

KOSMOS LIVE Preparing for Profound Change

Episode_3 Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee

Reconnecting to the World Soul

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From our recording studios in Philadelphia, this is Kosmos Live and I am your host Rhonda Fabian.

This will be a multi-generational story, it won't be fixed in the next five, 10, even 20 years, maybe in the next 200 years, but we have to be pioneers of consciousness, and this is something the mystic has always been. We push the frontiers of consciousness, we see what is possible within the human being, we dare to live a new story..

You're listening to Sufi teacher Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee. 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. He has also written about the feminine and the world soul, the *anima mundi*, and on the groundbreaking subject of spiritual ecology. Llewellyn is the founder of the Golden Sufi Center. His books include *Working With Oneness*, *Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth*, an anthology of essays, and most recently, *Spiritual Ecology: 10 Practices to Reawaken the Sacred in Everyday Life*.

Kosmos Live: Dear teacher, it's an honor to welcome you to Kosmos Live.

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Rhonda, it's a privilege to talk to you, and to have a nice conversation together on this beautiful summer's morning.

Kosmos Live: You have said that for the Sufi, spiritual life is a love affair, and the child born from this love is the path. Can you explain what you mean, and how this path can inform our response to a world in pain?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Yes. Well, in my understanding, there are many many different ways to God, to truth, to nirvana, whatever name you call that which cannot be named. What I have discovered is that for some people, this relationship or this journey needs to be a love affair. Some people just need to have a relationship with God or truth as a love affair, as this passion deep within the soul.

The Sufi says that 'there are 60,000 veils of light and 60,000 veils of darkness, lest

the glory of his face burn us away'. It is really a journey of love within the heart to go deeper into the mystery of what it means to be a human being, and to this extraordinary quality of divine love that you discover exists within everything in creation, this underlying structure of life, and also what is beyond life in the un-created, in the emptiness. It is a wonderful, intoxicating journey, most people have read about it in the poetry of Rumi - that has been a great gift to the west in recent years - to sense this intoxicating substance, as Sufis talk about, 'the wine that was before the creation of the vine', this divine substance that is really the deepest passion of the soul.

I have been graced since I was 19 and met my teacher, a Russian lady, Irina Tweedie, who was trained by a Sufi master in India to be taken on this journey, to be taken deep within the heart into the mystery of the soul, and to the mystery of this extraordinary relationship with what we Sufis call our Beloved.

As I said, since the beginning of time, there have always been souls drawn to this impossible quest, this ultimate destiny of being a human being, to discover our real nature, what we were before we were. That's why I titled my first autobiography *The Face We Had Before We Were Born*, which is actually a Zen saying. This essential nature of what it means to be a human being, and this is, if you like, the in-breath of the mystic, and as Lao Tzu said, "You close all the doors, you shut all the windows," and you go deep within yourself. Traditionally, this has been a journey often undertaken in solitude or in a monastery away from the world, but then there is the out-breath, which is what has fascinated me in this life, which is what is the contribution of the mystic at this present moment in time?

Kosmos Live: Yes, this is a core tension, isn't it? The Seeker is increasingly drawn inward as the urgency of the world's call seems to increase..

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: What I discovered in my own journey is there are certain core mystical values or experiences that I think are of infinite value to the wider community at this present time.

The first of these ... Well, there are two. There is love, yes. It is, I say, somehow in the west, we have limited love to something that happens in personal relationships, and the Sufi mystic knows that love is much deeper, much more all-pervading than that. As my sheik said, it is the greatest power in creation, and I think we have to free love from this limited personal prison we have placed it in, and welcome it back into the hall of creation, understand it as the heartbeat of the world, of this beautiful poisonous ... The Sufis say, "Keep away, keep away from the lane of love," because they know how dangerous it is, but we have to free love, we have to recognize it in its true nature, which is this extraordinary power and presence, tender, intoxicating, sweet, that exists within our own hearts.

You don't find it outside, you find it deep within your heart, it is one of the greatest mysteries of being a human being. Sufis over the centuries, well, as Al Hallaj says, "I am he whom I love, and he whom I love is me." He was known as the prince of lovers. Freeing love, empowering oneself with the true nature of love is very important.

And the other quality at this time that has drawn me very much is Oneness, because Oneness is a very basic mystical experience. They talk about *unio mystica*, Oneness with God, or just the experience of divine Oneness that is present in everything and all around us. Sufis say, "Wheresoever you turn, there is the face of God." I think we live in such a divisive world, and we live in a world that needs this consciousness of Oneness, that needs to recognize the whole world, all of creation is one living being, and that is divine, that is sacred.

