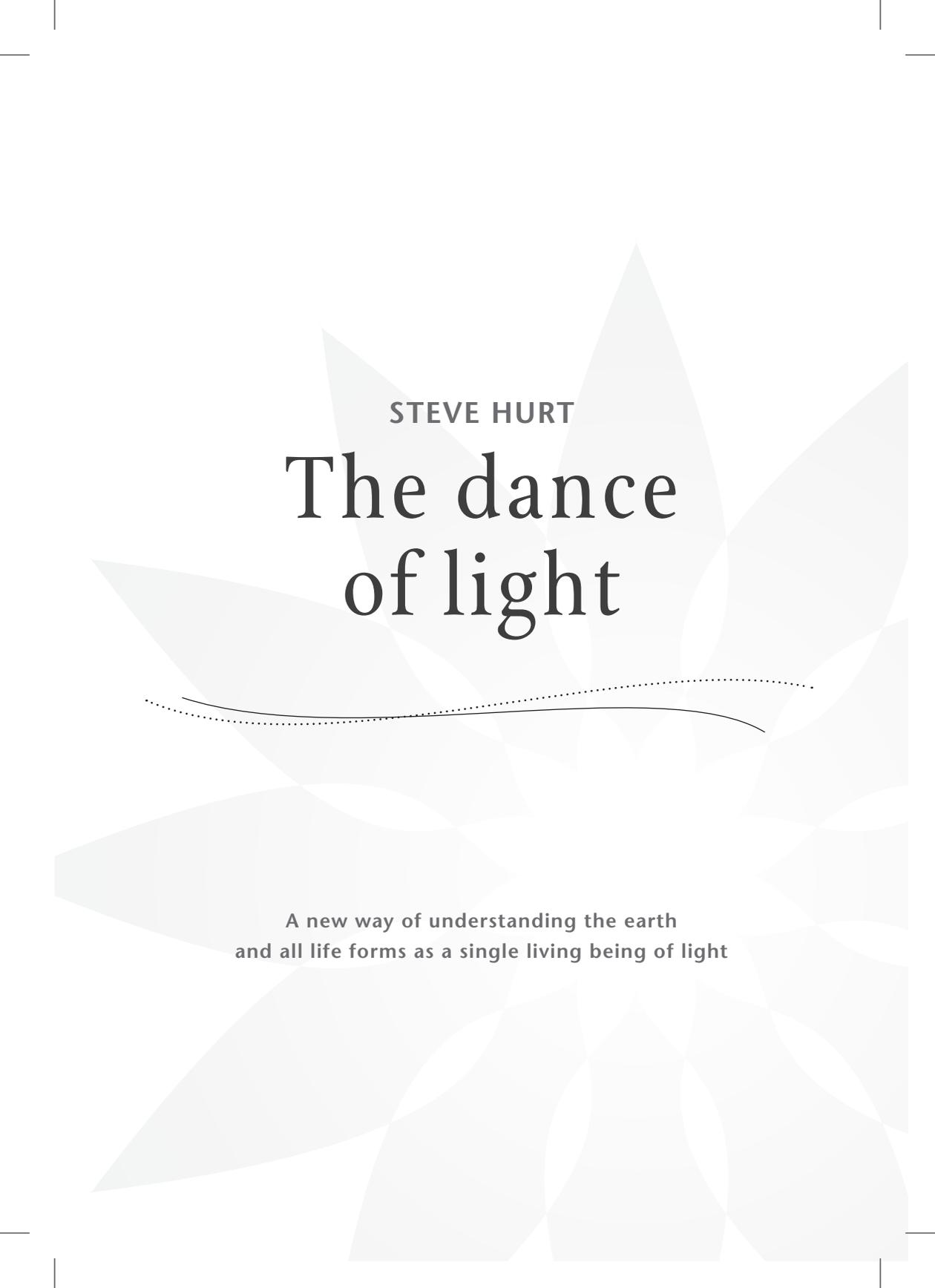


The dance of light





STEVE HURT

The dance of light

A new way of understanding the earth
and all life forms as a single living being of light

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This book is dedicated to my teachers

Llewellyn Vaughan Lee, Gabriel Cousens, The Dalai Lama, Credo Mutwa,
The San, The Great Mother, and my own mother and father, Dee and Ron.

Thank you for your Light.



*“The World Soul, or Anima Mundi, is the divine spark within life.
If we are to help the world to transform, we need to consciously relate
to her, to be the catalyst for her awakening.”*

Llewellyn Vaughan Lee, Sufi Sheik

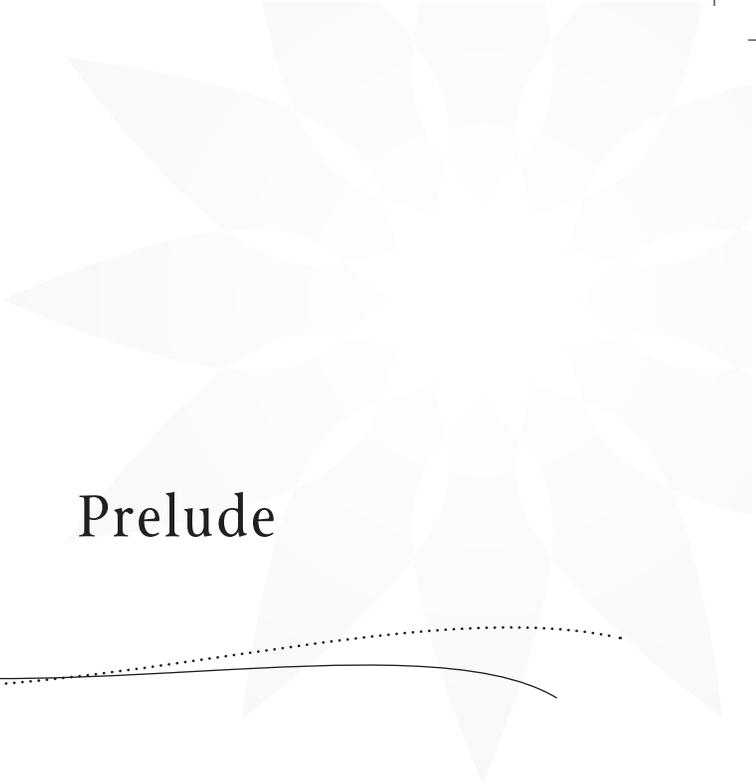


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Prelude

It all began with a cup of tea...

“So it’s time to start writing a book...” says Marilyn, my tea-leaf-reading psychic.

“Okay... about what?” I ask.

“Just sit down and write. My guides are saying that you need to be a channel for a very important message,” she replies...

Marilyn is a good clairvoyant, and whenever I had visited her for a reading I left feeling lighter. This news about the book was typical of Marilyn. She was always urging me to look at my deeper purpose in life. Sure, she would give me the stuff about money, love and success, and then she would get down to the nitty-gritty about my life’s purpose.

I felt excitement at the news that I should write a book, a kind of spiritual purpose, but there was also immense doubt inside me. My business was doing fantastically and I was making more money than I had ever imagined, but in the process I had stereotypically broken my relationship with my partner,

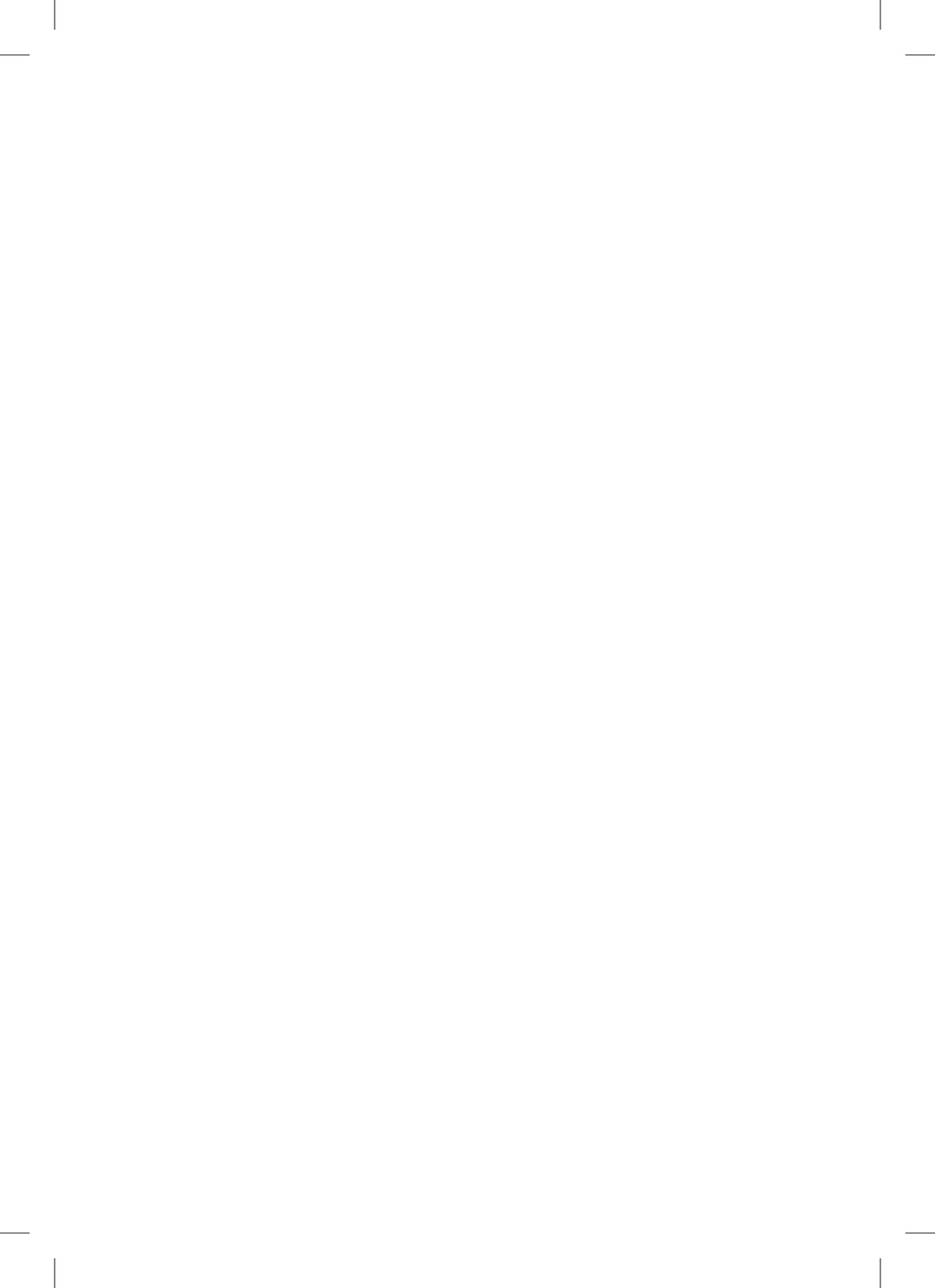
leaving her and our child alone while I moved away. My heart was shattered at the loss of this new family I had created, but it was as though the stresses of a big-city lifestyle had begun to take their toll. I was overweight, unhappy and depressed: it was a dark time for me indeed.

With the appearance of Marilyn in my life came a small crack in the façade of life through which the light could quietly shine. As I sat with her, something touched my heart. Something new had awakened. This revelation about a book was not new. It seemed to be a recurring theme which was popping up in my life. It was a message repeated by my mother as well as various healers and psychics I had visited from time to time. My mother, a mystic in her own right, has always encouraged me to record my life's journey in writing. She belongs to a mystical fellowship which offers a series of teachings to help awaken the spiritual centres of the human being, and had trained me from a young age to meditate, to see auras, to heal people and animals with one's hands, to breathe consciously, and to trust and listen to one's intuition. The light which she shared with me was the sacred passing of an ancient mystical tradition from one to another. She helped me to discover that in all human beings there is a deep vein of light and love that wants to be expressed, and which the world needs us, as human beings, to bring into fruition. I started to write shortly after receiving the message from Marilyn, allowing the book to grow day by day. As I wrote down everything I knew, everything I thought was useful, something deeper began to emerge. I started to have flashes of something altogether new, and as I turned my attention to the inner planes, I noticed that there was an exquisite and continuous vision which was unfolding, if I gave it my full attention.

As I continued to write down my experience of this vision, I was taken on a journey toward the realization that everything is one, that there is a light which connects all things and is the basic fabric of all creation. This 'light within nature', as Jung names it: *lumen naturae*, seems to be the universal substrate which weaves its way through all aspects of creation. Where there

is life, there is light. I imagined this light moving through me as I wrote, and it was as though I was infused with light as it traversed my body and through my hands. This vision became my own inner journey, one in which I rode this wave of light across the inner planes. I began to see how the earth and humans are one, as is the entire universe. Everything is connected by light, but is also light itself.

So what follows is a summary of that journey, my journey.





INTRODUCTION

A new earth energy



This book tells a story about a vision.

The vision came to me quite by surprise while I was trying to write a book about the earth and its current environmental challenges. I thought that I would sit down and collect all of my thoughts and ideas about environmentalism, which I had studied at university, and combine this with my knowledge of mysticism, which my mother had passed on to me through her life as a mystical student.

But what emerged was something quite different.

Instead of sitting down and putting my knowledge of these two fields into a theory, I found that I was experiencing an inner vision which took over and completely swept me away with its power. It was so very different to what I had envisioned I would write about that I struggled at first to understand where it was coming from, but it drew me in and completely captured my attention.

The vision was profound, yet utterly simple. It was initiated by a presence that I can only describe as God. It was a kind of incredible energy which

poured through me and wanted to show me something. It made me feel alive, sacred and filled with light. In fact, I even thought I was having a moment of awakening at times, yet later realized that it was completely impersonal. It was an energy that wanted to be recognized, wanted to be seen, something deep within the fabric of creation that wanted my attention.

I trusted this energy implicitly because it felt as though I was speaking directly with God, and it took me deep into the inner planes of my spirit and into the spirit of the World Soul. There I saw something that would become the entire basis of my story.

In this vision I was shown how everything in creation is infused with an subtle light that is life itself, and that there is nowhere that this light is not present. I saw it in the rocks, the water, the plants, and in ourselves, human beings. I was shown how it is present in the subtle realm that is visible beyond our five senses, and how it is a seamless wholeness that pervades every single thing in the universe. It was as though I was witnessing the essence of everything that is creation.

I experienced this energy as a kind of subtle light, and on all levels of my awareness – while I wrote, in my dreams, in the moments before I fell asleep or woke up, and particularly in nature, where its intensity was heightened for me.

The light wanted me to see that it was everywhere and that it was woven in an intricate pattern across all of creation. In particular I saw it as a web of light across the earth, a structure that connected and enlivened every single atom in creation, an energy that flowed through the presence of matter and connected all life into one incredible whole.

This energy was something completely new for me. It was nothing I had seen before, though I had heard murmurs of it being described in various spiritual circles. It was as though there was a presence in creation that had just been born and was now emerging into the awareness of the human mind.

My understanding of this light was deeply enriched by the teachings of

Sufi mystic, Llewellyn Vaughan Lee, who uses the term 'oneness' to explain how everything in creation is a single living entity, completely connected and utterly alive. The teachings of oneness not only enriched my understanding of all life being 'one', but also helped transform my relationship to the earth by allowing me to see it as a living being of which I was an inseparable part. But more importantly, Llewellyn was able to describe how and why this vision of incredible oneness was appearing and what we could do with it in terms of our spiritual responsibility.

My book did a complete turnaround at this point and became an investigation into trying to understand how this light is present in all of creation, the earth and the universe, and how this affects my understanding of an integral ecology.

Through writing down what I was seeing, and addressing a series of questions to this energy, I began to see how important it is for humanity to recognize simply that the earth is alive and that this energy is being born within creation. I saw how we need to allow ourselves to give our attention and our own light to her generously, much like a parent gives love to a child, thereby enabling him or her to grow into a healthy adult. By this simple process of paying attention to the earth as a living being I saw how we would be able to help create a 'holding pattern' out of this light which would enable the earth to evolve beyond her current state and into something new.

My agenda could not be bypassed, though, and I want to make it clear what that is: I want people to recognize that the earth is alive and that she has a soul that can be allowed to flourish if we simply restore our attention to the sacredness of the natural world and of life itself. I want people to remove their fixated gaze from the material world and focus on what is sacred, because our materialistic perception of creation as a soulless, mechanical structure is leading to its collapse. But instead of focusing on the environmental destruction and the imminent disasters that could come our way, I want people rather to turn their attention to the new things being born from the ashes of this dying

civilization. I want people to see the new energy that is being born into the world and help to usher its growth on the subtle planes of creation. I want people to stop the morbid sensationalizing of environmental destruction and focus on the new life, new patterns and new paradigms which are emerging from this crisis, because by turning our light and our love toward the new energy within creation we are offering our services to assist with the holiest process of all – life (which includes ourselves) emerging toward wholeness and integration.

This book follows the thread of this new sacred energy through each level of creation, from its beginnings in the nothingness before space and time, to the mineral kingdom, water systems, plants and ecosystems, animals, humans and the subtle realm. It attempts to weave this consciousness of the new energies in nature through all of creation so that we may begin to see how all of creation is implicitly alive with this divine spark of life. By seeing the earth and all creation as something that is buzzing with the light of God in an infinite web of oneness, we are able to re-write our ecological philosophies and theories and perhaps find a new way of being ecologically, and indeed spiritually, responsible human beings and caretakers of the earth, which is sacred and holy. I hope that by sharing this vision with others I am in some way appropriately responding to the calling I have felt from my own personal God, so that this new energy in creation may in some way be imparted to those who follow me through this vision as I describe it in the various aspects of creation. By imparting this energy to others, so it is brought into the consciousness of many, and thereby allowed to take its place in their own hearts and in the material world.

