



27. Did Humans Break the Planet?

Recorded on 20th May, 2019, in Byron Bay, Australia.

Future Sense is a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name, broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Hosted by Nyck Jeanes and well-known international futurist, Steve McDonald, Future Sense provides a fresh, deep analysis of global trends and emerging technologies. How can we identify the layers of growth personally, socially and globally? What are the signs missed; the truths being denied? Political science, history, politics, psychology, ancient civilisations, alien contact, the new psychedelic revolution, cryptocurrency and other disruptive and distributed technologies, and much more.

This is Future Sense.

Nyck: Did we break the planet? This is the big question. Have we broken the planet, Steve?

Steve: We are stepping back to look at a bigger issue now and this idea that we broke the planet and not only did we break it, but no one can fix it except us, is an interesting thing. It's very much reflective of the perspective and the values set of the emerging paradigm—this humanistic, network-centric way of being human that's emerging out of the end of the Scientific-Industrial era. This perspective is shaping how we approach the whole issue of repairing the damage that's been done by the previous paradigm and it's also impacting our capacity to bring about change, and so I think it's an important thing to talk about.

I started studying Clare Graves's work in 2003 and it was not long after that, that I started to see a connection between the emerging 'we broke the planet' movement and the way that human psychology was changing with this new paradigm emerging. I could see that there was a bias in there and that humans in general seem to be taking on board a whole bunch of guilt and responsibility—too much—to the point where it was actually going to get in the way of our capacity to fix the things that we were saying were wrong. So let's unpack that a bit and let's just have a look at what might be impacting those things.

To be clear, we're not saying that there isn't a problem—there certainly are very significant problems. Some of them have been created by the previous way of being human, which was very resource-intensive and not mindful of where we put the trash, and some of the issues, of course, are also associated with natural cycles of the planet

and how the planet is changing long-term—there are certainly problems that we need to fix.

One of the clear trends is this anthropocentric thinking, which is also called, I found out, homocentrism, which is another way of saying that.

Nyck: Yes, it's all about us.

Steve: Basically what it comes back to, is everything's about us, and it's useful, I think, to look back to the previous paradigm. In fact, let's go back to two paradigms. Let's go back to the Agricultural era and just have a look at a bias that was at play. You could even use another word—maybe just a particular perspective on things rather than a bias. That was the idea that the Earth was the centre of the Universe and everything rotated around the Earth: the Sun rotated around the Earth, all of the stars rotated around the Earth, and basically we were at the centre of everything. That was busted during the transition between the Agricultural era and the Scientific-Industrial era by the science, which said, well, actually, no.

Nyck: Thanks Mr Galileo and friends.

Steve: We know it kind of looks like that but when you really delve into it and collect some evidence, the story is different. We've got a similar kind of thing happening here where we've put humans at the centre of this cause-and-effect process of change, and it's no more correct than the Earth-centric view was back in the Agricultural era. It's got its uses, and these things always have their uses, and everything is part of a natural evolutionary flow, so it's not that any of it is wrong.

Nyck: It's not either/or.

Steve: It's not either/or, it's not good or bad, but it's interesting and it's informative to be able to see these dynamics because we can also see some of the impact that they're having, which might not be constructive from our point of view. This anthropocentric thing is one of those things. It's like the Earth-centric thing, except that it's the one of our time.

Nyck: Just to interrupt briefly, I'm just thinking of religion in terms of that layer—the Agricultural era, that period which is also identified with the rise of the great religions—and that notion from the Bible of 'go forth and multiply'. That whole idea, I think, is then supported very strongly by that human-centric, that anthropocentric view of the world,

that we can use everything because we're given that to use, and we are the centre—we're God's given creature.

Steve: True. One of the issues that arises when we take this human-centric, anthropocentric viewpoint is that it basically means that we're responsible for everything and whatever happens is our fault, and not only that, but the onus falls upon us to fix everything that we see is not right. In that, everything basically gets stuck in the same basket, so natural dynamics which are part of long-term changes on the planet—how the planet operates; its *modus operandi*—get lumped in our basket and we become responsible for things that have been happening for a long, long time, even before we were here. One of those things is, of course, mass extinctions. I guess we're not 100% sure, but we look like we're moving into the sixth mass extinction. The other five happened before we were here, but this one's our fault here. This is not a black-and-white argument that we're putting forward, so we're not saying that we're not responsible at all.

Nyck: We've clearly contributed vastly to changes on the planet in the last couple of hundred years.

Steve: Of course.

