

IS THERE A COVID-19 SILVER LINING?

OUTCRY

**URGENT ALARMS FROM OUR PLANET
AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT THEM**

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WITH

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**“THE WORLD IS COMPLETELY DELUSIONAL AND
GOING TO HELL IN A HANDBASKET AS FAST AS
HUMANLY POSSIBLE. THE ONLY RELEVANT
QUESTION IS: HOW DO WE MAKE THE CRASH AS
SOFT A LANDING AS POSSIBLE FOR SOME KIND OF
CONTINUATION OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION?”**

JAMES CAMERON

FOREWORD BY MOTHER NATURE

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E-books are far greener. For environmental reasons, this book is only available in an [e-book format](#). As such, no trees have to die and the books do not need to be manufactured and shipped to customers. As a bonus, the books are less expensive, while providing readers immediate access to all of the many references via hyperlinks that appear herein. They are also searchable, greatly enhancing the reading experience. For us, this decision was a no brainer—as we would feel like hypocrites if we chose to distribute this book in any other format.

Praise from Around the Globe

"In our day-to-day lives, we tend to get wrapped up in our existing beliefs, habits, systems, and current ways of thinking. Outcry helps us consider radically different ways to see the world, our roles in it, and the lives we can lead. We need to be having these conversations." – **Eduardo Briceño, Growth Mindset Expert, Co-Founder & CEO, Mindset Works, San Jose, California**

"Jim Hicks is a big picture guy who speaks about the environmental crisis in a way that we all need to hear and to act upon. This book is creative, well-written and tells it like it is. Read it and organize community meet-up groups for discussion." – **T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Ithaca, New York, Professor Emeritus of Nutritional Biochemistry, Cornell University, Author of *The China Study* and *Whole***

"Given the magnitude of the issues detailed herein – and the effect those issues may have on the populace of the world, Jim Hicks' book is more than timely, it is a shot across the bow for all of us. And, while the proposed solutions are imaginative, they are the beginning of a thought process that may well result in a viable and sustainable way of life for all of humanity. It all begins with acknowledging that there really is a problem." – **Ron Riedasch, MBA, Seattle, Former Senior Executive at Boeing and President of the Boeing Management Association**

"Scary, timely and persuasive, Outcry addresses the most important issue of our lifetime: the sustainability of Earth's biosphere that gives us life. As there are many opinions on this topic, we must have an open discussion. Education is vital – an ostrich strategy will kill us." – **Spike Lobdell, Mystic, Connecticut, CEO, New England Science & Sailing Foundation, Formerly Group Head – Managing Director JPMorgan**

"I have known Jim Hicks for over a decade and don't know of anyone who has devoted more time, effort, and passion into understanding how best to tackle the looming climate crisis that sits before us. This is a must read for anyone who wants to climb onboard to help ensure that we have a planet for generations to come." – **Rip Esselstyn, Austin, TX, Founder, Plant-Strong by Engine 2**

"Like Jim Hicks or not, this big picture, stubborn guy has the potential to save the world. I wish him well!" – **John Kelly, MD, Dublin, Ireland, Author of *Stop Feeding Your Cancer*.**

In my quest to make sense of the world in which we live, the writing of Jim Hicks has helped place certain global issues in a brighter light – from the ecological shortfalls the world is desperately facing to the essential paradigm shift away from animal-based foods." – **Simon Chu, Singapore, MBA, MSc Environment Management, BSc in Engineering and a BSc in Herbal Medicine**

“Outcry’s big-picture solution not only offers a route for survival but a better way of life that both conservatives and liberals can love.” – **Carl Myers, MD, MBA, CEO, Switch Healthcare, Seattle**

“As a life-long vegan and lover of our beautiful planet, this book speaks directly to my heart. I love the way the authors connect so many dots to illustrate our links to nature and the values of those connecting threads – as they define a loving approach for a healthy world for humans and non-humans alike.” – **Marlene Watson-Tara, UK, Activist and Author of *Go Vegan***

"In OUTCRY, J. Morris Hicks has laid out the choices we face before us with the uncanny ability of an excellent engineer, who seeks the truth dispassionately in order to build things that actually work." – **Sailesh Rao, PhD, Phoenix, Executive Director, *Climate Healers***