By connecting this energy to more and more people I believe we will help the planet truly to move beyond this current ecological and spiritual crisis in which we find ourselves today.

But be aware that like a tribal dance, this energy of oneness is incredibly fluid and it changes its beat and its shape perpetually. It will not be held with-

in a concept, but rather simply requires us to pay attention to what it is doing and where it is going. We cannot copy the dance of this energy, but we need to immerse ourselves in it and express it individually. By simply paying attention to how this energy is manifesting in life we will be enlivening its presence in creation and helping to shape the pattern of things to come.

So please join me on this magical dance on a wave of light, through the intricate web of creation, and share this vision of oneness with the world.





CHAPTER ONE

Remembering our Great Mother, Gaia

Gaia is a great big soul and living entity, in the process of completing her own life's journey.

The earth, or Gaia, is a being, just like you and me. She* is the sum of all life forms which exist as planet earth, from water, air, minerals and the various life forms, to the complex biological systems which are brought into existence through the breath of life. This includes the incredible vehicle of life called the human being. Not only is Gaia a living being, but she is also the embodiment of the deepest and most ancient mysteries. We humans can be viewed as a microcosm of Gaia, perfectly represented in her image, utterly the same.

* I have referred to Gaia as 'she', but this is not entirely accurate, as Gaia is perfectly androgynous. However, because Gaia is imbued with the capacity to create new life, we often refer to her as feminine.

Like ourselves, the earth's life journey is directed by the divine order of the universe, and she is living out her karmic path through the medium of a physical body called Earth. Her blood is the waters of the planet which move in an endless flow from cloud to rain to river and sea, filling every pore of the earth, bringing the kiss of life to all organic systems. Her breath is the air and the wind, carrying pure particles of spirit in her ether. Her bones are the rocks of the earth which we imbibe as minerals in our foods, and her flesh is the soft green blanket of peace that surrounds the sinking of her roots into her rocky crust. Her heart and organs are the molten core of liquid rock, deep in her central being. She is a beautiful being in creation, a perfect representation of the laws of life on a large scale.

Gaia is also subject to the same laws of creation that we as humans are. This understanding of the earth as a living being had been written into our spiritual traditions over the centuries. Unfortunately, this understanding has been lost in the last several hundred years.

The body of our Mother exists on many levels, from the densest level of matter to the most subtle level of spirit. Her body is made up of the mineral, plant, animal and subtle levels. Hovering between the dense world of matter and the divine world of spirit, are humans. We are an advanced species, and therefore by working with the active earth energies to awaken parts of her spiritual body, we are capable of being active agents in her evolution. We need to recognize in Gaia not only her physical manifestation as Mother Nature, but also her subtle form: her energy body, her thoughts, her spirit. Part of this subtle body is represented by the ley lines of the earth. These form complex energetic patterns which underlie all manifestations of matter, much like the energy meridians we find in our own human bodies, the ones used in acupuncture: the chakras and the nadis. Gaia has an exquisitely woven body of light, a delicate composition of chakras, much like our own, which are centres on and inside the earth where specific subtle balancing acts of light and spirit unfold in a divine dance of spiritual synchrony.

Because Gaia is manifest in both the physical and the subtle realm, her body is only partially recognizable by the five human senses. It requires our sixth sense and soft eyes to know the totality of her being.

In the subtle realms, which are the realms of spirit, there are many individual life forms – spirit species that have evolved with as much diversity as all physical creatures on our planet. This is the world of the ancient mythical creature. This subtle realm is where the spirits live out their lives, undetected by most of mankind, except the seers. There is also the realm of the angels and devas, or nature spirits, who are responsible for an infinite variety of subtle energetic processes within the light body of the earth. Some of these spirits continue to live in the subtle realms, irrespective of whether they occupy a physical body or not, and have accumulated great knowledge and power, immense spiritual progress in their karmic journeys. They have attained enlightenment or perfection in the strain of life which they represent. These are the great spirits of trees, animals and mountains, which still live ‘in’ this world, applying their consciousness to the work of Gaia’s evolutionary journey, harmonizing and synchronizing with the Great Mother, and assisting her to complete her journey through time. These subtle spirits know that they are one with Gaia, and that their individual state of enlightened consciousness is not their own, but rather a small fragment of Gaia that has achieved perfection.

Within the vision of this most exquisite being called Earth, there is the realization of where she stands today in this isolated moment called the present, where things are not as good as they could be. It is so easy for us to label humankind as the cause of the problem, but in my vision human beings are a part of Gaia. There is no separation between human beings and Gaia, they are one and the same. How then, I wondered, does this great being live with such contradiction in her body?

It is apparent that both the subtle and physical worlds of the earth have been severely damaged by the events of the last few hundred years through

the actions of one single species – humans. All of the environmental knowledge which I read at university, and even all of the wisdom which I had heard at spiritual circles, hold humans responsible for this big mess. But when one looks at the world through the vision of integration, regarding the world as being one single living organism, it is very difficult to say truly that humans are the problem and that their removal would result in a balanced earth. The answer is more complex than that.

Gaia functions like any living system – she is made up of many diverse parts, each of which performs a specific and valuable role. Gaia is one system residing within an infinite number of living systems of the universe. Similarly, we as humans are one small system within the system of Gaia and the whole as one.

The entire universe, from the very smallest atoms and quarks, to the solar system and infinite number of galaxies, is comprised of beings within beings. From this perspective one can only surmise that, as human beings, it is important for us to live in mutual co-operation with nature. We need to stop seeing ourselves as separate beings, because this perception that we are separate from Gaia is false. All of life is sentient. It has the potential to reach its ultimate spiritual unfolding, or enlightenment, and therefore all of life is sacred.



CHAPTER TWO

Birthed from light

The incredible mystery of our Mother Earth as a living being is a secret which was forgotten, but has been re-awakened in this emerging era. In trying to re-awaken in myself the memory of our earth as a living being, I felt that I should try to rewrite my own understanding of creation, of how all life began.

In many esoteric spiritual teachings there is no beginning and no end. There is no Creator God either, only a spectacular unfolding of life in an infinite web. A creationist viewpoint is perhaps a more metaphorical way of describing the beginnings of life as it relies on a Creator God who started the whole process. The esoteric inquiry says, 'who created that God?', and it seems really obvious that there is no single being that is responsible for all of creation. This does not mean that all of creation is not holy or deeply spiritual, it just means that our concept of God as something separate from creation is probably false. The fascinating thing for me in this deeply complex subject of the origin of life is that it makes us wonder.

These philosophical questions are extraordinarily complex and they ultimately lead us to understand that the nature of the human mind, the nature of thinking in concepts, is finite. When I look at the world before my eyes and wonder about how it all started, the only thing that I can see that makes any sense at all is that all of creation has been made in a kind of pattern which is truly infinite in its complexity. It never, ever ends anywhere, and we will never, ever find where it began. I have learnt from the old earth based spiritual traditions that one is not supposed to understand these mysteries, but rather to treat them as things that have no answer. The creation stories of these traditions are not just simple entertainment, though. They are magical stories which hold power within them, a very real power, a power to transform a human's spirit. These ancient creation stories are shared with the express intention of stimulating the listener's mind to enter into an infinite conundrum of thought, whisking it away on a fractal magic carpet ride, like a Zen kōan. Once the storytellers begin telling their tales, they use their infinite heart-based intelligence, the same maternal intelligence of creation, to help mould and shift the energies of the listeners' psyches. The result is that the story, if told by a skillful orator, can take the individual on a journey into the essence of its mysterious origin, where the mind cannot go. The listener is transformed through an experience of something beyond the plane of the mind and into the realm of the magical. This ability to commune with the cosmos through the heart, rather than through the mind, is an infinitely powerful tool for cultural transformation, and indeed cultural survival, as we move into our uncertain future. The earth-based cultures did not have all of the answers for living in this world, and they too had to evolve with the infinite unfolding of all creation.

Unfortunately, very little work has been done to bring the African and other earth-based wisdom into this tradition of spiritual study. The reason for this is partly that they were oral traditions, and as a result have been largely destroyed or lost. However, the primary cause of this loss of knowledge is the

attitudes of the political powers of the Church in colonial times, who made it one of their primary objectives to squash the nature-based approach to spirituality, and replaced it with their own patriarchal dogma. The African way, the way of the indigenous earth-culture, was a threat to the Church because it worked directly with the feminine sacred powers in creation. This fundamental hatred of the feminine is almost exclusively responsible for our forgetfulness of our earth being a living mother who is worthy of our attention. I think that it is important, when faced with the current crises of the natural world, to look back to these traditions and to try to weave a more integrated picture of how to relate to our living world.

An African creation story, as told by the great Credo Mutwa in his book, *Zulu Shaman*, describes the following scene at the beginning of time:

"...in the beginning nothing existed but the fertile darkness, floating on the invisible River of Time... nothing existed but nothingness and a darkness that overspread all... a desire arose in the River of Time... for the fertile darkness to give birth to something out of nothing. It was a strange mating between Time And Nothing, but from it came one tiny spark of Living Fire. And the Living Fire was consciousness..."

This beautiful and mysterious explanation of life is so profoundly ancient to me. It sings of a universe which was essentially a mystery, and for which man could only guess at explanations.

However, whatever did happen before the birth of space and time will remain a mystery that will forever be inexplicable in words. We can have visions, as I have had, of all of creation as a seed which materialized in the great nothingness before time and space, and then grew and grew into something extraordinarily complex. There is no time and space in this ultimate reality, and it is beautiful, comparable to an unbound magical ether waiting to be moulded into something by a playful mind.

In my dreamy vision the earth's first mysterious peep through the veils of eternity into physical form started as a faint glow of light in the shape of a primordial fractal pattern. This moment of creation can be likened to an Ayahuasca trip into the ultimate reality where every single possible physical attribute, every single law of creation, every mathematical sum, was represented in one small seed. And as this seed grew, like a fractal Julia set, so the world form came into being and brought every star, every planet, every smile and scream – the vast and infinite possibilities of creation – into being. This seed exploded into space and time at the speed of light, and grew into level upon level of form, each layer of reality more dense than the next, and each layer of density more deeply entrenched in the world of form.

The African way reminds us that we need to perceive Gaia in her physical form and her subtle form, recognizing the magic and mystery which surrounded her origins, and continues to dwell in her during her journey to fulfill her karmic path. If we look at Gaia purely as an integrated system of green leaves and rocks, without understanding the primary energy underlying her creation, existence and continuance, then we end up with the gaze of a Newtonian eye. Similarly, if we try to go back to a time when we were all indigenous earth-based tribes, and we function in a greater unity with nature, then we are merely going backwards in life, and this is the antithesis of life, which is by nature and definition always emerging.

Our beautiful mother is so much more than the sum of her parts. She is composed of veil upon veil of light in various forms; all the world is a play of light in different densities; all of creation is the same light in a myriad of forms. All of creation IS light. But this light is more than all of creation. In the new ecology of the world I think that we will need to pay attention to this light – this energy of oneness – because it has many things to teach us about the true nature of the earth, of life, and of reality.

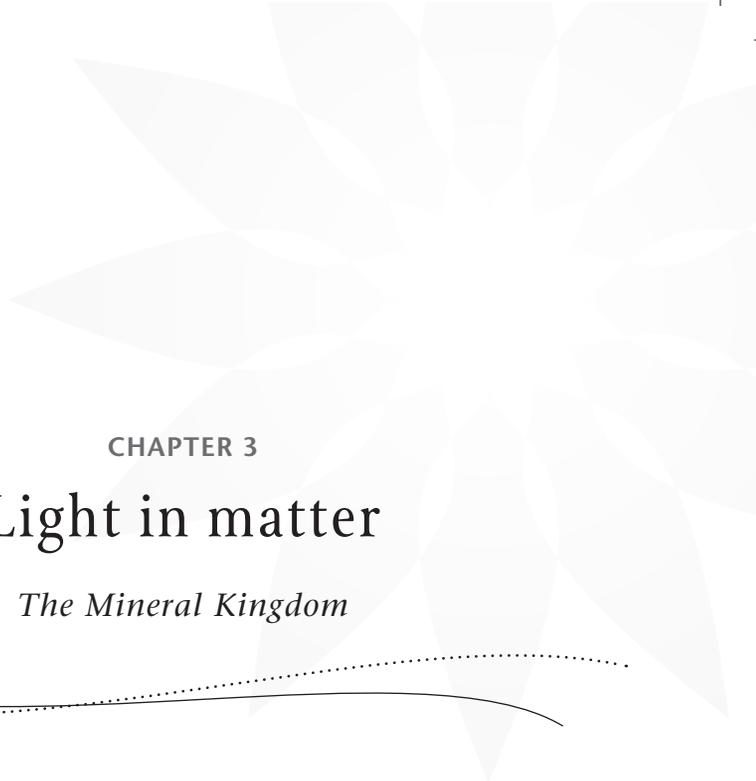
In many creation stories there is a point of transition where the universe initially came into being as light, so the perception created is that light is

the primordial expression of form in the world. In the Kabbalistic story, the Word of God filtered down from the Ein Soph, the unspoken word of the absolute, as light. It then manifested itself in successive layers of reality, from the subtle world of spirit to the dense world of matter. As the light entered the realm of creation, so it became realized in physical form. In the African story of creation the spark of Fire yelled 'I AM!', and so it began to grow. This spark became Ma, the Great Mother who begged for a partner. The partner was the Tree of Life, and from their union all life emerged. In African storytelling the animals, vegetation, rivers and humans all emerged from this ancient mythical tree. This is their way of reminding us that we all come from the same source. However, no tradition seems to have summed up the origins of life in a way that encompasses a true vision of oneness.

After considering all of my research into creation stories from mainstream religions, as well as earth-based traditions, and following my vision of oneness, my perception is as follows: At first there was nothing. Then there was Creation. Creation emerged from nothingness and began its journey into the world of form as a spark of light. This light seems to be the first physical manifestation of the stepped-down cosmic potential or creative force.

In the most complex philosophies of time there is a similarity and congruence – the agreement that reality is layered. It starts in the subtle world of spirit and it manifests in different densities. What we need to realize is that the reality which we experience is an expression of the subtle spiritual world made manifest in dense physical form. When we remove this spell upon our thinking which makes the world and ourselves appear as mechanical objects in a quantifiable universe, then we can really start to appreciate the mystery that is our world. When we realize that our very own bodies are layered in veil upon veil of mysterious light, then we can begin an inquiry into our very nature, our purpose, from a very different perspective – one that I think could open up entirely new worlds of possibility for humanity.





CHAPTER 3

Light in matter

The Mineral Kingdom

The physical earth is primarily made up of rock. To a scientist it may look like a big lump of dead matter, but to a mystic it is alive and buzzing with incredible mystery. Given its divine origins, I set out to discover the life which resides within each aspect of creation. Of what divine matter, and from what mysterious secret law, is Gaia's body composed?

I have studied the earth in detail throughout my life, completing an undergraduate degree, and part of a postgraduate degree in Environmental Sciences, but I had truly never grasped this vision of earth as a living being that is part of an infinite fractal of life. I wanted to get close to her, to delve into her mysteries, and to remove the stubborn veils which stood between my perception and her true essence. And so I attempted to query, explore and observe the workings of her mysterious light in the individual aspects of creation.

When we look at the mineral kingdom, it is often difficult to imagine that it is alive, but rocks are living things. You may ask how this can be so. The answer lies in deconstruction. Apply the crystal vision of your mind to

dissecting rock into its basic elements. Break the rock open, and see the structure behind the rock. Every single component of that rock is made up of a cocktail of minerals and elements. The electromagnetic energy which can be vaguely deciphered through scientific instruments is invisible to the naked eye. Equally visible through psychic sight is the subtle body of the rock which is made up of pure light. The subtle body acts exactly as a vortex, or subtle organized energy field, through which the entire spectrum of creative energy flows and communicates. This energy is the fundamental pattern behind all living things. Even a rock is composed of a subtle pattern, which is the true nature of the rock.

In the world of science the word 'energy' is used in this context to describe electromagnetic energy. But unfortunately the scientists' thinking ends in the world of quantifiable design. Wherever there is design in nature, there is a seed which gave birth to that design. In the case of a rock, there is the original design that was responsible for the whole earth's coming into being. When the universe was born, and matter came into existence, it was the primal pattern which directed the labour of the mechanical universe to congregate the atoms into this form. So, if you sit and look at the rock, you can see that there is divinity in that rock. The rock is alive and teeming with energy. Every single atom in that rock is buzzing with the frequency of life, swirling around in the dance of life. Because we live in a world which regards rocks as inanimate, we have denied ourselves the opportunity to see their spirits. There is ample evidence for the living energy of rock in nature. That energy is life. It is the energy of all creation. It is present in all creation, and it *is* all creation. That energy is light.

The entire earth is a living body of light. On a physical level, Gaia has shaped the largest part of her body out of rock. The shallow crust on which we live can be likened to an epidermal layer, a living skin that surrounds her inner organs. Inside the body of Gaia is a deeply complex body composed of a vascular system and organs made of stone. Underneath the shallow

skin of our earth is a complex maze of underground channels and chambers through which life pulsates. Water lives inside the rock, as do innumerable crystals and deep veins of exotic minerals. We talk of a gold vein in mining, a vein which miners will follow for several kilometres underground, blasting away at the rocks to extract the precious metal. This vein is a living component of the living body of Gaia. Humans who take this gold from her are robbing her body of precious elements which hold the internal balance of her organs in check. A conscious person would not dare to mine their bodies for precious metals, because they would know that it would result in some other part of their bodies becoming disrupted, and could eventually lead to their death. This is how Gaia's body is composed: as above, so below. Our body is a reflection of the form of hers.