If we are to take a step forward in our evolution both as human beings and also as a planet, as the Earth, we need to embrace this Oneness, we need how to learn to live from a place of Oneness, we need to understand what it means to be this interconnected, interdependent living whole that we call the Earth. That to me is another central note that the mystic can contribute.

Kosmos Live: Thank you. What practices are most helpful to help us awaken to the reality of Oneness, to make the bond of love with creation more conscious?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: What practices? Well, you know I am a mystic, and Sufi meditation is the most precious discipline, that if you go deep within, and there are many different forms of meditation, you discover what is underneath the veil of appearances, what is beneath the surface, you tap into this great reservoir of Oneness and divine love. I practice a simple heart meditation in which we drown the mind in the feeling of love within the heart. It's a long journey, this is not overnight success, this is a 10, 20 year commitment to going deep within yourself. I personally think it's tremendously worthwhile, and human beings have been given these techniques of meditation.

You follow a path, whether it's ... The beginning of my journey was in Zen Buddhism, and I practiced Zen meditation, which I found incredibly liberating, but I needed that fragrance of love to go home. Then there are more simple everyday techniques to make one aware of the interdependence, the interconnectivity, this living Oneness in which we are a part. Just think of a simple practice, when you are eating a carrot for your dinner, just be aware of where the carrot has come from, the Earth that has nourished it, the rain that has helped it to grow, the sun that has beaten down upon the Earth, and become aware that it is all a part of one living creation, and you are part of it. These are very simple practices, like walking in a sacred manner, where when you walk, you feel your feet connecting to the living body of the Earth.

When you begin to reconnect, Joanna Macy has this important work that reconnects, we reconnect with the living Oneness which is life, which every indigenous person knew about since the earliest years, that of course life is one, of course creation is one, of course everything is sacred. How could it not be sacred? Just like the air we breathe, the water we drink, and for some reason, and I think sadly, it's one of the vestiges of a patriarchal culture, we lost contact with it, we became separate, we became caught in a world of our own imaginings, and we need to reclaim, to return, to reconnect to this living wholeness.

Kosmos Live: Many teachings make a distinction between the apparent or mundane world and another level of reality, let's just call it the divine, or between inner and outer worlds. My Dharma teacher said once that he has one foot in the historic realm and one in the ultimate. I'm wondering how useful these distinctions are. More and more, these worlds seemed merged to me, or at least a kind of superimposition, what do you think about that?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Well, this is a very deep question, Rhonda. One of the privileges, if you like, of really the mystical journey is you begin to experience or are even taken into, when I was 23, I was woken up on the plane of the self, on the atmic plane, which is a plane of pure light, of pure love, there is no time, there is no space, a completely different reality, unbelievably beautiful, there is no ego. It is very different to this outer world, to this outer world of forms, with light and dark and shadows and misunderstandings. It's like St. Paul, he says, "Now we see through a glass darkly, then we shall see face to face, now we know in part, then we shall know even as we are known."

There, there is no misunderstanding, there can be no misunderstanding, it is what the Sufis call a realm of light upon light, unbelievably beautiful. What you come to discover is how this inner world of pure light and love suffuses and is also veiled by this outer world of forms. There are of course many different approaches of this, is it just our perception that veils the beauty, the divinity from direct experience, for example, this perception of the ego, that it is something separate, is it just that, or is it part of the nature of creation? The Sufis actually talk very deeply about this. They say there are two aspects of the divine, one is the innermost unknowable, and no one knows God but God. You go deep, deep into meditation, you lose yourself, you lose all knowing or unknowing, you are taken into the beyond of the beyond, and you come out of meditation stumbling, not knowing where you have been taken, not knowing who you are, but sensing you have experienced something that you can never put into words.

As Rumi says, "Words are like footsteps in the sand that take us to the edge of the ocean, and once you go into the ocean, there swimming always ends in drowning." Then there is the way that creation, this extraordinary, beautiful, and at times terrible world we live in, I am very fortunate to live in a very beautiful part of northern California, right now I am looking out over the wetlands where the tides come and go. This morning on my walk, I saw a downy falcon sitting on the telegraph poles. This incredibly beautiful place of revelation of the divine, they said this is really the first book of revelation is nature, is this world around us, but the question is, do we open our eyes of perception to see the world as it really is, or are we caught up in the ego and its desires and all of its patterns and attractions?

