

PROGRAM TRANSCRIPT:

“CLIMATE JUSTICE, AN INTERVIEW WITH LEE TEMPLE”

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MRL= Molly Rowan Leach, radio show host

LT= Lee Temple, interviewee

MUSICAL INTRO WITH JACKSON BROWNE’S “BEFORE THE DELUGE”

MRL: Share with us a personal glimpse into why you have created the Global Awakening Series, and why you are so passionate about climate action and the connection it has with human consciousness.

LT: Thanks for inviting me Molly, it’s a great thing you’re doing here, and it’s great to be with you. And let’s first give a shout out to Mr. Jackson Browne for this 40-year-old song that’s inspired me since I was in high school. I’d also like to honor all those helpers on both sides of the veil, all those beings, places and things that have made us and our world and this gathering possible, and especially to thank your awesome KHEN audience here in the Heart of the Rockies, one of the sweetest places on Earth – with these awesome peaks and valleys, the beings living here and especially, our great Arkansas river – you gotta love this river!!

OK, so now, getting to your questions:

These are challenging times. We have identical “hockey stick” trajectories of accelerating growth for human population and development, fossil-fuel usage, carbon emissions, natural super-disasters, and the number of climate refugees.

We already use over 1.5 times Earth’s available resources, yet we still rely on growth-based economic, political, and behavioral models. So to give our great grandchildren a habitable planet, we have to unite across the globe to turn the climate crisis around. Life’s future depends on it.

The good news is that billions of us – in businesses, organizations, communities, and governments worldwide – are already on board. But too many remain unable or unwilling to address this greatest crisis of all time effectively, and a catastrophic climatic tipping point is upon us. Global emissions are still rising steadily, up 2.1% to

nearly 36 billion metric tons in 2013. Participation in facing this global emergency is no longer optional: It's time for "All hands on deck!"

What's missing is a larger sense of selfhood. We need a new ethics/worldview founded in a sensibility of wholeness and "world-first" global responsibility. We need to value the sources and sustenance of our existence even more than our "me-first" agendas.

Only a decisive, worldwide change in our basic awareness can yield a realistic hope of survival. The dramatic shift required is from divisive to unifying, from exclusive to inclusive, from divergent to convergent ways of thinking, acting, and feeling.

Uniting in *action* is urgent now, and will become even more so in the next few years. I know we can do it. And millions of others do too – now is definitely the time for climate action.

Contributing positively to this global healing transformation is so important to me that I've devoted most of the past eight years to creating this series—it's a massive work that covers all aspects of this crucial topic.

It's based on my own personal experience of awakening into the perspective of oneness, and finding ways to apply that perspective successfully in how I live and work. There are indestructible, unifying bonds between the various parts that compose each of us, between all of us as humans, and between our species and our world. We can all experience them, it's not rocket science, and the ways we can employ them to heal our world are also right here for us to use too.

Three truths motivate this work:

- We are all products of our world.
- Life on our precious Mother Earth is in mortal danger.
- We still have the capacity to join together and make things better.

So the keyword for me these days is "Responsibility," meaning both being able to respond to the current climate crisis, and recognizing how we're responsible for it, you know, like, "Taking Responsibility"....

Human behavior is most profoundly influenced by our conscience and our consciousness, so I feel that affecting human consciousness is pretty much the only way to make lasting change happen.

MRL: Tell us a bit more about your professional background and how you are "walking your talk."

LT: Well, I'm what they call a long-time sustainability advocate – and by long time, I mean it's now approaching 50 years for me. I did my first recycling in the 60's during the time between when John and Bobby Kennedy were murdered, when I was still in Junior high school. That's when I first got the feeling that we were all in this together, and it stuck with me ever since.

In the 70's, I trained as an architect, and was inspired by the New Alchemy Institute and the newly forming alternative energy movement.

Then in the 80's, I went off to Europe for three years to study and work with some great architects, to learn the European culture. Then I returned to Ithaca where I began my architecture practice, and taught architectural and urban design and theory at Cornell, Hobart, and Syracuse Universities.

In the 90's, I volunteered to help out with the newly forming EcoVillage at Ithaca, and was a member of the founding board there. It has since become a leading example of sustainable development practices.

Then in 1993, I headed off in a new direction. My life partner and I moved to Colorado, where we designed and built our sustainable homestead. I also founded the Sustainable Resource Center with the help of a former student back then.

Much has happened for me during these past 20 years, lots of internal exploration, pilgrimages to various power sites, wilderness solos where I came into contact with the Great Spirit behind Nature and united with the Source of All.

During this time, I began to employ a holistic approach and developed what we could call a "working model." I tried it on myself in the internal realm of personal integration; I tried it at home in the integration of all the parts of our lives, with the goal of living as affordably, as sustainably, and as richly as possible. It was a truly radical makeover, and it has been a great success. We've managed to reduce our household's carbon footprint by more than 75% over this time, make more power than we use, eat organically out of our garden and hoop house year round, reduced our fuel usage to a minimum, and developed a really rich way of life in the process. We've been living it now for two decades.