We modern humans find this quite difficult to comprehend because we have not given any thought to our living mother in this way for a very long time, but when we look back to our original ancestors, such as the San of Southern Africa, we learn from them that the earth is very literally alive. Her body is not only the subtle layer of green vegetation that is our primary living habitat, it extends from her dense core to her upper atmosphere. She is immense in totality. Ecological and Environmental Sciences have managed to show us how the subtle green body of vegetation, in combination with the plant and animal kingdoms, are a complete system, a body of life.

This, however, is not enough. It is still a perception which regards all of creation as the sum of separate parts which are combined to form a web. We need to view the earth as a living body, as is the universe. All of life is a living, breathing organism made up of an infinite number of layers of life.

In an attempt to understand more fully that the earth is a living being and that the rocks are alive, try to imagine yourself as a being who is millions of years old, but who has experienced these millions of years as a single short human lifetime. Imagine that you could look at the earth as it has changed over millions of years, slowing down and speeding up your perception when-

ever necessary. The whole body of earth would appear to grow and change in an endless cycle of life. Rocks give birth to new crystal formations, just as a fruit tree bears fruit within a season. You could actually watch the crystals in a cave grow like buds on a fruit tree in spring. On deeper reflection, we can conclude that the changes on the earth are not random processes, but rather manifestations of an evolving pattern, with great cohesion and design. Gaia is a being whose body is subjected to the same ageing process as our own and the same potential to create new life forms. Just imagine how much a human could learn about the nature of our earth if they really did live for this long. How incredibly wise and mysterious our Great Mother must be after having been alive for so long.

Our great ancestors of the earth-based traditions created elaborate rituals involving the earth, and particularly using her rock formations. In his book, *Pathways of the Sun*, Dan Liprini, a sangoma from South Africa, describes these living stones which were used by the San in mysterious rituals involving the light of the sun. In looking more closely at the geology of particular areas, it becomes blindingly obvious that the earth seems to be moulded with a very specific purpose in certain parts. The San seem to have found that there are parts of the earth that are specifically designed to work with light. There are places on Gaia's surface where the light of the sun is involved in an elaborate dance of light, as though she is not merely refracting the light of the sun and absorbing it through the plants, but actually bringing it into her body through rock formations too. It becomes apparent that the earth, this mysterious ancient being, is actually *working with light* in ways which are utterly mysterious.

So how does the earth work with light? There are structures in rocks which have been moulded by Gaia to work with the elements of life. Mountain ranges are exquisitely designed structures which hold, channel and conduct solar energy into the surface environments of the earth. This energy is also collected and imbibed by Gaia as nutrition, and then used for the purpose of

spiritual transmutation. The earth's surface is a living skin, shaped by the will of Gaia into forms which have many sacred functions. This is not the result of a chance process, but rather the result of will.

Without a living understanding of the earth it is impossible for the Western mind to grasp the fact that earth-based traditions around the world have used these forms within the earth's structure to channel light from the sun, the moon and the stars into the subtle body of Gaia, and thereby help her inner light to awaken. The San must have known and recognized this aspect of her nature, and therefore performed these rituals, which were conscious interactions within this sacred process. In adhering to Llewellyn Vaughan Lee's words about the earth, I concluded that these rituals were a means created by the San to work with the Soul of the World, the *Anima Mundi*. He shows how the ancient wisdom of spiritual work with the earth is a process of helping the earth to remain filled with life energy, with light, so that she can perform her spiritual journey. This process relies on the spiritual body of the human being as a stabilized vortex for the light of the Creative Force to work in conjunction with the subtle body of the earth. In this beautiful Sufi imagery we can picture how the lesser light of the self meets with the greater light of the World Soul and the ultimate light of the Creative Force in a synchronized dance of unfolding life unto itself, light upon light.

This explanation also accounts for the numerous ancient stone buildings which are present around the earth, many of which have a direct relationship with the sun. Sacred architecture is a continuation of the tradition whereby man worked with earth energies that were present in a particular place by designing stone structures which could dance with the light of the sun and the energies of the meridians of the earth, the ley lines.

It is extremely apparent that the San, like many other root races or earth-based cultures, lived in relative harmony with nature, and were aware of these divine elements in her landscape. They sought out the patterns in her divine symmetry and lived out their lives through rituals in these spaces. They knew

that the earth is alive and that they were living in and on the body of a Great Being. Their ancient lives were focused on living in balance with the sacred patterns of the earth's body, and they used these sacred patterns to enhance their own spiritual development and enlightenment.

Gaia knows that light is the primordial sustenance of any physical body, so although rocks primarily interact with the light of the sun and the stars, they also interact with the pure energy of the Creative Force. The earth has collected innumerable mechanisms in her physical body to dance with light. These physical structures have been mimicked by human beings in the form of countless 'mysterious' structures, such as Stonehenge and the pyramids of Egypt. Wherever there is sacred design, there is a play with light. Not only were these stone temples and natural stone structures used by the earth to conduct and mould the subtle energies of creation, but they were also used by people to access these same energies. Groups of our ancient ancestors would congregate at these sites to create a subtle group energy body which would assist the process of energy exchange at these sacred points, much like our white blood cells gather to remove challenging micro-organisms from the vascular system. These sites were ritual spaces for our ancestors to partake in the active spiritual work taking place within creation.

The San talk about this relationship to nature as though it were the most natural thing in the world, as though it would be inconceivable to live on the earth and not commune with her soul directly. This innate understanding of their role, and indeed mankind's role, as true guardians of nature, is an enlightening take on the biblical reference to Adam and Eve's having a similar responsibility bestowed upon them by God. As guardians of nature we are not only here to conserve earth's precious resources, but also to work with her on a subtle level, to offer our light and our labour unto her spiritual journey.

This process of working with the soul of the earth has been lost in part because of mankind's continued decimation of the earth. The gifts that the World Soul once offered to us are being taken away because we have abused

her subtle body far too much already, breaking the sacred laws of custodianship over nature with our reckless materialistic lives. When the San talk about rain dances and their ability to create rain, they are not living in some whimsical superstitious reality, but rather they are working with an entirely superior and mystical process. Queen Makheala Modjadji, the Rain Queen in South Africa, was bestowed with the gift of rain-making. Sadly, this tradition, as well as her lineage, is little understood and being lost to the mists of time.

Still, the physical remains of the temples and sacred stone monuments to a lost heritage remain today for us to remember that once there was a true sacredness in all of life. These ancient stones hold the memory of the past deep inside their mutable bodies, and the subtle consciousness can still commune with them and hear their stories, albeit in a hushed whisper.

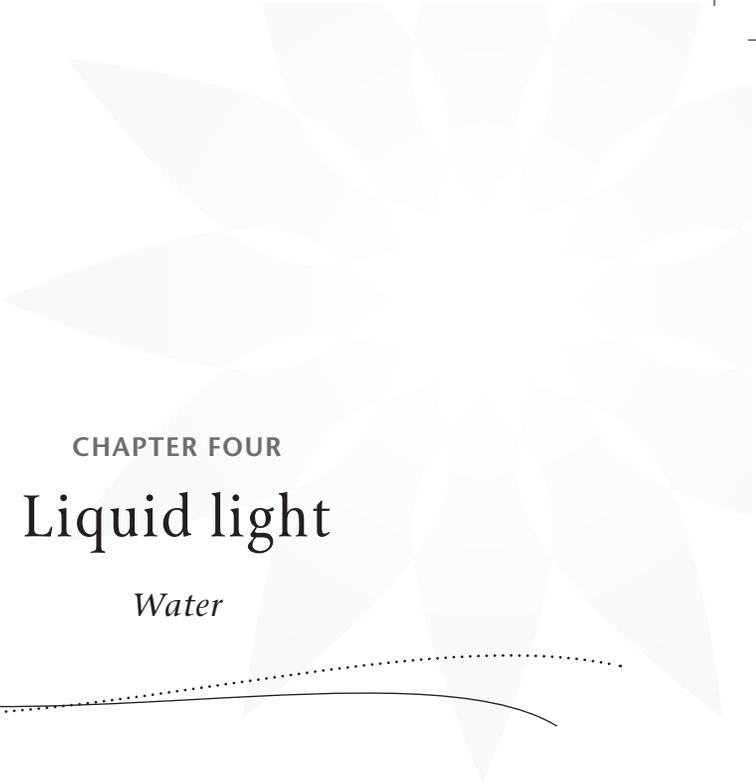
In modern life we still work with the earth on this physical level, though perhaps not with quite the same understanding or deep level of communication as in the past. Crystals and stones, which are the beautiful fruit of the stony skin of the earth, born into the world like soft flowers over thousands of years, are still used to perform specific healing work today. It is empowering to witness the body of the earth as being completely alive.

Something about this vision hit a chord within me, and awakened a new appreciation and humble sense of inquiry. Mysteriously well-timed events in my daily life coincided with my learning. During the writing of this book, I had asked my partner, Sylvie, to arrange a weekend away for us. She duly booked us into a place in the mountains to which I had never been. When we arrived, I instantly recognized it as an ancient San sacred site. The place was seated at the pinnacle of a mountain, and it must have been used as a shelter for our ancient ancestors. On either side of the shelter, in a perfect east-west line, were ridges of rock which stretched out along the sun's path, containing not only beautiful faces in the rock, but also perfect examples of crystals being grown and birthed within the skin of the rock. It was amazing to experience such synchronicity within my own path. I felt as though my hand was

being taken by an ancient being, and that I was being shown the answers to my questions in ways that I could not have imagined. And yet, though it may sound profound, it was all so very simple, humble and ordinary.

When we look at the mineral world and see that it is alive, it becomes easy to see this process in all other aspects of creation. The life that exists inside the apparently dead world of rocks is no different to the life on more complex levels of creation. The life in the mineral world is just simpler, or rather a less complex manifestation of life. As life evolved from the primordial pattern of light and moved into the world of form – into quarks, atoms and elements – so it became more complex. It is important to remember that at the most basic level of creation, this life is present, and that it is just another degree of complexity of an original perception of light which emerged from the beginnings of time and space. When we look at creation as a single, living organism, then nothing within it can be perceived as dead or inanimate. All things are contained and maintained by this process of life.

All of life is utterly alive with this spark of life, the signature of God in all things.



CHAPTER FOUR

Liquid light

Water

Water is a part of the living body of Gaia. It is a living substance, alive with purpose. The spirit of water is a living entity following a karmic journey of its own, partaking in the creation of life wherever it goes.

As I sat down to write this, I felt a beautiful and magical light touching each page, and bringing it to life. Like a magical fairytale, in some way it felt as though I was tapping into the light of creation, the *lumen naturae*, and I was learning directly from this light. This same light was weaving its way into my body and enlivening my own light, as though this light were the intelligence of life itself. This magical light danced with the light of my own soul. I was deeply conscious that everything was alive, from the simplest grain of sand to the spray which wafts off the back of the wave in the morning sunrise with the offshore winds.

The waters of the earth are not mere physical structures composed of atoms, they are actually light – bright and dazzling light that rests within water, both brighter than the sun and more pure. Water is composed of

simple structures to begin with, but as it diversifies into increasingly complex forms, it can hold a greater complexity of life forms. When water interacts with the mineral world and the light of the sun, it creates the primary substrate from which other more complex forms of life can evolve. This is an important principle in creation: one layer of life (atoms and the mineral kingdom) diversifies into more complex but self-similar forms (water), and then creates a platform for a kind of alchemical transcendence for other, more complex systems to emerge. When the integrity of one of these layers is undermined by some disturbance, such as pollution, then the higher levels of life supported by the primary layer, such as subtle energies that inhabit the water, will be compromised. The river is layered with life in the same way that the human body contains a skeleton, living organs and systems, a mind and a soul. All of life is similar in this way. It always repeats these fundamental patterns of expansion, from one layer to the next. We seem to have forgotten this wisdom which would have been second nature to us in the times when humans lived closer to the land.

Water is the blood of Mother Nature, and the rivers and oceans and streams are her vascular system. The whole system of the world is like a living, breathing organism, where water is liquid light. This is the true nature of water within creation.

This liquid light, water, represents an aspect of the dance of creation as it journeys through time. In African mythology there is a great spirit of water, named Bandau. A sangoma once described the Bandau to me as the overseeing spirit behind all water, alive in every river, flowing through every ocean. The sangoma showed me how a river which is dammed up becomes stagnant because it can no longer flow. She illustrated how the Bandau 'dies' when this happens. When the spirit of a river dies it leaves behind the physical form, but there is no longer any magic in the river. It becomes a shallow shell of its former self, lacking the depth of something that is completely alive. To those who cannot see beyond superficial appearances, the river might appear to be

normal, but in reality it is only alive on the most basic level of its potential. According to the sangoma, the material river is layered with various manifestations of life. The very basic layer of the river is easy to see with the physical eye, but beyond that level there is a subtle energetic body, a spiritual body, and ultimately a soul. Life is inseparable from its parts. All life, every single aspect which contributes to the make-up of creation, is visible in any single aspect of creation, because it is all one.

Our ancestors performed sacred water rituals with the subtle dimensions of a river, or the ocean for that matter, in order to enliven the subtle light within water and within themselves. These earth-based cultures had developed ways of shifting their consciousness into a state in which they could perceive the subtle realms and communicate with the spiritual aspects of the river. They would ‘speak’ to the spirit of the water, and often work in partnership with that spirit in order to receive help. Implicit in these cultures were rules for the conservation and protection of the physical body of nature. This combined approach of dealing with the river’s physical and subtle layers developed a relationship with water which helped enliven the subtle aspects of the river’s being. I believe that this nurtured the river in a deeper way, and therefore enabled the river to grow into a more complex form, allowing it to progress on its evolutionary journey. By taking a co-operative approach to creation, these cultures could actually carve a way for more complex aspects of creation to manifest, including not only physical diversification, but also the subtle growth of creation. As the physical layer grew more complex, so did the subtle and spiritual aspects of the river evolve.

This explains the importance that was placed on working with the spirit of a river, a mountain, or a tree in these cultures. They understood that their attention to these aspects of creation would facilitate the evolution of life. Our ancestors would relate to the river as a being of far greater depth than our current culture understands. They would go beyond the physical façade and access the other layers of the being that not only rejuvenated the life of the

river, but also created gateways between these two. This maintained a thread between the physical and subtle layers which enabled the 'magical' aspects of the river to be worked with, and allowed people to have access to the powers that we read about in old fairy tales and shamanic legends.

Much of the spiritual work that is done on the subtle planes, unseen to the eyes of humans, is largely responsible for maintaining the great diversity we have in life. Shamans and healers today continue this work of developing healthier relationships between the various dimensions of life because they are implicitly aware that these processes are utterly needed for the emergence of life. Our attention to the subtle realm, and our work within this realm, actually enlivens the world in which we live, sometimes in ways which we become aware of only over long periods of time.

I first experienced this magical property of water a few years ago with a sangoma, by the name of Liz, whom I was consulting. It was at a time when I was struggling to hold my spirit together that I approached her to help me to recover my light. I had recently moved to the city after spending a year and a half working as a river guide, then surfing and living in a tent in Jeffrey's Bay on the eastern coast of South Africa. I had been living a very healthy and natural lifestyle which was close to nature, and the transition to the city had been a huge shock to my system. I started studying at university, running a business in health foods, and was trying to negotiate the stresses of this busy new lifestyle. Liz could see that I was struggling, so she performed a water ceremony to help restore the energy in my light body. In this ritual she used the living energy of a river to help carry away the dark and sticky energy which I had been carrying in my light body, and thereby infused me with new and life-giving energy. We performed this ritual at sunrise. I had to stand unclothed in a freezing river, looking downstream, while she brushed my energy body and used sacred words to throw the negative energy out of my body and into the river. She used the tail of a wildebeest to perform the 'brushing' of my light body. It was almost as though she was removing some of the discord-

ant aspects which were causing my light to be depleted. Though it may seem strange that an animal's tail is used for such a ritual, I imagine that there is a relationship between the wildebeest and the healing that is embedded in the history of creation, which we have probably forgotten. When she had completed the ritual, I was told to turn around and walk out of the river, not looking back at all, because the negative energies could jump back into my body if I paid them any attention at all. The river duly took them away for me.

With hindsight I can see more clearly how she used the vortex of water energy to help draw out the residual 'stickiness' in my energy body, and how she must have connected my light, her light, and the light of the river into a healing poultice of light which helped me to heal.

This powerful and ancient healing form is still very much alive in Africa today. It is a kind of ancient earth wisdom which our healers still understand in relation to the art of healing, using the energies of the earth. In this simple ritual Liz interacted with the water on various levels, using the mechanics of its vortex, the spirit of the river, and her own conceptual and spiritual wisdom to perform a healing ceremony. This is just one example of how interacting with creation on multiple levels can reveal new possibilities for human life and the greater expansion of life in general.

