

Radical Place, Radical Money, Radical Love

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The premise of this essay is this:

Hurt people hurt other people. And healing people heal people. We humans, perhaps feeling the absence of deep, spiritually nourishing, loving connection in and with society broadly—including non-human species—have, under the guise of self-interest, pursued or tolerated increasingly manipulative and violent ways of hurting others in lieu of healing our own pain. Hurting others hurts ourselves. We humans also have indomitable perseverance and capacity for rising up individually and collectively—as we seek, identify, establish, and pursue purpose, wellness, and liberation. And, naturally, healing ourselves heals others.

This premise is presented through the lenses of time and money, war and the practice of peace. Life elements—such as Air, Earth, Water and tree species such as Pine and Oak—are capitalized herein to honor and show respect to their generosity. The preposition *we* is largely used in preference to the preposition *you* in order to demonstrate inclusiveness in thinking, feeling, and acting as one simple way to pursue healing of our collective pain, not to speak for or on behalf of any other person's individual or collective experience.

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Something happened. Instead of being the caretakers, instead of being the ones recognized by all the other forms of life as caretakers, as the ones who nourish everything else and keep it in balance, now all the other forms of life are afraid of us.

They are afraid that when we come to their homes, their ocean, their forest, their mountain, their desert, that we come only to take something and to destroy their home, destroy their source of food, contaminate. How did this happen? We reversed our original talent, our original gift, into the opposite.

~ Arkan Lushwala

Radical Place

We in the United States live in a moment, in 2025, when the reality of fascism is biting hard at the heels of those who may best know how to live in harmony with self, land, and one another. Families have sought asylum in the United States, decades after their homelands and social networks have been ravaged by the United States' (and other states') plundering disaster capitalism (manufactured disasters in order to profit from "recovery" with long term subjugation of people of the affected land). Displaced people are then vilified as terrorists or "illegals."

We live in an era where natural places—Trees, Rivers, Lakes, Meadows, Habitats alive for thousands of years—were leveled in order to erect market places; an era where even these market places now struggle to survive. To radicalize the place one is from is to explore and understand its roots. The word radical means "proceeding from a root"—and, coincidentally, the name of the square root symbol ($\sqrt{}$) is also "radical."

How might we seek radical understanding of place? How might we seek *the roots of understanding* one another, asylum seekers or not, as resilient human beings who may sometimes need a fresh start? We were taught in U.S. history class that the "founding fathers" and European settlers sailing across the Atlantic 400 years ago were no different. How may we approach difference in a curious way; as something to discover and learn from?

If we seek understanding we may come to discover great depths of compassion. With understanding and compassion, two deeply human qualities of being, we see just how much America has changed in the past 400 years. Seeking asylum today is not a state or Crown sponsored pursuit backed by investment and material support; instead, it is a true life or death pursuit supported by faith alone.

By the end of May 2025, nearly three thousand trucks brimming with enough food to feed one million people for four months had sat idle¹ for three months at the borders of Gaza due to the U.S. sponsored blockade by Israel, intentionally starving millions of Palestinians. In Worcester, Massachusetts, a family was targeted by ICE (Immigration Customs Enforcement) agents resulting in a mother being arrested while holding her three month old grandson, and her teenage daughter being slammed to the ground.² Violent detentions are happening throughout New England and beyond.

The current U.S. president has a modus operandi of bullying everyone. In May 2025 he accused South Africa—the whole country—of murdering white farmers. This behavior is evidence of unaddressed adverse childhood experiences and requires intervention at the highest level. Having respect and empathy for one another, in the way that South Africa stepped up for Palestine in December 2023 by instituting proceedings with the International Court of Justice against Israel alleging violation of the Genocide Convention,³ allows us to take bold courageous action in the midst of injustice.

“In extending our hands across the miles to the people of Palestine, we do so in the full knowledge that we are part of a humanity that is at one”⁴

~ Nelson Mandela, South Africa’s first Black President

George Orwell said the best synonym for “fascist” was “bully.”⁵ Hannah Arendt, well known for connecting the dehumanization and racial extermination of Native Americans by European imperialists to Nazism and the Holocaust, stated that colonialism was the seedbed of fascism. Arendt claimed that critical thinking can resist evil and the demand of thought is to defend the status of being human.⁶

Can we think critically about what it means to be human? Can we get to the roots of epigenetic traumas, notions of nuclear family supremacy and unresolved conflicts at the highest weave of our societal fabric? Can we look deeply into why bullying happens—on the individual or international level—rather than increasing our dissociation?

Maybe it helps to reflect on the roots of place and people. Gaza, first known as Tell es-Sakan, was founded in 3300 BCE. That’s a long time ago. That’s a lot of history and relationship to land. The ancestors of Wampanoag people have inhabited the lands of southeastern Massachusetts since the North American glacier began its retreat over 10,000 years ago. That’s also a lot of history and relationship to land.

Wars are often fought over resources—land and extractive potential of metal and mineral thereupon. Lauren Benton, history professor at Yale and author of, *They Called It Peace: Worlds of Imperial Violence*, seeks to banish all violence and tolerance for violence. Benton traces the profitability of war alongside dehumanization of those living in non-ownership with the land—from the Crusades throughout the 9th C. and 15th C., to the 1522 creation of “Garrison Empires” or households populated by 60,000 women stolen from Morocco, to the legalization of imperial violence in 1758 with Emer de Vattel’s authorship of *The Law of Nations*. We have been acculturated toward war yet war murders culture.

American taxes have paid for over \$30 billion in weapons, like 2,000 pound bombs, that Israel has used to bomb homes and hospitals in Gaza. Shortly after this current U.S.-funded Israeli war on Palestine began October 7, 2023, articles popped up linking it to state desires for the 3 billion barrels worth of oil off the coast and under the occupied West Bank.⁷ This, despite nearly 9 million people a year dying from breathing the fine particulate matter resulting from the burning of fossil fuels.⁸ We know climate change is untenable and that the sixth extinction is upon us; we also know wars are man-made. This essay explores a few roots of money and power in order to more carefully hold the notion that addictions to money and power are what prevent us from right action—right in relationship to land and the common good.

It is not so hard to sense that the present global and regional violences and violations of and against humanity are echoes of the “inconvenient” presence of Native Americans as Europeans settled North America or of Jews throughout Europe holding disparate cultural beliefs that didn’t assimilate well into homogenized thought and economics in Nazi Germany. These are extremes of hurt amplified and magnified not healed. Looking back to hard truths, especially in community, builds in us the fortitude and capacity to look forward with greater perspective and imagination.

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So how did we get here?

