



# VITA SAPIEN PHILOSOPHY

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**Vita Sapien Philosophy**  
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# **Part 1:**

# **Introduction**

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## **A Tale of Two Clans**

*Southern France ~17,000 years ago.*

Two human clans meet on the banks of a river. It is high season, and there is a lot of food in the environment, so there is nothing much to compete over. The two clans sit down to talk.

River Mussel clan are chatty. They have a lot to say. The clan leader points to his people one-by-one. He describes the archer, the one who makes bows and arrows. He points to the needle maker who can sew form-fitting clothing. He points to others who specialise in finding minerals to paint with and medicinal plants. River Mussel clan are identifiable from the shells that they wear as jewellery, the sophistication of their tools, the extent of their vocabulary, and the detail and beauty of their artworks left behind in painted caves, carried as tiny statues, or worn as jewellery or facial paint.

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The other clan is called Heavy Stone. They have little to say because they know few words and their minds aren't sharp enough to form complex thoughts. They can't really plan ahead, so they have not mastered archery, and they hunt with just sharpened stones on the end of sticks, like the Neanderthal. The landscape offers less for them to eat. They lack sewn clothing, and the extent of their artistry is a few coloured feathers and a handful of coloured stones.

When Heavy Stone bury their dead, that's all they do. They dig a hole, push the body in, and cover it over. River Mussel Clan, on the other hand, have extensive funerary practices which involve burying the dead with artifacts in specific locations and with ritual involved.

One might think that these two clans were from a different species. But in reality, they are anatomically identical. The singular difference between them is

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that a genetic switch was flicked to the 'On' position inside the minds of the River Mussel clan, and this opened up a reservoir of intellect, engineering, art, curiosity, symbolism, innovation, and spirituality. All these things are interconnected, intertwined, inseparable, and from the same source.

Let us call these new cognitive abilities *thinking-feeling* and view them as an emergent property of a complex central nervous system with language that arose through a subtle evolution in the wiring of the brain.

Thinking-feeling is first known in humans in Africa about 70,000 years ago. These new abilities conferred huge advantage, making it easier to find food, shelter, and to communicate.

Thinking-feeling people swept into Europe about 40,000 years ago, and the rapid increase in the sophistication of tools and art is referred to as the *Upper Palaeolithic Revolution*. This was first



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observed in the people of the *Aurignacian culture*. The Cro-Magnon people are from this culture.

The capacity for thinking-feeling is the origin of the full expression of cognition and spirituality in humans. Think of spirituality as the perception of being part of a greater thing, a quest for answers to imponderable questions and the ability to fall periodically into transcendent mental states.

In its native and original form, spirituality was associated with nature: with landscapes, seasons, and wildlife. Let's call this *nature spirituality*.

However spirituality is a vessel that can hold many different types of belief. In a period referred to as the Axial Age, around 5 - 10,000 years ago, a new suite of beliefs took hold of human civilization and separated most of humanity from nature. Most of the mainstream religions and philosophies that exist today have their origins in the Axial Age.

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So, for around 90% of the time that humans have been thinking-feeling, our spirituality has been expressed through nature, and we lived in balance with the ecosystem. However, for the last 5 - 10,000 years, the dominant spiritual expression has been fabricated. As a result of the behaviours that these fabricated beliefs inspire, our planetary life-support system has been in decline.

A pathway to restore our Living Planet to full health is a spiritual reconnection with nature, and the acceptance of knowledge and practice that can guide us through the troubled times ahead.

What's needed is a Sustainable Life Philosophy.

## **Sustainable Life Philosophy**

Vita Sapien Philosophy was conceived from deep contemplation of the question:

Why are people so accommodating of the political & economic systems that

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are destroying our life support system on Earth?

Our global political and economic system is unsustainable, no doubt, but the bigger question is why? Why did we make it that way? Why do we allow it to persist? Why have we not yet risen up and overthrown the destructive systems of power that are sending our civilization and our magnificent Living Planet to oblivion.

The answer has to do with what we know and what we believe, both of which advise what we do.

Of the two, what we believe is the greater motivator of action. The unsustainable systems of today do not fundamentally conflict with inner-monologue of modern society because we hold beliefs that are unsustainable.

How can beliefs be unsustainable you ask? Well, beliefs beget behaviour. So, if you believe that our Living Planet is sacred, you will make effort to protect

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her. Alternatively, if you believe that our Living Planet is simply a resource to be exploited, you will act accordingly.

Most people don't know what a drowning person looks like which explains why so many people drown a few meters from family and friends.

Similarly, most people don't know what a dying planet looks like, even though we are living on one. More importantly, *people cannot feel that the planet is dying* because we are spiritually disconnected from nature.

Vita Sapien Philosophy seeks to reconnect people to our natural awe, wonder and reverence for nature, augmented by an understanding of the environmental sciences, and brought into effect by practice.

This is a pathway to enliven people to do what is necessary to prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem and avert the looming heat-death of the Living Planet.

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Vita Sapien Philosophy has three parts:

- *World View* advised by the environmental sciences
- *Spiritual View* advised by observations of nature
- *Practices* advise by observations of society

Our Living Planet is dying, and a *Sustainable Life Philosophy* grounded in environmental science and nature spirituality can save it.

### **Nature Spirituality**

To be clear, when we speak of nature spirituality, we are not speaking of Gods, crystals, the Cosmos, or *woo-woo*. Instead, we speak of *spirituality inspired by nature*.

In this instance, the word 'nature' has a specific usage: *the living organisms, ecosystems and natural processes that take place within Earth's biosphere, and those factors that influence the biosphere such as the Sun, Moon, climate, weather, and tectonic forces.*

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Vita Sapien Philosophy offers new ideas about how individuals can connect to nature, and in doing so unleash the extraordinary power within to do the kind of insanely audacious things that will prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem.

Around the world, nature spirituality goes by different names including Animism, Druidism, Heathenry, Paganism, Wicca, etc. Indigenous people to this day practice nature spirituality through their culture and reverence for country.

While the capacity for nature spirituality is innate in all humans, there are many other competing and distracting spiritual beliefs. The lifestyles and beliefs that underpin mainstream culture separate us from our proper relationship with nature, and we are blind to the harm that we are doing to Mother Nature.

Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that this is the primary driver of the global climate

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and ecological crisis: *our spiritual disconnection from nature.*

As such, Vita Sapien Philosophy seeks to re-establish people's connection to nature and to do this in a manner that is fun, and cool, and funky, and exciting, and innovative and compelling. And mainstream. And while there's still time.

### **Spiritual Marketplace**

One hundred years ago, if you wanted spirituality, you went to the Church. Today, there is a *spiritual marketplace* with many offerings to satisfy inner cravings, including:

*...Gods, UFOs, shopping, crystals, dreamcatchers, yoga, yetis, phenomenology, the occult, flying saucers, heaven, Vikings, quantum vibrations, deities, sage, incense sticks, the Flying Spaghetti Monster, crop circles, channelling, Jesus, the after-life, Ganesh, the Inca calendar, chakras, Feng Shui, archangels, the holy trinity, tarot, crop circles, Nephilim, Pentecostalism, angel*

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*cards, unicorns, Islam, meditation, runes, Atlantis, crucifixes, the cosmos, Judaism, mermaids, the Bermuda Triangle, aliens, angels, sound healing, chemtrails, the everlasting soul, ayahuasca, Buddhism, Zen, Stonehenge, Taoism, extra-terrestrials...*

Go and visit a crystal shop, and you will see all these things for sale.

In addition to these things are the other distractions that have a spiritual-like following including:

*...pets, muscle cars, bikes, shopping, fishing, football, tennis, fashion, fitness, shoes, the Cult of Self, pop music, holidays and so on...*

To be clear, there is nothing wrong with any of these things, really. Each of these pursuits fills the spiritual vessel inside of us, gives a sense of meaning, and access to transcendence.

