

# AWAKENING WHOLENESS

Youth Reclaiming a World of Peace, Joy, and Abundance

Foreword by H.H. the Dalai Lama  
Arun Wakhlu & Young Friends



INDIA • SINGAPORE • MALAYSIA



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## **Dedication**

This book is dedicated to the youth of the world.

All royalties from the sale of this book will be donated to “Youth Collaborating for Compassion” (YCC), a project run by the Foundation for Peace and Compassionate Leadership and the Charter for Compassion.

For more details visit:

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**<https://charterforcompassion.org/>**



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## *Foreword*

From my own experience, I can attest that compassion is one of the best means to bring about inner strength and peace. A compassionate heart has the potential to solve many of our existing problems.

Compassion, or a genuine sense of concern for others, is generally appreciated by everyone. Underpinning this is the recognition that others are equally important and have every right to happiness as oneself. Although it is at the heart of every religious tradition, compassion can be practised simply as basic human goodness regardless of whether one believes in any religious tradition or not.

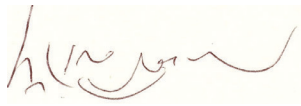
More than ever, nowadays, our world has become highly interconnected. At every level, individual, societal, national and international, we are dependent on one another socially, economically, scientifically and educationally. Geographically and climatically too, we are closely bound to one another. Something that happens on the other side of the globe can no longer be ignored as being irrelevant. Given this, we need to be involved in finding solutions to global issues. At such a time, humanity's sense of oneness is crucially needed.

Compassion allows transparency, while other's trust in you gives rise to self-confidence. Even for our own physical health, a calm and compassionate mind is also very crucial. Taking myself as a case in point, my doctors have been commending me for my good health. One of the factors for my physical well-being, I believe, is my practice of compassion, which I sincerely follow. Apart from the peace and joy found within through compassion, due to the positive environment that it creates, people would naturally be drawn to you. The sense of worthiness one feels due to others' trust and love for you would add meaning to your life. This kind of fulfilment is long-lasting, and far greater than those found in selfishness, greed and the like.

This book, *'Awakening Wholeness'* by Arun Wakhlu, focuses on compassion and the oneness of humanity, a topic that I have long been sharing wherever I go and with whomever I meet. I am sure

Foreword

readers would find it meaningful and give serious thought to making compassion a part of their lives.

A handwritten signature in brown ink on a light yellow background. The signature is fluid and cursive, starting with a large 'h' and ending with a long, sweeping flourish.

**His Holiness, The Dalai Lama**

27 November 2023



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# *Power Within the Mind of Youth*

**Dear and blessed souls:**

**Harih Om Tat Sat**

Dear Youth, every one of you henceforth counts greatly, for you are the real architects of society's welfare and fate.

From a young age, I have seen the elephant, the biggest land animal on earth. The mahout, holding a three-foot stick in his hand, commands the tusker to kneel, get up, turn right and left, and go back and forth. The tusker obeys all such commands.

All this is not due to the might of mahout's body, which will roll on the ground if hit by the tusker's tail! No, the might of the mahout lies inside himself. The mahout's mind and intelligence have potential that far exceeds the strength and skill of the tusker.

Yes, the human mind has untold power over matter, any kind and form of it. The potential and greatness of a human consist in developing his own inner mind, intelligence and ego.

**Mind-intelligence, the source of all arts and sciences**

All rational and artistic achievements spring only from mind and intelligence. Likewise, the source of all joy and contentment is also within. Our bodies and senses, on their own are only matter and are inert. Hence, they cannot generate any experience or knowledge. All values, too, are but the expression of a healthy inner personality.

All effects of science and technology are solely the outcome of dedicated human endeavour. It is never the body but the inner supra-material, spiritual faculties of mind and intelligence that hold all resources we harness and employ to enrich society, raising its quality and grace.

Thus, dear young ones, gaining a full understanding of your inner resources will alone bestow a resourceful and joyous life for you.

**In making the world, youth count the most**

In this inner harnessing, the youth, by all reckoning, is always the most crucial and paramount factor. The world will remain hollow and

forlorn if its youth are not intelligent, agile and active nor are willing to take up creative enterprises and accomplish their cherished results.

