

Deep Adaptation Q&A with Amisha Ghadiali hosted by Jem Bendell

Jem Bendell: Welcome everybody to another Deep Adaptation Q&A. This month I'm very pleased that we have Amisha Ghadiali joining me. This is interesting for me, in particular, because Amisha is the first person who interviewed me about Deep Adaptation after my Deep Adaptation paper came out. I didn't really know how to talk about it. I was really quite reticent about talking about it. I was still in my own processing, shock, grief, reworking what should I really be doing now? How should I be living? Amisha was amazing in the way that she held me in that moment for her podcast, which is *The Future is Beautiful*. And I wondered how our interview would actually go, given the facts of the nature of her podcast, the title of it. And yet we explored things which I think were really helpful for me. That interview helped me really connect with what I still believe in, and what's still beautiful for me. So it's really super to reconnect. What is it almost 18 months on? Thank you for joining.

Amisha Ghadiali: It's absolutely my pleasure. I was re-listening to the interview last night. And yeah, feeling what a journey because, as we were talking about it, you were saying that when we'd gone to the Green School, that was the third group of people that you talked about it with. And then here we are 18 months later, and there's an entire movement, there's been so many events, and many, many, many people around the world know what Deep Adaptation is. And it's been one of the most popular episodes of the podcast as well.

Jem Bendell: Yeah, so I mean, your podcast is incredible. For those of you who don't know, Amisha has done over 80 interviews now. Really interesting thinkers. Some of whom are well known, and some people that I'd never heard of before they featured on your pod. And really going deep into people's worldviews and motivations, in ways that you don't often hear. I recommended it. *The Future is Beautiful*. I suppose you just go to iTunes and type in *The Future Is Beautiful*, is that right?

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, you can find it on iTunes, Spotify, YouTube, or we have a website, thefutureisbeautiful.co.

Jem Bendell: I think actually seeing, I can't remember what happened, someone sent me the YouTube video of our audio. And it had 1000s of views. That was another indication that this was beginning to take off and become the kind of movement that it now clearly is. So thank you for joining me. Amisha, you took a decision some two, three years ago now to really explore people's ideas outside of the matrix. What does the future look and feel like and where we can see those seeds now? You've been having amazing conversations now with many people from around the world. I'm really interested in how, in many of them, you touch on this question of inner and outer. These people are actually engaged in trying to do good in the world, but are also very clear that their own personal journey, their own spiritual practices are important. That often comes up. I was thinking, is this a reflection of yourself

and what's important to you? And what is it that you think is really important for us to know about you in the work that you do?

Amisha Ghadiali: Thank you for the question. It started in a slightly different framing, but actually still very relevant. We had an election year in the UK, and I was feeling like, the times of trusting a politician and a political party to create the vision of the future that we choose was no longer the way that the system worked. And so how important it was for each one of us to connect deeper to our values. Not like individualism, but more, that we are all important. We are all part of the unfolding story. And whatever it is that we spend our time, our money, our energy on, is creating the future, whether we understand that or not. And that was the origins of the project. And so I had all these fun ways of getting people to engage with that question, what is the future you choose? Interestingly, it turned out to be a question that many people found very difficult to answer, which led me into much deeper processes around it. We had a book, and a few years ago, I started the podcast, because I felt like, quite often, our world is very siloed. And we present certain parts of ourselves, which means that our understanding of people and what drives people gets quite warped. Maybe I can use you as an example Jem. For years, you were sharing about sustainability, and you show a professional side of yourself. So a lot of people that you come into contact with, will only know that side of yourself. And that's the same for everyone in whatever kind of professions that they're in. And so we're often getting these very siloed understandings of people. And I feel that then in turn makes us more siloed. Because we feel like there isn't permission for all of these other parts of ourselves, and actually, how holistic and integrated we really are as human beings, but also not just as human beings, but as communities, as networks, as society. And for me, one of the things that felt really important was to offer a space that allowed people to be as big and dynamic and whole as they are, and share the inner world as well as what they're doing in the world and why they're doing it, and really make those connections. Because I think that that's the part that we can often all really connect with. Sometimes it's hard to connect with a theory or an idea of something that we should do. But when you hear someone talking about those really deep moments that influence them, or what keeps them up late at night, and you realise it's the same things that keep you up late at night, it's easier then to make behavior changes, and take more responsibility, or give yourself permission to be more of who you are.

