**EARTH-CROÍ – STEP ONE – NEART**

**NEART MEANS STRENGTH, FORCE OR ENERGY.**

Everything – yes, everything – is energy. All material life is energy in various visible forms. I am energy. You are energy. Tree, flower, grass, rock, animal, fish, soil, bird, moon, sun, stars – all is energy, in various material forms.

The Welsh poet Dylan Thomas wrote:

*The force that through the green fuse drives the flower/ Drives my green age….[[1]](#footnote-1)*

It is the same force of energy/life in the flower as the human being.

This is a wisdom that our ancient ancestors understood. For example, when indigenous peoples speak about the Stone People, the Plant Nation, the Two legged – and the whole earth as Kin/Relatives, they are expressing their experience of the interconnectedness of all living things.

In our age of individualism and independence, we have forgotten our interconnection and interdependence – this is the wisdom of NEART that we need to recover….

In our time scientists have discovered that we share DNA with all living organisms. Physicists tell us that all matter is energy (NEART) and at micro level everything is a matrix of dancing energy!

We have forgotten our kinship with all life. We’re not isolated individuals. We are intricately connected and related to everything else. We are family. We are never alone in this world because the whole of life – in all its forms – is our family!

For the ancient peoples of Ireland the natural world was full of **Sacred Power** or **NEART** - and they attributed deities to the rivers, the streams, the lakes, the springs, the mountains, the trees, and all of nature. Though they weren’t just ‘called after’ particular deities – they were actual manifestations of the sacred. This is the respect for the sacredness of the earth felt by many indigenous people throughout the world to this day.

Thom Hartmann in a fascinating book called *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight* (2007) speaks of meeting an Aboriginal elder who had this same ancient, non-dualistic perception of existence. The following comes from a discussion lecture about Hartmann’s book on the bodhitree bookselling web-site ([www.bodhitree.com/lectures](http://www.bodhitree.com/lectures) Accessed: 24 July 2015)

*‘I remember the first time I met somebody who lives inside the older culture story, instead of the one our society believes. I was sitting in a dry riverbed, talking through a translator with Tommy George, a 90-year old Aboriginal king. I was asking about ‘spirit’ and ‘sacred places,’ which led to a lengthy exchange between Tommy George and the translator, back and forth and back and forth. Finally I asked, “what’s going on?” and the translator replied, “I had to explain your concept. They don’t have a word for sacred.” “Why?” I asked. “Because there is nothing that isn’t sacred”, was the reply. “They don’t make the distinction.”*

He also discovered, in his conversation with Tommy George, that they didn’t have a word for Nature! Why?

*“Because there isn’t any ‘not nature.’ Everything is, so there is no need for the word. Humans, animals, plants, soil, the sky – it’s all one thing.”*

So Aboriginal or indigenous cultures experience the rest of creation as KIN – and they haven’t forgotten their inter-connection to the family of all life.

Sadly, though, we’ve forgotten, in our 21st century ways of urban habitat, our complete connection with everything else and we see ourselves as somehow separate from the rest of nature.

This wonderful poem, translated here by Marie Heaney[[2]](#footnote-2), is attributed to Ireland’s first poet, Amergin, in the Mythological Cycle of stories. This ancient poem brings to us – all down the hundreds of centuries – a powerful experience of connectedness in potent images of nature.

*I am the wind on the sea.*

*I am the wave of the ocean.*

*I am a powerful bull.*

*I am an eagle on the rock.*

*I am the brightness of the sun.*

*I am a fierce wild boar.*

*I am a salmon in the pool.*

*I am the wisdom of art.*

*I am a spear, sharp in battle.*

*I am the god that puts fire in the brain.*

Notice that the poet isn’t singing **about** nature, in an objective way – he’s totally identified **with** nature. He doesn’t say ‘I am *like* the wind on the sea’, or ‘I am *like* the wave on the ocean.’ He says ‘I **am** the wind on the sea; I **am** the wave on the ocean.’ There’s no distance. Nature – in all Her wonderful forms - and human beings are one and the same.

**Ways to practice NEART in your life**

**Be aware of all the non-human species wherever you live** – animals, plants, trees, insects, birds etc. Find out about them – their names, foods they eat, get to know your family. It may be that you feel especially interested in a particular animal, plant, bird etc. Follow that relationship in whatever ways you’re led to do so. You may find yourself supporting tree planting, growing healing herbs – in pots or in a herb garden - supporting an animal sanctuary or an environmental charity – possibilities are endless!

**Respect the life of your world family.** For example, buy/eat food which supports farming practices that are humane and nurture the soil. Recycle – as much as you can – packaging, clothes etc.

**Allow NEART to change your life**. Be aware of the energy channels in your own body. Some ancient traditions call this energy Chi or Qi or the breath energy of Prana Shakti. Often, because of life’s traumas, some energy channels in our bodies need to be unblocked so that the life energy of NEART can run freely and bring you healing. Find an energy-freeing practice e.g. T’ai Chi or Yoga.

1. D.Thomas (2000) ‘The Force that through the green fuse drives the flower’, in W. Davies and R. Maud (eds.) *Dylan Thomas, Collected Poems, 1943-1953*, London: Phoenix p. 13 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. M.Heaney (ed.) (1994) *Over Nine Waves: A Book of Irish Legends*. London: Faber and Faber, 1994, p.54 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)