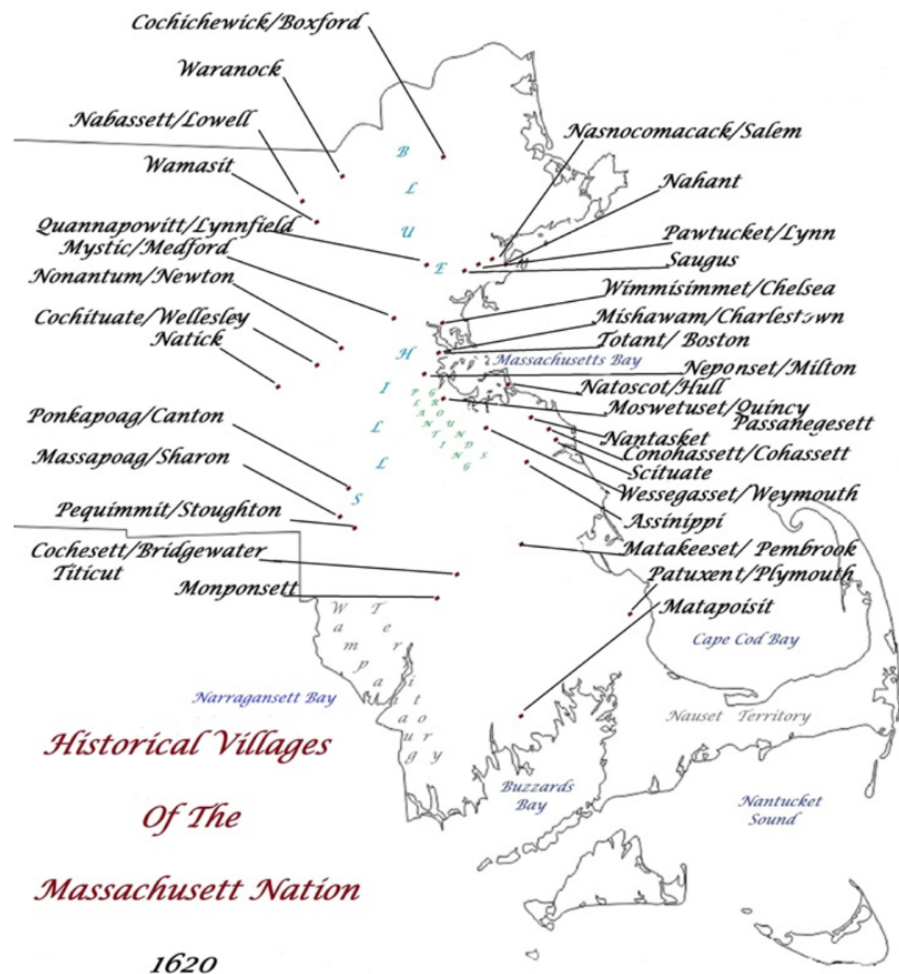
Given that numerous tribal nations of Turtle Island (North America) were living in kinship and right relationship with lands, coined “New England” by Captain John Smith, and have continued to navigate the sophisticated settler-colonial manipulation of law, covenant, treaty, and worded forms of negotiation over more than four hundred years, a few historical details are included here for perspective.

Turtle Island (Isla Tortuga in Spanish) is a name for North America based on a creation story several Indigenous peoples share. In one detailed story (horribly abbreviated here), a great flood threatens all life following a big fight between humans over magical powers. At the top of a cedar tree at the top of a mountain, in the midst of despair, Turtle volunteers to hold the remaining animals and grow food on its back. They cooperate and the turtle grows and grows and grows until all are safe.

Census data from the *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957* shows that in 1630 there were about 4600 Europeans living in the six colonies: Virginia, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Massachusetts and Plymouth (Plymouth wasn’t acquired by Massachusetts until 1691). In 1640 the population, with land occupation spreading to what became named Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Maryland, rose to over 26,000 and in ten years almost doubled to over 50,000 by 1650 with another colony named Delaware.

Here is a map of the pre-colonial Massachusetts tribal nation, along with brief details of the impact colonization had on this, the Wampanoag, and Delaware nations.

The Massachusetts Nation⁹ alone had 32 historical villages in 1620 from what is now Salem to Plymouth and west to Worcester. They began to recover from plagues brought by European goods traders just as the English Invasion began. An evangelist named John Elliot learned the Massachusetts language, translated the Christian bible and advocated for “his Praying Indians” in the villages of Natick and Ponkapoag. These two “Praying Indian Towns” or plantations were all that remained thirteen short years later in 1633 after the Massachusetts people were cheated and killed off their lands and their wise Chief Chickataubut was murdered.



Today the Massachusetts Tribal Nation is led by nine elected directors and four officers on the Massachuset-Ponkapoag Tribal Council¹⁰. The Native Americans who first encountered the English in Plymouth have lived in southeastern Massachusetts for more than 10,000 years. And in the early 17th century there were approximately 12,000 members of the Wampanoag nation among 40 villages. According to a settler colonist website, by the end of the 17th century, due to waves of epidemics and war, only 400 Wampanoag remained. The Wampanoag Nation is comprised of five tribal bands including Herring Pond, Mashpee, Aquinnah (or Gay Head), Namasket, and Assonet.¹¹ The [Delaware Tribe](#) (Lenape) were forced to give up their homelands and are now largely in Oklahoma.



The Massachusetts Bay Colony took the name of the land and created a state seal with an image of a disembodied sword held over a native man. This name and image continues to be brandished on the state seal. Decades of effort to redesign the seal had a legislative victory in 2021 but this change to remove the threatening sword over the head of a Native American man still remains. At the last state hearing on this issue, the Massachusetts tribal leader who testified suggested the seal image be changed to something like the tree of life. He, as a representative of another nation, should have been invited to testify first; instead, he was called on last.

The text of the original seal below reads, "The name of this State, probably arose from the name of a tribe of Indians formerly at Barnstable, or from two Indian words, *mas*, signifying an *Indian arrow-head*, and *wetuset*, a bill." The State motto, *Ease*, etc., means, By his sword he seeks the calm repose of liberty."