The problem is that very few of these spiritual offerings have anything meaningful to say about a right relationship between humans and the



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Living Planet. Mother nature is calling out to us, but we can't hear her over the roar of the crowd, the beat of the music, or the scream of the engine. As a result, most people have no sense that our Living Planet is dying. And if she dies, we die with her.

Vita Sapien Philosophy doesn't want to turn off these distractions. Instead, it proposes that we augment our spiritual views to include a reverence, a passion, a love for nature. This is because fostering nature spirituality is the most direct pathway to creating right action to make things better for our planet.

When people undergo *spirituality change*, they are primed for radical behavioural change. Radical pro-environmental behavioural change can be bought about in people when spiritual enlightenment to nature is paired with a deeper understanding of how nature actually works, and guidance for right action.

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If millions of people align their hearts, minds, and efforts to the wellbeing of our life support system **it is possible to shift the trajectory of human civilization** away from the extinction abyss that faces us today, and towards a future, environmentally sustainable civilization referred to as the *Verdant Age*.

It is believed that there are millions of people around the world who would adopt Vita Sapien as their primary life philosophy if it were put before them in a compelling manner. For example, it is calculated that there are around 53 million potential followers of Vita Sapien Philosophy in the western world alone.

This number represents a quarter of the *Cultural Creative* adults. A similar number can be calculated assuming that half of the people who are *spiritual but not religious* adopt Vita Sapien Philosophy.

Fifty-three million people is a significant political and economic force: about 8% of the adults in Western countries.

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According to Extinction Rebellion literature, non-violent rebellions don't fail when 3.5% of the public becomes involved. Imagine the change for good when 8% of the public tap into the raging forcefield that is unleashed through a spiritual awakening to our Living Planet.

Vita Sapien Philosophy is your pathway to that raging forcefield that will solve the climate and ecological crisis within a single generation. To do that, we need to be mindful of what science tells us about the world, today.

### **According to the Science...**

By integrating modern science with ancient wisdom and observations of nature, it becomes possible to develop a Sustainable Life Philosophy that can assist humanity in navigating the challenges of the 21st Century. Let us begin by examining what modern science tells us about humans and our planet. There is both good news and bad news,

but each provides insights into how we should behave to live sustainably on Earth.

**Humans are unsustainable super-predators.** *The unique ecology of human predators.* C. T. Darimont, *et al*, 2015.

In recognising this, we can change our behaviour to become sustainable super-predators.

**Humans exploit about 300 times the number of species as comparable predators.** *Humanity's diverse predatory niche and its ecological consequences.* C. T. Darimont, *et al*, 2023.

We can change our patterns of exploitation to maintain a sustainable ecological balance.

**Life on Earth contains 550 billion tons of carbon, and humans contain just 0.06 billion tons. Just 4% of mammal biomass on Earth is wildlife, and 96% is**

**humans and livestock.** *The biomass distribution on Earth.* Y. Bar-On, et al, 2018.

We need to regrow nature and reduce the burden on the environment that comes from a predominantly livestock-based diet.

**The total amount of stuff made by humans now exceeds the mass of living things on Earth.** *Global human-made mass exceeds all living biomass.* E. Elhacham, et al, 2020.

We need to move to a Circular Economy where don't keep making new stuff but recycle and reuse what is already in existence.

**Nine Earth system processes determine a safe operating space for humanity, and humans have driven four to exceed the safe boundary.** *Planetary boundaries: Guiding human development on a changing planet.* Steffen, et al, 2015.

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Recognising the existence of these planetary Boundaries gives us the ability to modify our behaviour so that we stay within the safe boundary.

**There are 500 times more pieces of plastic in the ocean than all stars in our galaxy.** *A global inventory of small floating plastic debris.* E. Seville, *et al*, 2015.

It is time to stop producing non-biodegradable petroleum-based plastics, clean up the mess we have made, and move to sustainable bioplastics.

**Due to Artificial Night Sky Brightness the Milky Way is hidden from more than one-third of humanity.** *The new world atlas of artificial night sky brightness.* Falchi, *et al*, 2016.

We need to reduce the amount of skyglow. This will allow more people

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to see the cosmos as well as make things better for wildlife.

**Between 1 & 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures lies a cascade of climate tipping points that will drive our planet into the hothouse and kill-off most life on Earth.**

*Trajectories of the Earth system in the Anthropocene.* W. Steffen, et al, 2018.

We need to ensure that global average temperatures do not exceed the dangerous threshold.

**There is already enough carbon in the atmosphere to take global temperatures 10°C above baseline, and global warming will likely pierce the 1.5°C ceiling in the 2020s and 2°C before 2050.**

*Global Warming in the Pipeline.* J. Hansen, et al, 2022.

We need to euthanize the fossil fuel industry and drawdown a trillion tons

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of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere to restore the climate.

**The scale of the threats to the biosphere and all its lifeforms - including humanity - is in fact so great that it is difficult to grasp for even well-informed experts.** *Underestimating the Challenges of Avoiding a Ghastly Future.* C. Bradshaw, *et al*, 2021.

As a matter of great urgency we need to get busy transforming the global economy and the human relationship with nature to make it ecologically sustainable.

**Major ecosystem may collapse much sooner than we had thought possible.** *Earlier collapse of Anthropocene ecosystems driven by multiple faster and noisier drivers.* S. Willcock, *et al*, 2023.

To repeat the last statement, we need to get busy transforming the global



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economy and the human relationship with nature as a matter of great urgency.

**By regulating the planet's temperature, life on Earth behaves in the manner of a single, super-organism.** *Atmospheric homeostasis by and for the biosphere: the gaia hypothesis.* J. Lovelock & L. Margulis, 1974.

This means that all we have to do is keep the planet healthy, and she looks after temperature regulation for us.

**Plankton produce most of the clouds over the ocean.** *Oceanic phytoplankton, atmospheric sulphur, cloud albedo and climate.* R. Charlson, *et al*, 1987.

If we keep the ocean healthy and the plankton will make the clouds that make the rain and keep the planet cool.

**Social tipping points that can lead to environmental sustainability have been identified.** *Operationalising positive tipping points towards global sustainability.* Lenton, *et al*, 2022.

We understand what we need to do to make civilization sustainable, we just need to get on with it.

The science shows that humanity and our Living Planet are gripped by a grave, global crisis created by human action over the past two hundred years.

Given that the crisis is caused by humans, it follows that humans can fix it. So, we just need to get on with it.

To do that, we need the right philosophy.

## Part 2:

# Vita Sapien Philosophy

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Vita Sapien Philosophy provides a holistic framework by which to understand the world and the place of the humans in it. There are three main structural elements:

- World View
- Spiritual View
- Practices

*Vita Sapien Worldview* focuses on material aspects advised by the environmental sciences.

*Vita Sapien Spiritual View* considers the non-material, spiritual aspects of our place on Earth advised by observations of nature.

*Vita Sapien Practices* are advised by observations of society, seeking activities that foster environmental change.

## Vita Sapien World View

Vita Sapien Worldview is advised by the environmental sciences.

1. **Biosphere as Life Support**
2. *Homo sapiens*
3. **Anthropocene**
4. **Planetary Boundaries**
5. **Fostering Mass Ecophany**
6. **The Long Future**
7. **The Verdant Age**
8. **Earthwork**
9. **Changing Trajectory**

### **Biosphere as Life Support**

The word 'biosphere' describes the totality of life on Earth. As the name suggests, the shape of the biosphere is a thin-walled sphere, located on the outer surface of our planet. The biosphere

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includes all the animals, plants, and other living things, plus the ocean, atmosphere, soils, and other substrates that are the habitat of life.

Some bacteria are known to live in clouds, and others live in rocks deep below the sea floor. So, the biosphere stretches from the top to bottom about 30 kilometers at its thickest point.