“J. Morris Hicks is sounding the alarm about the devastation to our planet and the possible extinction of humanity in the near future. He summarizes the work of internationally- known, independent thinkers who have spent their lives devoted to environmental studies. The authors give us hope and provide us with a vision of how we can turn this downward spiral around and live in harmony with nature.” – **Theresa M. Ditter, Long Lake, Minnesota, Chemical Engineer and Registered Nurse with BSN**

"Read Outcry. It is about how to leave our children and grandchildren a world in which they can survive and thrive. They are entitled to no less. Read Outcry, adopt the lifestyle changes it recommends – and demand that our leaders do the same.” – **Robert S. Wyatt, PhD, Dallas, Career Talent Management Executive and Graduate Business School Professor**

“Outcry is an inspiring and informative look at the environmental crisis in which we are living. Leveraging the work of nine “big picture” scientists, Hicks serves as a guide, moving us toward the kind of nuanced discussions that can take us away from fear, panic or denial and provide a clear vision for a healthy and sustainable future.” – **Bill Tara, London, UK, Author, *How to Eat Right and Save The Planet***

“One of, if not the biggest challenge we’re facing today is climate change. If we take no action, we may not have a planet Earth for future generations. In Outcry, Jim Hicks provides a starting point for conversations, if not a solution to the problem. Read the book!” – **Eric Trepanier, New York City, Healthcare Executive, Doctor of Pharmacy, MBA**

Foreword by Mother Nature

This message is addressed to the billions of humans who reside in the developed nations of planet Earth. You may wonder why I am not sending this message to all humans who live here. It's because you in the developed world are the ones who have done most of the disruption of my efforts to sustain you – while the remaining three or four billion people have done most of the suffering as a result of your reckless behavior.

A little background. Our planet became part of the Milky Way Galaxy over four billion years ago and the first forms of life emerged here a few hundred million years later. During those four billion years of life on our planet, millions of species of plant, bird, insect, fish, reptile and mammal have come and gone.

And it seems like only yesterday that you humans arrived – in fact, it has been about 300,000 years – a mere blink of the eye in geological time. So, let's put your *Johnny-come-lately* status in perspective. Imagine that all of the last four billion years (of life on Earth) could be crammed into just one year. What portion of that single *imagined* year has your species been a part of Earth's biodiversity?

Amazingly, you humans emerged as a species in just the last thirty-nine minutes of the last hour of that *imagined* year. Yet in just those few short moments, what a mess you have made – running roughshod over millions of other species in the wild – while stealing their natural habitat to establish your residences, farms, factories, shopping centers, warehouses, theme parks, bridges, tunnels, airports, golf courses, schools, concert halls, sports arenas, prisons, freeways, zoos, cemeteries, and on and on.

You seem oblivious to the damage you are inflicting as your reckless behavior keeps getting exponentially worse. In just the last two seconds of that *imagined year* mentioned earlier, your population has exploded eightfold – going from one billion in the year 1800 to almost eight billion in 2020. And each time your population doubles, your consumption of manufactured goods quadruples – as more people in the developing world are able to buy lots of mostly-unnecessary stuff for the first time.

Sadly, there appears to be no end to your madness as you continue to swell your numbers by well over one million people every week – while at the same time, you keep squandering my overly-stressed natural resources to maximize your steadily increasing consumption of stuff. Then, most of that *stuff* ends up in landfills within a matter of months, adding insult to injury in your abuse of my hospitality. Just since 2006, when the United Nations issued a huge report, *Livestock's Long Shadow*, chronicling your unsustainable agricultural practices, you've added over one billion new mouths to feed, caused additional erosion of hundreds of billions of tons of topsoil and destroyed another billion acres of rainforest.

What's the matter with you people? You seem to be intent on destroying every element of the natural world that has preceded you – leaving me with no other choice but to concentrate primarily on protecting all of the other natural species with which you share the planet – the many species that you seem so intent on destroying.

