

How to live after having eaten from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

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Essay abstract

This essay explores my personal mental and emotional overwhelm due to the intake and processing of information and knowledge and the ongoing disruptions and changes to our society and culture.

Ultimately, I'm seeking to discover how I'm supposed to live open-hearted and open-minded while being committed to intellectual expansion. The ache, the grief, the worry, the fear, and the disorientation that comes with knowledge and change are hard to manage and/or release.

How do I navigate this, having lost my belief in a religious framework that provided answers, and more specifically promises, to guide me through this? How do I integrate what I know and am learning into who I am, how I want to live, and what I write? This essay is part of my attempt to find my way through.

There are a lot of lenses through which to look at the world and our lives. There are as many lenses as there are people. As always, the words to follow are a peek through my lens at this moment.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Stories are how we make meaning of the world. Stories are how we understand what's happening to us and in us. There are many such stories by which humans make sense of our individual and collective experiences; these stories change through time and cultural context.

This is one story. Although we are in a time of the collapse of Judeo-Christian stories being the meaning-making stories of the culture, Western culture is still infused with the residual effects of being built on Judeo-Christian belief. This particular story holds meaning for me because of the broader culture I grew up in.

But more than that, Bible stories remain salient for me because I grew up steeped in them, not as abstractions upon which the cultural canon was built, but as actual truth. These are the stories of not just my cultural heritage but also my familial heritage. In this way, they remain my meaning-making stories.

The story goes like this...

In the beginning, humans lived in a garden. It was beautiful and well-provisioned with everything we needed. And God walked in the garden and talked to the humans.

We could eat from any tree in that garden, but God warned us against eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because we would die if we did.

Things were good for a while, but we were tempted by a serpent to eat from that tree anyway to become wise, knowing good from evil.

We ate from that tree. All of a sudden, we recognized our nakedness, having not been aware of it before. We grew afraid of God walking through the garden and turned on each other. (She made me do it! The serpent made me do it!) In response to the whole fiasco, God put a hex on everything, and now enmity, sorrow, suffering, pain, toil, and domination would be part of human existence.

This story tells many truths about what it means to be human and where we've come from.

One of the things it illustrates is what the dawning of consciousness brought into humanity. When we became conscious as a species, we suffered in a whole new way. As flesh and blood organisms with nervous systems, there was always pain, but

now we had knowledge (awareness) of our actions. Our consciousness made us aware of when our actions against another brought pain, but also when conscious action that caused pain was taken against us.

At some level, most of these actions are rooted in the biological imperative to survive. But human actions, though rooted in survival imperatives, reached well past that into committing acts against others and having acts committed against us for reasons not dependent upon mere survival. Though maybe somewhere deep in the recesses of human subconsciousness, survival imperatives or twisted iterations of them still drive it all.

I'm focusing on the evil part for now, but eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil also gave us consciousness of goodness and our incredible capacity this way.

What I'm writing here is not a philosophical, religious, psychological, or evolutionary treatise. I'm writing some stories of my own experience and mapping them onto an ages-old story of meaning that helps explain my experience. Stories within stories.

The internet age - or - Living in a world with unlimited access to information, ideas, and knowledge

I grew up in an age of printed media and television, where everything was *theoretically knowable* but “out there”. Ideas had to be sought out and brought into your daily life intentionally.

Ours was a culturally literate home with newspaper and magazine subscriptions, books purchased and borrowed from the library, an encyclopedia set on the bookshelf, and cable television. Things could be known, but they were still mediated by the publishers and producers of those sources.

I turned 20 in December 1995, just as internet access became available to home consumers. The most significant impact this had on my life at that time was its influence on my husband's career in becoming a whatever-it-is-he-does-with-computers highly skilled knowledge worker. This impact is not insignificant as Damien's work has not just paid the bills but also set a

particular tone for technology access and interfacing in our home and family culture.

The internet didn't *revolutionize* my own relationship with knowledge and ideas until I discovered mommy blogs roughly 10 years later. Fast forward to the present, where I manage the flow of ideas into my life through the mediums and portals of web searches and web content of all types, digital newsletters and email subscriptions, online membership subscriptions and stand-alone products, podcasts, YouTube videos, video streaming services, and print and digital books. VR is not yet part of my personal experience, though AI has become a regular part of my paid work.

