

# **The Impacts of the Climate Crisis on Mental Health: Research, Solutions & Action**

**December 5, 2023**



**Health &  
Environmental  
Funders Network**

**GRANT  
MAKERS  
IN  
HEALTH**

## Presented by:



Climate  
Mental Health  
Network



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**CRITICAL**

climate  
psychiatry  
alliance



# Agenda

## Introductions

- Overview of the Issue
- Frontline Communities Impacts
- Gen Z Lived Experience
- Practitioner Perspective
- Existing Tools & Resources

## Q & A

## Closing

# **Introductions**

- **Heather White**, author & founder, OneGreenThing
- **Sarah Newman**, founder, Climate Mental Health Network
- **Maya Penn**, Gen Z activist, animator & OneGreenThing board member
- **Tamara Toles O’Laughlin**, founder, Climate Critical Earth
- **Dr. Ben Liu**, advisor, Climate Psychiatry Alliance (CMHN advisor)





# MISSION

**OneGreenThing** tackles eco-anxiety through joyful daily action, leading to culture change for climate solutions.

**saving our sanity + the planet**

[www.onegreenthing.org](http://www.onegreenthing.org)

[heather@onegreenthing.org](mailto:heather@onegreenthing.org)



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# “ECO-ANXIETY” DEFINED

**OneGreenThing launched in response to a rapid increase in “eco-anxiety,” which is defined by the American Psychological Association as “the chronic fear of environmental doom.” Eco-anxiety is exacerbated by:**



## ANXIETY

Rates of anxiety & depression in youth have dramatically increased over the past decade.



## LONELINESS

GenZ is the loneliest generation. Compared to 5 in 10 elderly, 8 in 10 GenZ suffer from loneliness.



## HYPERAWARENESS

1 out of 4 people ages 16 to 25 do not want to have children due to eco-anxiety.

***Other terms include climate anxiety, solastalgia, climate despair, climate grief, climate doom.***



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# RESOURCES & PROGRAMS

- **Resources**

- The **Service Superpower Assessment** reveals your unique strengths in service.
- Personalized **Eco-Action Plans**, the **Joy Tracker** & **Bullet Journal** offer space for reflection.
- **2030 Visualization**, **Be An Awesome Ancestor Exercises** & **Intergenerational Discussion Guides** promote creativity, community, and long-term thinking.

- **Programs**

- Leading **Professional Development Trainings** for educators & mental health providers.
- **Scaling K-12 eco-anxiety curriculum** on leadership, climate justice & climate solutions.
- Empowering Gen Z through our **Climate Leadership Academy**.
- **Guiding individuals in creating eco-action plans** based on their personal strengths.
- **Researching the mental health impacts** of climate change.
- Hosting **Intergenerational workshops** to make climate action "do-able" & joyful.





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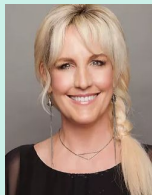
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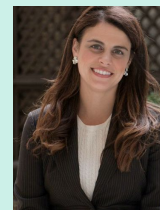
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**Maya Penn**  
Maya's Ideas &  
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**Larry Schweiger**  
Author, Public  
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**Sara Sciammacco**  
Ceres  
Vice President of  
Comms & Marketing



**Pam Solo**  
Civil Society  
Institute,  
President



**Colleen Wachob**  
MindBodyGreen  
Co-Founder &  
Co-CEO



**Heather White**  
OneGreenThing  
CEO & Founder,  
Author

*\*organizations listed for identification purposes only; please check out our Gen Z Advisory Council & National Advisory Council*



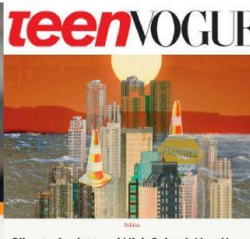


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# PRESS



Heather White • TEDxBoston  
Think Like an Awesome Ancestor: A Daily Practice to Ease Eco-Anxiety

