

SSAAP Quarterly Newsletter

Holiday Edition XXXV, 2021



In Loving Memory of John Stewart, SSAAP's humble and brilliant attorney. Thank you for all the years of partnership, of tutorship, of friendship, of trust. In life we learn gratitude; in death we learn the humility that comes from deep Love. You are, and will be, dearly missed and dearly Loved. You are irreplaceable and this is the true mark of a life well lived. Your service to SSAAP is legendary. We Love you and you will always be a part of us here, in Africa. You are the very roots, the sturdy earthline, of SSAAP itself.





Sunflowers are the human flower, she said to me; they are humans in flower form: sunflowers grow easily, through seeds, and they grow tall; then, as they are dying, they hunch over, and eventually just fall back to the ground when they die. They get tired, like we do, but they come back to life in another way – even after they die. They come back to life again through all the seeds they produce in their single center... and they bring back enormous color to the world ~ this is the sunflower, she smiled.



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

“Life begins where fear ends.”

- Osho



Life Itself is the Gift



The holidays are a quiet time to expand and massage our awareness – of what is, of what we hold dearest and deepest in our sacred hearts. Africa has a tendency to bring about the most profound appreciation for the day-to-day experience of being human, in a rugged climate with little mercy for human suffering. Africa has motivated me to realize that every day is a gift, and every moment: an opportunity to evolve, possibly even exponentially, our awareness. Awareness is the single most important strength for any human being on the planet ~ sharpen your awareness, and your mind turns on and tunes in to channels of consciousness you never before realized even existed.

It is my intention to express not only my gratitude to the people of Africa for bringing me to the lowest common denominator of myself, which in turn is also my highest self ~ as we are strongest in our weakest places ~, but also the people of U.S.A. who, locally, have made SSAAP a reality in the days and lives of those we work alongside in rural Africa (Zambia and Sierra Leone). They are two sides of a coin; they go together, and like every coin: it benefits from its other side.

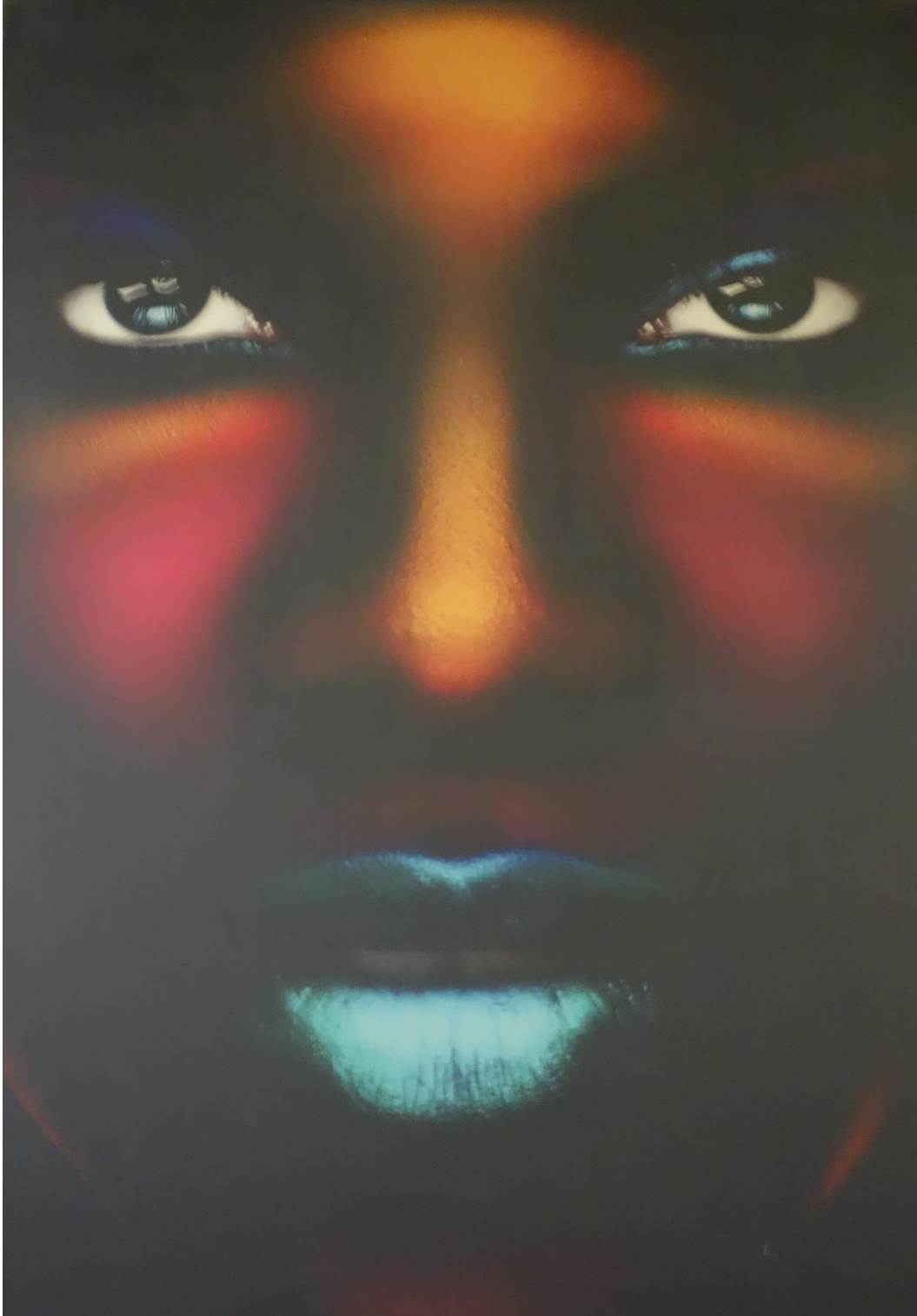
The more we get back down to Africa we get down to the roots of ourselves: our holy bones, naked to the soil. The humility of Africa shakes us to the nucleus of our beings. We touch our ancestors and we feel the necessity of the basics: food in our tummies, water on our tongues, the warmth of a blanket swaddling us and the cool breeze of the night air upon our scalps while we sleep on the floor of the Earth.

