

## INTRODUCTION

No matter who we are, no matter  
in which part of the world we dwell, we are one.  
We are one with each other. We are one with the Earth.  
We are one with the moon, the sun, and the stars.

—VUSAMAZULU CREDO MUTWA, ZULU LION SHAMAN

**I**n 2013, a spell was cast on me when I encountered the white lions of Timbavati, in South Africa. I was there on a spiritual journey in support of conservation. While in Timbavati, we sought the lions out daily, both at dawn and dusk, and sat in the jeep for a long while and communed with them. I lost track of time in their presence. On one occasion, a male lion stood close to the jeep and roared and roared for an hour. I recall feeling mesmerized by his otherworldly presence and the primal sound of his roar. Over time, my feeling of connection with the lions has only strengthened. I evoke their guidance and protection regularly in my spiritual practice. The resonance that I feel with them is due to my recognition of the essential truth of the vital message that they bear in this epoch of increasing breakdown and collapse on the planet.

There were reports of sightings of white lions in the late 1930s, although their existence was not officially documented again until the mid-1970s. According to a legend of the Shangaan people of South Africa, the white lions are star beings, the most sacred animals on the African continent. In the ancient Shangaan language, *Tsimba-vaati* means “the place where star lions came down from the heavens.” Timbavati, the region that shares this name, has been honored for centuries as a sacred protected area by African kings. It is located on the Nile meridian (31 degrees east), a ley line named Zep Tepi, and is believed to be the location where life first appeared on the Earth. Zep Tepi is exactly aligned with the location of the great Sphinx of ancient Egypt, the mythical creature with the head of a human and the body of a lion.

The Zulu legend recounts that the white lions originally appeared during the Ice Age in response to the people’s desperate prayers and came to teach them how to survive, to hunt, and to keep warm in the extreme cold. After the danger had passed, they left but promised to return if humankind was ever in grave danger again. Now they have returned to Earth to deliver a message to humanity during these times of great crisis. Credo Mutwa, the late Zulu shaman, characterized this epoch on Earth as a time of both “catastrophes and real miracles.” He viewed the reappearance of the white lions as a vitally significant fulfillment of the ancient prophesy and a harbinger of the time when humanity would either bow to the primacy of nature or go extinct. It is abundantly clear that this time is now. We are confronted daily with news of the evidence of the intensification of climate change around the globe. The destructive consequences of human activity resulting in the accelerated collapse of the planetary ecosystem are evident in the frequency, strength, and magnitude of storms, rising seas, flooding, heat waves, fires, droughts, and the loss of species, to name just a few of the devastating effects.

Linda Tucker, founder of the White Lion Global Conservation Trust, believes that the consciousness of the white lions is holding open a portal for humanity to connect more deeply with our divine nature. It does indeed seem like only through a radical shift in consciousness that acknowledges our kinship and interconnection with all that is will we be able to avert complete catastrophe.

## **Destruction, despair, and doctors**

We are living through a time of escalating structural global breakdown related to the fact that the current consciousness of our species is not one that honors, supports, and sustains life on the planet but rather is intent on destroying it. We have used our tremendous imagination and ingenuity to create weapons capable of annihilating all life on the planet while our air, water, and earth are being poisoned by corporations who pay off our politicians to support and protect their destructive practices. The economic inequality is staggering, with 47.8 percent of the global household wealth belonging to 1.2 percent of the world's population. The COVID-19 pandemic and its continuing consequences are also fueling a rupture with the world as we knew it. Those whose power is threatened are doubling down to enact laws to legitimize and fortify their rule and privilege, to sustain the existing patriarchal order that has brought us to this point of catastrophe and collapse.

In the face of the barrage of relentless frightening news, many people are suffering tremendous existential dread and hopelessness and are in desperate need of help. The available conventional psychiatric treatment approaches are frequently experienced by many patients as impersonal, inadequate, mechanistic, and even harmful. The standard of care employed by allopathic medicine and conventional psychiatry consists of making diagnoses via the identification of symptoms and

diagnostic testing and then suppressing those symptoms with pharmaceuticals or procedures. The body is managed as though it were a machine devoid of consciousness, composed of different disconnected organ systems, to be treated by specialists trained to treat that specific part in isolation, to be tested, dosed with chemicals, or cut and irradiated. For any diagnosis, there is an algorithm that clinicians are obliged to follow or else risk disqualifying for reimbursement by the insurance companies. The pharmaceutical lobby determines much of the way medicine is practiced. At its core, our health care system is driven by a motive of profit, not public health.

