

Welcome to Turning Conscience Into Action, the Earth Charter podcast. Join Mirian Vilela, Earth Charter International Executive Director, in her fascinating conversations with great thinkers, scholars and activists from around the world who are working in the fields of sustainability, ethics, education and social transformation. Our purpose is to generate new insights on how to face current global challenges and inspire informed action.

Hello everyone. Today I'm delighted to introduce a guest who has worked for many years in many different fields, including research on neuroscience and human consciousness.

In this episode we are diving really deep into his work and explore how it relates to the Earth Charter. So whether you are a longtime fan or a first time listener to our podcast, I trust you will enjoy this conversation. David, thank you so much for joining us today. Well, thank you, Mirian. And good afternoon. I am delighted to be with you today and to have the opportunity to talk about some of these issues. Thank you. So for our audience, David is Emeritus Professor of Neurology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

He is currently the chair of the Board of All Life Institute, which is a Washington, D.C.-based global think tank focused on issues involving interconnectedness of all life, which of course is very similar to the concept idea that set the center of the Earth Charter. He used to be the chair of the Board of the Humane Society of the United States, HSUS, which is the largest animal protection organization in the world, in which he was very closely associated with the Earth Charter during its drafting and consultation process back in the 90s.

So let's start our conversation with the following question, David. You have had really a long and distinguished career as a physician and scientist and also as an animal protectionist. So could you share with us or comment a bit on the concept of compassion for all life from these various perspectives and why you think that it's so important for individuals in society to understand that concept?

Yes, Marion. First of all, as a physician and a scientist, I have spent a lot of time involved with medical practice, clinical research, and teaching.

I've enjoyed every bit of it. But not long after joining the staff at Mayo Clinic, I also became increasingly involved in the protection of animals. And I could see that despite a great deal of controversy between the medical and animal protection communities at the time, which is largely over the issues of animal research and testing, there was much more that these communities had in common. Both involved the same spirit of giving and caring and the enormous fulfillment of helping others. And I can tell you that some of the most beautiful, caring, and compassionate people you will ever meet come out of both of these communities.

The primary goal of the medical community is to decrease the amount of unnecessary suffering and death in human beings. And the animal protection community simply wishes to extend this same goal to beings other than humans. And for these reasons, I've always viewed my work and animal protection to be an extension of the work that I do in medicine. And over the years, in the course of my work in medicine, science and the protection of

animals and humans, one of the things I've come to realize is that compassion for all life rather than scientific achievement represents the greater pinnacle of human existence.

Scientific achievement is indeed a wonderful thing. Indirect proportion to how much it number one reflects or number two reinforces compassion for all life. Happily, it often does both in the field of medical science. And I'm deeply grateful for that since I've spent a good deal of my life in that realm. And when compassion for all life becomes the principal motivation underlying a given endeavor, it becomes a powerful force and a force for uncommon creativity, understanding, wisdom, accomplishment within human medicine and the protection of other life forms.

This underlying motivation of compassion for all life combined with the ability to recognize the importance and deeper identity of other life forms instills within the human spirit and enduring an unfailing energy to care for non-human as well as human life. And simple as this may seem, none of us should underestimate the power of this motivation. When one looks at the profound interconnectedness of all life on this planet, it reflects upon the close connection of all life forms to a variety of existential threats that we are facing, including climate change and global pandemics.

It becomes clear that compassion for all life is not a luxury for humanity, but rather a necessity. Ultimately, the survival not only of other species on this planet, but also of our own will depend upon humanity's ability to recognize the oneness of Earth's life forms and the importance of compassion for all life. That's beautiful. Just thinking, helping us to think about the interconnectedness of all life and the importance to foster a sense of compassion. It's so crucial. So in 2012, you published a book titled *Theory of Reality, Evidence for Existence Beyond the Brain and Tools for Your Journey*.

In that book, you talk about consciousness, and it provides a new approach to experiencing peace and social transformation. Can you share with us the gist of this book, of what we can find in it or the key ideas that you have in it, including your understanding of the nature of consciousness and the nature of reality, so consciousness and reality?

Yes, yes, Mirian. One of the core components of *Theory of Reality* is that it identifies consciousness not as something created by the human brain, but rather as the fundamental fabric of ourselves and our universe.

