



This pocket guide is part of the Calm-ET project, a collaboration among organisations from Estonia, Germany, Malta, and Denmark, more information and the references of the content of this zine on noah.dk/kompas.

In times of climate chaos, joy, love, dream and hope are our best tools to take care of ourselves, each other and our environment. We shouldn't fear the future, but instead, make it desirable and possible. We have to remember we have that power in ourselves and together.

The aim of this pocket guide is to equip you with knowledge and practical tools to facilitate group discussions with young people in various settings, in order to strengthen their capacity to face the crises, learn to live with negativity and discomfort, so that they can respond with unexpected resilience and creative power. We all need to find how to play a role in the collective transition to a life-sustaining society.

While facts alter the thoughts and take away the imagination, emotions affect the heart and are often seen as less valuable to help us identify what we care about. They can help us navigate the climate chaos if we learn to balance the negative emotions with compassion, and desire, and the feeling of being useful.

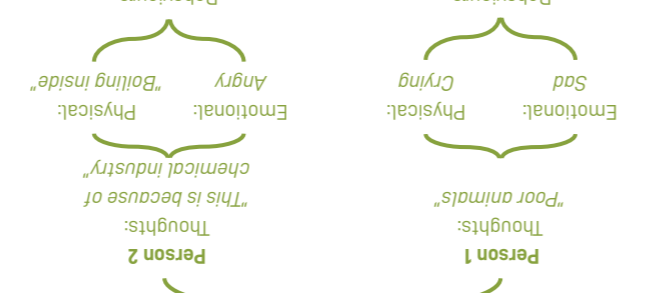
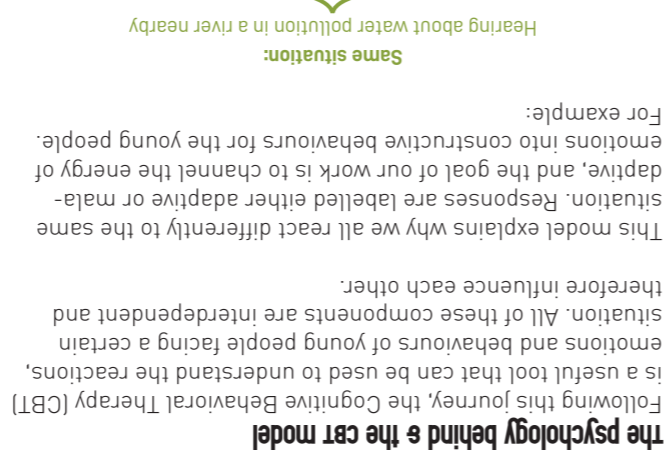
Why try to map and navigate within climate-related emotions? If you work with youth, you might have noticed that many young people have a hard time envisioning a positive future. They feel powerless and anxious about the social and environmental consequences of climate change. Political polarisation, war, inequality, resource scarcity, wild life decline, floods and megafires... The amount of information and challenges often leave us numb or desperate, and there is no collective space to share feelings about the climate crisis.

The climate anxiety journey
There is not "one" way in which climate-related anxiety experiences itself, but there are similarities between our individual experiences, which could be presented as the following "journey":

- 1. Denial:** Individuals initially avoid uncomfortable truths, minimizing the climate crisis.
- 2. Paralysis:** Realizing the scale of the issues often leads to feelings of apathy, powerlessness and anxiety.
- 3. Recovery:** After confronting anxiety, it's crucial to re-engage with the world and seek empowering alternatives, viewing change positively.
- 4. Revolution:** Change is a collective responsibility that requires political, economic, and social action, emphasizing the power of group efforts and the joy of transformation.

Different thoughts and narratives
Depending on their background, the participants will develop different narratives regarding the climate crisis. From green technology and business-as-usual to civil disobedience or sabotage, there are many paths to interpret the climate crisis roots and solutions. Recognizing these views is crucial as the different narratives coexist. However, when offering support, it is essential to provide consistent and empathetic responses, regardless of the young person's climate awareness profile or beliefs.

Different profiles
Note that climate change disproportionately impacts marginalized groups, including low-income individuals, indigenous communities, and those facing discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, ability, language, or socio-economic status. It is therefore important to be aware of this when working with groups, to give space and acknowledge individual experiences.



Adaptive: Behaviours: Deciding to join a demo

Maladaptive: Behaviours: Drinking too much beer

How to use this guide?

