



37. Personal & Global Grief, Part 2

Recorded on 23rd June, 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: Here on BayFM, you are tuned to *Future Sense* with myself, Nyck Jeanes and Steve McDonald, and our special guest here all the way from Texas, Ivory Root, who is a death doula, among other things, and we're talking particularly about grief—our relationship to death and grief on a personal and also on a global scale.

Steve: And how we evolve that as we shift into this new paradigm; how we remember our ways of being in community in the past and then bring all of that richness and learning and create something absolutely new—a new, more capable way of living in community and dealing with grief in that process.

Ivory, you were saying that your work has been heavily influenced by Martin Prechtel, a Guatemalan curandero. Do you want to just give us a little bit of detail? What are the main premises, the main guidelines that he gives around his work and dealing with grief in community?

Ivory Root: Well, I think that what we can learn the most about, especially from that talk—I want to point everybody there; I think you can find it on *YouTube* very simply (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUwewfPPSbE>); I think it's in three parts, that one talk that he gives—*Grief as Praise*, I believe is the title of it—and I would encourage everyone to go there just to supplement what we're talking about today. It is life-changing. It was for me. I think it will be for your listeners as well.

He talks about the fact that if we don't praise those that are gone, how will they know that we've missed them? That's another line that really helps me connect with people

who don't necessarily have access to these new levels of consciousness—just to make it that simple. And it does go back to *el día de los Muertos* [the Day of the Dead] and that sort of communing—the permission—but that's only once a year; the thinning of the veil once a year. You know, it's not quite fair, is it?

Nyck: Maybe that's all we can take just now.

Ivory Root: I think you can handle much more than that, but I think Prachtel wants you to go to a place of gratitude first.

He talks about honey in the hive. In the very beginning of his introduction, there is a prayer that he does in his language—I don't recall what it is but it's really powerful—talks about how his culture and his teachings are all about crying out to the ancestors and how he can't pass by a river without weeping into the water because our tears feed the dead; that they basically feed on our grief. So if we change our concept of grieving and see it as an offering, if we change that into something that's not associated with shame, we don't have to go down that really dark, deep rabbit hole of either turning to drink or drug or whatever other escape, you know?

Steve: Yes, in the Scientific-Industrial era, information has been a source of power, and the idea of withholding your information has been key to the success of people within that era, so this idea of holding back your emotion and not revealing that, because then you're giving away your power, I think has probably shaped our inability to do that—to grieve publicly.

Ivory Root: Well, in the *Tempest* poem, when she talks about holding your own—literally holding the hands out and then holding your own issues and then facing the wolves—I mean, there's just so many beautiful images there also that are very intense. But she always brings them back to a place of sweetness; she always brings them back to a place of healing. She brings up these really dark, dark images for us to help us look at what we're doing—our ghosts and our demons—and then she says, here's how you faithfully move forward, but it takes a lot of courage. Everything we're talking about takes a lot of courage.

Steve: It does take a lot of courage and I think gratitude is probably one of the most difficult things for people to express as they shift beyond the Scientific-Industrial because there's a natural, inbuilt human tendency to reject the previous era within the first six layers, and so it's natural for us to want to throw it out.

Nyck: 'I'm only going to be grateful for things I agree with and that I like.'

Ivory Root: Yeah, and great grief and gratitude don't go together—we're angry when we lose. What is anger? Not getting what you want; it's that simple. So if someone's taken from us ...

Nyck: So gratitude is accepting exactly what is, whatever it is.

Ivory Root: Right.

Nyck: Quite the opposite. It's interesting, isn't it? Because it almost is the opposite of anger in a way; or the expression of intense reactionary emotions to something that you don't like or you don't want.

Ivory Root: Which is why the Buddha calls it one of the three poisons.

Nyck: What are the other poisons?

Ivory Root: Jealousy and hatred.

Nyck: Oh, yeah. As our listeners know, we often refer to Bobby K, who does a wonderful *I Ching* reading every week, and it's interesting today, for this week, a little quote of his. He says: "Bitterness, guilt, shame and jealousy are burdens too heavy for this journey (meaning this evolution we are in now). Pack a very light bag and move on. Don't miss this train. It's the one called liberation." But that idea that perhaps those emotions like jealousy, bitterness and shame and guilt, that we're moving past the need for them in the same way, at least, than we've had. I'm not saying we should deny them, but how do you feel about that? Do you think that's happening, that we have to actually unburden ourselves, perhaps from the relationship to these parts of human experience and expression in a way to move forward? I don't know. What do you think?

