

DEEP TIME

Geology is the study of the origin, history, and structure of the Earth. Foremost amongst its insights is that unfathomable eons of time have transpired in the physical evolution of the planet. That which appears permanent and unchanging to our perceptions is seen to be but an ephemeral stage in an incomprehensibly long process of rock formation and erosion in the Earth's crust. For instance, Mt. Everest, the world's tallest peak, consists of marine limestone, a sedimentary rock that was formed by the biological precipitation to the bed of the Indian Ocean of calcium-shelled microscopic sea life, within the last 200 million years. Transformed by pressure and heat from sediment into rock over the eons, and uplifted in the collision of India with Tibet as tectonic plates thrust continental masses against each other, the Himalaya Mountains are dramatic testimony to awesome geological forces.

Deep time provides us with valuable perspective, and a good context of understanding our existence. The poetic beauty of exposed, folded striations in sedimentary rock gives the beholder a sense of sublime wonder, and an appreciation of our home planet, and of its on-going processes. Now that humanity is becoming a distinct force in the alteration of the Earth --- geologically, meteorologically, and biologically --- we would be wise to recognize our impacts, and to strive to mitigate the most harmful of them to our own well-being and to the Quality of life on Planet Earth. This deserves our highest priority commitment!

Glaciation is another aspect of geology from which we can glean fascinating understandings. Some poorly understood geophysical phenomena throughout geological history have caused average global temperatures to occasionally fall for long periods of time, causing periods of Ice Ages. The last Ice Age in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California was caused by a fall of about 7 degrees Fahrenheit in the Northern Hemisphere, a mere 20,000 years ago. This eventually resulted in an accumulation of oceans of ice a 1,000 feet deep, covering extensive areas of the high mountains.

"It is hard to realize the magnitude of the work done on these mountains during the last glacial period ... Nature chose for a tool ... the tender snowflakes noiselessly falling through unnumbered centuries, the offspring of the sun and the sea."

--- John Muir

Windswept peaks and plateaus projecting above the slowly moving oceans of glacial ice are called "nunataks." Alpine forms of plant life survived there, and then eventually recolonized the lands scraped barren by the ice, once the global temperatures warmed once again about 9,000 years ago and the glaciers melted.

Today's wild lands and wilderness areas are like modern nunataks --- that is, they are biological islands in a sea of altered and developed lands. As in the past, these modern nunataks provide an irreplaceable genetic storehouse that can replenish disturbed land. Today's Wilderness Areas, National Parks, roadless areas in National Forests, and undisturbed public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management are vital islands of hope for the future. Humanity must find better ways to help protect them!

"The tutor Pangloss taught metaphysico-theolog-cosmologology. He proved admirably that there is no effect without a cause, and that this is the best of all possible worlds."

--- Candide, Voltaire

Geologic Time Scale

Geologists have divided the long history of Earth into four Eras:

- (1) The Precambrian Era. Earth is about 4,500 million years old. Life apparently began about 4,000 million years ago, about 500 million years after Earth was formed. The Precambrian Era of life was characterized by single-celled organisms that lived in ancient seas for about 3,500 million years, until about 570 million years ago. There is no evidence of any form of life on land during this era, which comprises about 75% of the history of the planet.
- (2) The Paleozoic Era ("ancient life"). This era, from about 570 million years ago until 230 million years ago, was characterized by a dramatic proliferation of multi-cellular life forms, including trilobites, primitive fishes, amphibians, land plants and forests. This Era includes the Carboniferous Period, during which fossil fuels were formed by deposits of plant matter that accumulated on the bottom of shallow seas. The Paleozoic Era came to an end due to the Permian Extinction, an event in which a large proportion of species of life became extinct, due to an unknown cause.
- (3) The Mesozoic Era ("middle life"), consisting of the Triassic, the Jurassic and the Cretaceous Periods. This era was characterized by the evolution of many reptilian species, which seem to have dominated the era. The fossil record contains many species of dinosaurs, primitive mammals, early birds, and flowering plants. The Mesozoic Era ended with another worldwide extinction event known as the Cretaceous Extinction, about 65 million years ago. Evidence indicates that the cause of this biotic calamity, in which more than 50% of all species of life perished, was probably an enormous meteorite impact in the vicinity of the Yucatan Peninsula, which created a mushroom cloud proliferating into the stratosphere, deflecting sunlight and suppressing photosynthesis around the planet, severely disrupting the food chain from its base.
- (4) The Cenozoic Era ("latest life"), containing the geologic periods from the Cretaceous Extinction 65 million years ago until the present. This era has been characterized by the evolution of modern plants and animals, including grazing animals, marine mammals, apes and most recently, mankind.