Most neuroscientists and others involved in consciousness research still assume that our thoughts and consciousness arise solely as a result of the matter that constitutes the human brain. This is a materialistic viewpoint and would mean that our brain would behave like a materialistic machine controlled by classical physics and chemistry. Such that all of our behavior would be the inevitable result of nerve cell activity in the brain and free will would not exist. Yet, we are all able to recognize that we have the power, or free will, to decide what we do next, what we think next.

It is not, of course, up to some material object like our brain to decide this for us. Consciousness is the canvas upon which mind generates our impressions. It is not part of the impressions. Therefore we do not see consciousness out there with the other apparently material things. This has been the basis for decades and centuries of confusion and

conundrums behind the so-called hard questions in physics and philosophy. Namely, how does consciousness arise from matter?

Well, it cannot and does not.

Consciousness is not contained within matter or the world. It contains all matter and the world. Conventional Neurological Science has clearly shown that brain function correlates with various states of consciousness, which are actually states of awakesness relative to this material world. And these states of consciousness are in turn correlated with various brain structures. We could talk about these structures for hours, as I did for many years in classes and conferences with medical students and physicians, and you would probably fall asleep in the process.

However, these observations in no way prove that the brain or any brain structure creates consciousness. Something that is not often discussed is that all attempts to prove that the brain creates consciousness have failed and that no structure or feature of the human brain has ever been identified, which is capable of producing consciousness. The brain is both wondrous and highly limiting. It does not create one's thoughts or one's consciousness, but rather facilitates one's thoughts and consciousness and their application and expression to this material world.

It acts as a sort of receiver and transducer of a wide range of deeper consciousness-based information. And during life on this planet, humans, and non-humans, for that matter, perceive with the materially oriented senses sight, smell, taste, hearing, touch, while the brain functions as an interface between one's outer or particle-based materialistic world and one's inner, deeper, subconscious, or wave-based non-materialistic reality. One's subconscious mind is far more conscious and far more capable than what is normally thought of as one's conscious mind.

So, in summary, there is strong evidence to suggest that our consciousness is not created by our brains, but rather its expression and application to this material world is facilitated by our brains. And that the brain and body are temporary vehicles rather than our core identity. You are more than your body and brain, and that you that exist beyond your brain is indestructible, even by physical death. As an aside, I would also note that coming to recognize that the brain and body are temporary vehicles rather than one's core identity, and deeply understanding this, is fundamental to virtually any form of what has been referred to as spiritual enlightenment, regardless of the spiritual tradition.

I would also add there is little question that the consciousness that inhabits the bodies and brains of non-human beings is of exactly the same fabric as the consciousness that inhabits and activates all of our human bodies and brains. This is part of the reason that all life forms are profoundly interconnected. And I would conclude by saying that the universe is a unified living process rather than a collection of separate objects.

And although things and beings can still be part of a unified whole while possessing their own unique qualities, our tendency to fragment our world and to see ourselves as separate from the universe, from the earth, and from other human and non-human beings is responsible for many problems in science and society, and ultimately is responsible for

our neither being at peace as a species nor as a society, extending the circle of humanity's compassion to non-human beings in all life forms is an important and necessary step in the evolution of our species.

And we all have the opportunity to help facilitate it. Well, you really have studied consciousness and the brain, right? So can we really basically say we can work towards expanding our consciousness that's not limited to our brain? Yes. Okay. Yes. Amazing. I'm happy to expound upon that a little bit later. Okay. So what are the key learnings from research on neuroscience that can help education processes, for instance, to spark creativity or to be more effective in our learning process or foster understanding of the need for social transformation?

And how does it relate to the tools and techniques or the 12 key factors you identified in your book to help empower people in finding their own answers? There are answers to increase coherence and improved psychological health. And can you give us a tip for those of us who want to learn on how to explore and expand our own consciousness?

Yes. Mirian Ann, you mentioned increasing one's creativity, understanding and effectiveness, and that involves adding things to individuals to make them better than normal and more capable than ever before, as opposed to the more traditional approach in medicine of trying to identify and subtract diseases or abnormalities to get individuals back to normal or baseline by subtracting.

And at the heart of the additive approach is the emerging science which surrounds the concepts of resilience, equanimity and coherence. Resilience is the capacity following adverse or stressful events to adapt to and even thrive in the resulting challenges and changing circumstances. And such a capacity proactively insulates and protects individuals from a variety of adverse conditions such as anxiety disorders and depression. Similarly, equanimity is the inner strength and stability to experience well-being and confidence in the eye of the storm.