Ivory Root: To inoculate yourself from a disease, it's got to get to a fever pitch in order for enough to emerge to want to cure it, so we're in a purification phase and so there's going to be a lot of toxins that are going to come up, you know?

Steve: Absolutely, yeah.

Ivory Root: A big swell of toxins that we're going to have to go and address.

Steve: I also like to see it as a process of enlightenment as well. There's that old parable of the guy who's in his bedroom at night and there's a coiled snake in the corner. He's feeling all these emotions of fear and terror etc around having a snake in his room and all of a sudden there's a flash of lightning which enlightens the room, and he sees it's actually a piece of rope. With that revelation, the revealing of the truth, there's actually no need to suppress or pack away those fears because they're just not there anymore, because you've seen the truth and the truth is something quite different. So there's a revealing that will take place in our own development, this evolutionary process that's underway, which will take us beyond, so it's a transcendence of the fear.

Ivory Root: I wouldn't have had that unless I had asked death not to take Daniel from me and from our son. So without realising in that very personal moment that death was neutral; it was a neutral force keeping a balance—it's all about balance—so I don't know how, without having those personal experiences of having the courage to go into the nursing home where our grandparents are living, or the hospital, despite the smell; taking our children there, despite the fact they don't want to go—you've got to go up to these things; turn to the wolves sort of thing. We've really got to on a personal level.

Steve: Absolutely, you do, and I think this is where the power of psychedelic therapy comes in, and the work that was done in the US—and in fact, we're just about to start the same research here in Australia at *St Vincent's Hospital* in Melbourne with psilocybin; addressing people's fear of death by giving them a direct spiritual experience through the psilocybin. Once you've had that direct experience, you can't argue with that. You can always reject somebody's talk or what you read in a book, but your heartfelt personal experience—there's no argument there.

Ivory Root: And ibogaine helps with that, too.

Steve: Absolutely it does, yes.

Nyck: A few more texts here on this topic: "In acknowledging and accepting our natural mortality, we make space in ourselves to be awake, and grateful for each miracle moment, we are without fear." Nice expression.

Ivory Root: Beautiful.

Steve: Beautiful.

Nyck: Very good. And someone said: "Retreating into a piece of music or song that triggers and moving forward is a healing. No music, no life." Absolutely true.

Ivory Root: Alright, yeah.

Steve: I'll vote for that.

Nyck: And about culture, too. There are some interesting things here, thanks for this: "Culture isn't natural. It was created largely by men for men. I think with the feminine energy returning and many fearing loss of masculine domination, it goes together with fear of male culture dying. Sad because the physical dying is never a loss of control. It's a transformation into a much more beautiful space."

Steve: It's very true that the Scientific-Industrial era has been a masculine, left-brain-oriented era, and so it is a masculine-themed culture—there's truth in what that person said. Prior to that, in the Agricultural era, that was a feminine-themed culture, and now we're moving into another feminine-themed culture, so it is really a process of moving beyond the masculine culture to another feminine culture, but one that's more whole, more complete, more complex than the previous ones we've experienced.

Ivory Root: I'm going to upset some feminists right now—I don't mean to do that ...

Nyck: We love upsetting people on this show.

Steve: We'll play that disclaimer at the end.

Ivory Root: Maybe I won't upset them, but I just ask them to join me in celebrating the masculine right now. We've got this *#MeToo* movement, which is really important, but at the same time, I've just had this gut feeling all along that we can't stop celebrating the masculine. We can't lose sight of that. It's so important. So I just wanted to add that to it, that we talk so much about going into the divine feminine and reconnecting with that extremely powerful force, but we cannot ignore the masculine and the power there, too.

Nyck: Yes, well, there's a lot in that.

Steve: We started to unpack Martin Prechtel's three things and the first one was gratitude. What was the second one?

Ivory Root: OK, so grief as praise, right? And then talking about the village and talking about the different mechanisms that they had there, and talking about the way that he personally is constantly making offerings to the ancestors—to feed them, to keep that connection alive; and we were talking about how that shouldn't just be a once a year occasion, that we've got to have more rituals.

I encourage people who've got two or three relatives in urns up in the cupboard who say, 'I don't know what to do with them', it's like well, bring them out, set them on the table, maybe buy them flowers, light a candle and put them back. If one of them is talking to you, then commune with it. You don't have to hide it. So it's just a matter of becoming more comfortable with talking out loud from our hearts.