And then the wind changes; the current of the tide brings us to that space of freedom, of expression, of fearlessness in being. The stroke of a pen against paper or the brush dripping with paint upon canvas ~ that is U.S.A.: a place where opportunities manifest, and freedom of being unfolds. Freedom of speech, freedom of decision, freedom of Love, freedom of choice, freedom of being. Freedom to be the strangest person who ever walked the streets and be respected for it, simultaneously. There are no outcasts in America. It is a place where creativity is motivated by imagination found in dreams.

The holidays are a gregarious time to celebrate, to be with Loved ones and to be Love, to be part of the cosmic web: that which braids us to one another infinitely, that which we cannot untie ourselves from, as demands the Laws of the Universe. It's a time to be together and in doing so, to be part of a larger unity, a higher humanity – that which we came for, that which we will inevitably be.

Thank you, I say as a whisper muffled beneath saltwater I swallow down my throat; *thank you*, I shout in the open air market in a crowd of people, flies all over their produce and in the corners of my eyes, smiling and staring: we are all Africans; *thank you*, I scream arms open to the night sky, under a glittering festival of stars and the cold midnight air stains my cheeks and the soft baby sleeping beside me. Thank you for the gift of being alive. Africa has taught me this: day to day appreciation for the breath in my lungs, and to slow down long enough to breathe. The slower I am the sharper my instincts burn; I can feel my pulse in that oceanic silence, its synchronicity a melody with the heartbeat of the Earth.

Happy Holidays to you and your beLoveds. Thank you for being part of a project which weaves the world together through Love. There just doesn't seem to be anything as sustainable out there as Love.



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

“If you want to understand the secrets of the Universe, think in terms of energy, frequency, and vibration.”

-Nikola Tesla

The Gift of Simplicity



SSAAP's Microloan Project: Residents of Simwatachela Chiefdom, Southern Province, Zambia conduct meetings (as seen both above and below) sitting on the ground, beneath a tree, or the shade of a structure. We conduct meeting this way – and serious meetings, I should add – specifically for the Microloan Project, they are very important meetings. The Microloan Project nets approximately \$12,000 USD/year (its average loan pool amount) and this large-scale funding is typically divided into increments ranging from (in USD): $\$10 < x < \$320 < x < \$640$. The Microloan Project assists over 174 people in rural Simwatachela, Zambia; beginning in 2022, SSAAP hopes to expand its Microloan Project to three chiefdoms within Zambia: Simwatachela, Cooma, and Chona. The Zambians call the project: “*Village Banking*”. It is both a simple and yet profound way of sustainable opportunity in their society.





A Chief is a King in Africa: Our *mwamii*, Chief Simwatachela, pictured above with ba Hezah (Heather), in October 2021. Please note the Chief's position in our society is that of a king and the essential land owner of the entire chiefdom; his humble abode and cooking shelter are pictured below at his palace in Simwatachela. A man who has a home, and food, and children is a rich man in Africa. The size of his home, or whether his children are educated, are not essential to him so much that he provides his village – his community – with children. The children help to run the traditional society. That is the man's fundamental role in traditional African society. Africans always tell me that they have children for the village, not for themselves. It is their contribution to the society, and they would not contemplate living without children. It's part of the very roots of their society. They don't plan them, they just have them – they stay with Nature in that way, and that comes with many pros and cons to a Westerner as we cannot imagine bearing our children this way. It is against our Western society. But in Africa, this is typical: children with a father they have never seen, or with a mother who is one of many wives; nearly every mother in Africa is a single mother. This is one system in Africa I used to abhor I have come to understand, even appreciate a certain value in it, now that I have become a part of it. I see it so differently than I used to. This is not a system in Africa which creates poverty – as I used to believe; rather, this is a system that creates *abundance* in Africa. It is a system of interconnectedness and community and universality. It is a system that we barely, if at all, can relate to nor intellectualize in the West. My mother always says: "Africa is just one big family." Her time in Africa taught her this profound Truth.

In Africa, the village raises the child – and our contribution to the village: our child[ren]. They *are* the village. We take care of them when they are young and vulnerable; they take care of us when we are old and vulnerable. This is the cycle of Nature, the cycle of life. We give and we receive, thus creating sustainable abundance not only within the societal structure, but also within Nature itself. Nature is pleased when we flow with it, not fight against it.





Christine Sianzyeele is 54 years old, and tied to her back is her third great grandchild. The child is her *muzungulu-gulu*, meaning 'great grandchild' in ciTonga.

The Gift of Art



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

“How deeply you touch another life is how rich your life is.”

~ Sadhguru



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

The Gift of Nature

Africans don't feel entitled to a long life; I have come to realize that the idea of living to be old is a notion of privilege, or a privileged society. And as a result of life not being a guarantee, every day matters ~ there is deep abundance in this. Africans are funny about time: they are always late, and don't respect or regard time as we do in the West. And yet, Africans don't waste their lives, but rather, they seem to waste time. Why do they waste time? Because they somehow know it is an infinite resource... they somehow intuit that they have forever, that their life stretches beyond death, and don't differentiate according to watches and clocks, the minutes and the hours; Africans are unburdened by time, and they flow with a grace I have, over time, recognized as one of their greatest attributes. There is a fluidity to time in Africa that I do not experience with its rigidity in the West. Things get done in Africa – not by a clock, but rather, on Nature's time.

I am a contradiction. And that has suited me well; over time, I have learned how to wear it. I don't keep track of time – and yet I always know what time it is – sometimes even down to the minute. I

was born two weeks after my due date and have been late ever since. I am always busy – and yet I always have time. I am never without something to do, but I always have time for people. I have learned that stinginess in life has less to do with money as it has to do with our time. This is the most precious resource in our lives: *time*. Not money, because time is given to us by Nature. Money is not.

My whole life has been an improvisation. My heart isn't always with my body, my body not always with my heart. Sometimes I leave my heart behind when I move around this planet. It is currently in a few places where I am physically not. Nature is tricky in this way: it separates us into many pieces, if we allow it to. Part of me is sitting under the huge thorn tree on our compound in Simwatachela, my favorite place on our compound; the other part of me is sitting next to a stream in Rocky Mountain National Park, in Colorado, U.S.A.

We have to give back whatever we take, whatever we extract from this life: that is the meaning of a human being flowing with Nature; that is the meaning of our human existence within Nature.