Like most people, *my life is inundated with information and ideas*. I consume and produce in this intellectually mediated space for wages, personal entertainment, education, and distraction.

I like stories

I've always been a reader. Despite my teenage extroversion, I was the sixteen-year-old at the sleepovers, who by 10pm had found a quiet spot in the corner to read my book. And that book was always a story. A novel, maybe historical fiction.

I love stories. I love words. I believe in and have experienced words and stories, specifically the reading and writing of them, to be portals to meaning, truth, and knowledge. Of course, this reliance on the written word is also our cultural orientation, but I'm like a fish in water in this aspect of Western culture. (Not so much in other aspects of my culture.)

Outside of my formal education experiences, my reading strategy is to choose books that interest me. I don't read things just to learn about something, to become "educated". Historically, my threshold for non-fiction that isn't memoir or biography has been low.

I have always been more interested in gathering stories to understand people and their experience of the world than I am in understanding "the world" as an entity that can be studied independently of and outside of personal experience. I don't think such a thing exists.

This means if given a newspaper, I would head to the personal interest stories before reading the “news” stories. This means I have preferred novels, biographies, memoirs, and historical tellings of these types over “how-to’s” and “how things work”.

Because I enjoy and value reading and wanted to be informed *enough*, as well as answer my own questions and satisfy curiosities that would arise about the world-at-large, “how-to’s” and “how things work” did end up in my digital and analog book stacks. But these were outnumbered by pure stories, with how-to’s, analysis, and self-help at the bottom of the pile. (This included how to parent, how to homeschool, etc. I’m more of an experience-based person for this kind of thing.)

As I’ve already mentioned, the rise of the internet and the ease of accessing information in that virtual space, which changed reading patterns and how people in this time access and learn things, corresponded with my progression through early adulthood.

You didn’t have to borrow books from the library to learn about subject x. Knowing that information about subject x and everything beyond was a click away made acquiring this knowledge through the tedious process of securing and reading subject-matter-based books unnecessary.

A desire for simplicity and the cost of knowing

For most of my adult life, my reading choices have been motivated by my love for stories and my desire to escape my own mind, place, and situation to enter somewhere else. *But they also reflected my perceptions about my capacities and the boundaries I erected to protect that capacity during the child-raising years.*

I had the explicit desire and intention to keep my life as simple as possible.

Concurrent with my desires for simplicity and no doubt influencing my wishes, “the simple life” was a pop culture message that had infused the parenting, homeschooling, and homemaking discourses I was engaged in.

It pains me now to think how the pop culture’s simple living discourses of the aughts provided so little analysis and critique of the underlying economic and political conditions and systems motivating/forcing so many people to want to live

differently. Influenced, as they were by the writings of Wendell Berry, Bill McKibbin, and others, it was unfortunate that as the ideas became popularized in certain circles, they lost their philosophical and sociological roots and became focused on individual choice and action.

In my life, to keep things simple, there were things I'd rather not know. I didn't want to know what would grieve me to know but that I could do nothing about. What good is knowledge upon which you can't act?

But also, I didn't always want to know about the things that I *could* do something about because I have a finite capacity and scope for what I can change in my individual habits and actions in my particular context.

There are limits to the changes, or our responses to input, that individuals can make because of their finite capacities and the circumscription of what is possible in their particular context.

You cannot do everything. You cannot change everything. We don't have the resources, energy, time, or capital (of all sorts) to act in all areas. We all live in the intersection of a personal Venn diagram of what's possible for us in a world where so many things scream out for our attention and action.

In recognizing my capacity and the limits of what I can do, I have exercised caution in what I know.

A statement like this seems like an affront in the age in which we live, where we are bombarded with things to know for well-intended reasons. Our actions are needed to change the world! To end all the "isms" and change the human behaviors that harm each other and the planet.

There is a strong current of belief that knowledge or knowing is the answer to our social, political, economic, ecological, and spiritual problems. If people just "knew" more, "knew" better, "knew" the "truth". And this belief drives our collective desire to educate, inform, and proselytize one another.

I reject this belief based on lots of life experience and my own observations of supposedly "learned" and educated people. Knowledge alone is not the answer.

Knowledge without ethics or a moral compass, specifically without love, is just like [St. Paul says it is, a noisy gong or clanging symbol](#). Sounds like the information overload of our age.