Nyck: However, we have a great ability to not look at the much longer cycles and the natural cycles and some of the things we simply do not understand, despite our incredibly advanced science relative to where we once were. We still don't really understand some of these greater, bigger forces that we are enveloped in as a planet.

Steve: Yes, exactly, so we're aiming for the middle ground here. We're not totally responsible, but we're not innocent either. We have had an impact. We've done things, we've made a terrible, terrible mess. The oceans are full of plastic and the air has been polluted. There's lots and lots of things that need fixing that are our responsibility.

Nyck: The water's stuffed, the soil is stuffed, the forests, somewhat stuffed, etc, etc. These are real things.

Steve: There's lots of work to be done. The key issue is that we can do that work more effectively; if we have an accurate description of our impact and we understand what role nature's natural cycles are playing, we will be much more effective in addressing these issues.

It comes back to the river analogy and trying to cross a river as being representative of the change process. If you understand how the river flows, then it's easier to get across without getting caught in unexpected currents or whirlpools and those sorts of things.

Nyck: Or just to extend that, you stand across a raging river to get to the other side and your first thought is 'I've got to get across there quickly', so the easiest way is to go straight across very quickly, but that's not the way to get across the river.

Steve: Not necessarily.

Nyck: Not a raging river anyway.

Steve: Yes. So where's this idea of us being guilty coming from? And the answer is, it's part of this regressive values search which is characteristic of a paradigm shift, when our everyday values that we've been living by, in this case for a few hundred years, all of a sudden don't seem to solve our problems effectively. The first human response is to look backwards to older values sets and think about a time when things were good and then maybe try those out and see if they work, and so we're slipping back now to this Agricultural era where the most dominant emotion was guilt.

If you think about, for example, the religious environment back during the Agricultural era—and we're talking about pre the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions back through the Middle Ages, etc.—guilt played an enormous role in religious life. There was, and still is, a set of rules that have been handed down by God which must be followed in order to live a dutiful, righteous life and if you break those rules, then you are guilty and you are a sinner and action will be taken.

Nyck: You will be damned in Hell, or as was my Welsh, rugby-teaching, Latin teacher used to say, 'you slip down the slippery slide into the eternal bonfire'. That was his favourite expression.

Steve: Goodness me.

Nyck: Sounded quite appealing to me at the time.

Steve: Yes, it's quite a colourful description.

The idea of a guilt is associated with having committed an offence or breaking a law, so the implication here is that we're switching back to older values which is taking us back to this black-and-white perspective on life, where there's a fairly clear set of rules that we have to follow and it's as simple as that and if you don't follow them, then you're a sinner or you're guilty. That kind of thinking is being applied to the present awareness of planetary life conditions and the problems that need to be solved here. One of the disadvantages of that is it's dumbing things down and it covers up, it obscures, all of the subtle relationships between natural systems and human influence also.

Nyck: Yes, that immediately challenges me because God bless all the humans on this planet, but so many people simply don't seem to be able to uptake a bigger, more complex vision or version of things too often at this point in time. There's this kind of, as you said, a dumbing down. I don't want to refer to the election anymore, we've done that, but we can see, as we mentioned, Morrison appealing to that: simplify everything, make it really simple, and that's what the majority of people still resonate with, so we've got a bit of a way to go to wake people up from that.

Steve: We do, and again, this is a natural evolutionary dynamic. The advantage of learning about and understanding these dynamics is that you can shortcut the change process and you can make it smoother and easier if you understand. Going back to the river analogy, if you don't understand the river's dynamics, then it's chance, right? You jump in and you take what you get. That's where most of the people in the world are right now in terms of understanding paradigm shifts, be that a personal transformational processes or large-scale social paradigm shifts.

With some education and understanding of the dynamics of the river, using that analogy and understanding where the river flows, where the eddies are that you can get caught up in, and where the best places are to cross the river, you can get across the river more easily and with less harm; less suffering, and that's the aim of digging deeper into these dynamics and communicating them.

What we're talking about here, in particular in relation to guilt, is moral development. In this spiral of human development, each paradigm is alternatively focused on living life with an individual focus and changing the world to suit yourself, or alternatively, it swaps between that and living life with a communal focus and changing yourself to fit with the requirements of life and your community. You can call the individual systems 'masculine-themed' and you can call the communal systems 'feminine-themed'—that fits—so it's within the feminine-themed communal systems that moral development occurs. When you live in community, there has to be an agreement of standards and ways to live, and basically that's what morals are. Morals are a tool for communal living to help everybody get on the same page in terms of understanding what it's okay to do and what you don't do within this community of any size, and so it's only within those communal systems that moral development occurs. When we break out into the

individual systems like the Modern Scientific-Industrial that we've just been through, we tend to reject those standardised ways of living and we want to basically tread our own path. We want to break the rules, actually, and we want to see how we can live differently by being an individual.

