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Dear Friends,

Have you ever stopped to consider the meaning and importance we give time? Have you thought about all the ways in which we find ourselves referring to time as a way to define a sense, a place, a need, or a feeling?

Look at the time. Where has the time gone? We are running out of time. Time to step it up. It'll take time. Time for something new. Time out. Time heals all wounds. End of time. Our time is now. Time is money. Time is an illusion. Endless time. Take back your time. Track your time. Time away. Time is our enemy. Time is our friend.

Rich or poor, recognized or illegitimate, the elite or the rest of us, we all find ourselves in some realm of time. We can't escape it as much as we try to fight it. Time, as they say, can be a funny thing.

CELDF as an organization has had its own interesting relationship with time. In partnership with many of you, we have been pushing against constructs of oppressive systems of law, governance, and culture that have developed over centuries. Engaged in this work we have come to accept that the fruits of our labor will often not ripen until a significant amount of time passes and possibly not even in our lifetime. Movement work requires a unique relationship to time.

Culture change, even small transformations, takes time. We have been challenging ourselves here at CELDF to ask, in the time we have, how do we manifest collective behavior that will get us to where we need to go or as we have been referring to it, getting to right relationship? This brings up questions of values, morals, and collective attributes that will make up the dimensions of being in right relationship. For years at CELDF, right relationship has been about elevating local self-determination, advancing legal rights of nature, and dismantling legal doctrines protecting corporate "rights". We continue to support this, but we've also found ourselves being advocates for other means of finding a balance between people and places beyond structures of law.

That idea of time has influenced all of us and it will be in the flow of time that we will need to face the truths. We will need to work through the reckoning of what we know and don't know, and then take the pieces of gained knowledge to create the new systemic connection, a new life that operates from that place of right relationship to one another, our systems, and our place, as human communities, all within the bigger span of ecosystems themselves.

As we move ahead in time, there is also a real need to go back in time to be in association with those who never lost the meaning of right relationship. CELDF is thankful for all the rich relationships developed over the years, including with Dina Gilio Whitaker and Valerie Vande Panne. Valerie wrote a piece entitled, "[Time is a capitalist construct. How do we extract ourselves from it?](#)" calling into question the adherence to man-created mechanized time vs. being present with time as natural rhythms dictate in order to better relate to the non-

human world. A few years back, Dina worked with CELDF comparing and contrasting the ways, perceptions, and practices between western culture and first peoples culture including pointing out relationships to time. From a western vantage, time is associated as temporal, meaning things happen in chronology or more of a straight line of cause and effect. For indigenous people time is spatial - history unfolds in relation to place. Right relationship, in all its manifestations, for people, communities, and systems will have to come to grips with how we relate to time if we are to succeed in moving away from what we currently have towards what we, the whole planet, need.

CELDf is embarking on a new era inspired by its actions and experiences over time. For CELDF, that means being both effective and efficient with time as we establish new means to engage with community groups, organizations, and institutions. For CELDF, it means educating, organizing, and impacting others in a manner that utilizes time wisely so that more and more see the need for the necessary paradigm shift. For CELDF, it means taking the time to invite and nurture the necessary relationships that will serve as aids, inspiration, and the confidence boost needed to advance the needs of communities and ultimately the system itself such that the era of control and destruction gives way to interrelation, kinship, and balance. Now is clearly the time to invest in a different, more culturally robust means of preparing people and invoking the needed action that has brought CELDF to this point in time.

With your support, CELDF can deliver the expertise it possesses, provide the outreach and education needed, and support place-based action that works to push for transformational change for people and nature; people are nature. As we have in this year's end-of-year newsletter as well as last year's, CELDF subscribes to the need to bring together the fact that we live from nature, with nature, in nature, and as nature.

Consider donating to CELDF in your end-of-the-year planning. Your financial gift means having the funding to pay for communications, content development, staff time, travel, partner collaboration, and countless hours of pro bono support to communities on the leading fronts of community rights actions. With your donation, the probable becomes possible. Time is of the essence.

Thank you for your gift in support of our work. We wish you the best for the New Year.

Sincerely,

CELDf Staff