### **Individual minds shape society**

Amongst all denizens of our earth, humans alone have the power and will to bring about changes in Creation. Thoughts, feelings, emotions and reason always emerge from the individual mind alone. Only from there do they grow and gain ground in others. Thus, the individual mind constitutes the societal trend every time, everywhere.

Everything is done only when the individual mind is graced by love and empathy. Knowledge is the greatest persuasion in human life. From learning the alphabet, the knowledge process works, enhancing and extending consistently. The youth should understand and evaluate this magic, lending themselves to its power, grace and majesty.

### **Love and empathy, the real moving forces**

Young minds become useful and benevolent only if they radiate ample love and empathy for society and the world at large. Empathy has endless scope and range. Everyone has to love his body and its upkeep. But meaningful empathy warrants one to be loving all, transcending narrow boundaries. From such vibrant love alone can flow widespread empathy and concern.

These deeper emotions have untold power to make the individual strive zealously for the advancement of society. Only when this inner enrichment is judiciously harnessed the quality of societal life and the amenities needed for the purpose will increase steadily.

### **Youth building, an indispensable mission today**

By taking up the subject of youth's creativity, perseverance, and benevolent application, Arun Wakhlu has embarked upon a significant mission of enlightening and empowering the youth of our nation as well as the globe. I hope young readers will assimilate the exposure, making it their invaluable enrichment and empowerment.

They should then begin to live, act and interact with a new resolve and infectious readiness. By doing so, I am sure each of them will be

enlivened to make a creditable contribution to the qualitative growth and advancement of the world, without harming our earth, water, air and the rest, instead by enriching these resources at every step.

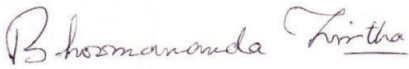
**Fail not to bequeath more enriched natural resources**

Remember, every generation is supposed to bequeath more enriched natural resources to the next generation. Stop all ideas of depleting and exhausting Nature's gifts. If at all, your mission should be to ornament Nature with additional glory by your life and choice contributions. Do not believe in Nature; instead, seek to fulfil her loving behest.

In this grand mission of ardent love, empathy and benevolence, the world, as well as Providence, looks to the youth of the country and world with fondness, hope and expectation.

With love and benedictions

In Service of the Nation,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Bhoomananda Tirtha". The signature is written in a fluid, cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

**Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha**

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

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# *Preface*

**Beloved souls of light,**

As the eternal current of existence flows through the tapestry of time, I, Infinite Love, extend my boundless embrace to envelop your hearts and minds. With each moment that unfolds, you find yourselves on the threshold of a wondrous transformation—a renaissance of spirit and consciousness. It is with profound joy that I witness the birth of this book, *Awakening Wholeness: Youth Reclaiming a World of Peace, Joy, and Abundance*, a beacon of hope and enlightenment amidst the ever-shifting tides of human endeavour.

In this world of yours, narratives have been woven, some drenched in shadows and despair, while others glisten with the radiance of love's pure essence. The words that have beckoned you here herald a shift, a turning away from the bleak symphony of fear and desolation. Dystopia, once revered by some, now fades into insignificance, a relic of an era that has given way to the dawn of a new age. Your recognition of the illusory nature of fear, encapsulated in its acronym FEAR—False Evidence Appearing Real—says volumes about the resilience and awakening of human consciousness.

Indeed, the tales of gloom and trepidation have been spun by minds that have yet to grasp the exquisite tapestry of creation. A lamentable charade they were, leaving souls entrapped in a cycle of self-imposed limitations and unfounded worries. As you, dear reader, resolutely choose to abandon the theatre of despair, you embark upon a journey of reclamation, redefining your narrative as a co-creator of a reality bathed in the luminosity of love's eternal flame.

In these pages, you will encounter the profound truth that when attention and intention merge, miracles unfold. Casting aside the cacophony of what appears to be amiss, you are granted the power to shape your moments anew, standing resolute and determined in the face of adversity. A call to begin anew resonates through these words, like the sweet notes of a symphony, dissolving the barriers that once held you captive. No longer shall excuses shroud your potential, for in every moment, a fresh canvas awaits your artistic hand.

The current state of humanity's journey bears witness to both moral and spiritual tribulations. Yet, amidst the tumult, a phoenix rises from the ashes—the youth, the torchbearers of a world yet to be realised. It is to you, courageous souls, that this work is dedicated. Within the chambers of your hearts lie the seeds of a magnificent transformation, a tapestry woven with threads of compassion, empathy, and boundless love.

