

Day 1

Please Come Home *by Jane Cooper*

Please come home. Please come home.

Find the place where your feet know where to walk
And follow your own trail home.

Please come home. Please come home into your own body,
Your own vessel, your own earth.
Please come home into each and every cell,
And fully into the space that surrounds you.

Please come home. Please come home to trusting yourself,
And your instincts and your ways and your knowings,
And even the particular quirks of your personality.

Please come home. Please come home and once you are firmly there,
Please stay awhile and come to a deep rest within.
Please treasure your home. Please love and embrace your home.
Please get a deep, deep sense of what it's like to be truly home.

Please come home. Please come home.
And when you're really, really ready,
And there's a detectable urge on the outbreath, then please come out.

Please come home and please come forward.
Please express who you are to us, and please trust us
To see you and hear you and touch you
And recognize you as best we can.

Please come home. Please come home and let us know
All the nooks and crannies that are calling to be seen.
Please come home, and let us know the More
That is there that wants to come out.

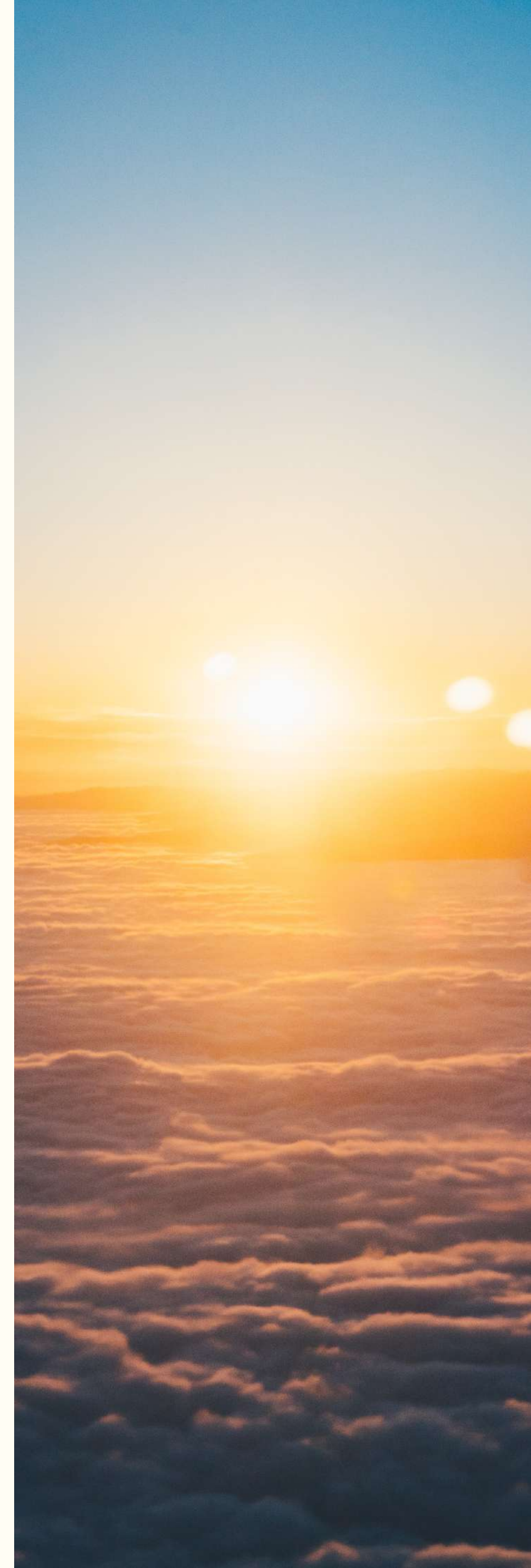
Please come home. Please come home.
For you belong here now. You belong among us.
Please inhabit your place fully so we can learn from you,
From your voice and your ways and your presence.