Steve: Yes, making it a part of everyday life. You made me think about Tibetan Buddhism where they had that process of the food offerings for the hungry ghosts also, which is part of the same kind of thing, isn't it, really?

Nyck: All very interesting. I was just trying to grab a bit of Martín Prechter there, but I think you've articulated it very well.

Nyck: You are here on *Future Sense* with myself, Nyck Jeanes and Steve McDonald and our special guest from Texas, Ivory Root, who is a death doula, among other things. Thanks for all of your texts. We can't get to all of them. A couple of quick ones here: "Perhaps there is no death, merely a change of worlds."

Steve: Oooh, there's an idea.

Nyck: Yeah, I like that one. That's good.

Let's have a bit of a chat about some of the big picture stuff and how it relates to what we're talking about here now.

Steve: Yes, I thought we'd take advantage of having a US citizen in the studio here and just talk about death of the US empire. A lot of people in Australia have been consuming a lot of popcorn and watching that as it unfolds.

Ivory Root: Aw.

Steve: As I was saying before, with the analogy about the child's toy made of blocks and you've got to pull it apart to restructure it into something else, it seems, I think, like an interesting perspective to take on Trump and what he's doing to think that he's the guy who's volunteered to come and do this dismembering to allow the change to unfold, to allow something new to emerge out of the pieces.

Ivory Root: Did you just give him credit?

Steve: I'm not sure I did that, but ...

Ivory Root: He volunteered?

Steve: Trump is the angel of death, ushering in the death of the US empire and making space for something new.

Ivory Root: There are a lot of people behind him who are more so the wings of that.

Steve: Yes, without a doubt, absolutely, but here we are watching what threatens to be another Middle Eastern war about to ignite, and John Bolton, the Secretary of State, is an interesting character. He's a real hawk and has been pushing not only for that war, but also he wanted war with North Korea and probably other countries that we don't know of also, and I wonder what's driving him? I mean, John Bolton is the US Secretary of State. What is it about him that that has him craving for war? Is it based on some trauma or grief from his personal life which is making him want to lash out or bring destruction or project that internal destruction onto the outer world? I don't know if you have any thoughts about that.

Ivory Root: I don't know much about the relationship between Bolton and Israel, but I know that there is a very complicated relationship there that goes back many, many, many years in terms of the way that people have been offended—personally offended,

especially a lot of these leaders. I feel like there's a lot of that built up—people whose egos got really damaged by decisions made long ago, and that they're still carrying that offence around, sort of like we were talking about voting based on previous generations. I think they're making a lot of these decisions based on things that they're trying to avenge.

Steve: And you've got like thousands of years of accumulated grief and trauma in the Middle East, of course, from all of the things that have happened there, and all of the perceived wrongdoings and the damage that's been done to individuals and societies and all of that, and really this transition that the world's going through at the moment, this consciousness shift—and we often talk about the shift from the Scientific-Industrial into what you might call the Postmodern or Relativistic, which is this humanistic, network-centric way of being human which is unfolding now and also expanding our capacity for compassion—and that itself will also be short lived. Very, very soon after that—I predict within the next probably 20 to 25 years—we're going to see the big shift, which is the quantum leap. This is the big shift that everyone's talking about in new age circles and have been for a long time, and it's been predicted by ancient societies—a quantum leap into a multidimensional way of being human, which takes us into a whole new era; more than an era. Graves had a word for it, a whole new chapter in the symphony of human history.

Nyck: As you're speaking, starting with John Bolton, because I'm thinking that what we're seeing now, of course, from some of these powerful identities in the world who have risen to, for whatever reason, positions of power—as presidents or secretaries of state or whatever their roles might be—that what we're seeing is a projection of their own inner pain into the outside world. And because of where they're coming from, from this earlier iteration of this passing away phase of our evolution on this planet in a time where it wasn't really appropriate to express your feelings and emotions in the last few hundred years, especially for men—it wasn't appropriate to show your vulnerability or where you may be weak somehow—so instead of actually being able to deal with that inside oneself, many of these mostly men have projected this onto the outside world, and we're seeing the results of that now. In some ways, it's kind of like a healing—it's like a bursting of a boil or a fever as you were saying earlier. It's got to come out that way, I guess, because they're not people who are able to deal with their own inner pain internally or in community or with someone like yourself who can work with people like this.