Knowledge requires action

I mean action in the broadest sense. Everything we encounter as organisms requires something of us, and our brains do a fantastic job of sifting, sorting, and rejecting the barrage of stimuli we encounter. But as conscious beings, we must make additional judgments, many of them ethical or moral, on an unending stream of information. And I'm not talking about the internet; the natural world alone communicates unremitting data.

Contemporary experience is a barrage of stimuli and information, and it's not trending down but just ramping and accelerating up.

To manage this barrage, our brain does some incredible wizardry so that we don't think or feel too deeply about most of our encounters. If we felt and thought to the depth of our capacities, we'd probably short-circuit. This is a metaphor but maybe also a literal possibility.

We must sort through and pick what's most important, somehow.

Personal experience tells me that the relationship between the external stimuli and the internal response and then outward action, i.e., what gets in, the individual's ability to process it, and the impact that processing will have on behavior and external action, is incredibly variable but also limited.

My point is we all respond differently to "knowing" things. We care about different things. We filter and process differently. We will be motivated to respond to knowledge in different ways. And not just because of upbringing or genetics, but because of some unique alchemy that makes you *you* and me *me*.

To ground this further, some of us will feel incredible burdens for specific causes and situations. Our hearts will break, our minds will be blown, and others will remain indifferent or unaffected and too busy. Or they have already reached capacity for what they can manage, given their own context. Some of us take

particular actions that others can't or won't. And the complexity of why and how of all this is beyond me to understand and articulate.

But here's what I do know and what all this pseudo-psychology is trying to explain:

I am mindful (cautious, circumspect) about what I actively pursue to learn because I am aware of the “cost of knowledge” on my consciousness and my body. I have no idea what it's like to be you, but I know what it's like to be me. I can be deeply impacted - emotionally, spiritually, and mentally - by “stimuli”. And it is a self-protection mechanism to be circumspect.

When I talk about my concerns with the personal cost of knowledge, I speak from the perspective of someone committed to learning and education. I speak as a university-educated thinker. I speak as someone who has spent my whole adult life interested in theories, practices, and contexts of learning, as well as the ideas of what constitutes knowledge.

Maybe all of that is the problem; I think too much. Period.

I don't usually consider myself an intuitive person. I lean hard into my thinking self to guide my actions, which probably explains the need to write this essay. However, during the course of this writing, I realize I may have short-changed myself and the extent to which I actually do follow my intuitions.

Given what I know now about my personality and my experience from the last few years with trying to analyze and understand more deeply than I ever have the culture I live in, I might have intuited my need for the self-protection measures I took during the children's growing years. **The emotional effort of raising children (at least *me* raising *my* children) necessitated circumspection and particular boundaries in my life.**

During those years, there was much that I actively learned about and took action on concerning children, family, education, home culture, and home practices. This included our diet and greener living practices. My learning influenced and galvanized a lot of actions for the things at hand. But I couldn't commit to stuff outside that. And I didn't try.

I am mindful that the particularities of my context, including the cultural, spatial, and temporal moments I did or didn't belong to, enabled and facilitated selective

naivety. I could choose not to know about things that were an unavoidable reality of someone else's existence.

Social media has changed this for many of us, for better or worse.

An example, and there is no safe place but some are safer than others

I recall a specific memoir/biography book genre that I couldn't handle reading while my children were growing up: The African boy soldier stories. The horrors of the African nation's civil wars were undoubtedly in the news during the aughts, so it feels like there was a spate of those books, [but maybe it was only one](#).

I had conversations with my mom, who *was* reading those books (or just the one). She recommended it to me since I like memoirs. I told her "I couldn't go there". This is another way of saying, "I can't deal emotionally, mentally, spiritually with that knowledge right now".

There were a lot of "places I couldn't go" while raising, nurturing, loving, and educating my babies. It was too vulnerable. I didn't know how to know and hold "all that" while being present for 24/7 nurturing and tending. Homeschooling meant many years of full-time responsibility for my children.

I was trying to protect myself and my children during their childhood from the horrors of the world.

Quick aside

My quest to protect my children from life's horrors is another essay I've been writing on and off for years. It goes something like this: we try to protect our children in specific ways with excellent intentions. Protecting children and childhood is important, and all children deserve this. We can't protect children from the world because we live in the world, but we keep trying anyway, succeeding at some things and failing at others. And also, many children are completely unprotected. The end.

