

MARGARET WHEATLEY | DEBORAH FRIEZE

WALK  
OUT  
WALK  
ON

The title 'WALK OUT WALK ON' is presented in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Each letter is filled with a different photograph of people walking in natural settings. The 'W' in 'WALK' shows a man and a woman. The 'O' in 'OUT' is a solid white circle. The 'W' in the second 'WALK' is filled with green foliage. The 'O' in 'ON' is also filled with green foliage. The 'N' shows a person's bare foot on a path.

A LEARNING JOURNEY INTO COMMUNITIES  
DARING TO LIVE THE FUTURE NOW

By the bestselling author of *Leadership and the New Science*



If this world does not have a place for us,  
then another world must be made.

– Zapatista saying

This book is dedicated to  
the people of the Berkana Exchange,  
who *are* making another world.

“If there is any hope for us it lies in rediscovering and recreating community—bringing forth our DNA as social animals into today’s world. Do not doubt that this is possible. Do not doubt that the resilience of life-creating conditions is present among us. Indeed, this is exactly what is happening in increasingly diverse social settings. Read *Walk Out Walk On* and see for yourself—and see your self.”

—**Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline* and coauthor of *Presence* and *The Necessary Revolution***

“Exuberant and galvanizing, this book takes us to where the future is happening. And that is not in the corridors of power but on the grassroots level where a ‘trans-local’ movement is unleashing human creativity and smarts.”

—**Joanna Macy, author of *World as Lover, World as Self* and other books**

“This book makes an outstanding contribution to the study of resilience and resilient communities in a world that is increasingly devoid of confidence and trust, one that desperately needs to be reassured that people have the power to claim their right to live and learn. This book will help inspire those warriors without weapons in tackling the issues of food security, education, health, justice, and the sustainability of our environment across the diverse communities that make up our planet Earth.”

—**Jim Varghese, Executive Director, Springfield Land Corporation; former Director-General, Government of Queensland; and Member, Order of Australia**

“A well-told tale of a journey of discovery of the arts of living. Read it with an open heart and it will take you to a soul place far beyond your normal experience. It should be read by everyone who feels an impulse to go abroad to fix the world’s poor.”

—**David Korten, author of *Agenda for a New Economy*, *The Great Turning*, and *When Corporations Rule the World***

“This is a masterpiece, lucid and illuminating. The authors narrate seven great stories of true transformation, inspiration, and leadership.”

—**Satish Kumar, cofounder, Schumacher College; editor, *Resurgence* magazine; and author of *No Destination, You Are Therefore I Am*, and other books**

“We desperately need a new approach to resist prevailing destructive systems and to renew the fabric of community and ecological health. The experiments profiled in this important book embody such visions. I hope their inspiration travels far and wide.”

—**Helena Norberg-Hodge, author of *Ancient Futures***

“This book gives insight and beauty to what is becoming the new, new world—the world beyond consumerism and all of its side effects. It is an intimate journey through communities and citizens who are creating a future with their own hearts, hands, and relationships. Written with poetic and reflective grace, it moves forward the movement toward communities and economies of gifts, generosity, local control, and care.”

—**Peter Block, author of *Community* and coauthor of *The Abundant Community***

“This is one of the most poetic, provocative, and powerful books on community-based societal change and coevolution I have read in more than forty years of working with social movements and community development, as well as with large-scale systems change in corporate settings. Deborah and Meg provide unerring conceptual clarity—inviting us to see and sense the deeper dynamics and principles that we can each call on as resources for work in our own local communities and organizations.”

—**Juanita Brown, cofounder, The World Café, and coauthor of *The World Café***

“The book is a jewel for everyone working to create a better world. Walk out of what you’ve been doing and walk on to these stories and experiences made rich by reflection. Walk on to deep truths acknowledged here. Walk on to wisdom shared.”

