

# Sleepwalking into the Anthropocene

the new age of anxiety

19 October 2019, London

## Programme

08.45 – 09.30 *Registration*

09.30 – 09.45 Welcome and Introduction – **Professor Sarah Niblock, CEO, UKCP**

### **Session One: The Challenge**

09.45 – 10.30 Hope in a time of climate chaos – **Professor Jem Bendell**

10.30 – 11.15 Psychotherapy, Earth and global crisis – **Mary-Jayne Rust**

11.15. – 11.45 *Refreshments*

### **Session Two: The Evidence**

11.45 – 12.15 Climate crisis conversations – **Tree Staunton and Caroline Hickman**

12.15 – 12.45 Audience discussion with **Professor Jem Bendell, Mary-Jayne Rust, Tree Staunton and Caroline Hickman**

12.45 – 14.00 *Lunch*

### **Session Three: The Opportunity**

14.00 – 14.45 What can we do to tackle climate change and how can climate action make our lives better?  
Panel discussion with **Dr Neil Jennings, Dr Audrey de Nazelle and Dr Joeri Rogelj**

14.45 - 15.30 Restoring Nature, Restoring Ourselves – **Professor Rosalind Coward**

15.30 – 16.00 *Refreshments*

16.00 – 17.00 Co-creating an emotionally healthy and sustainable future – **Emma Marris**

17.00 – 17.15 Closing comments – **Martin Pollecoff, Chair, UKCP**

17.15 Close

In partnership with:

**Grantham Institute**  
Climate Change and the Environment  
An Institute of Imperial College London

## Speakers

### Hope in a time of climate chaos

The latest science and measurements on climate change can be terrifying. As are the current impacts on people, through natural disasters to disruption of our supplies of food and water. Despite decades of agreements and initiatives, the growing rate of greenhouse gas emissions suggests humanity has not been able to respond in time to prevent further catastrophic impacts on both nature and society. What might be the implications for people's sense of purpose or safety? If there is little hope to preserve this way of life, where might hope be found? Or could another concept and its related practices provide more viable means of wellbeing in a time of climate chaos? Professor of Sustainability Leadership Professor Jem Bendell will share ideas on deeply adapting oneself to our predicament.



**Professor Jem Bendell** originated the concept of Deep Adaptation to help people explore individual and collective responses to the future collapse of society caused by climate chaos. His research paper on the topic has been downloaded over half a million times and is widely credited with influencing the founders of the Extinction Rebellion protest movement, which Professor Bendell advises. An author of many books, papers and UN reports on aspects of sustainable development, Bendell now focuses on supporting people from various professions to explore our challenging predicament. In particular, through the free Deep Adaptation Forum ([www.deepadaptation.info](http://www.deepadaptation.info)).

### Psychotherapy, Earth and global crisis

As the reality of climate crisis is sinking into mainstream society, people are beginning to suffer from 'eco anxiety' or 'climate grief'; how do we respond to this in the therapy room? This is part of a much bigger story about our dysfunctional relationship with the rest of nature: we say we 'love nature' yet we partake in a system which is poisoning and destroying life systems. Psychotherapy has grown out of this worldview which sees humans as separate from, and superior to, the rest of nature; as an urban profession we see our suffering and healing only in the context of human relationships. Yet, if we listen, we will hear stories of love and loss in our relationships with the land, animals and plants as well as a continued struggle to come to terms with ourselves as animals. This talk will explore the practice of psychotherapy in relation to the earth, as well as asking how therapy, as a profession, can offer helpful insights and interventions for a culture in crisis.



**Mary-Jayne Rust** is a psychotherapist, inspired by trainings in art therapy, feminist psychotherapy and Jungian analysis. Journeys to Ladakh (on the Tibetan plateau) in the early 1990s alerted her to the seriousness of the ecological crisis, and its cultural, economic and spiritual roots. Alongside her therapy practice in North London, she lectures, teaches and writes on ecopsychology, a growing field of inquiry into the psychological dimensions of ecological crisis. See [www.mjrust.net](http://www.mjrust.net) for publications, including *Vital Signs: Psychological Responses to Ecological Crisis*. Eds M.J. Rust & Nick Totton. Karnac, London 2011. She grew up beside the sea and is wild about swimming.

## Climate crisis conversations

*“The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with those we need a spiritual and cultural transformation. And we scientists don’t know how to do that.” - Gus Speth, Environmental campaigner*

Tree Staunton and Caroline Hickman of *Climate Psychology Alliance* dialogue on stage about our current climate and biodiversity crisis, and how we can deal with our responses. CPA understands that psychotherapists have an important role to play in facing these difficult truths and enabling a self-reflective dialogue about our relationship to the world around us as well as our responsibility for it. Caroline and Tree will discuss the issues and dilemmas for practitioners and look at how we can encourage a level of deep listening and engagement which can lead to empowerment and appropriate action.