I gave a recent talk called Spiritual Guidance for Living in Toxic Times, I think one has to be realistic and recognize that there is an outer darkening, particularly played out ecologically, that we are destroying the planet, we are destroying this beautiful fragile web of creation, the loss of species, the toxicity, the acidification of the oceans, it's heartbreaking, it tears your soul apart. We can talk more about that later, this is what I call the cry of the Earth. What I have discovered, which is not so well known or understood is that the outer darkening, this divisive culture

of exploitation in which human beings are treated as consumers rather than sacred beings, that takes away the light from the planet, takes away the light from the souls, stays echoed in the inner worlds by a darkening.

I call it the loss of the sacred, which is incredibly tragic if you know how precious this substance of the sacred is, how precious it is to human beings, how precious it is to the planet. We are living in very toxic times, it's jokingly called the post-truth era. The mystic and the Sufis have written a lot about the veils of distortion, and how to see through the veils of distortion, but they are more distorted than ever and it requires an extra special vigilance, attentiveness and mindfulness to stay true to one's own deepest purpose in this minefield of exploitation, in this minefield of greed in which sadly, even a lot of spirituality has become polluted by profit and loss, by commercialism.

Yes, there are these two worlds, there is this inner world of pure love and pure light, and one can be taken there. It's incredibly beautiful, it's incredibly intoxicating. My teacher used to call us, we are soldiers of the two worlds, of the inner world, and then there is the outer world in which we wake up in the morning. We need to be particularly attentive now in this outer world, from a spiritual point of view it is very very toxic. Sadly, I don't think, for some reason, many spiritual practitioners are aware of how the illusions of the inner world and the outer world permeate their practice, and how they need to be especially vigilant at this time, so that their inner work, their practice, doesn't get distorted, that the work they do on themselves doesn't get devalued, doesn't get buried in this landslide of exploitation, of greed, of darkening of the light.

Kosmos Live: Because in the face of injustice, anger can be a very strong motivator for the activist. Are negative emotions ever helpful, or should we be constantly seeking to transform them?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: That's a very very good question, and my sense is yes, a lot of negative emotions should be transformed, and the Sufis call this polishing the mirror of the heart, working on the lower self, the *nafs*. In our particular tradition, we adapted the Jungian technique of shadow work, an important preparation on the path, and I think every spiritual practitioner needs to confront their own darkness and to transform it. Yet, there is also a certain righteous anger, which I actually experience more as grief in the last few years, as I have seen more deeply inwardly and outwardly what we are doing to this beautiful, beautiful world.

It has brought up a deep, deep grief and sadness. I don't quite understand why we are polluting it to such a degree, polluting it not just physically, but also spiritually, and this dark web of consumerism, how it takes the light from our own souls, or as we'll say it, takes the money from your pocket, but also the light from your own soul as you are drawn into this darkness, with all of its false promises that stuff will make you happy.

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*We are talking with Sufi teacher Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee. He edited a pathfinding collection of essays, now in its second edition, called **Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth.***

Kosmos Live: We have desecrated the Earth, as you say, but also our relations with one another, mainly through greed and isolation. You do speak of Earth calling out to us, and how we must each hear that call in our own way. How can we re-sacrilize our relationship with the Earth and all beings?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Yes, this is, I mean again, these are very very important questions. The Sufis say the first step is witnessing, just being aware. It is to recognize as consciously as you can what is happening, because this is very painful, and because it's like being aware of your own darkness, being aware of your own failings, really to see what we are doing to the world outwardly. Many environmentalists are just torn apart by grief. In fact, Joanna Macy talks about this being an important stage, that the grief breaks open your heart, because she feels strongly as I do, and also as your teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh said, "We have to fall in love with the Earth," Love is the one redeeming feature, the most important thing that exists, in fact.

The poet Wendell Berry says that the care of the Earth is our most pressing concern, and the world can only be redeemed by love. First you have to recognize what is happening, and then you have to find a way to reconnect with what is sacred within yourself. Again, for me there are two aspects of this, as I am by nature a traditional mystic, you go deep into meditation, into prayer. I do think it's important to have a practice of prayer or meditation that reconnects you with the sacred within yourself, with that part of you that can never be polluted, which cannot be desecrated, your own divine core, your own divine center, that sacred being within yourself that the Sufis talk about it being in the heart of hearts, the place that belongs only to God.