—**Angela Blanchard, CEO, Neighborhood Centers Inc., Houston**

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**WALK OUT**  
**WALK ON**

## **Other books by Margaret Wheatley**

Leadership and the New Science

A Simpler Way (with Myron Kellner-Rogers)

Turning to One Another

Finding Our Way

Perseverance

# **WALK OUT WALK ON**

A LEARNING JOURNEY INTO COMMUNITIES  
DARING TO LIVE THE FUTURE NOW

**MARGARET WHEATLEY  
DEBORAH FRIEZE**

A BERKANA PUBLICATION



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## Walk Out Walk On

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The whole globe is shook up, so what are you going to do  
when things are falling apart?

You're either going to become more fundamentalist  
and try to hold things together,  
or you're going to forsake the old ambitions and goals  
and live life as an experiment,  
making it up as you go along.

—*Pema Chödrön*

Buddhist Teacher

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**WELCOME**

# OUR INVITATION FOR HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

This looks like a book and reads like a book.  
But it can be much more than that.

This book is an opportunity to go on a *Learning Journey*. In these pages, you'll meet people in seven different countries, all of them our friends and colleagues, who have taken on challenging problems that others have been unable to solve. They've discovered enduring solutions and created healthy and resilient communities by working together in new and different ways.

If this were an actual Learning Journey, we'd be traveling together to these communities. We'd get on a plane, propelled by curiosity and a desire to experience ways of thinking and living different from our own. We'd willingly step out of the familiar and discover people in other cultures and places who accomplish their work by relying on beliefs and assumptions quite different from the conventional wisdom.

On a Learning Journey, participants often experience a wide range of emotions: surprise, disbelief, excitement, doubt, joy, reassurance. These strong, contradictory feelings are likely to appear whenever we discover that seemingly unsolvable problems have solutions. All we have to do is change our minds! This is what a Learning Journey offers, even in book form—an opportunity to shake up our thinking, engender new insights, and strengthen our commitments.

We authors have each led several learning journeys. Because we've seen their transformative power, we challenged ourselves to re-create the experience of being in these different communities using only prose and photos. You'll be the judge of whether we succeeded. But it also depends on you. In every journey we've led, everyone has a different experience, even though we're in the same location, meeting the same people. We've learned that we can create the visits, but each participant creates his or her own journey.

For this book to succeed as *your* Learning Journey, we encourage you to think about how best to support yourself as a learner. What conditions need to be present for you to engage fully with the stories, to foster your learning, to reflect on what you just read? We provide the opportunities for immersion, observation, and reflection. But the learning is up to you.



## TWO CHOICES FOR HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

A. *You can read this as a Learning Journey*, a provocation that invites you to examine your beliefs and assumptions about how change happens and what becomes possible when we fully engage our communities. *If you choose to journey with us*, start by reading **Part I: Leaving Home**.

B. *You can read this as a conventional book*. We suggest you dig in immediately and begin by reading the story of one community, whichever one attracts you most. However, we need to offer a word of caution. Each visit has been designed to create a sense of immersion—like drinking from a fire hose. This can be overwhelming, at times even disorienting. That’s the nature of a Learning Journey—it creates moments when we’re no longer sure about something. We authors like this, because we’ve seen that when certainty collapses, it’s often replaced by curiosity. If you’re reading through for content and not pausing for reflection at the end of each visit, you may find our approach disconcerting.

## STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS (VISITS)

Learning Journeys have four major components, which you’ll find in each chapter:

1. **Immersion.** Each visit provides a direct experience inside these communities, through lively prose and many photos. We hope you feel immersed in the stories of these people and places.
2. **Observation.** There are moments when we, as hosts, observe and make visible contrasts between conventional assumptions and practices and those in use in this community. We also take time to explore the major issue this community has dealt with, providing more context. We feel these are core challenges that every community must eventually confront.

3. **Other Examples.** These communities aren't anomalies. In each chapter, we give you a glimpse of what's going on elsewhere, naming other communities and programs that rely on quite similar beliefs and practices to achieve remarkable outcomes.

4. **Reflection.** Each visit ends with a few short essays meant to stimulate your personal reflections. We've learned that it takes time to process any provocative experience, to notice our thoughts and reactions and what they might mean.

We welcome you to this journey!

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Reg' and the second is 'Deborah'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.



PART I  
**LEAVING HOME**