Human beings have become a force causing relatively rapid and accelerating species extinctions, leading to the realization that the Cenozoic Era is ending --- and that we humans are causing it! The greatest extinctions are taking place in rainforests, in coral reefs, and on islands.

Will the human race survive this extinction episode? Or will our hubris, our destructive exploitation, our stubborn resistance to progressive adaptation, and our aggressive violence towards each other and towards the natural world sound the extinction knell for our species?

WE MUST COME TOGETHER TO CHOOSE SURVIVAL!

That, about which you say:
"This is the way that it is,"
Is not the way that it is.
--- Ancient Philosophy of the Tao

"Doubt is not a very agreeable state,
but certainty is a ridiculous one."
--- Voltaire

"The fundamental nature of reality is
mysterious ---this is scientific fact."
--- The Aristos, John Fowles

Preternatural Predetermination

Sociobiologists say that we are instinctively predisposed, from an evolutionary standpoint, to behave in ways that make good biological sense. Selfish behaviors are powerful determinants of actions for individuals, but many species also demonstrate that actions which benefit the survival of the species, not just the individual, are vitally important. Homo sapiens' principal unique determining characteristic --- our big brains --- might lead one to speculate that to the extent we have freedom of will, we would be very wise to make socially-conscious courageous choices with regard to the future of our species.

Reference is being made to intelligent choices from the perspective of environmental and social sanity. We have a definite need to redesign our economic systems to be more responsible to posterity, to begin the critically important transition to sustainable, restorative environmental policies, to mitigate the pollution and degradation of habitats and ecosystems, and to recognize the vital necessity to mitigate military actions and reduce the economic and social inequities which lead to wars.

“Get Involved: Those who Run the World Are Those who Show Up.”

What citizens can do: Embrace Progressive ideas. Call or write your representatives about specific issues that you care about. Join with like-minded concerned citizens to demand significant change. Speak out. Consume responsibly. Help make a difference in the world!

Tiffany Twain believes strongly that human destiny is not fixed, not preordained. We do have some degree of choice in how our species will fare on Planet Earth in the future. Decisions we are making today, and the ones we make in the next few years, will have a profound influence on how healthy the ecosystems of our home planet will be for future generations, and on how crowded it will get during the span of this century.

We can make intelligent choices --- and we must choose courses of action that most favorably ensure that living conditions improve for both those alive today and those to come. It seems critical that we : (1) protect resources from wanton waste and reckless depletion; (2) protect ecosystems and biodiversity from deterioration and potential collapse; and, (3) strive with great effort to ensure that human relations do not culminate in the social and environmental calamity of devastating wars.

Individuals, business leaders, judges, and politicians must join together to alter current trends towards greater conflict, waste, pollution, injustice, and regression.

Being intelligent and versatile creatures, we are capable of changing course before it is too late. Powerful forces are arrayed against our success: (1) our economic systems that do not take into account resource depletion, ecological destruction, and pollution; (2) the irresponsibility and greed of corporations and of the controlling wealthy; (3) the increasing desperation of the world's poor and hungry; and (4) the continued growth of the human population, which is increasing by more than 70 million people every year.

Is there hope? --- I believe so! Where there is a will, there is a way. Let's find the way!!

An Ode to Hope

Sing praise to hope, optimism, and positivity of outlook
For these qualities are key to our vitality and well-being
And we can see that they contribute to our health, in body and soul
Helping to galvanize us into proper action, perspective and seeing.

Understand that each of us has both power and responsibility
And underutilized capabilities to modify our actions and behaviors
To live lives that are more true to our innermost souls
Making a difference in the world, and also being our own saviors.

Hopelessness and despair isolate us, and worse than that
They paralyze us into inactivity, into exercising no control
And lead ironically to ill health, both mentally and physically
So maintain a Big Perspective, be optimistic, Let's Roll!

Be not fatalistic, for it need not be "Après moi, le deluge"
Excellent solutions abound to common problems we face
And as a long journey requires the proverbial first step
We must stride forward with a confident, purposive pace.

The motivating drives of humankind are both simple and complex
As the hierarchy of need rises from basic survival and reproduction
To the noble summits of aesthetics and satisfying self-actualization
While the impulse to contribute and do good is a generous construction.