As a result of your failed stewardship of this planet, things are likely to become very painful for you in the near future, and for that, I am terribly sorry. But frankly, I have run out of patience with you and your selfish ways. Quite simply, you've become very problematic tenants who are now in serious danger of being evicted. Consider this your first warning – yet it could be your last. If you don't get your act together real soon, I am doubtful about your long-term chances.

As you may know, there is a chance that artificial intelligence empowered robotic cyborgs may someday take over the stewardship of this planet since you humans have failed so miserably. Perhaps they could do a much better job than you have done, yet for some reason, the whole idea makes me nervous.

So due to my uneasiness about the cyborgs and despite all of your failures, I am still in your corner and am hoping that you humans will come together, restore order and learn to live in complete harmony with all of nature – for a long, long time to come.

With tough love, Mom

PS: This book will outline how you can earn your way back into my good graces. It won't be easy, and you will quite possibly fail, but at least you have been warned – and you do still have a chance to make things right. My friends, the authors, will do their best to show you the way in this timely book that was published in an e-book format only – without killing any of my trees.

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”

– Aldo Leopold

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Introduction

“Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.”

– Chief Seattle, 1854

When we started writing this book in late 2019, few people had ever heard of the Coronavirus. On the cover, we alluded to a possible silver lining associated with Covid-19. If there is a silver lining, and we believe that there will be, we may not feel its

beneficial effects for quite a few years. Much later, historians may record that the Earth-shattering wake-up call we received in early 2020 – ultimately jolted us into urgently working to reinvent our grossly unsustainable relationship with the biosphere that gives us life.

As the title suggests, this book is all about what Mother Nature is trying to tell us regarding how our civilization is rapidly destroying that biosphere. Her OUTCRY is abundantly evident in phenomena like declining insect, bird and fish populations, rising global temperatures, storms, fires, melting ice at the poles, and dead zones in the oceans; to name just a few.

The title also suggests an OUTCRY from nine "big picture" scientists who have connected the dots between human behavior and the deterioration of nature's ability to keep us alive. On the front cover, the highly acclaimed filmmaker and environmentalist, James Cameron, sums up our dilemma in stark terms and asks the question that we strive to answer in this book:

"The world is completely delusional and going to hell in a handbasket as fast as humanly possible. The only relevant question is: How do we make the crash as soft a landing as possible for some kind of continuation of human civilization?"

Following the *outcry* from nature and the nine scientists in Part One, most of this book is aimed at what we can do about re-inventing our living arrangements enough to slow, stop or reverse the damage we have already done. In other words, what can be done – soon enough – to prevent the extinction of Homo sapiens? Some scientists have suggested that we must give half of the planet back to nature in order to survive. The problem is that there is no global conversation regarding a plan for how that might be accomplished.

Throughout the book, we describe an envisioned, highly-efficient, futuristic, luxurious and ultra-sustainable, coast-to-coast living corridor that could be developed in the USA and thus serve as a model for the rest of the world. We're talking about a spectacular new way of life, where all residents will enjoy free access to food, housing, clothing, transportation and the best healthcare. This new transcontinental corridor would also feature a totally new economy that rewards less consumption of physical stuff. How we might be able to turn that vision into a reality before 2030 is the focus of this book.

The primary question as we develop that futuristic living corridor is: "How green is green enough?" Since we can't be sure of the answer, we must totally re-design every aspect of our civilization, and even then, it may not be enough to save us. Some scientists have concluded that we have waited too long to make much of a difference. Perhaps those scientists haven't been thinking outside the box enough – when it comes to what we humans can accomplish when we throw the old, ineffective, playbook out the window.

Accepting defeat is not an option – as we simply cannot let our children down. We must also think about the billions of children who will follow them. As Dr. E.O. Wilson says, *“We have enough intelligence, goodwill, generosity, and enterprise to turn Earth into a paradise both for ourselves and for the biosphere that gave us birth.”*

So, let’s get busy and just do it. Hopefully, this book will provide readers with some of the knowledge and inspiration needed to help spark that crucial *conversation* regarding a complete reinvention of our civilization. And if we do this right, we are confident that Mother Nature will be delighted to see us survive and thrive indefinitely on this very special planet.

“The one process now going on, that will take millions of years to correct, is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly our descendants are least likely to forgive us.”

– E.O. Wilson

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