

# Ecopsychology talks 2012

## at Re•Vision



### Crazy Wisdom & Ecological Crisis

Mary-Jayne Rust 27 January

In this talk I will explore how the archetype of The Fool might be of help in modern times of social and ecological crisis.

In Shakespeare's play 'King Lear' the Fool is, perhaps, the only character who can bypass Lear's rigid defences in order to help this patriarchal old King connect to his heart. This situation is reminiscent of current affairs, where the old order of industrial growth society is clearly in need of massive change at a deep level.

Yet attempts to communicate the urgency of the situation using alarmist news have not succeeded in making the much needed difference so far. We are in urgent need of imaginative acts of genius to turn apocalypse into revelation.

The Fool is a magical wanderer of the borderlands, an outlaw and a force of nature who lives in the here and now. Yet in today's society we have lost many of the old rituals which honour the fool; why is s/he so shunned?

Despite this, The Fool necessarily lives on. So where might we see this fool energy manifesting in others and in ourselves? How might we access this powerful, creative and liberating energy?

### Transformative Liminality?

Chris Robertson 24 February

Humans have co-evolved with earth systems, the rhythms of night, day, seasons and magnetic forces despite the alienated ego bubble of modern culture. With the increasing evidence of accelerated feedback cycles leading to a tipping point in ecological systems, what is the resonance in human culture? Perhaps climate chaos and earthquakes are paralleled with social disturbance and unrest.

Such parallels may help us read the crisis as a move into liminal space, that in-between border country. Liminal states bring high degrees of anxiety because they are essentially unknowable and uncontrollable. And it is this very vulnerability that makes them potentially transformative, which is why they are used in rites of passage and initiation rituals.

The cliché of crisis offering opportunity may have an ecosystemic relevance. In opening to the earth's pivotal state as an initiatory challenge for human consciousness, we have first to face into the abyss. The potential of new life only comes through facing the real possibility of the end of birth. This talk explores how *negative capability* and *transitional objects* may facilitate transiting this threshold.

### Rediscovering Kinship with Nature

Joan Crawford 23 March

The pre-modern world possessed a kind of enchantment. Animals, plants and places were infused with spirit and humans communicated with them through rituals, prayers and meditation. There was a sense of kinship with everything and humankind experienced itself embedded in a rich web of relationships.

Wherever we locate the severing of this bond historically, the modern world has lost this sense of "holy presence". The elevation of rational empirical knowledge, and the abstractions that accompany it, means that we can no longer sense this profound connection. For Ecopsychologist, Theodore Roszak, "repression of the ecological unconscious," his term for this bond with the natural world, "is the deepest root of collusive madness in industrial society. Open access to the ecological unconscious is the path to sanity". Just as it has been the goal of previous therapies to recover the repressed contents of the unconscious, so the goal of ecopsychology is to awaken the inherent sense of environmental reciprocity that lies within the ecological unconscious.

How might we do this? In this talk we will consider the ways in which the ecological unconscious may be making itself felt within us and what blocks us from attending to its voice.

All talks from 6-8pm at Re•Vision 97 Brondesbury Road, NW6 Queens Park tube. £20 per talk at the door (£15 concessions payable in advance). These open talks are also part of the on-going ecopsychology course.

For further details and bios of speakers: [www.re-vision.org.uk/ecopsychology](http://www.re-vision.org.uk/ecopsychology) Tel:02083578881