

partnerships. But as we listened to our stories and those of so many, we found other music—music that went deeper than the notes on the page, all the way down to the most fundamental requirements of human relationships: trust and time, and as Kathy put it, kindness.

This partnership building is not for the weary! It is demanding, serious, imaginative, ambiguous, unending, honorable, transforming work. What we have learned in writing this book, and will continue to relearn over and over, is that partnership building is also about growing ourselves, growing our own humanity, or as my wise 96-year-old mentor Grace Lee Boggs would say, “growing our souls and reimagining what it means to be human.”

We conclude with the wisdom of Margaret Wheatley (2009), which condenses our book into just four sentences:

I believe we can change the world if we start listening to one another again. Simple, honest, human conversation. Not mediation, negotiation, problem solving, debate, or public meetings. Simple, truthful conversation where we each have a chance to speak, we each feel heard, and we listen well.

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