Gaia Theory tells us that animals and plants behave in a manner that maintains the condition of the atmosphere to ensure that the planet doesn't get too hot or cold. Life on Earth maintains conditions suited to life on Earth. It as though all the living things in the biosphere behave in the manner of a single living being that self-regulates its own temperature.

The biosphere self regulates and thus acts as a life-support system for humanity through a variety of mechanisms. For example, ocean plankton help to create the rain that falls onto our crops; plants produce atmospheric oxygen for us to

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breathe; plants also produce food, pharmaceuticals and materials like wood, hemp, and cotton.

The biosphere is the life-support system for the human race. Destroying the biosphere is a form of collective suicide. And yet, that is exactly what *Homo sapiens* have been doing for the past 10,000 years or so.

### *Homo sapiens*

Our species, *Homo sapiens* evolved around 300,000 years ago. However, it was only about 70,000 years ago that our central nervous system and language became sophisticated enough for the thinking-feeling awakening that fostered innovation, engineering, mathematics, art, spirituality, culture and so on.

The native spiritual expression for humans that sustained us for 60,000 of the last 70,000 years is a connection to wild animals and plants, ecosystems, forests, lakes, shorelines, clouds, storms,

and the rain, thunder, and lightning that the storms bring.

However, through the Axial Age, humans began to synthesise spiritual beliefs that involved Gods, statues, symbols, activities and ultimately machines that run counter to nature. It was from this point that human behaviour began to have a negative effect on the biosphere.

The human footprint on nature is now so profound that the entire global ecosystem is in severe decline, placing *billions of humans and millions of species at risk of extinction in the coming decades*. Much of this harm has been caused in the last few human generations, the modern era, the time of the humans: the *Anthropocene*.

## **The Anthropocene**

If you have seen the movie Jurassic Park, you may know that the Jurassic is not a type of dinosaur, but instead, a period of time (201-145 million years ago) in which

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the dinosaurs called velociraptors and the T-Rex roamed the Earth.

The people who give names to periods of time are geologists who study stratigraphy: the relationship between rock layers and past time. The name given to the 12,000 years since the end of the last Ice Age is the *Holocene Epoch*. This is a time with a stable climate in which human civilization grew.

In 2016, stratigraphers gathered in South Africa to debate an idea that humans had so changed the world that *we were no longer in Holocene-like conditions*. It was agreed we had entered a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene: the Age of the Humans.

Stratigraphers continue to debate the official date of when the Holocene ended, and the Anthropocene began. However, one leading idea is that the Anthropocene began when humans began to explode nuclear bombs in the atmosphere, contaminating the planet with highly



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enriched uranium and plutonium. Since the 1945 bomb test, there have been over 1,000 nuclear bombs exploded in the air with the radioactive fallout spreading across the whole planet.

Stratigraphers look for a distinct chemical signature in the soil and rock to identify the end of one geological epoch and beginning of another. Ponder for a moment the spiritual significance of this statement: *the marker for the beginning of the Age of the Humans is a layer of radioactive waste.*

Until the start date of the Anthropocene is officially confirmed, Vita Sapien Philosophy holds the Anthropocene began with the detonation of the first nuclear bomb - the Trinity Bomb Test - in New Mexico, USA, on 16 July 1945 at 6.29am Mountain Daylight Time.

This date is Vita Sapien Philosophy's New Year, and the beginning of the Vita Sapien Calendar.

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The concept of the Anthropocene is a core element of Vita Sapien Philosophy. The multiple, interconnected crises of the modern era including climate change, ecological collapse, nuclear weapons, plastic contamination, global inequality, late-stage capitalism etc, are referred to as the *Anthropocene Crisis*.

A big concern of the Anthropocene Crisis is that human activities are damaging key Earth Systems that are necessary to maintain a safe operating space for humanity. These are referred to as Planetary Boundaries.

### **Planetary Boundaries**

Scientists have identified key environmental issues that determine whether Planet Earth remains a good home for humans. Think of these as the warning lights on a *planetary dashboard*. Scientists are working to define the safe boundaries for these issues.

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Paraphrasing the science to keep it simple there are nine key issues, and the safe boundaries of four have already been crossed (bold) as a result of human activities.

- **The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> and energy imbalance of the atmosphere**
- **The integrity of the biosphere, or put another way, the health of the Living Planet**
- Ozone in the upper atmosphere
- The acidity of the ocean
- **The amount of nitrogen & phosphorous in the ocean**
- The concentration of particles in the atmosphere that block sunlight
- **The abundance of forest cover around the world**

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- The amount of freshwater used by humans at the expense of ecosystems
- Things humans created and released into the environment, that nature doesn't know how to deal with.

Of note, the boundary for ozone in the upper atmosphere was crossed, but the problem was largely resolved through an international agreement called the Montreal Protocol.

Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that the primary cause of the Anthropocene Crisis – and breaking through the Planetary Boundaries – is that people are spiritually disconnected from nature. An enlightened civilization would never allow Planetary Boundaries to be crossed, in the first place. Why would they risk it?

Thus, a solution to the Anthropocene Crisis is a global mass-movement to connect people spiritually to nature and

motivate them to undertake the actions necessary to restore the Planetary Boundaries and return our Living Planet to full health. To do this, we need to rapidly foster a mass awakening to nature: an ecological epiphany.

### **Fostering Mass-Ecophany**

One of Vita Sapien Philosophy's core concepts is *ecophany*, or ecological epiphany. This is an emotional, spiritual, or intellectual awakening to nature.

Ecophany is a one-way street because once you sense what humans have done to our Living Planet and what the planet is soon to do to us, you can't unfeel it. It changes your life. You will find yourself reconsidering everything that you previously thought was important. Your behaviour will change.

Ecophany is emotionally challenging, but it is a necessary pathway to enlightenment: understanding how things really are.

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The term *Fostering Ecophany* suggests creating conditions suited to helping people experience ecophany. To this end, Nature Awakening Programs can be developed that invite people to open their heart to nature and our Living Planet.

*Mass-Ecophany* is the concept of ecophany occurring in tens of millions of people. So, *Fostering Mass-Ecophany* is ultimately what Vita Sapien Philosophy seeks to achieve. And given the urgency of our climate and ecological crisis, *Fostering Rapid Mass-Ecophany* is what we need to do. But that is not enough.

A spiritual enlightenment is like hoisting a huge spinnaker sail on a yacht. What's needed is a rudder to set the direction of the vessel and a chart and a plan of how to get to a desired destination.

All these ideas can be brought together in *Nature Awakening Programs that include the following elements:*

- Spiritual enlightenment to nature

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- A deeper understanding of the Earth System
- A map for the future (Transition)
- A destination (the Verdant Age)
- Duties for the crew to achieve the mission

To prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem, we need a powerful spiritual enlightenment to nature for hundreds of millions of people around the world, framed by environmental science and directed towards expedient action. Then, humanity may enter a Verdant Age that will extend deep into the Long Future.

### **The Long Future**

Planet Earth is suited to life because our planet's temperature makes it possible for water to exist in all three phases - ice, liquid water, and atmospheric vapour. The temperature is right on Earth because the planet's orbit is neither too close, nor too far from the Sun, and because nature has mechanisms for regulating

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greenhouse gases for temperature control (Gaia Theory).

Earth's orbit is said to lie within the Habitable Zone - or the Goldilocks Zone - and will do so for another two billion years or so.

Beyond this time, the Sun will massively expand into a Red Giant as it ages and consumes its fuel. Eventually Earth will be baked dry and lifeless.

Vita Sapien Philosophy refers to the timeframe of future habitability of Planet Earth as the Long Future. The takeaway message is that Earth could still be habitable for humans for potentially hundreds of millions of years - that is if we don't destroy the planetary ecosystem that is our life-support system, first. A subset of the Long Future is the Verdant Age.