The second experience I had with the river magic was a less intense one. I was hiking in a huge mountain range with Sylvie; and we had been following a pathway of rocks which jutted out along the mountain range. I suspected that they were sacred stones. As we walked I photographed the incredible natural faces that were visible in the rocks. They were ancient faces, many with their heads looking toward the sun. The stone trail was covered in crystals and we were exploring these particular rocks, collecting crystals, and continuing to walk along the ridge which ran due east. Eventually we came to a small cliff, and the stones led us down to a beautiful, seemingly untouched valley. The valley was singing with the songs of the birds and the screaming buzz of insects as it baked in the midday sun. If we stood still we could feel the presence

of magnificent life energy. At the centre of the valley was what looked like a stone circle, which seemed to have been placed there in bygone times. From the top of the valley we could see a small trickle of water that had escaped the earth and was making its way down the mountainside. The path seemed to carry us along to a specific place, so we followed it to where the stream met another stream, and there we found a pool, perfectly squared off, perched atop a cliff and brimming with vibrant energy. Below the pool was a small channel carved into the rock which would fit my body if I lay down. With my head lying upstream, at the foot of the pool, and my feet perched atop the cliff, I dissolved into the divine fabric of the place. If I were to have designed a sacred place for doing work with the water spirit, then I would never have been able to create something as simple yet beautiful as this. I lay my bare body in the smooth rock channel and placed a few crystals which I had found lying next to the pool on my forehead. Lying there, I beckoned the energy of the water to speak to me. I calmed my breathing so that I could attune to the process. I was asking for healing. I felt the energy of the stream move through my entire body and then drop down the cliff and onto the rocks below. Every now and then a gust of wind would blow up the waterfall and spray its vapour onto me. It was a magical experience which lay there waiting for any willing participant. Like the caves in fairy tales which open upon hearing the magic word spoken by the adventurer, so too did the river open up and reveal its secret powers, its inner magic, its mystery. Nature bestows these blessings upon us – when we seek them out.

Once I had experienced the light inside the river I could never go back to a position of seeing it merely as the result of a geological process. It became glaringly apparent that the river was alive with an energy which invoked the sculpting of the landscape for its own purpose, its own evolution.

A river sings with the song that only the enlightened can hear. It carries magic that only those with the ‘secret password’ may find. It is there in plain sight for everyone to experience, but sadly remains closed to most.

But there is a new phase in the evolution of the body of Gaia today which is allowing more and more people to awaken to the subtle energies of life, to the light within nature. I have seen this emerging light in creation with my own eyes, and have started hearing of more and more people who acknowledge the sacred light within creation.

When water is alive it sings with joy, plays with light, and its spirit rushes to meet you when you enter it with respect. When you have the eyes to see, a river becomes a living vortex of light, filled with immense mystery and intrigue. I have gazed upon a river and seen on the outer planes how its energy is stretching throughout the stream, from its source to its mouth; and once in the ocean, I have watched it merge once again with its greater form.

Our own subtle bodies are similarly composed. The chakras of our energy bodies resemble vortexes of swirling energy that are accumulated at a particular place as a part of a greater energy body, which is our entire auric field. The interesting thing about vortexes is that they spin around at tremendous speeds in order to hold the conglomeration of atoms together in the material plane, and in turn to create the physical dimension.

The vibrational frequency of matter determines whether it appears as hard or soft. The vortex principle in creation actually contains the material plane, holds the loose atoms together within its subtle form, and manifests them as physical matter. This is a fine example of how the various layers of creation act as a single unit, and how the microcosm and the macrocosm are one.

Understanding this principle in water, and finding ways to work with this vortex energy, are probably two of the things that we will begin to discover and understand in the next era of civilization. The works of Victor Schauberger on free energy contain some remarkably insightful examples of how to use this vortex structure in liquid. Schauberger designed physical objects which could channel this vortex principle of water and create energy from the infinite cosmic energy of creation – the direct opposite of thermodynamic energy. Free energy is not just a new mechanical application of the laws of

the physical universe, it is rather the tapping in to the infinite energy of what Tesla called the 'unbound totality', and which metaphysical science describes as the 'aether' of the universe.

I am told that there was a time on earth when the ocean and all of the rivers were alive. It would have been unimaginable to find a river where the spirit was not present. Today we have to hike to the most remote places in nature to find these living beings untouched and still alive. How sad that we have forgotten our magical friends who live right before our very eyes. The multitudes of discordant energies which exist in built-up areas seem to jar the field of the light substrate and weaken the integrity of the river, and all other life forms, for that matter. When we speak to a river, or go to it for healing, there is a response in its deep and ancient soul. If we do this, not only will we find the magical energy in rivers, but we will also help to enliven these rivers by touching their spirits and asking them to hold our light. Our light, brought into contact with a river, can counteract the dizzy array of conflicting energy fields that come from our discordant mechanized civilization. Our light can actually recharge or repattern the energy field of a river, and help it to continue its evolutionary journey in the midst of our civilization's chaos.

Contemplating these principles often results in a myriad of questions, such as: How long is the lifespan of a river? Are rivers as ancient as the earth itself? If rivers are as old as the earth, then surely we would do everything within our power not only to rescue these ancient beings from extinction, but also to learn to unravel their deep mysteries? In a world of massive mobilization toward worthy causes, who will help to create awareness in the citizens of our world about rivers being living entities?

The solution to these problems is not simple. However, we can resolve environmental illnesses by returning to the knowledge of how to work with the most primary elements of creation in order to bring back the subtle life manifestations of living systems.

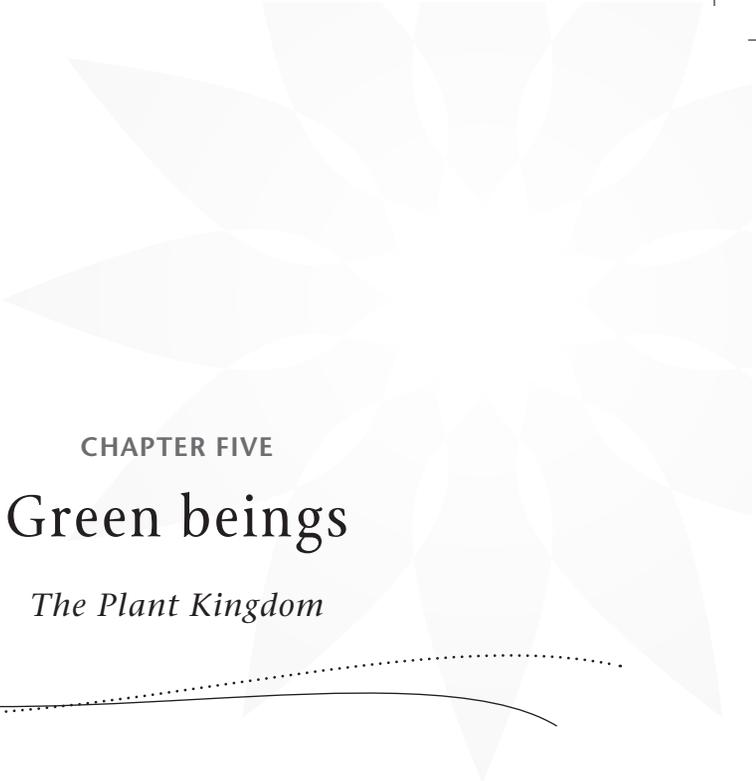
What we need to do is to approach the entire field, layer upon layer, and

give attention to each aspect of that system. We need to reconnect it with its source and its whole, understanding that the river does not exist in isolation to the rest of the body of Gaia. I believe that if we can find a way to interact directly with the multiple levels of creation, and take an approach that integrates all of these levels, then we will start to make immense progress in the field of environmental science. This is where the shamans and healers of the world can add their significant assistance to the healing of the body of earth, by interacting with the earth on a subtle level in partnership with others who understand the more dense manifestations of the earth.

I hope and imagine that our approach to environmental healing in the future will depend on groups of people who will come together from various areas of expertise in order to approach a problem from various levels of understanding: physical, subtle, conceptual and spiritual. This will be a far more powerful and integrated approach to repairing environmental damage. And I believe it will be effective.

Next time you see a river, call to its spirit to let it know that you see it, that you acknowledge its presence as a living being in creation. This simple act of acknowledgement can go a long way toward helping that river to heal. Offer yourself as a conduit for the light of the creative force to enter the river, and you may just experience something new and utterly enlivening.





CHAPTER FIVE

Green beings

The Plant Kingdom

Plants exist in nature in a state of oneness that implicitly reflects the original divine pattern of creation. The tree has no mind to question its position within creation, and nor does it consider itself separate from it. This Zen-like state of oneness is implicit in all of nature. It is an unbroken code that all living life-forms, besides humans, adhere to without question. With one half of their body rooted in the soil of the earth, and the other half reaching into the light of the sky, plants imbibe the light of the sun and draw it down into the earth. They are living metaphors for how life ingests the light of life and brings it into creation.

Remember this: all that comes into manifestation is not emerging from nothing, but from a divine pattern, a blueprint that is slowly dressing itself with physical and subtle form.

It is unfortunate that plants are no longer considered sacred in our modern culture. But this is not how it has always been. In African spiritual tradition, as with many other earth-based spiritual traditions, there is still an innate acceptance that plants are living beings. Shamans, in particular, see these

creatures as incredible beings who hold hidden knowledge which we humans can access through communicating with them. They talk of relationships with plants as though they were family, protecting plants with the same dignity and respect as one would treat their beloved. Plants are sacred in these cultures, and this relationship is something that seems to have remained unbroken since the beginning of their cultures' histories. In fact, these shamans cannot conceive of humans living their lives without an active relationship with the plants that surround them. As far as they are concerned, these plants are their food, their medicine, their teachers, their shelter and their companions on earth. They are as integral to their lives as the air that they breathe and the water that they drink. In Llewellyn's teachings he describes how in the Western world this relationship has been almost entirely forgotten as more and more people have left the land to follow the materialistic dream. Divinity and innate purpose gave way to materialism and practicality. Everything that once belonged to the sacred earth somehow got changed into a material asset.

Llewellyn says that when you tear away the essence of something, leave it without a spirit, then it opens the door to treating that as a disposable thing. The tragedy of this trend in human culture is that when the sacredness of plants was forgotten, we lost the extraordinary depth of that ancient relationship, and now we have not only forgotten the sacredness of plants, but we have forgotten that we have forgotten. The memory of this close bond between human and plant is something which we imagine to have a place in our children's stories, not our own 'real' lives. The subtle sacred chords that were once woven between our being and theirs have been torn apart and lost, and with this we ended a cycle of conscious co-evolution between ourselves and the plant world. Where ancient forests and sprawling savannahs once lived out their extraordinarily complex lives, we built concrete shopping malls that make money, trading deep relationships with nature for a dream of owning a bigger car and shopping for better clothes.

But while all of this change was happening in the world, there were the shamans, and other spiritually conscious groups, who kept the spirit of this relationship alive. There were remote tribes of earth-conscious humans who continued the practices of being guardians over nature, being passive assistants to the unfolding of life on the inner planes. These people helped to keep the earth alive, stayed true to the fundamental pulse of life, and maintained the threshold necessary to enable life to continue through her labour pains. These cultures maintained a relationship to plants, to the natural world that remained largely unseen to the eyes of the western world while it ploughed into the materialist dream of a technocentric future. They remembered that nature was sacred, that every person was one with life.

The traditional African understanding, which has been largely usurped by western values of materialism, is that plants are living, sacred beings who have an innate right to live, and who we humans are supposed to protect and defend. In ancient Africa, Credo Mutwa tells us that there were strict codes of conduct which related to the protection of the environment. There were specific trees that could not be cut down, and an offender could be punished by death. There were certain tribes who were custodians of specific plants which enabled natural conservation habitats to be established. Plants were given sacred rights that were to be respected at all costs. Horrible punishments were handed out to those who broke these sacred laws. The system of conservation was so deeply entrenched in these communities that certain tribes were responsible for specific roles in the entire environment. The many different tribes, separated by great distances, would naturally fall into line when protecting the earth. This way of existing alongside the plant world was not exclusive to Africa – all earth cultures across the world were similar.

Once you snap back into this quite intuitive and natural way of understanding the world, it becomes easy. It just makes sense to relate to the earth and its living systems as family, as our family.

We are living in an era when nature is coming alive again, as her soul

reaches out to the world and asks who will hear her invitation to remember that she is here. Those who can move beyond the materialist spell and start to see the light within life will begin to witness something new that is awakening within the great Mother Earth. There is a mysterious awakening of light in nature that is emerging on the inner planes, a bright light that is bursting out of the seams of all living things.

When we stop and look beyond the material world, which is the most simple level of perception, we begin to see this new life emerging. The key is to remind ourselves to keep looking beyond the material veil and to go deeper into the subtle layers of life which surround every living thing. When we look beyond the physical veil of a plant and into its subtle nature, we start to see things that are startling. We start to understand the sense behind the strange language of earth magic which our ancestors used to talk. It starts to become quite obvious that what they were saying is absolutely correct. We see the subtle realm, and then we see that plants serve as conductors of subtle energies between the subtle and the material realm that we, and all life, rely on for our survival. When we take this approach, using an awareness that is implicitly available to all human beings, then we can see that trees have spirits that can impart wisdom to us; that they are stabilized carriers of life energy that we can feel when we touch them, hold them or even just gaze upon them. Our potential to enter into far deeper and more meaningful relationships with them is almost untouched these days, but it seems that with the looming destruction of the world culture, these plants are trying to make contact with us and are somehow offering us a vision of their inner light.

Plants are stabilized vortexes of light which can transmit the essence of the communications from the World Soul into the material world. By listening to them we are surrounding ourselves with their collective energy. We are entraining our bodies to their gentle rhythms of peace, because plants are living examples of beings which are perfectly in tune with the ebb and flow of life in Gaia.

They affect our energy bodies in the same way. When conscious human beings gaze upon nature and see the soul of the earth implicitly resting in the green light of the plant world, they are participating in the sustenance of the light of Gaia. When we reflect on the light in creation, it is often plants and trees that create the visual and energetic platform for us to access this realm. When we talk to the plants that surround us and ask for their guidance, we are led into a magical realm of awareness of the light in creation. Plants can do this for us. To sit beneath an old tree or rest your head and fall asleep at its roots is a luxury that most of us never take. How much magical wisdom is lying there, waiting for our dormant minds to invite it in?

In African tradition, as well as in many earth-based cultures, there is a belief that for every illness in the world there is a plant that can cure it. Is that not an incredible thing? But we have been so limited in our understanding of what this great knowledge means, so selfish, that we assume it only relates to us and how nature can serve the human being. Why do we not take this knowledge and expand it in our awareness to other aspects of this term 'illness'. The concept of illness, in vibrational medicine, is a state that is reached when a system is out of balance. Vibrational medicine uses particular plants to rectify this balance in our body complex. What would happen if we looked beyond ourselves and to the world as a whole and asked what plants could teach us about the illness of the whole? Why do we not look to the plants for their teachings about how we can use them to help bring the light of creation alive again? If only we could reach toward a new culture on the earth which could begin to understand the journeys of these plants and help them to actualize their karmic missions. Then we would start to enter into a truly conscious relationship with these soft, green friends.

Since the beginning of time we have used plants for healing, but not in some pharmacological way where the active ingredient is isolated in a laboratory and then synthesized into a drug. No – this is very far removed from the original purpose of a plant's healing properties. We need to move beyond this

shallow façade in order to understand the true magic of the plant, because we heal ourselves with plants not only by ingesting their physical bodies, but also by integrating their whole being into ours.

When we take a plant and use it to heal ourselves, the plant itself whispers to us, teaches us to remember the secrets of our forgotten past. The plant is composed of many layers of energy, and all of these layers speak to us, communing with our bodies, minds and souls. They send reverberations throughout our bodies on various levels. They interact with the entire complex of our beings, communicating with each aspect of us, connecting the pathways that tie up our whole being. Plants bring us into an inner integrity, or wholeness, which pharmaceutical drugs cannot do, because they are living creatures administering us with their special gift that creation has bestowed upon them. We drink of their knowledge through the sacrifice of their lives for our wellness.

Whether we do or do not realize this on the physical level does not change the fact that we have been treated on levels beyond those of which we are conscious. The plants that we use as medicines, whether we receive them from the foods that we eat or as tonics for particular ailments, help us to interact with the deeper aspects of ourselves and bring a kind of synthesis between the various levels of our beings. Plants are magical alchemists when it comes to their ability to interact with us. By healing ourselves with plants we assume the spiritual responsibility of the time: to act as healthy, stabilized spiritual vessels that can be used by the body of the earth to perform the work of the World Soul.

It seems that in this age of materialism the plants are calling to us and communicating with whoever answers to them. They are telling us that they are there for us, that they want to be invited back into our lives and they want to communicate with us. I believe that at this time in our evolution we are being required to look toward the wisdom of the World Soul and be led by her teachings, and that plants and the entire spectrum of nature are capable of transmitting whatever information is required for us to learn right now.

Plants are truly living entities with whom we can interact and communicate, but how do plants help us to understand the living body of Gaia more thoroughly? Plants share the light of Gaia with us by offering us sustenance, by offering us companionship, and by their innate nature as living beings who collectively hold the surface of the earth in their soft green light. Their sustenance is pure condensed sunlight, processed into nutrients. To think of the nutrition that we get from plants as a list of minerals and other dense nutrients is a very mechanical way of understanding nature. The foods which plants give us are like gifts of love from nature, something that is birthed from the body of Gaia and given as an offering to our bodies for sustenance. This offering acts on the physical level as nutrition, but also contains the very life force of the plant, of the earth, and of the cosmos. The spirits of plants also give us their energy. Their presence in our lives is calming, peaceful and enlivening.