Much of what I learned during this retreat time of deep seeing and rewarding experimentation forms the basis of what I am offering in my work today. As the climate crisis became ever more present, my resolve became stronger. It's been a time when creating a greater sense of unity between and among the parts of these various entities became the central theme of my life and work. It showed up in many different ways, and this is the core of what I'm offering in my series now.

During the 2000's, I took this approach into the community, coordinating a successful sustainability conference here in Crestone. It was during this time that the idea for this series came about, and the impetus for presenting a way of uniting more of us with the true state of the world, so that we might better heal it, began to manifest.

MRL: You were in New York City on September 21st (2014) for the world's largest march on climate action. Share with us what you saw, what you think is coming from it, and how you feel about people's movements providing the impetus for true and lasting change.

LT: Well it was truly a phenomenal event. Imagine 40-50 people abreast walking past carrying signs, moving floats, chanting slogans, etc. Now imagine that this many people continue to walk by you for 5 hours straight, you know, like a couple thousand people a minute. That's what this huge mass of humanity that showed up that day felt like – over 400,000 of us just in New York City that day. The high point for me happened at 1 pm when we all were silent for those who have already been affected by climate change....Then a great roar of humanity started in the back and moved like a human wave of power down the several miles to the front, with a roaring that continued for a minute or more. Heady stuff!

And the effects are already huge and getting bigger, since the march wasn't just in NY, but in over 2400 venues in 159 countries all around the world. Two days later the UN summit kicked off in New York: Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recognized the march's people power, by orienting the tone of the summit toward catalyzing constructive, achievable action, particularly in the eight action areas of agriculture, cities, energy, finances, forests, industry, resilience and transportation.

Many other marches have happened since then as well. And just last week we saw the US and China reach that historic accord on climate targets. The timing of these things isn't a coincidence—they're all interrelated strands – the human world waking up to the facts of our time, the huge stakes, and that we need to act NOW.

As the former slave and leader of the antislavery movement Frederick Douglas once famously said: "Power concedes nothing without a demand." So if you look closely at the landscape of human history, especially in the recent history of countries like the United States, you'll see that human uprisings like this one have played pivotal roles in producing transformative change all along the way.

MRL: Why do you think people snicker at grassroots movements---people's movements? We have seen examples of David v. Goliath many times throughout our history. Can you share with us a few examples of other movements that were met with doubt and at times violent resistance, only to propel us into deep changes--systemically, consciously, and otherwise? Please provide examples from before the 20th century if possible, as well as one from that century.

LT: Well, picking up on the last question a bit first: Even if you just take the history of this country, the USA, you can see long-term systemic evidence that people's movements have led the way to a better day. Even just the beginning of it (this country) was, well, revolutionary! People getting, as the famous line goes, "Mad as hell, and not gonna take it any more!" Then there was the issue of slavery being recognized as inhuman and indecent – and you have folks like John Brown dying for it, and President Lincoln sending folks to war for it. Then you have the issue of women's rights to vote – and many, many other causes – I'm talking about really HUGE movements here: worker's rights, human rights, animal, reproductive, indigenous, gay, racial, civil and environmental justice rights, just to name a few.

Each one has been a milestone on the way to raising human consciousness, not just for a few, but for us all. So they all provide important markers along the road of our recent cultural and evolutionary history. Each movement has had really hard battles, both moral and physical, to fight, like the climate movement is fighting right now, and each one has made lasting change happen in our world. So this is just a part of a long lineage of such important change agents in the cultural history of the world.

If you want to get really inspired and more informed about some of these important milestones, check out the DVD called "The People Speak," featuring and narrated by the historian Howard Zinn. It's inspired by his work, "A People's History of the United States."

So why do people snicker at this sort of thing? I think many folks are stuck today – stuck in poverty, in despair, stuck on the dominant corporate/cultural merry-go-round, and they don't or can't find ways to imagine or engage such societal changes. But these movements show us that change can happen, and engaging in it starts with ourselves. We can wake ourselves up out of the cynicism and defeatism that plagues some of us. It

is possible, it does happen, and these movements provide the conclusive proof. Jackson Browne wrote another great song about waking up and engaging the world. It's called: "Alive in the World." Here it is: (song was played).

MRL: How are climate change and consciousness connected? Give us some examples of where we are at as a humanity--how do you see our developmental stage as a collective affecting our Earth and our systems? (i.e., are we prepubescent teens? are we young adults? are we even able to be categorized?)