Steve: And as we approach this massive quantum leap, this huge consciousness shift, there has to be a kind of karmic reckoning, so as individuals, when we're going through transformation, we have to turn inwards and revisit all of our internal pathologies—all of those little bits and pieces that have been stuck and unresolved inside of us—and

heal all of those. You see this in the explosion of interest in healing, which we're very aware of in this area, in the Byron Shire. It becomes a big thing. Everyone's life is 'you've got to heal yourself', and the whole of humanity, the whole planet, is also going through the same process so we need to do like a cosmic accounting in order to transition through this big shift. We need to actually take time and put energy into revisiting all of these things, like all of the Middle Eastern trauma and all that kind of stuff. Eventually it's all got to be accounted for.

Ivory Root: So Trump could not be a better example of how a society is just focusing on one sickness and doing a karmic accounting of his life, right? Because he has no personal responsibility—there is no personal responsibility at all; he's not being held to that standard at all, except by all the people who are very ready to focus on more compassion and humanity. He has woken up so many people just by being exactly who he is.

Steve: Absolutely he has, yeah.

Ivory Root: So that is the positive.

Steve: It is a positive, and again, it's building this evolutionary tension. It's like a mirror, basically—Trump's a mirror. He's like Homer Simpson standing up in front of everybody and saying, 'hey, this is what you look like, this is who you are as a country', and people are reacting to that massively, as you say.

Nyck: This is interesting, from someone we follow a little bit, Joe Martino from *Collective Evolution*, who wrote a thing just the other day. It's a long piece, but it's the last piece that really stuck out in terms of what you just said then: "The elite's (those in control) actions are only revealing their true nature more and more", which is why he feels if you want to view it like a game, we're winning. In other words, we're seeing that the emperor has no clothes, we're seeing behind the scenes, so that while the actions are still happening, while things are out of control, it would seem, while world wars are on the verge and societies are collapsing at the same time, for the first time, we're actually able to see a bit of behind that and we're able to exchange that. It'll get messed up in fake news and people deny and manipulate the information, however, we are becoming more aware of what's actually going on and what the psychological drivers for some of these people actually are on the planet; what service they are rendering.

Going to gratitude for someone like Trump is a bit of a leap, but one can certainly have some sort of empathy for how these kind of people—and particularly these kind—how some people from that paradigm simply can't find a way to feel themselves and to

express their vulnerability and to show themselves in that way so they can only project out. To have some kind of empathy for that, I know it's a difficult one, but just imagine that.

Ivory Root: No, no, I just think, what's the saying? With great power comes great responsibility. So I think it is very proud men who become leaders and have so much power. They're trying to bring forth; they're trying to honour something, they truly are, and it doesn't matter whether or not we'll ever truly know ...

Nyck: And many people listening to this will not agree with this because they see these people as responsible and they should be taken to account.

Ivory Root: Oh, I'll agree with that.

Nyck: And there's a truth to that, too, so it's a difficult balance.

Steve: It comes back to capacity, though, and an understanding that as we grow as human beings, our capacities, our perceptions expand and vice versa. If you go backwards through our development, those things narrow. The extreme example is looking at a young child and trying to hold a two-year-old responsible for their financial situation or something like that—that capacity is just not there, the perception is not there, the concepts aren't there. It's like a computer that hasn't got the software loaded.

Ivory Root: If you're a listener to this show, then of course you're going to be just enraged that it all goes back to personal choice, and people like Bolton and Trump, you know, we're just disgusted with their personal choices.

Steve: I know, but you've got to appreciate that it's personal choice based on a limited perspective, a limited scope of understanding and perception and feeling. The more that we can understand that, that people can understand that, okay, this is a capacity issue; it's not necessarily that this is a bad person or this person's evil, it's that they just can't see, they can't feel, they can't perceive what others can see.

Ivory Root: And I'm worried about the trauma that's going on inside people's hearts in America. What are we going to do about that? You talk about being prepared, and people are really personally traumatised by what's happening, you know? And so because of how we grieve, we do go back into such an individual place; even when we're

in town hall meetings and we're online and we're really passionate about change and advocacy, we're going through personal traumas that I don't think that we're prepared to address just by going and voting.