It allows one to remain centered, to see the big picture with perspective and patience. Confidence implies a form of order or focus and coherent thought implies very focused, clear, non-random thought as opposed to disorganized, haphazard, noisy thought processes that we're used to in our day-to-day living. Going from random, incoherent thought to coherent consciousness can be a powerful tool for increasing one's effectiveness, creativity, understanding and intuition. By achieving a highly focused level of awareness, individuals are able to tap into normally unconscious or latent abilities.

In general, factors that increase one's resilience and equanimity also tend to increase one's coherence. Nutrition and exercise play underlying fundamental roles, but a variety of other factors are generally fun and compelling, can also increase one's resilience and equanimity, including things like laughter, music, friendship and intimacy, spiritual exploration and understanding and sleep. Enhancing these factors can be a relatively easy and effective way to increase coherence while optimizing brain and neurological function as well as psychological health.

In terms of your question about exploring or expanding one's own consciousness, I would point to peak experiences which generally involve seconds to minutes in which one feels the highest levels of peace, connectedness, happiness, harmony and possibility. They are often pivotal moments in a person's life, often associated with key insights, waves of understanding and or thought balls which are large packages of thoughts or ideas that arrive instantaneously and unfold in real time as they are processed and expressed through our brains.

A variety of phenomena and techniques have been associated with producing or facilitating peak experiences or with other wise enhancing one's creative or integrative capabilities. These phenomena and techniques which we describe in detail in theory of reality generally involve focused coherent states of consciousness and they can be important tools for all kinds of discovery and understanding, scientific, spiritual, musical, artistic, interpersonal and so forth. One further point, from the time that we humans are born on this planet we are taught to look outward and look to various institutions for meaning and for answers.

Academic institutions, economic institutions, political, social, religious institutions and while these institutions may be wonderful in many ways in reality for the most part we need to look inward for answers. Everything that is needed is inward including the highest intelligence which is contained within one's individual consciousness and within each of the approximately 100 trillion cells in one's body. So those are some of my thoughts on that topic. Amazing.

Well I wish I could listen to these several times to remember but I like that you mentioned about the importance of nutrition, good physical exercise, sleep as basic elements to help us with increase our level of awareness and focus and thank you so much for highlighting the importance of looking inwards as we are so used to be unconscious about our inward and half-conscious I would say of the outside world.

So how do you understand or view the interconnectedness of all life, the connectedness of all life forms on our planet and why is this important and how could this be reflected in conscious leadership if we think about leadership that is conscious or unconscious. So how could this idea of interconnectedness of all life forms on our planet could it be more clearly and explicitly reflected in conscious leadership, policymaking, decisions and education?

Yes, well all that we do depends upon abundant plant and animal life as well as clean air and water.

Think about that for a moment. This simple observation illustrates how profoundly interconnected we humans are to other life forms and our futures are inextricably intertwined.

One of the potential silver linings of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it has provided humanity with a stark and straightforward example of how human behavior in connection with other life forms can rapidly bring about massive amounts of death and destruction and the resulting crisis delivered a wake-up call to our species about the fundamental and existential importance of the interconnectedness of all life, other humans, non-humans

and the earth and it will be important for us to not only to heed this underlying lesson of COVID-19 but also to apply it broadly to how we approach the future and we should do so as if our lives and the lives of others depend on it because ultimately they do.

Although our species has made great progress in the realms of science and technology, we have failed in many regards in the realm of safeguarding life forms on this planet including our own. We have created dangerous scenarios exploiting non-human animals in the environment such as factory farming and live animal markets that offer ever-increasing threats of global pandemics, antibiotic-resistant infections, other human and non-human health crises and our exploitation of the earth and its inhabitants has also created another overarching crisis that has progressed to a state of undeniable urgency namely climate change.

These are all examples of why it is important to think in terms of what is best for all life forms when formulating decisions and policies at all levels of leadership, governmental, corporate, scientific, academic, because what is good for non-humans and the earth is virtually always in the best interest of humans given the profound interdependence of all life forms.

Given these and many other examples it has become apparent that it is neither wise nor sufficient to approach our world from a purely human-centric point of reference and we're running out of time to make changes on the current trajectory of many of our practices and it will be increasingly important for us to advance our governance structures so they neither are rewarding activities that are destructive to the planet nor heavily prioritizing economic governance over health and environmental governance.

We must call on decision makers to make all life protection and the principles set forth in the Earth Charter the new norms across the various sectors while inventing and implementing equitable economic systems that have human, animal and environmental health and well-being at their core.