You can see why working that one through to publishing is hard.

To speak of protecting myself and my children from the horrors of the world makes me feel icky with privilege. The only reason I could remain both consciously ignorant (turning off or turning away from) or unconsciously unaware (not knowing to begin with) was because of economic, social, racial, and other privileges and fortunate situations. Born into a different skin, family, and a different place, I would have had no choice but to know and experience particular evils that the skin, family, time, and place I had been born into shielded me from.

The kids grew up, came into consciousness, and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as they must, like every human before them.

An invitation to overwhelm: going to to grad school

What brought me to grad school is a drive and desire to have a career, not just a series of jobs but a trajectory for my post-child-raising paid work aligned with my interests, skills, and experiences for this next stage of my life.

But I also wanted to go to school because I love learning, for learning's sake. Only if I'm interested in the content. I have no desire to learn accounting, for example, for "learning" sake.

I'm in a program about education in the context of society. This subject is of deep interest to me, with high resonance and continuity with my work as a homeschool mother, my first career.

To be studying like this is a dream for me. But also a nightmare.

The whole point of being in this program is to expand my knowledge and to teach me the skills and tools for creating and adding to knowledge.

It's all about knowledge! And as I've laid out above, knowledge is a type of curse. It requires action. It costs us something. It's its own burden.

The knowing has weighed heavy now for several years. It started before grad school, before becoming more "educated". Becoming more conscious or "cognizant" of a particular type of knowledge has amplified the weight.

The weight has a wave pattern, rising and falling in intensity as a function of life circumstances, calendar season, and sometimes hormones! Riding the wave is the

best course of action. And I've been learning how to do that now that I've identified the pattern. But even when riding those waves, as they reach land, I am prone to being sucked under the swell and tossed up onto the beach of life, bedraggled and gasping for breath.



Knowledge, knowing, has been like a wrecking ball against the cognitive and emotional structures I've built through the years to keep me and my family safe. The only reason those structures held is because of my good fortune and privilege that have insulated me from many things. I have lived a sheltered existence in a hard world.

But, a combination of external and internal changes has challenged me to look beyond those walls, to invite their dismantling when going to school, and to recognize their vulnerability under the assault of geoeconomic, sociopolitical, and ecological events.

Eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil has been downright awful some days, the bitterest of fruits. And even when it isn't god-awful bitter, it's often hard to chew and swallow.

Navigating knowledge in a post-truth world and a (personally) post-religious truth context

One of the reasons that this is so difficult is because, in our post-modern period, all knowledge, ideas, facts, and truths are contested. There is no agreed-upon authority or truth. These challenges to the concept of truth come from below and above.

The disenfranchised and those silenced by whatever story is dominant at the time have always contested and resisted the narratives that arise from facts, knowledge, ideas, and truths advanced by those who seek and hold power over them. Often, that resistance is underground and indiscernible, but it's there. Our unquenchable quest for freedom fuels this fire, even if it's just a low burn.

Additionally, since roughly the second half of the 20th century, the challenges to truth have also come from the places where the "esteemed knowledge" is generated, namely academia, which has been actively contesting and dismantling, for good reason, "what we know" from the [modern era](#). These challenges to modern-era knowledge are what we call postmodernism.

Universalism is the concept that a truth, idea, value, experience, or position *is, can, or should* be held by all.

Because of the former contestations - the from-the-bottom dissent - the universalisms of the modern era were never genuinely universal. And now, because of the latter - the top-down deconstruction and dismantling - universalism has no legs to stand on.

We are culturally adrift without a shared or universal story of meaning, a narrative we all believe. Some people are cognitively aware of this, others not so much. But we all feel it in the culture wars, polarized politics, and the social anxiety of our cultural crumble.

I reiterate there was no period in which *we all truly believed in the same story*. Still, there was the pretense of shared stories and theories, even though those narratives contributed to the erasure of particular voices and bodies.

This is just one piece of knowledge that grad school has moved from the unconscious to the conscious. You don't have to go to grad school to learn this. It just happened to be part of my path.

This particular awareness that we have no shared cultural mooring or meaning with which to navigate the increasingly complicated world we all live in makes the rest of the "facts" that much more difficult to deal with. A situation only amplified by our media and social media landscape.