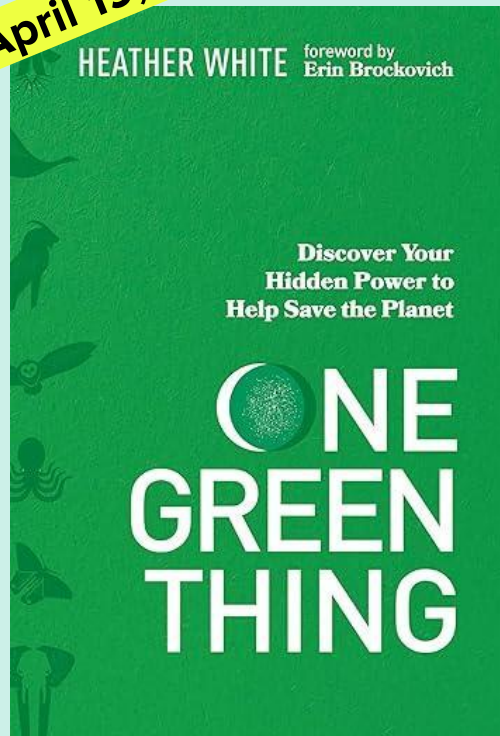


Climate Anxiety and High School: How Young People Are Coping

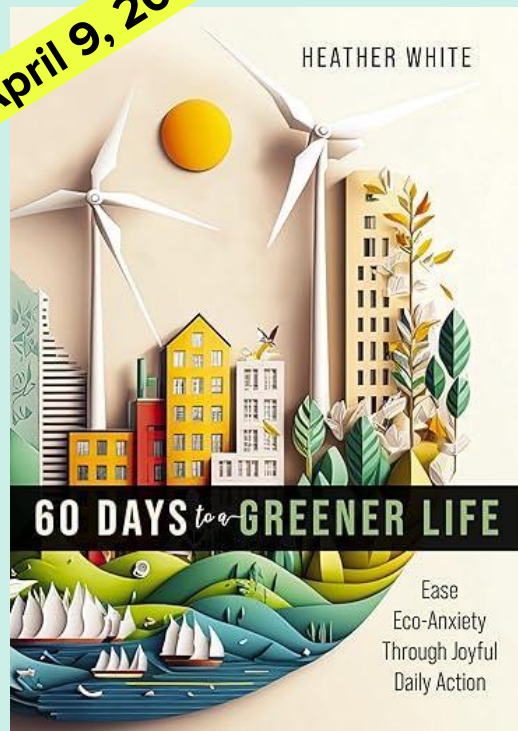


# BOOKS

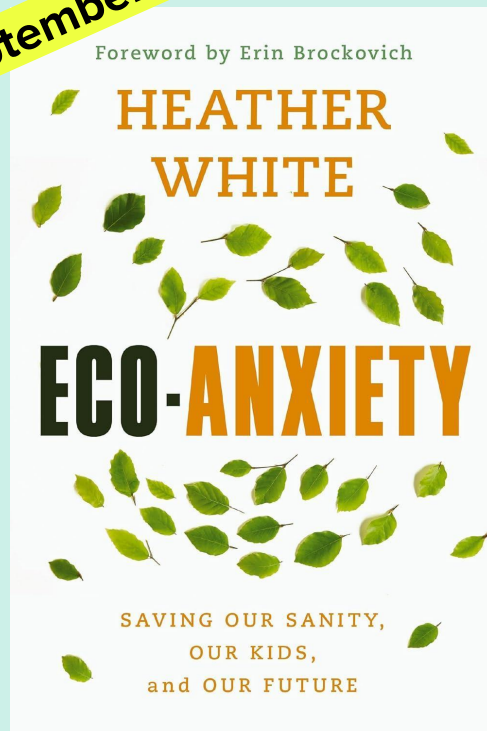
April 19, 2022



April 9, 2024



September 24, 2024



**Climate change and  
mental health are  
inextricably linked.**

To heal the planet, we have to collectively heal ourselves.



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**Sarah Newman** Founder and Executive Director  
Sarah@ClimateMentalHealth.Net  
ClimateMentalHealth.net

# Mission

Our mission is to provide access to education, tools, programs, and support designed to help individuals and communities recognize the signs and manage the emotional impacts of climate change.

#ClimateMentalHealth

# Strategy

Intergenerational programs, based in research, that reach youth, educators and parents/caregivers.

# Advisors

- Gen Z advisory board
- Scientific advisory board
- Advisory board: Launching January 2024



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# Research

## Previous

- Report (Blue Shield of California): Climate Change and Youth Mental Health
- Survey of 1,000+ people about resources and digital tools to manage climate emotions

## Current

- Chair of the Lived Experience Working Group of the Connecting Climate Minds global research project
- Focus Groups with Middle School Teachers
- Focus Groups with Parents
- Focus Groups with US Forest Service educators



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# Programs

## Youth

- Gen Z advisory board
- Youth-led projects support and leadership
- Documentary film, *Gen Z Mental Health: Climate Emotions*

## Education

- Middle School Teachers Pilot (2024)
- K-12 Activities Guide
- Teachers Wellness Resources (2024)
- Climate Justice Curriculum (California)

## Parents

- Resources for parents of children 0-8

## Communications

- Media partners (e.g. Apple TV+, MTV)



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# Tools

- Available in English and Spanish.
- Includes:
  - Climate Emotions Wheel
  - Art Therapy Guide
  - Tips and wellness tools
  - Taking Action & Self Care Guide
  - Meditations

## Climate Emotions Wheel



# Alliance Magazine Op-Ed (Dec 4, 2023) by CMHN and Hopelab

**Funders must help youth respond to climate change**

*“A challenge of this magnitude calls for a groundswell of investment in climate mental health initiatives across philanthropic sectors – private, public, and corporate.”*



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# Maya's Ideas

## Meet Maya Penn

A 22 year old phenom, award-winning founder and CEO of eco-fashion brand Maya's Ideas, keynote speaker, sustainability consultant, 3 time TED Speaker, artist, global activist, animator, filmmaker, social entrepreneur, coder and Simon & Schuster author.