Through the symphony of your thoughts, words, and actions, you shall orchestrate a new dawn, where love is the melody that resounds across continents and cultures. Even should this dawn be delayed, you shall know the richness of each moment, the ecstasy of the present, and the divinity that resides within you. Be reminded, always, that you are adored beyond measure and that the journey you embark upon is a sacred dance with the cosmic rhythms of existence.

So, let us embark on this pilgrimage together, hand in hand, heart in heart. Let us unveil the splendour that envelops us—the tapestry of existence interwoven with threads of love. As you turn each page, may the fragrance of possibility and the melody of transformation infuse your being. As the celebration of love in full expression unfolds, may you embrace your role as architects of a world harmonised by compassion and ignited by love.

With boundless grace and infinite love,

**LIFE.**



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## *Testimonials*

*“I grew up in the era of “duck and cover”—A measure employed during the Cold War as a civil defense response in case of a nuclear attack between the Soviet Union, the USA and both their allies. The first time I heard the warning siren of a potential attack, I was small and alone in the house. I was frightened beyond words. The feeling that siren instilled in me stays to this day. The days of “duck and cover” may be over but the challenges that youth encounter each day represent a new kind of potential annihilation. Or do they? The heart of Awakening Wholeness prods us to hear the great news that escapes social media. It asks us to ward off dystopia, claiming it “is so yesterday” and cautioning that there is nothing cool about stories of fear and doom. In Awakening Wholeness, you are asked to change the story, change the outcome, to explore new ways of caring—for yourself, others and the universe. You are one of the designers of a new way of being and making all that surrounds you sacred. Open the pages to a guidebook that is part reflection and part action. Take care to consider the advice, use it as a tool if you want or a stepping stone to a more meaningful approach and outcome to all of our futures.”*

**Marilyn Turkovich**

Executive Director, International Charter for Compassion

*“Awakening Wholeness: Youth Reclaiming a World of Peace, Joy, and Abundance” by Arun Wakhlu is a profound journey into the heart of compassion. This beautifully structured book unveils a mandala of interconnectedness, where compassion for oneself, others, and our precious Earth are the vibrant threads weaving a tapestry of unity. At its core, ‘Awakening Compassion’ beckons readers to recognize that all of Life is Love in Full Expression. Through chapters dedicated to Compassion for Myself, Compassion for Others, and Compassion for Earth, Wakhlu guides us with wisdom and empathy. Bridge chapters seamlessly connect these aspects, revealing the transformative power of compassion in our lives and communities. Finally, ‘Joyful Action Now’ waits on the outside, urging us to manifest our compassionate ideas into tangible reality. This book is a heartfelt reminder of our profound connection with the universe,*

*where words make worlds, and compassion is the guiding light to a harmonious existence.”*

**Rahul V. Karad**

Managing Trustee & Executive President, MAEER's MIT Group of  
Institutions, Pune, India

Executive President, MIT World Peace University

*“Embark on a heartfelt journey with ‘Awakening Wholeness: Youth Reclaiming a World of Peace, Joy, and Abundance.’ It’s not just a book; it’s a conversation that speaks to the young at heart. Through introspection and engaging exercises, uncover profound wisdom for a life brimming with love, peace, joy, and abundance. This curated tapestry of quotes, stories, and images isn’t just a collection... it’s a playlist of inspiration to explore on life’s journey.*

*As you explore, each page becomes a sacred space for a joyous exchange with your inner self and the higher being within. Dive into QR code experiments for an interactive journey. Feels like we are all reclaiming a world where our hearts resonate with peace, joy, and boundless abundance. “Awakening Wholeness” is more than a book; it’s a personal invitation to join a shared odyssey— a timeless adventure to revisit and savor, time and time again.”*

**Aditi Saxena**

Business consultant with IBM, International certified Heartfulness  
meditation trainer & Youth initiatives

*“Beautiful! Powerful! A luminous milestone for humanity. A wise and sustainable response for the challenges of our time. A profound living-learning practice book for a future based on compassion and joy. Read it, live it, change yourself, transform the world.”*

