

unsustainable, never-ending craving for material wealth and unconscious patterns of consumption which provides only a false sense of gratification and momentary stimulus.

What if we returned to the narrative of paradise? What if we transform ourselves into local and global communities of greatness, sharing our gifts and talents generously? What if we share our spiritual and material resources, living simply and sustainably, consciously and compassionately? Rather than competing with one another, what if we cooperate with people and the planet? What if our economies were circular and regenerative based on natural principles? Wouldn't this be a more holistic way to respect and enhance the wellbeing of Earth and the community of life? Wouldn't it celebrate the biodiversity of creation?

The Sacredness of Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the most valuable element of Earth's physiology. It is life sustaining itself through cosmic cycles, a tapestry of multidimensional living components, a network of inter-beings sustaining each other in homeostasis¹. The fabric of our reality is interconnected and interdependent; based on reciprocity and sharing; abundance and gratitude – all parts of the same whole. This universal form of harmony serves the most sacred of all its components – consciousness.

This understanding is rooted in the cosmology and wisdom of multiple Indigenous traditions who have taught humanity that life is sacred, that Earth deserves respect, so each generation, each human and each being has the right to coexist in harmony within the cosmos. The Iroquois – Native American people – spoke in their tradition that all around us we can perceive *Orenda*, the extraordinary invisible radiant power that pervades every particle of matter as a luminous essence that informs and forms the four elements: minerals, fungi, plants, animals, the forests, the oceans, the marshes, the volcanoes, the sky and Earth as a whole. Perceiving the planet as a living organism, it is the most sacred and luminous place in the Universe.

A Critical Time for Our Planet

Now is a critical time. We are witnessing the most epic devastation of planet Earth: the current water and land crises, climate change, extinction of species, poverty and pollution. In addition, many people live their lives virtually, driven by technology and are disconnected with the natural world. What is happening in the external world mirrors the spiritual crisis happening inside of us. The knowledge base of the Brahma Kumaris explains that the current status of the planet can also be an auspicious and benevolent time, the confluence of an old era with a new one. It is by witnessing time as cyclical that we can understand that which is now in degradation can turn pristine again.

¹ Homeostasis, from the Greek words for "same" and "steady," refers to any process that living things use to actively maintain fairly stable conditions necessary for survival.

“Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and, in the process, heal our own – indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. This will happen if we see the need to revive our sense of belonging to a larger family of life, with which we have shared our evolutionary process.” Wangari Maathai

Spiritual Regeneration

We live in a light reality where sunlight is the life force that sustains all of us in the natural world. Energy is condensed light which is the transformation of light energy from the sun. Plants transform sunlight into the nutrients they store as food. Every nutrient or molecule, like oxygen, are produced by plants and therefore they carry the light we need to eat and breathe. Every moment of our lives we are consuming condensed light.

Similar to plants that convert light into energy, this paper proposes a concept called *ecosynthesis*^a. It is a form of contemplation that works as an “ecology of the soul”, a bio-spiritual-dynamic process that can heal, regenerate and help our connection to the self, others, God and Nature flourish. *Ecosynthesis* helps us to recognize, embrace and integrate the different dimensions of the self, the human, the natural and spiritual realities within our consciousness. It is a conscious process of the mind which allows us to discern the intricate value of all the planet’s resources, including the spiritual wisdom and psychic energies of Earth, as integral parts of our overall wellbeing. *Ecosynthesis* allows us to realize our divine potential and to remember that all human souls are indigenous to an inner dimension of silence and peace, our spiritual home, the place where we can meet God, the source of infinite spiritual power. It is in silent contemplation that we can begin to heal our own wounds and those of the world. In this inner space our spiritual awareness blossoms, and we acquire the power to make choices that are aligned with the cyclical patterns of time and nature.

The contemplative practice of *ecosynthesis* has the potential to enlighten us by transforming our thoughts and feelings with numinous² energy and manifesting them in our actions in the form of regenerative spiritual values such as harmony, love, peace and respect. This connection to the Divine can emerge and grow spiritual restorative powers such as cooperation, courage, adaptation or tolerance in our awareness. These values and powers are guides to our behavior which take root in our mind, blossom in our heart, and flourish in our actions. It is in practicing them until they become a natural part of our thinking and behavior that they will create a garden of sustainable possibilities which will regenerate and enhance both our personal and Earth's wellbeing. The recognition of our own spiritual consciousness mirrors what is divine in all of us with no distinction of color, race, gender, or culture. It is what defines humans and all living beings as sacred.