The word Massachusetts is an Algonquin Indian word which roughly translates to

"*large hill place*" or "*at the great hill*." In the Native language the word is spelled *massa-adchues-et*, where "*massa*" means "*large*," "*adchu*" means "*hill*," "*es*" is a diminutive suffix and "*et*" is a locative suffix that identifies a place. The word specifically refers to the Great Blue Hill in Milton, Massachusetts which is an ancient volcano that was last active over 400 million years ago.¹²

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Some say that Europeans carried moral injury to Turtle Island and, as hurt people do, hurt the Indigenous people they encountered in insidious and abhorrent, dehumanizing ways. Pat McCabe, or Weyakpa Najin Win (Woman Stands Shining), is a global voice for peace dedicated to many things—including addressing the Archetypal Wounding that occurred in colonizers' misunderstanding and abuse of Indigenous technology—in prayer, ceremony and science. Pat

believes that Earth Creator remembers all time and energy and that the only currency is courageous generosity.

Later in this essay, in the section titled Radical Love, we explore some of the ways this moral injury can be named, embodied, inspected and explored in community, transmuted into new story, and healed with and for European American ancestors across time. This is the healing work needed to address cultural harms. Much can be learned through Hospicing Modernity and Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures.¹³

We have been taught that fear of religious persecution is what led the first puritans to America. And we know that this fear was paid forward egregiously in their religious persecution of the people well established on Turtle Island. What most of us didn't learn in school alongside the first Thanksgiving fable is that the Massachusetts Bay Colony settlement in Boston was founded by a lawyer (John Winthrop) funded by King Charles and the opportunistic waves of puritans who shared the same religious beliefs as the protestant Church of England. To uproot oneself, one's family as subsequent waves of English and French and Dutch colonists did, indicates a lack of connection to or kinship with land and a sense that adventure and profit opportunity outweigh one's rootedness to place.

If we study Native American history, we know that a primary cultural clash occurred when colonizers introduced the foreign notion of exchanging goods for land. To this day far too many European Americans have yet to appreciate the cultural understanding and life ways aligned with non-ownership of land. When we experience the essence of land (and plants and animals) as our Mother, our Father, our kin, it is inconceivable to think it can be owned.

In an Indigenous culture a human sees the animal and, simultaneously, sees that he or she is being seen. There's a mutual recognition not only with animals but with plants, rocks, everything... It's the principles of living within the affordances of a place, the ceremonies of gratitude and remembering, and the awareness that everything is alive.

We have to learn to embody these principles in our own unique places.

~ Suzanne Simard, author, Finding the Mother Tree

This irreconcilable difference led to "deals" like the 12 miles square (144 miles) known as Naquag—now the four towns named Barre, Rutland, Paxton and Oakham, Massachusetts—being "traded" with Indians Ooseph Trask, aka Puagastion, Job, aka Pompamamay, Simon Piticom aka Wananapan, Sassawannow, and James Wiser aka Qualipunit, and executed as a deed on December 22, 1686 to Henry Willard, Joseph Rowlandson, Joseph Foster, Benjamin Willard, and Cyprian Stevens for 23 pounds sterling.¹⁴

And in 1651, Massachusetts General Court grants 2,000 acres (3.125 square miles or ~ 10 miles) of land in the Dedham Grant to English missionary John Eliot for the establishment of a Puritan mission, or "Praying Town." Qualalanset, aka John Speen, and family also gave up title [remember this is a culturally bizarre and foreign notion] to parts of the land now known as "Natick" to John Eliot. Sometime later they also agree to live in the mission. The community is classified as a "plantation" by the Massachusetts General Court. It was called "Natick," a Nipmuc

term that many scholars agree means “my land.”¹⁵ Deeds for Concord (not as in “conquered,” as in agreement), Lancaster and other places had such arrangements negotiated throughout New England. Experts indicate the Native Americans may have made some of these arrangements with the intent of coexisting or sharing the land, receiving payment as a form of gratitude.

From the Southern Essex district registry of deeds website, we read, “In 1687, Native American deeds were as used legal evidence by the Colonists to prove their right of ownership to the land, claimed by King Charles as part of his dominion (the Dominion of New England), when he revoked the [Massachusetts Bay] Colony’s patent. This was one of the colonist’s first outward expressions of independence from the Crown, ninety years before the American Revolution. In 1692, a new Charter for the Colony was issued by King William & Queen Mary, which, subsequently, suppressed this fear.”¹⁶ Fear of having deceived the king makes sense. What could have been “offered” in negotiations with a new king in order to continue the colony?

The cultural clash turned physical after decades of unfairness became untenable. The encroachments of animals at the edges of coexistence, the abuses of land by settlers, perhaps akin to seeing one’s mother Earth unremorsefully and repeatedly ravaged, brought Native Americans together to resist and revolt. The First Indian War, also known as King Philip’s War—named after the English name Philip given to grand sachem Massasoit’s son Metacomet—forever changed the relations between “red” and “white” men.

One stark example explains that statement. Despite the unkind and manipulative lengths humans will go when feeling fear collectively, such as the English getting friendly with any Native Americans exhibiting the potential to war against other Native Americans, what happened to “King” Philip, who had become grand sachem after his father’s death and brother Wamsutta’s murder, was inconceivable. Philip was betrayed and shot by an English man named John Alderman. Philip’s body was beheaded and quartered and Alderman was given one of his hands as a trophy. If that wasn’t enough, Philip’s head was displayed prominently on a pole in Plymouth for 25 years.¹⁷ This story is a deep root of Massachusetts’ history.

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In 1972, a four mile long caravan of over 200 Native tribes from 25 states drove from St. Paul Minnesota to Washington D.C. to present “The Trail of Broken Treaties” position paper. The manifesto demanded legal recognition of treaties, restoration of the treaty-making process, the return of 110 million acres of Native land to Indigenous communities and the reform of federal-tribal relations.¹⁸

In 2025, after centuries of broken agreements—“good faith” treaties signed between a Native nation and the nation of the United States—U.S. funding of basic necessities for Federally recognized Indigenous Nations is being revoked. Aaron Payment, member and former chairperson of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and former first vice president of the National Congress of American Indians has this to say:

“The 574 tribes across the nation seeded over 2 billion acres of land in exchange for health, education and social welfare into perpetuity. What we receive is [already] pennies on the dollar of what we exchanged. It’s not welfare. It is not reparations and it’s not because of the poor Indians. We prepaid in full for every penny that we receive.”¹⁹ Payment continues to explain that Indian Health Services only reaches 55% of tribal needs for 50,000 people, and that the reality of indiscriminate proposed cuts is likely to be over \$2.5 billion—or 30-40% less than the [1800s Marshall Trilogy] treaty and trust obligation. This, after a 40% proposed cut from Trump 1.0. “Donald Trump ... seems to be purposely testing the Waters to see how far he can go down the path of an autocratic society. ... Citizens United and the money that makes its way into the [lobbying] processes, is a bastardization of the American democracy. And it should be fixed. It needs to be fixed.”