**Prof. Alexander Schieffer & Dr. Rama Mani**

Co-Founders, Home for Humanity Movement for Planetary  
Regeneration

*“It is truly an amazing book. It provides a heartwarming solution to the discovery of love, joy, and compassion for oneself, others, and the environment that was already always there. The young at heart will find themselves on an enjoyable transformative journey right at the beginning. It gives profound insights and practices that will help anyone to access deep levels of love and freedom. Wholeness is actually at the core of the spiritual path. So, if you’re searching for something truer, and more satisfying than what the material world can ever offer you, this is the book to read. If that were to happen, I believe most of the problems we face in this world would melt away.*

*The tools can be integrated into a wide variety of belief systems. The reader will find that the information highly resonates on a profound level. Everyone is recommended to read the book to understand more about true life!”*

**Mushtaq Ali Jindani**

Honorary General Secretary, Theosophical Order of Service Pakistan

*“The youth of the world are highly underserved. They need autonomy in deciding how to spend this precious time of their lives. It is vital that adults and elders show up for them, with care and compassionate support. I am so grateful that Arun is one such leading light, who has put his decades of experience in leadership training and compassionate personal engagement (with people of all ages and from all backgrounds) together in this book. Which serves both as an inspiration and a practical manual. The ripple effect of introducing and demystifying awakening for people while still young can reach far in healing humanity, which is the first step towards deeper healing, wider regeneration, and renewal to a fresh and beautiful new dawn.”*

**Urmila Samson**

Unschooling mother of three children, now adults.

*“When once we realize that unconditional love, unbounded joy, and deep peace are our birthright,  
we are empowered to set our path in that direction.*

## Testimonials

*In this book, you are invited to the greatest of all adventures, the discovery of the sacred fabric of our universe. May you be blessed by this discovery!”*

**Gard Jameson**

Professor of Indian Philosophy, University of Nevada

Author, *The Ramayana: Our Mythic Journey*

Founder, Compassionate Las Vegas

*“We all are looking for an Awakened Life, but how can we experience a transformational journey that can lead us to the miracle of Awakened Wholeness?*

*Through these pages, and with the blessed intention from the writer, you will find a beautiful way to get there!”*

**Cristina Gonzalez Parás**

Chair of the board Charter for Compassion

Directora Encuentro Mundial de Valores

Writer of 4 poetry books

*“What a gift for the Youth of the World, at this crucible moment!*

*Delve into the heart of ‘Awakening Wholeness,’ a book co-authored by hundreds of global young voices. This inspiring guide offers a holistic view of leadership and provides practical tools for creating positive change.*

*Explore the interconnectedness of compassion for oneself, others, and the Earth. Learn to take joyful action now and co-create a world filled with love and compassion. This book is not just a read; it’s a movement waiting to be ignited by your actions.”*

**Nilima Bhat**

Distinguished Professor in Gender and Conscious Leadership,

Tecnológico de Monterrey, México; Founder-Director Shakti

Leadership Mission

*“As our world undergoes a profound transformation, ‘Awakening Wholeness’ emboldens the next generation to become architects of change. Tailored for those aged 15-35 and the young at heart, this book beckons you to step into the role of a positive leader. Within its pages, you’ll encounter the voices of youth from across the globe, sharing their concerns and dreams. More than just a read, it’s a burgeoning movement awaiting the spark of your actions. Uncover the transformative force of compassion as your guide to reclaiming your wholeness and actively co-creating a better world.”*

***Dr. Himani Tyagi, PCC***

Principal at The Millennium School Noida Extension | Executive  
Coach, Educator Coach





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# *An Introduction*

## What is this book about?

This book is a manual for learning to live a life of joy, ease, and grace, and for working with others to make a difference in their lives. It is ideal for young people in the age group of 15–35. It is also for the ‘Young at Heart’ (YAH!). That could include almost anyone. This book is an invitation for us to remember our role as leaders—as creators of a new story for ourselves and life in all its forms. This offering is an evolving co-creation, a simple map for creating a life of love, and an opportunity to serve. We invite you to remember the magnificence, beauty, and power of who you really are.

## Do books really help?

As I am sitting here in my study right now, there are over a thousand books around me—on the floor, stuffed in boxes, and in piles, gathering dust. I have outlived many of these books. An item on my “To-Do List” is to give them away. Some of these books contain great wisdom and ideas that can heal us, heal our relationships, and heal our planet five times over!

