



PROJECT ADAPT

Working Title (other titles will become clear once submissions are received):
With Reverence: Interfaith Reflections on Facing, Accepting, and Living Through Collapse

Call for Contributors **Scholars of Religion, Clergy of all Faiths, Spiritual Teachers and Mentors**

Project Adapt* invites Abstract Submissions

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Around the world, people are experiencing the intensifying crises of our time as they struggle to deal with the unraveling of our ecological, cultural, socio-economic, and political systems. We can see and feel the dehumanizing effects of unacknowledged and unjust power and privilege. Widespread social upheaval and growing anxiety about the future continue to overwhelm and paralyze. What kind of inspiration and guidance can help us adapt to our increasingly perilous, volatile, and uncertain world? Where can we find the moral courage we need to navigate these crises and challenges? What can we learn from our religious, spiritual, and wisdom traditions that may allow us to maintain our humanity in these perplexing times? Who do we want to be, as individuals and as communities, in the face of collapsing ecosystems and the unraveling of everything that previous generations had taken for granted?

Whether or not there is a chance for some of humanity to survive the coming devastations, **Project Adapt** understands that a more flexible and joyful orientation is required if we are to meet this moment with courage, perseverance, equanimity, and love. This orientation must be rooted in Reverence, an approach for honoring and engaging life that is inspired by a strong sense of the Sacred. Such an orientation has been present for millennia within humanity's wisdom traditions, indigenous lifeways, and the great world religions, and has been practiced by countless spiritually-mature communities around the world. Even though certain modern trends have alienated us from this orientation, Project Adapt affirms that we never lost the ability to revive it in our individual and collective lives. Each of us can play an important role in unlearning harmful patterns, resisting unjust power and privilege, and choosing Reverence, through both ancient and emerging practices, that are urgently needed in this moment.

Curated to address the entire range of thoughts and feelings we are experiencing in the context of the ongoing polycrisis/ecological degradation/social unraveling, **With Reverence** will be a collection of spiritually-rooted and/or religiously inspired reflections, lessons, explorations, and inquires written or created for a general audience. The book will provide meaning-makers and meaning-seekers—both as individuals and as responsive communities—with theoretical and practical tools necessary for wise and loving engagement with humanity's predicament. More specifically, **With Reverence** will offer sermons

and talking points (for faith leaders and spiritual teachers), poems, lessons, and activities (for educators and facilitators), ideas for interviews and discussions (for members of local governments, neighborhoods, and grassroots groups)—with the aim of increasing our collective willingness to talk about collapse in a meaningful, grounded way. The book will provide guidance, instructions, and tools for leadership so that more of us will be able to grieve and reorient, to respond and re-imagine, and to find the clarity and courage we need for discerning and taking right action. It will help more of us to develop the care and capacity being asked of us as we face the realities of ecological collapse and societal breakdown.

Among other things, ***With Reverence*** is intended to connect us to one another as a growing community of “deep adapters.” As more of us recognize the spiritual maturity that is needed in this moment, alongside the invitation to respond as a caring community to the predicament we are facing, our actions and attitudes must continually be fed with Reverence, an honoring of relationship with the seen and unseen, and a willingness to be transformed in the process.

We are looking not only for insights and experiences concerning collapse education and community responses but also for ways to introduce and share this very existential, overwhelming reality with people of all ages, while providing appropriate psychological and spiritual grounding. To this end, we also welcome discussion questions, interactive practices, and “lessons learned.” The following are the types of themes and questions we would like to see addressed in the book:

- “Deep Adaptation,” [<https://jembendell.com/2019/05/15/deep-adaptation-versions/>] a collection of ideas put forth by Jem Bendell, invites reflections under four interrelated categories: Relinquishment, Restoration, Reconciliation, and Resilience. How has any one or more of these informed your spiritual thought and practice?
- What is the role of Reverence in the face of ecological collapse and societal breakdown? How might this orientation create greater resilience?
- What spiritual teachings or sacred texts can help us acknowledge and come to terms with our own entanglement in an extractive and exploitative economic system?
- What spiritual teachings and/or activities are helping you and your community to adapt deeply to the planet’s changing climate and the worsening extinction crisis?
- Who are we becoming when we undertake the work of adapting deeply? In what way might adapting with Reverence be a homecoming?
- What makes it so difficult for individuals and societies to stop acting in harmful ways toward other people and other species? What is preventing us from choosing collaborative, connected, and compassionate lifeways?
- How does your spiritual and/or religious tradition guide you in times of upheaval and loss? What rituals or other practices have helped you and your community to honor your pain and express your grief?
- What does adapting deeply (physically, spiritually, emotionally) mean to you? What spiritual teachings and practices would you recommend for inviting aliveness, spontaneity, acceptance, and compassion?
- How does reconciling with the transitoriness of one’s life offer liberation, engagement, joy?

- What does it look and feel like when a community acknowledges unjust power and privilege and sets out to actively dismantle harmful patterns and structures?
- What sort of meaning is possible in the face of deep disappointment, existential overwhelm, and persistent violence and injustice?
- How have you and your community experienced liberation or restoration (inwardly/outwardly) by prioritizing relationships over transactions, with other people and other species?
- What values are expressed in your spiritual and/or religious tradition that offer skillful instructions for our behavior with ourselves and others as scarcity and uncertainty increases?
- What does your spiritual and/or religious tradition teach about “radical hope,” even as we accept the overwhelm of climate disruptions?
- How do we build multi-generational solidarity, in spirit and in action, as we undertake this necessary adaptation?
- What resources are available in your spiritual and/or religious tradition that may help people from different socio-economic classes, as well as from different races, ethnicities, and cultures, to work together in this endeavor?
- What are some of the most effective ways for holding and exploring the reality of collapse within small groups? As we make our own adaptations visible, how can we invite others to join us in creating connected communities that practice a reverent and resilient way of life?
- How do we develop an attitude of respect for all living beings? How do we practice repentance? How do we heal our rupture with the matrix of nature that keeps us alive?

Acceptable formats for final submission include essays, sermons, poems, images, and interviews or dialogues. The length of each final essay, sermon or interview/dialogue should be between 300 and 2000 words. Submissions that are selected for publication will receive a small honorarium.

Abstract Submission Guidelines

1. Between 300–500 words with your First and Last Name at the top of the document
2. Deadline date for abstract submission: **21 June 2024 (5:00pm PDT)**.
3. A brief biography, including any activities relating to collapse awareness and Deep Adaptation if applicable.
4. Send to info@projectadapt.earth

Please share this open invitation for abstracts with your community members, colleagues, or faith-based/like-minded organizations. Thank you for considering being a part of this curated resource for teachers, clergy, and communities of practice.

* **Project Adapt** seeks to prepare individuals and communities to serve as Conveners of Connected Resilience who will offer grounded guidance and facilitated leadership during turbulent times. Each of us has an essential role to play in un-learning harmful patterns while choosing the more ancient and emerging practices. Learn more at: www.projectadapt.earth