A cynic may say optimists do not fully comprehend
That all too often "life is hard, and then you die"
But the best Quality of life must be our first concern
And hope gives us reason for living, dreams, and a rallying cry.

Yes, praise be to hope, for betterment and such
Have faith in the power of some freedom to choose
Imagine a caring, compassionate, visionary society
And help actualize it, as if there is everything to lose.

Lasting art involves strumming and striking a chord
To ring with both personal resonance and universal truth
And it behooves us to be bold and set our sights high
Striving, caring, and trying to understand like a good sleuth.

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An Ode to Hope

“Star light, Star bright, I wish I may,” I used to say
“I wish I might, have this wish I wish tonight,”
Hoping for social and environmental fairness and justice
Clear vision in true light, and doing what is really right.

The urgencies of daily circumstance deflect our focus
From deep inner values to the unconsidered and mundane
Let us seize the moment, philosophically aware and alert
And dare to speak out to others with a positive refrain.

Accelerating change confronts us, so let us rise to the occasion
Pursuing progressive policies that help our societies properly cope
And individuals and communities must assert their will
Using high standards of hope, while forbearing to just mope.

The positive gamut of fulfilled feelings ranges wide
From contentment, happiness, joy, enthusiasm, generosity and love
To rapt interest, freedom, friendship, confidence, and calm
And projections of thanksgiving to the heavens above.

Cultural Creatives are required in the face of rapid change!
People who boldly embrace ideas that are fair and far-sighted
Not just clinging to conservatism, partisanship and the Status Quo
But being committed to respecting Nature, not making it blighted.

Tiffany Twain recognizes the metaphorical truth in the saying that hot air rises
And that there is an elevating quality to flights of philosophical optimism
And she appreciates the reader's forbearance in perusing these words
Hoping that they are redeemed by a reversal of man's drift towards cataclysm.

The end is near, to this Ode and this Manifesto, but not to ancient Planet Earth
And since nature is indifferent to every species that has ever been in existence
It is to clearly to ourselves that we must answer for a hopeful and positive fate
Pursuing happiness and meaning --- and helping to protect future generations hence.

The best we can do is to make the best of whatever comes our way
Remaining alert to opportunities, and knowing the rich depth of our souls
Acting consistently with openness, wisdom, compassion and care
Appreciating our existences, whether or not we reach our goals.

Tiffany Twain
June 2004

Earth Manifesto Summary

A fundamental truth seems to characterize the Universe: change is continuous, infinite, and eternal, within a context of eternally unchanging physical "laws". All forms of life strive to find security, to survive, to reproduce, and to adapt to change. Any species that fails becomes extinct forever.

Human beings have evolved as one of the most versatile animals ever, capable of modifying the environment in which we live, so that we have been able to colonize an extremely wide range of habitats, not just the narrow niches to which most species are specifically adapted. Our ability to make use of the resources of the planet has allowed us to expand our population to the point that the ultimate limits are very basic: the availability of water and topsoil and finite mineral resources.

We are at a juncture in human history where increasing human numbers are obviously on a collision course with diminishing natural resources. We ignore, or deny this, at our species' own great peril. Calamitous starvation, widespread war and social disruption can be averted, but only by embracing a revolutionary greening of our economic systems, a sensible moderation in our wastefulness of non-renewable resources, and a dramatic mitigation in the harmfulness of our impacts on the ecosystems of Planet Earth, upon which we are ultimately clearly one hundred percent dependent.

Muses Benediction

Thank you, oh Muses, for all of your Inspiration --- particularly Calliope and Clio. You did such a rousing and through job of provocation that I feel practically channeled!

Also, thanks to Mom Muse Mnemosyne for not being too STRICT about having a good memory in order for creativity to flourish! (Incidentally, Mnemosyne, I empathize with you for having had to father the wonderful Muses with that rascally philanderer Zeus!) Also, I apologize on behalf of humankind for having consigned the entire Pantheon of Greek gods and goddesses from the vaulted heavens to the murky attic of mythology. Western Churches invented the more sophisticated, unnatural, and dominating concepts of monotheism some 2,000 years ago, and suddenly all of the richly anthropomorphic Greek deities became pagan, naïve and archaic. It is rather ironic that we traded in such a revealing cadre of archetypes of human nature for a pathetic guilty sublapsarianism --- a religious dogma of Sin, and of a man nailed to a cross for our salvation. Ouch! --- on our poor psyches, and societies!!