Jem Bendell: Yeah, I really appreciated that as someone you interviewed, being really tuned into the personal journey. And as I've spent more time on this Deep Adaptation topic, I think that's become so clear that we do self-censor in a culture of mutual censorship of a myriad of emotions and uncertainties. And yeah, it's that professional face wanting to appear clever, in control, have the answers. Fear of being vulnerable in front of others. And it kind of then means that we don't have an enquiring culture. We have really stupid pronouncements, for example, on the most recent concern affecting humanity right now with the Coronavirus. You can see that there's just this thin veneer of confidence, which just doesn't really help. So I'm wondering, to what extent do you think that inner suppression, that inner alienation is involved in causing our environmental predicament, amongst other problems in society?

Amisha Ghadiali: I just don't think we can separate the two things at all. I really feel that if we were allowed to, if it was culturally normal to bring our whole selves into the workplace and into our decision-making, then we would just live in a very different world. If people showed up to work as a father, as a brother, as a friend, as all of those aspects of how they might be in other parts of their lives rather than

as an employee that makes decisions based on a certain set of criteria, if we were allowed to bring those things together, we would just make different decisions. Because we'd see each other as humans rather than whatever the set of data is that we're working to, in our, in our workplaces. And I think that living in a world that is so siloed and so confusing creates an extraordinary level of distortion, where our values are, like true human values, and our behavior are so different. And that hurts every single individual, for themselves, it's a painful thing to live with. But then when it comes to the wider way in which society runs, if we feel disconnected to how that is, because it doesn't really give space for who we are, and for what's really important to us, then we all become so disconnected and numb. And we see that in the mental health statistics that we have, in how lonely and isolated people are feeling, in the rise of many diseases, diabetes, these kinds of things, which are often from not having those kind of self-care and community care tools readily available to us.

Jem Bendell: So this is a big part of your own personal work, as a yogi, as a coach, and so forth. It's that tuning into that inner world and helping people connect with that and be more comfortable in exploring and expressing that. Is that right? And can you tell us about your own personal story, your own journey with that, and how that's influencing your choices in being active, engaged and changing things in society?

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, for sure. So, Jem, I feel like when we first met I was working in sustainable fashion. I've always been very ambitiously driven to make the world a better place. And I did it in a way where, partly also because the kind of organizations that I started to work for, were very underfunded. And so I learnt in my early 20s how to burn myself out through my care of the world. And in my life journey I had turned to my kind of spirituality only in moments of real crisis, rather than in an everyday kind of sense. I've always been very spiritually connected, but was also quite embarrassed about it for a number of years because it wasn't culturally accepted. I didn't grow up with a community around my spirituality. And actually, I grew up with the kinds of friends and people around me that look down on spirituality. There were a few moments where it really, really, supported me. When I was 21, I was driven over by a four-wheel drive pickup truck. I had some damage to my legs. I had one tie go over my hair and the other one go over my thighs. And I had quite a healing process after that, which interestingly, a lot of it was around the trauma, rather than around the physical trauma. It was around the emotional trauma. And at that time I really turned to my yoga and I went to different kind of healers that were able to help me to work with the pain in the way that the physio wasn't. And again, a few years later, one of my closest friends, got hit by a car and killed in front of me whilst I'd gone to visit her for the weekend. And that was obviously a huge, huge life changing moment for me. And again, it really connected me to my spirituality. I stopped drinking, I stopped doing a lot of the things that culturally people around me in the worlds that I was living and working in did, and I really turned inwards. I went to teachers. I wanted to understand, what does death mean? Why did this happen? Where has she gone? Why was I there? Is this my fault? You know, and all of these questions that I had. I went to many different teachers and I started to read many different books about death. I really changed my lifestyle. And I came to peace with it. And not only peace, I came to see like, okay, what was the gift in this, and I kind of understood that her soul was free in that and was able to find my way through this this horrible tragedy. And then, of course, what happened was I got back into London. And I was working at the Ethical Fashion Forum, I was working for the Impact Hub, I was doing The Future Is Beautiful in its early incarnations. I didn't have enough money because none of these roles were paying