Yes the whole notion of interconnectedness of all life is at the center of the world view that is articulated in the Earth Charter and the way in which you explain this so clear and so basic but I do feel that it's not yet at the fully at the consciousness of many of us and especially leaders and policy makers so there's significant work that needs to be done to make people understand that and basic understanding on the interconnectedness of all life forms.

Okay so can you comment on what you see as a human-centric paradigm? What is a human-centric paradigm and what is good or bad about it?

What's the problem with it, with the human-centric paradigm and how could we move from a human-centric paradigm to a more all-life or life-centric paradigm whereas the Earth Charter articulates paradigm that's centered in life, in the community of life.

Yes Miriam and a human-centric paradigm has existed throughout much of the time that our species has been present on this planet and continues to be largely what we see in the realm of human endeavours you alluded to a little bit earlier. This involves giving not

only top priority but in many cases exclusive priority to the needs and demands of humans a little or no regard for the needs of non-human beings and the earth.

An all-life-centric or so-called eco-centric paradigm on the other hand takes into account the needs and well-being of all life forms including humans, non-humans and the earth and given the examples of existential threats to the earth and all of its inhabitants including our own species such as climate change and pandemics that we just discussed it is clear that our species would be wise to invoke an all-life-centric paradigm when we look at specific pandemics such as COVID-19 and realize that the likelihood of further pandemics that could be far more lethal is increasing with activities such as factory farming and live wildlife markets.

It becomes clear that we humans need to correct course in some of these activities for the good of our own species as well as other species and the earth and on the issue of climate change you know success involving creation of a stable and sustainable scenario for the planet that success would be a monumental benefit to all humans non-humans and other life forms but failure on this issue will ultimately make all other issues of human animal and environmental protection academic.

Again the best available science indicates if we do not dramatically change our current trajectory on global warming within the next seven to eight years the coming decades will bring with them widespread environmental and agricultural destruction extensive famine flooding disease and warfare with hundreds of millions of so-called climate refugees all of this would be experienced in most of our lifetimes and will become a dominant part of the lives of our collective children and grandchildren and whether or not we can stop global warming is in our hands and our collective future clearly depends on decisions that we are making now so we need to be very very conscious about those decisions.

And having a more life-centric paradigm would help immensely and I would even argue that probably this is one of the biggest challenges of our current time is to move beyond our human-centric paradigm or way of looking at the life in the world and embrace a more expanded life-centric paradigm such as the one that's articulated in their chat.

Thank you for sharing that David. So for many years you you were involved with the humane society of the United States some people call it HSUS by its current name which was a major partner of the Earth Charter initiative in its early stages. Would you share with us your thoughts on the efforts around animal protection which is the key work or mission of the HSUS? What are the challenges around it and what is needed to be done?

Yes, Mirian.

The protection of animals has long been very compelling for me in part because I've seen it as an extension of my work in medicine as I mentioned earlier. But another highly compelling element of extending one's compassion to species other than humans involves the sheer magnitude of suffering that takes place on a day-to-day basis, much of which is occurring at the hands of humans and when one looks at the sum total of unnecessary death and suffering among sentient beings on this earth the vast majority of it involves non-human animals.

Over the past 35 years or so that I've been very much involved in animal protection we've seen considerable progress in many areas such as the use of animals and research and testing, the entertainment industry, companion animal protection with no kill animal shelters, various wildlife protection measures, some limited farm animal protection measures, not enough that some and some signs of transitioning to a more plant and less animal-based diet. It was encouraging to see the United Nations adopt a resolution 2023 that recognizes the connection between animal welfare and the environment human health and sustainable development.

That was very encouraging and in recent years the very large one health movement which is started by the medical and veterinary communities and which recognizes and emphasizes the interconnectedness of human animal and environmental health has also been a very encouraging development and this needs to be part of the equation.

Also over the past 10 years a number of countries including Peru, Sweden, Spain, and the UK have passed laws that formally recognize animals as sentient beings and these type of laws are important because when we recognize animal sentience we accept that animals can feel both positive and negative emotions and sensations, joy and excitement on one hand and fear and pain and distress on the other hand and if we accept that animals can feel pain and distress we must accept that it is our responsibility to minimize experiences at our hands that harm animals such as factory farming and the wildlife trade.