Nyck: Yes, well there's no absolute truth in that scenario. It's almost like that's a play in itself: 'you can't tell me that's the absolute truth because over here, my experience is this and I'm going to my version of the truth—my distortion, even, of the truth—in order to achieve what I want to achieve', and values systems break down then; morals, ethics fall apart. We've certainly seen that, particularly throughout Western societies and most Third World countries that are becoming more capitalised as we go forward.

Steve: That's right, and as we're moving now back into a communal way of being human, one of the biggest criticisms of the previous system is that it breaks the rules—it's unethical; it doesn't fit with the accepted moral values.

If we look at the historic unfolding of those communal systems, we've had the Traditional Tribal [Layer 2] which had its customs and they were its version of morals; in the Agricultural era, there were the rules given by some higher authority, which was often God—a list of ways to live; a list of rules to follow—and in this emerging system, we'll see a new kind of moral development which, understanding the themes of this system, ought to be something that's developed amongst peers. It ought to be that we consult with our peer group, our community, our village, and we work out amongst ourselves what the morals are, what's acceptable, what's not acceptable.

Nyck: And I guess we could say that this has been, in some senses, the expression of, for example—again, generalising here, so taking that into account—the whole hippie movement, the New Age movement, which to me are examples of an early attempt to try and create a sort of new levelled-out set of values systems and ethics and morals that aren't dominated by some God with a beard or some other shit like that.

Steve: Yes, exactly, whereas if we look back to the Agricultural times, we could say, okay, the dominant emotion there was guilt. It was like, 'do as God says or you'll be guilty and reap the consequences', but with this emerging paradigm, if we take the 60s as an example of a flare up, then it looks like love is the dominant emotion here: 'live according to love', so that's kind of interesting.

Bearing in mind that we're in transition now, so this new paradigm hasn't flowered yet. We've seen early versions of it in pockets, but it hasn't flowered yet. It hasn't created a set of life conditions that are fully supportive of its way of living, and it's only then that we will see its full potential, so we're kind of in a no-man's land where we haven't quite got the new morals nailed down, we haven't figured out what they are exactly—it's kind

of an experiment in progress. We've got no morals from the Scientific-Industrial era, we've just got hard evidence, and so the only reference point we've got is to go back to the Agricultural era and these older religious values.

Typically, this is what happens when we go through change. This is the regressive search. We flip back and we look at, 'OK, how did we do this last time?' It's like going back to an old job, something you don't do very often, like changing a car tyre, for example. You get a flat tyre and it's like, 'oh god, last time I did this was five years ago. How do I do that again?' and you think back to the last way you did it; and that's what happens with moral development. We're thinking back, 'how did we do this last time we were living as a community in that last paradigm? Oh, yeah, I think it was something to do with this and that, let's dig out the notes; okay, so something to do with guilt so we'll try that out and see if that works'.

Eventually we get to the point where we realise that these older values, they're useful because they're a guideline, but we really need to work out current ones. That's a work in progress, so we're in a kind of a no-man's land, a bit of a desert in terms of morality right now, where people are clutching back to the older values, they're searching out the experimental new values: 'what happened in the 1960s? What happens in that weird place up in the Northern Rivers there where there's a big pocket of new paradigm folks, and how do we live? What is the right way to live?'

Nyck: As we've been saying with this notion of 'did we break the planet?', in this emerging paradigm, of course, there is a lot of guilt and there is a lot of shame for exactly what we're saying—this anthropocentric vision or view of how we've influenced things on the planet here—so we have regressed to those earlier responses anyway, to guilt and shame. That would seem to be part of the slingshot effect, but I like the idea that you said there's this notion of love because there is that tone to this now.

Steve: There is. Very clearly.

Nyck: And that's different now. That's a good way to articulate it, I think.

Steve: And with that comes an absence of conflict and a general peaceful approach, which I think is wonderful, and that was very, very clear and was encouraging for me to see how that *Extinction Rebellion* thing played out in London because it really demonstrated some of the more developed aspects of the emerging paradigm and that they're mature enough in that community to be played out on a large scale and to be effective in bringing change, which is very interesting,

Nyck: Even just the image of the very first demonstration of just a handful—30 or 40 *Extinction Rebellion* activists—standing way apart in the main street in Trafalgar Square, or where-ever they were, and just that idea that the togetherness was there but they were individuals that have come up with a smarter way of being together without having to be a whole horde intensely banging at the barricades. There's a subtle differences there.