When we stop looking at nature as something that needs to be kept at bay, and start seeing it as mysterious and magical, then we start to understand the true possibilities of accessing this magic in creation.

In contemplating plants from this ancient and sacred perspective we come to the understanding that they have lives quite similar to ours. They have destinies, they have karmas, and they have purposes in the web of creation. I remember that Liz once told me that a plant would sacrifice its body for a person in order to be of help, whether it be for healing, sustenance or shelter. At the end of such a plant's life it returns to the great realms of creation, knowing that it has assisted in a purpose. This is why a sangoma always asks permission from a plant to take its life for a medicine. In a place where there is more than a single plant to choose from, a sangoma asks the plant deva in the area to guide her as to which plant to choose, and even though it may take several hours more to find the right plant, she must continue until she is led to the one she may use. These plants are completely surrendered to their roles in the ecosystem, obediently entrained to the mind of Gaia. They do not

question their roles, but they have an awareness that their role is beneficial to the whole system, and this gives them purpose. The apparently obvious fact that plants are living things has an enormous impact on how we treat our green friends.

When we imbibe a living plant into our bodies for sustenance, we take on that plant's karma, its consciousness, and also the offering or gift which it is capable of imparting.

I have spent nearly a decade studying the ancient foods and medicinal plants of Southern Africa, and what really interests me is the way in which a plant can enhance my own spiritual journey toward a state of greater consciousness. My mother had given two books to me which helped to teach me more about these special green things on our planet's surface. One was written by David Wolfe and its title is *The Sunfood Diet Success System*. The other, by Gabriel Cousens, is *Conscious Eating*. Both of these authors were using their own lives to explore the practice of raw and live food diets for the express purpose of personal actualization and spiritual development. What I found fascinating about these books was how both authors had discovered a way of actually enhancing their personal development by the practice of eating raw plant foods. Implicit in their philosophies is the understanding that plants are filled with light, and that the quality of nutrition – the sum of elements in the plant that were life nourishing – originates from the light of the sun and the primordial energy of life, or prana. I subsequently spent some time practising a raw food diet, and I found that when I consistently ate raw foods, there was a definite change in my consciousness. Not only did my physical body change into a healthier vessel, but my spiritual development seemed to be accelerated. I do not believe that eating raw foods alone can bring anybody to a point of enlightenment – there is a whole series of things required for this – but I do acknowledge that by eating these raw foods we are partaking in an ancient co-operation with the light within nature that has a noticeable effect on our consciousness. By ingesting these raw and live foods,

we are taking in the pure, condensed light of the sun and the creative life force as nutrition, and thereby helping to stabilize our energy bodies for the reception of more complex spiritual energy.

Over the years I have realized that the use of plants in my diet, especially ones that I have grown myself or which have been plucked from the wild, is one of the great secrets that ancient earth cultures knew and understood as sacred pathway to receiving the teachings of the earth. I have seen that a plant is a subtle spiritual vessel, and that when we imbibe a plant there is a sharing of energy between our world and theirs. The subtle electric life force, the vibrational frequencies of its primary identity, and its particular spiritual gift, are shifted into and superimposed upon our own. This concordance of energy is an alchemical elixir which gives rise to human growth and learning.

Our plant friends care for us and show us love, and we can partake in this relationship consciously if we so wish. They want us to know that their usefulness to humans is not only as food, but that they are also able to hold particular strains of energy in balance within an ecosystem or environment such as our bodies.

There is something about these green, leafy friends with whom we share the earth's surface that makes it very easy to see the light within them. When we are in nature, it is the reflection of the sun's light onto the green fields, the leaves and the flowers, that really touches something in the soul. When we are stressed by too much concrete, have seen too many billboards and passed an overwhelming number of shopping malls, the peace of the green light in nature has a powerful effect. It can relax the body and mind, almost like a kind of light therapy on the system. The sounds of nature are slower, more natural and more rhythmic. We can find ourselves slipping into a new rhythm in a short time. There is something about the green light in nature that relaxes the mind and soul.

On another level altogether there is the subtle, spiritual light that resides in plants. This light is present behind the material veil of the physical leaf.

When we look at a leaf and invoke the subtle light that rests within it, we can see on the inner planes how the physical shell of the leaf is hiding an immense bright light within it, a light that is almost bursting at the seams to come out. This light within matter is the presence of life within life. It is the primordial substance that underlies all form. This light is visible as the physical stuff of the material realm, but all too often we mistake the physical manifestation of this light for the actual thing itself. The leaf we are looking at in this thought experiment is made up of multiple wavelengths. Our physical eyes perceive the wavelength which makes the light appear to have form and structure, but on the inner planes, and with subtle vision, we can see the light that resides in the leaf. This light bursts through the leaf and into the world of form. Its presence is everywhere and its source is everything. When we see this light, an interesting thing happens. We begin to understand that everything in creation is utterly seamless. We begin to understand that every living thing is composed of light, and that this light connects every single thing. We also notice that this is not a 'web' of connection. It is not connected like a chain of many separate parts. Rather, it is absolutely all one.

To think of the oneness of all life as a web of separate things is like trying to divide up the sky and say it is all linked together by smaller bits of sky. The whole of creation is the light that underlies every single thing, and in plants you can see this light very well.

Nature's heartbeat itself can be heard in the movements of nature. If you sit still in a place where nature's volume is louder than the mechanical world, then you can do the following experiment to connect with the rhythm of life:

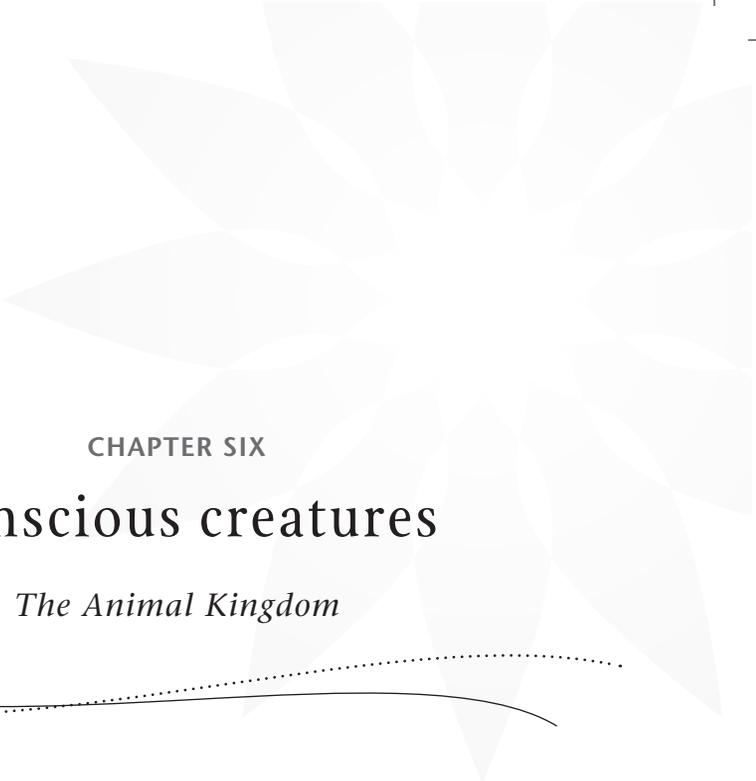
*Sit still, lie down or just be comfortable and close your eyes.
Notice all the sounds that surround you. Birds singing: first one,
then a few more, maybe even a small symphony of different birds.
Notice, with your eyes closed, how they are moving through the
trees. Imagine where they are going, what draws them to fly or sit*

still. Imagine that they are living beings filled with light, that they are moving in tune with a subtle rhythm. Now turn your attention to the wind. Notice how it is moving across your body, how it rustles the leaves in the trees, how it ebbs and flows. If you are at a stream, listen to the water moving along the elaborate bed of rocks as it makes an infinite variety of sounds. Perhaps the river is tidal, notice how it is in motion all the time. Then open your eyes and look into the leaves of a tree, or stare into a flower or across a landscape. Notice how nothing is still. Notice how there is light dancing upon every single surface of the greenery. See how this light itself conducts the patterns of sounds and visions you perceive. If it were a fraction darker, how would this symphony change? Now see how the tree drinks in the sunlight. Find a leaf that is highlighted with light. Notice how the light is being drawn into the body of the leaf and transformed into energy. On the inner planes, imagine that this light is far more real than the material things you see and hear. Imagine that this light actually lies beneath the surface of the material things you perceive and that your eyes are tricked by its appearance in the material world. Imagine the light now bursting through the very subtle veil that separates your perception and forming a white chord of light that, like a gentle feeler, moves toward you, up and into your solar plexus. This light moves up into your body and collects your light, morphing it into a chord. Now two chords of light flow with your breath in a figure of 8 between you and the tree. You are one.

This gentle flow between you and the tree awakens something in you and in the tree. It connects the ancient subtle chords that once existed between human and plant, stimulates some ancient magical pathway that once existed. The tree comes alive because you are one with it. You come alive

because you are connected to the life in the tree: its light. There is a fertilization between your spirit and that of the tree, something that was once separated and held apart has come together again. Where there was division there is now unity. As you imagine how this feels, expand your consciousness into all the trees around you, then expand it into all the greenery of the whole planet. Recognize that the same light that resides within this tree before you is seamlessly woven throughout every single leaf on the planet, and that you too are this very same light. This is the consciousness of oneness. By serving the tree with this exercise you not only awaken yourself to the principle of the oneness of the light within nature, but you also awaken the tree to become conscious of this again.

Like us, much of nature is also sleeping, awaiting the assistance of those who can bring their awareness to life again. Slowly, by bringing our light into union with the light of nature, we help to awaken the whole once again.



CHAPTER SIX

Conscious creatures

The Animal Kingdom

Animals, like plants, seem to have no self-awareness. They effortlessly perform their duties, as ordained by the blueprint of life, fitting into the environment where they have been placed without complaint. This is pure oneness in practice.

The animal kingdom is a spectacular array of incredible mystery and awe. What is particularly striking when looking at and interacting with animals, especially wild ones, is that they are so much like us. When there is an eye looking back at me which belongs to a creature of nature, I feel the compassion that comes with a sense of being family. The eyes are a pathway to the soul. The minds and souls of animals are deep, as ours are; mysterious too, and wild with potential. Perhaps they are more simple than we are in many respects, but this does not mean that their souls are not deep and mysterious. Our differences are miniscule, only slight at the most.

I have read in Buddhist literature that animals have group souls which evolve into a single human form over the course of their successive lifetimes, and that through the process of serving their time as animals, they

eventually awaken and merge into a higher form of consciousness as a single human being.

In African earth-based cultures the belief differs somewhat because some animals are considered to be beings who have achieved their supreme states of evolution long before humans have.

Mythic tales told by Credo Mutwa tell that whales are the remaining beings of lost gods who once roamed the earth. He says that whales were supernatural creatures who once reached great heights of development and were capable of incredible magical acts. Their lives on earth ended after a great battle in which they saved the planet from invading races from the stars by using magical whips of powerful electricity to bring down their foes. After this great battle the whales became sea creatures, living the rest of their journey in the great ocean. Because they were considered to be such great, sacred creatures, the shamans would go to the beaches and beat their drums in order to slip into a trance and thereby communicate with these creatures, attempting to gain some of their incredible knowledge.

There is another legend in South Africa that tells the story of how the San actually learned to communicate with dolphins in the shallow waters of Jeffrey's Bay, and that their language today still contains innumerable clicking sounds which bear a remarkable resemblance to the dolphin language that we have heard. Credo Mutwa believes that the day will come when other humans will learn to communicate with the dolphins and the whales, and that great vaults of knowledge will be given to us through this. The name for a dolphin in Zulu is *ihlengethwa*, which means 'to redeem' or 'to save'. Perhaps they will offer us redemption in the times that lie ahead. Maybe they hold knowledge that has been lost by humans, and maybe they are fulfilling their roles as custodians of this great wisdom. Whatever the truth may be, these African stories remind us that animals are deeply sacred creatures whose presence on this earth is wonderfully mysterious, and probably very important.

When we compare ourselves to the dolphins and the whales, there is

surely no comparison to the great levels of intelligence that they have reached. Not only is it a different type of intelligence, but also a completely different evolutionary path that we have each travelled. They are the master magicians of the oceans and of the animal kingdom, mysterious beings who have a significant role to play in the evolution of life. Some animals may even have the ability to transcend the earthly planes in the same way that humans do, and they might be our equals in this great complex system of life – it is quite an assumption to think that humans are at the top of the evolutionary ladder. Maybe we have equals in the animal realm, creatures who are on a different evolutionary path altogether, the ultimate merging of which will be something humans could never have achieved on their own?

Llewellyn Vaughan Lee writes that our previous worldview, the one that is in the process of dying, seems to focus on all the aspects of our consciousness which were separated, and that the new world view of oneness is seeking out the pattern of everything that is whole. When we look at animals, it is important to remember that if we are to discover the mysteries of these beings, we will have to look at their role in our world as beings whose lives are as important as our own. We will need to observe them from a perspective of oneness, to observe our similarities rather than our differences, to stop this misguided human perspective of seeing ourselves as the masters of nature. African earth lore has a deeply respectful relationship with animals which mirrors the idea of the oneness in creation. Its followers have never dissected an animal on a surgical table to attempt to understand how it works, rather they have honoured the creatures with the respect of being equal and mysterious beings with whom they have communicated in order to learn more about the earth and the world. In our new world view we must remember how these ancient relationships worked, and we must rescue this knowledge if we are to move forward in a way which truly serves the whole, the one.

When a member of the San speaks of an animal, he or she holds it in the highest regard. Through their trance ceremonies they learned that every

living thing has a spirit, and that communication with this spirit of the animal is possible. There are some accounts of a very sacred ritual which was practised in San tribes during the hunting ritual which deeply respected the soul of the animal.

An animal which was going to be hunted would be called the day before the hunter even set out. The hunter would send a request to the overseeing deva of the tribe for an animal that he might hunt and kill. If the spirit world decided that it was not his right to have such a creature, then there would be no hunt. When a creature was given to the hunter, he would set out into the wild, following a path which the spirit revealed before his feet as he walked, and the animal that had been chosen for him would appear. When that animal had been shot with a poison arrow, the hunter would begin the long and arduous chase which ensued until the animal came to a stop from exhaustion. During the chase the hunter would leave his physical body and enter the spirit body of the creature. He became one with that creature as he was chasing it down. Once the animal had succumbed to his hunter's pursuit, the hunter would speak gently to the animal for a while, thanking the animal for its life, which had been surrendered. This deeply respectful conversation between the two spirits is an ancient practice which honours the art of oneness in creation, for the hunter knew that they were one and the same being, merely expressed in different form.

The legends of the San and the stories of Credo Mutwa remind us that there was a language in that ancient time which the San spoke and was understood by animals. There was a way of contacting animal and nature spirits and communing with them which we have all but lost today. While these cultures lived in these mythic times they were able to cultivate knowledge that we would do well to include in our modern world views.

The San had names for individual animals and spoke to the spirits of these animals. When they hunted and took the life of one of these animals, it was done with great respect and constant dialogue with the animal and its spirit.

When a plant was removed from the ground, it was spoken to, and the cause for its removal from the soil was explained. When even a leaf was plucked for medicine, the plant was spoken to, softly and in spirit to gain a greater understanding of the creature from which this medicine was obtained. When a member of the San went gathering medicines, he or she did not seek with their eyes, they rather used their third eyes to find what was being given to him or her by nature. Credo Mutwa writes of this as an intelligence which comes from the belly, using an ancient centre of intuition to guide and teach the seeker. The medicine collector would not take the nearest available plant, but would rather be led by the overseeing spirit of the place in which the plants grew, and would ask to be led to the plants that might be harvested. Such was the complexity of the relationship between man and nature.

In this culture there was no concept of ownership of land, for how could this magnificent spiritual sanctuary be owned or divided, how could man claim to be a keeper when it was nature that kept and provided for man? This connection to the spirit of Gaia is evidence of a connection to a more subtle world of spirit into which the earth-based people tapped.

When I started to understand the nature of this new vision of oneness, I could see how this ability to commune with nature was completely based on a state of communion with the oneness of the world. It was not a dialogue as such, it was more a state of being. The San had an incredibly sophisticated understanding of how ecosystems operated, and they implicitly understood that each aspect of an ecosystem had a role to play within the great dance of life. They explained everything in terms of a mythical story which the new world view could not grasp, could not include, because the new world view was all about separating this myth from the world. In this process of separating the mythic understanding from life, mankind has lost deep vaults of precious knowledge which had been accumulated by people such as the San. We need to be reminded of these things, need to integrate them into our lives, and then use them for our own alchemical transcendence as a culture of oneness.

Modern environmentalism has touched upon this oneness within nature on a very superficial level by describing the way in which ecosystems operate. In any ecosystem there is a complex layering of relationships which work together as a single unit in order to create a harmonious environment that sustains life. When we look at an ecosystem, it can be compared to a living body made up of innumerable cells, organs and neurons. If we were microscopic organisms living inside a human body we would probably experience individual cells as independent agents inside the structure of the body. It is only when we zoom out and see the body as a whole that it becomes apparent that the cell has a very specific function in the body and that it cannot survive without the body. Ecology understands that an ecosystem is a web of life that functions as a single, living, breathing body. In this way we are able to study ecosystems with greater insight. The problem with this perspective is that it really is still the same way of looking at nature as a physical machine made up of many parts. There is no understanding of the subtle spirit that underlies all of these interactions. Earth-based cultures would laugh at such a simplistic understanding of nature and her natural cycles. Not in a mocking way, but because they would view this perspective as quite childlike. They would not understand how any worthwhile manner of description of a being could be made once its soul had been removed. Remove the soul and all you have is mechanics. Maybe it would look like a spectacular display of quantum mechanics, but it would still reveal a dead world of lifeless interactions. This level of enquiry into the physical nature of life, without going deeper and further into the experiences of the soul, which is far more intricate and mysterious, will reveal nothing of significance about the true nature of the world in which we live.