Extracting the raw Nature out of Africa, out of being here in the wild; no wonder I have power, for it is Divine power, and I am merely its vessel, its channel. Your Divine purpose here has so much more to do even than with you. Things manifest here on Earth – here on this dimension – originating from another realm first. We have this life – this chance – to wake up to spirit, not just our body must wake up every day, but also our spirit.

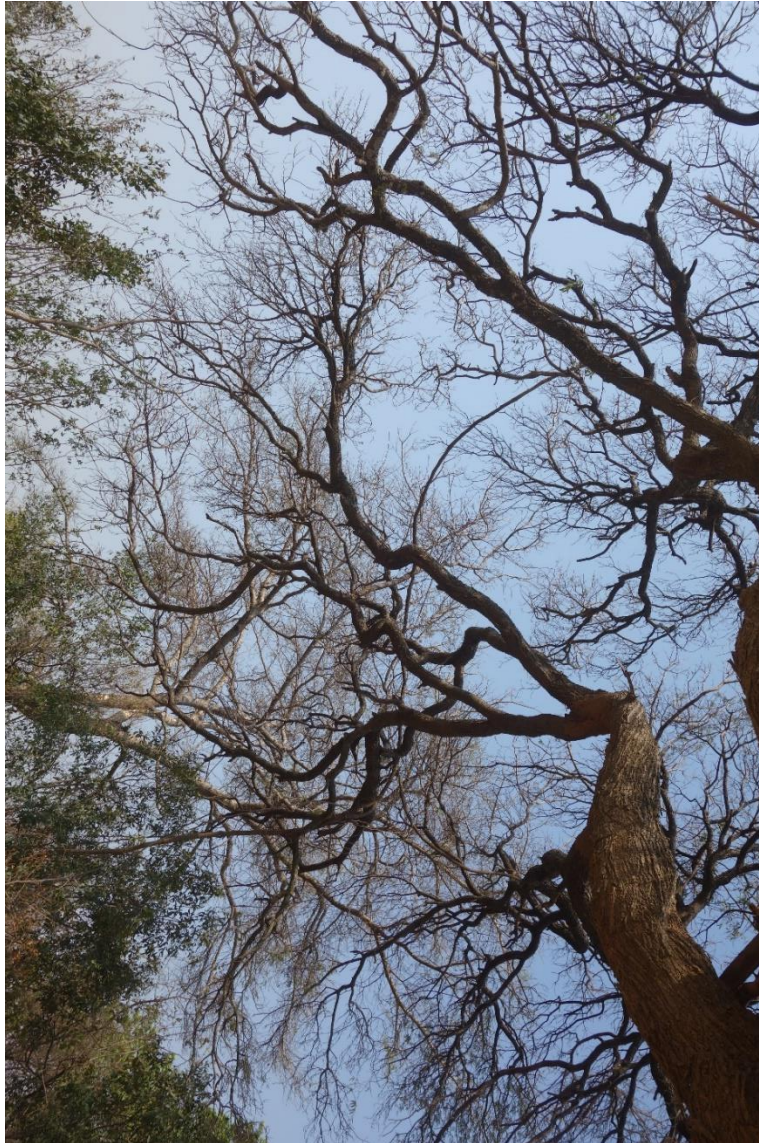
Nature makes everyone equal - and - it makes everyone different; this brilliant conflict is what creates and shapes us as women, as men. Conflict is a gift: though sometimes quite unpleasant, it is the single greatest impetus for personal growth and widespread evolution of mankind on the planet. When we embrace conflict, rather than hiding from it, we have given permission to the Laws of the Universe to guide us ~ rather than our small, limited selves.



Ode to the Trees

“All things share the same breath - the beast, the tree, the man. The air shares its spirit with all the life it supports.”

~ Chief Seattle



It's not about healing the planet so much as it is healing our relationship to it, thus healing ourselves.

Therefore our habitat – our lodging, here on Earth – can be more secure, build on a more solid foundation of purity than ever it has before. People speak of working with traditional, indigenous leaders when they seek of finding a channel back to the sacred Earth ... and while such people (indigenous leaders of tribes and communities) have innate wisdom of the Earth, they are still human – just like you. The innate wisdom of the Earth that you seek is within you. To heal the energy of the human sphere here on Earth, you need something deeper than human energy. You need metaphysics for that, even telepathy will do!

Separating ourselves from our habitat is the only way that we have come to destroy it; failure to realize that we are part of the Earth and that She is part of us, and that as human beings we are entirely inseparable from this great celestial body, was our mistake. But we still have an opportunity! We can wake up to our position on the planet! We can make that fundamental change, in our intellectual mind and our subconscious hearts.

The shaman within each of us is called... to wake up our Spirits. Our bodies wake up each and every day, but our Spirits? That is another issue altogether.

Healing the Earth requires being with the Earth which requires us, as humans, become part of the Earth – or, bear the sentiment that we *are* the Earth. Most of us remove ourselves in some way or another from the very thing most precious within us: the Earth within. We are the Earth: its microcosm; the same Nature that exists externally in the birds, the trees, the stars, the grasses, also exists within us; the same Nature that we seek, the Divine energy we utilize for medicine in our bodies, inspiration for our songs, healing for our hearts: the leaves, the snow, the sun, the moon, the heat, the cold, the frost, the fire, the rock and the rain, the canyons and cliffs, the rivers and sea exist within us. We have seasons, too: we blossom, we flower, we bleed, we breed, we sigh, and we die upon the seashore. All this Earth is inside of us – the Nature we need is the Nature we are. We must choose only to wake up to Spirit: this is it, and this is all.

And so we leave Nature in vain for our noisy urban lives in the oil world and our smog-polluted sheets which bear witness to the blood-soaked hands we all possess: in guilt and in shame, for losing touch with the Source: our Source: Nature.