Steve: And you just hit on the nested nature of these value systems. You've got the old Agricultural values, then you've got the smarter, strategic, individually-oriented, Modern Scientific values layered on top, which gives you that smartness and strategy that you just pointed out, and then the new communal values developing over the top of that.

Nyck: Someone's written in who says: "Guilt: the mafia of the mind." True enough.

Steve: Exactly.

Nyck: And someone else, just quickly: "Don't forget the Earth is flat. Just ask via time travel, the aristocratic, arseholistic, pompous, camel-turd-sucking nobles of the 16th century who put to the torch intelligent minds that had scientific insight and vision." Thanks, Shane. Yeah, well, that's certainly true.

Steve: Yes. Just moving on from that a little, it's interesting to look at the actual problems which are evident right now—the problems that we need to fix, which are becoming very, very obvious as people pop into this new way of seeing the world, which is the emerging paradigm—and look back at the old paradigm, the Scientific-Industrial, and its impact on the planet. We see things like an imbalance of wealth in society; we see problems with our healthcare systems, which are generally disconnected rather than connected; we see social justice issues; we see depletion of natural resources; we see overfishing; we see pollution of the ocean and vast islands of plastic; we see polluted air, contaminated food that's got pesticides and stuff in it that we're eating; broken political systems, which don't seem to be giving us leaders that can solve our most obvious problems and respond to how society is changing, and these are all very real things which are very measurable and present.

I put those problems in one category and there's another category of problems, which is the expected, anticipated or imagined problems.

Nyck: Our projections.

Steve: Yes. These are problems that aren't here yet, but may arrive sometime soon, and these are things like the Earth becoming uninhabitable due to climate change.

Nyck: That trumps everything else, though.

Steve: It does. This is the interesting dynamic that's at play at the moment, and associated with that is the possibility of human extinction. Are we exempt from this sixth mass extinction?

Nyck: Doubtfully.

Steve: I don't think so. I think we're part of that same system, and so it's quite right that people should be concerned and even fearful about these things. It's this that's contributing to the evolutionary tension which is actually carrying us forward through the change process.

Nyck: Did you hear that, folks? As much as you may feel fear and trepidation, especially if you happen to be Left-leaning and you've lost the election and you're feeling this, that and the other and you're desperate about 'am I going to get my affordable housing? Is the ABC going to be defunded', etc, etc, etc, consider the possibility that all of that is part of a positive change. Somehow.

Nyck: That was *Whatever it Takes* by *Imagine dragons* there (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOsM-DYAEhY>). *Imagine Dragons* is kind of appropriate, and also the song itself. I don't know if you know the song. It's a bit 'poppie', but some great lyrics in there and pretty relevant to what we've been talking about this morning here on *Future Sense*.

Steve: Very good Nyck, and we're talking about this idea that humans broke the world and only we can fix it, and looking at some of the emotions associated with that perspective, which is part of the emerging paradigm.

In Clare Graves's research, he uncovered fractal patterns in human development and these same patterns play out for us as individuals and also for groups, societies, countries, the whole of our species at a very large scale, so it's quite fascinating. By enquiring into our own experience, we can sometimes unlock keys to understanding large-scale change also.

One of the things that Graves researched partially in his process of trying to verify his model—his spiralling model of human development—he looked outside of his own profession, which was probably pretty radical for the time considering that he was doing this research from the early 1950s onwards, through to the 1980s, and he found that guilt was the dominant emotion associated with the fourth layer of consciousness, which was dominant during the Agricultural era. Really, that was the end of his certainty around the association of emotions with layers of consciousness, however, he speculated that the dominant emotion associated with the Modern Scientific paradigm was manic excitement, and that kind of fits.

Nyck: He was saying that from the 1950s when it wasn't particularly manically exciting, even after the Second World War.

Steve: Well, I think it was exciting in a 50s kind of a way.

Nyck: I guess so, yeah. He wasn't living in Adelaide, though, as I was.

Steve: No, that's true. The other thing that's interesting to look at is he did a little bit of research into the use of drugs, and again, it was partial, it wasn't complete and he didn't come to any great conclusions, but he associated the fourth layer of consciousness where the dominant emotion is guilt with the use of alcohol, which is like a numbing, dumbing-down drug, right? The idea is that life during that Layer 4 Agricultural era was a very long-term outlook and you had to work really, really hard for a long time, and then you might get rewarded at the end of it if you did your duty well enough.