² Numinous: having a strong religious or spiritual quality; indicating or suggesting the presence of a divinity.

Awakening A Flourishing Future

The emergence of a flourishing future starts within individuals. Within the awareness of the self, we find the power to transform our world and leave an archetypal blueprint for an ecological civilization. Our relationship with the biodiversity of the planet is based on the choices we make and the quality of our awareness. Cultivating an awareness that recognizes all relationships and include rights, responsibilities and reciprocity will improve our relationships within the biodiversity of life. Developing a consciousness that promotes care, mutuality and sufficiency for all living beings will transform the sense of exploitation, extraction, greed, competition and ruling over nature. This flourishing spiritual consciousness will help us make lifestyle choices and collective decisions in the policies and practices we implement on a global scale.

Our awareness impacts our thoughts, attitude, and our actions consequently impacting our world, actions such as sustainable lifestyles and a vegetarian diet can mitigate climate change, reduce waste and prevent over exploitation of species. Consistent choices to live simply, buy compassionately, use economically, learn collectively and share generously will make a difference. We can accelerate these changes by listening to the wisdom from multigenerational stewards of the land and learning from experiments in eco-villages, traditional knowledge like sustainable yogic agriculture, solar energy such as India One, and other initiatives that respect the sacredness of all beings³. We can benefit from other catalysts of change by pursuing collective inspirations by equitably engaging indigenous people, local communities, women, youth and other historically marginalized groups.

The biodiversity of life serves us, and it is our responsibility to serve life in exchange. Serving nature and preserving biodiversity is key to sustainability and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other UN targets and goals. We celebrate the progress made in the last decade in raising global consciousness of the triple threat of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change. However, it is a spiritual consciousness shift that will give us the power to make the kinds of advancement that will achieve the 2050 SDG goal of living in harmony and peace with nature and all living beings.

It is a pivotal time to recognize the sacredness of biodiversity on this beautiful blue planet, and an auspicious time for spiritual regeneration and strengthening our divine consciousness. We invite everyone to engage in experiments of silence and stillness to awaken their hearts and minds and create a world of ecological harmony. The time is now to shift our awareness to make the reality of a more flourishing world possible.

³ <https://eco.brahmakumaris.org/what-we-do/>



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The BKWSU, with its spiritual headquarters in Mt. Abu, India, comprises a worldwide network of centers in 110 countries and is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) of the United Nations (UN) accredited with General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); Associate Status with the Department of Global Communications (DCG); Consultative Status with UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); Observer Status to the UN Environment Assembly of UNEP; Observer Organization to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); Flagship Member of Education for Rural People (ERP), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

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^a The Brahma Kumaris are using the term, *ecosynthesis*, to represent the direction of our own work. The use of the term grew out of our understanding of *psychosynthesis* which was first popularized by psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli. *Psychosynthesis* is a form of psychology that considers a deep sense of personal identity and purpose and combines psychological healing with spiritual development. Its aim is to achieve greater authenticity and harmony among people and societies. We also take from the term, *ecosynthesis*, which is used by some environmentalists committed to supporting the restoration of ecosystems, including the planetary ecosystem. Approaches for regeneration such as regenerative agriculture, ecological restoration and rewilding are being suggested. The purpose is to renew and restore degraded, damaged or destroyed ecosystems and habitats by human intervention and action so those ecosystems can support the flourishing of life. The Brahma Kumaris contribution to this visionary work is to combine our own spiritual knowledge of the soul with the personal and spiritual strengths of *psychosynthesis* and the evolving work in the restoration and renewal of ecosystems on the planet. We have adopted the term *ecosynthesis* which is outlined in this paper.

(Assagioli, R. (1965) *Psychosynthesis*. New York: The Viking Press; Whitmore, D. (2013) *Psychosynthesis Counselling in Action*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage; Sorenson, K. (2016) *The Soul of Psychosynthesis*, Kentaur Forlag) (Holmgren, D. (2010) *Weeds or wild nature, Perspectives in Ecology, Spirituality and Education*, 13; Graham, J.M. (2007) *Planetary ecosynthesis as ecological succession*, Research Gate; Schreefel, L. et al (2020); *Regenerative agriculture: the soil is the base*, Global Food Security, 26; Society for Ecological Restoration (2019); *International Principles and Standards for the Practice of Ecological Restoration*; Foreman, D. (2004); *Rewilding North America: a vision for conservation in the 21st century*. Washington, Island Press.)