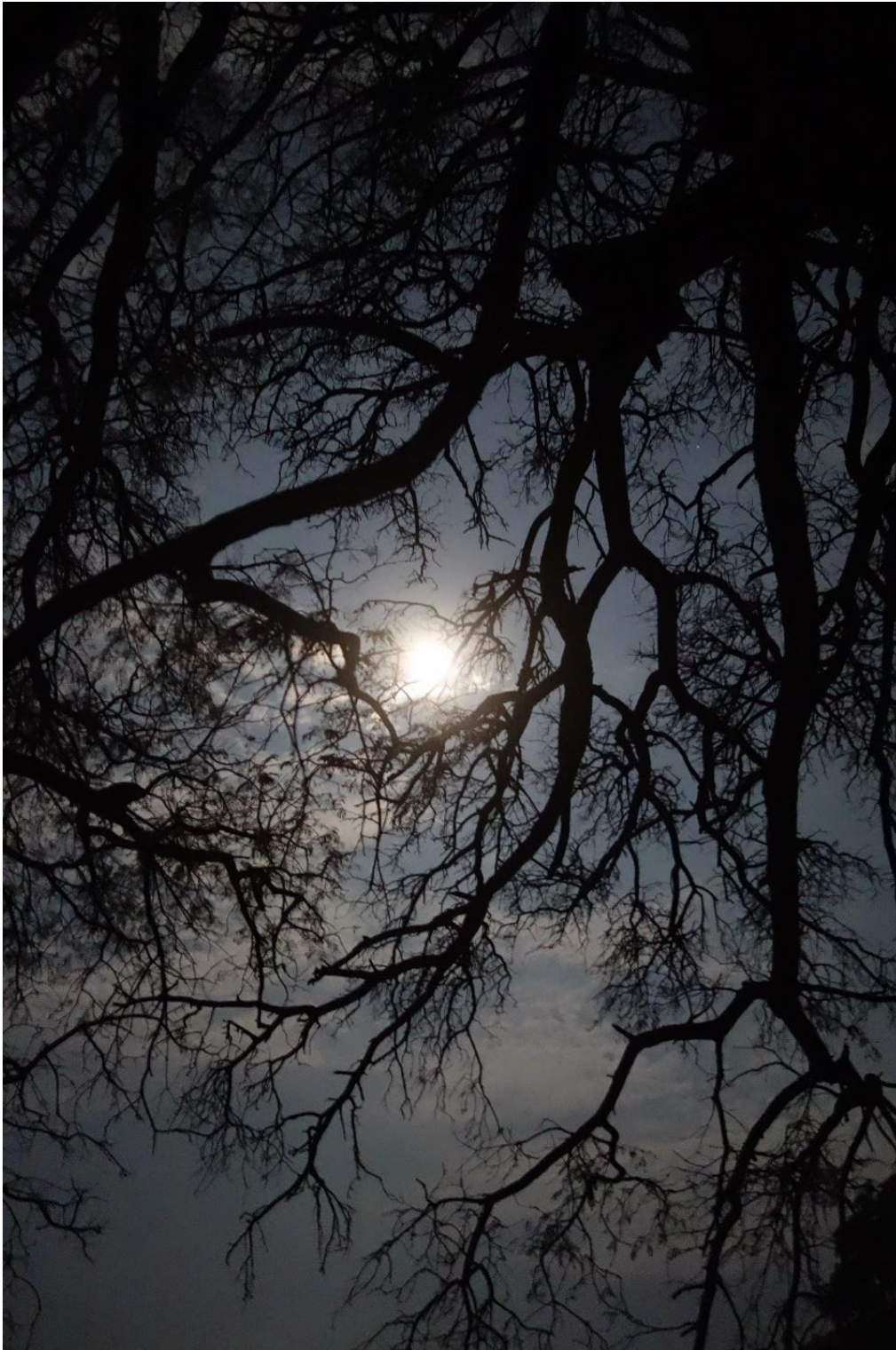
The medicine man, the indigenous healer, the shaman, the visionary is alive and well within each of us ~ go inside, and wake Her up. There is no need to seek out a village elder, a sadhu, an external force, when what we seek is already within us... go within, go within, go within.

Being within Nature is being within all its energies: bird, leaf, tree, cloud, water, sun, star, sky, moon. Connection to Spirit and Earth is thus connection to all energies She bears upon Her.

Nature is where we all shine most brilliantly! It is our Highest selves! Nature is such an everyday part of our world here in Africa that we don't even have to seek it ~ in fact, we can't get away from it, even if we wanted to! We live morning, noon, night with the sun and the wind and the rain and the holy ghosts alive in the potency of raw Nature: stars and trees and lunar energy. We have no shield from it, and then: we become it, no separation. Africa has taught me that the power resting within me is the Divine power of Nature, as I am its vessel, its channel. And that is bound to be an upsetting force for some – if not many – who are disconnected with Nature and Her elements. We disconnect with Earth, and we disconnect with both our higher and deeper selves, the result: a lost humanity. I always say that I answer to Nature first, human beings second. Universal Law first, human law second. That's why being in Nature makes us feel so grounded and alert, so alive, while at the same time frees our Spirits to another [higher] realm. Of all the things in Africa, Nature comes first for me – its force the strongest. It is what keeps me here when I am so frustrated or disappointed or the project isn't going as I planned or that I cannot wrap my Western mind around an African context ... Nature keeps me alive – thriving! – it keeps me going here, and everywhere.

Lately, I have realized the magic in the everyday, seemingly “monotonous” moments which are in fact the precious moments of our lives: falling asleep at night, washing the dishes, taking a bath. So grateful am I to be a part of this existence.

In the last few weeks, I recognize there is a difference in the moon here in Africa. The moon in North America is cold-blooded; the moon in Africa, is warm-blooded.



And the planet, She needs both. She needs warm-blooded for Her sacred alchemy; she needs cold-blooded to replenish, and to sustain. They are, indeed, two sides of the same coin – and the coin needs both its sides.

SSAAP has already begun a program for tree initiation in Simwatachela, and continues its tree-planting initiatives in Cooma Chiefdom, with a new international partnership – in India and in Mexico.

SSAAP and its Partnership (India, Mexico, International Group):
Nonviolence Through the Messages of Trees



The land donated to SSAAP by Chief Cooma to begin SSAAP in Cooma Chiefdom is incredible – rolling hills, even a gentle stream.



The first steps in a Nonviolent Economy begin with finding alternatives: how to get food and water for local people, and how to maintain human connection.

SSAAP would like to partner with this organization during its Nonviolence Campaign, in an effort to build a relationship, beginning at this time, and sustaining for the next decade – or even potentially inevitably – through creating relationships with local people, the Earth, and international partnerships between people: human to human, through the planting of trees.

