

## HONORING THE ANCESTORS

### Big History Conference 2018

#### 1. In gratitude, I Bow to the Generations of Life

I am my mother and father – and my four grandparents – whose blood, flesh, and vitality are circulating in my own veins and nourishing every cell within me. I carry in me the life, blood, experience, wisdom, happiness, and sorrow of all generations, the generations of humans who evolved and turned into our own species of homo sapiens. I am the primates before them whose eyes began to face forward with life in the trees; and the early mammals before them who evolved from reptiles . . . who scurried about under the feet of dinosaurs. I am the generations of reptiles before them who created the reptile part of my brain, and the generations of fish before them who created my backbone; and the early worms on the bottom of the ocean floor that developed a notochord that turned into the backbone; and the early single cell creatures before them who came together into the very first multicellular creatures; and the first earthlings before them, bacteria, who developed ways to turn energy from the environment into ways for LIFE to move and think and have its being. I am the Earth itself that burst into the first forms of life.

#### 2. In Gratitude, I Bow to the Elements and my Star Ancestors

I am the cloud of stardust before that which grew denser and tighter and flared into our Sun and all the planets; and to the generations of elements before that which were fused inside a star . . . carbon, calcium, and oxygen, to name a few . . . that over generations and generations would turn into my brain and bones and air to breath; and to the birth of that ancient star that lived before our Sun which fused those elements. YES! Stars are my ancestors. I am the clouds of hydrogen that turned into the very first ancient stars. I am the cosmic explosion that inflated the entire universe and fused together protons and electrons into hydrogen, the very first element; and through hydrogen I see the energy that existed before there was any material stuff at all; and which then turned into the very first stuff. And I am the moment when our cosmos itself was born as a tiny speck, smaller than a piece of dust, 14 billion years ago.

#### 3. In Gratitude, I Embrace the Whole of the past

I open my heart to receive the energy of insight, love, and experience transmitted by ALL my ancestors over billions of years. I allow their energy to flow through me, and I ask that I be aware of the incalculable gifts of countless generations, each one of which was crucial for propelling the greatest adventure of all – the adventure of the universe, from the Big Bang, 13.8 billion years ago till NOW.

#### **4. In Gratitude, I Ask for Wisdom to Create a Flourishing Future**

I ask for the strength and wisdom to learn from all the generations that came before me to help me play my role in carrying forward the cosmic adventure. How are my actions a gift to future generations? How will generations a hundred, a thousand, a million – or even a billion – years from today look back and see the gift of this very moment that I am living right now? In all the chaos of today, I am afraid and full of self doubt. I ask too for the vision to see how chaos and creativity – which have always partnered together to bring about spectacular new orders of complexity and consciousness – are at work right now, even inside of me. Help me to enter into the chaotic fray of evolution with zest, compassion and insight to play my role in the cosmic adventure.