Thomas Merton also talks about it, his "incorruptible center", so that is done through serious prayer, through serious meditation, but I also felt that there is another side to it, which has to do with creation. For that reason, I recently put together a little book I called *Spiritual Ecology: 10 Practices to Reawaken the Sacred in Everyday Life*, because what I discovered is over the years since I was 19 and came to my teacher's door, I had developed certain very simple, essential practices to help to access the sacred in everyday life. First for me is always walking. For some reason, since I began spiritual life, since I began meditating when I was 17, walking and meditation belong together.

I usually start the day early with a warm cup of tea, and I meditate, and then at first light, before the thought forms of the day have arrived, I like to go out for a walk, and as I say, I'm very fortunate I live in a very beautiful part of the country. To feel the presence of nature, to feel this aspect of the divine that is so present in the created world, and whether it's the mist coming over the water or the first rays of sun coming over the hills, or the birds calling to each other, or the blossoms of the tree.

Another one for example is cleaning; it's something I was taught, which I think is also a traditional Zen practice. One thinks of the Zen monks sweeping the courtyard, the importance of cleaning, of keeping an outer clear space as much as an inner clear space, and treating everything in your house with love, with care, with attention, which is again, a simple way of reclaiming the sacred in everyday life. It is present all around us, for some reason we have been made too busy to be aware of it, and our lives get so cluttered with noise, with images, with what the Taoists call the red dust or the 10,000 things, and we need to return to a certain simplicity. I wrote this book just to give simple practices in everyday life, how we can reclaim or reawaken the sacred in everyday life, whether through **simply** using the brush or the broom, or learning how to cook with love and attention.

These are simple practices, they are not difficult, they don't take time, because they are part of our everyday life, that we reclaim the sacred in our inner life through prayer, through meditation, through devotions, and in our outer life just through being present in the sacred that is all around us, that permeates everything, but for some reason there is this poison, and I deliberately call it poison, in our contemporary culture, that stops us from experiencing it, that veils us from what alone gives real meaning to life.

What I actually find interesting, Rhonda, I'm very aware because it's something my teacher taught me, to listen to the news, to watch the world as it unfolds. Yes, it is an illusion, but it is an illusion that has a story to tell, and she would often be awake in the night and she would listen to the World Service on the radio, and to see what is happening at the present time in America I find deeply troubling, but also answers a certain question.

Because my sense is that this American dream, this dream of prosperity has passed its sell by date, that its promises of prosperity have failed, and something deep in the collective psyche of the country knows this, but doesn't know why, and as they become very angry and bitter, and it's reacting because it knows that things materially are not going to get better, that that dream is gone, that our politicians and in fact that everything around us has no alternative. They just promise more economic prosperity, but that dream is over, and it's created this deep disturbance in the collective psyche, and I'm not quite sure where it is headed.

Kosmos Live: Yes, I think many are still trapped in the illusion of 'manifest destiny', and individualistic American values around competition and consumption, or 'rising to the top'. We blame our leaders when in fact they are shadows of our collective consciousness dancing on the world stage.

At the same time, new values are also emerging or re-emerging having much more to do with sharing and cooperation, interbeing and Oneness. This is a collective struggle, and I'm wondering what you see as some essential quality in us that we might be able to call upon to overcome our negative illusions.

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: You know, I think there are two things you are saying

here. There is a saying the Sufis have treasured: "We have placed our signs on the horizons and in themselves." There are signs in the world around us, and you don't have to be a psychic to see them anymore. This is why I love this expression of Thich Nhat Hanh, he calls them the "bells of mindfulness", and when you look at what's happening in the world around us, and you see the depletion of the ecosystem, any species that is destroying its own ecosystem has become pathological. There's no other word for it, it is beyond crazy, and we are destroying it at an ever increasing rate.

Either you bury your head in the sand and you hope things will get better with Coke, or you actually say, "Something is happening I need to be aware of, and I need to make a shift." There is what people call a new story, and it is a story that we are not separate from the Earth. This was a myth of Newtonian physics that treated the Earth as some unfeeling mechanism it could control. Building a path, this is a new story, but it's also an old story, that we are part of this living wholeness. You know I say the Earth is not a problem to be solved, it is a living being in distress, and we are part of it. Then you think, "How can you change, how can you respond to this situation?" I said, "First, you are aware of what is happening."

One of the dangers I see at the present is what's called greening the economy. There is this kind of current easy option that we're going to find some technological fix that will enable us to continue our energy-intensive consumer-driven life without damaging the planet too much. My sense is that that story is a false promise, because there is something deeper, Rhonda, within a human being than merely the consumer. Human beings are sacred, they are incredibly beautiful. I've been blessed to see human beings as they really are, as beings of light with the quality of love, with a quality of divine consciousness, and we cannot lose that.