The way of beauty is squeezed out of us over the empty, unsatiable, desperation for money. Unconscionable suffering arises with and through ugly distortions of power. Power is a fuel and a sensory perception that a dominant source or group of humans has over another. Power in human form has been defined through the creation of classes and categories in order to separate those defining power from those too inconvenient to collaborate and share power with. White, class, “power over” has supplanted the beauty of “power with” as a way of being through the lenses of money and economies.

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“Why try to control Earth when you can work with her? Why hoard for your own species when you can live to serve all life around you? Why put plants and animals into farms and cages when you can simply make a home for them, and they come to you? Many people think that we followed the buffalo when, in fact, they followed our fire.”²⁰

~ Lyla June, Diné warrior, artist, activist

Radical Money

Once European settlers had a toehold, they set to felling trees to build homes, open up fields, and make money. White Pine was “the first gold that New Englanders struck,” the naturalist Donald Culross Peattie wrote in the seminal 1950 text, *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America*.²¹

What follows such a “boon” or salacious opportunity where large scale money or opportunity is identified is numerous businesses emerge to vie for said money. White Pine ‘as wide as a man is tall’ came down and sawmills sprung up, as early as 1620. Alongside the chasing of more and more stands of Pine down the coast of Maine, Oak was identified to be valuable for building ships and making barrels, tannin-rich Hemlock excited the tanneries, and hardwoods were burned for fuel all the way down to Boston.

By the late 18th century high-value trees were all but gone from Maine. But harvesting continued because a new technology for making paper out of wood pulp instead of cotton emerged. Then trucks replaced draft horses to carry trees out of the forest. Then the chainsaw was invented, then the mechanical skidder. And monocropping became commonplace, preventing the forests innate collegiality and diversity, in the late 20th century.

After 400 years only 10,000 acres, one twentieth of one percent, of an original 18 million acres of unbroken Maine forest remains intact. From 2001 to 2023, the interdependent species living in the United States lost 47.9 Mha of habitat in and among trees (or 118.5 million acres) which is a full 17% decrease in tree cover since 2000.²² How do we start the healing of trees, which all life depends upon, when we cannot seem to stop the harm?

In The SUN article, *The Great Reckoning: Eileen Crist on the Consequences of Human Plunder*, we receive the author's deep dive into the reality of the present collapse of the web of life, the "sixth extinction," which will take 5 to 10 million years to recover from. Crist asserts that "as long as human supremacy prevails, humanity will remain unable to muster the will to scale down and pull back the burgeoning human enterprise that is unraveling Earth's biological wealth.

When we drive a species to extinction, we're prematurely taking out of existence a unique, amazing manifestation of life that has never existed before and will never arise again, and we're extinguishing all possibilities of its evolution into new forms. "Superkilling" is a good way to put it. Killing an individual is one thing, but killing a species—let alone 50 percent of the species on the planet—is something else entirely. It's murder that reverberates farther than we can see or imagine.

The other side of the coin has to do with expansionism—the colonization of everything, the humanization of the planet. What we're seeing is a population of 7.8 billion *Homo sapiens*, along with the billions of livestock and cultivated plants that feed us; some token wild species that are kept in restricted spaces and whose numbers are tightly managed; and some species that can parasitize our way of life. And the human monoculture continually replaces landscapes with constructed environments. All told, it's a crisis of domination."²³

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If the love of money is the root of all evil, as is taught in the bible, chapter 1 verse 6:10 in the book of Timothy, how do we stop loving money and the illusion of power it affords? (And for those who are inclined to get semantic about scripture sources and the difference between "a" root or "the" root, let's instead attend to the aforementioned impacts which short-sighted, separatistic actions continue to have on all species).

Louisa May Alcott famously said that yes, "money is the root of all evil, and yet it is such a useful root that we can't get on without it any more than we can without potatoes." Money is simply a

vehicle, a way to exchange this for that with greater ease than lugging bags of potatoes around to exchange for, say, a medical exam. But when we identify with money in quantity, in flow, and in how we feel using it, money becomes imbued with entirely personal and emotional qualities.

The etymology of the word money has a story going back to 344 BCE in Roman times. The goddess Juno—the protector of women and the state—had a temple erected on a hill where money was coined and precious metals may have been minted and stored. Juno’s title or surname, Moneta, is said to be rooted in the word *monere*—to advise or admonish—and to also refer to the minting of coin.

The Great Silk Road (or ‘Royal Road’), traversed and assessed for Italy and the West in 1271 by Marco Polo, was an important trade route from China to Turkey and Iran (formerly Lydia and Persia). The first coin currency is said to have been invented in Sardis, Turkey²⁴ where archaeologists, funded by Harvard and Cornell Universities, unearthed in 1958 a gold refinery²⁵ dating from the sixth century BCE.²⁶ The Greek drachma emerged a century later. But the shekel dates back to around 3,000 BCE as a unit of weight and then became coin and the currency of the Israelite kingdoms in the 10th century BCE.

Shekel, from the Hebrew root šql, means “to measure.” The word drachma is “coined” as “to grasp [no more than] what fits in one’s palm.”²⁷

Money as a form of exchange was dependent on collective literacy, the ability to manipulate numbers, and the combination to standardize measures and track resources. Despite the coin unit of shekels in Mesopotamia, their value was controlled by the temples, not transferrable or available to the populace. Money as a notion, as a tool, requires the existence of a universally accepted abstract economic value in order for widespread use and transferability.

Steve McAllister, author of *In the Time Before Money*, notes that even though humans began painting on cave walls at about 38,000 BC, the written word did not come into play until about 3,100 BC, a time when, “the female’s ability to create life from the womb merited much greater respect from the human species, resulting in a more maternalistic worldview than what has since developed through the inherent paternalism of the Judeo/Christian/Islamic traditions.”²⁸

According to content from the University of Victoria Anthropology course, *The Time Before Money*²⁹, money was created 5,000 years ago (about the same time as words) by state institutions. Further, any telling of the history of money benefits banks by associating it with other commodities or natural products rather than the instrument of public welfare as a social relation of debt that it actually is. Course educators Hudson and Martin, assert that money is a human creation not a nature creation or a nature economy.

When did the aphorism of “time is money” achieve its stranglehold on our collective consciousness? About the time when Benjamin Franklin, inventor of the printing press, wrote an essay called “Advice to a Young Tradesman.” Remember Juno Moneta and the advice this goddess gave to protect women and state? It seems that “moneta” or strategic advice given by

Juno to the Roman people, which then became associated with advice about use of currency, was, with Ben Franklin, further stretched out to link money with advice about one's use of time.