### **The Verdant Age**

The Verdant Age is a potential future time when human civilization and the



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Living Planet thrive in synergy. Let's break that down because it is important.

- *Thrive* suggests not just surviving but prospering.
- *In synergy* means that each party is better off with the other.

Humanity cannot survive - let alone, thrive - without the Living Planet.

However, the Living Planet has got along just fine without humans for billions of years. What could humans possibly offer the Living Planet in a synergistic relationship? There are a few things:

- Humans can drawdown a trillion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere to reduce the change of runaway greenhouse effect leading to the Hothouse and the annihilation of most life on Earth.
- Humans can clean up the mess left by 200 years of industry that is poisoning the planet. For example, radioactive waste and marine plastics.

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- Humans need to properly secure nuclear waste and the debris in landfills to protect against these escaping to the environment in a *Storms of My Grandchildren* scenario.

In addition to cleaning up the mess we have made, humans can have other material benefits:

- Humans provide the biosphere with a threat management capability, i.e. looking out for Earth-killing asteroids, and destroying or deflecting them.
- Humans could conceivably help the biosphere to reproduce by taking Earth species to another part of the solar system, and thereby extending the life of Earth biota deeper into the Long Future.

Finally, a poetic benefit:

- Humans give the biosphere consciousness, a capacity for self-

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awareness. It was, after-all humans who in 1968 took the first *Biosphere-Selfie*, the famous Earthrise photo from the Apollo-8 mission.

One could argue the benefits of a biosphere being aware of itself, but as components of the biosphere, we humans gain a deeper understanding of ourselves from *Biosphere-Selfies*.

To reach the Verdant Age, it is necessary to resolve the Anthropocene Crisis with as much of the Living Planet intact as possible, and a high-enough proportion of people with nature-based spirituality.

By necessity, a sustainable civilization has a sustainable population, and sustainable patterns of consumption.

The concept of the Verdant Age is not just wishful thinking but is consistent with scientific frameworks such as:

- Gaia 2.0
- Class-5 Planets

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- Earth System Stewardship
- Ecozoic Era
- Ecological Civilization

One might ask, how long could the Verdant Age last?

A year, as we all know, is the time it takes for our planet Earth to orbit the Sun.

What is less well known is that our Solar System is also in orbit, travelling around the centre of our Milky Way Galaxy once every 230 million years or so.

Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that the Verdant Age could last at least one Galactic Year. If this aspiration comes to fruition, there will be humans thriving within a healthy and robust biosphere on Planet Earth over two hundred million years from now.

Advancing the Verdant Age so that human civilization might survive a Galactic Year is the *raison d'etre* of Vita Sapien Philosophy. For this to happen, we need to get busy with Earthwork.

## Earthwork

Humans arrived on Earth through the same evolutionary pathway as the trees, the bees, the whales, and the snails. As such, we have the same responsibilities to the Living Planet: *to pursue our own interests in a manner that supports the wellbeing of the whole.*

Unlike other organisms, however, humans have free-will and this allows us to act outside of biologically programmed instinct. Because most people have lost their innate spiritual connection to nature, much of their behaviour is detrimental to the biosphere. This is the root cause of the Anthropocene Crisis.

By reconnecting people spiritually to nature, it is possible to transform their behaviour to become pro-environment. When conducted on mass-scale, this will allow humanity to undo the harm that has been caused to the biosphere and to

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live synergistically with nature deep into the Long Future.

Vita Sapien Philosophy refers to these biosphere-affirming duties as **Earthwork**.

### Changing Trajectory

Our civilization is heading toward a cliff edge, and accelerating, as the cliff edge gets closer. As the global economy grows at around 3% per annum, so does its energy metabolism and its toxic waste by-products. Most of the global economy's energy comes from fossil fuels, and humanity spews more than 30 billion tons of carbon dioxide pollution into the atmosphere every year as we hack-down, chop-up, rip-out, obliterate, annihilate, and poison the global ecosystem that is our life support.

We get closer to the precipice every day, and we are now in the final few years of maintaining agency over our destiny.

No person in their right mind wants to live through global ecological collapse.

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And yet, we are all part of the cause and the consequence of this situation.

Fortunately, there is an alternative.

The alternative is to change trajectory and restore the global ecosphere to full health. This can be advanced by completing the following missions by mid-century:

- Euthanize the fossil fuel industry and replace the energy and materials it provides with ecologically sustainable alternatives and disciplined energy efficiency.
- Restore the climate by safely drawing down 1 trillion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- Clean-up the chemical and nuclear mess left behind by 250 years of industrial civilization.
- Restore the global ecosystem by rewilding the planet.
- Establish constraints on population and consumption within ecological limits through a

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fair and efficient global socio-economic model.

- Embed nature spirituality into all cultures worldwide.

Activities that lead to these outcomes is the highest form of Earthwork. To achieve this in the narrow window of time remaining, the widespread uptake of a sustainable life philosophy grounded in nature spirituality is required.

Remember that 80% of the world's energy comes from the fossil fuel industry, and the super-wealthy corporations, families, individuals, and their enablers have *zero intention* of protecting the global ecosystem whilst they are gorging themselves from the multi-trillion-dollar fossil fuel trough.

These are the agents of the hyperthreat, and the business model of the global elite is to continue growing the economy based on fossil fuels. That's it.

We need to mercifully euthanize this industry before it mercilessly kills us all.



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The sustainability crisis is a crisis of power. They wield it effectively. We don't. Yet. Overthrowing the destructive systems of power will require a herculean effort that only a spiritual motivation can provide.

### Vita Sapien Spiritual View

Vita Sapien Philosophy views the term 'spirituality' as an *umbrella concept* that shelters many themes. There are six core themes that make-up Vita Sapien Spiritual View.

#### 1. The Bigger Thing

#### 2. The Golden Rule

#### 3. Life's Big Questions

- Where did we come from?
- Why are we here?
- What happens when we die?

#### 4. Inner Self

- Self-reflection
- Ecological-self
- Self Actualisation

#### 5. Transcendence

- Peak & Trough Experience
- Awe, Wonder & Amazement
- Timelessness & Flow

#### 6. Higher Values

- Right & Wrong
- Sacred & Profane
- *Raison d'etre*

Vita Sapien Philosophy does not claim that these themes represent the totality of

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spiritual experience. Instead, they form a frame of reference to make it easy to talk about *the subject of spirituality*.

In this way, we are better able to discuss the potential for *spirituality change* to foster radical pro-environmental *behaviour change*.

Vita Sapien Philosophy is not a competitive belief system, but a co-operative system of belief that encourages people to care about the Living Planet, our life support system, and act accordingly.

People are encouraged to adopt Vita Sapien Philosophy *in addition to what they already believe*. Where there is conflict between these two philosophies, this is okay, as humans are able to comfortably hold conflicting ideas.

For example, many Christians hold that God created life on Earth in six days, whereas Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that the life arose around 3.8 billion years ago through a process called *abiogenesis*.

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This disagreement is no reason not to honour and respect life on Earth and strive to protect it.

In this manner, followers of Vita Sapien Philosophy can be Atheists, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, New Agers, and even Pastafarians (followers of the Flying Spaghetti Monster).

Vita Sapien Philosophy can augment traditional spiritual philosophies that do not have strong ecological stance. For example, the Abrahamic religions were founded before the scientific revolution and the climate and ecological crisis. As such, the founding documents of these faiths make no specific reference to climate and ecological collapse and offer no advice about transition.

*Vita Sapien Philosophy augments ancient and New Age spiritual traditions to help make them ecologically sustainable.*

## The Bigger Thing

One of the most common phrases that describes spirituality is an individual's quest to be part of something bigger than themselves. For some people the Bigger Thing is God. For others, say professional athletes, it might be their sport. People can have multiple Bigger Things that they aspire to. People's behaviour is guided in part by their efforts to contribute to the success of the Bigger Thing.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** the Bigger Thing that we should aspire to be part of is the biosphere and the social movement to Advance the Verdant Age.

Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that all life on Earth forms a single living organism. Some might call this a super-organism or even an *omni-organism*. This means that you and I are cells in a body.

Holding this belief profoundly changes our relationship to the environment, as

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we see that the environment is us: an interconnected, holistic, oneness. An interbeing.

There is no *away* in this model to throw our waste to. When we pollute the ocean or the atmosphere, we are, in effect, polluting ourselves.

In the field of biology, all organisms are given a scientific name called a binomial. This is written in Latin, has two words, and is descriptive of the organism.

The binomial that Vita Sapien Philosophy ascribes to the single, super-organism that makes-up life on Earth is *Imperium vitae-planeta* which roughly translates to the *Empire of the Living Planet*.

A shortened version is *Vitae-planeta*.

As with the trees and bees, the whales and snails, we humans are part of the Living Planet, functioning as cells within the body of *Vitae-planeta*.

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*Vitae-planeta* is known by other names such as the biosphere, Mother Nature, Pachamama, the Tao, Gaia, and the Living Planet. While these terms are broadly interchangeable, there are subtle nuances. For instance, Gaia represents both a scientific theory and an Ancient Greek Goddess, while *Vitae-planeta* is a spiritual belief that all life on Earth comprises a single super-organism.

For Vita Sapien Philosophy, the social movement aimed at nurturing a healthy and resilient Living Planet while fostering a synergistic relationship with humanity is the biggest of the Bigger Things that we might aspire to.

### **The Golden Rule**

A Golden Rule is a central, guiding statement that frames ethical and rational decision making.

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The world's major religions all share a common Golden Rule which goes something like this:

*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*

The problem with this 'Do unto others' statement and all the others is that they fail to take into consideration the Living Planet that is our life support.

### **Vita Sapien Philosophy's Golden Rule:**

*Do unto others and the Living Planet as you would have them do unto you.*

Phrased another way:

*Be good to people and the Living Planet, and they will be good to you.*

## **Life's Big Questions**

Spirituality offers answers to existential questions of origins, meaning, and ultimate outcomes. There are many Big

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Questions, but three are particularly important.

- Where did we come from?
- Why are we here?
- What happens when we die?

### **Where did we come from?**

*What are the origins of the human race?*

Some people hold that humans were created by God. Others hold that we evolved from forbears called *Homo erectus*. Some Australian aboriginal cultures hold that rain and cloud spirits called *Wandjina* created life on Earth, including humans.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** to answer this Big Question we ought to speak to cosmologists and biologists. They will tell you that these questions can be answered by science and that our understanding gets better year by year. The best theory for the origins of the universe and life on Earth are that the universe formed around 13.8 billion years ago with the first observable evidence being the Big



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Bang. Humans arose through a long process of evolution from the first living things that formed from non-living compounds and elements on Earth about 3.8 billion years ago. From this *abiogenesis*, evolutionary pressures selected some organisms to survive and adapt to changing conditions.

We humans and the other living things alive today are the survivors of five *Mass Extinction Events*. We are made of what Earth is made of. We grew here with the trees and the bees, the whales and the snails. We belong here.

### **Why are we here?**

*What is the purpose of human existence?*

Some people hold that humans are placed on Earth to serve God. Others hold that we are here to have a good time, or to share love. The philosophical movement called *existentialism* holds that there is no meaning to human existence.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** humans are here on Earth for the same

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reason as the trees, the bees, the whales, and the snails: to pursue our individual life interests in a manner that makes a positive contribution to our societies and the well-being of the Living Planet, our collective life support system.

### **What happens when we die:**

*What happens to us upon death?*

Some people believe that when you die you either go to heaven or hell for eternity. Others believe that there is an eternal soul that occupies another body and returns in an after-life.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** death is like sleep forever without dreams. When we die, the organic compounds in our bodies are released into the soil, water, and the air from where they originally came.

These compounds may be *revitalised* by being taken up by other organisms. In this way, the end of our life begets the beginning of new life.

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While we are alive, the flow of blood and electrical energy pulsing through our bodies, is our spirit. When we die, it ends. There are numerous ideas that have similarities including *Élan Vital*, Chi, Prana, Mana, Odic Force, Kundalini, and Orgone energy.

Evidence of an individual's spirit can be seen while we are alive, and by what we leave behind after death.

If we plant a forest, our spirit can be said to reside within the trees. If we wrote books, our spirit can be said to reside on bookshelves around the world. *Van Gough's* spirit lives large today in coffee table books and art galleries. However, the spirit of the baker from whom he bought his bread is harder to define.

If we spread joy and wisdom, our spirit can be said to be the fond memories and the knowledge in the people that we leave behind.

## **Inner Self**

Inner Self refers to that part of each human that is unique. There are three categories:

- Self-reflection
- Ecological Self
- Self-actualisation

### **Self-reflection**

Part of a full life is to reflect on our own thoughts, motivations, desires, and aspirations. Many people use mindfulness and meditation techniques to tap into the Inner Self and seek a deeper insight into their own personality.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** we should take time alone to reflect on our lives and seek pathways to personal growth. Take time out in nature to help align your motivations with the way of life on Earth.

### **Ecological Self**

The ecological Self is a term introduced by Norwegian philosopher *Arne Naess* to

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describe the potential for people to identify with other living beings, widening and deepening our sense of who we are to include all life on Earth.

Ecological Self determines the extent to which we identify as part of the Living Planet. For most people, the ecological self is non-existent because they have not learned to understand or feel the global ecosystem of which they are a part.

Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that for most people, the Ecological Self is frail or non-existent and this is evident through their blind consumption of fossil fuels, plastics, and bad ideas.

Seek to grow your Ecological Self to connect spiritually to nature and find the strength and inclination to do what is necessary to protect her. See yourself as a part of nature, and act accordingly.

### **Self-actualisation**

Self-actualisation relates to the realisation of one's talents and aspirations, our ability to achieve what we set our mind

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to. Self-actualised people are better able to adapt as conditions change. Being adaptive to change is regarded as fitness, in an evolutionary sense.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** the Anthropocene Crisis is dynamic, fast, and deadly, and it is coming for us all. You will need to bolster your emotional fortitude to protect yourself from the sorrow of things that you love that will be lost. Continually strengthen your self-actualisation by learning and doing and focussing on expedient action. Expedient action is that which achieves an objective most effectively. As the climate and ecological crisis deepens around you, you will need to grow emotionally and cerebrally just to keep-up. *Keep-up* means to stay alive in these dangerous times, but also to continually reframe what is expedient action for you, as conditions unfold. A big part of self-actualisation can be ensuring that you

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have the resources (including financial) to allow you to do what is necessary.

### **Transcendence**

Transcendence refers to those times when you feel yourself to go beyond the normal experience of life. Three subthemes are identified:

- Peak & Trough Experience
- Awe, Wonder & Amazement
- Timelessness & Flow

While these subthemes are given distinct names, in reality, they are often experienced overlapping with one-another.

### **Peak & Trough Experience**

Peak & Trough experience refers to intense pleasurable or painful experiences that powerfully shape us. Peak experience and trough experience can often be sensed during the same situation. Extreme experience – whether perceived as good or bad – opens a

doorway to spirituality change, and therefore, potentially to the adoption of ecological spirituality.

### **Peak Experience**

Peak Experience refers to those moments of euphoria and bliss when you are detached from your normal reality and become enthralled and entranced by an uplifting experience. Regularly enjoying peak experience is a pathway to a fulfilling life. Peak Experiences can be stumbled upon by chance, or they can be fostered.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** when we enjoy peak experience through nature, we more closely bond with the Living Planet, our life support system. Sunsets and sunrises, waves breaking on a beach, a Full Moon rising over a lake, catching a wave: these are natural experiences where we feel connected to a global life force shared by all other creatures and plants.