Steve: No, that's exactly right, and this is something that we need to think about, and it's great to be talking about it on this show—how do we change ourselves and our society to cope with this better? There is a massive wave of grief that's approaching for humanity as more people transition into this higher place of compassionate capacity and perception. People are waking up more and more and they're seeing what's going on; they see the damage that's been done to people and to the planet, and they're grieving for that already, and we're in the early stages of this transition so most people haven't even got there yet. As the transition grows, the consciousness awakening grows, more and more grief is going to be expressed, and we need to cater for that as a global community.

Nyck: And also, the biggest area of growth in this region is with young people. We've seen the whole Greta Thunberg phenomenon and the response to climate instability from our young people, from teenagers. We had big school strikes here a couple of months ago, as I'm sure you've had in America as well. *Extinction Rebellion* has also come out of this kind of same feeling of desperation and grief about the whole planet. I think what you're saying there is that now we're really seeing it, as our young people are coming up, it's a contestable space, because many people are saying, 'well, really, they shouldn't be worried about these things, their frontal lobes are not developed, they can't actually understand everything', and yet their passion, the depth of their despair, is so powerful that it really has to come out somewhere.

Ivory Root: So going back to what we were talking a little bit about in the break, about all the school shootings and mass shootings in America. That couldn't be more on point with regards to young people watching their teachers and their peers being shot in cold blood. That is something that has just woken up so many in such a sad and tragic way—so many of our youth who are now going to be voting in 2020—so, yes, a lot of people over the next 15, 20 years, are going to be so personally affected by that empathy because they are very empathic youth, and so they're going to feel, very much on a visceral level, what these shootings have done, every time they go into a classroom. I know I've had conversations with my son and his friends about 'what would I do?' And so many of them are just very, you know, they're young; they don't have the capacity, like you said, to think about it, but they say, 'well, I would just play dead,' you know? They're having to think about things like this.

Steve: Yeah, it's crazy, huh?

Ivory Root: And combat, basically—they're thinking about what they would do in a combat situation, unarmed.

Nyck: And it's amazing, too, as you're speaking, I'm seeing those images from the 50s of Americans ...

Ivory Root: Sitting under the desks. Duck and cover.

Nyck: Yes sitting under the desks, duck and cover, which was a completely ridiculous thing to do in the face of nuclear disaster, so that's how far removed from reality they were, but now, reality is real—it's here—whether you think the climate's going to do this or that or whatever, this or that, but certainly the world's issues are globally impacting on our young in a way that's very real now compared to back then when it was more like 'oh, nuclear bombs, go and get under your table and you'll be OK.' No.

Steve: You just reminded me that when I went to war in 1993, I arrived in Somalia unarmed.

Nyck: Did you?

Steve: I was sent over in advance on my own and I flew civil air flights into Zimbabwe, then Kenya and then into Somalia on a UN flight and someone in Canberra decided that I shouldn't take a weapon because I was travelling on civil flights. They said, 'oh, you'll be right, you'll get one when you get there', you know?

Ivory Root: You didn't have a Buck knife in your boot or anything?

Steve: I landed on this UN flight in Mogadishu airport and I was met by these two Australians who had been there before me, also sent unarmed. One of them was carrying an AK-47, which he borrowed from the Pakistani battalion—seriously—to protect themselves. They picked me up in a civilian Somali, like a 20-seat Toyota Coaster bus, which had a beautiful little line of bullet holes through the front windscreen, and a Somali driver. The guy who met me, this line officer said, 'oh, yeah, that happened on Christmas Day', and this is like the 2nd of January. 'That happened on Christmas Day. We were just driving through the market and some guy just jumped out of the crowd and sprayed the front of the bus. Luckily, the driver did a really good job of dodging and all, and we kept going', and here I am just about to drive through the city

unarmed in this goddamn bus with bullet holes in the windscreen, so I kind of appreciate what it's like being in a threatening environment, unarmed. It's not a very nice feeling.

Ivory Root: No.

Nyck: Doesn't mean that everybody should arm themselves, however. That's another story.

Steve: No, it doesn't.

Ivory Root: When we're talking about kiddos in terms of trauma and people say, 'oh, well, the kids are just so resilient', well, to me it's like, 'well, they shouldn't have to be'.

Steve: No, it's just crazy.

Nyck: It's great if they really genuinely are resilient. Some will be, but most will not be resilient in that way.

Steve: And another angle to come at this is the angle of self-care. As individuals, as we go through this transformation our attention is naturally turned inwards to start caring for ourselves and repairing and healing those things, including all the traumas that we've collected over time, and you can think about that on a large scale and I think America is a great example. Think about how America has focused so much on the rest of the world and projecting its power around the world but neglected its health care system, right? That's a large-scale example of this whole phenomenon. It's time to actually look inside and take care, and America is now, of course, suffering from not having a proper health care system. It's causing all sorts of issues and I think it's probably part of the downfall.

