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I tuned in to the podcast “Is Water Alive?” with Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson in conversation with Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant and decided to reflect on Dr. Johnson’s choice to use the word “possibility” instead of “hope” when talking about climate solutions in two ways.

First by writing a journal,

Journal Entry: The Weight of Hope

Date: October 9, 2025

Topic: Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson's framework: Hope vs. Possibility

Dr. Johnson’s explanation for discarding the word "hope" struck me profoundly. She defined hope as carrying an expectation that things are going to work out in the end, regardless of current action. Given the dire scientific projections we face, the looming threat of unlivable temperatures and accelerating losses, she rightly calls this expectation unreasonable.

When we lean on "hope," it often fosters passivity. We might think, "I hope the scientists find a solution," or "I hope the government fixes it," allowing us to default to inaction while waiting for an assumed positive outcome. Hope, in this context, becomes a subtle form of paralysis or wishful thinking, insulating us from the true gravity of the crisis.

By contrast, her embrace of "possibility" completely shifts the frame. It acknowledges the scientific reality that multiple futures exist from the catastrophic to the desirable, and that which future we achieve is entirely dependent on what we do now.

Possibility is an active, galvanizing word. It doesn't promise a happy ending, but it highlights the immense agency we have to "inflect all of these projections." The difference between apocalypse and paradise isn't a binary; it's a sliding scale. Every action, every policy, every choice to protect a wetland or fund a regenerative farm moves the needle toward a better possibility.

This distinction resonates with the shift she made after Hurricane Irma: recognizing that the best local ocean policy couldn't stop the global climate reality. "Possibility" is the intellectual engine that drives her question, "What If We Get It Right?" It bypasses guilt and fear, focusing instead on the tangible, valuable outcomes of action, like creating sustainable jobs and rejuvenating coastal life through things like regenerative ocean farming.

Ultimately, "possibility" feels more honest, more radical, and far more useful than "hope." It tells us: The future is not written; it must be built.

Second by reflecting in my own creative way.

I was really moved by this podcast and got very fascinated behind the choice of using “possibility” rather than “hope”. That’s why I decided to use my poem writing skills to reflect on the matter in my own mother tongue too and I must admit, it came out better than I expected. Though it might get a bit messy if translated to English directly. Even though the challenge guideline did say that I could “reflect in my own creative way”, I still hope this won’t cause any problems as I do not know if reflecting this way is against the rules or not and if it does cause problems then I am extremely sorry for this.

আর নয় শুধু আশা

আশা সে তো নরম কথা, ভাবে বসে একা,
ভালো কিছু হবে শেষে, শুধু রয় দেখা।
বিজ্ঞান যা বলে, তাতে কাজ না হলে নয়,
শুধু চেয়ে থাকা দিয়ে কোনো ফল নাহি হয়।
আশা হলো চোখ বাঁধা, স্বপ্ন দেখে শুয়ে,
"অন্য কেউ দেবে মুক্তি," ভাবে ভয়ে ভয়ে।
কিন্তু সম্ভাবনা শোনায় জোরের গান,
বলে, "এগিয়ে এসো সবে, খুলে দাও দু'কান।"
ভবিষ্যৎ নিজে আসে না, জানতে হবে আজ,
আমরাই তো পারি হাতে তুলে নিতে কাজ।
কাজ দিয়ে গড়া হবে যত ভালো দিন,
না বসিয়া থাকি শুধু, হাতে হাতে করি ঋণ।
ভবিষ্যৎ হবে কেমন, সেটাই আসল কথা,
কেন ভাবি শুধু শেষে আসবে সব ব্যথা?
ছাড়ো সেই আশা যা শুধু স্বপ্ন দেখায়,
সম্ভাবনা বলো, যা কাজ দিয়ে পথ দেখায়!

Here's a **rough English translation** of my Bangla poem. I used a **translation software**, so it may not capture every nuance, inner-meaning or rhyme but **it conveys the main ideas**,

No More Only Hope

Hope is a soft word, sitting quietly alone,
It believes something good will come in the end, only waiting to see.
But what science tells us, if we don't act, nothing will change.
Just watching and waiting brings no result.