## Young Powerhouse

Maya has received a commendation from President Barack Obama for outstanding achievement in environmental stewardship. Maya was awarded the 2016 Coretta Scott King A.N.G.E.L. Award, as well as honored at the SCLC Drum Major for Justice Awards (past honorees include Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, John Lewis and more). She has been hand chosen by Oprah Winfrey as her youngest Supersoul 100 entrepreneur, change maker, and thought leader. She has been one of the youngest leaders in sustainability and environmental justice for 12 years, starting at the age of just 8 years old.

## Roaring Recognition

Maya was featured in Forbes magazine at 10 years old, and has since been featured in Huffington Post, Business Insider, Entrepreneur Magazine, NPR, ESSENCE, The View, CNN, CBS This Morning with Gayle King, O Magazine, Ebony, The Steve Harvey Show, VICE, Wired, Adobe, and many more. In 2016 during the Obama Administration, Maya made history when she was commissioned to produce and animate the opening of the first ever digital report presented to Congress. The report was created to get an American Museum of Women's History built in Washington.



[mayasideas.com](http://mayasideas.com)





## A Powerful Voice

She has given three TEDTalks and her latest TEDWomen Talk has gone viral worldwide and is one of TED's official top 15 TEDWomen Talks of all time. She is known as the youngest female to do two back-to-back official TEDTalks. Maya is the winner of the 2013 Black Enterprise Teenpreneur of The Year Award. Magic Johnson chose Maya to be featured in his 32 Under 32 series. Maya was invited to meet and have a private roundtable discussion with Michelle Obama during the launch of her book *Becoming*.

## Giving Back Globally

Maya also founded a nonprofit organization called Maya's Ideas 4 The Planet and started an ongoing project to give back to women and girls in Haiti, Senegal, Somalia, and more. Maya's book *You Got This* (Published by Simon & Schuster) is being used in schools around the world as curriculum to teach youth social good driven entrepreneurship, creativity and giving back.



[mayasideas.com](http://mayasideas.com)

HOME > FILM > NEWS

Oct 19, 2022 9:00am PT

# Viola Davis to Produce Climate Activist Maya Penn's Animated Short 'Asali'

By Michaela Zee ▾

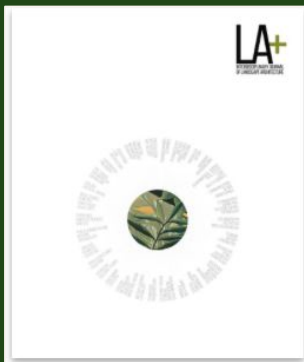
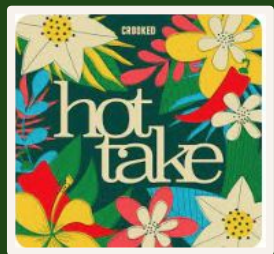


Deidre Penn / Shamar Benoit





# Tamara Toles O'Laughlin



*Rolling Stone*

**THE**  
**N**ation.

grist

THE  
HILL

Vox

Atmos

THE  
ENERGY  
GANG  
A WOOD MACKENZIE  
PODCAST

THE  
COOLEST  
SHOW



In the fight to avert disaster, our people are the most precious resource.

Practitioners, organizers and activists, in community, are the ones who will make survival possible — but only if we can bring **radical rest, restoration, and community care** into our movement. Now.

Doing this will require new models of leaders who can envision the urgency of this moment and understand the centuries-long struggle of which this is one part.

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Climate Critical. Earth is the home for  
anti-racist practice and radical care  
programming as a strategic, lifecycle  
intervention that betters our odds in the  
fight for climate survival.

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# Climate Critical Advisors



**Ife  
Kilimanjaro**

Grandmother, author,  
researcher, educator,  
activist, traditional healer  
and spirit warrior



**Jasmine  
Sanders**

Climate scientist,  
strategist, advocate



**Lorraine  
Chiponda**

Organizer, advocate,  
Zimbabwe EJ activist



**Mary Annaise  
Heglar**

Storytelling and  
Narrative at the  
intersection of racial,  
healing, and  
environmental.

Care Practice

Care Programs

Com

munity

Lifecycle

Interventions

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# 2022 Burnout Study: 5 Takeaways



# Burnout

# 2022 Burnout Study

## #1

Burnout in climate and environment **exists, and is pervasive**

Nearly all survey respondents showed  
**high or very high levels of burnout**

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# 2022 Burnout Study

## #2

EVERYONE is depleted, distanced and diminished  
in their capacity to envision or accomplish  
the work it will take  
to protect and preserve people and planet.