Nyck: With a beer.

Steve: You 'might' get rewarded. From a religious point of view, you live your life according to God's rules and depending on how well you do that and how faithfully you do it—with faith being more important, really—at the end, you might go to heaven, but if you made a slip up somewhere along the line, you might not go to heaven, so it wasn't a particularly optimistic outlook, generally, and so the use of a drug that kind of takes you away from that long-term drudge, like alcohol where you kind of just dumb things down and numb your feelings and forget about the guilt for a while, you can see how that fits.

Then, if we look at the Modern Scientific-Industrial era in the corporate world, we think about the corporate drugs, things that are generally associated with manic excitement.

Nyck: Again, we're generalising, but yes.

Steve: We're generalising.

Nyck: But there's cocaine for example.

Steve: Cocaine, exactly.

Nyck: But also, in Australia, there's a statistic from the other day that said that Australia actually has the most problems with alcohol, the most referrals to medical help or hospitals from alcohol poisoning or other problems, than any other country in the world. So we've still got alcohol here and I would suggest that there's a bit of manic excitement there, because we drink for the manic excitement and then you dumb down after that.

Steve: Well, look at the whole Red Bull thing—putting stimulants in your alcoholic drinks. Also remember that these values systems are nested inside each other, so the old values don't go away. They're always there and accessible so the alcohol hasn't gone away. It's still there but we've tweaked it a bit and we've added other drugs that are stimulants that fit with the manic excitement thing.

This was very tentative information in Graves's work. It wasn't an absolute conclusion, he was just basically speculating here, and he speculated in relation to Layer 6, which is the emerging paradigm globally, that depression seemed to be the dominant emotion. My personal interpretation of that is that he was researching at a time when there wasn't a lot of emerging paradigm Layer 6 values being expressed by people and so he was probably seeing early stage, and it makes sense that when people suddenly wake up to this next layer of consciousness and they look through their new eyes at the Scientific-Industrial era and they see all the damage that's been done and they see the polluted earth and the natural systems suffering, then that's depressing, particularly in the early stage where they haven't got a big network of people who share their values, who they can work together with to solve the problems. So the obvious kind of emotional expression of that is depression, I think, but I expect—and this is just my speculation—that as the emerging paradigm grows and becomes more strong and it builds life conditions around itself which are supportive, that love will become the dominant emotion of this particular era.

Nyck: And as you're speaking, I'm feeling also that there's a transition from pure depression, which is usually an isolated thing, as you're saying, because you're alone in

that beginning stage, then there's a sort of shared depression that comes as you emerge into a community of one sort or the other, which kind of transfers the depression, I'd say, to a kind of grief—a merging together of depression into a communal grief, perhaps—which is actually much more close to a genuine feeling rather than emotional reactionary response, and that probably leads into the expression of love more, perhaps.

Steve: Absolutely, and at a personal level, often these things play out as a result of past trauma. We can look back at the history of the world, particularly through this Scientific-Industrial era, and the warfare that has taking place and all of the trauma that's been accumulated, both personally and through DNA transfer, that needs to be expressed as grief, so I think I think you're on the money there. And it's interesting that we just had a grief event.

Nyck: Yes, Stephen Jenkinson here, a couple of weekends ago.

Steve: Yes, we had a visiting 'death walker' from the USA and there was a public gathering, like a vigil, which was just oriented around grieving, so that's very interesting to see that playing out.

You can also transfer this personal experience across to the widespread social attitude at the moment towards these problems that we see, which were partially created by the Scientific-Industrial paradigm and partially are anticipated or imagined problems that could unfold if we don't act quickly enough, and you can see how there's a general feeling of depression around that. People are talking about human extinction; there is the *Extinction Rebellion* that's cropped up, so this kind of fits.

Nyck: It's very interesting. Two weeks ago on my Friday show, I had a couple of local young women in here, Carla and Sophie, who were talking about eco-anxiety amongst the teenagers. There's a house just up on the corner here called *Future Dreamers*, where they have programmes for young girls usually, but also boys sometimes, focused on this particular theme. I saw her yesterday actually, I bumped into her and she said, 'oh, we had so many people there, we had babies and kids and some guys as well', looking at, for young people, this impact of anxiety, grief, depression, particularly regarding the sixth extinction potential and ecocide, generally speaking.

Steve: Yes, and one of the challenges that we're facing at this early stage of the paradigm shift is that the life conditions that would ideally support this new way of being human aren't really in place yet. We've got our social media, but it's based on technology that was created by the previous individualistic paradigm, so it's

disconnecting. Even though it's connected—you're connected electronically—you're disconnected personally.