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*The struggle for justice should never be abandoned because of the apparent overwhelming power of those who have the guns and the money and who seem invincible in their determination to hold on to it. The future is an infinite succession of 'presents,' and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.*³⁰

~ Howard Zinn, author, historian, WWII veteran

To bring the roots of money to the United States, and of interest to those living in the colonized states of New England, The New England Historical Society states³¹, “Easy money is perhaps New England’s least famous contribution to humanity.” They go on to describe how 50,000 Massachusetts puritans [those who wished to “purify” the Church of Roman Catholic traditions], numbering far fewer than the financial centers of Amsterdam and London, began the move to easy money by adopting three “official” currencies: English silver coins, grains, and beaver furs. Then, as the mood and self-interest struck, items like lead bullets and wampum—an oyster shell carved trade vehicle of Native Americans—became legal tender.

“Colonists were remarkably adept at dealing with numerous coins of different values and weights. About half the coins were Spanish (mostly minted in Mexico) silver dollars. For 400 years, the standard Mexican dollar contained a specific amount of silver. From 1601 to 1816, a troy ounce of silver was worth 5s. [shillings] 2d. [pence] at the official English rate, making a standard Spanish dollar worth 4s. 6d.”³²

Plymouth Colony was founded by the Plymouth Company (70 investors financed as a joint stock company in 1606 by King James I) with an agreement to finance a journey to North America for religious freedom seeking pilgrims from farming communities in Yorkshire, England and Leiden, Holland—in exchange for goods they would harvest and send back to England. About half of the Mayflower voyagers died of cold or starvation. The colony with those who survived was acquired by the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691.³³

The Massachusetts Bay Colony charter was confirmed on February 27, 1629—and its legal name changed from the New England Company to “the Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England.” This colony was settled by non-separatist puritans (not seeking religious freedom). Boston became its capital in 1632. Brooks, author of The History of Massachusetts blog notes the Massachusetts Bay Colony was chartered with the intent “to reduce or convert his people to submission.” Those who didn’t follow along were excommunicated, including known historical figures Anne Hutchinson, Thomas Hooker, and Roger Williams.³⁴

No one welcomes the experience of receiving someone else's moral admonishment. Yet reading colonial documents it is easy to find numerous instances of preacher and esquire authority figures pontificating about what is right and just for all others. The consequences that reverberate from this throughout North America include every facet of enslavement of humans—subject daily to great indignities and harm—such as forced sterilization and boarding schools and subsequent deaths to Indigenous children who resisted assimilation, strong in their own faith, their own ways, their teachings from their parents and ancestors.

This essay does not delve into what is right or wrong, legal or illegal. It does raise the concern of people being perceived and treated as if they could be illegal, which is a common theme of war (physical and psychological) across time.

Massachusetts was the first colony to legalize slavery in 1641, one short year after the Massachusetts Bay Colony's southern and western borders were established. By 1644, "Boston merchants began importing slaves directly from Africa, selling them in the West Indies, and bringing home sugar to make rum initiating the so-called triangular trade. Samuel Maverick in 1642 is known as the first slaveholder in Boston. By 1696 the British Parliament revoked the monopoly held by the Royal African Company, enabling Massachusetts merchants and shipmasters to engage freely in the slave trade."³⁵ This continued legally through 1781 when two slaves, Quock Walker and Mum Bett, sued the Commonwealth and won given the state's 1780 Constitution asserting all men are born free and equal.

Despite what we may have learned in history class, we know slavery existed in the North—how else could all of those textile mills (many owned by the Lowell family of Boston) be so profitable and not be complicit in the uncompensated labors of cotton harvesting? The 2020s are seeing histories and the dominant narratives that have continued to play out across time being challenged and broadened at unprecedented levels despite the political risks involved.

"Early benefactors who gave money to Brown and Harvard universities, for instance, made their fortunes running slave ships to Africa and milling cotton from plantations in the American South," writes Stephen Smith and Kate Ellis in [Shackled Legacy: Universities and the Slave Trade](#). While Ta-Nehisi Coates, who has written powerfully about the African American experience, argues that the university—indeed all higher education institutions with historic links to slavery—needs to make reparations. "I don't know how you conduct research that shows that your very existence is rooted in a great crime and shrug, say you're sorry and just walk away."

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In 1652 Massachusetts became the only colony to open a mint, 10 years after recognizing Spanish and Dutch coins to encourage their imports. But, in the late 1670s, King Charles II viewed Massachusetts' independent mint as treasonous and it was shut down in 1682, just as a private bank started in Boston by issuing banknotes backed by land titles rather than coins.



It was during this mid-17th century period, to encourage immigration, that land was “granted” free or nearly free.³⁶ Three quarters of colonists were farmers and each typically had over 100 acres. Because land ownership after tenancy or after a few years of indenture was virtually impossible in Europe, the opportunity to acquire property is what attracted over 50,000 colonists by 1650.

By paying ministers and other officials in “free” land, colonists in government were able to keep taxes low. Low taxes, often paid in tobacco, were incentive for more Europeans to keep coming to America. Beyond tobacco, official value for payment of taxes included other locally produced crops, animal skins and Native wampum. With respect to tobacco and sundries exchanged for taxes, their values became discounted by the colonists as “country pay” to account for costs of storage, shipping, and losses. But as colonists also paid their taxes with tobacco, they shipped their worst, nearly unmerchantable products back to the Crown and other colonial treasurers.³⁷

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*Trees have complex lives. They know what their neighbors are doing.
They communicate with them through these webs of fungal filaments that travel through the soil. They also communicate by sending off chemicals through the air.
And so they're in this constant conversation, helping each other out.
We are so similar to forests. We can learn from the forest—that they're caring societies.
They look after each other.
They're about their relationships. Through these relationships, they're able to heal themselves, heal their families, and heal their communities—just like we do.*

~ Janine Benyus, author, *The Forgotten Wisdom of Nature*

Humans are not trees. We may have complex lives and know what our neighbors are doing, we may care deeply about one another, but we are often dissociated from the roots of our connections. And we are more connected digitally than we are chemically, like the trees. How may we take instruction from the mycelial networks throughout the Earth—allowing ourselves to be compelled toward one another?

Many of us have exchanged social media time for in real life connection time. Americans spend up to 93% of our time indoors, often connected to devices while present with one another. We

know this is bad for our brains, and Frances Haugen, a Facebook whistleblower, told the world about their algorithmic strategic plan to drive our addiction to screens and police our every move.

