

A Conversation About Women and Climate Change

By Kathy Baxter

Environmental and climate change consultant JoDee Powers, author of the soon to be released book "Why Women are the Solution to Climate Change," is asking the questions, "As we watch major systems fail, what if there had been a greater number of women involved in trading, government and business decisions? Would we be in these crises of energy, economy and climate change? Is something happening, that creates an opening for women and their perspective to take hold in a new way?"

The following interview with JoDee explores these questions and challenges women (and men) to think about these issues in a new way.

JoDee: Systems beginning to fail are cracking open, creating potential avenues for women to step in and offer a different way forward. When we talk about breathing new life into our communities, we are also looking at re-connecting at a deeper lever with what's around us. Whether that's refurbishing what's in our back yard or connecting with nature close at hand. This is about re-establishing a sense of connection with the ecosystem we live in regionally and remembering our very basic connection to the earth.

The economic, energy and climate crises were created by out of balance male-dominated oligarchies. We can begin to restore balance by looking at the tried and true phrase: Act locally, think globally.

We can find ways to breathe new life into these close-to-home relationships with localized food production, power generation, supporting local small businesses is key to building regenerative relationships and a sustainable environment.

Kathy: How is this feminine?

JoDee: It has to do with women and their relationships... It is because of who we are and the relationships we cultivate and keep. Women take a relational approach to each other, family, to the environment. Native Americans take the seventh genera-



JoDee Powers says We can find ways to breathe new life into these close-to-home relationships with localized food production, power generation, supporting local small businesses is key to building regenerative relationships and a sustainable environment.

tion view. What will the effects be of this decision seven generations in the future? This philosophy expresses the energy of the divine feminine. Assuming the solution to every problem is purely technological and that this technology is right at all costs is more male. This reliance on technology at any cost rejects the idea of slowing down to really look at whether the technology being created could potentially be harmful, in the manufacturing and production, in the consumption or disposal.

Kathy: If the "male dominated oligarchy" was to incorporate relationship into their system/process, how would that look?

JoDee: It starts with embracing the pre-

cautionary principle, looking at the inter-connectedness of all the relationships, and whether an action would create harm in the manufacture or extraction of resources, harm from chemicals left in the earth, water, or our bodies. That is a relational concept.

Kathy: Our economies seem to be based on the idea that more stuff, newer stuff, bigger stuff is always better. This applies to technology and consumption in general.

JoDee: Economies that are based on infinite growth are not sustainable. The paradigm in which we live today says that if we are not growing we are not prospering. A linear economy that depends on infinite growth and infinite resources is a death march.

If you look at natural systems, they go in a loop. The male dominated system we live in now is based on a linear, cradle to grave model. Regenerative models are cradle-to-cradle; circular. They are cooperative. Survival of the fittest is a myth, a century old concept that was an idea

taken out of context. Darwin knew that ecosystems had to cooperate in order to survive. Much of our last 100 years has been based on the misinterpretation of this little piece of survival theory. Ecosystems may

compete but they also cooperate in order to survive.

Kathy: We can model ecosystems to create a different kind of economy?

JoDee: Exactly, one that puts a premium on regenerative living and cooperation. It's not enough to sustain. Sustainability is the bridge to get us from what we have been creating to regenerative design. The planet cannot regenerate as long as we are just taking more and more resources to sustain our current way of life.


Kathy: Do we need to shift from maximizing the individual to maximizing the whole, good of the planet versus maximum profit?

JoDee: Definitely. We can't look at this without asking whom have we currently been maximizing? Well, corporate profit. But also, we have maximized the importance of things outside of ourselves. Literally, we have made the economy our higher power. Western culture has been in adolescence where everything has been treated as infinite. Mature cultures understand that resources are finite, human or planetary. We haven't had to pay the full price or be responsible for what we have done in our reckless consumption. We have let other parts of the globe pay our cost through exploitation, a European model for millennia.

Kathy: What's a first step to shift this model?

JoDee: The bottom line is that we have to go deeper. We can no longer be skimming the surface with quick fixes, thinking we've done enough. We can take personal responsibility for what we do: food choice,

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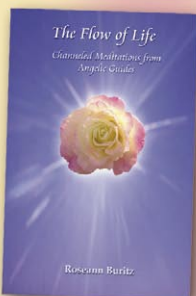
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