This is why so many opinions, perspectives, and viewpoints exist around controversial topics. The solution seems clear as day to the people on side A but is seen completely differently by side B and through another lens entirely by sides C, D, & E.

Individually, how do we sort this out? Collectively, how do we sort this out?

It makes increasing sense to me why people are tribal and want to hang out with people like them, who think like them, who create, share, and understand the same kinds of knowledge. I know it, but I don't think it's humanity's path forward for human flourishing.

How do we bridge the divide of fundamentally different worldviews and perspectives?

I don't know.

The loss of my original religious mooring has absolutely contributed to the mental and emotional overwhelm of the last few years. I am a cautionary tale about the dangers of deconstruction (smile). Don't do it, or you might end up like me.

Losing my religion meant losing answers to these questions, losing certitude. Ironically, certainty is not actually "faith". Which is something I still have. Certitude and answers can be like the walls I've previously described, which keep coming down in my life.

There is an immense vulnerability here. No wonder we seek fortifications!

The only way is through and forward

So many people feel overwhelmed by our time's facts, ideas, data, information, and knowledge. AI is only going to make this worse.

I think part of that overwhelm is because we have to process and make decisions from all this information without the guidance of a manual or grand narrative of meaning or a "this is the way it is" shared story. To be sure, we use our own stories of meaning, context, and truths to process all that data, but in doing so, we all arrive at different places, amplifying the problem.

I also believe we're overwhelmed by change and the constant economic, social, ecological, and political disruptions and crises. This is also going to get worse before it gets better, *if* it gets better.

This is where faith comes into play, believing in a trajectory where it can improve and then taking action in that direction. I acknowledge that some voices argue there is a purely rational case to be made for positive trajectories (Pinker and others), so it needn't be a faith proposition, but it is for me.

We must contend with the changes, the disruption, and the crumbling. We must look, because what other choice do we have, at the gaping hole in our culture that used to be filled with a shared story of meaning, and come to terms with the fact that without this story, we actually have no culture.

Do I want to go back to the previous universal story that could guide us through this time? The one where, among other things, some human beings are more important than others based on how they are embodied? Nope. I absolutely do not want to go back.

The only way to go is through and forward, but it's a hell of a challenge when there is no shared foundation.

Is it any wonder that those of us who think deeply and care deeply are overwhelmed? More to the point, is it any wonder that I am overwhelmed? That I find myself regularly washed up on shore, looking for a leeward side dune that I can build a small fire behind to warm up and catch my breath.

I never wanted to know this much or feel this much. (But obviously, another part of me did because I have a curious mind and an open heart. Damn it.)

I've always been drawn to "the simple life" and actively try to simplify and order my life in response to the complexity and disorder of the larger world. This is necessary, obviously. We can't flourish in physical, emotional, or mental chaos. But more than that, I have a strong desire to retreat, and I can also observe this in particular cultural and religious movements. But ever since we were cursed by our consciousness, that possibility has been closed to us.

We're not going back to the garden.

But we keep trying. I keep trying, literally and figuratively.

How do I write this?

As a person compelled to write about my life, I can no longer write from where I used to reside, where I tried to shelter myself from many things.

Additionally, I cannot reflect upon and understand my own life and experiences and attempt to write about them without historical and cultural awareness. This has always been true to some extent but has become especially salient in recent years as my capacity and capabilities to hold that knowledge have increased.

Having raised my children, the time I can spend devoted to formal and informal study has gone up. I am engaged with a lot of information as I desperately want to understand the world I live in and myself in that world. I want to know, to a greater degree, my own beliefs and values and understand the cultural influence and interplay with my values, goals, and life experiences.

As I'm learning and processing all this, I have become more hesitant in my writing.

This stems from a couple things.

Firstly, writing from this awareness has an undercurrent of despair, as there has been an undercurrent or tug of despair in the experiences that inform these words. There is despair in the words because I feel the despair in culture and society. I don't want to write from this space. I don't want to be that person who writes despair *into* the story but neither can I ignore it. (It's so hard for me to believe that once upon a time, this blog was called FIMBY for *Fun* In My Back Yard.)