Allopathic medicine takes pride in the standardization of care, and there is little tailoring of treatment to the individual. There is no appreciation of the innate intelligence and healing potential of the body, no emphasis on prevention or upon identifying treatable root causes of sickness, and certainly no place or acknowledgment of the power and reality of the central role of the sacred in healing. Western medicine has greatly reduced its capacity to heal by cutting itself off from this profound source of power and wisdom.

It's small wonder that many patients have very little trust in their doctors these days. They often do not feel known or cared for. The problem is a systemic one, and many doctors practicing conventionally are as unhappy as their patients. They are allotted insufficient time to spend with their patients and, during the appointments, interact primarily with the electronic medical record at the expense of establishing rapport. The system that determines the way conventional medical encounters are structured makes meaningful connection with patients, thoughtfulness, or creativity virtually impossible, as physicians are obliged to robotically follow treatment algorithms and are inundated with documentation requirements. It's unfortunately unsurprising that a 2020 study by the *Washington Post* reported that physicians die by suicide at twice the rate of the general population,

given the fact that most went into medicine wishing to be healers but instead find themselves trapped in a soul-crushing predicament.<sup>1</sup>

### *The strengths and weaknesses of Western medicine*

The Western medical approach excels in the treatment of acute trauma, such as car accidents and gunshot wounds. It is also unparalleled for the treatment of conditions necessitating systemic stabilization in the context of an acute event, like sepsis, or conditions that require emergency surgical intervention, like appendicitis, bowel obstruction, or testicular torsion. It succeeds when it comes to elective surgeries to replace hip or knee joints or for surgical treatment of cataracts. Western medicine fails when it comes to the treatment of chronic conditions that are inflammatory in nature, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, autoimmune conditions; or chronic mysterious illnesses like fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, chronic Lyme disease; or illness caused by mycotoxins.

The crisis afflicting medicine and psychiatry is another expression of the much larger context of global breakdown, where the conventional approach to dealing with deeply rooted vast systemic problems is clearly not working. It's not an exaggeration to say that these are indeed extraordinary times, a threshold moment for humankind, where the world as we knew it no longer exists, but what is to come has not yet emerged and manifested in its new form. Technological developments have opened a Pandora's box of unanticipated implications. The splitting of the atom in 1932 and the subsequent development of nuclear weapons in 1945 created the possibility that, for the first time in history, humankind could annihilate itself. This is the most dramatic example

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1 Marya J. Cohen, "Doctors Die by Suicide at Twice the Rate of Everyone Else. Here's What We Can Do." *Washington Post*, October 6, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/10/06/doctor-suicide-coronavirus-covid/>.

of the devastating possibilities created by technological advances. But there are multiple other examples of the potential for destructive consequences related to artificial intelligence and the misuse of personal information, disinformation, health tracking, and genetic engineering to name just a few. These advances have created ethical questions that we do not have the wisdom to skillfully manage or answer.

### *Separation*

This is an in-between epoch of logarithmically accelerating change that is evoking tremendous uncertainty and fear. Some respond with denial, both of the magnitude of the losses already sustained and of the dangers we face as the biosphere is collapsing, millions of species are going extinct, and huge numbers of climate refugees are moving around the planet looking for both food and shelter. In the USA, vast numbers of people are addicted to drugs, more than half a million people are unhoused, there are ongoing attempts to subvert the electoral process and the rights of women, and regular grim occurrences of mass shootings, often of children in schools by other children, as well as racially motivated mass shootings in the streets, universities, houses of worship, night clubs, and stores. For many in the USA, there is an enormous and pervasive distrust of government, and no authority is considered legitimate. Rulings by the Supreme Court do not reflect the wishes of the majority of citizens. Fear and uncertainty translate into increasing polarization and susceptibility to belief in conspiracy theories. In the summer of 2022, I visited a flea market in Rogers, Ohio, and witnessed a large variety and quantity of paraphernalia related to anger at the government and threatening violence. There were bumper stickers, T-shirts, lapel pins, key chains, baseball caps, and signs to be displayed in front of the house, with variations on the message “We are angry, and we have guns.”

It is a small wonder that people are depressed, anxious, and desperate for relief and reassurance. The anxiety and depression created by the national and global situation are driving people to seek help and, particularly, help that includes a spiritual component. Even when these external realities are not explicitly acknowledged, this is the desperate context in which the need for treatment is embedded.

