

CLIMATE CHANGE CHRONICLE 32

Learning from the Two Wolves

In these chronicles we have been talking about the impact our man-made systems are having on a climate changing world and our need to make choices. There is an old Cherokee story about a grandfather telling his grandson a story about choices.

"A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy. "It is a terrible fight between two wolves. One is evil-filled with anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other is good - filled with joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going on inside of you and inside of every other person".

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked, "Which wolf will win?" The old Cherokee replied, "The one you feed."

In our climate changing world a struggle is going on within many of us. It is about making a choice between the Destroyer Systems and the Healer Systems. Which system will we feed?

The Destroyer Systems are primarily our economic and political systems. For many years we have been feeding them because they seemed to serve us well. But in recent times scientists have been telling us that our systems have turned against us. They are contributing to the destruction of Earth's natural systems we depend upon for our continued existence. Deciding to do nothing about them is to feed them.

Then there are the Healer Systems: individuals and groups who see what is happening to Earth and are battling to change things. They may not have all the solutions or answers but they see the destruction of Earth and they are working for change. They are helping Earth heal itself. These are the ones we must continue to feed with our thinking and support.

But before we get into this fight we must have no illusions about the challenge confronting us. This is a pitched battle that will last for some generations.

The Destroyer Systems are controlled by powerful individuals who are often the chief beneficiaries and will do everything in their power to resist change. But, in our climate changing world we can now see what is really happening. Back in the 70s Pogo aced it. "*We have seen the enemy and the enemy is us.*" So what to do?

We must begin with the grandfather's consciousness within himself and within all of us—the struggle between positive forces and negative forces. Key to this awareness is

a realization that some things we consider “normal” in the world around us are actually abnormal. It is not normal to destroy the things we need for our own survival. Part of this growth in awareness is, of course, an awakening to our own lifestyles and how they might be contributing to the problem instead of helping solve it. Without an awareness of this struggle within us nothing else can happen.

Next, with this awareness we must decide personally what to do, particularly in our own communities where we have some leverage. This begins with some kind of intelligent evaluation about what is happening. We just can't go running around bashing everything. We must learn about systems. We must become systems triage workers—saving the things in existing systems that can be useful, developing alternative systems and transitions.

We can increase our awareness of the effects of climate change through reading and on-line research. We can also learn how other communities around the world are working to deal with it.

We can communicate our concerns to relatives, friends and members of our community. We can support local programs and projects. We can create pressure on our local politicians to take positive action. We can demand that our business leaders take action in terms of the products they are developing and selling.

There is one thing we have learned from the failure of COP 21 agreements and the actions of political leaders like Donald Trump in the U.S. Our “salvation” will not come down from the top. It will only come up from the bottom.

Finally, and most important of all, we must realize that none of us reading this chronicle will see a victory in this battle in our lifetime. We need the long view.

Like the grandfather we must focus on our children, grandchildren and future generations. They are inheriting from us a damaged Earth. In our homes and particularly in our schools and educational institutions we must work to prepare them to become Earth Healers. We must pass on to them what Earth needs, something we failed to give it--restorative justice.

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