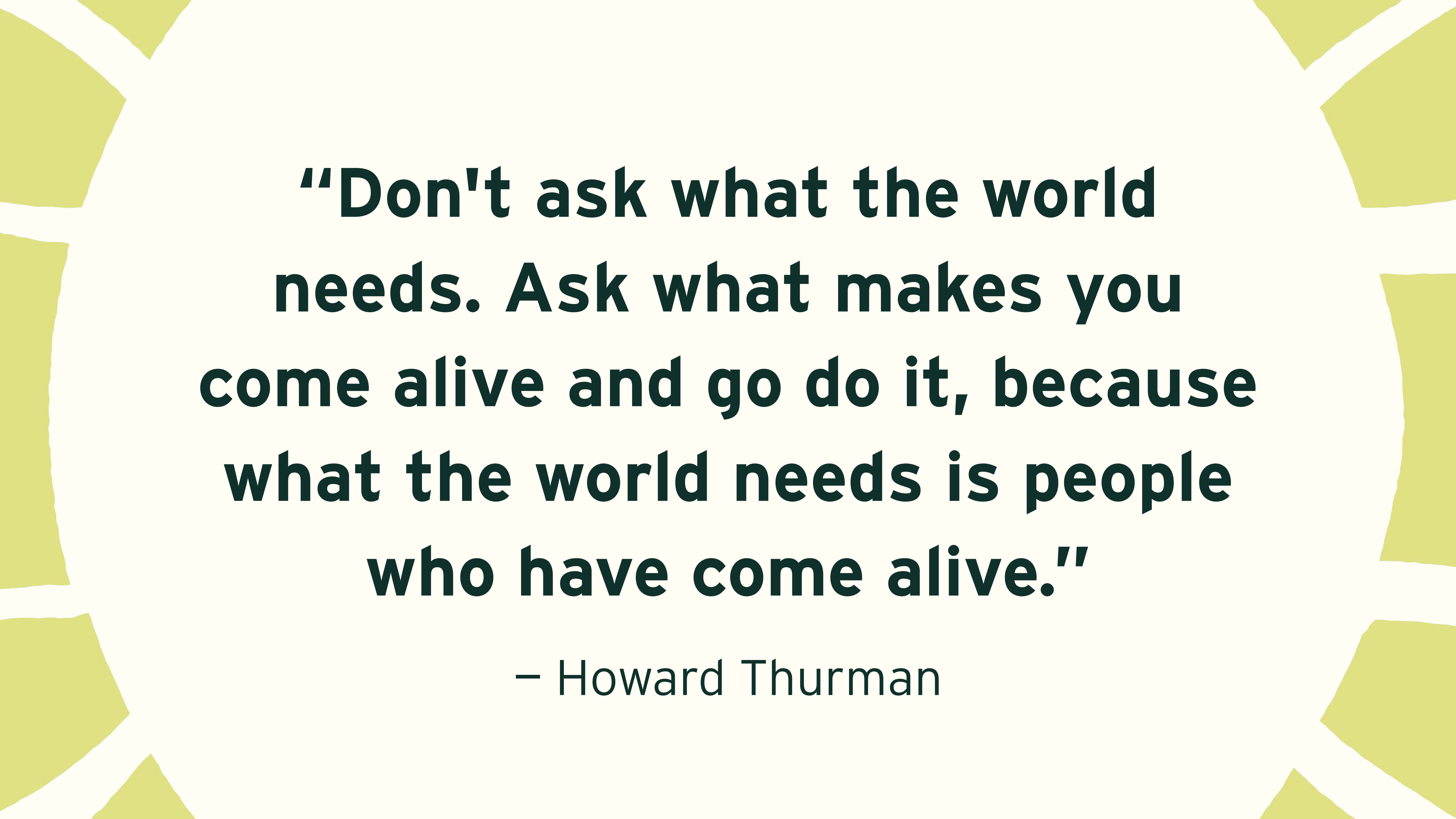
Please come home. Please come home.
And when you feel yourself home, please welcome us too,
For we too forget that we belong and are welcome,
And that we are called to express fully who we are.

Please come home. Please come home.
You and you and you and me.
Please come home. Please come home.
Thank you, Earth, for welcoming us.
And thank you touch of eyes and ears and skin,
Touch of love for welcoming us.

May we wake up and remember who we truly are.

Please come home.
Please come home.
Please come home.