Hope wears a blindfold, dreaming while it lies still,
Thinking, "Someone else will bring the freedom," afraid to move.
But possibility sings a stronger song,
Saying, "Come forward, everyone, open your ears."

The future doesn't come by itself; we must learn that today,
It's we who can take the work into our own hands.
Through action, better days will be built,
Not by sitting still, but by sharing effort together.

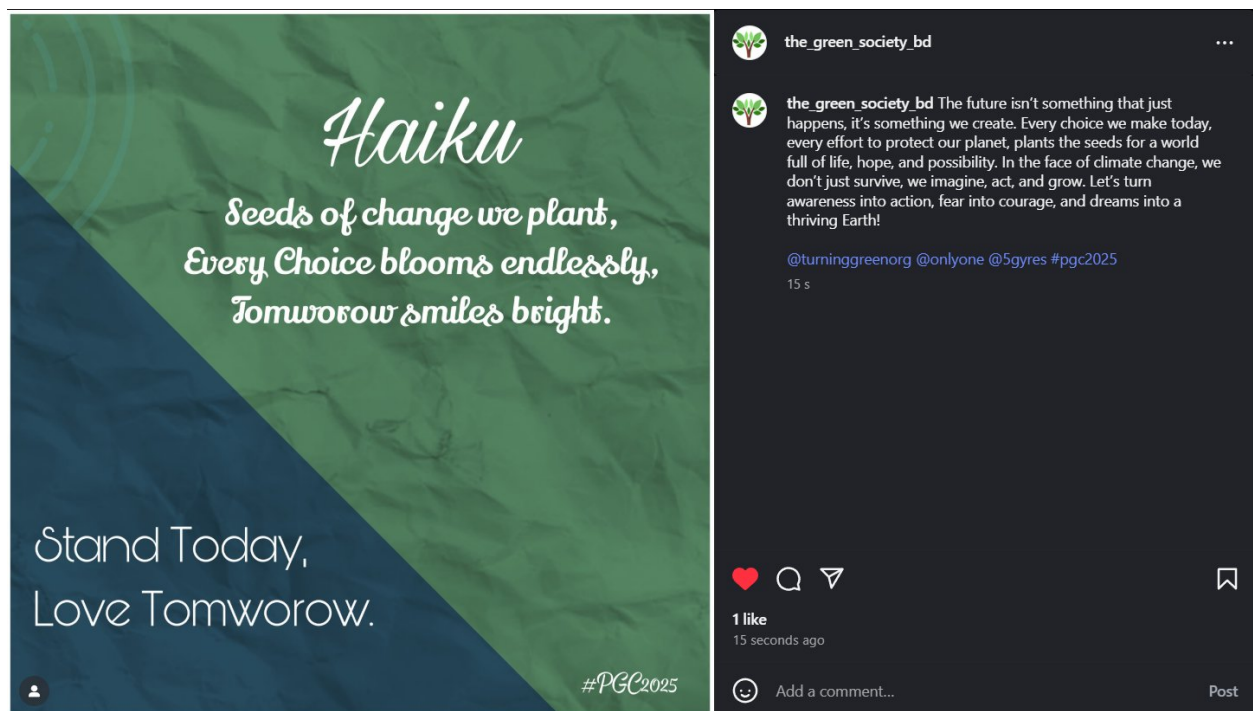
What the future becomes, that's the real question.
Why think only of pain waiting at the end?
Let go of the hope that only dreams,
And speak of possibility, the guide that leads through action!

Responding to “What would it look like if we really lived as if we loved the future and all the possibilities it holds?” with A **Haiku**,

“Seeds of change we plant,
Every choice blooms endlessly,
Tomorrow smiles bright.”

Here is my Instagram post with this Haiku: -

https://www.instagram.com/p/DPkMsZxk8zy/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



I also created a **text-based illustration** exploring and responding the question “What would it look like if we really lived as if we loved the future and all the possibilities it holds?”

Here it is on Instagram: - https://www.instagram.com/p/DPkQtrNkwg-/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