Nyck: So many paradoxes, which is getting us ready to accept paradoxes in the future more readily.

We've got a few texts here. Interesting bits and pieces. I like this one from ten minutes ago: "Surely until each individual acknowledges the extraordinary miracle of being alive, there cannot be a collective respect."

Steve: That sounds like a reasonable comment.

Nyck: It does. Someone else says: "There's an interesting talk on TED from April by Carolyn Cadwallader of the Observer re: Facebook and Cambridge Analytica and their effect on Brexit. Does this explain Morrison's miracle?" We've talked a little bit about that today.

Steve: Yes, it's possible.

Let's have a talk now about how this dynamic, these emotional dynamics and the particular perspective on what seems to be wrong, is impacting us generally and also our capacity to practically address the issues. One way that's unfolding is that the emerging paradigm's tendency to value and focus on the subjective experience and the relativism. This connection with other people and absorbing and sharing perspectives amongst a network of people has had a huge impact on our science, for example, and our science around these issues that we see and have identified quite accurately as problems that need to be addressed. The science is being muddied and obscured because people are focusing on the subjective connection and people's subjective experiences. Also, they're mixing the actual problems which exist today with the expected or imagined problems, and as you pointed out before, the expected or imagined problems kind of trump the existing problems, because extinction is a much bigger issue than just a polluted ocean, right?

Nyck: It's also that the stakes have got higher, even just in the last few years.

Steve: Very quickly. It's ramped up. So what's happening is that we're getting this muddy mix of actual problems and imagined problems and feeling some emotional overwhelm, perhaps getting thrust into a state of depression as a result, and experiencing the hopelessness that can come with that. That's a very reasonable experience at this time, where we haven't got the new paradigm built enough for it to

be thrown into action suddenly to resolve some of these issues. We're still facing the dominance of the old paradigm, which hasn't gone under yet, and it's difficult to predict how long that's going to take.

Looking, in my futurist work, at the cycles that we're in at the moment—things like solar cycles, economic cycles and those sorts of things—it looks to me, if I had to guess when this global paradigm is going to flip from being dominated by the Scientific-Industrial to dominated by this emerging Humanistic paradigm, it looks like it might flip around about 2032. That's a rough guess—a very, very rough guess—so if that's even roughly accurate, we're still more than a decade away.

Nyck: And that's a lot of time in this Modern era where there is so much in a given moment going on.

Steve: And it's a lot of time for that evolutionary tension to build. These things are never clear cut, so what we'll see is pockets. There are already pockets—communities around the world where the dominant paradigm within the local bubble is the new paradigm—and to some extent, we live in one of those here in Byron Bay.

What we'll see, I expect, is kind of like when the water boils in a jug. If you have a glass jug where you can see through the walls—and there's a few of them in the shops these days—then if you watch it boil, you can see that it doesn't just go from not boiling to boiling. You get one little bubble that forms and then another little bubble and another bubble, another bubble, and at some point, the network of bubbles goes through a sudden transition and the whole liquid breaks into boiling. That's how this change will unfold. We will get bubbles here, bubbles there, bubbles everywhere, and there will be probably a number of tipping points where various parts of the planet flip into boiling and you'll see the old paradigm slip under and the new paradigm become dominant.

Nyck: Yes. I've mentioned before Barbara Marx Hubbard, the futurist and new age author, who just passed away recently. She recently did a piece for Findhorn community where she was articulating how the current paradigm is this sort of blobby, messy, very complex thing down here, and out of that are popping these new expressions everywhere, which, of course, they are. She said that instead of trying to contest and repress and attack the dominant paradigm down here and try and manage that, the idea that she was espousing is kind of what you're saying in a different way, which was to actually help to connect the outlying and often outrageous and unusual ideas that are popping up everywhere else so that eventually those connections occur, and underneath that, the dominant paradigm just falls away as part of the sort of compost embedded in and included in the future system as it's emerging.

Steve: Yes, I would agree with that. I think that's a very sensible way of seeing this unfolding, by all these bubbles connecting with each other and forming bigger bubbles and the bubbles spread.

As I've been saying, though, one of the big impacts that the emerging paradigm is having on our science is it's muddying the clarity that we had in the Scientific-Industrial era, where science was based on hard evidence. If you wrote a scientific paper, it was peer-reviewed and it was judged on its capacity to be replicated. Whatever your theory was, you described a theory of how something happened, then if somebody read your paper and then could replicate your study, your experiment, then that was seen to prove its worth. That's one of the things that we've lost in the muddying of the waters through this subjective focus in the communal communication process that's going on around all of these problems within the new paradigm.