The project should involve a Philosophy Mission, Action, and the Spirit of Nonviolence.

*

Philosophy Mission: Hand-outs in Africa do not help local people – but rather, they harm them. In the spirit of Nonviolence, and encouraging people to participate in their own well-being, the simple act of planting trees will assist local people to connect to many things.

So much violence is currently active through a disconnection of human beings to their environment, to the Earth. Trees provide oxygen for human beings to breathe, and the more trees, the more rain will visit an area. In the Southern Province of Zambia, where SSAAP is located, the rainfall is inconsistent. The recent pattern, as Zambia has been affected heavily by Climate Change, is: the first year – heavy monsoon rains, the second year – moderate rains, the third year – little to no rains/drought, the fourth year – no rain. Therefore, drought and starvation have become commonplace to the Tonga people of Southern Province, Zambia. Trees will help this crisis significantly.

The local people have little to no science base in their culture, thus very little knowledge of how the presence or absence of trees in their world serve them. Rather, they cut them down in high volumes to make charcoal, which they can then sell for \$1-\$3 per bag. Local people do not value trees, and do not have the understanding that without trees, there can be no survival for them, either.

Action: Planting trees will help people to connect with the Earth, and connect to one another. Through a partnership, SSAAP will help to connect local African people to people from all over the world: Europe, Central and South America, and potentially other parts of Africa.

A project should never be focused upon money and funding, because most sustainable projects in Africa need either very little funding. While funding is incredibly important, other resources such as time, patience, and Love are just as important to a project. Water wells surely cost money – but compared to a monthly water bill in the States, the cost of a water well in Africa is fractional ~ and the water well, maintained properly, lasts for a lifetime in Africa. It is a good investment in humanity, in eradication of poverty, in Mother Earth. Projects need organisation, dedication, and sustainability – as well commitment from the local people and the implementation organisation. When we are driven by money, our projects are not sustainable, and they are not Love-based. Nonviolent projects can never be driven by funding or by money. Therefore, something as simple and profound as planting trees can change the face of Africa as we know it, and planting trees through local seeds and seedlings is entirely *free*. The currency of money is important for paying the contractor to dig or drill a water well, yes, but the aim is the village receiving the water well and the livelihood of the contractor.

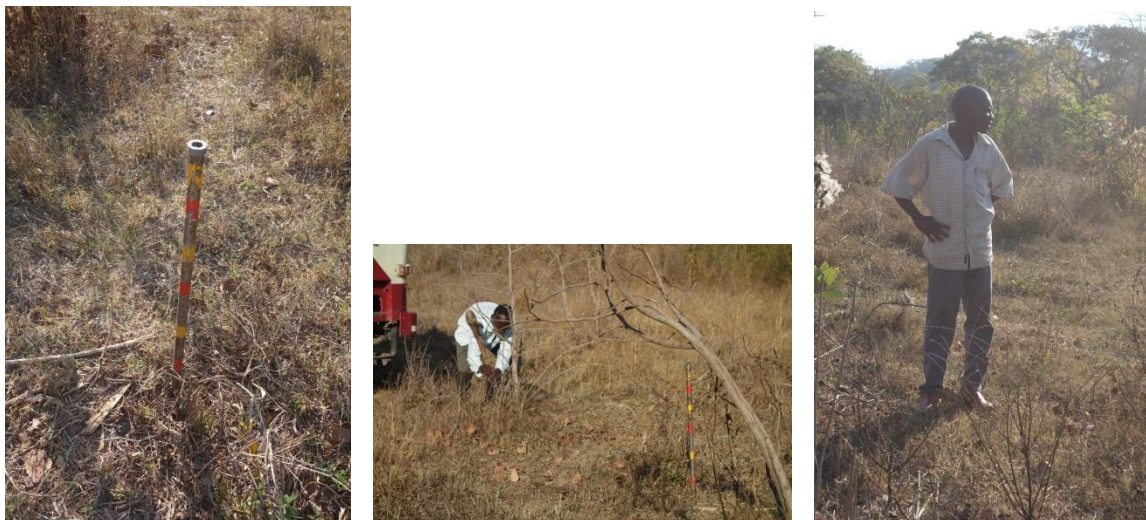
The *Nonviolence Through the Messages of Trees* is also an educational campaign. Through planting seedlings, we will have the opportunity to dialogue with local people regarding the meaning of trees,

and their inherent value, as well the meaning of human beings and human relationships to one another, and their inherent value. Valuing human connections and connections to the Earth are part of the Nonviolence Campaign, as well a step forward in the powerful international connections to one another that are needed on the planet at this time. The centrepiece of the educational campaign is that human life is not cheap, and our existence on the planet is a gift, and our habitat cannot be recreated once it is destroyed, and therefore our habitat on the planet is not cheap. Through the cycle of Love and Nonviolence, as well the educational campaign, both interrelationships between human beings and their planet can be repaired.

The project will commence in Simwatachela Chiefdom, the focal area of the project, until it eventually shifts into Cooma Chiefdom – the new SSAAP project site. In Cooma Chiefdom, a well was drilled recently for the project, to serve as the centre of its irrigation base for an irrigation project SSAAP is initiating in an effort to provide year-round water to people who wish to plant both vegetables and crops for further food sustainability for their families. The water well in Cooma Chiefdom will, as well, be a source of water for the *Nonviolence Through the Messages of Trees* partnership. The Cooma Chiefdom SSAAP site has a large space of land, which the project does not have in Simwatachela Chiefdom, which may be utilised for a large-scale tree-planting project, so that it might expand in the next decades or even century to come. The Cooma Chiefdom project SSAAP site will allow for the growth of the project that the Simwatachela Chiefdom project site will not.

The idea for this project is that people will bring ten local tree seedlings and in return will receive lunch that day. So the emphasis of the project will be people trading seedlings for a meal for the day. This will mean more to them than I can express. Food is the currency in Africa, and food means Love to them. Through providing a meal for them for every 10 seedlings they bring, this will help them in providing incentive, in the initial stages of the project. 10 seedlings = 1 lunch for a local person.

Water Source at Project Site: We arrived at the site on Monday, 6 September 2021 to drill the central borehole for SSAAP’s Headquarters in Cooma Chiefdom, Southern Province, Zambia which will also serve as the centerpiece for the Irrigation Project, located in the center of the land.