The Hemisphere Project (aka Data Analytical Services) is a massive Office of National Drug Control Policy database providing 26 years' worth of phone record data on any person upon law enforcement request. Four billion data points are added every day. Brendan McQuade, a professor of criminology at University of Southern Maine, has written on historical capitalism, "capital was formed through a manhunt for pliant laborers and it was the police powers of the state that organized this hunt. It's the witch hunts in both Europe and Americas that Silvia Federici wrote about, the slave trade and the lynch mobs and pogroms that historically have kept marginalized groups at the bottom of different societies. It's the perpetual police-war against 'the criminal element.'"

McQuade seeks to address police power in *Pacifying the Homeland: Intelligence Fusion and Mass Supervision*, and gives a vision for moving beyond divesting and reinvesting by inviting us to [rethink social services](#) "on terms that explicitly challenge the basic social relations that police power, in its myriad forms, maintains: private property, the commodity form, and the wage relation. In other words, the positive project of abolition would require a 'reinvestment' in care and reconstruction of the commons."

The International Labor Organization dubbed 2024 the year of the care economy. But care industries like child care, elder care, home care, are "reproductive labor" industries. These are in direct contrast to extractive industries that steal resources from future generations in order to deliver stock options to those of us still addicted to money and the emotional fix it promises.

Many alternatives to money exist. Alternatives that do not have the ugly, obfuscated underbelly that money in New England and beyond has. There are numerous free marketplaces online, often town by town. There has been great effort made in time trading and time banking. There are seed banks and clothing swaps, and gift economies, sliding scales, and community land trusts. There are great networks of mutual aid, cooperative and solidarity economies, and models like donut economics and gross national happiness. And as we reconstruct the commons, we demand Land Back into right relationship with all life.

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One way we may be trying to reconstruct the commons is by understanding our genealogical roots. Asking ourselves from where and which people have we come? Who ... and what ... places us; roots us to place? In what ways did ancestors come together in ritual, ceremony, gratitude? This is a courageous endeavor when approached with curiosity and desire to understand the roots—the joys and pains of what ancestors may have experienced; may have lost. What have we lost, to law and money, and time?

An estimated 70 million people worldwide claim Irish descent including 45 million Americans who identify “Irish” as their primary ethnicity.³⁸ This is more than 10% of the U.S. population and offers an interesting example of radical—root—excavation.

Former president of Ireland Mary Robinson, in the 1990s through her 1995 *Cherishing the Irish Diaspora*³⁹ address to the Joint Houses of the Oireachtas, popularized the notion of the Irish Diaspora. For five centuries, British penal laws in Ireland forced the removal of ancient trees (so the Irish couldn’t hide), persecuted religious practice and education, and began controlling food supplies before the Great Potato Famine led to the loss of 1.5 million of the total 8.5 million lives in Ireland. Trees were kin to the Irish as they were to Native Americans; removing the Irish rainforest was a genocide.

Numerous historians point to deliberate British policy as the root of Irish mass starvation but few go to the lengths of describing the Great Famine or the clear-cutting of forests as genocide⁴⁰. During the 19th century, most genealogical records were repulped as the source of paper had been lost⁴¹. And the Irish in the mid to late 19th century accounted for 25% of the population in Boston⁴² despite being unwelcome intruders upon a closed, hierarchical society until well into the 20th century.

90 million “trees” have been created on Ancestry.com and six million of their customers have taken Ancestry DNA tests. Ancestry.com, purchased by the investment group Blackstone for \$4.7 billion in 2020, also notes⁴³ that genealogy is the second most popular hobby in the United States after gardening.

In the past couple of years, the librarian like accuracy sought by most ancestral record keepers has been overshadowed by experimentation to expand reach using artificial intelligence. Amazon leads the technofeudalism game with facial recognition and the mantra of Chat GPT gives the illusion that what was once a multi-generational storyline can become a quick dopamine fix when you learn you’re (maybe) cousins with Beethoven. A few Native Americans like Michael and Carolyn Running Wolf and Vanessa Andreotti offer deep insights about AI grounded in cultural preservation.

Maya Jasanoff of The New Yorker published, in May 2022, research about the “twisted roots” of genetics with this hobby of genealogy, including the vault of millions of reels of genealogical documents on microfilm held seven hundred feet below tunnels blasted six hundred feet into the rock of a Salt Lake City, Utah mountainside. These records, Jasanoff notes, is about 25% of all vital records on Earth.

With 23andMe forming a DNA travel partnership with Airbnb—valued at \$3.5 billion—and doing more than Ancestry.com’s share of the 30 million people who have *paid* to have their DNA tested *and stored*, 23andMe is leading in the modern era of genetics. It is not difficult to imagine the upper echelon of certain pharmaceutical elites rubbing their hands together in glee dreaming of ways to lay these hands on a windfall of genetic data.

If you don't want to pay to create your family tree you can use the Mormon FamilySearch.org for free. A billion of volunteer-indexed records were digitized by FamilySearch in 2013. How does FamilySearch.org provide such services for free? Well, if a DNA travel partnership is worth \$3.5 billion, their partnership with a genetic-testing firm in the early 2000s was a modern path to easy money.

Jasanoff writes, "While middle-class white Americans looked for lineal connections to a national origin story embodied in 'first settlers' and 'Founding Fathers,' Mormons began conducting proxy baptisms of ancestors who had died before the origin of the Church. By the mid 1840s, when the nation's first genealogical organization was founded, in Boston, Mormons had performed more than 15,000 proxy baptisms, including at least four for George Washington."

A French minister of foreign affairs, Alexis de Tocqueville, stated in 1840 that "you hardly meet an American who does not want to be connected a bit by his birth to the first settlers of the colonies." Nathaniel Hawthorne, an American contemporary of his, asserted his truth that, "once in every half century, at longest, a family should be merged into the great, obscure mass of humanity, and forget all about its ancestors" as a way of mitigating the exclusionary, elitist tendencies underlying the desire to claim enviable pedigree—for better or worse.

~ ~ ~

Radical Love

*Pain is just the other side of love.
And if you try to anesthetize yourself then you numb your whole psyche.
And that is boring, and ineffective.*

~ Joanna Macy, author, founder of the Work That Reconnects

Organizations like Comrades in Education, Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), and Nature Evolutionaries, can attest that European Americans are wanting the moral injury⁴⁴—the harm and hard truths of the past—to be named, embodied, inspected and explored in community. We seek to transmute the past into new story, and heal with and for one another, including our ancestors, across time. That desire is 90% of the work.