Climate anxiety? The term encompasses a range of emotions including grief, anxiety, anger... reflecting our emotional connection to the world.

This pocket guide is offering you simple tools to navigate through eco-emotions with the young people you work with. It offers methods for self-care and support during climate chaos, including readings, meditations, and activities that foster hope and empowerment. It contains:

- **A mini-booklet** about the simplified theory behind climate psychology and explanations on how to facilitate workshops.
- **32 cards** which offer different methods related to each step, inspired by various practices such as Active Hope and The Work that Reconnects from Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, the Anxiety Soup of Alice Walker, the RAIN meditation of Tara Brach, and so on.

Practice : 8 open sentences

Start with a mini-session to get familiar with the method:

- Gratitude**
 - I love...
 - I'd like to thank...
- Grief**
 - When I see what is happening to the world, I feel...
 - Looking at the future we're heading into, my concerns include...
- Interconnection**
 - What inspire me is...
 - Looking at the future we're heading into, what I deeply hope for is...
- Transformation**
 - A part I'd like to play in support of this is...
 - A step I'll take towards in the next week is...

safe space and introduction

- **Make a cozy atmosphere** and encourage offline participation.
- **Create a safe space** by clarifying structure and timeframe. Remind the participants to respect everyone's rights.
- **Introduce yourself**, facilitate a name (and pronoun) round, and encourage sharing expectations.
- **Set workshop rules** for fair distribution of speaking time, limit interruptions (e.g., using a talking stick), and explain that all feelings are welcome.

collective practices

The Work that Reconnects is the method behind Active Hope and is a spiral journey through four stages. In practice, each of these stages flows naturally to the next.

- **Gratitude:** Start with positive feelings to create safety.
- **Grief:** Open the emotional space to acknowledge painful feelings like sadness and anger.
- **Interconnection:** Reflect on what these feelings reveal about our care for the world and consider new perspectives.
- **Transformation:** Channel emotions into concrete actions and identify necessary support, encouraging everyone to commit to simple steps for positive change.

Workshops can range from two hours to several months, but it is important to go through each step to work towards empowerment. Consider theming your workshop —seasonal, elemental, or case-specific— to make it more personal and relevant for the participants involved.

check out after facilitation

- **Make sure to wrap up the session.** Tell the participants they can come and talk to you or a psychologist if needed.
- It is essential to **check your own emotional state** and take care of yourself, possibly by talking with a friend or engaging in reflective activities.

How to effectively support participants:

- 1. Listen actively** and provide reassurance if they struggle to respond. It is essential to acknowledge their core needs: being seen, heard, understood, and supported.
- 2. Normalise their feelings** by recognizing and validating without diminishing them. The goal is to help them regulate their feelings.
- 3. Educate yourself** about the climate crisis, potentially alongside them by connecting with groups or individuals.
- 4. Take personal action** and encourage youth to act as well.
- 5. Favor nudging** over nihilism.
- 6. Use a relationship-based support** approach. Avoid giving them directives and ensure young people do not feel accountable for adults' distress or guilt. Tell them that they do not have to be or should not be "always on".

Practice : Active listening

- Be fully present
- Keep eye contact (if the other is comfortable with that)
- Pay attention both to verbal and to non-verbal communication
- Ask open-ended questions when appropriate
- Reflect back what has been said (both words and emotions: "I hear...")
- Understanding is more important than responding
- Don't be quick to judge or give advice (if you want to suggest an idea, ask for permission first! "Would you like to hear an idea I got?" or "Would you like my advice?")

Limits, concerns & further support measures

Climate anxiety varies in severity from mild to severe, and one should not take responsibility for handling it without proper qualifications. The facilitator can create a safe space, but it is not your role to deal with mental distress. It is therefore advisable to have a psychologist or other professionals to refer young individuals to when needed.

Here is the wheel of the most common climate-related emotions. Try to observe and identify with the young people what they feel; it is a helpful tool to name and understand what is going on. Use a mindful and non-judgmental approach.

There are way more options than fight/fright/freeze. Emotions come from the same latin root as in "moving". Allowing, observing, and investigating a wide palette of feelings helps us avoid the pitfalls of burnout, fatalism, or denial. Emotions are our internal compass that tells us what we care about. They can be regulated and provide the energy and desire to lead to meaningful actions, such as motivating us to inform ourselves about certain topics or pushing us to change patterns in our lifestyles and take initiatives.