Animals need to be understood in the same way: as individual, living ecosystems, and also as singular expressions of the World Soul.

It is deeply saddening that we think of animals as practical objects which supply us with their bodies for food. Enslaved animals do not have a choice

in the matter – they are born into this slavery and the purpose of their lives is simply to die so that they may be consumed in a lifeless hamburger half-way across the world. Some people are slightly more sophisticated in their relationships to animals, and they keep them as pets or encourage their conservation. At the level of conservation one becomes aware of the role that these creatures play within an ecosystem in order to keep it healthy. And at this level one sees the intricate webs of life that these animals sustain through their interaction with the world. At a broader level we might even find people talking about the world as a living system, and explaining how animals are a specific aspect of creation which fulfills an important role in the global ecology of the planet. In terms of mainstream thinking we have not progressed from this very limited way of understanding what animals are about.

The earth-based tribes, like the San, were on some level conscious caretakers of the planet. The greatest of the San wisdom, which is also echoed in other tribal wisdom, says that humans were put on this earth as spiritually responsible individuals who would nurture and protect the living world. In those tribes there were ways which they had developed in order to speak to the earth and all living things, working with the natural world. Their spiritual initiates were conscious of a responsibility towards the creatures of the world in ways that very few modern humans can comprehend, simply because the relationship between animal and human relied upon so many intricate balancing acts within the subtle and physical ecosystem of nature. The balance between human and nature was knocked out of kilter when we forgot how to live in accordance with these ancient environmental codes. However, it is possible to get to a place where we again share a sacred balance. I truly believe this.

But how can we open this door again? We can do this by trying to understand the next level of awareness which we humans can perceive, and that is the light of oneness in creation.

If we are really to understand how this light is present, and indeed

reflected, in the animal realm, then we need to drop all of the preconceived notions of what we think we know about the animal realm, and rather enter into a state of grace which is one with the animal world. The San did this – it is not so difficult.

And yet we are left with a few lingering questions: How do we remember what has already been forgotten? How do we bring back the sacred relationship to animals that we once had in humanity? How do we enter into a respectful and peaceful relationship with the animal realm?

I think that the first thing we need to do is to develop a sense of awareness that we humans are responsible for the almost complete habitat destruction on this planet, and that this has directly impacted on the animals' ability to live their lives on earth. Roads and fences have cut animals off from their natural migratory patterns and habitats have been destroyed. This has led to several layers of animal life becoming extinct because they are not supported within the balance of the natural world. But this is only the beginning. In ancient times we were conscious caretakers of the planet. We were put on this earth as spiritually awakened individuals who would nurture and protect the living world. In those times we used to speak to the earth and all living things, we used to work with them as teachers would look after children in their classrooms, nurturing them through their growth and raising them in the direction in which they needed to grow. We were conscious of our responsibility towards the creatures of this world, and we lived our lives in accordance with ancient rules of conduct. In return we were granted certain animals as food, and the understanding between human and animal was far more sacred than we can imagine.

Mystics such as Llewellyn Vaughan Lee, and great shamans like Credo Mutwa, say that we can open these pathways again: the knowledge is there, it just need to be remembered. Llewellyn, in particular, says that we need to use the emergent energy of oneness to help open these pathways again. We need to listen to the voice of life, and to hear what it is saying about how it wants

to reawaken. Similarly, we need to listen to the animal world and hear what it wants from us; discover how we can best serve its unfolding evolutionary path. In part, this means that we have to do what Ken Wilber describes in his incredible theories of a new 'integral life', and go back to the wisdom which our tribal ancestors held, and reclaim it in some way; integrate it into our global culture before we move on into the next phase of our evolution. If we do not do this, the knowledge will be lost, and we will feel the loss as black holes in our spiritual unfolding which will be very, very difficult to comprehend.

So what we need to do is not just to find ways to conserve environments from destruction and to set aside more land for conservation and rehabilitation, although this is part of it. We rather need to find ways in which to repair the sacred relationship between human and animal, human and the earth, and human and life. We need to remind ourselves how to communicate with the soul of the animal world, and the soul of life itself. We need to find ways in which to integrate these ancient practices into our modern culture, with scientist and shaman working side by side.

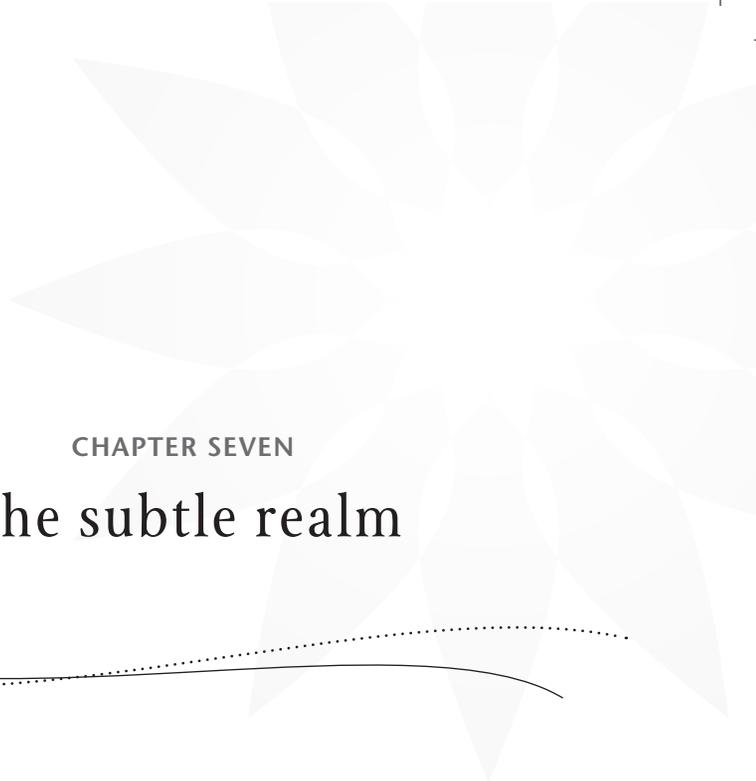
This urgently requires us to look back to our tribal cultures and the great mystics of the world, and to ask them to show us how to heal this great divide. They have the knowledge about how to awaken the subtle threads of wisdom between human and animal. Let us go to them, and ask them to teach us, ask them to bring their incredibly valuable knowledge with us into the future.

Likewise, those who have the eyes to see the light in creation, the *lumen naturae*, need to work with this light, weave it into their lives, and into their relationships with the natural world. Those who are able to work with light need to bring this light into the world so that we can begin to restore the subtle threads which connect us with nature. By working with this light, this energy of oneness, we can do incredible things. The power of this energy is absolutely immense in its ability to bring transmutation.

Today the World Soul is not heading towards a strangely archaic existence. Rather, it is becoming more intense, more complex, and more integrated. We

will never go back in time and live off the land, alongside the animals, as in days gone by. But we can find new ways of working with animals which will transcend the previous ways. The mistake which we have made before is that we threw out the tribal wisdom and burnt the mystics while we evolved into more complex forms of society, and this was not helpful. When we did this, we somehow opened the door to treating animals, the sacred and natural world, as impersonal. In order to move beyond this current impasse, we need to embrace the traditions of old which held the natural world in balance, and we need to incorporate them into what is becoming our emergent global culture.

The Soul of the World is offering us a different angle, another way to move forward with the task of being custodians of nature. It is now our role to make peace with the soul of the animal world, and to marry science and shamanism, in order to find a way to work with the earth that is truly a reflection of the oneness of creation.



CHAPTER SEVEN

The subtle realm

Like all living things, the earth has a subtle energy body. This energy body is the pattern upon which the physical form of the earth is built. It came into being before any physical aspects of the earth emerged, since all life emerges from light and then steps down into increasingly dense manifestations of matter. In its subtle state it is an exquisite pattern of light, containing the sum of DNA-like information for all living things.

The earth's subtle body is similar to the human subtle body in that it is made up of a similar structure of chakras and meridians. We humans are capable of seeing this subtle form, and by requesting the co-operation of the devas, we can work within this pattern, fulfilling our divine role as caretakers of nature.

This free flowing energy of the subtle body is pure white light in its original form. In the human, the subtle body becomes split into the primary colours of the spectrum in the separate points of the chakras. Each chakra is a different colour, separated into the spectrum of visible light. The crown chakra is the only chakra capable of receiving the pure white light of the cosmic energy

– thereafter light is divided into purple, dark blue, light blue, green, yellow, orange and red; in a descending order. The chakras of the earth are similar but not the same. They are far more diverse and complex in their make-up, while operating as a complete unit, a fractal and holographic vortex of unlimited energy beating, pulsing, emanating in unison. The chakras of the earth are marked by very special places of power. These are places that accumulate energy of a particular strain, corresponding to the chakra's function. What many people do not realize is that the earth has many, many unseen chakras and energy centres, or nadis.

There are many that are awakened and others that sleep. Each part of the energy body of earth awakens in its own time. Some of the sacred centres of the earth that may have been awake in recent times are now sleeping, while others are waking. This is the nature of life, this dance of light upon light. Where there is an energy centre, there is a great sense of energy in the air, something which those with psychic sight can detect and work with in their energy bodies.

As previously mentioned, the San, being one of the ancient earth-based cultures, often accessed this subtle realm through their trance ceremonies. I recently read an account which describes these ceremonies, and it was shown that many of these experiences are recorded in their rock art. The art depicted lines of energy along which the San would travel during these trances. One person describes the white light which would sit above the head and that it stretched up into the sky like a white thread, going all the way up into the heavens. The spirit of the person in trance would climb up this thread, depicting it as a ladder to the heavens in their rock art, and would meet the 'Great God'. They describe how they would be met by their ancestors and then be taken to meet the Great God, who would then issue them with instructions about the work which they needed to do on earth. When they returned from these experiences they would have complete recall of the event and would use this experience to enliven the spirit of the tribe. In one

such account a member of the tribe said that the dance gave them life, and that without the dance they would die (their spirit would die). Without the trance dance they may as well have been dead. They also describe horizontal lines, which cross the whole of the earth, along which one can travel in spirit to visit other communities and places. In their art they illustrate how the body disintegrates in trance and can merge into the form of an animal or a spirit being, using the wisdom of this being to travel in the spirit world. In this ritual the tribe would dance around the fire and work themselves into a trance state through song, dance and movement (there is very little reference to the use of any psychoactive plants in the San's trance rituals), slowly coaxing their spirits free from their bodies. They describe two lines of energy that would appear, one green and one red, as long lines stretching off into the distance. The green line was something good, the red line something bad.

After reading this account, and after much contemplation, I came to the conclusion that when one's consciousness speeds up, there emerges the ability to have a kind of meta-perspective on life. We can see into life with a new type of perception which can expand beyond our 3D dualistic vision. This new, multidimensional consciousness shows us life on another level where it is seamless, interconnected, and held together by a fabric of energy which connects all life.

The San saw a light string which connected them to the Great God. It showed them past and future, a kind of seamless web across time. It was inter-dimensional, exposing the layered nature of life. Past, present and future became one.

I remember that while I was recording this information in my journal one evening, my son, Oliver, then 4 years old, picked up a pen and started to draw on the opposite page. He instinctively drew a picture of what he described as 'a man climbing up into the sky' with a long thread that led from the ground to the heaven, complete with a picture of a lion, a man sleeping on the floor below, and one up in the heavens. Beautiful.

In the unfolding vision of the world as one, all that appears separate becomes one whole system. We are looking at something deeply ancient, and the next level of understanding is to begin to ask questions about how we, and indeed all of life, could begin to work with this system. Taking a note from the San trance work, I feel that there is something within their culture from which we can learn.

In conscious earth-based cultures, places were recognized by their over-seeing spirits. Each place in nature had a distinct entity which lived in and occupied the space of any area. A river had a spirit which belonged to it, as did a mountain or a valley. The spirits were the primary presence in these places and man was the visitor. There could be no way to enter a place without being conscious of the spirit that resided there, and the spirit would be invoked through sacred ritual or meditation. The conscious listener would take into account what the spirit said and would act in accordance with the will of the spirit. With the consciousness of oneness which was comprehended in these ancient cultures, our ancestors learned that there were definite gateways through which one could access and speak to the World Soul. In those times they would find places where these spirits were very much alive. They were often places of significance on the earth's energy body, places where intense energetic activity was being experienced. With their subtle consciousness of the energies of the world, our ancient ancestors would be led to these places and would begin to work with the energies of the place. Sacred ritual would be performed in order to access and communicate with the World Soul, and they would be led to discover how their activities could enhance the processes which the earth was undergoing. These cultures understood that they were a part of the whole system of life and that with their self consciousness and awareness they would offer themselves to be of service to the World Soul. This is an extremely beautiful vision of how these cultures explored the understanding of oneness and used it to partake consciously in the evolution of all life.

Since the destruction of earth-based cultures by the Church, these places have been almost wholeheartedly lost to the noise of the modern world. This process happened because humans were not making themselves available to work with the energies of the earth anymore. They were squashed out, killed off and banished, and the critical mass that was required for the global consciousness of oneness to prevail throughout the world could not be sustained. It is as though we were midway through an intense healing session with the earth and we suddenly abandoned it. Now when we go back to these places they are no longer active. It is not that the earth itself is not still going through these profound and mysterious processes, it is just that in the time that has passed between then and now, the energies have moved on into other aspects of creation. When we humans were working with these energies, they were like a magical dance which was constantly evolving. But now when we look back to these places for the same magic which they once held, we are left with nothing but strange stone structures and buildings that seem to have none of the potent energy which they once possessed. We missed out on the process of being moulded into shape by the ever-changing beat of the World Soul, and now we are like old parents attending a teenagers' dance party, and we do not know any of the moves anymore.

One of the principal ways of working with the energies of the earth in these ancient times was to commune directly with the deva of an area. These are the deities we see in Hinduism, the gods that were spoken to in order to receive blessings and work with the many potential states of the energies of creation. There are devas responsible for all aspects of the work in creation, from the wind, rain and fire, to the ongoing unfolding of the patterns of the cosmos itself. These devas were not perceived as gods unto which one should devote religious service, but rather as beings, much like the angels referred to by Christians. The devas could be called upon to help with specific aspects of the work within creation. At each of these energy centres, where specific work within the earth's soul was being performed, these devas would have been

present in order to assist with the process of creation. African spiritual tradition is filled with these devas who go by many, many names. Devas are still accessible to us as assistants in the work of helping creation fulfill its destiny, though many of them have ceased to be as present in this world because of our lack of communication.

In the modern Christian tradition there continues to be beautiful work done with angels; authentic, wholesome work which is serving the planet. It is also true that there are entities that are not so holy or ethical and who are able to lead sincere humans astray. In this case it is always better to work with devas through the assistance of a spiritual teacher or religious group that has a proven track-record and is trustworthy.

Another reason for our having lost touch with these helpful beings is that the integrity of the earth's energy body has taken severe strain through human pollution and discordance in our culture. The help of these devas is being lost to the noise of the modern world. They can no longer be heard as they were before. The spirits are waning and their voices reduced to whispers.

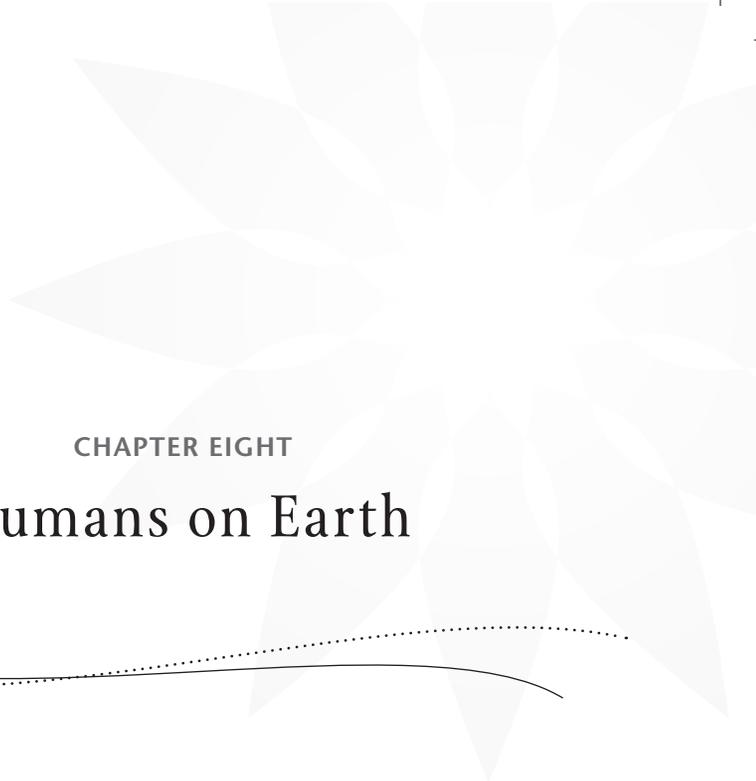
Pollutants of every kind create discordant energy flows in these natural places which tear and disrupt the psychic link between man and nature spirit. Where there is too much interference, there can be no dialogue. Where the microscopic life forms are not abundant, the ecosystem collapses. But it is preceded by the death of the spirit of that place, and this resonates throughout the system. Sacred spirits are left without their ancient homes and are forced into endless wandering, being formless and without place. As we tear down old forests and build new parking lots, so too do we tear at the soul of nature and its rich tapestry of life on many levels.