So we've clearly made headway in animal protection in recent decades but we obviously still have a long way to go on a host of issues and rather than trying to discuss individual issues which would take far longer than the time we have in this interview I'd like to step back just for briefly and talk about three things that need to happen in order for society to make further progress on these issues. First, humanity needs to continue to evolve in its understanding of the deeper identity and importance of beings other than humans and along with this comes the recognition that each individual human has a unique value not by virtue of his or her level of intelligence or ability to communicate in a certain way but by virtue of the energy inhabiting that body that instills recognizable life into its protoplasm.

This energy which activates the human brain allows physical structures of the brain to achieve consciousness, make decisions, think thoughts, feel pain and pleasure without such energy the human body including the brain is merely a carcass devoid of these capabilities.

The similarity between this energy in the human and that in other animals is upon reflection self-evident particularly for those who have closely associated with animals and observed their personalities over many years but even without such careful observation logic would dictate that the life conferring energy allowing consciousness thoughts decisions movement pain perception etc must reside in other living beings in order to activate their central nervous systems in the same way that it does in living humans and we go into some detail in the book theory of reality to show that the consciousness that inhabits the bodies and brains of non-human beings is of the exact same fabric as the consciousness that inhabits and activates all of our human brains and bodies.

The differences that we see between humans and non-humans do not relate as much to the consciousness solar spirit that inhabits the bodies and brains of humans and other animals as much as they do to the bodies and brains themselves which specifically define and limit the expression of this consciousness these aspects reinforce the deeper identity of non-human beings and their connection to humanity.

Okay the second overarching thing that needs to happen moving forward to make further progress on animal issues is the increasing recognition that we are all in this together that there is such a profound interdependence among all life forms that are protecting and caring for other beings other than humans is not only in our best interest as humans but that are very survival ultimately depends on it it's actually the case and and we need to make our aware we need to increase our awareness of this and and and think about this carefully.

And the third thing that needs to happen which is particularly relevant on issues like climate change where it's become apparent we have a short time window in which to change the trajectory to avoid some you know irreversible downward spiral kind of a scenario.

On these types of existential issues where time is of the essence becomes increasingly important for those of us who have been involved in human protection animal protection environmental protection to go beyond these separate spheres recognize the oneness of life of all life and we need to call upon our colleagues and our friends in these areas move forward move beyond working in separate silos join forces help forge an all life protection mentality and movement invoking a more advanced and inclusive concept that better unites both the protectors and the life forms that we protect in the spirit of compassion for all life so those are the three things I think that need to happen.

Thank you so much I love the way in which you put or emphasize the importance to recognize how human animals and environmental health they're all and well-being are all interconnected we need to to bring this to the consciousness of of the world population I feel yeah thank you so much yeah you mentioned about sentient beings what are sentient beings what it means to recognize animals as sentient beings for the those who are listening to us who are not familiar with this terminology sentient beings.

Sentient beings are capable of feeling and are capable of perceiving themselves as as themselves in in their environment and they're capable of the same kind of positive and negative feelings that we feel as humans joy feelings on the positive side and all of the feelings and perceptions on the negative side as well so the question is that some people may perceive that only humans are sentient beings.

Yeah and the question is who are the others out there who are sentient beings but are not humans are the animals the trees what is your feeling about that sentience in plants and trees and so forth?

I feel that there is more there than we humans can identify right now but I cannot prove it in the same way that I can for other non-human being other non-human animals it's it's much more difficult to prove at this point in in our knowledge so um uh it's an interesting

question I think that we uh are unable to get at it scientifically in a way that gives us the whole answer for plants.

But how about for animals that are non-human animals?

Yes for non-human animals there's no question in my there are all kinds of evidence that is we could talk about for a long long time that they they are sentient beings and these laws that have been enacted in Peru and and Spain and and Sweden and the UK are for good reason they've reviewed some of the evidence and concluded you know we this is there is no question about it simply isn't and.

Studying neuroscience for many many years and the brains of humans primarily but also looking at the brains of non-human beings I would you know there are some differences but by and large they are wired the same they are structured the same and in the case of primates gorillas and chimpanzees.

I was Shocked to learn from a couple of my colleagues at Mayo Clinics or world authorities in the electroencephalography the EEG is sort of the the basis for recording the brain waves if you will or the energy output from the brains of humans and you can record them in other animals the EEG's or electroencephalograms of gorillas my colleagues could not said I asked him you know when I was a student what is the difference between you know an EEG of a gorilla versus an EEG of a human being they said well frankly we we'd have a hard time we have a hard time telling any difference so it's it's it's self-evident in some ways to people that have observed animal behavior but scientifically it's also very evident in those cases.