LT: I just really love this message: "To open my eyes, and wake up ALIVE, in the world, to open my eyes, and finally ARRIVE in the world"-- that's what it's all about for me – helping to bring forth a global awakening to the true state of affairs today. And again, it goes back to the keyword of responsibility: We're becoming aware of and awake to the fact that, like it or not, we're now RESPONSIBLE for life's future here. And today humanity covers the entire spectrum of awareness of this fact.

We have, in the developed world, the "business-as-usual" corporate energy interests who have in many instances bought a government that is still fighting to give fossil fuel the upper hand, fighting to prevent any deep societal change away from it toward renewable energy. This is just self-protection on their part and disrespect of the facts and the responsibilities that those facts thrust upon us all. On the other end of the spectrum, people and organizations all over the world, **in the billions**, are eliminating, divesting, ignoring, and otherwise decimating these dinosaur fossil fuel interests. And we have everything in between.

Many people remain ignorant or disinterested to the issue, and many in developing and primitive cultures are not yet engaged in the dialog, but more are. As far as your categories go, we are all of the above. Unfortunately, time is running out to make a difference, so we all need to grow up and become responsible adults here in a hurry. My series looks at all of this in detail.

MRL: Beyond taking the Ten Steps, is there a shift in understanding one's place in the world and one's efficacy in it, that needs to occur?

LT: Yes, and that shift is basically what we were just talking about, it's what I call the move from a "me-first" to a "world-first" mindset. I've found that when you help people realize how interdependent we are with the rest of humanity and the Earth, when you reveal just how much we rely on others and the world, and how much we affect it by our own actions, then we naturally recognize and connect the dots between our behavior and the world, and we begin to treat it more reverently, more respectfully. For example, when you realize that each breath you take is basically a gift from other

beings, and what you do affects the air we breathe, you pay more attention to what you do to it.

The Ten Steps pretty much summarize and condense the series into simple ways we can make a difference. They help us make a personal, familial, community or national transition toward these world-first ends in an achievable, step-by-step fashion.

MRL: What points are you hoping to directly convey with your about-to-launch Global Awakening Series? What are you hoping people will come away with after reading the first few volumes?

LT: I believe our challenge today is essentially spiritual and philosophical, and that it touches the deepest core of our being. We need a comprehensive path that will help our out-of-control materialism transcend itself.

Luckily, convergent fields and technologies across the human spectrum are fostering an awareness of our fundamental unity with each other and all things, through an emerging and congealing consciousness of our intrinsic oneness.

In synch with these developments, my *Global Awakening* series integrates widely accepted scientific, spiritual, and environmental perspectives to reveal our profound collective journey from the Big Bang to the present day. It helps us understand, at a deep level, who we truly are, what we're made of, and how we've created our global crisis. In so doing, it helps facilitate the urgently needed large-scale awareness shift. This enlightening transformation can inspire broad-based, compassionate, win-win behavior that promotes lasting healing for Earth and her children.

The four-part series is presented in large-format magazine-style, and abounds with magnificent artwork, photographs, diagrams, inspiring quotes, and poetry. **Overview Volumes** introduce the series, the unity perspective in which it's rooted, and list extensive resources to fuel individual transformation and change networks. Then, **Part I's "Grand Universal Lineage"** maps our authentic place in the Cosmos, through explorations of everything that makes our earthly existence possible.

This foundation enables us to live from a deeper understanding of our intrinsic oneness with all. Various aspects of this realization form **Part II's "Grand Integration,"** including guided exercises/meditations that help us walk more compassionately with all of creation. The **unity perspective** facilitates the greater care for the planet that is essential for success in dealing with climate change.

Part III's "Next Steps" synergistically unites today's crucial change-drivers: environmental justice, grass-roots activism, philosophy/spirituality, science, systems-thinking, and more. It investigates striking possibilities, living examples, and forward-looking strategies for healing our world. They all integrate Part II's oneness wisdom into comprehensive, unifying modes of action – with helpful, down-to-earth tools and climate solutions. We can do these **right now** at various scales from the individual to the planetary. Then the **Epilogue** looks playfully at a future human world that has successfully broken through to an awakened mode of functioning.

PrimaMundi.com is the series' companion website. Our mission is to empower immediate, ongoing large-scale carbon emission reductions around the world, while simultaneously enhancing overall life-quality for humanity and our fellow creatures. We unite many convergent efforts, movements, methodologies, individuals, and organizations – from the grassroots to the global scales – through networking, inspiring action, and informative, empowering education.

So that's a thumbnail about the whole series and our website. Now, the first volumes we're releasing are the Introduction and volume 4 called *First Light*. The Intro gives a good overview of the series, and also provides quite an extensive (fifty+ page) reference list: books, articles, DVD's, and websites that folks will find helpful. *First Light* launches Part One's Grand Universal Lineage sequence, and it looks at the beginning of spacetime, the very instant of creation, from various perspectives.