<https://www.climatepsychologyalliance.org/>



**Tree Staunton** is Director and MA Programme Leader at Bath Centre for Psychotherapy & Counselling. She is a UKCP Honorary Fellow, body psychotherapist, trainer and supervisor, and Chair of the Training Standards Committee of the UKCP - HIP College. Tree is a member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA) and has a special interest in the links between psychotherapy and the current global crises we face. She is currently promoting the development of training and CPD in these areas.



**Caroline Hickman** is a member of the Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA) Executive Committee, psychotherapist and therapeutic social worker. She is currently researching children's relationship with and feelings about the climate and biodiversity crisis, developing therapeutic responses to climate change trauma, and looking at how a 'climate crisis lens' can be used in practice. Caroline teaches on the social work degree at the University of Bath and works with various charities to provide psychotherapy to children following trauma. Her passion is to use everyday stories to explain complex psychology.

## What can we do to tackle climate change and how can climate action make our lives better?

This session looks at what needs to happen to avoid the worst consequences of climate change and the role that individuals and society may play in the transition to a lower carbon future. The session also considers the multiple benefits of climate action – how reducing carbon emissions can improve public health, reduce NHS costs, grow the low-carbon jobs market and reduce poverty and inequality. It attempts to combine these themes by emphasising the agency that individuals have to make a difference on climate change while showing the personal and societal benefits that result from climate action.



**Dr Audrey de Nazelle** is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London. Her work at the intersection of environmental sciences, health behaviour, transportation, and urban planning aims at guiding decision makers towards health-promoting built environments and policies. Much of her research has been on the relationships between active travel and air pollution (exposures, health risks and benefits, and societal engagement). Audrey holds a PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in Environmental Sciences, and a Maîtrise in Mathematics from the University of Paris VI Pierre et Marie Curie.



**Dr Neil Jennings** is the Partnership Development Manager at the Grantham Institute, Imperial College London. He has a specific interest in the co-benefits of climate action – how tackling climate change can help create a cleaner, greener, fairer future and how these co-benefits can be better considered in the decision-making process. Neil holds a PhD from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia.



**Dr Joeri Rogelj** is a Lecturer in Climate Change at the Grantham Institute at Imperial College London. He researches how our understanding of the Earth system affects climate policy. He has published over 70 peer-reviewed scientific studies on carbon budgets, climate change mitigation, societal transitions consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C, and climate change mitigation equity. He served as a Coordinating Lead Author on the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and is one of the ten members of the UN Secretary General Climate Science Advisory Group

## Restoring nature, restoring ourselves

We are in an accelerating climate emergency that presents an existential crisis for human life on earth. The sixth great extinction, otherwise known as the Anthropocene, is caused this time by us. All indicators suggest we should despair but recently Rosalind Coward has discovered that there's some hope. She joined a conservation group restoring the ecology of the river Stour in Kent and learnt what nature means to us and how vital it is to our mental wellbeing. She began to explore nature restoration projects across the globe and visited some key sites. Her paper will be about the idea of repairing nature – and also us as a result – and will look at the idea of nature's restoration.



**Rosalind Coward** started her career as an academic during which time she immersed herself in psychoanalytical theory and wrote several books. She began to write for a more popular audience with her book *Female Desire, Women's Sexuality Today* and changed career to become a journalist. She was a columnist on the Observer and The Guardian for many years, covering social, political and environmental issues, and became a Professor of Journalism at Roehampton University. She has always been passionate about nature and has been heavily involved in environmental politics: a board member of Greenpeace, the Rainforest Foundation and the Campaign to Ban Trophy Hunting. She is also a keen

birdwatcher.

## Co-creating an emotionally healthy and sustainable future

Climate change is one crisis that every human – every organism – on Earth will face. In this session, Emma Marris will share strategies for tackling the issue without becoming overwhelmed or despaired, braiding a personal response to climate change with a fully lived, joyful life. As a problem that can only be solved collectively, climate change reminds us that fighting for change together can be healing, even if the needed change is complex and hard-won. She will share her insights from writing about the science of climate change and its effect on the planet for the public, as well findings from multiple fields about climate change, how best to combat it, and how to do it without burning out.



**Emma Marris** is an environmental writer and an Institute Fellow at the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability. She has written for many magazines and newspapers, including National Geographic, Wired, the New York Times, and Nature. She has a Master's in Science Writing from Johns Hopkins University. Her first book, *Rambunctious Garden: Saving Nature in a Post-Wild World*, focuses on new, innovative ways to conserve biodiversity in a humanised world. In 2016, she gave a TED talk about seeing the hidden nature that surrounds us, which has been watched over a million times. She grew up in Seattle, Washington, and lives with her husband and two children

in Klamath Falls, Oregon.