### **Trough Experience**

Trough Experience refers to those instances where you are flattened, rendered helpless, approaching what seems like death. This can be brought about through near-death experience, witnessing a tragic accident, exposure to war, attack by wild animals, etc. Trough experience is not pleasant, but it can trigger a substantial shift in our spirituality.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** trough experience can be a powerful driver of behavioural change. However, as people generally don't go seeking trough experience, it is hard to shape the direction of the change.

With that said, trough experience can open a path to ecological spirituality. People who get dumped by massive waves, for example, change their behaviour and are much more reverent of the surf. Similarly, people who have bad experiences around wild animals tend to respect them more afterwards.

### **Awe, Wonder & Amazement**

The words awe, wonder and amazement are used interchangeably, and refer to the instances when we feel overwhelmed or taken aback by the vastness or extraordinariness of an experience.

People can find awe in many different places including from such obscure sources such as drag races or watching YouTube videos of rocket launches, or the manufacturing process of golf balls. Others find awe in nature.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** we should seek awe, wonder and amazement from storms and landscapes and coastlines and forests and lichen growing on a rock.

Technology can enhance our awe of nature for example, videos of schooling fish, or close-ups of spiders spinning webs, or the formation of tropical revolving storms. Seek awe, wonder and amazement in social movements that advance the Verdant Age such as

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the growing rebellion against extinction.

### **Timelessness & Flow**

Timelessness comes when circumstances are so distracting that one loses track of the passage of time. Flow has similar characteristics. This is where one is engaged in effortless action with total focus. One could fall into timelessness and flow watching your underwear in a tumble dryer or sitting under a metal triangle chanting '*ommm,*' but these won't point your spiritual compass towards the Living Planet.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** we should seek timelessness and flow in the practice and presence of nature: a waterfall, a walk on a beach, kayaking across a lake, the sights and sounds of life on Earth. Get into flow by reading books or articles about the Earth System. Lose track of time in the garden or a forest or in conversations about how to Advance the Verdant Age.

## Higher Values

Higher values are those values that are strongly held, and for which one will make sacrifices to defend. There are three considerations for Higher Values:

- Right & Wrong
- Sacred & Profane
- *Raison d'etre*

### Right & Wrong

Right and wrong signifies actions that either help or hinder achieving a desired state. A desirable state for human civilization is a healthy biosphere populated by healthy, happy people for millions of years into the future.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** efforts that harm people and the biosphere are wrong, and actions that help people and Advance the Verdant Age are right. Of equal importance, inaction in the face of ecological collapse is wrong. If you know what is coming down the pipeline, and you are not taking action to help prevent it, this

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is wrong. Evil is a term that Vita Sapien Philosophy uses to describe the unconscionable behaviour of people who hold power, wealth or influence and deploy it in a manner that works against the well-being of people and life on Earth. Evil is wrong and should be opposed.

### **Sacred & Profane**

The sacred are those things that are perceived to be imbued with unique and higher qualities and values, and for which distinct rules apply. Profane is simply something that lacks sacredness, such as the everyday and mundane. Sacredness is not implicit but is granted by one's beliefs. We can choose what we hold to be sacred.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** places of ecological significance are sacred as are acts of personal sacrifice on behalf of the biosphere. Natural biophysical processes that underpin our life support system as sacred, and we should act accordingly by

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protecting them. Indigenous cultures and endangered species are particularly sacred and ought to be revered and protected.

### ***Raison d'etre***

*Raison d'etre* is a French term for *reason to be*. Some people attach themselves to a cause so tightly that they experience a visceral sense of oneness between themselves and their belief. This is called *identity fusion*. This can be a positive or negative for the Living Planet. For example, the people who massacred the cartoonists from the French satirical comic *Charlie Hebdo* had fused their identity with a cause unrelated to the biosphere. On the other hand, activists in the rebellion against extinction fuse their identity with a cause that Advances the Verdant Age.

**Vita Sapien Philosophy holds that** the Anthropocene Crisis calls upon us to set our *raison d'etre* to the highest levels of Earthwork: Advancing the Verdant Age.

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Your *raison d'être* will determine what rituals and ceremonies are meaningful to you. Your *raison d'être* will determine the causes you support and those people who you regard as significant others.

If you are to fuse your identify, fuse it with the integrity of the biosphere and the proper function of the Earth System as these are fundamental to life on Earth and for human civilization.

## Vita Sapien Practices

Described below are a number of practices that can help give effect the Vita Sapien Philosophy.

- 1. Touch Base**
- 2. Live with Earthity**
- 3. Practice a Vitamission**
- 4. Celebrate the Moon**
- 5. Magma and Cosmos**
- 6. Reinvent New Year**
- 7. Know Your White Horse**
- 8. Return to the Flux**

### Touch Base

We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for biosphere, so every-day, in some way, say thanks or take some time to connect-in with nature.



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This might be through a guided or unguided Vitan Meditation, or through a conversation with a stranger about Vita Sapien Philosophy (maybe prompted by wearing a Quendant).

If you are in a big hurry, maybe just say “*Thanks Plankton*” as a way of recognising the wonderful things that the biosphere provides for us.

Maybe just stop by a tree for a few moments and contemplate the colours and textures of the leaves and bark.

Maybe say “*Hi*” to a cloud.

Feel free to create your own *Touching Base* routine and share with others.

The more we acknowledge, connect to, and give thanks to our Living Planet, the more we realize that we just can't live without her.

## **Live with Earthity**

At all times live with honour and respect for the Living Planet and your fellow humans. We call this living with Earthity.

As cells in the body of *Vitae-planeta*, we have common responsibilities to our fellow cells, and that means to other people and to nature. *Vita Sapien* calls upon us to be good neighbours and good environmentalists.

Here are some things you could do to live with Earthity:

- Use public transport over motor vehicles or walk, cycle, or use innovative new low-energy transport modes.
- Get solar power for your home that connects with the grid or uses batteries to store energy.
- Make your home energy really efficient.

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- Support the efforts of environmental groups.
- Eat organic foods grown locally to reduce chemical use and transport energy.
- Reduce meat consumption, particularly red meat and seek the ethical treatment of animals.
- Wear non-synthetic clothes as synthetic microfibers get into the water ways.
- Get plastic out of your life as much as you can, particularly single use plastic.
- Do your part to euthanize the fossil fuel industry by getting fossil fuels out of your life.
- Learn about the First Peoples of your region as traditional owners have knowledge of how-to live-in balance with nature and have much to teach Western People.

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- Do a carbon audit of your life and cut your carbon emissions to zero.
- Do a waste audit of your life and cut your waste to zero.
- Turn your garden into a forest or a farm.

These are just a few ideas for Earthity.  
There are many more.

## **Practice a Vitamission**

Every cell in a body is tasked with a specific mission. So it is with us humans, except that we have agency, which means that we can choose our own mission. What is your self-chosen mission to help Advance the Verdant Age?

Given that climate change and biodiversity are the two biggest threats to the Living Planet, these could be the focus of your attention.

There are many ways to support Living Planet including removing plastic from

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beaches, climate activism, developing new technology, or researching who's responsible for bad governance and holding them accountable. However, supporting environmental efforts should not come at the expense of human well-being, and vice-versa.

Ideally, a cause could foster more than one benefit. For example supporting women to plant trees in developing countries helps to eradicate poverty, sequester carbon, and improve biodiversity.

Seek to make your Vitamission as impactful as possible and seek to continually increase your efficacy. This is referred to as *expedience*.

Devote your life to your Vitamission to become a powerful force in the transition to a sustainable global civilization.

### **Celebrate the Moon**

One way to get in touch with natural cycles is to observe the rise of the Full

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Moon. So, on the Full Moon, gather with friends and strangers and use this auspicious event to engage in an evening of Big Talk. A gathering on the Full Moon has a number of key attributes.