A decorative border made of yellow torn paper pieces is visible around the edges of the image.

**“Don't ask what the world
needs. Ask what makes you
come alive and go do it, because
what the world needs is people
who have come alive.”**

– Howard Thurman

Give and receive welcome. People learn best in hospitable spaces. In this circle we support each other's learning by giving and receiving hospitality.

Be present as fully as possible. Be here with your doubts, fears and failings as well as your convictions, joys and successes, your listening as well as your speaking.

What is offered in the circle is by invitation, not demand. This is not a "share or die" event! Do whatever your soul calls for, and know that you do it with our support. Your soul knows your needs better than we do.

Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth. Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth in a circle of trust does not mean interpreting, correcting or debating what others say. Speak from your center to the center of the circle, using "I" statements, trusting people to do their own sifting and winnowing.

No fixing, saving, advising or correcting each other. This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcoming the soul, to making space for the inner teacher.

Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions. Do not respond with counsel or corrections. Using honest, open questions helps us "hear each other into deeper speech."

When the going gets rough, turn to wonder. Turn from reaction and judgment to wonder and compassionate inquiry. Ask yourself, “I wonder why they feel/think this way?” or “I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself?” Set aside judgment to listen to others—and to yourself—more deeply.

Attend to your own inner teacher. We learn from others, of course. But as we explore poems, stories, questions and silence in a circle of trust, we have a special opportunity to learn from within. So pay close attention to your own reactions and responses, to your most important teacher.

Trust and learn from the silence. Silence is a gift in our noisy world, and a way of knowing in itself. Treat silence as a member of the group. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.

Observe deep confidentiality. Safety is built when we can trust that our words and stories will remain with the people with whom we choose to share, and are not repeated to others without our permission.

Know that it's possible to leave the circle with whatever it was that you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead.

Core Values

We Choose Integrity/Wholeness:

Living and working with integrity requires us to develop greater congruence between our inner and outer selves, to live less divided lives. To move towards such wholeness we must become more self-aware and accepting of our gifts and strengths as well as our shadows and limits.



We Choose Authenticity:

When we “show up” as whole people and act authentically, those with whom we live and work are more willing to trust us in relationship and leadership. This can lead to transformed workplaces and organizations.



We Choose Diversity:

Diversity is a deeply valued source of strength, richness, and wisdom for us and for the communities in which we live and work. The capacity to welcome and make space for diverse voices and multiple perspectives is critical to the creation of circles of trust, and to the healing and wholeness needed in our world.





We Choose Community:

As we do “inner work,” we are not simply focusing inwardly on ourselves. Rather, we become more aware of the fabric of our connectedness with others in our families, workplaces, and communities. This results in an ongoing sense of responsibility and stewardship of the people and concerns that most matter to us.

We Choose Courage:

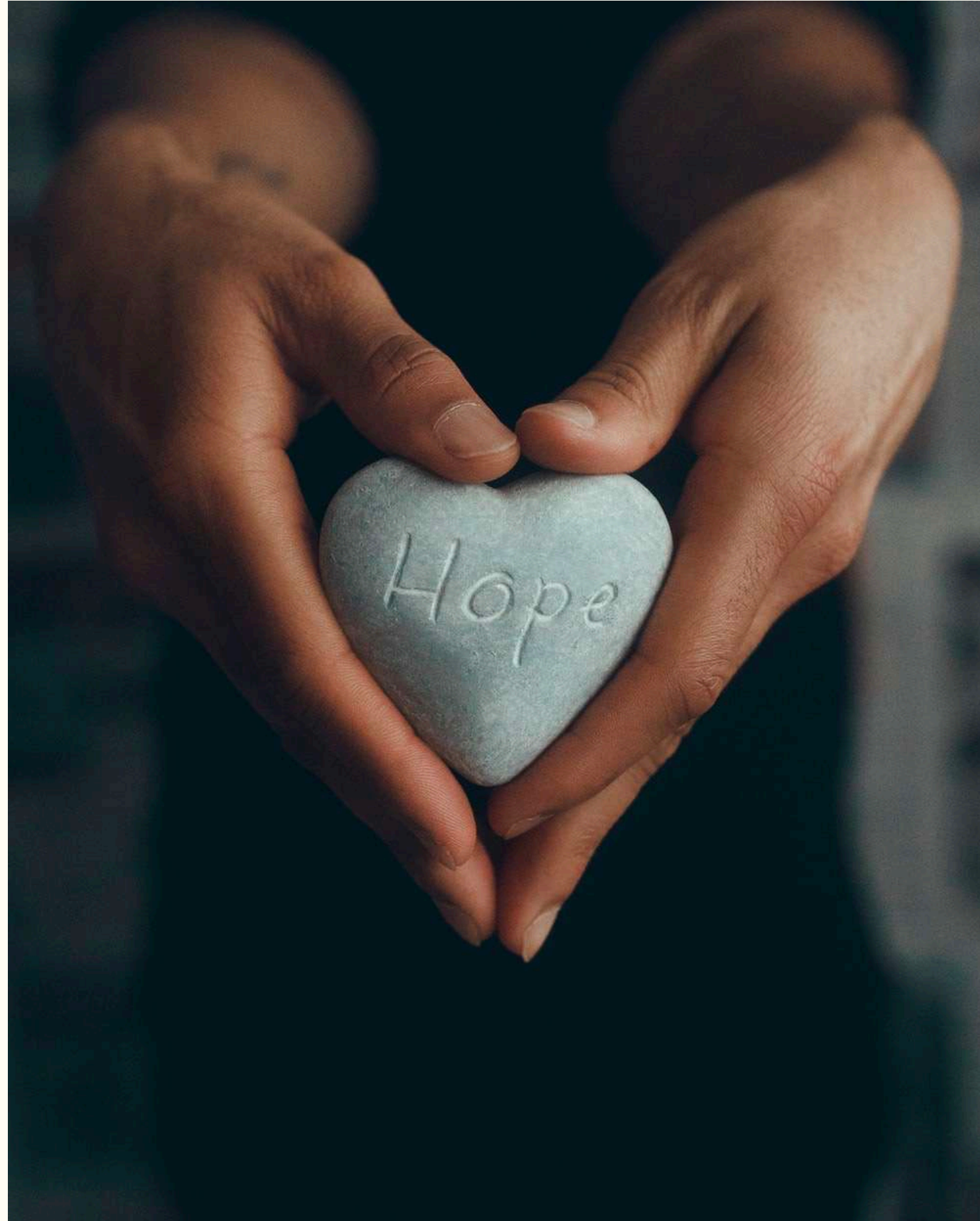
For people whose vocation is serving others, courage is needed to persevere and be “whole-hearted” in the often overwhelming circumstances in which we are trying to make a difference– whether that be in the life of a child, patient, congregation, or community.



We Choose Love:

Our work is grounded in love, by which we mean the capacity to extend ourselves for the sake of another person's growth. Our work in community stretches us to understand, respect, and support each other, teaching us why learning to love is one of the most demanding disciplines we can choose.