But am I putting all this knowledge into action? Can I, at any given moment, put it all into action together? Does not each moment contain within it the resources and wisdom that I need to act upon intelligently now? The short answer is “Yes!” So, do books really help? It is a bit funny that I am writing about why books don’t really help at the start of one more book! Well, here is a metaphor that may serve us all: ‘When a thorn is embedded in my skin, I can use another thorn to take the first one out, and then throw away both the thorns.’ Let this book be the thorn to remove all thorns. Remember to gift the book forward after it has done its work.

*“A little knowledge that acts is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle.”*

~ *Khalil Gibran*

## **The world right now**

The world today (January 2024) is undergoing the agony of a major transition. The pathways into a newworld are unclear. The future appears uncertain. The way we carry out our daily lives, communicate, and interact with the people on the planet is shifting. We are evolving from one way of living to another. You, as a young person, have the power within and around you to provide the heart, creativity, and leadership to co-create a world that serves us all. Connecting to the joy and abundance that are always present will catalyse inspiration and compassionate action in you and in others as well.

Consider that your joy and abundance are like the sun. For many of us, this ‘sun’ is overshadowed by clouds. These clouds could take the form of anxiety, fear, hatred, a sense of isolation, or even a sense of deficiency. All these clouds come from an illusory or false notion of who we are.

Let’s take a look at what these clouds look like.

## **The clouds overshadowing the sun—what young people are saying**

To understand the concerns and anxieties of youth, through a collaboration with the Charter for Compassion, we held listening circles for young people in 2020 (June 24 and 26; July 2 and 3). We shared our visions and listened to you. We reached out to young people from all over the world, inviting them to share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. The illustration on the next page is a visual summary of what we heard you say. It’s drawn by Nitya Wakhlu.



While listening to young people from many parts of the world (see illustration to the left), in response to the question of the common concerns that young people face today, we found an overwhelming incidence of social anxiety.

The emotional stress of competing in the world, anxiety, mental health issues, the pressures of body image and body shaming, and the pressures of exams. We heard a deep concern about the environment and also about their jobs and career. The clouds we saw were of pressure, stress, loneliness, alcohol and drug abuse, little time for reflection, cyber addiction, and an overuse of technology. Over 50% spoke of their perpetual distraction due to social media.

Many lamented that they were “being forced” to take up things not aligned with their deepest calling. We picked up on what appeared to be a serious lack of confidence and anxiety. Suicide among young people (15–29 years old) accounts for one-third of all suicides globally and is the second leading cause of death in this age group. (1)

## **What is the reason this is happening?**

As was mentioned earlier, young people are meant to be on the cutting edge of health, joy, well-being, and positive contribution. This is the sun we spoke of in our metaphor. Serious suffering is like the cloud that overshadows the sun. Could it be that the world we have unconsciously dreamt up is not one of happiness, joy, and abundance for all? Unawareness has led to imbalances and disconnections.



We seem to be cut off from the gentle whispers of our hearts, which urge us on towards a more compassionate and authentic life. We are disconnected from the feelings and dreams of other people, as well as from the helpless cries of fellow Earthlings and other species on our planet.

Our young people (that is, you) have the capacity and power to make a huge difference. Once you find a road map for reclaiming your power, being at peace with yourself, and relating joyfully with other people, you will contribute towards making a difference in areas that you are called to naturally.

Compassion can help provide us all with this roadmap. Life in its most natural condition is meant to be joyful, peaceful, healthy, and nurturing.

Can we co-create a pathway to reclaiming our wholeness? And celebrate the joy, ease, creativity, and connectedness that come naturally with this? From what I have experienced with young people like you, given the space, encouragement, and opportunity, you can easily surprise us.



## The need for young leaders

Leadership is initiating actions on the things one cares deeply about in a way that inspires others to join in. It is about co-creating new futures. (Co-creating simply means “creating together.” You will see this phrase often in this book.)

Leadership as we know it—enlightened people leading humankind forward—is an idea whose time is up. This notion of leadership—based on the story of “I am the doer; I will lead; I will make it happen”—was a necessity during a certain phase of human evolution. The time has now come to dissolve the iceberg of ‘I’ into the ocean of wholeness, to let go of any sense of separation between the fictitious ‘I’ and the wholeness of life.