Tema Okun, an anti-racist educator and author of *The Emperor Has No Clothes*, developed an often cited list of characteristics or behaviors people exhibit within white supremacy culture—along with antidotes. The following white supremacy culture characteristics has been adapted from Okun's work⁴⁵ and that of Undoing Whiteness and Oppression at Brooklyn Zen Center:

Fear	One Right Way	Paternalism	Perfectionism	Defensiveness and
Denial				
Quantity over Quality	Worship of the Written Word			Either/Or Binary thinking
	Fear of Open Conflict	Individualism		Progress is More
	Expectation of Comfort		and Urgency.	

The phrase “white supremacy,” and words on this list, might make us bristle. This phrase does not mean white people are supreme or better than any other racialized human, it means that institutions of extractive power have banded together to convey an alternative reality and place a definition on low melanin skinned people that has been collectively internalized and insufficiently inspected.

If we are light skinned, have low melanin, pass as white, or claim whiteness as a badge of honor, we have experienced skin privilege. That can be hard to accept if we have had a really hard past, but it is true. This privilege has been baked into law for centuries. It began with the land grants mentioned above. Actually, it began with the idea that white people can dominate land. Even so, there are roots of suffering to the perpetuation of any harm; our healing work is to understand them.

*Being a revolutionary is about going back to our ancestral ways,
looking up at the stars for guidance.*

~ Kazu Haga

Kazu Haga, author of *Fierce Vulnerability*, writes about the word revolution in the context of remembering a time before dominance or human supremacy. Revolution comes from the Latin *revolvere*, meaning to turn or roll back, and the Old French word *révolution*, which refers to the revolution of celestial bodies. Our ancestors of long ago spent decades gazing up at the stars and noticing day to day, month to month shifts in the stars. This study, this relationship building, gave rise to knowledge, grown generation after generation, applied in navigating oceans and planting crops. Haga asks, “do we become revolutionaries or do we continue down the material way toward destruction?”

Haga also teaches Kingian Nonviolence—as in the principles lived by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.. A revolutionary aspect in living nonviolence is to understand the difference between the absence of violence represented by the hyphenated word non-violence and the non-hyphenated word nonviolence which represents the practice of living nonviolently. We can be calm while watching violence happen and be technically non-violent. We cannot be a dispassionate bystander and practice nonviolence. This includes being nonviolent with self.

Going to the roots of, and being radical about, hurt and healing is a choice that is supported by an understanding that emotions—energy in motion throughout the body—are alive to serve and inform. Emotions cannot kill us if we listen to them. Diana Beresford Kroger, a renown

scientist, author, and keeper of ancient Brehon Irish law⁴⁶, informs us of the traditional Irish understanding and ways of speaking about emotions as something we wear for a time; until we're done wearing them for a time. Not letting them get stuck is important.

Fear or sadness or anger or even joy in the body can be very hard to discern or detect, especially when or as we grow in our sophistication to mask or bury any hint of it. We become unwilling at first and then unable to identify what is happening inside the body. This pattern can lead us to believe we are "fine" and all put together even under extreme duress. We put up with chronic repetitive motions good for neither the body nor the spirit and only complain about aches and pains rather than the underlying conditions leading us to tolerate such treatment.

Tears are Waters in very similar composition to Oceans. We have Ocean within us. Tears purify the mind, cleansing the feeling which helped the tears to pool up, and flow out of the eyes. Letting them flow is the key to receiving the gift of clarity that follows. And feeling safe is the key to allowing tears. If the idea of going to the beach fills the body with a sense of peace, we can go to the beach within, in our minds and memories, for this peace.

We begin with self-reflection; by noticing how we think about the ebbs and flows of energy in our own bodies. Do we judge emotion as bothersome, annoying, a deterrent to productivity—because time is money? If so, we also ascribe that judgment to others who may be in good relation to their ebbs and flows of energy. Do we believe we might fall apart if we were to allow *deep-seeded* feelings to arise?

This and similar obstacles of thought—thought knots—will stop energetic flows. If we only ebb with energy, pretty soon the emotional signals and flows grow so faint we may come to believe big feelings are for other people, that we don't need or have feelings.

The judgments and the beliefs that "those people with feelings" are bad, wrong, and deterrents to productivity, have played out in society over so many years that social sciences have tracked their progression and escalation. Taken to extreme, the judgements and the beliefs that "those people with feelings" are bad, wrong, and deterrents to productivity, show up in legislated policies that further harm—adding insult to injury—all of us practicing being in good relation to ebbs and flows of energy.

We can guide ourselves to not look away from the gory details of life, the violently broken animals strewn across our highways, the truths of what humans are and have been capable of at our worst, the genocide underway in Gaza. We can also guide ourselves to embody beauty—to breathe it in to see it and everything and everyone. Staci Haines teaches⁴⁷ a gorgeous way of embodying not just the present moment, but also time in a nonlinear way.

When time "as money" is experienced as a linear course, it loses mystery, it loses spontaneity, it loses malleability, flexibility, and the magic of pure creativity. What money has done to time is to enclose it in notions of progress, productivity, and economy. As we loosen and "unpack" cultural conditionings and enclosures around time, we liberate our mind, our spirit, and our

bodies. When we loosen the thought knots that echo throughout our bodies, we open ourselves to one another and the infinite love poured over us each day by the elements of nature. It is then that we achieve inner fortune.

Fortunately, we also have Air and Fire and Earth elements within us. As we breathe, as we respire with awareness, we bring in spirit support that can transmute personal angst into insight. Perhaps we become more like trees. Diana Beresford Kroger says that trees are parents to the child deep within us.

As we “do the work” to breathe and be in right relationship with the self, we notice others who are not in right relationship with the self. And this is why breathing, and anything to do with mindfulness, is called a practice. We get activated by others who are not taking care to speak kindly, to listen, to pause and breathe. Can’t they see we are practicing being kind?!

The practice deepens as we keep at it, keep trying, keep breathing, keep appreciating the opportunity to notice and see reflections of ourselves and ways to grow in kindness and compassion. And, as we allow ourselves to let the reality of others’ suffering—spoken or unspoken—to penetrate our sense of self, we may grieve together—spoken or unspoken.

*What if our grief, not hidden away in corners,
becomes a kind of communion where we shine?
What if our grief becomes a liberation song
that returns us to our innocence?
What if our fierce hearts could simply bear witness?*

~ Laura Weaver

Toxic grief—grief that is held in the body in such acute concentration it turns a balanced system into an imbalanced one—comes from a legacy of avoidance, of stuffing or repressing feelings, of medicating grief rather than experiencing (giving and receiving) the support of community.

