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# Reader's Guide for Reflection and Conversation

“Religion, Science, and Spirit: A Sacred Story for Our Time” by David Korten

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*To accelerate this awakening and actualize its possibilities we need an open and self-critical public conversation about the foundational stories by which we understand our human nature and purpose.*

Thank you for reading David's "[Sacred Story](#)." It is, at once, a very personal story and a global story, inviting deep reflection and conversation. Engaging in conversation is a powerful way to connect with each other, ask the tough questions, practice expressing our insights and ideas, tell our personal stories, develop new common understanding, and fuel the transformation to a new Living Earth Economy.

Please share the essay with others, and consider initiating a conversation. To start the conversation, think of who you would like to include in a group discussion about the “Sacred Story” – a group of friends, co-workers, a book group, a group associated with your faith community, or fellow spiritual practitioners. Send the link to the essay with an invitation to a discussion circle.

We offer a few questions, here, to explore; please take liberties to use the ones most useful and/or adapt for your purpose.

1. How would you describe your personal cosmology, your relationship with Living Earth, and your role or purpose in the universe?
2. What is the source of your personal belief system about creation and our human place in it? Who and what life experiences have helped shape or influence your beliefs?
3. What has sustained your beliefs over the years and/or how have they changed or evolved? To what do you attribute the changes?
4. In what ways does your belief system manifest as practice in your daily life? How does it inform or influence your everyday relationships with people, with other living beings, with Earth, and with “things”?
5. How do your beliefs help you respond to the conditions you experience or see around you or read about in the headlines, e.g., poverty, environmental destruction, war, corruption, and injustice?
6. What about the Sacred Story essay, in particular, rings true for you? What challenges your belief system?
7. In what ways have you been exposed to or touched by the Distant Patriarch, the Grand Machine, and/or the Integral Spirit cosmologies? In what ways do these narratives reflect your own thinking and belief system about life?
8. If you were to assume there is value in each of the three cosmologies, what do you find most appealing about each? What is the relationship between/among them?

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9. If you belong to a faith community and/or have a spiritual practice, how do the three cosmologies align – or not – with the doctrine or belief system associated with your religious/spiritual tradition or institution?
  10. “Our choice of creation stories has real world consequences.” What are the consequences of each of the three cosmologies over the next 10 years, 20 years, in your lifetime, for all future generations?
  11. If we were all to embrace the Integral Spirit cosmology, what is the potential for our human species? How would you envision life on Earth?
  12. In the essay, David observes that there is currently no major, formal institutional infrastructure for the Integral Spirit story. Is this a disadvantage or an advantage? Why? If there is no formal institutional support, how will the Integral Spirit narrative survive, spread, and become a conscious global reality?
  13. What value do you see in engaging in conversations about the three cosmologies and with whom would you most like to have this conversation? What questions would you want to explore?

### **Additional reading and conversation**

In his beautiful short story, “[Shooting Stars, Talking About & Living Spirit](#)”, a family conversation about David’s essay, our friend Roberto Vargas invites us to capture the questions the essay raises within and among us and to remember and revisit places that help us feel one with spirit. Where are those places for you?