

A FUTURE WE CAN LOVE

Discussion Guide

A Future We Can Love is structured as a series of conversations engaging multiple perspectives on the climate crisis, and how we can each be buoyed and drive positive change. In much the same way, readers are encouraged to discuss themes raised in the book. Below are questions to get you started. In the spirit of the book, we encourage you to begin your conversation with a moment of silence or meditation to ground and be present with one another. Here is a [guided grounding meditation](#) by *A Future We Can Love* author Susan Bauer-Wu.

1) Greta Thunberg, a passionate young climate activist, and the Dalai Lama, a global spiritual leader, are generations apart in age. How do their perspectives, when brought together, help move our collective understanding forward? Why is it important to engage in intergenerational dialogue related to the climate crisis?

2) *A Future We Can Love* begins with an exploration of the science of climate feedback loops. How do these feedback loops point to a climate emergency? What examples provide evidence of their impact?

3) The Dalai Lama has long sought to raise awareness of our fundamental interconnection and the reality that our actions have consequences, which is consistent with Western systems thinkers. What are practical ways you see that you are interconnected with others and the natural world? What are some of the downstream consequences of our actions—be it buying a piece of clothing or taking a long plane flight—on climate change?

4) Joanna Macy describes Industrial Growth Society “as a political economy that sets its goals and measures itself on growth.” How is Industrial Growth Society in itself a runaway feedback loop? What are the obstacles and opportunities when it comes to countering this growth paradigm?

5) The dawning of an “Age of Enough” has the potential to create large-scale and lasting beneficial changes. What can it look like? What are positive examples in your own life and community of this transformation happening?

6) Our biggest ally in fighting climate change is nature's own regenerative capacity. Examples include the carbon absorbed by trees and the reflective quality of polar ice. What are climate-friendly actions that we can take, or support, to maximize nature's own healing power?

7) According to Buddhist wisdom, we all have the ability to be a bodhisattva, or one who develops themselves and wholeheartedly cares for others to alleviate suffering without attachment to outcome. How is the climate crisis the ultimate call to exercising compassionate action, especially toward those most impacted by the crisis and the natural world? How can you show up as an ecosattva (a bodhisattva committed to serving the environment and all living beings)?

8) Expressing our feelings about the climate crisis—from sadness and despair to outrage—is helpful in metabolizing our feelings and is an important step toward motivating us to take action. Share an experience or image that captures how you feel about the causes and impact of climate change. Take note of any similarities or differences among those feelings expressed. Do these feelings stir you to want to take action?

9) Wonderment offers a powerful antidote to despair, encouraging a felt sense of our interconnection. Our love for nature and our planetary home makes us want to show care for her. Think of and share an example from your own life of when this was true. What can you do to bring more wonder into your life?

10) People often associate living a more sustainable lifestyle with having to give up something. Rebecca Solnit counters this, asking: "What are you willing to gain to address climate change?" Could living sustainably make you feel more satisfied and fulfilled? If so, how? If not, why?

11) Mindsets are our beliefs, values, and worldviews that contribute to what Karen O'Brien calls quantum social change. How do mindsets serve to fuel or help solve the climate catastrophe?

12) Take a moment to reflect on and describe your particular strength(s) when it comes to being a force for good in creating a sustainable future. Is your strength educating others, working through systems (e.g., your school, place of employment, local government), writing, and/or advocating? Propose one step you could take to maximize your climate 'superpower' and be a driver of positive change.



MIND & LIFE
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