



Excerpt from

EMBERS OF HOPE: EMBRACING LIFE IN AN AGE OF ECOLOGICAL DESTRUCTION AND CLIMATE CHAOS

by Bonita Eloise Ford

What This Book is About

I am concerned we are killing the living world that makes our survival possible. I want to imagine a healthy future for the children I know; right now, I worry about the hardship they will have to bear in their lifetimes.

When I chat with people, be they neighbours or strangers, most agree that things are not working in some way: the state of our environment is dire, our economies are unstable, and our political systems do not serve the average citizen. In addition, many of us may be dealing with personal challenges such as a serious illness, the loss of a loved one, or other trauma. It's not easy to deal with all of this and still keep our hearts open.

The future of life on Earth is uncertain and our lifetimes are finite. Considering our own deaths as well as the possibilities of climate catastrophe, and perhaps even our collective extinction, shows us what we have to lose. If we are to find happiness in the face of this, I believe it is up to us to create it while making a contribution to the world.

Embers of Hope is about doing just that: embracing life in uncertain times. In this book, we explore death in order to reconnect with our vitality, and we confront ecological devastation in an effort to rediscover our oneness with all of life. Although reflecting on these things may feel uncomfortable or scary at first, ultimately they lead to uncovering what is truly important to each of us.

Personally, my perspective has been radically transformed by the deaths of a dear friend and a close family member. I learned through them to be grateful, to do small meaningful things each day, to give back to the community, and to let go, so that when it's my time to die, hopefully I can be at peace.

My loved ones' journeys helped me see our global ecological crisis through new eyes. Previously, I thought there were only two options: be hopeful and do everything in my power to change things, or accept that there's nothing I can do and give up. I now try to hold *both* perspectives: I am doing what I can to foster a healthier world *and* make peace with the end; I am nurturing new possibilities *and* trying to be open to receiving what life brings.

When we take the step of acknowledging our own mortality, how does this affect the way we live? When we look at the threats to our planet home, how does this compel us to act?

We can nurture ourselves and the life around us through our choices. Those choices can be as simple as helping a neighbour, or they can be as significant as protecting a forest or starting a nonprofit to serve food-insecure people in our community. If the end is near, then now is the best time to appreciate life: to feel the air on our faces, to sing, to sit under a tree, to hug a friend.

I hope this book will help you realise or remember how you want to live. May this nourish the seeds of possibility and the embers of hope that you carry.

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Bonita teaches permaculture (ecological design), Nonviolent Communication (cooperative communication), Reiki (energy work), and gardening. She has led workshops around the world for over 18 years. Bonita loves talking to the plants, eating wild foods, and dancing barefoot.

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