Likumbi, our Contractor and Driller, stakes out the land prior to drilling, in order to do a water survey study ~ searching for the best place to put the well, which will yield the highest volume of water to make the Irrigation System work to the best of its ability.

SSAAP HQ 20/10/21
Afarma

10	142
25	102
30	89
35	80
40	83
45	87
50	96
55	108
60	112
65	125
70	134
75	156
80	163

Likumbi typically tests two points at every site for water, so Point 1 and Point 2. After conducting the water survey with his little machine from Japan, he looked at me and said: “These numbers are so good, I am only doing one point on this site, Point 1, and I can already tell we will get a very good well here.”



When I walked through the clearing in the trees, this was the sight I observed:





Radiance, my daughter, and Heather (myself) at the new SSAAP-Cooma Chieftdom water site.



The Gift of Water

It is only in taking water on the head: the weight, the sheer labor of it, the time it takes in the burning African sun, that one realizes how precious every drop is.

And this is precisely the gift of water.

There is a saying: “Water is Life,” but I wish to amend it. “Water is Medicine,” SSAAP’s driller, Likumbi, always says – and he says it after he has taken a bath. He says he feels like a new person after every bath he takes. *Water is medicine*: I feel this after swimming in a warm, brown river in a village in Sierra Leone. The water is the perfect temperature to cool down from the sweltering humidity, but not too cold to give you a chill. The current is perfect for a good swim, but not a bad strain. Water is medicine: medicine to swim in, medicine to drink, medicine to get clean in. Water is medicine, indeed.

Since its birth in 2009/2010, SSAAP has served over 40 villages with machine-drilled water wells in Southern Province, Zambia: Simwatachela Chiefdom, Cooma Chiefdom, Sipatunyana Chiefdom, and Siachatema Chiefdom; SSAAP has served over 20 villages with hand-dug water wells in Sierra Leone: Tonkalili District, Port Loko District, Moyamba District, Kambia District – located in Southern, Western, and Central Provinces of Sierra Leone.

SSAAP currently has four water wells organized for Zambia in 2022, and in Sierra Leone-2022: twenty-two wells, currently. We thank you for the bounty of this gift in rural Africa where clean drinking water is not only hard to come by, but is more or less a treasure, or as we say in the village: gold. *Water is gold in Africa*. Water is, in fact, gold all over the world. It is the Earth’s treasure.

Water Initiatives: Simwatachela, Zambia



This was the first water well ever drilled for SSAAP, in 2010. It is the oldest of the SSAAP wells, and located centrally in our community: *Sibooli-C Village*. The children draw water from the local water well, or ‘*cikuju*’ in our local dialect, called *ciTonga*.





The children have the wisdom of the water, for not having lived with a water well for a portion of their lives, they have come to appreciate the abundant blessing of what water really is – and will be the last people on Earth who will waste it.





In ciTonga, our local language, and through the help of my personal translator (my daughter!), SSAAP is able to connect with the children to learn more about their innate wisdom of water: the taproot of their lives.









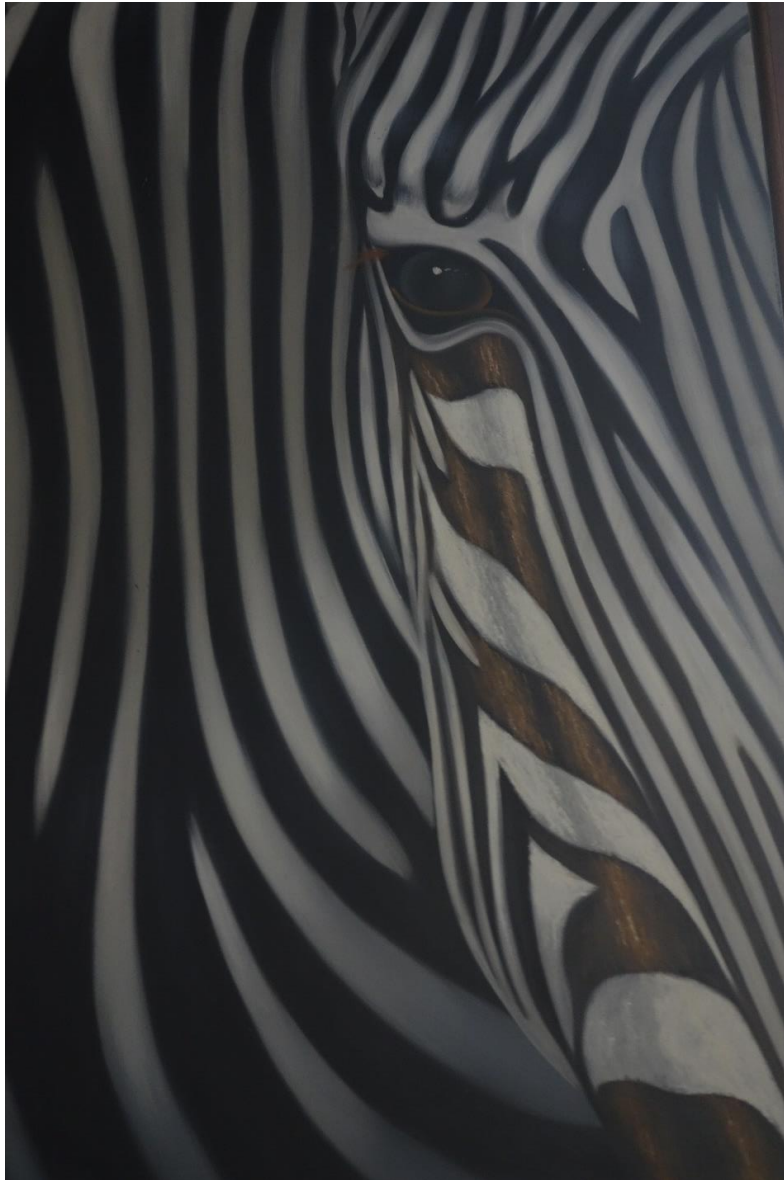
Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

*“Love is preserved by wisdom,
destroyed by demand,
tested by doubt,
nourished by longing.
It blossoms with faith
and grows with gratitude.”*

~ Sri Sri Ravi Shankar



But I know the mud, and I know the lotus that comes up from it, arising from its crystalline element. I know them both ~ and my value to the planet is essential to this.