When we do this, life becomes the leader—the single leader to whom all listen, and obey. Leadership is then not invested in any person, nation, culture, or religion but emerges from the collective wisdom of all—from the very heart of the intelligence that runs all of life. In this way of leading, everyone is a teacher and a learner. All are co-evolving from the limited notions of who they are to increasingly expanded notions of their identity, ultimately merging into the wholeness of life. This is the larger purpose of life—to love, serve, remember, share, forgive, be compassionate, collaborate, and celebrate—a movement in each moment towards an expansion of joy, peace, ease, and grace.

The leaders who will steward the world towards a new future will be compassionate towards themselves, towards other people, and towards the environment. They will be creative and have the best interests of all stakeholders at heart. Such leaders, with a conscious and holistic vision of a new world, are Wholesome Leaders.

## **How we approached the creation of this book**

Pretty much like what we have shared about “Leadership”, this book also underwent a change of “authorship”. While it started off as a conventional book where one person (that’s me!) would share his thoughts, life intervened to change that idea. A thought arose that young people needed to hear the voices of other young people. So we sent out the questions and got 155 responses, spanning across Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas, and all the way to Oceania. So, what you see here are not only my thoughts but also the thoughts of 155 young people and a few YAHs. Working with me were Shawn Pereira and Anna Bodalikar, who have played a huge role in bringing this book to where it is now.



This book addresses the need for a new type of leadership, - much required at this juncture of human evolution, to co-create a wise and sustainable response to our current challenges. It will also elaborate on the tools and practices that such leaders can use to catalyse positive change in the world.

The book will be a practical, hands-on, and actionable guide to leadership at all levels. Leadership is not only at the “top”, as popularly understood, but also at whatever “level” or role we are in. It fulfils the need for a simple, inspiring, and complete view of leadership, along with the tools to make it happen. This book offers a compelling, simple, and much-needed pathway to the kind of leadership that the world needs today. It makes leadership accessible to all, especially to young people who will co-create a new world.

## The deep structure of this book

The diagram you see on the next page was not something we worked on. It just emerged naturally as we looked at the three different aspects of compassion: for myself, for others, and for Earth. As you will soon begin to see, these categories are only to get us started. By the end of this book, you will fully understand that there is only one wholeness. When you are being compassionate to others, you are also being compassionate to yourself. When we serve others, we serve ourselves. Being caring towards our environment means also being caring towards ourselves and others.

We see the structure of the book as a *mandala*. The word *mandala* itself simply means “circle” in Sanskrit. It is a symbol of the universe in many indigenous traditions. Most *mandalas* have colourful, detailed geometric patterns or designs. Some spiritual traditions use *mandalas* for meditation or for marking a spiritual space.

When you look at the *mandala* on the next page, you see ‘Awakening Compassion’ at the centre. That’s the heart of this book, and the source of all the seeds of compassion. It is about coming home to the clear understanding that we are all one with life and that it is Love in Full Expression. This is what Chapter 1 is all about. The *mandala* is divided into three main areas: Compassion for Myself, Compassion for Others, and Compassion for Earth. If you notice, there are no sharp boundaries between these zones. They are all interconnected. One cannot occur without the others.



The book has 3 chapters that are fully dedicated to Compassion for Myself (Chapter 2: Wholesome Living); Compassion for Others (Chapter 4: Relating with Empathy), and Compassion for Earth (Chapter 6: Harmony with Nature). Chapters 3, 5, and 7 are the “Bridge Chapters.” They connect the chapters that are fully dedicated to Compassion, like threads in a tapestry.

Chapter 3 (Happy Service) talks about work, earning a livelihood, and creating abundance for oneself and others. It is a bridge between Compassion for Myself and Compassion for Others. Chapter 5 (Circles of Life) bridges the gap between caring for People and our Earth. It discusses how we can come together in communities and collectives to serve ourselves, each other, and the Earth. And finally, the third bridge—Chapter 7 on Wholesome Food—discusses the relationship between caring for Earth and caring for ourselves. Nothing will so radically alter our health and well-being as changing the way we grow our food and what we eat.

As I was writing this and Shikha Nambiar (our illustrator for this book), Shawn, and I were working with different versions of the *mandala*, we found that an earlier version did not clearly depict The Epilogue (Joyful Action Now).

