Reader Discussion Guide for
Flourish: Design Paradigms for Our Planetary Emergency
by Sarah Ichioka and Michael Pawlyn

Readers may find it useful to refer to the summary table of the five regenerative paradigms in the Conclusion. The Flourish Media page provides links to further stimulating content: https://www.flourish-book.com/media.

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1. What, according to Ichioka and Pawlyn, are some of the problems with the way sustainability has become conventionally understood? How does a regenerative approach encourage us to think of development differently?

2. The authors critique the perspective of minimized agency among practitioners in response to the ecological crisis, and argue instead for a "possibilist" mindset. What are three aspects of possibilism that can be applied in design practices to change the way we see the world? How might these be relevant to your own life?

3. Ichioka and Pawlyn cite diverse references to argue how we must go beyond our current anthropocentric framing and instead, co-evolve as nature. How can the application of biomimicry and co-evolutionary principles enhance the work of designers?

4. In what way is reshaping our understanding of time vital for our response to the ecological crisis? Which of the examples from this chapter resonated the most for you and why?

5. What are some of the shortcomings Ichioka and Pawlyn find with the mindset of "competition"? How does a "symbiogenetic" approach in the way humans interact with one another and the environment differ?

6. What is a "degrowth" mindset and what, in place of "degrowth", do Ichioka and Pawlyn put forth as the "ultimate purpose that should drive the economy and the way we shape our built environments"?

7. What are the 7 "P" tendencies or attitudes towards regeneration in agriculture, communities and personal lives, referencing the Rodales, that the authors advocate for?

8. Ichioka and Pawlyn assert that the biggest obstacles to regenerative transformation are social and political, rather than technological and financial. What are some of these obstacles or challenges you experience in your context / country of residence or birth?

9. Reflect on how the authors' work challenges some of the paradigms that might be core to how we currently understand the world. Do you agree with their critiques of these assumptions? Why or why not?

10. At these "critical and perilous crossroads", what are some ways we can actively empower ourselves and communities to seek deep transformation?