Foundational to the loss of faith and disillusionment with allopathic medicine and conventional psychiatry is the prevailing scientific paradigm of seventeenth-century Newtonian physics and linear causality, of mechanistic cause and effect, and of separation in time and space. This model of separation pervades all aspects of modern Western society and culture and divides mind and body, spirit, and matter. It does not recognize what quantum physics has firmly established, that everything is interconnected and entangled. Space and time are categories of our perception, which can be effectively harnessed for feats of engineering and technological innovation, but they do not reflect the actual nature of the world as described by quantum physics, characterized by nonlocality and indeterminacy. Simply put, everything is connected, and everything impacts everything else. Furthermore, and most importantly in my mind, this model of separation creates a distinction between the divine and the mundane and does not recognize that the whole world is enchanted, alive, and filled with spirit.

The modern mindset has elevated and privileged the five senses and the rational mind to the exclusion of other capacities for knowing and understanding. It is utterly dismissive of a magical and symbolic approach to relating with the world. A mountain is a mineral-rich resource to be exploited for financial gain rather than revered as the abode of spirits, to whom you can express gratitude and also pray for guidance or assistance. An old-growth forest's value is measured as the quantity of timber it yields. Animals are treated as commodities rather than sentient beings we are in relationships with. It is this "rational"

materialist mindset that regards the natural world as inanimate and separate from us that is at the heart of our extractive relationship and permits us to abuse and destroy the Earth as we do. This stands in contrast to an animistic worldview that sees the whole world as enchanted, all natural phenomena, including humans, animals, insects, plants, minerals, mountains, lakes, rivers, oceans, rain, snow, wind, all the elements—water, air, earth, and fire—as filled with soul and consciousness and therefore sacred. Animism also includes the belief that everything is interconnected. It is the spiritual foundation of the practices of indigenous cultures around the world.

## **A holistic approach**

Patients who come to see me are seeking healing that is holistic. They are extremely dissatisfied with psychiatry as it is conventionally practiced and are longing for a more natural and spiritual approach. They usually have seen several other practitioners before arriving at my office, often in a state of frustration and sometimes anger regarding their previous experiences with my colleagues. I am an adult and child psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, a shamanic practitioner, and an astrologer with a private practice in the Boston area. The patients who contact me are depressed or anxious, can't sleep or concentrate, but wish to avoid prescription medications. Some are currently taking psychiatric medications but would like to come off them, but their current psychiatrist is unwilling to help them to do this, or they were prescribed such a rapid schedule of tapering that it resulted in a severe withdrawal syndrome. Some have been exposed to toxic mold and wish to work with me because of my expertise in treating environmentally acquired illness. Some come to me because I am knowledgeable about the connection between autoimmune disease and psychiatric conditions and because of my familiarity with low-dose naltrexone, a medication that



modulates the immune system but of which many conventional MDs are unaware. Some come because they are suffering from psychiatric symptoms related to long COVID for which prescription medications are not providing relief, and they seek alternative modalities. Some are drawn to me because they have had unusual spiritual experiences that they would be afraid to share with a conventional psychiatrist for fear of being considered crazy but have faith that I would not be so quick to jump to that conclusion. Some seek me out because of my training in astrology and the tarot and wish to incorporate those wisdom traditions into their healing journey or because of my training as an energy healer. Some simply wish to work with someone who has a more spiritual approach to healing.

Although most are longing for an alternative, holistic approach, they are reassured by the fact that I am conventionally trained and board certified in psychiatry. I am on the faculty of Harvard Medical School, which is where I did all my training in adult and child psychiatry at the Cambridge Hospital and where I continue to teach and supervise. My training in adult and child psychoanalysis has provided me with expertise as a therapist, so there is no need for them to seek out another practitioner for psychological work.

At the end of our first meeting, before my patient and I commit to working together, I make it explicit that our goal as I see it will not be a return to “normal.” Normal is a state that is broken and responsible for creating the conditions that brought them to my office in the first place. Normal in 2023 in the USA is eating a diet of processed foods and regularly drinking alcohol; working long hours at a job that often does not feel like it feeds the soul and has little meaning or purpose; making minimal time for movement, fresh air, and sunlight; remaining indoors most of the time staring at screens; often living alone, having few or no close friends; having no sense of community or feeling of belonging; feeling out of touch with the natural world

and the cycles of light and dark, as well as the night sky; and feeling totally disconnected from the ancestors and spiritual practice. This contemporary lifestyle is a powerful prescription for anxiety, loneliness, depression, and chronic illness.

