

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW STORY

What is the Old Story?

The old story is about separation from the divine. What we call the “old story” is a world view that is mechanistic, deterministic, dualistic, and objectifying. Mechanistic in that the machine is the explanatory model for understanding relationships. Deterministic in that cause and effect are tightly bound. Dualistic in the oppositions of heaven and earth, us and them. Objectifying is a separation between objects such as between the earth and humans. These are all ways of pointing to the basic sin of separation that is part of the old story. The worldview of the old story has led to the destruction of the earth and its ecosystems, to racism, classism, and other forms of “othering,” to power over and violence. To the extent that faith communities have embraced the old story, it has led to their dissolution.

And the New Story?

The worldview also called “cosmology” of the New Story is one of radical interdependence between individuals, groups, and the earth. The sacred is omnipresent in individuals, in animals, in plants, in soil, in rocks, in atoms, and in galaxies and in their connections. The New Story draws on the wisdom traditions of major religions and indigenous practices. For example, the teaching of Jesus, of Buddha, of gurus, shamans, and wise women are part of different wisdom traditions. The New Story also draws on the insights of science, particularly an evolutionary worldview and the emerging worldview of quantum physics. We seek the transformation of consciousness that will allow us to learn and live in harmony with these truths.

There are many people learning about the new story worldview. We are open to sharing their insights. There are different ways of talking about the sacred and words can get in the way. We need to learn how to communicate from the place beyond words.

There are many people who in different ways are living the new story. Some focus on teaching the new story worldview to children in order to counterbalance the old story that is dominant in our culture. Some focus on gardening as a way to reestablish a connection with the earth. Some focus on personal engagement with the omnipresent divinity. Some focus on learning to communicate with those who we disagree with. And, some focus on teaching nonviolence. Working on anti-racism, climate justice, extinction rebellion, clean energy, the Green New Deal, land acknowledgement, politics, are all ways to express the new story world view. Every crisis is an opportunity—our current crises are a wakeup call to enable a positive change.

We are not alone in this work. The number of people who have had a transformative experience is growing. We may be nearer the great turning that Joanna Macy envisioned than we realize. Duane Elgin reports on surveys that show that “awakening experiences of communion and connection with the aliveness of the Universe are not a fringe phenomenon but, instead, are familiar encounters for a large portion of the public.”¹

¹ *Choosing Earth: Humanity's Great Transition to a Mature Planetary Civilization*. By Duane Elgin (2020, p 109)