

Contents

Acknowledgments	xiii
Prologue: It's the End of the World. Now What?	1
1. IMPOSSIBLE NEWS	13
We are where?!	13
Why it's so hard to hope these days.	22
How do you fix a predicament?	25
Interview: Guy McPherson —"If we're the last of our species, let's act like the best of our species."	31
Interview: Tim DeChristopher —"It's too late—which means there's more to fight for than ever."	41
Should I tell people how bad I think it is?	54
2. THE FIVE STAGES OF CLIMATE GRIEF	61
You have to go through all five stages of climate grief, except they're not stages, there's more than five, and you might have to walk backwards.	64
1. Denial: The wisdom of denial.	66
2. Anger: We can! We must! We won't?!	69
3. Bargaining: Is it now yet?	72
4. Depression: Despair is our only hope.	74
5. Acceptance: We must awaken to our burdens.	75
6. The Sixth Stage: Gallows humor.	78
Interview: Meg Wheatley —"Give in without giving up."	85
Can I get my Buddhism with a side of strategy, please?	97
Flowchart: Navigating Our Climate Predicament	

3. EXISTENTIAL CRISIS SCENARIO PLANNING 99

- It’s not the end of *the* world; it’s only the end of *our* world. 100
- We have to learn how to die as a civilization. 103
- How do you want to decline?. 105
- Welcome to the future—all four of them. 108
- Don’t worry, we’re not heading off a cliff, just down
a sharp slippery slope. 111
- Houston, we have a super-wicked problem. 113
- What’s a meta for?. 119
- The road to catastrophe is paved with other catastrophes. 126
- Extreme Sisyphus. 128
- I want a better catastrophe.. . . . 132

Interview: Gopal Dayaneni—“We’re going to suffer,
so let’s distribute that suffering equitably.” 133

- Sartre is my whitewater rafting guide.. 155
- Same storm; different boats. 158

4. HOW TO BE WHITE AT THE END OF THE WORLD . . . 161

- We’re all in this together. Not! 163
- How do I sing my story? 165
- Can I lose hope when other people can’t afford to? 170

5. IS THERE HOPE? 173

Flowchart: Is there hope? 174

- Hope in the, like, *really* dark. 175
- Pessimism of the intellect; Optimism of the will! 179
- You don’t need to “save the world”; it’s already made
other plans. 183
- I dedicate myself to an impossible cause. 185

Interview: Joanna Macy—“Be of service not knowing
whether you’re a hospice worker or a midwife.” 187

- “What aileth thee?” 200

Interview: Jamey Hecht—“Witness the whole human
story through tragic eyes.” 203

- Your job at the end of the world is to become
a happier person. 220
- The climate crisis is an existential Rorschach Test 224

6. WHAT IS STILL WORTH DOING?	227
What would Paul Kingsnorth do?	228
It's never too late to fail to save the world.	231
Why the fuck am I recycling?	240
We have met the enemy and he is us. No, them!	
But also us. But mostly them.	244
No need to choose between mitigation, adaptation, and suffering; just get good at all three (especially suffering).	248
We need to do the impossible, because what's merely possible is gonna get us all killed.	250
Interview: adrienne maree brown —"How do we fall as if we were holding a child on our chest?"	253
Dystopia: If the Zombie Apocalypse comes the Day After Tomorrow will Max still be Mad?	266
Utopia: Our Afro-Indigenous-Trans-Eco-Socialist Futurism can beat up your Capitalist Realism!	278
Interview: Robin Wall Kimmerer —"How can I be a good ancestor?"	285
7. EXPERIMENTS ON THE VERGE	301
What do I love too much to lose?	302
Step into the river.	304
Line graph your way beyond "Progress."	305
Let go of your iPhone.	309
Give pessimism a chance.	310
What would Marcus Aurelius do?	312
<i>Homo notsosapien.</i>	315
Vent your contradictions!	317
Imagine your utopia.	319
Hold a group meeting in the halfway house of your soul.	321
Are you a YES or a NO kind of person?	323
Let the eyes of the future bore uncomfortably into your skull.	324
Should I bring kids into such a world?	325
8. ANOTHER END OF THE WORLD IS POSSIBLE.	331
Hope and hopelessness, both.	331
AEOTWIP!.	335

Epilogue: Now Is When You Are Needed Most	341
Epi-Epilogue: Passing the Torch	347
Appendix: Stuff You Can (Still) Do	353
Figure References	355
Flowcharts Bibliography	357
Notes	359
Index	391
About the Author	401
About New Society Publishers	402