

Active Hope:

How to face the nuclear mess we're in
without going crazy

Based on *The Work That Reconnects*, developed
by world-renowned eco-philosopher Joanna Macy



As nuclear activists and citizens of a nuclear world, we are confronted with realities that are painful to face, difficult to take in and confusing to live with. Whatever situation we face, we can choose our response. However, when facing overwhelming challenges, we might feel that our actions don't count for much. The kind of response we make, and the degree to which we believe they count, are shaped by the way we think and feel about hope.

The word *hope* has two different meanings. The first involves hopefulness, where our preferred outcome seems reasonably likely to happen. Passive hope is about waiting for external agencies to bring about what we desire. If we require this kind of hope before we act, our response gets blocked when we don't feel our chances for success are high.

The second meaning is about desire—what we hope for and would love to see happen in the world. It is this kind of hope that starts our journey. It is what we do with this hope that really makes the difference. Active Hope is about becoming active participants in bringing about what we hope for.

Active Hope is a practice. Like tai chi or gardening, it is something we *do* rather than *have*. It is a process we can apply to any situation.

The Active Hope workshop is based in the interactive group process called **The Work That Reconnects**, which is uniquely designed to help us in this time of planetary emergency and the resulting overwhelm and despair that many of us feel. The Work That Reconnects strengthens our capacity to give our best response to the social and ecological challenges confronting us. It has helped hundreds of thousands of people around the globe find creativity, solidarity, and courage to act. Drawing from living systems theory, spiritual teachings, deep time and deep ecology, it involves a transformative journey around a spiral of four successive experiences: Gratitude, Honoring Our Pain for the World, Seeing With New Eyes and Going Forth.

When we experience *gratitude*, we become more present to the life around us and to the many gifts we receive. This also brings a sharper awareness of the problems we are facing. We *honor our pain for the world* by making space to hear our sorrow, fear, outrage and other feelings in response to what is happening in our world. As we do so, profound caring and interconnectedness with all life are revealed.

In *seeing with new eyes*, we deepen our recognition of our mutual belonging in the living Earth. We learn to understand the new kind of power this gives and the many ways we can apply this to our participation in the Great Turning to a life-sustaining society. Fresh vision and practical steps are clarified in the final stage of *going forth*.

Compassion literally means to feel with, to suffer with. Everyone is capable of compassion, and yet everyone tends to avoid it because it's uncomfortable. And the avoidance produces psychic numbing -- resistance to experiencing our pain for the world and other beings.

--Joanna Macy--

Kathleen Rude conducts workshops on sustainability, environmental and social change and earth-based spirituality. She is also a shamanic practitioner and ceremonial leader and an environmental writer/advocate with a Master of Science degree in natural resources.



A lifelong environmentalist, Kathleen has been trained by Joanna Macy and is a founding member of The Work That Reconnects Facilitator Network. Kathleen recently co-facilitated with Joanna a five-day WTR intensive in Madison, WI and a workshop in Chicago.

"Kathleen Rude is a guide of remarkable depth, with powerful gifts to bring to people of all backgrounds who seek a life-enhancing relationship with the natural world. I know her as a facilitator of the Work That Reconnects, and I trust the way she has enriched its practice with her own shamanic training and skills. Kathleen has a natural authority that builds confidence and ease in collaboration. I treasure her guidance and her companionship as we work together for the sake of life on Earth." ~Joanna Macy



Carolyn Treadway has been part of Joanna Macy's Work That Reconnects since 1983. Trained also by Al Gore to be a Climate Leader, she "speaks for Earth" whenever she can. She is a life coach, therapist, and pastoral counselor.

Conference note:

You must sign up in advance for this workshop at the Registration Desk. The Workshop will be limited to the first 40 individuals who sign up. It will begin immediately following Sunday's memorial observance at the Henry Moore Sculpture to Nuclear Power, around 4:30 p.m. Walk-ins will be accepted only as space permits, at the discretion of the workshop facilitators.