me properly. I was out all the time. I started to socially drink wine with everyone that I worked with because there was a lot of that. And I started to feel myself burning out again. And then I had a moment where I got glandular fever, which is not something that people in their 20s normally get. And the funny thing is I didn't really know I had glandular fever. I was lying on the floor before doing a TEDx talk on *The Future We Choose*, which was the book version of the podcast. And I had no energy in my body because I had glandular fever. I didn't know I had glandular fever at this point. I just knew that I kept getting sick, and I kept pushing through being sick. I remember I was lying on the floor, and the people that were hosting the TEDx talk were terrified that I was going to mess up the event. And I was like, 'no, no, I'm just saving energy'. And then I got up, and I did the talk, and the talk was fine. Not perfect, but it was ok. And then I realized after that I had glandular fever. And I realized how I had pushed myself so much, even though I'd had glandular fever, all from this motivation of wanting to make the world a better place. And that was ridiculous. And completely unnecessary. I was doing similar things to what the people five years older than me, ten years older than me, that I was working around were doing. And it wasn't completely bonkers the way that I was living. But it wasn't good for my body or my soul, and I wasn't doing my best work. And that led me to making this very clear decision that I would make my spirituality the core of my life, and that everything else would come from that. And, for me, spirituality doesn't have to mean a set of practices and dogma and any of that. It's just the recognition that we're all connected. It's a recognition that there is a sacred element to being here, to being in this body. It's a remembrance to connect with the earth and the sky. It's a remembrance to find the greater parts of ourself, I want to say, the parts of ourselves that is beyond the ego, and the part of ourselves that knows what to do. I feel like, that's really key at this time, that we're all more connected to ourselves as souls, so that we understand why we're here. And we're able to listen to our intuition, so that we know what to do. Because it doesn't look like a time that we've ever known before. And we know that the authorities that we've been giving our power away to in different ways don't have the answers. And so for me spirituality was that, and taking care of myself as well. And creating a relationship with myself. Actually in the height of workaholic-isms and, and the burn out period, the ideas just come so fast, and there was such urgency and I didn't have the capacity to sit with anything, to digest anything. And to make clear and concise steps forward. I didn't know how to be with myself. And even before, in those moments of crisis, I found spirituality. But it had been about leaning on others that were understanding and compassionate and could open up and receive me in my grief, which I was finding that my friends or the people around me didn't know how to do. And so for me a big part of that that spiritual journey is being able to sit with yourself, being able to sit with all of your thoughts, being able to sit in the quietness, being able to really enjoy in a very, very deep sense who you are and why you're here. And when you cultivate a relationship with yourself, that's that strong, then so much becomes possible. What you're able to hold for other people just by being yourself, I think is world changing.

Jem Bendell: Thank you.

Amisha Ghadiali: And then I got into this work. And I never intended to do this for work. But, of course, there's that saying that when the students ready, the teachers appear. And then, of course, sure enough, I met this incredible mystic that basically just kind of gave me a nudge. A kind of harsh nudge, that opened up things that were sitting there, that had been there. They'd been on the surface, sometimes they'd crept out into the world, a lot of the times I'd been terrified of them. They'd been