This will be a multi-generational story, it won't be fixed in the next five, 10, even 20 years, maybe in the next 200 years, but we have to be pioneers of consciousness, and this is something the mystic has always been. We push the frontiers of consciousness, we see what is possible within the human being, we dare to live a new story. We have to reclaim a sense of the sacred within creation, that is to me the most pressing need of the present time.

Yes, there is social injustice, and for example the refugee plight, which many of our community in Europe are facing very much and actively involved in, but on a deeper multi-generational level, we need to reclaim the sacred of creation. We have to learn how to live, how to work together with the Earth, how can humanity and the Earth continue to evolve together? How will the Earth survive as a sacred living being, and how can we help it transform? This is a time of crisis, but also a time of opportunity, if we are prepared to renew our ancient pledge, our sacred commitment to the Earth to care and protect her, to love her. That's why I said I quote the poet Wendell Berry, who says, "The care of the Earth is our most pressing concern," and "the world can only be redeemed by love."

It may sound idealistic to take this approach, but if you can't live from a certain ideal within yourself, but at the same time being pragmatic, being aware of the difficulties of the present time, and we are going through a time of transition, a time of crisis, a crisis for the Earth. It's been through other crises before, whether it

will survive in the same way, or human beings will survive in the same way, we don't know, but we have to make this effort to reclaim the sacred nature of creation before a certain light goes out, a certain joy is more difficult to access.

Kosmos Live: Sounds like the right moment to invoke the Divine Feminine. Can you speak more about the role of the Divine Feminine in restoring wholeness to our families and our communities?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Yes, I think this is very important. I mean, first again, one acknowledges we are living at the end of a patriarchal era that has given us the fruits of science and technology and many gifts, but there has been a terrible price to pay, and the price has been this image of separation, the masculine, the analytic self that can cut things into pieces and analyze them, but lost a sense of our own wholeness, both our individual wholeness, our wholeness as communities, and our wholeness together with the Earth. There is a simple truth, Rhonda, you know without the feminine, nothing new can be born. This is both a biological truth and also a spiritual truth. Spiritually, you go into the womb of yourself and are regenerated, I suppose there's an inner incubation that gives birth to the divine nature.

It's called spiritual rebirth for that very reason, you go into a certain place within yourself, the womb of your own heart where you are recreated, you are reborn. What can happen to the individual at a microcosmic level can also happen to the Earth, and so we need the feminine on a very deep level, and we need to reclaim the feminine that has been abused, that has been degraded, whose power has been stripped away by centuries and millennia of patriarchal oppression. There are very basic important feminine qualities that are needed at this time. First of all, we need to learn to listen, we need to be receptive, we need to listen to the Earth. How are we going to heal the Earth if we don't listen to her?

Inner listening is something that the mystic learns, Rumi says, "We make everything in you an ear, so you can hear what the beloved is saying to you at every moment." In prayer, one becomes receptive, you learn to listen to the beloved, you learn to listen to the mystery that is unfolding within you and without you. I think there have been too much implementation of masculine plans. I firmly believe that life is a living organism of which we are a part, and it can recreate itself, it can heal itself if we are receptive, if we are attuned to the deeper wisdom of the Earth, and also the deeper wisdom of our own being that can be in tune with it, and also for the feminine in the same way has an understanding of relatedness. The masculine likes to separate.

I always remember as a child, an image that sticks with me, I used to walk to school when I was six. Walking back from school, there was a group of schoolgirls in front of me, and they were chattering away back and forth with each other, and I was aware they had a quality of relatedness that I as a man lacked, they just had a way of being together. I'm sure there's a dark side to that, but I was so aware that this relatedness that is so natural to the feminine, just being together and relating, and we need to reclaim this in its deepest sense, that we need to relate to each other as a community of human beings. For example, this refugee crisis calls to us to relate.

It's not so visible in America, as I said, our community in Europe is very involved in it. We can't build walls, we are one living human family, how are we going to be with this present predicament? How are we going to relate to the people and their stories and their souls and their suffering, and not treat them as a commodity to exploit or exclude, as we are doing at the moment?

In this country, there is so much divisiveness along so many different lines, and we are one human family, we are interconnected, we cannot cut off an arm because we don't like it, it is all part of one living wholeness. The feminine understands that, this is natural to the feminine, she understands the patterns of relationships, she understands the importance of wholeness, of being holistic, these are feminine qualities. The masculine, as I said, likes to separate and to analyze and has been very useful scientifically, but you know as people discovered the importance of holistic medicine, we need holistic lifestyle. We cannot exploit the Earth, we cannot exploit each other, we have to get along together.