Nyck: And the search, I guess, for a new moral system, as we talked about before—a new value system—because that also compounds that thing where you can get away with ... well, you can get away with murder then, in terms of anything really, that's supposedly claiming to be truth or real.

Steve: I know, and this is part of the dynamic of the fake news problem. People can put news out there and because we've kind of lost our anchor points in terms of knowing what's right and what's not right—and part of that is just because the pure volume of communication that's going on is overwhelming and we haven't got time to sort through it all—the outcome for that is that we are more easily fooled because we can't reach for and grab hold of the solid evidence to show that something's right or wrong. It's been much more difficult.

Nyck: Yes, and I think in that scenario where we are more easily fooled, it is also therefore easier to align yourself to some ideas which might be actually a bit too far some other way—a bit 'crazy here, crazy there, and that explains everything'—some sort of outlandish conspiracy theory. I'm not saying they're all conspiracy theories are wrong because clearly some of them are true, but there is that element, isn't there, that when you don't know what the truth is, you'll grasp at anything?

Steve: You get like a runaway effect, and this is absolutely happening in the climate change debate. I've got an example here from a *BBC News* report which was published in 2007. It's talking about the ice melting in the poles and particularly the Arctic. The headline is *Arctic Summers Ice-Free 'by 2013'* (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7139797.stm>).

Nyck: That was an underestimation in the article, they say.

Steve: That's right.

Nyck: 'We could be more optimistic than we should be'.

Steve: Yes, 'it could happen sooner than that', and clearly, this didn't happen. Using the climate issue as an example, if we look at the predictions that have been made over the years by all of the key public figures that have stood up and said 'this is a big problem, we have to fix it, the ice is going to disappear by this time, your children won't know what snow is', and those sorts of things, consistently they've been wrong; consistently their predictions have been wrong. However, the fear associated with this category of imagined, anticipated problems—because of the potentially severe outcome for human extinction, for example, or the earth becoming uninhabitable for all life—the fear driving that has swamped the fact that there's actually very little practical evidence, and there's actually a solid record of incorrect predictions being made, even to the point where the *IPCC*, the *United Nations International Panel on Climate Change*, has actually, in a number of their reports, said that they've stopped looking at evidence of natural climate change now because human-induced climate change is more important. These are huge risks that are emerging in terms of social systems and the way that we prepare for the future and the way that we avoid being radically surprised. These are huge risks that are emerging in our social systems that we really need to be aware of and take care of.

Going back to the old analogy of trying to cross the river and not understanding where the currents are going in the river, if we come up with a community theory of where these currents are going in the river and we haven't actually tested it—and in fact, with that community theory that we've come up with, every time somebody tried to test it, it hasn't actually resulted in an accurate prediction—if we put all our eggs in that basket and then we all jump in the river, then we're all going to be horribly surprised when we hit the reality of where those currents are and where they're taking us.

So this is a major, major risk and it's really something that we should be talking about. We're not pretending that we have the answers here, we're not pretending that we know what the climate's going to do, we're just pointing out the fact that there are massive blind spots emerging in our large-scale processes that we really need to be aware of.

Nyck: On *BayFM* in the last few minutes of *Future Sense* for this week, that was a track called *Courage* from Clay Finnesand (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6ySgyLNBtE>) and I quite liked that. *Courage* is perhaps a good position to adopt right now against all of this that we've been talking about today. If you happen to be disappointed by the federal election result, perhaps that's what we need—a bit of courage and a

reassessment of the timing and the time that we're going to take to move forward from here, because we are going to move forward. Change is happening anyway.

Steve: It certainly is.

We might just make a few conclusions to try to wind this up. One of the interesting things in the process of researching some of this material is that within Clare Graves's work, I found some bits and pieces of biochemical relationships between some of these emotions being expressed, their particular worldviews and perspectives, and how the body chemistry is changing, which is really interesting. It's not something that Graves made a complete study of. It was part of his verification process of reaching out to other scientists and looking for bits of information that supported his model, his understanding of human change.

Nyck: And, of course, as we've said, this study was 50 or 60 years ago, so his understanding at that time—anybody's understanding—with any sort of neuropsychology and physiology was fairly minimal compared to where we are now.

