

CLIMATE CHANGE, DESPAIR & EMPOWERMENT

The Climate Change, Despair and Empowerment workshop series aims to support climate action groups and individuals to increase personal empowerment as well as climate action sustainability and effectiveness.

BRISBANE WORKSHOP DETAILS

WHEN: 28th May. Saturday 10am – 6pm,

WHERE: Croquet Club Community Hall, 91 Cordelia Street, South Brisbane.

COST: Suggested donation \$100 (or whatever you can afford)

All proceeds to [Beyond Zero Emissions](#), [Australian Youth Climate Coalition](#), and [100% Renewables Campaign](#).

BOOKINGS: johnseed1@ozemail.com.au

Please bring a cushion to sit on and food to share for lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

John Seed OAM is an environmental activist who has worked with Joanna Macy since 1986 and co-authored with her the book “Thinking Like a Mountain – Towards a Council of All Beings”. He has been facilitating Despair and Empowerment for 25 years and in 2006 helped in the formation of numerous Climate Action Groups in the US, Canada and Australia with a series of Climate Change, Despair and Empowerment workshops.

Emma Brindal works on Climate Justice issues with Friends of the Earth, currently with a focus on solidarity work for Pacific Island communities affected by climate change. She also has a background in teaching and has been facilitating workshops based on Joanna Macy's work since 2008.

Fiona O'Sullivan has been facilitating the Awakening the Dreamer Symposium since 2007. The Symposium is a transformative program which facilitates participants feeling connected to one another and empowered into action. Fiona is passionate about the power of reconnecting with the natural world and so our inherent and natural wisdom to inspire our thoughts and actions.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

We in the climate movement know better than anyone the horror of what climate change will mean for humanity. Yet we live in a culture where there is a profound denial of feeling - and this affects our energy and effectiveness to make change happen.

We are conditioned to repress feelings of grief, fear and anger and avoid their expression. We also learn to deaden ourselves and try to avoid feeling them at all. This repression takes a heavy toll and causes us to burn out, shut down, become shrill and ineffectual or burdened by quiet despair.

Yet these feelings are an important part of our intelligence. For billions of years our pre-human ancestors used feelings alone to determine what was safe and what was dangerous, and natural selection honed the accuracy of these feelings at every turn. Thinking augments this intelligence but does not replace it. Without robust feelings to back it up, thinking is shallow and lacks authenticity and passion.

To sustain our own work and reach out to other people in the community, we need to draw on our feelings for energy, not fight them. In her books “Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age” (1983) and “Coming Back to Life” (1998) Joanna Macy teaches us how to create a safe container of fellowship to invite these banished feelings back into our lives and explore the wisdom, energy and empowerment that this inevitably brings.

For more about Despair and Empowerment see Joanna Macy’s “[Working Through Environmental Despair](#)”. Also see more about [Climate Change, Despair and Empowerment workshops](#).

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