### **A Peak Experience**

The rise of the Full-Moon provides a peak experience - the Moon Illusion - that can be shared, and this helps to bond people together.

### **Joins Us Together**

The Moon is a great leveller of humans as it joins us together across space and time. The Moon looks the same, no matter where we are. A Full Moon in Malaysia occurs on the same night as a Full Moon in Australia, for example. The Moon has looked the same to all humans over the entire course of human history. So, when Shakespeare wrote “*The moon’s an arrant thief, and her pale fire she snatches from the sun*” he was referring to the Moon that looked the same as the Moon that we see today.

### **Reminder of Life**

The Moon offers a visible reminder that we do not just live in a constructed society, but we are part of an ancient archaic natural system that has been here long before us. The Moon is dead, inert, and lifeless, reminding us that life is the exception, not the rule, in our solar system.

### **Influences Life**

The Moon has a huge influence on living things as the influence of its gravity moves trillions of tonnes of sea water around, causing the rise and fall of the tides. The Full Moon floods the night with light, making landscapes and seascapes visible in the dark. So, every time you see the Moon think of life on Earth.

### **Renewable Energy**

The tides, caused by the influence of the Moon's gravity, can be harnessed to provide clean renewable energy. The Moon reminds us to euthanize the

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fossil fuel industry and advance  
sustainable renewable energy.

### **Cosmos & Magma**

According to the 2016 paper *The New World Atlas of Artificial Night Sky Brightness* about 30% of humans will never see the Milky Way from their homes due to night sky light pollution.

Artificial night sky brightness is a feature of human activities caused by the over-spill of light from homes, business, streetlights, motor vehicles, factories, oil production facilities and fishing vessels.

Vita Sapien Philosophy believes that seeing the Milky Way is an integral part of the human experience, and this night sky pollution is an important psychological component of the global sustainability crisis.

What lies above the biosphere is a vast expanse of space that is a frigid -273 degree Celsius. Not a very welcoming environment for life.



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To manifest this contemplation visit a place where artificial night sky brightness is minimal or zero to view the cosmos. You will need to find a *Skyglow Map* for this.

Under the night sky, it is possible to view the Milky Way and contemplate the vast scale of the Universe. This helps to frame in people's minds the distinctive nature of Earth as a planet with life. It also helps to demonstrate the important role that the Living Planet plays in maintaining conditions suited to life on Earth.

You might also contemplate what lies below the Living Planet. This contemplation might be advanced by actually visiting a volcano. However, there is an ecological footprint to travel (consider your Earthity), and volcanoes can be dangerous; so one might simply ponder volcanoes and lava through a book, a website, or a documentary.

What lies below the Living Planet is a bubbling cauldron of molten rock - the

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magma – at a temperature of around 1,000 degrees Celsius.

There is a takeaway message of these contemplations of the Cosmos and the Magma. The biosphere has dangerous neighbours and yet is able to maintain internal temperatures within a narrow range despite the extremes of temperature on either side.

### **Reinvent New Year**

The looming collapse of the global ecosystem is exacerbated by many institutions. *Reinvent New Year* is an exhortation to reinvent ALL institutions to align them with Advancing the Verdant Age. Banking, finance, energy, governance, public holidays... all institutions need reinventing to align with a sustainable civilization.

Vita Sapien Philosophy has taken up this challenge and has reinvented New Year. New Year is an arbitrary date. After-all, when is the natural beginning and end of

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a circle? There isn't one. So, around the world, cultures ascribe different dates to the beginning of the New Year.

Vita Sapien believes that it is auspicious to celebrate New Year on a date that advances the conversation about the Living Planet and the Verdant Age.

This might include a Solstice or Equinox, or **Cosmos Day**, the day that Earth aligned with the Sun and the Galactic Core. Or it might recognize an Anthropogenic event that is significant to Living Planet such as the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch.

Vita Sapien Philosophy celebrates New Year on 16 July. The minute of the end of one annual cycle and the beginning of the next is 9.29pm Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST).

At that time in 1945 in New Mexico, USA the first nuclear explosion was detonated - the Trinity Bomb Test. This event is significant because radioactive contamination from atmospheric bomb

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tests has been identified as a potential chemical marker of the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch, and this was the first such bomb test.

It is fitting to align the Earth New Year with the beginning of the Anthropocene Epoch, as Vita Sapien Philosophy seeks to help foster the creation of a subsequent era, where humans thrive in synergy with nature. We refer to this subsequent epoch as the Verdant Age. The sooner that starts, the better.

Commemorating the bomb test is also appropriate because there are many prognostications about the world ending in fire due to Climate Change, Armageddon, Nuclear War, etc. These ideas are widely circulated in movies and by many religious institutions.

It is therefore refreshing to create a narrative in which the fireball occurs at the beginning of the story and leaves the end date for humanity to be decided deep into the Long Future.

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Vita Sapien Philosophy Pods (groups of people who practice Vita Sapien Philosophy) are invited to accept the Foundation Pod's New Year date or to propose their own. The choice of their New Year needs to be backed by a rational justification of how this date relates to the Living Planet.

### **Know your White Horse**

The Uffington White Horse is a Bronze-age artwork etched into a hillside in Oxfordshire, UK that is regarded as sacred by many people. Every year, thousands of people visit the White Horse to undertake maintenance. This involves removing weeds, cutting the grass, and adding new chalk which is pounded into the ground with a hammer.

The exhortation to *Know Your White Horse* is that you should know where to go for your spiritual renewal. If you do not yet know how to find spiritual renewal in nature, this is your next adventure. Our

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civilization is heading into a pressure cooker of climate and ecological collapse, and it is important that we all know how to regenerate from the battles that we choose and those that are thrust upon us.

### **Return to the Flux**

Our bodies are the receptacles of minerals and energy borrowed from the Living Planet. When we die, we ought to promptly return the energy and minerals to the Living Planet.

This can be done either by cremation but being aware of not using fossil fuels for the heat, or plastics in the casket.

Alternatively, one might be buried in a casket that allows the soil to absorb the body easily. There are various 'Green Funeral' practices that you might consider. This might include a simple practice like burial in a forest with a tree planted on your grave. Alternatively, there are more complex technological decomposition processes.

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When the minerals in your body return to the biochemical flux from where they came, you are contributing to the growth of new life. Who knows what living organism may come to be the beneficiary of the minerals that you once were composed of?

This is the principle of Revitalisation. A Vita Sapien funeral will help add new life to that which was once part of you.

## Part 3:

# Conclusion

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### Connecting to Nature

There are many ways to connect with nature. The first is to hear her call. Nature Calls are those instances when nature intervenes into your consciousness. How many of these have you sensed? What would you add to this list?

*Nature Calls when: ...you sense the wind change as the storm approaches ... the sound of small animals rustling in the grass ... the multicoloured glow of a rainbow in a waterfall's mist ... the spangles of dappled sunlight through a forest canopy ... the unique colour and texture of lichen on a boulder ... a bird lands on a branch close to you, taking you by surprise ... you come across a fallen tree covered in fungi and moss as it returns to the soil ... you see a bird on a branch with an insect in its beak ... a possum climbing up a tree turns to look at you ... the*



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*Full Moon rising above the ocean horizon ...  
the sun sets in an orange sky ... a dolphin  
comes to the surface and you hear its breath ...  
a ray swims past, hugging the sea floor ...  
clear sea water washing against the green  
seaweed on the rocks ... the first sign of a new  
leaf on a pot-plant ... a bird lands on your  
windowsill and looks inside ... you watch a  
thousand green ants carry a locust to their  
nest ... white light shimmers off the sea  
surface ... seawater moves over corrugated  
sand ... the hiss of water as a stream flows  
over a fallen tree ... brilliant rays of sunshine  
burst through the clouds ... you feel the wind  
increase and the cumulus swell ... the cicadas  
in the bush are loud but invisible, no matter  
how hard you look... looking out upon a  
forested valley ... you see a butterfly land on  
a leaf, close by ... you wake to the music of  
songbirds in the trees ... you see track marks  
on the beach, and wonder what animal made  
them ... you find a beautiful seashell on the  
beach ...*

Nature calls for your attention many times a day. Do you know the sound of her voice?