In the case of plants which I was talking about earlier that I think there's more to the equation than we understand but science isn't there yet.

Wonderful thank you so much for sharing this and clarifying.

So we have talked about compassion about interconnectedness about a life-centric worldview and paradigm these are key ideas that we can find in the Earth Charter so I would like to hear from you what do you think about the Earth Charter and its relevance to current times?

Well the Earth Charter is a wonderful and unique document that clearly articulates the key practical and moral imperatives that humanity needs to follow in order to move toward a more sustainable peaceful and just world.

It serves as a guide to influence the actions of people and nations on a global scale it was very very carefully thought through and.

I have a very special place in my heart for this document as I've been very close friends with some of the leaders who put this document together including Maurice Strong, John Hoyt, and Rick Clugston and in the year 2000 I happen to be serving as chair of the board of the Humane Society of the United States which as you alluded to earlier partnered with and supported the Earth Charter initiative and the formation and launching of this important

document so I know it well and one of the key pillars of the Earth Charter involves respect and care for the community of life which emphasizes the interdependence of all life and these are also key concepts that drive the all life institute that I currently chair.

The importance of the Earth Charter and its principles to governmental and corporate behavior and decisions and to how we function in science, academia, and society is greater now than it has ever been going back to the time that the Earth Charter was launched 25 years ago when one looks at the current state of the world and the inextricable relationship between the principles espoused within the Earth Charter and some of the biggest current threats to our collective existence the applicability of this document is clearly self-evident among other things the Earth Charter I think will help lead the way regarding our much needed evolution to a more all life-centric collective human mindset and help guide us to a better and more sustainable place a host of issues including uh some such as climate change that are truly existential.

Okay well we're almost coming to the last question of our conversation today you just mentioned about the All Life Institute?

You're currently serving as the executive chair of the all life institute in washington dc would you say a few words about the institute and its work and how you see your work interfacing with the Earth Charter?

Sure yes Mirian the all life institute is a global think tank based in washington dc uh it is uniquely dedicated to protecting and enhancing the life of all life on this planet including humans non-humans in the earth um and one of the central tenants underlying our work which i alluded to earlier is that what is good for non-humans in the earth is virtually always in the best interest of humans because of the profound interdependence of all life policy recommendations and other frameworks are not driven by partisan or economic interests and not exclusively by human priorities but rather by the long- and short-term interests of the earth and all of its inhabitants.

The institute is designed to act as a bridge between academic and policy making communities both governmental and corporate on a broad range of domestic and international issues that affect all life forms and we give priority to issues of overarching importance that are an urgent need of change in direction for the benefit of humans non-humans in the earth.

Three examples of such issues are climate change pandemic prevention factory farming which are all interrelated and which like all of our other issues are assessed through the lens of their impact on all life forms including humans non-humans in the earth.

We seek out thought leaders in science and academia we manage a volunteer global network of prominent researchers from a broad array of human, animal, and environmental disciplines to research develop and bring forward key issues to the public and and we seek to influence society in four main levels governmental corporate science slash academia and the general population every other major cause that's made progress in recent decades has had an organizational incubator of ideas research and writing to ground the seriousness of reform.

Regarding how our work interfaces with the Earth Charter and Earth Charter international i think that these entities and the all life institute have an obvious and natural compatibility given that we're so closely aligned in terms of values goals and principles.

Part of what the Earth Charter was intended to do from the outset was to promote the evolution of our global mentality to help foster a less human-centric and more all-life-centric approach as you alluded to earlier and the all life institute is trying to do this as well.

So we're very pleased to be involved in detailed discussions with you and our other Earth Charter colleagues about various ways that our organizations can combine forces to produce the greatest impact on a variety of fronts and we look forward to working together as partner organizations in the months and years ahead.

Well i feel particularly very inspired and happy to be here in this conversation with you i have learned quite a lot and mostly felt inspired i'll continue to think about how we can improve the way in which we help to foster human consciousness with regards to how we relate to the large living i think it's an urgent and much necessary effort for all of us to engage in especially through education and through policy making and etc.

So we are coming to an end of our conversation today david thank you so much for your time for taking the time to share with us all of this your book your research the work you have done and how it relates or correlates with the Earth Charter and thank you for making this such a rich conversation.

Yes thank you thanks so much for having this conversation and thanks so much Mirian for all that you're doing.

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