## **Our heavenly mandate**

At this time of crisis and breakdown on the planet, the unique contribution that each of us was born to make is desperately needed. There is a Taoist belief that when the sperm and egg unite, a spark of starlight falls from the sky and illuminates the zygote. This heavenly spark contains the divine mandate for the individual, the entelechy, the vital guiding principle for this incarnation. My deepest wish is that the work that my patients and I do together will transform their lives and suffering and help them to embody their heavenly mandate. My patients and I work together to overcome the obstacles that are standing in the way of their realization of this goal. The work in my mind is not just about relief from feelings of anxiety or depression or returning to normal but also to get clear about why they are here, how they can contribute, and what are they meant to do with their lives.

Because I am not only a psychiatrist but also an astrologer and shamanic practitioner, those spiritual practices and mindset inform my work with patients. Astrology is a spiritual and holistic paradigm that uses archetypal language and posits that everything is connected and that events and experiences in our lives on Earth symbolically mirror the movements of the heavens, the cycles, and relative positions of celestial bodies. I have never heard a persuasive explanation of how astrology works, but my observation of the meaningful correlation between events in the heavens and life on Earth is repeatedly reinforced by my experience. There are many things in modern life that I depend upon and do not understand how they work, such as my car

or the internet. Phenomena exist that are inexplicable now, but later, when scientific understanding has evolved, they will be explained. It would not surprise me if this will be the case with astrology as well.

C. G. Jung (1875–1961) was a Swiss psychoanalyst who coined the modern term *archetype*. The history of the idea of archetypes extends back to at least the ancient Greek philosophers with Plato's concept of eternal forms. Archetypes are primordial patterns or energetic templates that influence and even structure human psychology and behavior on many levels. Jung thought of them as universal primal energetic constituents of the psyche that are an expression of the collective unconscious. Archetypes are inborn categories of experience that have an essential, mythic, and spiritual quality that can be experienced both collectively and personally. Which planets will be particularly influential at a specific point in time is knowable, but the way an archetype will be expressed individually and collectively is not predictable. The same archetype can manifest in myriad different ways. For instance, an individual with the archetype of Pisces prominent in her chart could be someone who was motivated by spiritual seeking or could indicate someone with a vulnerability to addiction or possibly someone who had problems with addiction but who eventually healed through spiritual connection. Because the same archetype can be expressed in multiple different ways, it's not possible to predict what expression will manifest.

Shamanism is an ancient spiritual healing practice rooted in nature and is a way to connect with all of creation. It is based upon the assumption that there are helping spirits who are available to us to call upon for assistance in the healing work. My approach to my patients is not based solely upon my conscious rational mind and intention. Of course, I do run tests and make concrete recommendations based upon my training and fund of knowledge, but I simultaneously aspire to be a hollow bone, a conduit, and to allow the spirits to guide our

work together. I always ask the spirits for assistance before I begin seeing patients for the day and give thanks after each session. I do not assume that the healing work is done by me, but rather, I am being guided and assisted as I try to help.

### *Chironic psychiatry*

I call this approach *Chironic psychiatry*. Chiron is an asteroid that was discovered in 1977. There is a correlation between the archetypal meaning of a newly discovered heavenly body with the zeitgeist of the time. In 1977, there was an upwelling of intense interest in holistic health, in Eastern medicine and the role of energetic and nonquantifiable factors in healing. The orbit of Chiron weaves between the planets Saturn and Uranus. Saturn is the most distant planet that was able to be seen by the ancients with the naked eye. Uranus is only visible with the aid of a telescope. Saturn signifies the cross of matter, embodied existence, bounded by space and time and knowable via our five senses, while Uranus represents transpersonal reality, only accessible through multidimensional ways of knowing. Chiron has been called the Rainbow Bridge, linking the personal with the transpersonal, matter with spirit, which is what I aspire to do in my work with my patients. Healing occurs when there is integration and balance of the body, mind, heart, and spirit with the Earth and the stars.

Chiron was a Greek mythological figure; there are numerous versions of his origin story. In one account, he was said to be the product of a rape. His mother, the beautiful nymph Philyra, changed herself into a mare to escape from the god Kronos, who lusted after her. When Kronos saw that Philyra had changed into a mare, he assumed the form of a stallion to impregnate her. When Chiron was born, Philyra was repulsed to discover that her baby was a centaur, with the body and legs of a horse and the torso and arms of a human. In her

shame and disgust, she abandoned him. Thus, the circumstances of his origin and entry into the world involved tremendous trauma, both his conception by rape and, subsequently, the rejection by his mother.