hidden. And he just helped me to open up a lot of things in myself. I'd been practicing yoga, but I started to really practice yoga and meditation. And then I did a lot of different trainings, and I started to hold space. My intention was actually to take these practices back into the world of social change, and change making, and social entrepreneurship. But then I found that actually everyone was too busy, and they said that they didn't have time to come to yoga or learn to meditate. And then through the podcasts, I found a space where I could draw the connection between these things together. And another aspect of my work is that I work with clients one on one in helping to set up practices that really work for their lifestyle and where they're at and what they need. But also working on the subconscious patterning that is actually what dictates our thoughts and how we live. There's some really interesting work in the field of epigenetics, which shows that around 95% of our thoughts are coming from our subconscious, which is mostly formed between the third trimester that we're in the uterus and the age of seven. So we have our conscious mind, which we're cultivating through our intellect and through what we learn and through who we think we are. But that's actually not as strong as what was already formed. And so, so many of our thoughts and emotions are coming from that space. And a lot of it is often limiting and self-sabotaging. So it's really interesting when you think that everyone that we know is running these programs. And there are certain politicians, for example, that we see a lot of on the TV, and you can actually see the seven year old in them quite strongly. But we're all doing that no matter how good we are at disguising it. So I started to work a lot with clients on how we actually shift those patterns. And for me, that's a pathway into greater sovereignty, which is how we are able to move forward as humanity.

Jem Bendell: Thank you, that was really, really wonderful to hear your journey and how it all sort of clicks into place. I'm thinking the kind of spirituality you've talked about is one that I now know has the longest heritage and has incredible wisdom teachings and practitioners related to it, but is still fairly marginal when people think about spirituality. You've described one which is very much looking inward. It's self-acceptance, it's being with the inner difficulties, rather than just having some kind of quick fix through believing in something. So it's that it's that contemplative tradition, I think, that you're drawing upon there. Also you've connected there to some of the latest science as well. And I feel that this is hugely needed right now. As people around the world are going to be facing evermore troubling changes in their lives and news about threats and feeling that vulnerability. And we've seen it, you mentioned it. It's not just happening at the level of Donald Trump just seeming to, like consciously or unconsciously operate from fear in terms of let's just have a simplistic answer, something I can say that's bold and actually isn't super intelligent in where the real risk is. But we see that, I've seen that in organizations as well, people just wanting to look like they're in control, rather than exploring things deeply. Some people call this cultivating personal or emotional self-regulation. Is it possible to do something to bring this rapidly into societies, to scale up the contemplative path, to help people be with that emotional difficulty? So that they can, as you mentioned, find their sovereignty and act from their own? And also, as you mentioned, tune into that intuition in them as well, rather than all that shutting down that we've been doing.

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, for sure. I mean, it goes back to school. If we were able to teach our kids this stuff, which actually a lot of them naturally do, and then we teach them how not to do it. And we learn all this stuff that then when you get to this place as an adult you've got to sort of unlearn everything that you learnt. And then actually learn, okay, how do I actually show up in my relationships, whether it's

with my colleagues or with my romantic partners, or with my family. And so I feel like education is a huge part of this, and how we can actually bring this into schools, and then of course, into workplaces. But in terms of the mechanics of it, it's quite simple. I have an online platform called Presents Collective, where we have different themes every month that we explore. It's very practice based. For me, it's the integration part of everything we talked about on the podcast, which is lots of different people's ideas and stories and ways of looking at the world. For me, it's important that we take things away from philosophy into actually embodying them and being that which we value in the world. That's what we're doing with Presents Collective. I've been on that platform very careful not to just keep, for the sake of it, making a new meditation. Just do the one that we were already doing, because that, that's all we need. Some of it's so simple. Like learning how to breathe, and being able to slow down our breathing makes such an incredible difference to the quality of our life, from our health perspective, our emotional health, our levels of anxiety, our ability to see clearly and make decisions. That's as simple as taking a breath that's in for four and out for four at any moment that you're feeling a little bit... Before you do anything, and then, of course, it can go into much more elaborate practices. But for me, the simplicity of it is the part that ideally, on a on a big scale, we want more and more people to be open to. For me, if you choose the path of a yogi that's like, that's a whole different thing. And you choose to be in a certain set of set of practices and traditions, and all of this. But that kind of understanding that we are able to shift our consciousness that, you know, we don't have to be who we've always been. A lot of that is our patterns. A lot of that is because of our trauma. A lot of that is because she did this to me, and they did that to me, and this didn't, and I didn't get this. And now I'm like this and it's your fault. How do we shift from that into: Yeah, things in life are always tough, and things are always changing, and there are always things that are unknown, and we can't control everything. But the bits that we can control are what we put into our body. From a health perspective, it's very simple. Stuff like are we drinking enough water? most of us don't drink enough water and that really affects the way that we think, the way that we feel, the way that our organs function. To how do we breathe? To how does it feel to sit quietly? To just spending like 10/15 minutes a day with our feet on the ground. It doesn't even have to be barefoot, but just outside. A lot of it's so simple!