These are really important feminine qualities, and we need to live through cooperation rather than competition. This is how human beings and the Earth are meant to be together, these are the original instructions, and we can only evolve together. We cannot build a wall and evolve on our own, it doesn't work. This is one of the great recent revolutions, through the internet, through cell phones, that make us aware of how we are part of an interconnected human society, and yet we have taken that the other way as, "How can we use the tools of interconnectivity to exploit each other more, for more divisiveness, for the richer few?" That's why I wrote this book *Working With Oneness*, we should learn how to work with Oneness on a global scale, on a local scale, in a community. This is something very simple but completely radical and revolutionary, and sadly we have only made a few steps in this direction.

Kosmos Live: It is incredibly sad and it leads me to ask you a question I asked two years ago, can life continue beautifully without human beings?

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: There was life here before human beings, this planet was a beautiful place before, human beings are quite recent. Human beings have this unique quality that they carry divine consciousness, that they can become conscious of their own divine nature. When I saw the downy falcon this morning, it just was as it was, incredibly beautiful, pure, but there was no consciousness of itself. It was connected of course to all of creation around it, but there was no consciousness, and human beings carry this gift of consciousness. My sense is that while there is a tradition here, and there is a line both in the Quran and also in the Bible about God teaching Adam the names, that humanity has a very particular relationship to creation, that was symbolized by being taught the names of creation, which has to do with the sacred, the esoteric meaning of creation.

Through this relationship, which is quite beautiful, one can still see traces of it in indigenous people, for example the Kogi in South America, we evolve together, the living being, the Earth, evolves together with this divine consciousness within humanity. We can make an evolutionary shift together, something in the heart of

the world can wake up. This is something I was shown in deep meditation many years ago, that just as a human being has a heart, so the world has a heart. You know the heart of the world used to sing many many thousands of years ago. It was an incredibly beautiful song, I think it's what we call Eden or Paradise, that first garden, and the heart of the world was alive, and the heart of the world sang the songs of creation, and we were a part of it.

Then became the great forgetting, and we forgot, we forgot the names of creation, we no longer know the real names of the animals or the plants, we no longer know how to talk to the plants, how to listen to the plants. This saying actually from Thomas Berry about how we have forgotten the great conversation, "We are not talking to the rivers, we are not listening to the wind and the stars, we have broken the great conversation. All the disasters that are happening now were a consequence of that spiritual autism." My deepest wish and dream is that we can return to the heart of the world, and help the heart of the world both to heal from this travesty we are inflicting upon the sacred and wake up again. When the heart of the world is awake, when the names of creation sing, when magic is alive, and everything is seen as sacred and known as sacred, that will be a tremendous step forward in our shared evolution, that will be a certain light.

You see, Rhonda, I have the privilege of working with human souls, I have sat at the feet of my teacher since I was 19. For the last 30 years, I have been teaching people the secrets of the Sufi path, and I have seen what happens to the light of a human being when they wake up to their divine nature. Something changes, it is incredibly beautiful, there is a light in the eyes that was not there before, there is a deep inner knowing. What can happen to an individual can also happen to the world, that the world can wake up spiritually, it can be aware of its own divine nature, its song can be heard. I don't think now I will see it in my lifetime, I had hoped at one time I would, but maybe in the future.

This is our shared destiny, our shared evolution. Yes, the world will continue, and there are other worlds too, there are other physical worlds, and there are of course many inner worlds, angelic worlds, beautiful worlds, worlds of light, worlds of love, as well as darker worlds. This world will continue with or without the presence of human beings, but we had a pledge when divine consciousness came into humanity, to help the world to evolve together. It's time to remember that pledge, and to work again with the light within creation, with what is sacred within our own souls and the soul of the world, what the ancients called the anima mundi. The world has a soul, it's very beautiful, it's sad at the moment because we have treated it so badly both through neglect and abuse, yet it is still present. This light is still alive, and so there is still hope for the future.

Kosmos Live: We seem balanced on the razor's edge and our choices will usher in profound change however we choose. Yet, give us such great hope for the future, dear teacher. I'm so grateful we could have this time together, that our listeners could receive your words of wisdom today, thank you so much.

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Thank you Rhonda, it's great to talk to you.

Kosmos Live: Wonderful having you today on Kosmos Live.

Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee: Okay, thank you so much.