After reading these volumes, I hope readers will become interested in the various aspects of the unity perspective – the hugeness of it; the relevance, you know – and become inspired to want to read more....

MRL: What would you like to share/say to those who believe climate change is not real?

LT: Wow – That's a big one Molly! The first thing I'd say to the climate change deniers is that we're agreed on one really important point: not a single one of us WANTS it to be real – this challenge we're facing is such a horrendous thing.

I think the main thing for the remaining deniers to do is to get educated about the facts of the matter in an open way, if they possibly can, although I know it might be like pulling teeth for some. I once had a teacher who was fond of saying that "facts are like cows, the more you stare at them, the less they go away."

In this case, the facts, the real truth of the situation, and also of public opinion, are increasingly against the denial position. According to a globally representative 2010

Pew Research Poll, 84% of people polled believe there is a global climate crisis. The study also found that majorities in most countries believe that human activity is responsible. After 2012's super-hurricane Sandy, an Associated Press poll found that almost 80% felt that Washington should act decisively against climate change.

Many who are former deniers or were indifferent to the crisis are indeed coming around to realize the reality of the situation. Like the World Council of Churches that recently committed to divesting from fossil fuels, or Republican Senator John Thune.

But the remaining deniers are typically quite closely associated with fossil fuels in one way or another. Like Senator McConnell whose base is a coal-rich state. Any threat to that me-first agenda will be systematically dismantled, which is of course what they're doing. It's turning what is essentially a survival issue into a political one, instead of adapting to it – and we'll undoubtedly see how broken the political situation is tonight with the Keystone vote in the Senate.

There **are** successful ways to move away from the vice-grip of fossil fuels, even in such states, but the political, economic and world-first co-operative will has to be there to make it happen. We look closely at such next steps in Part 3 of the Global Awakening series.

MRL: Any closing comments?

LT: "We are the change, We are the difference," these slogans are clichés today, but by God they've never been more true, or important to take to heart. What we do now and in the future has never mattered more than it does today. So: if we as a species can unite in our intentions to manage ourselves, our population growth, our resource extraction, and turn toward eliminating fossil fuel usage in the immediate future, we can choose the road of recovery, the road that leads to reestablishing Earth as an Eden of thriving, pristine life again.

So I'd like to leave you with a song and a prayer. This is truly a great time, when the tide is changing in favor of dealing successfully with the climate crisis, when many convergent elements are making the synergy of the hundredth climate monkey **real** in our world. I'm really glad and I celebrate that wholeheartedly. But today is also a time when the crisis is still raging, and the near future will bring us incredible challenges on so many levels. So I'd like to dedicate this ending to the real losers in this battle – not democrats or republicans, but all the beings that are giving their lives as we make this laborious, painful birth into a new day for our planet.

Many of Earth's beings have already been affected by climate change, and indeed, many have already or soon will be dying as a result of our role in making it worse. So I'd like to recognize the effect we're having on all those precious swimmers, on the crawlers and the flyers in our world. I'd like to recognize what we're doing to the grasses, the bushes, and the trees, which in our landscape here are dying prodigiously. Let's recognize now the challenges we're making to the very fiber of Creation on our precious Earth, the challenges facing our four and two-legged brothers and sisters, what we're doing to the waters, the winds, the cloud nations and thunder beings, the havoc we're visiting on the life-giving soils and their many inhabitants, and on the precious, life-giving Light of this sweet old world.

To all those beings who have and will be affected, who are right now, **THIS VERY DAY**, fighting for their fundamental right of existence, and who will be extremely challenged in the near future, I say this prayer for you: May you have the strength to hold on and be strong, may you find ways to adapt to the challenges we're throwing at you, may you stay with us, any way you can, in this world. I say to you all – we have been selfish, and many of us are trying to make things better. Please forgive us these trespasses. We deeply recognize you, we honor and respect you, and yes, make no mistake, we love you; we truly, deeply, love you!

So in closing, I dedicate this song to all of you. OK, thanks again Molly for having me here, and thanks to your audience for listening to me today. Goodbye.

PLAYS EMMYLOU HARRIS'S "WRECKING BALL" RENDITION OF LUCINDA WILLIAMS' "SWEET OLD WORLD"

MRL: Join the PrimaMundi family by [signing up](#) for and helping to distribute the free interactive workbook: *TEN STEPS* to a *Healthier, Safer Planet*. Learn there how they can help you make a decisive difference. When you join, you won't miss the monthly digest from top-source newsgroups and original/guest blogs.



A retired architect and architecture professor at Cornell and other leading universities, **LEE TEMPLE** is an author, visionary, elder, community organizer, and global sustainability advocate/consultant. He has been living the low-carbon life in the high desert of southern Colorado since 1993.

This transcript was entirely written and e-published on carbon-neutral solar power. Learn how you and your network can be a stronger part of the global climate solution at primamundi.com.