Ivory Root: Our health care system is Big Pharma, who's very well prepared and very happy about this big wave of grief.

Steve: Of course they would be.

Nyck: When I was talking about the isolation and the grief that comes from the isolation that many people in the world are still stuck in, the way to deal with that is, for example, pharmaceuticals—opioids—and you have this huge crisis in America, the opioid crisis, and again, we're not far behind here. To me, that's a symptom of the isolation that many people feel, and the only way that they can deal with is not actually from sharing and caring and being community and finding a way to be vulnerable, finding a place of safety—because they're not taught that, especially men—but actually to go 'well, I'm just going to take the drugs because it makes me feel good.'

Ivory Root: So you bring hospice very much into the focus there, right? There's a lot of people who say you should give birth naturally; there aren't a lot of people who say you should die naturally. One of the main goals—THE main goal of hospice—is palliative medicine. We're going to control symptoms, that's all we can do, is manage symptoms. We're going to make them comfortable, we're going to make sure that we are medicating; not hastening death, but palliating symptoms and keeping them comfortable. Opioids, of course, are a huge part of that. Morphine is used quite often, and then other opioids, and people get frightened by that, also—the fact that we are, quote unquote, "pushing them under" and then they don't talk again—but really what we're doing is making them comfortable enough to give up the fight. In the disease process, the body is dying, but ...

Nyck: It's probably, as you say, an appropriate tool of that time, but as Steve talked about at the very beginning of the show, there are other substances now, natural substances, which are being experimented with now—some of the psychedelics—and these may offer a much better way to do that same job without the addictive and without the financial element to that control by the pharmaceutical companies, which of course lobby the governments and so on and create the platform for the policies that hold the whole thing up.

Steve: Yes, and Australia is a major, major producer of opium poppies, actually.

Ivory Root: I just think, you know, talking about the addiction, those people that are palliating have grief themselves. They're not dying yet, they're not terminally ill. Something in them is—something in them is very much dying—and so they get addicted to that. There's something there in that particular substance to look deeper at.

Steve: There is, yes.

Nyck: Yes. A couple of other texts. We are nearly out of time, it's amazing. The day has gone by quickly—it usually does anyway—but a couple of things. Someone has written: "Perhaps in a couple of decades there might be a law that forces people to take an induced coma to reprogramme the mind. Personal choice will be removed from people by tyrant governments, haha." Yes, not a very good picture. And from Melody: "Opposing factions building in the US as the election approaches could cause even more grief, even such a possibly as civil war might arise." We've talked about this on the show before.

Steve: We have, too, and there is definitely a massive potential there when the elections happen in November 2020. Based on all of the questions around the last election result and the manipulation of social media, there's a huge, huge risk that whoever wins that election, a large number of the general public in the US won't accept the result, and that has the potential to be an absolute tinderbox.

Nyck: We are nearly finished here with *Future Sense*. A couple of quick things. If you're interested in the 5G debate going on, very full-on at the moment, there is a big public meeting on this coming Saturday, June the 29th, from 2 until 5 at St John's School Hall in Mullumbimby, doors open at 1.45; and the other thing is that the very well-known American journalist, Dahr Jamail, who was coming this week to the Shire for a talk on Wednesday night, has had to cancel. He had difficulties, even though he's an American citizen, with getting out of the US, probably because of his name, interestingly. I was going to have him on my show on Tuesday morning but that's not going happen and he's not here for Wednesday, so if you have tickets or were getting tickets, then that's not happening.

Steve: Did you say he's having trouble getting out of the USA?

Nyck: Yes. Apparently he didn't have a visa for Australia; thought he could get one very easily and then for some reason, because he's a journalist who spent three years in Iraq during the war and now he's a journalist on climate change in particular, a very good journalist, but with a name, Dahr Jamail. Go figure. American immigration.

Steve: Interesting. Alright. So let's wind up by having a quick discussion about: if we're reinventing grief and we're transitioning to grieving as a community, what does that look like?