I'm hyper-aware of my own glass-half-empty personality trait, my tendency to envision scary futures and catastrophize. Already riddled by self-doubt, I amplify that when I assess the validity of my cultural analysis through the lens of my personality. I have a propensity to fixate on the potential for danger.

I know this about myself, which is also why I am proud (yes, proud) of my orientations to trust and love, over fear. It's a choice I make and also a kind of faith. It doesn't come naturally. And something about the choice in trust makes me feel like I am not a zombie to my personality but a spiritually and intellectually conscious being with some measure of agency and self-determination.

I am also hesitant because I never assume that what I experience is normative, that my reality is other people's reality. If everyone else is oblivious to what I'm talking about, it either doesn't exist, and my own senses can't be trusted, which is a terrifying prospect. Or my senses can be trusted, and other people don't, won't, can't see what's happening, which is equally ominous.

As I have been reading, listening, writing, and processing knowledge and cultural cues at a rate that an earlier and more naive version of myself could not have comprehended, I have sought to verify the data of my own experience and senses with the collective wisdom of others.

Admittedly, I am drawn to expertise and eloquence, neither of which is a virtue or de facto prerequisite for trust. Even so, I have processed enough knowledge and run a sufficient number of personal experiences through an evaluative process, relying on other people's expertise and eloquence, to know that I am not alone in my assessments or moments of despair. In fact, I'm late to the party in that regard (for all the reasons I've discussed above).

There are many verification points, and I've been gathering data now for years. Keeping my confirmation bias in mind, **I am convinced my sense of being overwhelmed over the last few years is not an isolated incident.** Even so, it's not easy to write about because, good Goddess, who wants to read this?

How do I live this?

How am I supposed to live and write both wholehearted and open-minded?

What should I do with the desire to expand my mind and understanding when it keeps breaking my heart? What am I supposed to do with the urge to find and know the truth when the journey itself keeps challenging what I thought I knew was true to the point where I wonder if such a thing even exists?

And how am I supposed to do any of this without a macro culture and shared stories of meaning?

Where do I draw the boundaries for my inquiry and openness (of heart and mind)? Because without borders, there is no self with which to make inquiries!

How and where do I protect myself enough to not fall apart? And how do I not lean too hard into the privilege of distancing myself from things I'd rather not know?

How do I metabolize "all this" to energize my growth and service to others?

Many voices advocate that we focus on the things we can control in response to this overwhelm. Which might be our mindset or our interpersonal relationships. Yes... but we can't mindset our way out of ecological disasters or collective oppression, especially when discourses work overtime to convince us that our sphere of "control" is tiny, to keep us in that exact place.

Focusing on our own small realms, where we know we can take action, must be paired with, at minimum, a recognition of the potential for such a position to perpetuate the very things we are trying to escape in our insular and inward focus.

I've been writing this essay for many months now, which gives me plenty of time to weigh it down with more metaphors (#sorrynotsorry) and unanswerable questions, but also to revisit the ideas in different frames of mind and emotional tenor.

If I'm writing while feeling despair, I might conclude there isn't any way forward for me, which, of course, isn't true. There's always some way, even if it's only internal.

But even on my brightest day, I cannot easily answer any of those questions. There is no ease here, and it would be immature to seek it. Maturity holds tensions, contradictions, incommensurables, and seeming impossibilities, not squirming away from their reality or the discomfort they create. And not discharging that discomfort onto others.

I don't have answers to these questions. But if they do exist, and I'm definitely open to that possibility, I'm not going to find them in isolation. We need each other. We need both like-minded communities and non-tribal, non-identitarian community spaces. Spaces where we agree to humanize (vs. dehumanize) the other, allowing us to explore diverse ideas with respect and empathy.

I need community to help me instantiate action, to challenge me, and to help me prioritize people over my own comfort. I need community to help me realize that the answers we seek do not exist outside ourselves but in and through us collectively.

We need home. We need physical, emotional, and intellectual safety to retreat, regroup, and tend to our needs while being our authentic selves in an environment of love and acceptance. The fact that not everyone has this safety, either relationally or physically, necessitates the need for people to extend home and belonging to others.

We need art and all its derivatives to help us feel, express, and navigate such fraught territory.

We need bodily practices that remind us of our holistic nature as body-mind-spirit beings.

We need the natural world to ground us and remind us of our place and creaturely status.

For me, that means a literal garden.