images such as Gordon's scourged back, a slave ship hold, and an enslaved nurse holding her young master? Are explorers, scientists, politicians, etc. who are POC discussed? Are male and female authors who are POC on reading lists? Are Japanese internment camps being discussed? Is history explained correctly in history books? As an example of a severe failure to teach the reality of slavery and its ramifications, check out image 1 and

image 2. There are a lot of great resources out there with a little googling, like PBS's resources for teaching slavery, this POC Online Classroom blog, Teaching for Change, and The National Association for Multicultural Education.

44. Arrange for cultural exchanges and cultural ambassadors in your local school's classrooms. The International Classroom program at UPenn and People to People International are options. The Dept. of Education has a good list. Cultural exchanges via the interwebs are very valuable. Actual human interaction between people from different races, religions, and countries (ie: cultural ambassadors) and students in the physical classroom is ideal.

45. Seek out a diverse group of friends for your kids.

46. Seek out a diverse group of friends for you. Practice real friendship and intimacy by listening when POC talk about their experiences and their perspectives. They're speaking about their pain.

47. Watch these videos to hear first hand accounts of what our black brothers and sisters live. Then read everyday people's experiences through the hashtag #realizediwashblack. Then watch the rules Tik Tok user @skoodupcam's mother makes him follow just so he comes home each night. Share with others.

48. If there are black children/teens in your life, contribute to their college savings plans. You can also contribute to an HBCU or to the UNCF. Credit for the idea to @ABPollardIII.

49. Call or write to your national legislators, state legislators, and governor in favor of affirmative action. Encourage friends to do the same.

50. Write to your college/university about implementing all or some of these diversity strategies that effectively promote racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity on campus. Write to the public universities your tax payer dollars support about implementing these diversity strategies.

51. Recognize that in the same way saying "slavery is a necessary evil" (Thomas Jefferson's words) was acceptable by many in 1820, the same way saying "separate but equal" was acceptable by many in 1940, choosing to not condemn white nationalism, the fact that black people are 2.7 times as likely to be killed by police than white people, the fact that unarmed black Americans are roughly five times as likely as unarmed white Americans to be shot and killed by a police officer, that the fact the black imprisonment rate for drug offenses is about 5.8 times higher than it is for whites, etc. are acts of overt racism in

2020.

52. Write to the U.S. Sentencing Commission (PubAffairs@ussc.gov) and ask them to:

- Reform the career offender guideline to lessen the length of sentences.

- Change the guidelines so that more people get probation.

- Change the criminal history guidelines so that a person's criminal record counts against them less.

- Change guidelines to reduce mandatory minimum sentences for non-violent crimes.

- Conduct a study to review the impact of parental incarceration on minor children. With more data, the Commission could modify the Sentencing Guidelines and allow judges to take this factor into account when sentencing individuals for non-violent crimes.

- Conduct a study to review whether the Bureau of Prisons is following the Commission's encouragement to file a motion for compassionate release whenever "extraordinary and compelling reasons" exist.

- Consider amending the guidelines to reduce sentences for first offenders.

53. Read Van Jones' short and to-the-point article about the racial biases of reporters. More examples are here. Check out this article discussing how media coverage of the opioid epidemic – which largely affects suburban and rural whites – portrays it as an outside threat and focuses on treatment and recovery, while stories of heroin in the 1970s, crack-cocaine in the 1980s, and other drug problems that impact urban people of color today have focused on the drug user's morality. Keep an eye out for such biases, and use social media and direct communication to the media outlet to call them out when they occur.

54. Donate to groups that are working to put women of color into elected office, to get out the vote, and to restore voting rights to disenfranchised voters.

55. Know our American history. Watch *Roots*, *12 Years a Slave*, and *Selma*, to name a few.

56. Check out black movies, TV, and other media that show POC as lead characters and in their full humanity. Queen Sugar, Insecure, Dear White People, The Carmichael Show, Blackish, Grownish, Atlanta, 2 Dope Queens, Black Panther, A Wrinkle in Time, Get Out, Girls Trip, Mudbound, How to Get Away with Murder, Scandal, The Cloverfield Paradox, Sorry to Bother You, Blindspotting, BlacKkKlansman, Little, If Beale Street

### 75 Things *continued from previous page*

Could Talk, Queen and Slim, A Black Lady Sketch Show, PBS' Great Performance of Much Ado about Nothing, youtube videos of Amber Says What, and Pose are a few. Share them with friends. In addition, if you can't watch the whole video, watch 13:12 to 15:17 of this discussion about working in Hollywood when you're not white.

57. Know what indigenous land you're living on by looking at this map and research the groups that occupied that land before you did. Find out what local activism those groups are doing and give your money and time to those efforts.