Ivory Root: It looks like being gentle with ourselves first, and understanding that grief is as personal and unique as you are, and as personal and unique as your relationship to the deceased was—is. I think that you need to remember that your love and your grief is equal to your bond that you had with that person, whatever that may have been, so if you had a very difficult relationship with the person, you're going to have more difficult and more complicated grief. That's OK. So you can welcome in the parts of you that are sharp—the sharp edges of your grief—and be gentle with yourself when they come up. You don't have to grieve someone perfectly and be a revisionist on the history just because someone's dead and then we come together at the funeral and we don't talk about those things. You don't have to cover that up in your personal work, is what I'm saying.

Going back again to this great teacher, Martín, and that talk that we've referenced, he talks about having an ugly cry, and I and I encourage my clients, my patients to do that—the kind of cry where you don't look good when you get done. People will say to me sometimes 'I had one of those; I've had three of those this week', and there's other people who need the tears to be loosened, very much. I try to tell people that every tear is packed with love so let them out, in that sense.

Steve: Yes, that's a nice way to put it.

Ivory Root: Sleep, hydrate, ugly cry. Encourage your friends.

Nyck: Not necessarily in that order. It could be any order.

Ivory Root: Any order, but you've got to sleep and if you're not sleeping while you're grieving, get some help with that; and you've got to hydrate, otherwise you're just going to get more raw; and you've got to have those ugly cries.

Steve: And I guess from a community point of view, feeling okay about doing all this and being witnessed at the same time.

Ivory Root: Yes. Reaching out to other people.

Nyck: Yes, I think that's the big thing, is being witnessed. I think it's a stage, isn't it? People go through being closed for a significant time, and then at some point, for whatever reason, start to open up to themselves to feel that; but then to be witnessed in that is the next stage—to actually be seen in that vulnerability.

Ivory Root: You're not a burden to people by calling on them and asking them to come over and help you or bring you a meal or what have you. You're actually giving other people an opportunity to be kind, so reach out, don't be alone.

Nyck: Someone has just written in: "Great show yet again, and a warm, friendly Aussie welcome to Ivy", he or she says, "Forgive me if I have her name wrong." Ivory is her name, as in *Ebony and Ivory*, so to speak. I was going to play that song.

I think we have to leave it there, just about. Oh no, we've got a couple more minutes.

Steve: Yeah, so let's just scale up a little bit and think about social systems—and that can be informal or formal—but how does society need to rejig itself, restructure to support the grieving process; bring it back into an acceptable part of life that we can consider every day if we need to, rather than being sort of literally buried?

Ivory Root: I think if there's a vigil, say for David Bowie or a mass shooting or whatever it may be—go.

Steve: We had one in Mullumbimby recently for the planet, didn't we? There was a grieving vigil.

Nyck: There was.

Ivory Root: If there are vigils, then go. It's kind of like in America, we're trying to pick up people and take them to the voting booths—do the same thing with vigils.

Steve: That's great, actually, I really like that—the idea of gathering community and just sharing that experience.

Ivory Root: And also, you know, we come together for these massive yoga groups—and group yoga is a big part of the festivals—how about we come together and we start to grieve? How about we start to have, not necessarily a cry but a wail—a big wailing moment. Maybe more musicians and more people need to say 'let's do a big ol' yelp and holler'. There's a cloud of witnesses that we use sometimes in our memorial services or celebrations of life in my programme, where we just ask people to call out a name, and it's shocking. One person will name someone that's died, and it just lights up, like the little paper lanterns going up, and people just continue to call out names. So things like that ...

Steve: You just reminded me that that's been a big part of Burning Man, hasn't it? At the actual burn, people put in images and memorabilia from lost people and it's all about, you know, seeing it all go up in flames and grieving in the process.

Nyck: Very good. I just wanted to mention the local *Natural Death Care Centre* based here, <https://www.naturaldeathcarecentre.org> is the website. You probably know of it, particularly the executive officer, our good friend, Zenith Virago, a huge activist for these issues, and many other well-known local people, but if you haven't heard about the *Natural Death Care Centre* and some of the events that they have, then check it out.

Also, for our own podcast for this show, you can go to <https://www.futuresense.it> which is essentially a portal to the edited versions of this show. You can check us out on *Twitter* @futuresenseshow, and also from this website, www.bayfm.org on our programme page, you can get the whole show, which includes music and everything else that's in there; in the edited versions, all of that is cut out so you just get the content.

Thanks so much to Ivory—Ivory Root from the great state of Texas.

Ivory Root: Yeeha, thank you so much for having me.

Steve: Great pleasure. Thanks, Steve. We'll be back next week.

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.