Jem Bendell: I knew all this in theory as I was doing the Deep Adaptation stuff. But with the fear around Coronavirus over the last month, I realized that I have quite a long way to go myself in how to spot my own emotions, and not act to fix them, just to notice that they're there. And I realized that I've still got quite a lot of work to do in whether it's going to be using a meditative practice or other practices to be able to have that equanimity. Because I'm not directly affected by Coronavirus just yet, but there's that sense of vulnerability and so it's really helping bring it home to me that there's that personal development or spiritual work that I need to do to be able to better be with the these difficulties of which Coronavirus is one but there are going to be many, many more to come. And then also to find somehow some joy in the way I can be in relation to those difficulties and noticing the fear response and the simplistic answer, but actually then going to a different place, which is much more loving and caring and supportive and collaborative and inviting people also to become more conscious about how they respond. How are you feeling about Corona?

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, I mean, I wanted to say one thing about emotions, because a pure emotion only lasts 90 seconds, which is fascinating. Because if you see me after a breakup, it definitely doesn't feel like its 90 seconds! But the actual emotion that passes through your body is 90 seconds. And then

the rest of it is the story and the history and the way that it connects to a deeper sense of everything. So when we really learn to work with our emotions, we're able to just to be with them and to move them through and to come back into a place of equanimity. I talk a lot about resilience and courage for this time. For me, resilience is slightly different to the Deep Adaptation definition, but not too dissimilar. It's that picking yourself back up again. Now that there's Coronavirus, and there's going to be more and more things. And still we're alive, still our hearts are beating, still we're here. And so how are we able to integrate and move through and re-show up every single time? The courage required to be in the heart, to live in the heart, in amongst all of this fear. We had a call for Presents Collective and of course the question in the calls is always: what's present? And then everyone is like: Coronavirus! We had a deep conversation about it, and where I've got to with it is that there is an invitation here to take better care of ourselves. And so all of the things that we're talking about from drinking more water to washing our hands, to being more aware of how our energy and physical body impacts other people, to taking the right vitamins and eating well. There is a conversation about our immune systems in a very, very real way. And that's a wonderful side effect of Coronavirus because if that empowers us all to take better care of ourselves, then that's something that can come out of this that is really positive and equips us better for the present and for the future. With the with the panic I think people are turning to meditation or breathing, asking how can I sit with this? And it's interesting because I'm at my parent's house at the moment, and they have generally a TV on all the time. So I went to bed last night, actually I was in the bath, and I could hear Coronavirus news that was louder than my mantras that I was listening to in the bath. And, and then when I woke up, as soon as I left my room, I heard more. More deaths and news of Coronavirus. It's a lot to stay centered in amongst that, and I do feel like we need to take the invitations as they come. Okay, so there's an invitation to slow down, there's an invitation to take more time for ourselves. Obviously, there's a whole notion of what people can afford to do, because there's something that is sort of inherent in the whole self-isolation thing that if you can't afford to not have your income, or if you're if you work for yourself, or if you're a freelancer, you know, you are much more affected by these kinds of things. But the fact that all these events have been canceled, and whatnot means that there aren't too many places to go. And so even if you're still going to work, there is more time for oneself. And so there is a real invitation for self-reflection in that as well as how we do things, For me, the thing that scares me the most about it is the racism and the fear of other people that that can arise or something like this.

