



Presenter

Anne Richardson - Atrium

Climate Psychology - Impacts, Mechanisms and Roles in Mental Health

Physical human health risks of climate change perhaps are more sensational in the media and easier understood by the American public, but in this presentation, I argue that the mental and emotional impacts of our warming world are ubiquitous and massively consequential.

We will review the literature that describes the acute and chronic mental health impacts of climate change. Some acute emotional repercussions include increased incidence and intensity of trauma, shock and PTSD. We will discuss how climate change can compound small stressors that can lead to great psychological dysfunction. We recognize the relationship between emotional illness and physical illness and review literature that correlates the two trends. With increasing acute stressors that cause individual turmoil one can predict the subsequent interpersonal strain.

Chronic mental health complications have also been described such as the relationship of heat and aggression and violence. Some popular psychological concepts are reviewed such as solastalgia, resignation, nature deficit disorder and Ecoanxiety.

After exploring mental health implications, we will review recent data explaining the psychology in the different ways that humans approach climate change and how to overcome our own and others mental defenses that lead to inaction.

Lastly, together we will explore how to persist and emotionally thrive in an uncertain and changing world. Discuss how to create and practice individual mental fortitude and community resiliency. Despite excessive emotional pressures created and worsened by our wounded environment, humans have the psychological capacity to maintain balance and persevere. This will be shown in a short audience demonstration.