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

The Gift of Animals

Animals are essential family members to all world cultures. In the States, our dogs, cats, fish, birds, even reptiles are family members: they sleep in our beds, they have their own bowls and plates, they visit the animal doctor's office, the veterinarian, and we think of them as no less than our children, our friends, our companions.

In Africa, animals are workers – as are family members to a family; no one is exempt from working in the fields, or the home, or fetching water: the women, the men, the children, the animals. Every animal has a designated purpose, every animal assigned a duty. Our cats are responsible for killing the rodents which are unwanted on our compound: rats, mice, even the reptilians: snakes.



Our cats are the first to notify us of the impending danger of snakes. They tend to act strange, and their ears spike up, and they growl or hiss – sometimes, they will kill the snake and even eat it.

We currently keep seventeen cats at our home, ranging from newborn kittens to matron cats. Here is the issue: a cat doesn't live long in the village, not like in U.S.A. Their lifespan is typically seven years, eight if we are lucky. Their lives in the wild African bush are typically very strenuous, even with our pampering (!), they still have difficult lives.





Cattle Project-Zambia: SSAAP is working with a partner organization which donated ten cows to SSAAP-Zambia in October 2021. The Cattle Project works as follows: ten groups of four members each. Each group has one Group Leader. The Group Leader will receive the first of the cows (each group begins with one cow). The gestation period of a cow, as is a human being the same: nine months. After the cow reproduces, its offspring will be given to the second member of the group (after it stops milking from its mother). The next reproduction will be given to the third group member, and so forth until all four group members have one cow. At this point, when all four group members are satisfied, any further reproductions may be kept by the members of the group (they no longer have to share after each member of the group has at least one cow).

Each group is an assortment of both women and men.

Just to give a broader scope for which how much one cow means to the village: one household contains approximately $8 < x < 12$ members. On average, let us say that each family has ten people. If each group member has one family, and there are ten family members who are served from one cow, and there are forty group members (10 groups x 4 members each), then 10 family members x 40 group members = 400 people in the village served, minimally. In reality, I expect the Cattle Project to reach as many as six hundred to eight hundred people. What a treasure this is to us! Thank you for your partnership!



Goats and sheep also provide a fundamental part of our lives here in the village. We do not live without them.



“All life is sacred and all creation related. What we do effects the whole Universe. So let us walk in balance with Mother Earth and all Her peoples.”

~ Smiling Bear



The Gift of Food



Fresh vegetables are our daily bread and they help in so many ways to communicate their nutrients to the fibers of our cells and the brains of our bodies. If Africans living in the remote areas of the Continent could have access to a multitude of vitamins that food variety yields, the face of Africa would change forever and the people would be even mightier than they already are.



Through SSAAP's Water Reticulation System(s) – the newest phase of our work in Africa – we aim to encourage multiple harvests for the subsistence farmers that SSAAP lives with and works with. The Water Reticulation Systems are quite simple in their engineering, and using a simple spraying model, they have the ability to water fields and gardens year-round, ensuring numerous harvests annually.

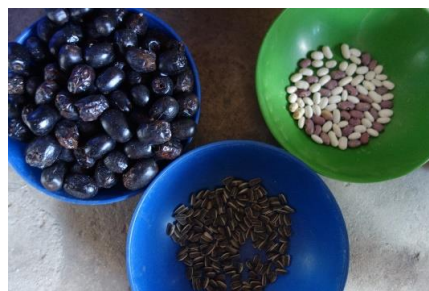
Open-Air Market: Typical in Africa, fresh, locally-grown, organic, non-chemically processed produce is available both internally – within the villages – as well roadside, or in designated marketplaces within town centers: the more urbanized parts of Africa.



SSAAP hopes that after the Water Reticulation System(s) commence (which is planned for after the rainy season, so approximately April/May 2022) the local people in the village will not only have enough produce and crops to feed their families, but also a surplus which may result in the establishment of a new marketplace, which could potentially generate income for their families and themselves.



SSAAP also hopes to introduce a greater nutritional variety into their food. Things grown easily, for example: carrots, garlic, green beans, are not commonplace in their everyday meals. Such food enhances food texture, vitamin content, and nutritional value to a meal. Beans and legumes, very simple to grow, are also not found often in the daily meals among village people, and as most people in the village eat little to no meat (animals are for rearing in the village – not for consumption), their protein sources are lacking. SSAAP hopes to educate and introduce more protein-rich sources of food to the people: easy to grow, as their seeds are created from the previous harvest!



Sunflowers are easy to grow as well, and provide oil as well as seeds for consumption and future harvests.



Radiance Loves to cook and so do I, and our food is our medicine – our medicine is our food.

I cannot name the last time we were sick in Zambia; our diet is that of vegetables, chipatis, lentils, and Indian pickles (*achaar*) – we tend to cook mostly an Indian cuisine in the village, as there are so many Indians living in Zambia, their food is imported to Zambia and available at Indian stores in town.



Nuer spoon, pictured above, given as a gift to Radiance from our Nuer Village in Ethio-South Sudan.

The Gift of Shelter

“Be realistic: Plan for a Miracle.”

~ Osho



SSAAP's Headquarters and my home since 2004, when I was a Peace Corps Volunteer: Radiance mentioned to me just the other day that our home in Sibooli-C Village, Simwatachela Chiefdom, isn't even a home. *It's more of a person than a home, she declared, it went past the point of being a structure long ago. Now it is its own entity ~ it breathes like we do, and feels ... it is alive, watching over us, protecting us...*



Part of my Love of Africa comes from its housing. In Africa, you can build a home with your hands, and from the Earth. Of course, I am hardly skilled to build a home ~ but I know how it is done: the materials used, where to find the materials, how to mold the bricks or find the river stones for its structure, the grass for its roof, the wooden planks for its roof. I adore the idea of free housing, or Earth-sponsored housing. Not only does this model accommodate everyone: those who have money and those who do not, but it also brings us closer to the Earth when we live in a home made simply and modestly from it.