My formal education in environmentalism did not allow any mention of the psychic and spiritual significance of places. We were not trained to sense the spirit of a place, nor were we given the vocabulary or scientific paradigm to describe and understand these aspects of an environment. This is unfortunate, as it is much the same as a doctor not being able to treat the subtle,

spiritual body of a person and only focusing on the physical body for clues. This approach of modern science is narrow because it has already assumed that it knows what all of the parameters are before it looks to develop an explanation. The modern, spiritually conscious person begins with the premise that the world is a mystery, and that the answer does not necessarily lie in the ambit of scientific data.

Can we imagine where science and the pursuit of knowledge would end up if we once again entered into dialogue with the oneness of creation? I believe that we would begin an entirely new journey of awakening and enlightenment which would help to unfold the perfect dream that many of us sense is possible to achieve.





CHAPTER EIGHT

Humans on Earth

We humans are exquisite beings. We lie halfway between the material world and the angelic realm. We are so close to God – dormant seeds of potential infused with the pure spirit of God. All that we need to do is to awaken, and then we will see this. When we look at the state of our collective mind, when we see all humanity as one mind and one body, then the distance between our true potential and our current state seems to be a great divide.

The human form is no different to the whole form of creation, the body of earth and the laws of nature. The human body is the vehicle of our consciousness for the duration of our presence in this material realm, and it is a body that is made of the earth, the very elements which make up all of creation. If there is any sense of separation between the individual and the whole then it cannot be explained in our physical make-up, it is a condition of our minds. Our body is composed of the substances which are found in the body of the earth. When we die, this carcass is left aside and we appear to return to our original state: as transient beings of light where we are conscious again of

being one with God. But in truth there is no separation at all. In my understanding of the nature of the human condition, I see it all connected as one integral whole. There is no separation between the body of the human being and the body of all creation, because our souls are seamlessly woven into the pattern of all life.

So even though the experience of being a human creates the illusion that we are separate bodies and separate minds, this is not our true state. In the vision of oneness that I have seen, all life is composed of this original pattern of light, and though it may appear to be separated in the physical world, it is actually all one.

The current human condition, however, is to experience the material condition as separation from the whole, and it is only when a human being becomes spiritually enlightened that this sense of merging with the one returns as the dominant mode of being. Similarly, while we are still unborn souls in the spiritual realm we experience a state of being, completely merged with all that is; but as we turn our attention to the physical realm and notice that there are aspects of creation that are not entirely merged in this state of oneness, so we are drawn into the physical world. This begins the process of becoming separated from the oneness of life, albeit if only in our minds. It starts at conception.

A human soul begins its journey into the material realm as a being of light, and as it is birthed into the womb the light body begins to take on form. The light body actually materializes. It condenses into physical matter at the point of conception in the womb where this magical materialization process takes place. I have read that scientists have discovered that our cardiovascular system actually flows with a rhythm before the heart has formed its capacity to pump. The blood vessels, which are still only subtly formed, flow with the pulse of life without a heart to propel this flow. This beautiful discovery illustrates how our fundamental rhythm of life precedes our physical form, beating in unison with the primary beat of life. Our bones are made from the

minerals of the earth's body, given to us by our own mother's body, generously passed from one mother to the other. Our breath, that mysterious rhythmic intake of the spirit of life that we take for granted as we sleep at night, is the same heartbeat of the world to which our bodies reach a state of entrainment. There is no separation between us and the body of the world, only the illusion of separation that we carry in our minds. All life is one living system, beating with one heartbeat. All life is connected, and indeed it is perfectly synchronized to a fundamental drumbeat of life. In Africa the tradition of the drum carries this knowledge through generations. It is the heartbeat of life itself that is being entrained, not the drummer beating out a clever rhythm. As we live, so we rhythmically entrain to the pulse of life.

When we take on this material form something else happens: we become self-conscious. We begin to see ourselves not as one with everything, but rather as an individual. This is the fundamental experience of the human condition. Humans are self-conscious. This self-consciousness is a strange state because while we appear to have become an individual inside the material world, we are no more individual than a blood corpuscle is separate from the entire body in which it occurs. We are born into a living system which appears to have the characteristics of being separate, but which actually works as one single system.

This is also the realm where space and time play out the grand illusion of creation. Kronos, as the Greeks called it, is the experience of time as a chronological event, whereas Kairos is spiritual time where past, future and present are all one.

The material realm is a reflection of the spiritual realm, but it is not an accurate one, because space and time are great veils which mask the appearance of the spiritual world. So if we can just imagine for one small moment that both worlds exist simultaneously, layered upon each other, reflecting upon each other, and that our human minds are mostly only conscious of one of these layers – the material layer – then we begin to grasp the fuller picture.

This concept then leads to the question: what is the purpose of humans in creation? My view is that humans are incredible creatures of light, like all other aspects of creation, but they are the keepers of one specific attribute that makes them unique in this material realm – they have free will.

In the body of creation there are always components which have specific potential, and ours is particularly unique. Humans are the most spiritually capable creatures of the earth by virtue of the fact that we have been imbued with free will. The combination of our immense spiritual power as divine beings and our free will enables us to create, unlike any other living thing on this planet. We have the ability not only to become great spiritual caretakers, but also to create whole worlds within the divine pattern of creation. Humans are made in the image of God, literally. Animals and plants do not seem to have this free will. They are not capable of stepping outside of their natural role within an ecosystem, except for small attempts at the making of tools which we witness in the higher apes. Humans have the ability to be the most basic creatures of creation, and yet also the most incredible vehicles of creative potential. Many artists have felt a divine spark of life pulsing through their veins at the heights of their creativity, where the boundaries between life become blurred and one feels like a god in the act of creation. This attribute enables us to create that which we desire in the material realm. Practically anything we wish to create can be made manifest.

The great philosophers of this century, as well as the secret societies of old, knew about these powers of manifestation with which humans are imbued.

Humans are able to know God and matter at the same time. This is an incredibly precious and powerful attribute of our character. I believe that part of the reason for our place in this world is to act as conduits between the body of Gaia and the spiritual realm. We are beings who can effect tremendous change in the body of Gaia, aiding in her evolutionary path. Our free will enables us to partake in the web of life without being forced to assume a predetermined role.

But we are still forced to entrain to the rhythm and oscillation of the world.

The material world in which we exist has a pattern through which it is emerging. This fundamental pattern in life is an ebb and flow. It is not an endless circle, but rather great orbits which expand, evolve and grow. Life and death, day and night, are not endlessly circular processes, they reveal more and more of life unto itself. Life oscillates constantly and it is this oscillation of life between poles which creates the rhythm and heartbeat of life. It appears like a large fractal which is constantly diversifying into something new, within the same self-similar structure.

Humans exist within this great unfolding of Gaia, are entrained to her evolutionary journey, and are deeply embedded in this journey. Where her karmic path goes, we must follow. The earth-based cultures knew and understood this aspect of creation. In the biblical context, as with Buddhist explanations of the origins of humanity, we were born into this world in order to act as guardians over all of creation. All other aspects of creation are a part of the body of Gaia and they have no awareness that they are separate. They are born into the world of form and they perform a role in creation which is ordained by the natural order of things. Humans are also a part of this system, instructed to entrain to the heartbeat of Gaia, but they are able to hover between the two worlds of spirit and matter. This is the divine role of the human being: to be a conduit between the two worlds, to have both physical form and spiritual form, and to be conscious of both states, as well as the many dimensions which exist within these polarities.

While we journey with Gaia, as guardians of nature, we have simultaneously partaken in a spiritual journey into the ultimate end of our potential in the material realm. We have explored just how separated our spiritual awareness can become in this physical realm by journeying into the heart of Gaia, deep into the recesses of her soul.

Human beings were brought into this world in order to partake consciously in the great cycle of life, to journey from awakened beings to unconscious

fools, and then consciously to bring the light of God back into their form and into creation itself. The sacrifice of descending into the material abyss is a worthy endeavour in spiritual unfolding. It is the ultimate offer of love to be willing to sacrifice one's own state of oneness with the Beloved in order to help to bring other aspects of creation into emancipation. In journeying away from oneness into separation we have been able to discover how the mechanics of our world work, but we need to get back into oneness in order to figure out truly how to use this knowledge.

This journey away from a state of oneness is a part of a natural cycle that is apparent in all of creation. Our journey away from God (oneness) is just like the earth's journey away from the sun during the cold winter months. It also appears to have been a natural cycle through which the earth itself has been travelling. The earth ventures away from the sun and then returns. As she returns and reflects the light of the sun, so does her giant body come alive with life. And as the earth awakens to the light of the sun, so do the sleeping humans arise from their slumber and begin to remember the light of their own inner nature.

Similarly, in our descent into the material realm we have really gone to the ultimate end of materialism and experienced the most basic potential of the material world, of the soul of earth. We have witnessed that aspect of our Great Mother that is still sleeping, that aspect of her which has not been turned toward the light of her higher self. We have drunk of this darkness until we have found ourselves in a collective stupour. Now it is time to witness the light in creation.

In the times when the ancients walked this earth, the earth itself was seen as the being which gave birth to humans, and so they called the earth their Mother, or the Great Mother. This understanding of the earth as a living being is quite accurate in terms of a mystical understanding of life, but it is something which we have forgotten in our current culture, because at some point in our history this sacred code was purposely broken. Something hap-

pened in Europe, some dark and sinister idea took over the minds of people, and a handful of men decided that they should eliminate the feminine spirit of creation in nature. This horrible change in human history led us on a dark and tragic path to where we stand today, a path which tore down the culture of the sacred and replaced it with a culture of materialism. From then on we were forbidden to speak of the spirit in nature, and anything which was not of the physical world was deemed evil. This deliberate attempt to eradicate the understanding of the feminine aspect of creation allowed those in power to disregard the sacred laws which kept nature intact and alive. By eliminating the power of the feminine spirit in creation, men could get on with their plans to dominate the world, unimpeded. What these men did not realize, however, was that the very earth they depended on for their plans of domination was actually a living being, and that without the practising of the sacred codes of the divine feminine, she would collapse and eventually die. These men chose to forget that women held within them the ability to create not only their human children, but also the children of the earth, the things being born within the soft light of creation present in each aspect of life. They chose to forget that this feminine creative power was the magic which allowed life to awaken and evolve.

What we humans have lost through this process of destroying the sacred relationship to earth as our mother was a vital link between ourselves and the very essence of life. We lost our ability to be compassionate to the unfolding of life, and so we helped create a world that was left void of anything truly sacred. Our world today is a reflection of this. Everything of value today has a material value and no more. We cannot attribute innate spiritual value to a piece of land because our culture refuses to accept that the earth is a sacred being. We destroyed the feminine in life, shut down the process of life unfolding, and left our Great Mother to suffer in her birthing pains alone, without her sacred midwives. Slowly, the earth began to lose its sacredness. The places which were once filled with magic started to die, the feminine mystery

within life was choked. Our world lost its subtle chords of magic because nobody was allowed to help weave them into our daily lives. We lost contact with what it meant to have a sacred relationship to the earth, and all that was left was the material realm, like a thin shell of an infertile egg. Our world since then has followed a male dominated path of scientific rationalism, with cold and cruel accumulation of power as the ultimate end. When the sacred feminine was no longer allowed to be present in life, everything lost its magical and mysterious hue. Life withdrew from itself because it was no longer being nourished.

One of the ways in which we can bring the feminine spirit of creation back into our consciousness is by starting to acknowledge the multi-faceted nature of reality, to start giving attention to the subtle aspects of life. And it is a matter of urgency – we need to do this today, within ourselves, within our communities, and within our families. The subtle energies that are woven throughout creation are there for a purpose, but we have forgotten what to do with them. It was humans who helped weave these subtle threads throughout creation by developing sacred relationships with the earth and all aspects of creation. We have seen how these relationships worked with water, earth, living plants and animals, and how they all worked with the mysterious light in creation. The earth-based stories and the San stories from Southern Africa remind us that there were intricate customs which had been developed to work with this light in nature and to assist in its growth. Now we need to learn how to work with this light again. We need to bring back the awareness of the sacred feminine, of the subtle energies that are present in creation, and we need to learn how to use them for the unfolding of life unto itself.

We can begin to remember this through living this awareness in our own bodies. By bringing this light into ourselves we naturally reflect it into the greater systems within which we live: our families, our communities, our global culture.

Our subtle bodies are a dynamic and living replica of the subtle body of the

earth. As we evolve, so our subtle bodies change, for better or worse, in order to meet with the instructions of our free will. In creation we can truly create anything we desire, but there are secrets of creation, divine and immutable, which we have to obey and realize in order to access this implicit ability.

Our bodies are composed of light and we need to remember that. Once we start to remember that we are essentially light, then we can begin to work with the true and divine power within creation again. This is the real secret which is being revealed to humanity at this time, and it is being done in order to help us to find our way back to our original purpose in creation.

Our subtle bodies are stabilized vortexes of light that interact with the divine energy of the universe in a continuum of life. We take light in from the subtle ether of the universe in its various forms. The most subtle form of energy which we imbibe is the direct transmission of cosmic energy which is stepped down as light as it enters the material plane. Our bodies dance with this light of creation when we are born and return to this light when we die. The energy of the sun is given to us as condensed sunlight and foods of the earth, the air we breath is this same stepped down energy in the aether. In reality we are an exquisite dance of creation all of the time. When humans do spiritual work they begin to awaken to their true nature as spiritual beings, and this is often spoken of as a light that enters the spirit. Spiritual practice tends to stabilize our subtle bodies in order to facilitate the flow of the light through our subtle organized energy fields. This light comes to us most purely through meditation, then through sunlight and electromagnetic earth energy, and furthermore from breath, water and sun-kissed foods. The spiritual work on the soul teaches us to find this subtle energy of God in its myriad forms and to use it in our transmutation from base creatures to golden creatures who reflect God in totality.

Our subtle body is in turn a reflection of the body of the earth. As her body is composed of light, so is ours. When we awaken to our light bodies, we also begin to realize that our subtle bodies are beating in unison with the body of

the earth, which in turn beats in unison with the heart of the universe, which is God. We are one.

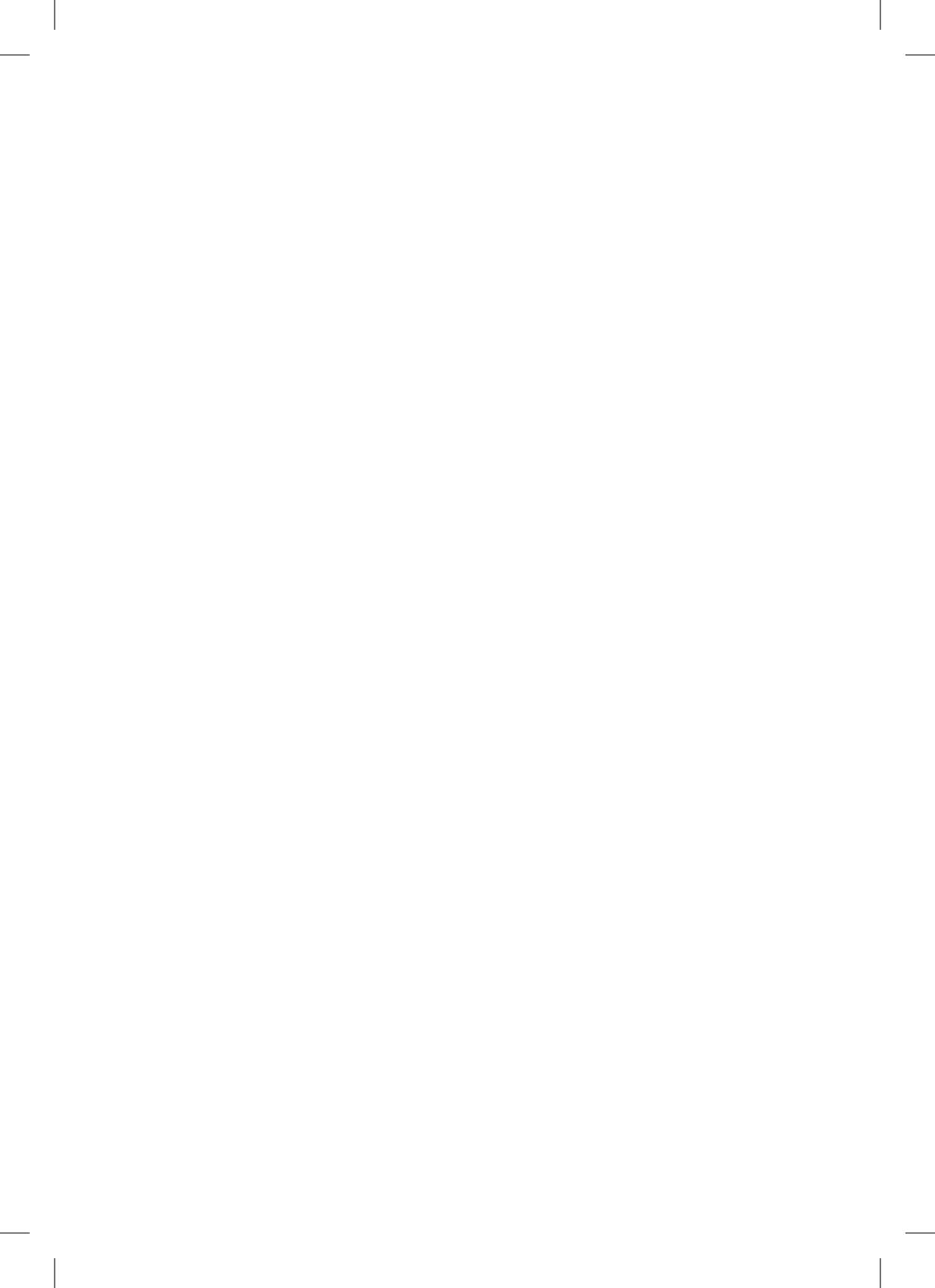
The most important thing that a human being can do in life is not, as modern culture seems to believe, to get rich and powerful. Rather, it is to develop a consciousness of our spiritual self, while in our physical form, and to learn to work with the development of our spiritual body. When we turn our attention to our inner planes, our spiritual body, then we can begin the work of creating a conduit of life from the spiritual plane to the physical plane. As we do this work, so we literally bring God into creation. This process enlivens our physical bodies, and brings about a shift in our normal day to day attention by aligning us with a deeper, more spiritual purpose for living. It moves our attention away from the pursuit of material goals and into the realm of spiritual work. Our spiritual work is the true work that is necessary for us to perform in creation. This work is of the utmost importance in life because it is the process of life unfolding itself.