Let us meditate on Apollonian truths ... << Know Thyself. >> << Nothing in Excess. >>

Principles Must Guide Us!

“Instincts and passion are magnificent as driving forces, but dangerous as guides.”

Spinoza 1632 – 1677 A.D.

If universal ethical principles exist, they would define what is Right as what a consensus of social conscience believes, taking into account logical comprehensiveness, universality and consistency. These principles would essentially be characterized by a respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons, by a reciprocity and equality of human rights, and by an equitability of social, political, and environmental justice. Open-minded critical thinking and fair judgment must inform our understandings, NOT unquestioning faith in doctrines and acquiescence to compulsive fears and to pressures to conform.

Tiffany Twain feels that the following principles should guide individual and collective actions, now and in the future:

- (1) We must commit ourselves to the implementation of policies that help ensure that our legacy to future generations is a livable world.
- (2) We must honor the natural impulses of human beings, as well as market principles, creating self-actuating solutions to the challenges we face --- not regulated or morally mandated ones. We can do this by using Incentives and Disincentives to modify demand in ways that help create a secure and sustainable future by reducing the absolute amount of resources consumed and energy used, using technological innovation and investment to emphasize efficiency and conservation.
- (3) We should recognize that self-interest is one of the most powerful of human motivations, but that self-interest is not identical to our individual selfish interests, for it is inevitably linked to the common good.
- (4) The faculty of reason should be cultivated and encouraged through good broad-minded public education programs that teach how to think critically, and how to both analyze and synthesize.
- (5) We must maintain the goal of providing secure, stable, and meaningful employment for people everywhere to the greatest extent possible, while also valuing leisure time.
- (6) Limits must be transformed into opportunities, in order to create a more authentic, rewarding, engaging, fun, aesthetic and secure future for all.
- (7) Degraded habitats and ecosystems must be restored to their fullest biological capacity.
- (8) We must live within the Carrying Capacity of the natural systems of Planet Earth, redesigning all industrial, residential, and transportation systems, so that they are sustainable for future generations, minimizing pollution and spillover effects of damages to other systems and people.
- (9) We should apply the Golden Rule, and act towards others as we would like to have others act towards us.
- (10) We must develop empathetic understanding, defusing anger and conflict, and fostering good communications, cooperation, and reasonable compromise.
- (11) We must keep faith in the desirability of peace, and avoid binges of violence, individually and “in herds”.
- (12) We should individually strive to understand the positive qualities of life, aware of values true to our souls, cultivating those things that Really Matter, and worrying less about “the small stuff” and obsessing less about material possessions.

Articulated Actions for a More Sane Humanity

Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Political Initiatives to Better the World

- (1) Establish a Bill of Rights for Future Generations, as petitioned by the Cousteau Society.
- (2) Endorse and support the Earth Charter Initiative (www.EarthCharter.org), joining the global partnership in moving towards a healthier framework of a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world.
- (3) Create a Cabinet-level Department of Peace to advance the causes of conflict resolution and international cooperation.
- (4) Phase out "Star Wars" spending, and transfer 20% of military spending to programs for peacebuilding, demilitarization, and sustainable development.
- (5) Strengthen ties with our allies, and simultaneously implement bold measures to mitigate the injustices that create enemies.
- (6) Support the International Bill of Rights program (www.ibor.com) to promote peaceful coexistence amongst the world's peoples by bringing basic freedoms and standards of education, healthcare and economic opportunity to all peoples.
- (7) Create Incentives and Disincentives to improve the fuel efficiency of vehicles, to improve energy-saving appliances and housing insulation, to promote conservation and economic sustainability, and to reduce the waste of non-renewable resources, electricity, and fresh water.
- (8) Enact serious campaign finance reform to ensure that our democracy is more fair, and to lessen the power of Big Business and the Wealthy in determining our national policies.
- (9) Make contributions more attractive for donors to charitable institutions and to environmental protection organizations.
- (10) Invest in the revitalization of cities and urban areas, improving the country's aging infrastructure, and establish plans to curb suburban sprawl.
- (11) Improve mass transit, subsidizing construction and operating costs of light rail in cities, and of trains and bus systems.
- (12) Encourage the development of solar power, high mileage hybrid vehicles, energy efficiency and conservation programs, and alternatives to fossil fuels.
- (13) Strengthen recycling and re-use programs, and find ways to reduce packaging and electronics wastes.
- (14) Develop more effective programs to reduce toxic wastes and mitigate air and water pollution in the United States and abroad.
- (15) Enact Green Taxation policies, as outlined on page **27** of this Manifesto, and establish legislation to require politicians to more nearly balance the federal budget every year.
- (16) Reduce the size of the federal government, preferably through attrition, with a 10% reduction in the number of federal jobs over the next 5 years. Empower local and state communities to handle issues that are most appropriate to what they can handle best.
- (17) Improve social justice with progressive legislation, and a repeal of the regressive tax, social and environmental policies enacted in the U.S. by the Neoconservative movement in the years 2000-2004.
- (18) Build no more nuclear plants, since long-lasting radioactive waste and the threat of terrorist attacks make them far too risky.
- (19) Ratify the Kyoto Protocol to reduce atmospheric pollution.
- (20) Strengthen the protection of wetlands and water resource protections.