The abandoned Chiron was found by a shepherd who brought the infant to Apollo, who adopted him and provided him with a broad education. He was taught medicine, astrology, divination, prophecy, poetry, and to play the lyre. Apollo's twin sister, Artemis, taught Chiron archery, hunting, and herbalism. Centaurs have a reputation as debauched, crude, and violent creatures. In contrast, Chiron was refined and highly educated and grew up to be a great healer and herbalist, a respected oracle and astrologer. Chiron symbolizes the reality that we have simultaneously an instinctual animal embodied nature represented by his horse body, and we are also divine beings who have huge imaginations, make art, and practice healing.

Chiron was revered as a mentor by many of the Greek heroes, and local kings would send their sons to be educated by him. In one version of the myth, his student Hercules accidentally pierced Chiron's thigh with an arrow dipped in the venomous blood of the Hydra, the nine-headed water serpent, which resulted in a wound that could not be healed and was the basis for Chiron's common moniker "the wounded healer."

The unhealable wound in his thigh caused Chiron unending misery, but as a demigod, he was immortal and could not be released from his torment by death. Despite all his expertise and knowledge of medicine, he could not heal his own wound. He was ultimately released from his agony by an act of sacrifice and service. He exchanged places with Prometheus, who, as a punishment for having given fire to humankind, had been chained to a rock, where an eagle came daily to peck out his liver, only to have it grow back again. The gods were so moved by Chiron's altruism that they freed him and placed him in the heavens as a constellation.

Like Chiron, we are all wounded. In this country, our wounds may be related to the vicissitudes of life in the family growing up, living in a capitalistic patriarchal culture with systemic inequality and racism, our religious upbringing, our experiences in school and the educational system, physical illness, loneliness, the lack of community and sense of belonging, and very importantly, our divorce from the natural world and a nourishing spiritual practice that connects us with the sacred dimension of life. All the wounds we received and our responses to them fuel our psychospiritual development and the potential for the realization of our heavenly mandate. I believe that it is my heavenly mandate to be a Chironic psychiatrist.

## **My Chironic journey**

I will tell you a bit about my origin story and healing journey. Like Chiron, I was rejected by my mother at birth. My father told me that, when my mother saw me, she declared that I was an ugly baby. She was very depressed during her pregnancy with me and, after I was born, went on to be psychiatrically hospitalized for a long time. Both my parents were German Jews, survivors of the Nazi Holocaust, and the shadow of that trauma was always present. My mother was the only surviving member of her family of origin and was never able to move beyond her grief and bitterness about the loss of her mother. She tried to end her own life many times. My father also lost multiple family members but not his parents. He responded to the terrible trauma by becoming very self-involved and grandiose. Trauma and heartbreak were very much a part of the everyday fabric of family life, so it was not surprising that my older brother chose a hearse for his first car and even purchased a second one! Consciously, this was not an explicit statement related to the family history, but to me, the determinants of this remarkable choice were unmistakable. The

hearses were a concrete expression of the impact upon him of all the tragic losses my parents were endlessly grieving.

My father was a psychiatrist, a psychoanalyst, a professor of psychiatry, and a closet astrologer. He did not want anyone to know about his passion for astrology for fear of his reputation, but astrology was very important to him. He was a beloved mentor and had deep and intense relationships with many students. When he became older and required physical assistance, those who helped him with his personal care needs revered him. The public and private persona were very different. He was a difficult man to feel close to; he was authoritarian, competitive, and judgmental and was, at times, cruel, with little real empathy for his family. He had great difficulty seeing me or valuing me as a person, apart from my achievements. Since I could not be close to him, I became a version of him, at least professionally.

I married a man who shared many of the qualities of my father and had three beautiful children with him. The marriage was, however, unbearably oppressive, and in 2005, at the time of my Chiron return, when my children were still quite young, I separated from him, to protect both myself and them.

This concept of a planetary return is an essential one to understand, as it is very influential both personally and collectively. The duration of each planet's orbit around the Sun varies. It is common knowledge that the Moon travels around the Earth in 28 days, and the Earth travels around the Sun in 365 days. But all other planets also have orbits of varying lengths. For example, Jupiter takes 12 years to go around the Sun, Saturn 29, and Chiron 49. When an orbiting planet returns to the position it was in the sky at the moment of birth, the archetypal significance of that planet becomes magnified. It is not uncommon for patients to appear in my practice at the age of 49, at their Chiron return, as themes associated with their original essential wounding press upon the psyche for reconsideration and transformation.