58. When people say that Black Lives Matter is a violent/terrorist group, explain to them that there are fringe groups that are being misrepresented as part of BLM. If conservatives don't want to be lumped in with the KKK, they can't lump violent protesters in with BLM.

59. When people ask, "Why aren't you talking about 'black-on-black crime'?" and other myths about BLM, let Francesca Ramsey help you with those talking points.

60. Stop shopping at Amazon and Whole Foods. They advertise on – that's to say fund – white supremacist media.

61. Be honest about our history. One genocide, another genocide, then apartheid. It sucks, but it's true. We'll never be free from our history unless we're honest about it. Denial is our pathology, but the truth will set us free.

62. If you have a close relationship with a young person of color, make sure he/she knows how much you love them. Love and affirm that child.

63. Write to your city or town government representative to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day like these cities did.

64. Donate to Standing Rock through the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

65. Write to your city or town government representative to divest from banks that are financing the Dakota Access Pipeline, private prisons, and detention centers. Seattle and Davis, CA already did, as well as Los Angeles, and there are campaigns going on in many cities to divest. Start here: <http://howtdivest.org/>

66. Personally divest your investments in private prisons and detention centers. Start here. Many people are divesting from Wells Fargo for their substantial role in Standing Rock and from private prison companies Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), GEO Group, CoreCivic, and G4S.

67. Get your city/town, company, place or worship, etc. to divest from private prisons and detention centers. Since the start of a national prison divestment campaign,

cities like New York and Cincinnati, higher ed institutions, churches, and corporations have divested.

68. Write to your state legislators to end cash bail. It means that someone who is legally innocent is put in jail because they can't afford bail. It means that a defendant can be released pre-trial because of their wealth, not how much of a flight risk they are. It puts more people in detention (which tax payers pay for) and affects a defendant's ability to maintain employment, access mental and physical healthcare, and be in communication with their family and friends, etc. Housing the approximately 500,000 people in jail in the U.S. awaiting trial who cannot afford bail costs U.S. taxpayers \$9 billion a year. Thank you to Elizabeth B. and Cynthia Astle for suggesting this addition.

69. Support organized efforts to end of cash bail by donating to The Bail Project. Bail out a black mother through The National Bail Out. Thank you to Elizabeth B. and Cynthia Astle for suggesting this addition.

70. Attend town halls, candidate meet-and-greets, etc for political candidates and ask about ending mass incarceration, reducing mandatory minimum sentences, reducing or ending solitary confinement, decriminalizing weed, ending cash bail, divesting from private prisons, divesting from banks, divesting from banks that finance the Dakota Access Pipeline, etc.

71. Read this article about an overt white supremacist's son's journey to relinquish white supremacy and watch this video about Daryl Davis, a black man who gets KKK members to disavow by befriending them. For those you know who are overtly racist (see #51), think about ways you can create exposure for them to people who don't look like them, share their religion, etc. Jane Elliott says, "People who are racist aren't stupid, they're ignorant. And the answer to ignorance is education." Frederick Douglass notes, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." It may be best to focus on children, adolescents, and young adults currently being raised by overtly racist parents. Maybe it's tutoring them so they could get on a college track, encouraging them to study abroad, or turning them on to colleges where not everyone looks like them and shares their religion, etc. Maybe it's spending time with them with some regularity and showing them the achievements and beauty of non-white cultures. Be creative.

72. Talk to the white people you know who aren't clearly upset by white supremacy. Use "I" statements and "I care" messages

("I feel [feeling] when you [behavior]"). They need to know you see a problem. Call them out, and call them in. As a start, ask them to watch the videos in #47. For people you know who've been radicalized by FOX News and other nationalist (not conservative) media, who've been so pummeled with fear and hatred of "the other" that they've become ISIS-like towards others, how can you and other family and friends guide them through conversation to show them that their actions are now in direct contrast with the values they feign to purport?

73. A wise former teacher once said, "The question isn't: Was the act racist or not? The question is: How much racism was in play?" So maybe racism was 3% of the motivation or 30% or 95%. Interrogate the question "How much racism was in play?" as you think about an incident. Share this idea with the people in your life when they ask, "Was that racist?"

74. As a nod to #72, don't become the monster, as you try to kill the monster. As Gloria Steinem says, "The ends don't justify the means. The means are the ends."

75. Credit Black men and women. Kara Springer, a black woman artist, created the image/public art that begins this piece. It's called A Small Matter of Engineering, Part II. Christian Campbell tweeted to ensure the art was attributed appropriately and correctly.

## Equality Includes You

Speaking up for humanity through intersectional social...

- BlackLivesMatter
- Racial Justice
- Racial Equality
- United States
- Peace

**Source:** <https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>



Corinne Shutack