Articulated Actions for a More Sane Humanity

Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Political Initiatives to Better the World (continued)

- (21) Increase sensible protections of National Parks, roadless areas, National Forests, Wilderness areas, and other public lands.
- (22) Invest in the quality and safety of public education.
- (23) Support the George McGovern/Bob Dole Global School Lunch program to encourage education worldwide to increase opportunities for boys and girls, and to diminish starvation.
- (24) Work to get the Equal Rights Amendment passed, and to accept and support the empowerment of women to achieve equal opportunity and equitable pay.
- (25) Adopt generous policies to provide contraceptives to people worldwide to allow people to more responsibly choose whether to have more children, and to prevent the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- (26) Reverse the Global Gag rule, and restore funding for international Family Planning programs and women's reproductive health care.
- (27) Strengthen the separation of Church and State to reduce the unwise, intolerant, and unfair influences of religious fundamentalism in politics.
- (28) Strengthen protections for human rights both at home and abroad. Help establish freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom from want for all people.
- (29) Promote self-determination for all peoples, and do not support dictatorships.
- (30) Oppose human rights abuses by our government, and by all other governments.
- (31) Help free Tibet from repressive Chinese rule.
- (32) Help establish and empower an International Court of the Environment to help assure environmental justice, and to reduce the detrimental impacts of unrestricted global enterprise on the environment.
- (33) Do not allow the government to give a blanket exemption of the Department of Defense from U.S. environmental laws, specifically the Clean Air Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Endangered Species Act.
- (34) Enact a National Oceans Policy in accordance with the recommendations of the bipartisan, independent Pew Oceans Commission, in order to combat the perils from pollution, over fishing, global warming, and the lack of international cooperation in ocean resource management.
- (35) Find ways to guarantee adequate minimal levels of health care for all citizens.
- (36) Support dignity in dying by hammering out an ethical initiative that respects patients, families, and personal choices.
- (37) Invest federal research funds in stem cell research.
- (38) Reduce the harshness of penalties for victimless crimes, legalizing medical marijuana, reforming the War on Drugs, and making prostitution legal and safer.
- (39) Support the arts in their contribution to cultural health and the nobility of aspiration.
- (40) Appreciate good music, harmonies and passionate crooning. Become a connoisseur of fine qualities and noble actions. Exhibit a reasonable modicum of self-discipline. Step a bit more lightly on Planet Earth. Simplify your life in some tangible way. Allow a maximum of respect and dignity for every person.

**Principles propounded herein by yours truly, young gal Tiffany Twain
Are philosophical, farsighted, and importantly momentous musings, and such,
Caringly constructed to connect deep value, consciousness and visionary concern
To stimulate awareness of our soulful innermost selves, and to keep us in touch.**

Environmental Organizations

Fortune Magazine publishes a list each year of the largest companies in the United States. In the year 2003, the largest 100 companies in the U.S. all had assets exceeding \$ 35 billion, with Citigroup being the largest, having assets over \$1 trillion.

It is sad to realize that none of the environmental organizations in the world, which are fighting to protect the ecological integrity of the planet, are anywhere near as large as even the smallest of the Fortune 500, all of which are contributing to greater or lesser extents to the destruction of the planet. For instance:

--- The Nature Conservancy had Net Assets of \$ 2.9 billion at 6/30/03. It is an international, non-profit membership organization, whose mission is to preserve plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

--- The Sierra Club has Net Assets of \$ 75 million. The Mission Statement of the Sierra Club is to: 1. Explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth; 2. Practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; 3. Educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and, 4. Use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

--- Environmental Defense had Net Assets of \$49 million at 9/30/03. It is dedicated to protecting the environmental rights of all people, including the right to clean air, clean water, healthy food, and flourishing ecosystems. Guided by science, it works to create practical solutions that win lasting political, economic and social support because they are nonpartisan, cost-effective and fair.