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# 2022 Burnout Study

## #3

NOT EVERYONE is experiencing it the same way,  
or being seen or heard  
which leads to “climate depression”

Black, Indigenous and all People of Color reported systemic blind spots,  
in their places of work and the issues/campaigns and focus of that work  
that limits their sense that we can win.

# 2022 Burnout Study

## #4

Despite high rates of burnout,  
a majority of respondents  
stay in their jobs out of love for people and planet  
and because they want to make an impact.

63% of survey respondents and all focus groups indicated they would not leave the climate change and environmental field for a job with comparable pay or benefits.

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# 2022 Burnout Study

## #5

Resources for combating burnout are few,  
and those that do currently exist are generally ineffective

Participants cited lacked supportive structures in the workplace.

We need to do better for all of our sakes!

# Contact:



Website: [www.climatecritical.earth](http://www.climatecritical.earth)

Facebook/X/IG: @CCEsolves

Founder: Tamara Toles O'Laughlin

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Ben Liu M.D.

- Oregon Health & Science University, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry
- Psycho-Oncologist. Inpatient psychiatrist.
- CPA steering committee and Treasurer

# Short Intro to CPA!

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# How to Survive

## Keep Rooms Cool

- Lower shades to reduce heat
- Maintain cross air ventilation
- Avoid fans if room is >95 degrees as they no longer cool the air

## Wear Loose Clothing and a Hat

- Loose cotton (non-synthetic)
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat outside

## Drink Lots of Water

Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and sugar

## Cool Down with Showers

- Or cool, wet towels

## Find Cool Shelter

- Don't wait out the heat at home\*
- Cool down in libraries, malls, movie theaters, and local cooling centers

## Take Meds as Prescribed

- BEFORE heat waves, ask your health care provider about any changes to your medications during hot weather

## Make a Plan

- BEFORE heat waves, ask your health care provider about any changes to your medications during hot weather
- Seek help

# Actions

1. Education.
2. In our professional org APA:
  - I. Caucus. Committee.
  - II. Action Papers. Oral symposia.
3. Advocacy at individual state level.

# Plugging people / trainees in

- Write!  
Ecopsychepedia or PsychNews - good places to start
- Speak!  
Educate professionals on climate change
- Social media team: official APA Instagram / Twitter
- Trainings & Collaboration:
  - Climate Aware Therapy trainings
  - Climate Care Collaborative platform [the NA hub for COPx2]

# What is Psychological Adaptation to Climate Change?

- Turning towards climate change rather than away from it
- In a way that's engaged
- In a way that allows for positive affect, and a sense of well-being
- In a way that creates mental space to think clearly about what to do, being able to assess and reassess goals and pathways to those goals

( Lewis)





## THE ECOPSYCHEPEDIA

A trusted source for current research and thinking on how psychological factors drive the climate crisis, how the worsening crisis affects us psychologically, and what we can do about it.

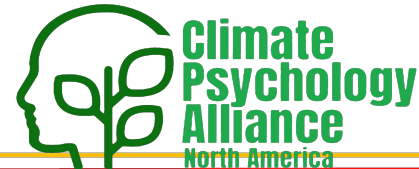
[LEARN MORE](#)

Visit our budding to see our current entries:  
<https://ecopsychepedia.org>

# EcoPsy

About our Ecopsychepedia project:

- A joint project by the Climate Psychiatry Alliance, Climate Psychology Alliance - North America, and Climate Psychology Alliance - UK
- A free, reliable information source, developed by experts in the fields of climate mental health and human behavior
- Inspired by resource projects such as the [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#) and [Project Drawdown](#)



# Our Mission and Vision

To share knowledge on the mental health impacts of climate instability and what we can do to address both the causes and the consequences of the challenges we face.

We envision an information source that is engaging for a wide audience, informed by expert knowledge, and a comprehensive encyclopedia of climate psychology topics.



# www.ClimatePsychiatry.org

- Robin Cooper – CPA Co-founder and President
  - [robincooper50@gmail.com](mailto:robincooper50@gmail.com)
- Ben Liu – CPA steering committee member and Treasurer
  - [benjaliu916@gmail.com](mailto:benjaliu916@gmail.com)
- Emily Schutzenhofer – ECN co-chair and Social Media lead
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- Slide credit to
  - Colleen Rollins PhD – EcoPsy Project manager
  - Max Galvan – ECN co-chair

## **Discussion**

- Overview of Climate Anxiety & the Research
- Frontline Communities Impact
- Gen Z Lived Experience
- Practitioner Perspective
- Existing Tools & Resources

**Q & A**