Jem Bendell: Yeah, I've seen it in many forms already. Even in internal emails in organizations, which has shown hidden latent racism there. Amisha, sorry I want to stop you because there are some people on the call. And I want to just actually go to them and see what questions they have for you. Is that okay?

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, of course.

Jem Bendell: Those of you on the call who haven't sent Matthew a question yet, please do. We're going to go straight to Tamara. Over to you Tamara.

Tamara: Oh, gosh, I've almost forgotten my first question. I noticed when, in January even, the British press was posting Coronavirus on the front page solidly for two weeks. And my response was, I am not afraid. I will not panic. I do not experience fear around this. But I started to post stuff on my Facebook

threads in which I was saying, I'm not buying into this as a panic situation. And I got quite attacked for that. But I'm wondering, what is it that you said earlier Amisha, that you sometimes lose touch with that inner wisdom, with your center, with your core? So my question is how do you notice when you have lost your center? because I started getting overexcited and responding and posting and you know, got hooked in to all of that. I wasn't afraid. But I was engaging with all of this stuff that was happening. And against my better judgment. And I got quite attacked for being grounded and solid and unflappable.

Jem Bendell: Thank you. How do you catch yourself Amisha?

Amisha Ghadiali: I think you can feel when you've come out of center. And I have noticed a lot of that too. I mean, viruses are viruses, but the stronger your immune system is, which a big part of that is your self-belief, and the more fear there is in your body, the easier it is for a virus to come in. And so cultivating that love and strength and compassion is one of our greatest protections. It is interesting how triggering that is for lots of people. I've noticed a lot of that that. There is, of course, a balance of not putting other people in danger because you don't believe in Coronavirus. But to say to yourself that I'm not going to get this, that my system is strong and healthy, is really powerful. For me, I think that if you have a daily practice, it really helps in not getting off center. But we are always going to get off center because we live in a in a world that's not centered. So I feel like if you're still in relationship with the world, which I personally want to be in - I could become like a kind of spiritual ninja, that's like so kind of hardcore to the world - but I really want to be part of this living breathing organism, and to feel with everyone, but then of course that sometimes means that I will come out of myself and then I have to return to my practices and come back in. And also just picking our battles because there's something about sharing wisdom. But then there's also a place where having to argue with people or having people argue with you, just because you've shared something is really tiring. I'm very lucky in the podcast that the episodes are so long that people can't really be bothered to argue with them. They're not like Facebook posts!

Jem Bendell: That is a good one. How to inoculate yourself from criticism. Super, that's fun. Christopher, you have a question for Amisha. If you unmute and share your question, actually also say where you are in the world. That'd be nice to hear.

Christopher: Hi, it's three AM here in Boulder, Colorado. I'm glad to be here. I didn't expect to be up though. One of my questions for you is, we're trained to be consumers of everything. You know, people workshops, stuff. How do you deal with people come to you who want like, what can you give me? What do I get from this? And it seems like for years I wanted a special experience or something that has a lot of energy to it. And it's taken years to want to have something be a letting go or a non-experience almost is just as valuable. How do you relate, or share with people who want just want something from you?

Jem Bendell: You're talking about the commodification of spirituality, as a way of adding on to one's experience of life and making oneself have more fun. I think I've heard the phrase 'spiritual bypass' as well. So rather than actually working on one's shit. Yeah, important stuff.