--- The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) had Net Assets of \$ 47.6 million at 6/30/01. NRDC's purpose is to safeguard the Earth: its people, its plants and animals and the natural systems on which all life depends. They work to restore the integrity of the elements that sustain life --- air, land and water --- and to defend endangered natural places. They seek to establish sustainability and good stewardship of the Earth as central ethical imperatives of human society. NRDC affirms the integral place of human beings in the environment. They strive to protect nature in ways that advance the long-term welfare of present and future generations. They work to foster the fundamental right of all people to have a voice in decisions that affect their environment. They seek to break down the pattern of disproportionate environmental burdens borne by people of color and others who face social or economic inequities.

--- Earthjustice has Net Assets of just under \$24 million. It is a non-profit public interest law firm dedicated to protecting the magnificent places, natural resources, and wildlife of this earth and to defending the right of all people to a healthy environment. They strive to bring about far-reaching change by enforcing and strengthening environmental laws on behalf of hundreds of organizations and communities.

--- The Wilderness Society has Net Assets of about \$16 million. "The mission of The Wilderness Society is to deliver to future generations an unspoiled legacy of wild places, with all the precious values they hold: biological diversity; clean air and water; towering forests; rushing rivers; and sage-sweet silent deserts."

GREAT IDEAS!

Tiffany Twain asks readers to Please support environmental organizations!

Gourmet Recipe for a Medium-Sized Planet

Eat a More Healthy Diet, and Help Save the Earth!

This recipe has an extraordinarily nutritious combination of vitamins, minerals, protein, essential fatty acids, fiber, and anti-oxidants --- it is VERY HEALTHY!! It is far, far better for your health than FAST FOODS --- and also much better than taking vitamins, in my opinion.

Mix the Following Ingredients Together:

1 pound raw sunflower seeds	1 pound raw pumpkin seeds
1 pound raw slivered almonds	½ pound pine nuts
½ pound hazelnuts (Filberts)	½ pound raw pecans
½ pound dried cranberries	½ pound Brazil nuts
½ pound walnuts	½ pound roasted cashews
½ pound dried apricots	
½ pound crystallized ginger, cut in small bite-sized pieces	
½ pound dried papaya, cut in small bite-sized pieces	
½ pound dried pineapple, cut in small bite-sized pieces	
¼ pound sesame seeds	

Design your own mix --- all ingredients are optional! (Store ¾ of this in the freezer.)
Consume a little of this daily, with some water, and eat less meat and Fast Foods!

Touching Tiffany Twain

Mark my words; there must be more important things in human life than basic survival, self-gratification, individual accomplishments, and the accumulation of material possessions. True fulfillment requires a more genuine connectedness, an authentic caring, and a giving back of something to your community, or to posterity; and being in touch with the important qualities that make existence rich and worth living.

Runic Wisdom indicates that spiritual understandings reveal that each of us has a higher purpose. Our nature requires wholeness. Our innermost Self yearns for clarity, openness, generosity, fairness, and receptivity. The willingness to learn and change is essential for healing and restoration. Fears and self-doubt must be transcended to achieve growth and the gift of freedom. Becoming whole requires lifting ourselves above the endless ebb and flow of ordinary life to acquire broader vision. Adversity teaches us the value of mindfulness, self-acceptance, harmony, balance and versatility. When we peel away old habits, loosening the bonds the self has inherited from being in the world, then we are able to choose movement to better our world.

A Missouri native, I love Nature and our precious Water Planet. I love beauty, wild lands, free-flowing streams, thriving wildlife, birds, frogs, and wily trout living carefree lives in clear deep pools in beautiful mountain streams. I do not have a dog and a cat, but if I did, they would get along well together. I am an idealist, and a realist, believing in greater potentials for humans, and in the certain capability of humankind to improve its fate. I am 5'7", with eyes of blue, slender, fit, adventurous, and Epicurean in temperament. I love life, freedoms, culture, creativity, passion, affirmation, generosity, enthusiasm, fulfillment, and the good health and attitude to be able to appreciate it all. And I love my privacy and anonymity from attention, despite the apparent contrariety this has to the creation of this Earth Manifesto. But it just had to be done!!

Tiffany Twain, September 2004