

Getting Started...

Taking time to reflect on the **Down to Earth** storytellers' experiences and then sharing (group activity) or journaling (personal activity) from those reflections is one way to use this workbook. Below are some questions that can get you started, using the film's stories as prompts to begin to unearth your own values/activism journey. You could also organize a group to share each other's experiences around the questions. This workbook contains other opportunities/activities to explore some of these questions in greater depth. *A template for the questions and activities is provided, should you wish to make copies for a film screening/workshop.*

The questions and activities below could be part of a short workshop or fishbowl session that follows the film screening. It could be turned into a longer workshop series, taking the questions separately for personal journaling sessions and then returning to share each other's reflections in a group gathering. *(Fishbowl sharing: Sitting in a circle, each person has an opportunity to respond to a question or series of questions. No one speaks for a second time until everyone who wishes to speak has spoken once. You can organize this by passing an object around the circle (talking potato, talking stick, feather, your choice.) and someone not ready to speak may pass the object on to the next person. The object may be passed around multiple times to insure that everyone who wishes to share gets the opportunity. This can also be less structured without passing an object and individuals in the circle just speak as they feel moved. However it is structured, keeping to the rules — each person speaking only once, individuals not responding to one another but listening intently as someone speaks, and speaking from each person's own experience and not debating — is key.)*

Watch the **Down to Earth** film (one hour) and Reflect...

Down to Earth Climate Justice Stories *Questions for Reflection/Sharing/Journaling*

Which filmed stories/storytellers reflect your own story and/or inspire you?

- ❖ **Sylvia** wrestled with what she would need to do if she were to truly live her values and beliefs. **Iris** spoke of embracing activism as “just something inside of me.” What are the values you hold deepest and dearest? Where did those come from? How do you live those values daily?
- ❖ **Chloe** fell in love with Maine's wilderness. **Skip** felt profound concern for frontline communities experiencing painful social, economic, and environmental injustices. **Dawn** loved two horned owl friends and was always drawn to the Penobscot River. Love prompted them to act. **Rachel** and **Wendy** both shared their belief that love is at the heart of actions for justice. What/whom do you love that climate disruption/ injustices might impact? What bold new action(s) will you pledge to take to protect that which/whom you love?
- ❖ **Maria** recounts her Wabanaki peoples' prophecy, saying this is the time foretold when all people must come together to light the 8th fire. **Chloe** says that the beautiful, yet scary, thing about climate change is that it impacts all of us, though to different degrees. And that it is not going to be political leaders who solve the problem...it's you and I and our families and friends. Where do you see signs of a paradigm shift/of people coming together for justice?
- ❖ Each storyteller found his/her own path to be active in the movement towards a just and sustainable world. **Fred** and **Hadley** are “practivists” while **MJ** is a contemplative and puts prayer into action. **Hilary** found courage and her voice to share her Healing Walk and tar sands experience when she returned. **Becky** finds joy and hope in getting off the couch and into action. What is your role to play on this new Earth?

Down To Earth Climate Justice Storytellers (in order of appearance)

Mary-Jane (MJ) Ferrier: A Sister in a Roman Catholic religious order — the Society of the Sacred Heart — and a Portland area psychologist, MJ identifies herself as a “contemplative in action.” MJ is one of the leaders of the Protect South Portland citizen-powered group that championed a grassroots education and public policy campaign to keep tar sands from coming into the community. Growing up in Ottawa, Canada, she spent summers by a lake in the Gatineau, and winters sledding, skating and skiing. While a student at McGill University and later, she’s had the opportunity to sail extensively, fly fish and hike the Rocky Mountains in both Canada and the US. She says: “My love of nature has only grown deeper as, with all my sisters, I have dedicated my life to “getting to the heart of things”, to working for “justice, peace and the integrity of Creation.”

Hilary Clark: Hilary lives in York, where she is a small homesteader. She is long-time environmentalist who has focused on population growth, biodiversity, conservation and climate change. She serves on the York Land Trust board and the York Energy Steering Committee. Hilary is the convener for Green Sanctuary at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Portsmouth, NH, and coordinator for 350 Maine York Region. In the summer 2014, she accompanied two other Mainers on a trip to Ft. McMurray, Alberta, Canada, for a First Nations-led Healing Walk at the site of tar sands mining activities and toxic pollution.

Sylvia Stormwalker: Sylvia has participated in nonviolent direct action in Texas frontline communities to stop tar sands and fracked oil pipeline development. She has been a workshop leader for Maine youth and multi-generational groups that are considering transgender and sexual orientation issues, deep ecology, and colonialism, racism, classism and oppression in our culture. Sylvia is a life-long learner, most recently traveling south to study the science of herbal remedies.

Iris SanGiovanni: Iris grew up in South Portland and now attends the University of Southern Maine where she has focused her studies on political science. She has been an active member of the Protect South Portland campaign on tar sands. Iris is a leader of the multi-Maine campus organization, Maine Students for Climate Justice, and has served as an intern on the 350 Maine Divestment Team, where she’s played a large role in persuading the University of Maine system to divest from coal. Iris has become an advocate for bicycle commuting.