Toxic grief held over a lifetime, or over many lifetimes and inherited as genetic predispositions, shows up in the body as cancer, as blood dis-ease, as bone dis-ease, as undiagnosed pain, lethargy, and overall malaise. These dis-eases prevent healthy interaction, prevent conversation, and prevent our basic human proclivity to be inclined toward one another rather than away from one another.

Toxic grief and the subsequent dis-eases in the body—which can “turn on” or not depending upon so many factors we have yet to understand—perpetuate the hurt people hurt people premise of interdependent co-arising. Perhaps this is so because we as an economic culture have been more inclined to be curious about market potential than serving the collective good.

What if we see all the ways our lives are poor now — poor in hope, poor in social solidarity, poor in mental and emotional wellbeing and confidence in the future, poor in social connectedness, poor in relationship to nature. What if we imagine the abundance of doing right the things we've done wrong, of a world in which [nearly] 9 million people⁴⁸ a year don't die from breathing fossil fuel emissions, in which childhood asthma is not epidemic in the places where fossil fuels are refined, in which the fossil fuel industry doesn't corrupt global politics. What if renunciation was in fact renouncing poison, corruption, deprivation, uncertainty, a dismal future, miserable health?⁴⁹

~ Rebecca Solnit

As we say no, as we renunciate the oppressive media, the oppressive narratives—in ourselves and in society—we make space for more beauty, more friendship, more community and connections. Stress narratives take up a lot of space in the body-mind. To make the choice to say no also requires supportive frameworks, networks or netting to hold us inside our choice. There are so very many beautiful structures capable of holding us. The most beautiful is nature herself. And as we connect to networks of humans seeking beauty, we are held in our choice to see and be beauty, see and be peace, see and be love.

In order to activate, fully activate and expand the healing people heal people premise of interdependent co-arising, we must choose health. And to choose health is not at all easy or easeful within a state of economic extractivism. To choose health is to love ourselves so much and in so many ways that we, naturally, extend that love to other people and all of nature.

How do we co-create external conditions to allow the ebbs and flows of internal energy? Small steps—one after another.

As we explore the beauty of cultures historically othered and oppressed—by law, force both physical and psychological, by shame—we find countless examples of generosity. When a culture is informed by and aligned with spirit, the foundations, principles, values that define it move within and beyond the culture in the way spirit moves—freely—not for sale, not negotiated for price, not attached to conditions. And when another culture not informed by and aligned with spirit clashes with a culture which is informed by and aligned with spirit, misunderstandings arise. If misunderstandings are addressed with grace and curiosity, spirit grows within and between cultures that could otherwise clash.

The genocide in Gaza needs to end. The longer it continues and the longer people around the world see children denied food and water, the more violence spreads. This is true for every war. We are all less safe when there is genocide. Let us sing to the trees, “let aid in to Gaza.” They are listening even if our electeds cannot.

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People everywhere who don't subscribe to gender labels are magnificent. Women everywhere are magnificent. Men everywhere are magnificent. If we begin at our most basic level of seeing one another, we can fully activate and expand the healing people heal people premise of interdependent co-arising.

What replaces human supremacy will be born ... from the wombs of women and of Mother Earth that are ready to give birth to new ways of living, and from the hearts of grandmothers who have been silent, concentrating and full of care like beasts in the wild, praying for us, asking that we be protected.

But who can protect us from ourselves? There are many of us throughout the world who have rebelled against our own lethargy, who have decolonized our belief systems each time we have been awakened by buckets of cold Water produced by our own conscience in moments of illumination. And so we have come to understand that the devil was created by humans and that hell only needs to be feared when one gets used to living in it. We have stopped believing in the superiority of those who won the wars, who continue looking at us from the tops of their monuments. We look again at the world like wild people, like Earth people, like pure beings that take from nature only what we need to eat, and the rest we care for with respect and reverence.

~ Excerpt from [*The End of Human Supremacy*](#), by Arkan Lushwala

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A New Story

The year is 2025. The leader of the food and drug administration is currently a member of a well-established organic food collective, not the head of Monsanto. Their land labor responsibilities are shared by other members of the collective while this one year term is served. All of the federal agencies are administered with Sociocratic circle practices and elected participation in these administrative circles are peer evaluated based on the extent to which each member engages in learning and serving activities during their term.

Because the FDA (along with all other federal agencies) has been completely revolutionized, all residents in the United States have easy access to healthy, nutrient dense foods. They no longer worry incessantly about health insurance and medical bills and are regaining not only strength but creativity. Thankfully the heavy metals and other toxins like glyphosate that cause lymphoma and other cancers, making everyone bone weary and unable to concentrate, have

been eradicated from the soils, the waterways, and the small and large scale agricultural practices from coast to coast. The heme or iron that came, from star dust, to be in every living body, is back in balance and the chronic tensions held by all living beings are loosening.

Mutual aid networks are thriving in every municipality and county, empowering and invigorating even our most reclusive neighbors. Because so many state and private economic systems have collapsed under austerity and fiscal mismanagement, including education, health care—along with insurance of all forms. Public safety is no longer aggressive and antagonistic. Instead, it approaches each community with the heart of social work, bringing people together, vulnerably sharing strengths and needs, and finding an abundance of care and capacity for supporting each other's wellness. The United States is no longer being administered at the highest levels by adults with severe and unhealed adverse childhood experiences.

People are driving fewer vehicles fewer miles and many roads are closing from lack of use. The primary vehicles seen on the road are trucks transporting bulk foods and specialty goods from one region to another.

With the re-regulation of energy, renewables are now accounting for 80% of the national electricity demand. Fossil fuel extraction and fracking has been permanently banned and people are actively working together, monitoring and reducing energy consumption more than they could have imagined. They are bridging the gap between what is sustainably available and what they need to stay warm, fed, and safe.

What is giving most people joy and hope for the future is the forests return to health and resurgence of native plant species. We know that healthy forests are the key to water and soil regeneration, and in the absence of governmental obfuscation, scientists are able to collaborate in a generative way they have never before known—celebrating each other's discoveries, cooperating rather than competing nationally and globally.

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Wren Ribeiro has European ancestry in Massachusetts dating back to the mid 16th century and seeks to bridge economic, spiritual, and cultural gaps in belonging through dialogue and trust making. Residing in Western Massachusetts with and on the land long stewarded by the Nipmuc, Pocumtuck, and Nonotuck peoples, Wren has created a comprehensive 8-gateway color-coded journal to support the discovery of what activities in life, which people in life, what thoughts and aspirations and learnings in life, give meaning and joy so that we can continue doing those things, set intentions for more of our happiness generating behaviors, and experience InnerFortune.

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