

Greetings!

## *Playing for Change*

Reflecting on the past: Envisioning the Future  
"Imagine," A Song to Begin 2021



**The Playing for Change Foundation** brings people together from around the world with music. In this production they chose John Lenon's visionary song, "Imagine" to advance the cause of peace. The musicians and singers come from Brazil, southern India, Nepal, Tokyo, New York and beyond. "Imagine."



**Stories, insights  
and action for a  
world that works  
for all of us**

~ ~ ~

*Justice is what love  
looks like in public.*

Cornel West

~ ~ ~

### **Favorite Resources**

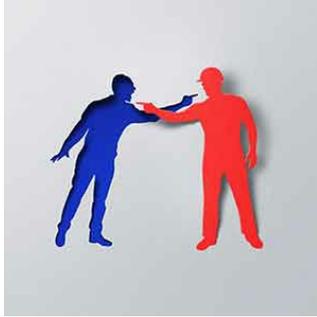
[350.org](http://350.org)  
[Climate Reality  
Project](#)  
[Next System Project](#)  
[The Small Planet  
Institute](#)  
[Local Futures  
Network of Spiritual  
Progressives](#)  
[Project Heaven on  
Earth](#)  
[Yes! magazine](#)  
[The Optimist Daily](#)

[Desert Rose Press](#)  
[VirginiaMudd.com](http://VirginiaMudd.com)

## **Reflections on the last four years in America**

***Politico* magazine presents a collection of 35 brief essays entitled "What Trump showed us about Americans" about what the past four years have revealed about us Americans.**

**I found these essays intriguing and worthwhile reading as we begin a new year and a new**

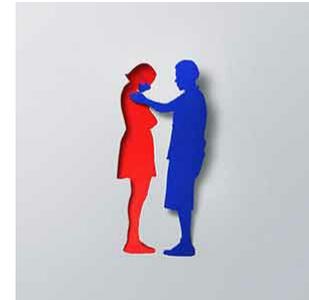


**presidency. Some of the titles in this article are:**  
 "Democracy really is a verb."  
 "The political establishment is still entrenched."  
 "Even in the Trump era, there are some big things on which Americans can agree."  
 "America is two countries."  
 "We've forgotten what respect is." [Here's the article.](#)

### Excerpts that stood out for me

"If it is not continually guarded and protected, democracy can morph into fascism in the blink of an eye."

"Ultimately, though, Trump's America gives us a way forward. It taught us the vital importance of calling on the collective power of our diversity in support of the greater good."



"We have forgotten that we are all Americans. We all fundamentally want the same things: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. If we can have something in common with our Founding Fathers of 244 years ago, surely we have common ground now. Let's look for it and stop assuming the worst of our neighbors because of their campaign yard signs. Let's make a concerted effort to debate and disagree with others but to not berate them, belittle them or call them names. Enough. *Basta ya.*"

"If the United States is to overcome the threats to its democracy, the past few years prove that Americans will need to find a patriotism grounded in national solidarity. It will need to be one of both devotion and dissent, praising progress while holding the nation accountable for its shortcomings. That is, we will need to reimagine what it means to be American in a 21st-century multiracial democracy and who is included." [Full article here.](#)

## Uplifting Stories & Innovations



### Prioritizing Food Security

The city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, long ago prioritized food security for its residents as a measure of social justice. The city has kept healthy food flowing for 2.5 million residents during the pandemic. [Read here.](#)



### Denmark to end new oil and gas exploration in the North Sea.

The EU's largest oil producer will phase out



### "Priority Status" for climate court case

An unprecedented climate lawsuit brought by six Portuguese youths is to be fast-tracked at Europe's highest court, the European Court of Human Rights. The case, which accuses 33 European nations of violating the applicants' right to life by disregarding the climate

fossil fuel extraction by 2050. They join France and New Zealand to end exploration now. "This is what climate leadership looks like.:" [Here's the article.](#)

emergency, would be granted priority status due to the "importance and urgency of the issues raised." [Read here.](#)

## Wisdom for Our Time



*It really is possible to disagree with someone's policies without hating them. Grown-ups can do that.*

*There are times a country is so tired of bull that only the truth can provide relief.*  
--Molly Ivins



*Joining with others to achieve the great possibility of America is as much fun as you can have with your clothes on.*  
--Jim Hightower



*Never doubt that a thoughtful group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*  
--Margaret Mead



### Who Will Win? A Cherokee Parable

According to the legend an old man says to his grandson that a fight is going on inside him. "It is a terrible fight, and it is between two wolves, one good and one bad." He explains that the first wolf embodies emotions and vices such as hate, greed, arrogance, dishonesty, anger, false pride, superiority and ego. The other wolf represents values and virtues such as peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, truth and compassion. The grandson considers the metaphoric battle and asks, "Which wolf will win?" The grandfather answers, "The one you feed." [Read more here.](#)

### A "Safety Bear"



**Every highway crew needs one!**

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Wishing you a truly new year



### My Column

#### "2020 Vision"

A dear friend, and the woman who married Clifford and me, Rev. Dr. Maxine Kaye, has shared with us her annual sonnet which is the heart of my column this month. Begin the new year with the music, song and poetry.

in every imaginable way.  
*Virginia / Gibi*



## To begin the New Year



*Candles of joy, despite all sadness,  
Candles of hope, where despair keeps watch,  
Candles of courage for fears ever present,  
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,  
Candles of love, to inspire all our living,  
Candles to burn the year long.*

—Howard Thurman