Steve: Very sparse, yes. It's a very interesting area, though, and something that I'm interested in trying to pursue and feel into a little bit further to that fill that picture out. There are some conclusions that we can draw from what we've spoken about during this show, which is to look at how human values are changing, how this regressive search to older values is impacting the dynamic at the moment, and how we can perhaps be a little bit wiser and more aware of the change dynamics themselves and inform ourselves in such a way that we can surf the waves of change rather than getting sucked underneath with the currents.

One of the things that we conclude is that everything's not okay. This is a very big theme at the moment—that the world's broken and only we can fix it—so it's absolutely right to say that everything is not okay. We have damaged the planet in terms of making a big mess and damaging natural systems, we've damaged ourselves by ingesting all of the chemicals we've put in our food and all this kind of stuff; there are things that need to be fixed. However, to say that we've broken the planet, I think is an extreme and it's a symptom of this anthropocentric bias that we have. In the same way that people back in the Middle Ages thought that the Earth was the centre of the Universe, we're here thinking that human action is at the centre of all change on the planet. That is simply a bias and it's inaccurate. It's a partial truth, and so I think we can moderate that approach by just understanding that sure, there are things that we have done that we need to fix, but there are also natural cycles at play here, which we really don't understand very well, and we need to pursue the science of understanding those natural cycles and working with them.

I think all of this speaks to the need to put new social systems in place so that we can bring about the changes more effectively. We're seeing a general trend at the moment away from private sector dominance, which has been the central dynamic within the modern Scientific-Industrial era, back to public sector dominance during the emerging era, and that's going to play out differently, because in the previous communal paradigm, public sector dominance was quite rigid and structured. In this emerging paradigm, it's going to be quite decentralised and very flexible, so it'll show up differently but we're moving away from the private sector dominance thing. I think that, from a government point of view, the decentralisation is going to change our system of governance quite radically; we're going to end up with something very different.

Nyck: So focus still, folks, on the local—local everything. That's really important at this time—those networks that you can evolve and develop.

Steve: Yes, absolutely. And things we can do: I think number one is to stay super curious and open-minded. Don't get carried away by the hype and just because everybody else is thinking something, don't assume that it's actually right and there's evidence to support it because it's just not the case at this time in history. Assume that we don't have the science worked out. Anyone who says that the science is in, isn't a scientist. Science is a never-ending feast a we're always gathering new information and always analysing it and always modifying our understanding, upgrading our understanding of how things work, and that's become really important at the moment because we are facing some very critical issues over the next couple of decades. We really need to figure out: a) how to address it effectively; and then b) how to motivate people to fix it.

Because this is a fractal model, it all comes back to knowing yourself, also. Pay attention to your own nature, your own biases, your own compulsive behaviours which sometimes lead to your downfall, because those things play out at scale, and if you can understand the dynamics within yourself, then you're also getting the key to understanding large-scale social dynamics.

Nyck: That can be a development of intuition, too, because that's part of this new evolving paradigm—this beginning to access and understand the difference between, say, intuition and pure emotional response to something.

Steve: That's true. Other things we can do is to take meaningful action. Right now, the great attraction is to talk, talk, talk and gather together with other people to talk, and talk about what needs to be done, and tell other people what needs to be done, but we really need to take action. That is really an important thing at the moment—take action to clean up our act, clean up the planet, make the world a more peaceful place, build

better and fairer social systems, economic systems, political systems, justice systems, health care systems, systems that are connected and not disconnected. Elect leaders or appoint leaders in whatever process is appropriate, who are committed to these positive changes which are mindful of the large-scale impact that we're having, the things that need to be fixed, and who are interested in building community and not separating people; and who are also capable—they have the skills and the experience and the motivation to take effective action, not just talk about it and tell us lies to make us look the other way.

Nyck: Very good. That's about it for the show. We'll just address a couple of other things. Thanks for your texts; and two more things. First of all, you can get all of our podcasts from our website, www.future sense.it within a couple of days of the broadcast with an edited version of the show. Secondly, someone's asked me for an email address to myself. You can get me at president@bayfm.org; and Melody, one of our long-time listeners asks: "Perhaps if we can cause adverse future scenarios by imagining or projecting, then we can do so constructively if we understand the river's currents from love and not guilt."

Steve: Yes. It's a very, very interesting scenario when you stand back and look at it, that all of these things are happening, a lot of them don't seem to be related to facts and evidence, yet they're all effectively building that evolutionary tension, which is absolutely necessary to bring large-scale change.

Nyck: Yes. Beautiful. Thanks, Steve. We'll be back next Monday morning, here on BayFM.

You've been listening to Future Sense, a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Future Sense is available on iTunes and SoundCloud.

The future is here now, it's just not evenly distributed.