Rachel Mason Burger: Looking back, Rachel describes herself as artist-builder-activist. Rachel says: “My art has mostly served my passions such as stopping the Vietnam War and ending violence against women and children. Since moving to this gorgeous part of the world I've naturally painted Maine landscapes. Now I find myself painting birds. My partner is a photographer and bird rescuer.” Rachel gathered friends and neighbors to stop tar sands from being piped to and exported from South Portland. She says: “The persistence and hard work of many resulted in the creation of the Clear Skies Ordinance, which accomplished our (Protect South Portland) goal. At our urging, the City Council is also writing an ordinance to stop the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Through hard work we have become a large dynamic group focused on concrete ways of working against global warming and for the healing of the earth.”

Becky Halbrook: Becky has retired from a career as a corporate attorney to Phippsburg, where she’s active with the land trust and the Sierra Club’s Climate Action Team. She was one of the 1251 people, who answered Bill McKibben’s invitation to do a nonviolent direct action sit-in in front of the White House to halt the Keystone XL pipeline, under consideration for tar sands transport through the breadbasket in the US Midwest. She is active on the ecumenical EarthCare Team in Brunswick and has served on several initiatives of 350 Maine and other environmental organizations.

Fred & Hadley Horch: Residents of Brunswick, Fred and Hadley have made a family commitment with their three children to live fossil-fuel free as much as possible. Fred is the former owner of a local green retail business, FW Horch, and Hadley is a professor at Bowdoin College. They power their home with the sun, get around on bicycles, walking or in their all-electric car, and are turning their yard into a permaculture paradise. Fred has been a Green Independent Party candidate for the legislature at the urging of his friends, neighbors, and customers. They are active in civic affairs and student concerns.

Wendy Schlotterbeck: A high school art teacher, Wendy grew up in Ohio and Maine as the daughter of two classical musicians. She has become an activist, inspired by the example of her four children, who are all activists themselves. She is the mother of Sylvia Stormwalker. Like Becky, Wendy answered a call to go to Washington, DC in August 2011 to do a sit-in at the White House to stop the KXL pipeline construction. She returned to apply her art skills to creating banners and t-shirts for climate justice campaigns. Wendy joined the 350 Divestment Team of Maine teachers who advocated at the Maine Education Association annual meeting for a resolution to divest their pensions from fossil fuel corporations. In 2015 the resolution didn't pass. She has been an ally to the Penobscots' land sovereignty campaign. She says: "Besides teaching, my passions include organic gardening and chicken raising, listening to classical and folk music and working with the youth at Durham Friends Meeting."

Betsy (Skip) Caitlin: Skip grew up in Brunswick, but went away to NYC to college where she began her activism. She has spent many months with frontline communities, impacted by climate change, pollution and social/economic injustices. Skip has been an organizer and ally, and engaged in nonviolent direct action in these communities. Skip and Sylvia were arrested at the TD Bank in January 2014 when they locked their necks together to the bank doors as a solidarity action with communities in Texas and Oklahoma where a tar sands pipeline was opened for business. Skip lives in community with other like-minded activists.

Dawn Neptune Adams: Dawn is an activist with the Dawnland Environmental Defense organization which is an "alliance of Native and non-Native peoples united in the protection of the 'Dawnland' with particular focus on the sacredness of Water." Dawn grew up in a foster home in Brewer and spent much of her early adulthood in California. She has returned to her roots and her culture to be active in preserving tribal lands and sacred traditions for her daughter and future generations.

Chloe Maxmin: Chloe is a graduate of the Harvard College ('15). She is currently a Fellow with *The Nation* as she writes a book about the climate movement and how it can become an effective political force. Chloe became a youth climate activist when she was 12, forming the Climate Action Club in high school and galvanizing a grassroots movement in her community. At Harvard, she co-founded **Divest Harvard**—a campaign calling on Harvard University to divest its endowment from fossil fuels. Chloe also founded First Here, Then Everywhere to empower youth climate activists. She has received national recognition for her activism. Learn more at www.chloemaxmin.com and @chloemaxmin. She is currently in Paris for COP21 climate negotiations.

Maria Girouard: Maria, of the Penobscot Nation, is a historian and an expert on the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act. She holds a master's degree in history. She is a community organizer and environmental activist, and she volunteers for her community, coordinating the People's Garden Food Sovereignty Project. Maria is a 2015 recipient of the prestigious Maryann Hartman Award for her advocacy work on the preservation of cultural heritage and rights of the Penobscot Nation. A founder of the Dawnland Environmental Defense organization, she has been the leading spokesperson at community meetings along the Penobscot River to inform elected officials and citizens about the lawsuit between the Penobscots and the State of Maine over water sovereignty and sustenance fishing rights. Maria is the health and wellness coordinator for the Wabanaki REACH program, a cross-cultural project to promote healing.

Story Line for the Film:

Background

Early experiences and inspirations

Intergenerational Nonviolent Direct Action focused on Tar Sands/Fracked Oil Pipelines: Youth (Sylvia & Skip); Older Generation (Becky & Wendy)

Living what we believe (Chloe & Fred featured)

Divestment as a tool for change

More about inspiration and seeds of activism

Environmental Justice concerns

Water (Penobscot River/land sovereignty and cultural preservation

Healing Walk in Alberta, Canada (tar sands)

Protect South Portland — speaking truth to power in local community (MJ, Rachel, Iris)

Hope for the Future