Amisha Ghadiali: Yeah, it's definitely part of the world that we're in. And yeah, this sort of spiritual bypassing or spiritual materialism, where everyone needs the crystal and they need to go and do this, and they need to do this experience and that experience. I try and really ground people into the simplicity of it. Anyone that's within my world, with Presents Collective or doing one on one sessions, I really try and make it that you don't have to just go and do all these things to try it. It's more about committing to something than it is about having all these big experiences. That thing that we're committing to can be very, very simple, as many of the things that I've said today are very simple things that anyone can do no matter what they believe in. One of the reasons that I stopped doing retreats for a while for was because I started to notice that they had become part of the 'top up culture' that was propping up the existing system. People would come to me really worn out and then we'd have this amazing week and then they'd go back and then they'd come back again next year and be like, 'Oh, you're my lifesaver'. And I was just thinking, I'm literally just helping you to go back and live exactly the same way. And so I've sort of shifted my offerings into more online, and one on one programs, maybe visioning that Coronavirus was going to mean that we were going stop hanging out together! But actually the reason that I did that was more because I wanted to focus on offerings that are simple, that you can do at home. Because it's the integration, it's what you do that makes the difference. I know because I've also been to many teachers and tried this and that, and had this met God in multiple different ways. And I just found it really tiring by the end of it. I mean, it's super exciting. But then it's like, hang on, this isn't having the grounded impact. And actually, my values are about connecting to a simplicity and connecting more to the earth and connecting to my heart. And I don't need all of that in order to do that. I don't know how you shift it in the whole system. But for me, what I found is that what I'm able to shift in myself or at least have full awareness of because we're human and so even when we have awareness, it doesn't always completely shift because of the cultural conditioning and cultural patterns. But I find that the things that I'm paying attention to myself dramatically does shift who is around me, and who signs up for my programs and wants to share practices and do sessions with me. And so that's something that I've been trying to really offer in the container of what I'm holding.

Jem Bendell: Yeah, I think this is key as well. But it was something you said earlier about when you were in your early 20s, there wasn't really a community to connect to, to explore and support you in your own spirituality, and that's still the case for many people. This question of integration or abiding with this consciousness over time. We're trying to promote that as well with the Deep Adaptation Forum in a non-commodified way. We intend to make sure everything that we offer is free. Because also otherwise we're going to see people saying that I am commodifying people's anxieties around climate chaos. And our mission is to reduce harm. And therefore we want to just try and find ways of getting out all these kinds of practices and helping people find community online or in person. It feels massive as a thing. I'm going to ask you a question before going back to questions from the group. When I first met you, Amisha, you were wearing a bracelet. We'd known of each other for a while, but when we actually worked face to face you were wearing a bracelet of skulls around wrist. And I said 'what's that?' I suppose that I didn't really know. I thought you were a goth or into heavy metal. You said, oh, it's Carly. And that was it. And then I didn't really understand what that meant. And I now know a bit more about what that means now, and from what you were saying earlier in our conversation about your approach to spirituality, which is very conscious of emotions. It's very grounded. It's quite earthy. You talked about earth and sky, intuition, personal sovereignty. And also talking about taking pause and letting

come. And wondering if the notion of sacred feminine is important for you, and in what way, and why it matters right now, in the face of the climate tragedy?

Amisha Ghadiali: The tradition that I'm most connected to in terms of my yogic path is a goddess tradition. The kind of understanding is that the Shakti, the feminine, is all of the energy. Like everything that's moving, and the Shiva, the masculine, is the unseen that's holding everything. It's different to the sense of the masculine. The feminine is the yin and the yang. In that model, the feminine is seen as the listening, slowness, nurturing side and the masculine the more action. In the in the tantric worldview, it's the masculine which is more that which is holding, and the feminine is all of the energy. And for me, it's been very powerful to actually study it. And it's one of the things that I share quite a lot of. It's the mythology of the Hindu goddesses. We're not just Hindu because also Tara is Buddhist. But in the tantric world, it's before the goddesses were claimed by religions. When they just were. Each of these different goddesses have, for me, what they are able to offer is the awakening of certain parts of ourselves. For example, Durga, who is the warrior goddess who rides on the lion, or the tiger, and she has all the arms and she has all the weapons. She, for me, represents the power of love to win any battle. And it's the power of love over the love of power. And real courage, and a sense of right timing as well, like in the stories, she doesn't just rush into every battle. She actually cultivates herself. And that she knows that she can win the battle at any moment. But what's really important for her is that she takes action at a point where it can be received and fully understood, so that the karma shifts to the future. So Durga is my kind of sacred activist goddess, and then Kali is a favorite as well. I mean, how can you have favorite goddesses?

