



Resolutions To Action

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Deep Dive into the Intersectionality of Racism, Forced Migration, and Climate Crisis: Head, Heart & Soul Knowing

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What does this “deep dive” into the intersectionality really mean? It calls for the effort to dive into the issues in new ways and to remain in murky water until new ways of knowing are revealed. And then, only when new ways of knowing are found, can the profound systemic changes needed happen. Right relationships take on whole new meanings and actions automatically change to match our “bone marrow” level changes in thought, emotional responses, and spiritual aspects of life if one is willing to pay attention and ponder what murky water conditions call forth from deep within. Doing the deep murky dive to discover your personal enculturated ways of denying DNA instinctual behaviors is needed for the quantum leap to bridge racism, forced migration, and the climate crisis.

EXPERIENCE

Re-reading Thomas Berry’s *Dream for the Earth* chapter 15 published in 1988 was a murky dive into a new knowledge level of understanding the intersectionality of key social

and environmental issues for me. Berry challenges the human species to assess how individual enculturation experiences have taken us adrift from our fundamental DNA instinctual ways of being. Enculturation is how other members of a species instruct and inform new generations about right and wrong, good and less good ways of being in relationship with everything in life. It is critical to assess how I with other humans, who are not the same as me, see creation as “objects” to be used instead of subject to be respected and used with limitations based on their dignity and sacredness.

The human species gifts to the universe our thinking and conscious awareness abilities. This enables us to override instinctual behaviors. It allows us to act out encultured behaviors as more appropriate ways of behaving in life. However, in doing so, Berry believes we have grown to disregard the fundamental instincts and life-supporting ways of knowing contained in our DNA. These principles based on differentiation, subjectivity/interiority, and communion are needed to bring forth behaviors that augment rather than violate natural balance and wholeness found within systemic creation. A

wholeness that we intellectually and spiritually yearn for; that which reflects the necessary flow and interrelationships that sustain and support life. Looking at the chaos, violence, and degradation of social and environmental systems today suggest that Berry is onto something “old that is yet new for our times” to reconsider.

While humans are not merely their DNA, instinctual knowing does call forth a foundational knowledge conducive for systemic change. All the facts and emotionally motivational

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efforts encouraged by a call to go from “head” to “heart knowledge” have not successfully resolved the social and environmental crisis of today. Just maybe Berry’s call for humans to return to “instincts” is the murky water needed to discover more wholistic ways of relating. Eastern religions, psychologists, theologians, and other wisdom people say humans are being invited to

“The universe is composed of subjects to be communed with, not objects to be exploited.

Everything has its own voice.

Thunder and lightning and stars and planets,
flowers, birds, animals, trees...

all these have voices, and they constitute
a community of existence
that is profoundly related.”

-- Thomas Berry

deeper “soul knowledge” levels. That if we tap into the very “marrow of our own bones” we can know new ways for living our role as a member of this one universal community.

“Soul knowledge” goes beyond the facts, beyond the emotions and into the essence of my spiritual soul. What needs to shift within me for this greater good of all? How do I rediscover and learn to act out of the instincts firmly rooted in my DNA? How do I re-examine how the culture I grew up in and am daily influenced by lead me to beliefs and actions that are in conflict with what “nature” rather than “nurture” teaches?

SOCIAL ANALYSIS/ REFLECTION

Let’s examine what DNA tells us about white supremacy/racism and cultural-promoted materialism. By 2003 the human genome project informed us that 99.9% of human species members DNA is identical regardless of where one lives, exists, skin color or economics. That 99.6% of human DNA is identical to that of chimpanzees and even a tree has roughly 70% identical DNA to me. By 2006 scientists revealed

that the 0.1% difference in human DNA showed greater variability within groups of same colored skin people than that found across races.

Take this head knowledge to the “soul” level and how can one not respect and interact with every aspect of creation as having a similarity to self beyond imagining? If our connectedness and wholeness is reflected by these facts, what does the very “marrow of my bones” tell me is right relationships? How am I called to act with all that exists knowing this biological DNA similarity information?

How I use a pencil is a concrete expression of this “soul knowledge” level of knowing. It costed a tree life for the very pencil to be made. If Berry is correct, then like another human being, this pencil, the tree, and graphite that were used to make it, are subjects and not objects to be used or abused as my encultured intellectual giftedness deem appropriate.

DNA tells me that every speck of matter is a precious sacred subject. My “soul knowing” calls forth the dignity, respect, and loving interactions that not just my heart desires, but my DNA instincts call forth as the base for defining appropriate or “good” use of this cheap pencil.

What I do with a pencil is a concrete witnessing to others what values and principles are foundational in my life for all life. Berry and Brian Swimme, in their book, *The Universe Story*, identify differentiation, subjectivity/interiority, and communion as the key principles governing an evolving universe. They brought forth and sustained interconnected diverse living systems long before humans existed. These very principles also brought forth the human species’ gift of self-reflection abilities as manifestation of our DNA for the greater good of all. Have humans’ rational abilities involving enculturation across generation misled us to erroneously believe we are better than nature and that nurture should outsmart nature?

ACTION

“Soul knowledge” knowing is a return to intentional instinctual actions which are more in line with the foundational nature principles. Rethinking the roots of our actions can awaken new ways of being that can move us beyond the anthropocentrism that is the intersectionality of the social and environmental crisis of today. Our very DNA cries out for this deeper dive pondering who I am in relation to all that is.

- Is “soul knowledge” a way to pay more attention to what your DNA defines as good and right in, with, and for life?
- Research how instinctual behaviors influence interactions within natural systems.
- Collaborative ways far exceed competitive actions in nature. What are the significances of this for humans’ role in the community of life?
- What are the gifts humans collectively offer for the development of interrelationships that are life-giving?
- How is the simple use of a pencil with dignity and respect reflecting to others the principles of differentiation, interiority/subjectivity, and communion being enacted?
- How does going to the DNA “soul knowledge” level change your perception of the intersectionality of racism, forced migration, and

At the widely publicized unveiling of the draft of the human genome map in 2000, Bill Clinton said, “one of the great truths to emerge from this triumphant expedition . . . is that in genetic terms, all human beings, regardless of race, are more than 99.9 percent the same. What that means is that modern science has confirmed . . . the most important fact of life on this Earth is our common humanity”
(National Human Genome Research Institute 2013)