SSAAP-Simwatachela Compound: Many guest houses have been built on our compound in anticipation of visitors, hopefully after the pandemic dissipates and the comfort level with traveling heightens once more. Please come visit us! Our life in the village is something I want to share with all...

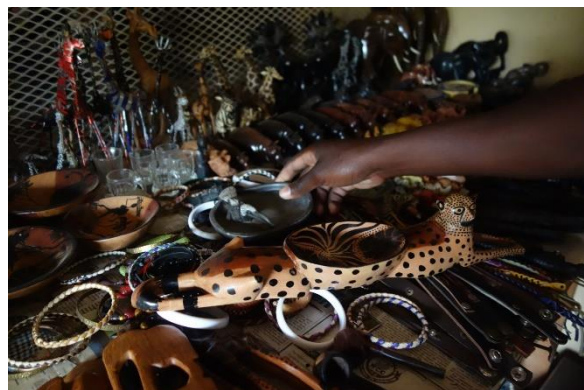




You have an important mission on the planet that only you will come to recognize I have told her: half of you comes from one of the wealthiest worlds on the Earth, and the other half of you comes from one of the poorest worlds on the Earth. But you know they are equal in value, even if they don't; you will find a way to balance the worlds as you mature. This is your education; this is your home-school. This is your incredibility, the very essence of you. The task is heavy, but you are up for it – you came here for it: this is the work of the poet and the humanitarian, who are one in the same. An artist doesn't simply create Art, but rather, is Art. Let your life be a living Art.

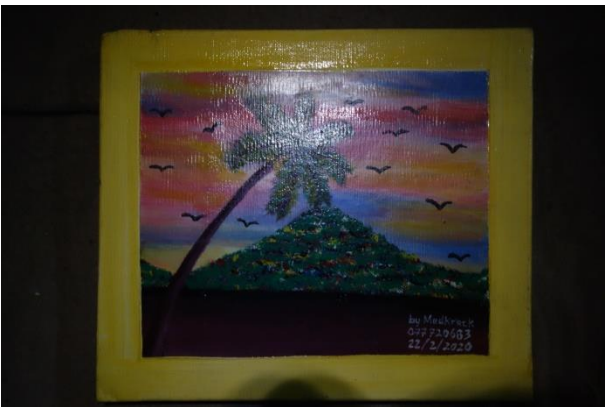
The Gift of Art

SSAAP works with both female and male artisans in the villages, as well in urban areas (such as Mosi-oa-Tunya, Zambia: Victoria Falls, at the Zambezi River point between Zambia and Zimbabwe) to create art: seed jewelry, clay art, paintings, sculptures (soapstone, Zambezi rock), woven baskets, woven country cloth (in rural Sierra Leone). We typically sell art around the holidays – either in-person, or virtually. This year, we will be selling art virtually for SSAAP. The website for the market is at the following link: <https://www.ssaap.org/world-gift>. Please contact me directly, as well, if you are interested in purchasing any art for the holiday season from SSAAP.





SSAAP writes (usually handwritten) contracts with all its artisans, painters specifically.





Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

*When you can accept
that you can relate to
no one absolutely,
and that no one else
can absolutely relate to you,
you have then fully
accepted yourself.*

*And it has nothing to do with Love ~ sometimes the more we Love someone, the less we can relate;
because in the end we all reach the same place
but we each ultimately must reach it alone
and the more we deepen our Love for one another
the more it doesn't matter
whether or not anyone can relate to us
at all
our Love no longer based upon condition
but rather, upon the cohesion of Souls, not egos.*

*Cosmic order has it
that we are all to be
uniquely whole
and separate beings;
intimacy with others thus changes:
it is then
not a need
but rather
something that
polishes
our already-
wholeness.*

The Gift of Being Within



Photography of wall-hanging art courtesy of Mwiluzi Lodge, Lusaka

“Life is a journey. Love is the goal.”

-Osho



I always remind myself of this: Your Divine purpose here has so much more to do even than with you. Wake up each day to Spirit – not just that the body ought to wake up each day, but more importantly – the Spirit should rise within you, each day, as your body rises from your bed ... your Spirit ought to also rise...

I put myself on the level of the people in the community where we live, and I do this now unconsciously; and I believe, as a result of this, I am harder on them. I demand more of them – to take responsibility, to be more than what they are – to be what they always wanted to be... I don't ask anything of them that I don't ask of myself; I ask of myself the same. I am very hard on myself. And so I take this project very seriously; I take the people of rural Zambia and Sierra Leone very seriously. I have an opportunity to work with them, and they have an opportunity to work with SSAAP, and SSAAP has an opportunity to work with the people who support it, and therefore we are interwoven in a web of opportunity. It is too good to waste, to pass up! And therefore, I will take such an opportunity with open arms. Embrace its possibility! And the people of rural Africa, who SSAAP serves, have done the same...



The magic is in the details, and the source of the project's sustainability: *Love*. Love we have for one another, Love we have for SSAAP, and Love we all share for Africa ~ wanting such a mighty continent to stand firm, on its own two feet, without dependence, starvation, lack of suitable drinking water. We collectively are working to make Africa all that it can be: at the small-scale level, which in the end, will result in large-scale development, at the core of those we are working with: motivation and empowerment of the individual human being ~ this is the essence SSAAP seeks.



SSAAP is a water, food, and nutritional sustainability project created by the people and committed to serving the needs of the local people.



You need both. We, as a humanity, need both: Science and Spirit. We need Science, we need Spirit. Science should further the study of Spirit – it should infuse the topic with an appreciation of the Spirit, the magic within it. How many scientists, how many microscopes, how many trial runs does it take to make a vaccine? By the time it reaches Africa, it's just an injection no one wants, with no appreciation of the science behind what it took to create it. How many light years away is a star? To an African without science, it's a mere dot in the sky. To a scientist with a computer, it is an equation. But you need both; we need both. Science needs Spirit to justify its holiness, and spirit needs science to ground itself back to Earth. Science and Spirit – two sides of the same coin. And the coin, it needs both.



“And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being.”

~ Black Elk, Wichasha Wakan Oglala Lakota





Happy Holidays to you and everyone you Love ~ With Love, SSAAP (Heather, Radiance, and Gail)







“The mystic and the physicist arrive at the same conclusion; one starting from the inner realm, the other from the outer world.”

~ Fritjof Capra