Jem Bendell: It was really nasty to ask you this question right at the end. When are you doing Satsang? Go to amisha.co.uk and get a Satsang. I've never heard Durga explained in that way before. Wow. Brilliant.

Amisha Ghadiali: I do share the myths a lot in Presents Collective, but also there's a gift section on my website, and it's free. You can listen to me sharing the story of Durga and Kali, and what they mean. I think also Lakshmi I explain, not as material abundance, but as soul radiance, the abundant nature of the soul. For me, these deities, offer a way of waking up parts of ourselves that we need to wake up through story and of course they have their power.

Jem Bendell: I'm going to go and listen to you talk about those things. That's brilliant. And share with other people I know who were inquiring into this as well. Last question Amisha. It's coming from Michael. If you could unmute and tell us where you're joining from?

Michael: Hi Misha. I'm in Holywood in Northern Ireland. I started listening to your podcasts only about three weeks ago, just as they were winding up. And I listened to a few. And in fact, one of them was you describing a myth of, I think it was Carly, who is selected by the gods to effectively kill a king who gets a bit power crazed. And it's still sort of reverberating in me a bit. But the question I've got is about the series itself. And presumably, when you started it, you gave it the title The Future Is Beautiful. Possibly, without as it were, the context of Deep Adaptation's attitude and approach to the climate crisis and climate breakdown. I think it's quite lovely how there is that direct challenge to the fact that there is an inevitable climate breakdown, and yet, you call it the Future Is Beautiful.

Jem Bendell: Thank you, Michael. I think the question is, where is the beauty? Inner, outer, material, cosmic?

Michael: Yes its sort of that question, but is it on a personal level or is it on a society level?

Amisha Ghadiali: This title, The Future Is Beautiful, is from 2016. And in four years, the world has shifted in ways that we can't understand. And it does feel like a bold title to be holding at this time. And that has been an interesting journey. I didn't know that I was walking myself into that one. I stand by this, that no matter what happens in the world, no matter what shit hits what fans, I want to be a purveyor of beauty. I want to have a beautiful experience. And for me, beauty isn't nice. It's really being connected, you know, and beauty has depth. And it's about enjoying, on some level, who I am, and the life that we have. And seeing, amongst whatever chaos, the beauty that exists. And there is always some. And that's what's so incredible about being alive. I really feel like I refuse to live the rest of my life in an anxious lockdown crisis. And that no matter what happens, I will seek to share the beauty in myself. And in whatever scenarios we find ourselves in. And I'm happy to be supporting that as an idea, that no matter what happens, we can find beauty and there is beauty and we can share beauty. And we can bring meaning and love to the future.

Jem Bendell: Super. Absolutely. Sometimes when people say to me, it sounds like you're giving up, I say we're not giving up, we're opening up to a wider, deeper agenda. Reduce harm, find meaning, create joy, no matter what. It's certainly not a turning away or withdrawing. It's a leaning into these things. And so Amisha we come to the end. And for those of you who weren't on gallery view, and those of you who just see the video, then you don't see all the beautiful faces I get to enjoy. The beauty of these calls is often just seeing the beaming faces. I just want to say hello to Samira and Steff. I've just really enjoyed your beaming smiles throughout call. I might just unmute you so you can say hello.

Steff: Hi!

Jem Bendell: The look of joy on your faces as you hear things is very lovely to see. I just wanted to say thank you.

Steff: It's been a beautiful, rich conversation that really is enlivening and beneficial. I feel the ripples and really appreciate the space that it's creating.

Jem Bendell: Thank you very much. And thank you everyone else for joining and thank you Amisha for joining. Did I get your website right Amisha? Amisha.co.uk.

Amisha Ghadiali: That's right. And thank you so much. This has been really lovely. It's just been really lovely to spend this time with all of you. And thank you for these questions.

Jem Bendell: Okay, super. And I'll see all of you and people watching next month. Goodbye!