We are only able to partake in this process of life unfolding once we use our free will to raise our consciousness beyond the material world and into this higher stream of life. By remaining in the material world, following our material goals, all that we achieve is evolution in isolation. This process is a circular path because it serves no higher purpose at all, only the will of the ego, and as we all know, the ego is only interested in survival of the lowest order. By becoming spiritually focused we step into the light, quite literally, and we can consciously begin to partake in the process of life unfolding. It is only when we pay attention to this aspect of life that we begin to see who we really are and what the purpose of our existence is. All becomes revealed when a person is spiritually conscious.

This revelation of spiritual purpose is quite simple. It is about aligning our free will with the higher will of God, which in turn is the process through which all of creation is passing. Once we humans turn our free will over to God and surrender our personal sense of making things happen, then we

enter a whole new realm of power and possibility. We awaken, for the first time, to who we truly are, and learn that everything we aspired toward from the domain of the ego was utterly false. Spiritual teachers tell us that all life is an illusion and that it is meaningless if we are not conscious of what is going on in the spiritual planes. That means that the goals we set while we were unconscious become meaningless. Everything we ever aimed to achieve in the material realm, if it was not aligned with our true higher purpose, becomes useless. But once we turn our attention to the spiritual realm, our purpose becomes apparent. This does not mean that our life skills are meaningless, rather that these skills and powers which we possess become tools for a spiritual purpose. This is when life really gets good.

This stage in our evolution requires us to focus our attention on the nature of oneness in the world, to begin to see how everything is connected to the greater purpose of our spiritual world. It is time to learn how to be one and how to help life to unfold through oneness.





CHAPTER NINE

It's all one

The whole of creation is one living being, progressing along on its karmic journey through the process we call life. This being is infinitely complex, made up of many levels within levels of various forms of life. There is no single aspect of life which is not alive and which does not have purpose, because it is all one and the same.

Human beings have a particular role to play in this unfolding of life. They are precious components of life, are self-conscious, and have the ability to assist with the unfolding of creation through consciously working with life. I believe that through developing an awareness of the oneness of life on earth, humans can actually enter into a relationship with the Soul of the Earth, the *Anima Mundi*.

Through this paradigm of accepting that our earth is a living being, we can assist her with her specific journey. We can do this in order to help her unfold and evolve, just as we would work with any other living creature.

One of the ways in which we can access the Soul of the Earth is through becoming aware of the great light, the *lumen naturae*, which is within creation, and by learning to work with this light in our daily lives. This light is like the life force which is woven throughout all existence. It is present in a rock, in water, in plants, in animals and in humans. There is not a single place where this light is not present because it is the fabric of all of creation and connects everything into a single great web. This light underlies all of creation, and this is why the great mystics say that we can see the world in a grain of sand: it is the signature of God in all things.

The light in creation is also in the process of birthing a new energy which I have touched on in this book, the energy of oneness. This new energy is appearing in the collective unconscious of the world and is asking to be seen. It is as though this new energy is softly making an appearance in the world and asking us to be aware that it is being born. How we work with this light in creation and the birth of this new energy will determine much of how our planet continues to evolve in the future, and therefore much of the future of humanity.

Our spiritual purpose is deeply complex, and few people alive can say that they understand very much about such things, but in some ways this purpose is also incredibly simple. At different times or stages within the great unfolding of life there are different things that humans are expected to do, and at this time I believe that our role in creation is that we have a fundamental global purpose to become custodians of nature. The earth is suffering under the great weight of humans who have been living blindly, disconnected from their source, and creating a world of division rather than wholeness. In the last few thousand years we have learned how to separate everything in creation into pieces. We have analyzed, dissected, split and compartmentalized, and this process has led to a split in our understanding of the essential oneness of nature. It has also robbed us of the innate appreciation of the feminine, sacred aspect of life. Now it is time to do the opposite – to bring

wholeness to the world, to reinstate the awareness of the sacredness in life, of the feminine aspect of the Earth's Soul.

How do we do this? How do we work with the Soul of the World, the light within creation and the soul of our Mother Earth? We do it simply by starting to remember. The simple act of recognition that life is sacred actually goes a long way to starting the process of allowing life once again to unfold. By recognizing that a tree has a spirit, as does a mountain or a river, we are allowing ourselves to begin working with the spirit of creation, with the Soul of the Earth.

There is an ancient memory of a power within creation which was once everywhere and which is now wanting to be awakened through our recognition. When we recognize the ancient light in creation we become accustomed to learning how it works again, familiarizing ourselves with an ancient energy. This deed of simply acknowledging the presence of the sacred in creation awakens us to the new manifestations in this energy – the light of oneness. In this book I have attempted to show that as we allow ourselves to witness the light in every single aspect of creation, so we begin to awaken to the same light within ourselves.

By tuning in to nature as a being with a soul, and allowing ourselves to be aware of the subtle light within creation, we are also creating an abundance of light within ourselves. This process of turning our awareness to nature and reflecting upon her light actually sets up an exchange of this light into our own being.

The Sufis describe this as 'polishing the mirror of the soul' to reflect the light within creation, and by doing this we slowly bring the light of creation into our light body and experience its transformational effects.

What happens when we become 'enlightened' by reflecting upon the light in nature is that we build up the new energy of oneness within. We are then able to use this exchange to assist with the growth of our earth's own light body. Just as a woman is able to offer her womb for the creation of life, so

too are all humans able to offer their light in order to allow life to give birth to its new forms. This principle of creation, which is naturally present in all women, is a distinctly feminine attribute of the powers in creation. This potential in all humans to create a holding space for life to give rise to something new is an incredibly important aspect of our responsibility as humans to the earth right now.

What the earth is giving birth to is a new era, a new time, a completely new paradigm which is attempting to become manifest on this planet. It is the birth of the new age of the awareness of oneness in all life.

In many religions, as well as in the records of our ancient cultures, this time is spoken of as an incredibly important phase in our history. What I see happening on the inner planes is that a web of light is being constructed across the globe by individual souls who are awakened to their spiritual purpose, souls who have given over their lives to being vessels for the spirit of creation to flow through them and use them for its purpose.

As this new era is being born on the subtle planes we experience it as a light energy which is deeply transformational. Because it is still very new and has not been brought fully into maturity, has not yet been born into the material world, it is still visible in the subtle realms. It is still only a pattern, a gentle and intricate pattern of incredible beauty which is being woven throughout all of creation. As this primary DNA-like code is manifesting within the body of the earth, it requires as much of the light in creation to be present so that it can grow. Slowly we will see how this web of light, which is in turn woven throughout a web of souls who recognize the sacredness in nature, creates a holding pattern around the earth which creates the conditions necessary for the birth of this new energy in the world of form. This web will act as a giant womb for the creation of new life.

As this happens, as we hold our attention on this web of light across the planet, so we will witness the collapse of our current culture of materialism and experience the birth of a new culture based on an understanding of one-

ness. This new time will be of such a high order of lightness that it will not be able to endure the rugged attachment to materialism, and so everything that is vested in the material world will collapse. The light will literally break the spell upon our perception that our world is a mechanical, lifeless thing, and will change so many of the ways in which we live our lives. This radically simple notion, the notion that we are all connected in this web of life, will reveal new ways of being in the world.

This awareness will transform the planet because it will remind people that we are powerful beyond measure when we are connected in the act of oneness. We will see how new life-forms evolve to manage the destruction which our past created. New links and connections within ecosystems will evolve, things which in the previous era were impossible. When people learn about the power of working together to create an enlightened world community they will discover for the first time in many centuries that there is enough to feed and house all of us. We will learn that the collective power of working together, instead of competing against each other for more all the time, will bring about a whole new understanding of what it means to be alive. New possibilities for what life can be will emerge which we never imagined possible, and we will see this reflected in the natural world around us too. Nature will be reborn as we develop technologies which respect the sacred laws of life and learn to work as one with nature.

The real change begins with us. We are the custodians of life on earth, we are the creators of our society and what we do in this global community is what life on earth, the state of our home, will reflect. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we have already been working with this light of oneness for a while. Now it has come time to name this energy, to learn how it works and attune ourselves to its rhythms and to where it wants to grow.

The simple practice of being conscious of oneness is the key to our unfolding a new future where the earth is allowed to come alive again. We cannot expect that shopping for organic vegetables and switching to renewable en-

ergy sources alone is going to solve the problems of our times. Our culture is hurtling forth at such a speed that these small efforts of a conscious few will never make the kind of impact required to change the course of the earth's destruction. What we need to do is to explore how we can consciously act as communities to re-establish our relationship to the world. Part of this is making ourselves available for spiritual work, where we create a network of light across the surface of the world and create a kind of holding pattern for nature to give birth to the new aspects of her evolution. By spending time in groups whose sole purpose is to bring the light of the world forth into our lives we can make a big difference. In the past it has been the guru or the spiritual teacher who has performed this function of holding the energy in a community for the purpose of spiritual work, but now this energy can be held by groups of conscious people.

The energy of oneness has grown and stabilized, and now groups of people are able to hold it and make it work.

The power that resides in this light of creation is extraordinarily strong. It has the capacity to change completely the tide of events which are destroying the world. What we must be prepared to lose are the superficial aspects of life, those things which we cling to in our material culture which do not support the growth of the earth.

How we do this is up to us. There is no master plan other than the knowledge that we can work with the oneness in nature, the oneness of life, and create immense capacity for change. This is a very important key to unlocking the incredible potential of our planet, a key to unlocking the solution which will usher in the next era.

Working directly with the light of the world through simply being conscious of how oneness is present in all aspects of life is one of the keys to our next phase of spiritual evolution, where things will be more fair, more balanced and more harmonious throughout. I believe that by connecting to others who carry the awareness of oneness, by seeing the oneness in the

ordinary everyday life around us, and by exploring ways in which we can bring about the growth of this oneness, we will start to see how life comes alive once more. Together we can be the change that the world needs. Together we can partake in the mysterious dance of light.



Remembrance



A tree has a spirit, as does an animal, a rock or a pool of water. An ecosystem, made up of trees, plants, animals and insects, buzzes with life and communicates with subtle messages more ancient than time itself, in a complex dance of light that is utterly alive with life.

All life is birthed from light, and as we become conscious of this, so we begin to act as vessels for this light to emerge in the life around us. By practising this act in our daily lives, we begin to awaken the world around us. Like a magical spell that turns a grey, lifeless world into a living symphony of life, so will our attention to this light bring life to that which has died in our world. Our attention to this light in life, through the act of oneness, will bring the world alive again, it will bring the sacred spirit of nature back into harmony with the places in which we live our lives, creating unity where there was once separation. In society it will bring about incredible depths of change as people learn to work together in peace, affirming their fundamental oneness rather than their separation. It is up to us to cultivate a garden on earth which is life-giving and life-affirming, which serves the spirit of the earth and nurtures the spirit of humanity. Our attention to this work will create a place for the subtle spirit of life to thrive once again and the accumulation of this light in all of life will become exponential.

Talk to the tree. Talk to each other. Find the subtle thread of love that reaches through each and every living thing on this earth. Be alive with the light of oneness. Share the message of love with one another. Once we see that we are all utterly connected in this exquisite dance of light we will see how we are all one extended family.

It is time for us to grow our own medicines and foods on a small scale, to feed each other, to heal each other, and to bring the world back into balance. It is time for us to bring our communities back into natural family groups who care for one another and create a space for love to be given freely. It is time for us to remember that the world, this beautiful earth we live on, is one single entity that includes ourselves; that we are one not only with the earth, but with the cosmos too, and that we are ultimately all made from the same basic fabric of life, which is light.

A world of spirit resides within us and around us. It is inseparable from us; it is the soup in which we live and breathe. It is only our minds that disconnect us from the consciousness of the primal mix of life and make us believe that we are separate. But there is no separation, only synthesis. There is no 'us and them', only one family.

We are life. We are in life. And we are surrounded by life, seamlessly and inseparably.

We need to throw off our discordant beliefs of separation and embrace our place in the oneness of life, and as we do so, we will begin the magical journey of transmuting the death of our current world into nothing but light.

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Llewellyn is a sheik in the Naqshbandiyya-Mujadidiyya Sufi Order. In recent years the focus of his writing and teaching has been on spiritual responsibility in our present time of transition, and the emerging global consciousness of oneness (see www.workingwithoneness.org). He has also specialized in the area of dream work, integrating the ancient Sufi approach to dreams with the insights of modern psychology. Llewellyn is the founder of The Golden Sufi Centre (www.goldensufi.org) and author of several books.

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Together we are already weaving the web of light in our world.

One Love. One Heart.



Glossary



Bandau The Bandau is a distinctly African name for the overseeing water deva of the rivers of Africa. The term is used across much of Southern Africa, and even West Africa.

Chakra The term ‘subtle organized energy field’, or ‘SOEF field’, coined by Dr Gabriel Cousens, describes very well what a chakra is. It is an energetic structure which exists in the subtle field that is organized in a particular way to perform specific functions. Just as a tree has a physical structure which imbibes light and transmutes it to energy through photosynthesis, so does an energetic body perform similar functions, but on a more subtle level. On the earth there are several new chakras that are awakening as places where specific energetic work is being performed in the subtle body of the earth; our role is to be aware of these places and to facilitate their harmonious function.

Devas These are entities which exist solely in the subtle realm and have no physical form at all. Devas are as diverse as humans in their roles and personalities, but their purpose relates specifically to the work on the subtle realms, assisting with life as it unfolds in its growing light body. Humanity has a rich history of working with devas, and in this book I have described one of them, the Bandau, which is an overseeing deva of rivers in Africa.

Ein Soph A Hebrew Kabbalistic term, literally meaning nothingness or boundless, referring to the unmanifest form of God. All matter and

all form proceeds from the Ein soph. The Ein soph gives rise to the sefirot of the Kabbalistic tree of life, which in turn forms or reveals the fundamental pattern of all creation.

Fractal Julia Set This set is a complex fractal pattern generated mathematically by Frenchman, Gaston Julia. These patterns expand infinitely into patterns within patterns which are startlingly reminiscent of the shapes of living things. “With increasing resolution more and more details of the fractal contour appear, revealing a fantastic sequence of patterns within patterns – all similar without ever being identical”
– Frijtov Capra.

Kabbalah The mystical teachings of Judaism.

Kōan A kōan is a Zen term used to describe a question which is posed to a person and which has no rational answer. It therefore forces the person to use the intuitive aspect of their mind to find an answer. A famous kōan is: “Two hands clap and there is a sound; what is the sound of one hand?”

Nadis Nadis are like chakras, only they are organized in a less complex way. Like chakras, they are points within the subtle energy body of earth (and all life) which perform specific roles of energy exchange and transmutation.

Prana A term describing the vital life force, in Sanskrit it means breath. Prana is the life force which flows through all living things and has similarities to the *lumen naturae*.

Quarks These are, according to quantum physics, the smallest units of matter in the physical realm. A quark can also be described as the most

elementary particle of physical life, or the first manifestation of matter as it passes from the subtle to the physical realm.

San This is the modern term and considered the politically correct description of the Bushmen. In my dealings with the San, through their national representative councils, they have said that they prefer the term 'bushmen' to San, but there is still disagreement amongst academics as to which is more appropriate.

Sangoma A traditional healer in South Africa, an African shaman, is known as a sangoma in this region. The term sangoma can mean 'to create and destroy' and has similarities to the term yin-yang. A sangoma is defined by his or her belief in the importance of being conscious of both the physical aspects of healing (herbs, medicines, acupuncture, etc.) and the subtle aspects (the subtle world of spirit, the psyche).

Seer I have referred to a seer as a person who is capable of peering beyond the material veil into the subtle worlds. Many children are naturally seers, especially when they are growing through their imaginary phases, and we need to nurture this quality in ourselves and our children if we are to develop a spiritually integrated global community.

Vortex A pattern that is present in many living systems where energy/matter flows in a spiral form and where energy is accumulated at a higher rate in the centre of the vortex. Chakras display vortex patterns.

Zulu The South African tribe who were famously led by Shaka, and whose origin is believed to be from the original ancient civilization of Great Zimbabwe.



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Multimedia

The Global Oneness Project –

An inspiring collection of short films about oneness in the world
(Copies available from www.globalonenessproject.org)



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