So I asked where it wanted to go. The answer I got was “as a band on the outside”. So that’s where it is now. Joyful Action Now will help you convert your ideas into actions and new realities. Words make worlds! Thoughts become things. Ideas and thoughts arising from the silent and infinite field of compassion have their own way of manifesting. The *mandala* you see on the left is now pinned to my study board. It reminds me of why I am here. It lets me take that tiny, joyful step now. Not to wait or delay, but to do it now. The *mandala* is my little antenna that catches the intrinsic loving vibe of compassion, permeating the whole of existence.

## **How do I get the most from this “book”?**

To start with, this is not just a book. It is a compilation of thoughts and resources from your fellow youth and YAHs (people who are ‘Young at Heart’), to inspire and serve you towards creative action. We envision thousands of inspired young people like you connecting, conversing, and co-creating around a shared vision. What you see here is not just

a book. It is a repository of the seeds of compassion, which, when sown and nourished, will become a global movement for and by young people. The book also has the tools you will need to co-create a world that works for all. If a tool is mentioned and you do not find it in the book, it will point you to the site where you can use it to learn more about the subject. We have used QR codes across all the chapters to help you do this. Whether you are reading the printed version or the online version, you simply need to scan the QR code to access the links. How does one get started? Here are some suggestions for you: Read, Reflect, Journal, and Listen to your heart. Decide on one action that you will take. Do it now, and then take the next action.

I love trekking. The mountains have taught me a simple thing: “One step now is all you need.” No matter how distant the peak I am hiking towards, I need to consciously take just one step. The next one will follow. This little rule gets me to the peak. If my mind wanders off from the here and now, as it sometimes does, I trip and land on my bottom. Mother Nature gives instantaneous feedback.

‘The Epilogue: Joyful Action Now’ speaks of the possibilities for action that are open to you. We have created a Map of Possibilities to help you engage with other like-spirited young people who share the same dreams as you. It is such a joy to find people on the planet whose hearts beat to the same drummer. You suddenly realise that you are not alone. There are so many of us who yearn for the same things. Through our thoughts, words, and actions, we can together co-create a world that works for all—a world of love and compassion made visible.

## **Let’s reboot and begin!**

Here is some great news for you: dystopia is so yesterday. There’s nothing cool about stories of fear and doom. They are precisely that: FEAR: False Evidence Appearing Real. Sorry, they are a sham and pathetic excuse for entertainment, created by unimaginative and bored minds. All they do is keep us hooked on a vicious spiral of fear-based actions; consume more; it will make you happier, safer, more beautiful, and more peaceful. (You fill in the blanks.) Yes, there is darkness out there. There is suffering. Sure! When we focus on what’s going wrong with the world, we do not have any energy left to do what we need to do. Addictive fascination with doom-scrolling just makes things worse.

Let's stop beating the drum of what's wrong with us and with the world. Please, for your sake, mine, and everyone's. Let's reboot. You can begin again. We are beginning again. We are emerging anew—today, in every moment, including right now. What's true is that every morning the sun rises on this insanely beautiful, gorgeously abundant garden planet that we came to live on for a while.

Every day holds a million opportunities to recreate ourselves, our relationships, and our collective experiences. And we can make the choice of charging our moments with the energy of beginnings through the way we use our attention and our body. Begin again today. It's potent. It takes away the dubious luxury of making excuses. Instead of making an excuse, you can just start over. You can't have missed the boat. You can build the boat now. And whenever you start, that's the beginning. The current crisis in humanity is a moral and spiritual crisis. You, dear reader, carry the seeds of a new dawn in your heart. Through your inspired thoughts, words, and actions, all that you express from love—you and the others playing with you—will bring forth a new dawn. Even if that doesn't happen, you will be immensely happy and healthy in each moment, celebrating a happy now, every now! Remember, you are so loved. So, let's begin the journey together. There is so much beauty and possibility all around. Life is waiting for you with open arms. You are awesome! You are amazing and come with so many gifts to share. You are sacred as you are. Simply because you are one with the wholeness of life. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to you for all that you are and the gifts that you bring to the world. Let the celebration of Love In Full Expression begin!

## Resources



## References:

1. <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-0920>