

EMERGE

Could a New Set of Values Help Restore
Our Right Relationship
With Earth and Its Living Communities?



The Premise:

Quakers are already equipped to dismantle the drivers of our climate and biodiversity crises.

The Query:

How do we become a catalyst for a cultural shift?



The **SPICES testimonies**, which many Quakers believe summarize our core values, are: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (or Sustainability).

A testimony calls us to act outside our personal comfort zones. It calls us to take up the hard work of challenging the comfort zones of others. We can apply this understanding to a quest to let go of practices and conveniences that cost the Earth, and that artificially separate us from the plight of a long unheeded planet.

We might need an emergent set of values...

In the Quaker tradition of the familiar acronym **SPICES**, and with that same sense of wayfinding.



EMERGE

...guides transformation—from our current state of coping with crisis, to a new way of living...

As we take each letter and progress from...

Empathy to

Mindfulness and

Ecological Integrity... to

Right Action to

Growth, and finally to

Endurance





Empathy

It's the aspect of love that lets us feel...together.

Marcus Rediker wrote

The Fearless Benjamin Lay

and showed us how this now-famous abolitionist Quaker's "one and all" commitment to mutual aid included all of Earth's sentient beings.

With empathy, we perceive other living communities and feel an emotional stake in their thriving.

Just as no one lives apart from the air, the water, the winds... No one lives apart from human-driven ecological crises.

What happens to one living community happens to all.

Empathy lets us reimagine the place of humans in the world.



For "one and all" of Earth's living communities...
Could we become essential workers on our planet?
Spirit, all-encompassing!

Mindfulness

Mindfully, we listen for messages from our Earth and the living communities it supports.

We feel the impact of what we do, and what we refrain from doing—across systems, across time, across communities, throughout the web of life.



Within mindfulness is a relentless sensitivity to the effects of unmindful privilege—around us, and around the world. Those with the least resources, and those who cannot easily move, are the most impacted by climate chaos and biodiversity loss.

Mindfulness is attention at a deeper level.

Where what we discern isn't just knowledge, but a connection to an inner call to act.

Ecological Integrity

It's about integrating our spiritual journey with the unfolding of Earth's systems and communities as far as possible—as we are led.

Ecology—the study of living beings as interconnected with their environments—comes from the Greek *oikos*: house or habitat. In empathy with all Earth's communities—our housemates—we commit to listen and learn.

We cannot fix the evolution we've broken, or restore human cultures that have already been lost in the throes of global heating.

But we can interrupt the continued pattern of dominion, hierarchy, inequality, land-grabbing, and exploitation that caused these crises.



*Attending to messages from spirit,
we're striving to perceive not only
the wrongness of humanity's impact
at this moment, but the possibility
of who we could be.*



Right Action

Acknowledging climate breakdown is only a start. Action must follow.

Discerning right action implicates the testimony of simplicity, as we strive to live within our ethical means on a finite Earth.

To simplify our lives.

To support each other's efforts to do so.

Right action considers vulnerable people, and present and future generations of all living beings. We acknowledge that what Earth produces are not the fair spoils of the privileged. Nor are they humanity's resources alone.

The life-saving results of our transformation could unfold relatively quickly, for we'll be siding with the power of nature.

Growth

It's a popular word in economic circles, but our focus is on *spiritual* growth.

As a basis for this work, we imagine a humanity that understands community, the web of life, our connection to all beings and to spirit as indispensable joys.



What if we could turn climate crisis into a true opportunity? A chance to support socially just, community-oriented transit? A call to nourish each other with plant-based meals, based on the growing of food, not feed? To thrive in the simplicity testimony? Through the lens of evolving values, our sacrifices would become profound gifts.

Through spiritual growth, we free ourselves to define affluence by its true meaning: a flow.



Endurance

We seek an Earth restored from its depleted, destabilized state.

From the unnatural wildfires.

The degradation of waterways.

The dangerous weather extremes that imperil food sources and force unwanted migrations.

The bleak reality that so many habitats and their living communities are dying—and not of natural causes.

Real progress will depend on deep work, advocacy, and dialogue that plumbs our values, causing an evolution of consciousness that transforms the way we perceive our world and our role in it.

This is a lifelong task.



Reimagining our place in the universe is vital to human progress.

We take courage, knowing Quakers are uniquely positioned...

Free to sit with religious texts, to engage with them, to consider continuing revelation.

We take courage, knowing...

The EMERGE values can speak when we are not able to, or when we stumble, or feel like giving in.

Imagine Emergence...

From crisis into committed love for our planet,
For its systems...its precious life.

Can we imagine? Can we free ourselves to live out our strongest respect for planetary systems, our deepest empathy with living communities?





A spiritual and cultural transformation...a deep shift in our idea of ourselves: the emergence of a humanity whose mindful living reintegrates us with our Earth.

As we work for a cultural and spiritual transformation **EMERGE** can be a touchstone. It can guide inquiry in our own hearts, in each other, and together..

Imagine an Earth restored

Gus Speth, who has served as Administrator of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, once thought the top global environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. Speth later said:

But I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a spiritual and cultural transformation, and we scientists don't know how to do that.

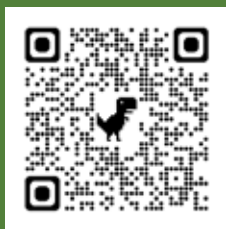





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To be continued, at *EmergeValues.org*
Learn more and join in the conversation.



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