

We hear this heartbeat resound in the whisperings of our deepest inner knowing, in the silence of the boundless spirit. If we choose, we can embody it in ways of living and being that, as Janine Benyus says, "...create conditions conducive to life." *We* know it's time for this new way. Those of us with our ear to the ground hear the heartbeat fading. But, others seem deaf to this call; or perhaps, they hear the beat of a different drum. How can people with incompatible worldviews find common ground on one planet? How on Earth can we hope to survive?

We have the science we need to restore the earth and its communities. What we don't have are the relational skills and tools. What we need to help us find our way is "A Not So Lonely Planet's Guide On the Road to Sustainability." The first sign on that road is CONNECT. An open heart/mind will allow us to build relationships with those we meet along the way. A common language will be essential as we talk with people who are hard for us to understand. A variety of tools will come in handy for clearing paths to sustainable choices and powerful actions.

R/Evolutionary Communication is a comprehensive approach to the relational work of creating a sustainable way of life. It is a joyous practice: a path to heightened awareness and a consciousness of connection. It provides a framework for perceiving and understanding the factors that influence people's beliefs and choices. It is a life-serving lingua franca, a common language, and a set of practical tools for identifying needs, choosing sustainable strategies to meet them, and building effective social actions.

OBSERVING-RECEIVING-INTERPRETING-EXPRESSING-ACTING

There is one place where people and their worldviews find common ground: the realm of the sacred heart of nature—the realm of spirit--the source of us all. Getting to that common ground begins with the practice of wholly listening: fully receiving with empathy, accepting all that is arising, observing without judgment, and inquiring with appreciation. "*What part of the wisdom—beauty---mystery is being offered here? What is this person's expression telling us? What are they feeling and needing? What actions are they choosing to try to meet their needs?*" We listen with our entire being, drawing from the three springs of life: spirit, body and mind. The more streams through which we receive information, the broader our pool of knowing, the clearer our understanding, and the more successful our decisions and actions.

SPIRIT: With meditative mindfulness practices, we attune to the web of connection; with this consciousness, we may more clearly hear whatever is present, vital and meaningful.

BODY: With practice, we re-member the intelligence of our bodies, cultivating awareness of our sensations, responses and emotions: connecting to the animate, somatic and cultural messages. For instance, we notice a clenched jaw and inquire as to its source. Impatience? Fear? Anger? No longer fluent in this ancient tongue, relearning it is a core practice.

MIND: With Ken Wilber's Integral maps in hand, and Marshall Rosenberg's NonViolent Communication model, we explore the confusing territory of human relations. We clarify our understanding of how

various factors influence people's choices. We gain insight into the many different ways people make sense of their world. We bring order to the chaotic crossroads where feelings, needs, actions, values and worldviews collide. We identify strategies likely to meet the deepest needs of all, generation after generation.

With these modes, we receive friend and foe, alike. It's *all* intelligent. Every expression tells part of our story. Each word, gesture, action, silence and scream carries information, intention and meaning. No matter how violent, damaging or ineffective, every action is an attempt to meet some beautiful life-serving need. We must learn to interpret these actions. It's *all* alive. We cannot afford to silence one voice. *We are all relatives.*

We cannot disown anyone, not even the painful parts of ourselves. Our power to make change is often locked up in our pain. For instance, when we express frustration, anger and fear, we are often met with resistance, anger and fear. When all we express is our pain our words fall on deaf ears; and, our efforts are less successful. When we listen to our pain and recognize it as an expression of a beautiful life-serving need--our need to care for the earth--we can translate this pain into heartfelt desire. Expressing from this place of beauty and love inspires receptivity, curiosity and connection; and then, *even* ears deaf to earth's cry will hear.

Recycling old ways will not create fresh patterns of living. Effective social change depends on new ways of being: wholly listening with spirit/body/mind. Interpreting with an integral framework. Expressing the beauty of our needs. Forging loving connections. Taking life-serving action. Fluently speaking the ageless language of wisdom, beauty and mystery. Reawakening to the vibrant beat of the sacred heart of nature.

September 9, 2005