## A Sustainable Life Philosophy

People ask: what does Vita Sapien Philosophy want us to do? Should we support the rebellion against extinction? *Of course, that goes without saying.*

Should we live with Earthity, living lightly on the Earth? *Yes. Of course.*

Should we find a mission for the Living Planet that resonates with our personality and Ecological Self. *Absolutely you should.*

*But most importantly, sit in quiet contemplation and attune you heart and mind to the biosphere, the sphere of life on Earth. She is calling out for your help.*

There is little time left to win this battle. We need Earth Warriors. And to get Earth Warriors, we need people who are attuned to their innate spiritual connection with nature.

### **Connection Activities**

These are some simple practices that help you connect spiritually to nature.

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Practice Vita Meditation which is to lose yourself by looking at or listening to nature – whether this be closing your eyes and listen to birdsong, gazing into a fish tank or something else.

Note: Vita Sapien Philosophy is creating a series of guided meditations that combine ecological spirituality with environmental science.

Take your shoes off and walk on the ground, on the grass, in the mud, on the beach. This is called Earthing. Do it regularly.

When it rains, find somewhere to watch the water fall from the sky. Maybe go and stand in the rain. Embrace the sensation.

Do a Moonscope to determine when and where the Full Moon rises, and then watch the Full Moon Rise. Experience the Moon Illusion with friends.

Stand close to a wild animal and just look at it. See if you can encourage the animal to look at you. Maybe you can be friends.

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Close your eyes for five minutes and then open them to gaze upon an old leaf.

Watch a documentary, uninterrupted, about nature, concentrate on learning the new information, then ponder it deeply.

Plant a seed in a pot, water it, and observe the seed sprout and grow. Maybe you can nurture the plant to become a tree that will outlive you.

Visit a cave that has Palaeolithic (ancient) paintings inside and ponder the motivations and the spirituality of the people who painted it.

Learn about climate change and then sit in quiet contemplation of this knowledge until you feel it.

Go to a place where wildlife congregates and try to be accepted as an unfeared witness.

Meet with your local indigenous clan and learn about their spiritual connection to the land.

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Learn about the subject of spirituality from Vita Sapien Philosophy and ponder the extent to which your spirituality is aligned with nature.

Lay on your back in the grass and just watch the clouds. Ponder the process by which invisible atmospheric vapor becomes a white cloud. Learn about lapse rate and cloud nucleation to enhance your sense of wonder.

When a storm comes, watch the way it affects the trees. Maybe go to the beach and experience the violence of waves crashing on the shore or the rocks.

Find a Skyglow Map and visit a place that has full darkness on a night during Milky Way Season. Gaze upon the cosmos and contemplate that this vast, cold, empty space is what lies above the biosphere.

Visit an active volcano and gaze upon the magma rising to the Earth surface. Contemplate that this molten rock is what lies below the biosphere.

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Find a place where the technosphere cannot be detected – i.e. you can't see or hear anything man-made. When you are in this Full Nature Place, marvel at how life on Earth evolved on Earth and has sustained itself in this hostile environment for 3.8 billion years.

Ponder the Gaia Hypothesis. Then, contemplate how much of an aberration it is that one species – *Homo sapiens* – should be intent on annihilating most life on Earth by fostering climate and ecological collapse over the coming decades.

Then ask yourself, what should I do with the rest of my life?

## **Vita Sapien Pods**

Vita Sapien Philosophy is foundation of a social movement to Advance the Verdant.

One way you can participate in this movement is to create a Vita Sapien Pod.

A pod is a group of people who give effect to Vita Sapien Philosophy through practice.

There is no formal process for this, you can just jump in and do it.

Here are some of the things a self-directed Vita Sapien Pod leader might do.

Choose a name for your pod and invite people to become a part of it.

Host a monthly Full Moon party and use this as a place for socialisation, learning, fun, Big Talk and sharing Vita Sapien Philosophy with others.

Organise luncheons to introduce people to Vita Sapien Philosophy.

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Learn about and participate in Vitan Archery. This is an archery tradition where the bows and arrows are only made of natural materials.

Organise an event to take people to where they can see the stars at night.

Help people connect spiritually to the Living Planet.

Help people develop a deeper understanding of the Earth System and how human actions are influencing it.

Gather people together to share tips on living with Earthity.

Help people to find their Vitamission and seek expedience, which means to become better and more effective at their mission.

Purchase a Quendant, watch the explainer videos and learn how to explain the symbol to curious strangers.

Help people deal with eco-grief. There is a lot of that on the horizon.



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Chose a date for a New Year and hold a party. Remember that this date needs to help people connect with the Living Planet. You can use Foundation Pod's New Year on 16 July, if you like.

Create new ceremonies and rituals that help people connect intellectually and spiritually and through practice with the Living Planet.

Connect with other Vita Sapien Pods. Foundation Pod can be contacted: [vitaepianeta@gmail.com](mailto:vitaepianeta@gmail.com)

## The Quenn Pendant

Vita Sapien Philosophy is an initiative of Vita Sapien a registered charity based in Australia. Vita Sapien needs resources to function and spread the Vita Sapien message.

An excellent way of demonstrating your support of Vita Sapien Philosophy is by wearing a Quendant like Nick, here.

A Quendant is a Quenn Pendant.



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The standard Quendant is made of laser-cut stainless steel with a stainless wire and magnetic clasp. They are a tried and tested piece of robust, attractive jewellery that attracts attention.



The Quenn is deeply symbolic with four key aspects.



The lower rings represent

- a) the Living Planet
- b) human civilization.

The outer ring represents continuum, the ability to continue on. This outer-ring is

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broken because civilization is out of balance with the Living Planet.



The upper circle, incorporating the tops of the two lower circles is the Verda symbol, representing the Verdant Age, the potential future time when humans and the Living Planet thrive in synergy.



The Quenn symbol is the Vita Sapien Philosophy symbol for the Anthropocene. Within the Anthropocene is the seeds of the Verdant Age.

If you wear a Quendant in public, people will comment on the piece, creating a

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space for a conversation about Vita Sapien Philosophy and other big-talk.

If you want to wear a Quendant, you can get them through the Vita Sapien website where there are also Quendant explainer videos: [vitasapien.org](http://vitasapien.org)

There is other cool stuff you could buy from Vita Sapien that helps to fund our mission. You could even make a regular donation. That would help a lot.

Really, though, what we would ask of you is to pursue your life interest in a manner that makes a positive contribution to society and the Living Planet.

## **Vita Sapien Organisation**

Vita Sapien roughly translates from Latin to *Life Wise*.

The aspiration is that people are wise about our personal lives, and wise about our place amongst life on Earth.

Vita Sapien is an Australian registered charity that advances *Vita Sapien Philosophy* and develops a range of programs that seek to connect people spiritually and intellectually to our Living Planet.

Vita Sapien Organisation has an aspiration to establish an Operational Centre with a film and recording studio to create high production value video and audio for dissemination across social media. Ideally, we would produce 24-hours per day content to tell the Vita Sapien story.

At the operational centre, we will develop and trial awakening programs that seek to help people undergo

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ecophany. Between the awakening programs and the programming, we hope to enrol hundreds of millions of people around the world to become active in doing what is necessary to prevent the collapse of the global ecosystem.

If you support Vita Sapien's mission and have the resources to help fund Vita Sapien Organisation, please contact us:  
*vitaepaneta@gmail.com*