White supremacy, Climate crisis & human trauma

Can we design to confront all three issues?

(By Mexican artist Saner Edgar)

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Challenge #1

Cumulative trauma

(Take a deep breath)
We need to compost trauma

In North America:
-- 1 in 3 witness domestic violence
-- 1 in 4 have alcoholic relatives
-- 1 in 4 beaten with marks on the body
-- 1 in 5 sexually molested as a child

AND there is racial, gender-based, economic, and climate trauma
You & me. We are needed.

There is no group of non-traumatized people outside of us and our friends that is going to lead us.

We need to “see” other in our full humanity - full trauma.

1 to 1 professional psychotherapy isn’t going to be enough to heal the scale of trauma we have.
Challenge #2

Scale of climate crisis & our responsibility

(Take a deep breath)
In the US, we need to decrease average individual footprint from 65000 lbs to 5000 lbs CO$_2$e within next 10 years.

(Will not happen without systemic work on 132 trillion lbs of global annual emissions)

See YouTube talk for explanation: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGmpHfTETTE
Global greenhouse gas emissions scenarios

No climate policies (4.1-4.8°C)

Current policies (3.1-3.7°C)

Pledges (2.6-3.2°C)

2°C pathways

1.5°C pathways

Based on data from the Climate Action Tracker (CAT).
The data visualization is available at OurWorldinData.org. There you find research and more visualizations on this topic.
Personal Carbon Footprints: t CO₂e

- USA: 21.7 t CO₂e
- Canada: 14.5 t CO₂e
- Australia: 14.0 t CO₂e
- UK: 11.7 t CO₂e
- Germany: 11.2 t CO₂e
- France: 9.3 t CO₂e
- Japan: 8.6 t CO₂e
- Russia: 7.8 t CO₂e
- Korea: 6.5 t CO₂e
- Mexico: 4.2 t CO₂e
- World: 4.0 t CO₂e
- Brazil: 3.2 t CO₂e
- China: 1.7 t CO₂e
- India: 1.4 t CO₂e

Scale of Climate problem = 60 billion tons = 132 trillion lbs

Note: The personal carbon footprint represents the combined emissions from personal consumption, including housing, travel, food, product and service emissions. It excludes capital, government and land use emissions.

Sources: Hertwich & Peters 2009
Keep it in the ground. Add it to the ground

We can not allow any more fossil fuels to be dug out, any new coal, oil and gas infrastructure.

And we need to
- ration transport
- let go of meat industry
- invest in local soils & plant-based food
- adopt communal village life.
Climate crisis: Tipping points

- Cascading Arctic tipping points
- Boreal forest die back massive carbon
- Megadrought SW North America
- El Niño - Southern Oscillation
- Global warming increases El Ninos - increasing heat waves, fires and drought
- Amazon forest die back massive carbon
- Arctic switched from carbon sink to source (2017)
- Greenland Ice Sheet
- Arctic Sea Ice Tipped
- Permafrost
- Boreal Forests
- Methane Clathrates

Adapted from Potsdam Climate Institute Tipping Elements the Achilles Heels of the Earth System
Is it too late?

NO.

We have crossed some tipping points.
Gaia’s lungs and heart are hurting.
But there are many other tipping points.

We must creates islands of sanity no matter what.
Challenge #3

Our participation in systems of oppression

(Take a deep breath)
WOMEN WALK FOR HOURS TO REACH A WELL
Why millennials are facing the scariest financial future of any generation since the Great Depression.

BY MICHAEL HOBBES
Percentage of CO₂ emissions by world population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Decile</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richest 10%</td>
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<td>19%</td>
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Richest 10% responsible for almost half of total lifestyle consumption emissions

Poorest 50% responsible for only around 10% of total lifestyle consumption emissions

Source: Oxfam
White culture & white body supremacy

Black, indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC)

• Cause least harm
• (will) suffer the most
• “Side dish” in eNGOS (Who is we?)
• **Have called for financial reparations**
• White folks also need atonement: Truth/Reconciliation circles
• Have teachings that white folks need to face chaos and collapse
• Their culture & ancestral knowledge subjugated – cultures that knew how to live in harmony with the living Earth
Connections between challenges
White supremacy

= Mother of climate crisis

http://boundlessinmotion.org/white-supremacy-mother-of-climate-crisis/
We can’t solve for climate now and then come to racial healing.

“The most important thing you can do to strengthen climate movement is to fight racism against black and brown people”….. within and outside you.

Ian Haney Lopez, Berkeley Law Professor

Lopez: Videos
The first video is a lecture basically presenting the thesis of his latest book “Merge Left”, and the second is an interview with Extinction Rebellion where Ian and Dr. Adam Elliott-Cooper together roast the notion that one can deal with the climate crisis without directly tackling racism. They make an extremely clear argument that however messy it is, white folks need to face racism within and around them. The content of the first video might be important to fully understand the second discussion.
Trauma/shame + fear of uncertainty

= Fight, flight and freeze mind

= Engine of white supremacy....
....that further traumatizes both white & non-white bodies
How do we deal with all three of them?
Three pillars of “Islands of Sanity”
Let our belonging empower each other

- Trauma Resilience (Healing individuals)
- Communal ‘village’ life (Strategic YES)
- Collective resistance (Strategic NO)
Islands of sanity: How?
With Belonging (6-8 friends)

- Regular meetings (>3 per month, 120-150 minutes each)
  - 20-25 min: Silence/somatic practices (to attune to each other)
  - 30-35 min: Check-ins with wholehearted listening without interruption
  - Discuss (or prepare for) “Third pillar” strategic actions or scheduled sharing circles on money, lifestyle, race/religion, gender

- Have transparent structure/format for
  - Grief/rage work for processing trauma
  - Action strategy and understanding of the movement ecosystem
  - Information flow (how many emails from whom?)
  - Decision-making (Consensus, majority, veto?)
  - Learning through feedback
  - Restoring conflict
  - Flow of money (if any)
Islands of sanity: How?

With Belonging (6-8 friends)

Resources:

Three pillars of Sanity:
http://boundlessinmotion.org/three-pillars-of-eco-dharma/

Island of sanity friendships:
http://boundlessinmotion.org/ecodhharma-friendship/

One movement:
http://boundlessinmotion.org/one-movement/
For more resources, articles and videos:

http://boundlessinmotion.org/ecological-crisis-content