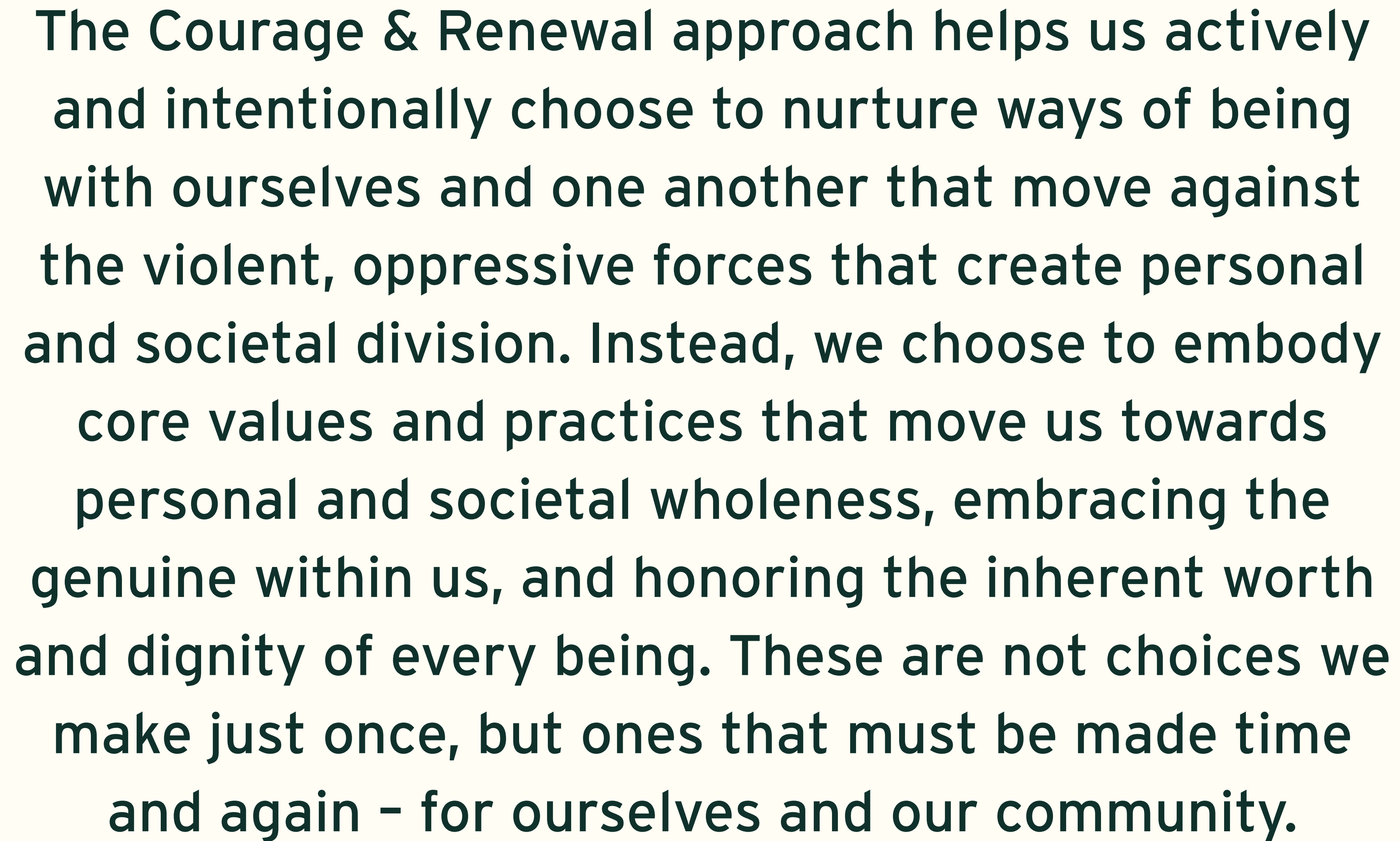
We Choose Hope:

Hope is believing and acting on our finest and most dearly held dreams, persisting even when the odds are against them. In the midst of the despair and brokenheartedness experienced by so many in our world today, our work engenders hope for people to live purposeful lives, do meaningful work, and make contributions to succeeding generations.

We Choose Renewal:



Just as we experience nature's cycle of renewal through the seasons, so we experience natural cycles of engagement and withdrawal, love and loss, creativity and despair in our personal lives and work. When we take time to slow down, quiet ourselves, and reflect, renew ourselves and recall our commitments, important changes can happen within us and around us. As we who are teachers, healthcare providers, clergy, lawyers, and community leaders are renewed, we in turn can contribute to the renewal of our professions, workplaces, and communities.

The image features a white background with a decorative border made of yellow, torn-edge paper scraps. The scraps are irregular in shape and are placed around the perimeter of the page, creating a layered, artistic effect. The text is centered in the white space.

The Courage & Renewal approach helps us actively and intentionally choose to nurture ways of being with ourselves and one another that move against the violent, oppressive forces that create personal and societal division. Instead, we choose to embody core values and practices that move us towards personal and societal wholeness, embracing the genuine within us, and honoring the inherent worth and dignity of every being. These are not choices we make just once, but ones that must be made time and again – for ourselves and our community.

Imaging Touchstones