Within three weeks of separating from my children's father, my own father died, followed by my mother three months later. This confluence of major losses prompted me to reach for the stars, and I consulted a professional astrologer, Nicoli Bailey, for the first time. It was such an extraordinarily affirming and remarkable experience—a stranger, through deciphering mysterious glyphs and symbols on a page, could see and understand me so profoundly—that I returned to see her every couple of months for the next several years to look at the birth charts of my children, as well as those of members of my family and friends. I finally resolved that I must learn to practice this art myself and undertook extensive courses of study with two well-known astrologers, Steven Forrest and Maurice Fernandez.

Up until this point, I had been practicing as a conventional psychiatrist and psychoanalyst for more than 20 years. After my Chiron return, I felt compelled to broaden my vision, to explore and incorporate a wide variety of holistic approaches to healing. It is not uncommon, at the time of the Chiron return, that a person experiences a desire to have spirituality play a more central role in their life. Over the next 15 years, I have explored many other healing modalities, practices, and wisdom traditions, including Buddhism, Kabbalah, shamanism, divination, plant medicine, herbalism, sacred activism, Reiki, Kundalini yoga, the Akashik records, nutrition, functional medicine, environmentally acquired illness, medical intuition, energy medicine, Ayurveda, and Chinese medicine.

I drew upon all these approaches as I metabolized and processed the considerable trauma and wounding that I experienced in my family of origin and that I went on to repeat in my marriage. After my Chiron return, I was drawn to explore therapeutic and spiritual modalities that also healed and transformed my own suffering. I have discovered that, like for Chiron, being of service to others has played a central alchemical role in my own healing. I have been blessed with



the opportunity to offer to others the knowledge and wisdom accrued through my own experiences and heartbreak. The following chapters are a discussion of what I have learned and what I believe will support your healing process and resilience during these transformative times.

Meeting the white lions of Timbavati in 2013 was a part of that wide-ranging exploration. The encounter with the white lions touched me deeply—their beauty, majesty, and mystery, as well as what they represent mythologically. I heard the extraordinary extended roaring of the male white lion as a direct communication about the urgent need for us to shift our consciousness. He was commanding us to wake up and to listen, to shift our modern mindset of separation that denies interconnection and is reflected in our lack of love and respect for the natural world and our divorce from the sacred aspect of ourselves and nature. We must shift the paradigm from one of separation and scientific materialism to one that recognizes the sacredness and interconnectedness of everything so that we will be able to live in a way that supports the thriving of life on Earth now and for future generations. Only by doing this and by acting in accordance with this knowledge can we hope to bring about the changes that are so desperately needed.

## **Playing your part**

Writing a book about a holistic approach to healing poses the inherent conundrum of knowing where to begin. No one aspect of a holistic approach is more important than another. All the elements are necessary components to consider and are all vital constituents of the whole. Although the early chapters provide an overview of the astrological context in which we are all embedded at this point in history and a discussion of the value of an astrological understanding of people, this is not meant to signify that this is a book that is primarily

about astrology. Similarly, any of the other crucial ingredients for healing from a holistic perspective, such as a daily spiritual practice, healthy nourishing relationships, diet, movement, and sleep, are not discussed in order of importance or priority. We are human beings with a mind, body, and spirit related to all other human beings, the natural world, and the cosmos, which lives within us, and we live within it. A deep awareness of this coexistence and interpenetration is essential to creating holistic health.

Fundamental to holistic healing is the fulfillment of your heavenly mandate. Pirkei Avot is an ancient collection of Jewish rabbinical teachings and maxims about living ethically. Rabbi Tarfon, one of the rabbis whose teachings are included in the Pirkei Avot said, “The day is short, and the work is plentiful; the laborers are lazy, and the reward is great, and the Master of the house is insistent. He used to say: It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it” (Pirkei Avot 2:15–16). Although the current planetary situation can feel overwhelming, we are each called upon to play our small part, in whatever way is right for us, which will look very different for each person. Fame or prominence is not necessary. It can be of equal importance to be a good citizen, neighbor, parent, or friend. When we have done that, we may pass the baton to the next generation to continue the work. We need only do our part, there is no need to do it alone, and there is no need to finish the work. My hope and wish are that this book will provide courage, inspiration, and knowledge that will contribute to your holistic healing and that will empower you to do the part that is yours to do. As we are all one, our personal healing is inextricably linked with the healing of the planet.