Sacred Activism

Sacred activism is an important component of XR, as XR aims to actively heal and revitalize the planet, going beyond sustainability to actively improve and enrich ecosystems and communities. Sacred activism, with its focus on integrating spirituality and mindful awareness into social justice work, provides a framework for this holistic approach. Perhaps Sacred Activism holds a capacity that other forms of activism may not encourage? Perhaps Sacred Activism supports individuals to find inner strength and connection to the earth, which then fuels their actions for positive change.

- Sacred Activism draws on wisdom traditions, integrating activities like mindfulness, meditation, embodied relationship and compassion into activism.
- It recognises that personal growth and spiritual development are essential for creating positive changes in the world.
  An intersection between inner and outer change. An openness to support from forces currently invisible to us yet felt.
- It actively works towards a more just and equitable world, addressing issues like inequality, environmental degradation and social justice.
- It emphasizes the importance of love, empathy and kindness in all actions taken to create positive change.
- It recognises the interconnectedness of all things and seeks to address the challenges in a holistic way, integrating personal, social and environmental well-being.

Ritual

In sacred activism ritual is purposeful practice, often involving symbolic actions and ceremonies, that aim to connect with the spiritual realm and enact change in the world. It’s a way to ground oneself, express intentions and collaborate with currently unseen forces to manifest positive change within individuals and the collective.

Rituals in this context are not just symbolic actions but a way to connect with the sacred – whether it’s the earth, ancestors or spiritual forces. They are used to express intentions, prayer and desires for positive change, acting as a bridge between the spiritual and physical worlds.

- Rituals can help shift individual collective consciousness towards a more harmonious relationship with the earth and each other. In these ways ritual and ceremony are often harmonious bed fellows with the alliances between the human and other than human worlds.
- Through collective participation and symbolic actions, rituals can amplify the power of individual intentions, creating a stronger field of energy for change.
- Rituals can challenge and subvert dominant narratives that perpetuate inequality, exclusion and environmental degradation.

- Rituals can foster a sense of community, belonging and shared purpose, strengthening the collective for action.
- Rituals in sacred activism can range from simple actions of grounding and intention-setting to elaborate ceremonies involving prayer, song, offerings and symbolic actions, often tailored to the specific context and goals.

In essence, ritual in sacred activism is a powerful way to harness spiritual energy, amplify intentions, and create meaningful change in the world by connecting with the sacred and fostering a more just and sustainable future.

PLEASE NOTE: For some rebels ceremony and ritual are vital and for others this is seen as ‘weird and wacky’. We acknowledge the range of individual differences across the XR community as a strength of our shared approach.

Ceremony

A sacred activism ceremony may involve a community coming together to perform a ritual, like a fire ceremony or a prayer circle, to express solidarity, send healing or call for change. The ceremony is held with a specific purpose relating to social and/or environmental justice.

Ceremonies often incorporate elements of prayer, meditation, chanting or other spiritual practices to connect participants with their inner selves and with a higher power or universal energy. These bring people together to share their intentions, offer support and create a sense of collective power.

Participants may engage in symbolic actions like lighting candles, offering gifts (food, incense, water) , creating art or performing a symbolic play to represent their commitment and hopes for change.

Sacred activism ceremonies are not just symbolic; they are meant to inspire and strengthen participants for real-world action. They can be a way to process emotions, build resilience and find renewed motivation for ongoing activism.

Practices of sacred activism invite a different way of understanding and a different method through which their actions and decision making may be guided. Ceremonies give us an opportunity to pause; to take time out of the often habitual and unconscious busyness of everyday life so prevalent here in this western culture. To slow things down. To bring the body and mind together as we move our bodies through gestures and postures that amplify the words that we speak e.g. when we **actually** bow to the four directions we **actually** turn our body to face different directions. As we do so, we may **actually** feel the warmth of the sun on our face as we turn to the south, perhaps and the breeze as we **actually** turn towards the north etc.

Ceremony may have a performative element to them, but is that the main intention? Perhaps ceremonies can be opportunities to pause and be present to what we do not yet know. Perhaps ceremonies are ways of opening us up to new in-formation coming to us, more creative innovative

responses. Open to being guided by forces that cannot yet be seen but are felt by us. Open to the non-conceptual support that is already here for us? Opening to being changed and transformed maybe.

Of stepping outside of the ‘voice in the head’ and into the guidance of something other than the intellect. Something bigger and more universally or elementally felt by others perhaps?

Examples of a Ceremony

A Fire Ceremony

- Find an area outside or indoors
- Imagine a circle of protection around everyone.
- Invite in the spiritual power or energies that you wish to be with you.
- Reflect on what you wish to release (negative emotions, limiting beliefs etc) and what you want to invite into your life
- On a piece of paper write down the things you long to release and those you want to invite. You could include gratitude for what you’ve learned.
- Build your fire with reverence, taking time, slowing down, adding kindling and gradually larger pieces of wood.
- As you place each item in the fire perhaps you are inspired to visualise the release of the old and the manifestation of the new. Speak your intentions aloud or silently as you offer them
- Take time for meditation, grounding and reflection for integrating the experience. This could be spoken.
- Close the circle and say goodbye to the spiritual power or energies.

Video:

A workshop about Sacred Activism delivered by Jonathan from UK XR Sacred Activism

https://www.youtube.com/embed/xDudKYTpZG4?si=e4Lrd9W70oWDeCD8
