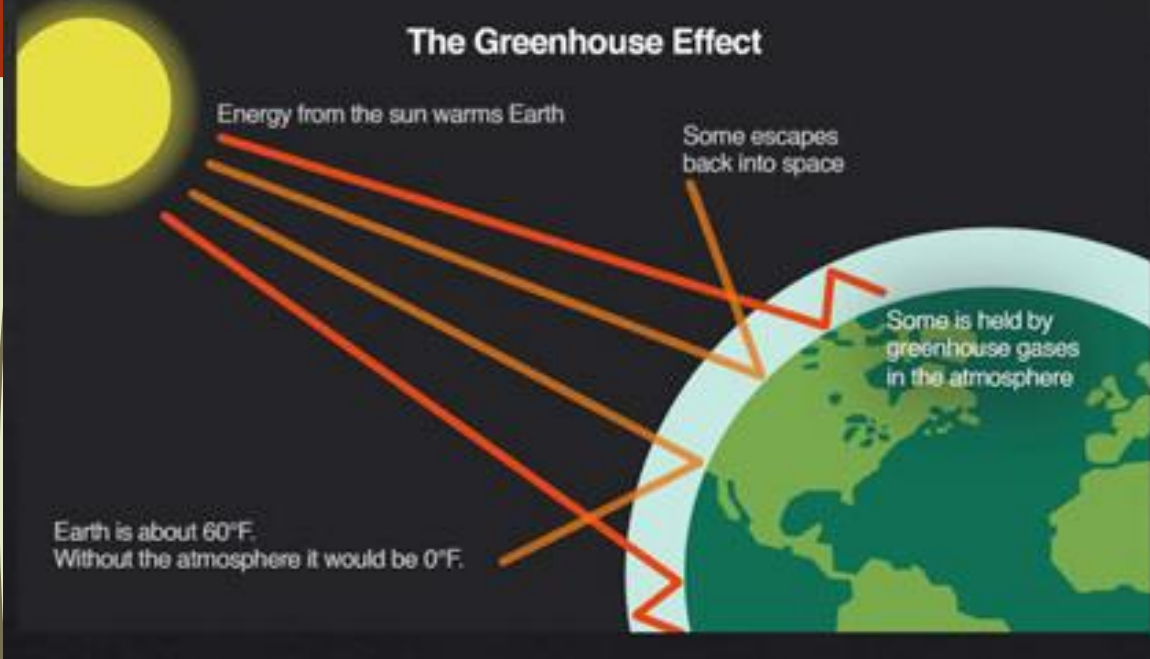


Psychology & Climate Change

Dr Maxine Watkins

Science: Greenhouse Effect

The Greenhouse Effect



5 COUNTRIES MOST AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

According to NASA, the first 6 months of 2016 have been the hottest since records began in 1880, whilst in the Arctic, sea ice levels have been at record lows. Since 1880, the earth's average surface temperature has increased by 0.87°C, but the significance of this seemingly small figure should not be underestimated.

THE WORLD BANK HAS IDENTIFIED 5 MAIN THREATS ARISING FROM CLIMATE CHANGE:

DROUGHTS FLOODS GREATER UNCERTAINTY IN AGRICULTURE STORMS RISING SEA LEVELS

SUDAN

MOST AT RISK OF FOOD DEFICITS

Most at risk of food deficits is Sudan in northeast Africa, as a result of the impact of climate change on agriculture. With most land being arid or desert and more erratic rainfall, it is susceptible to drought and desertification. It's feared that the rapid projected population growth and displacement due to conflict will result in increased pressure on the demand for food and water.

MALAWI

MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO DROUGHTS

A low income country in southern Africa, most Malawians live in rural areas. The country's susceptibility to droughts will lead to reduced agricultural yields, which will have a significant impact on the 90% of the population reliant on rain-fed subsistence agriculture. Currently experiencing its third drought in 20 years, the worrying impacts of climate change can already be seen.

BANGLADESH

MOST AT RISK FROM MORE FREQUENT AND SEVERE FLOODING

Rising global temperatures will increase glacial melt from the Himalayas, resulting in the swelling of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers and their tributaries. As a result, it's estimated that each year between 30-70% of the country could be flooded. Bangladesh's coastline is also vulnerable to flooding from rising sea levels. Yet another concern, caused by climate change, is the increased number of cyclones likely to hit the country.

PHILIPPINES

MOST IN DANGER OF MORE FREQUENT AND INTENSE STORMS

The 7307 Philippines islands are most in danger from more frequent and intense storms. The severity of this threat was experienced when typhoon Haiyan struck in 2013, resulting in more than 6,000 fatalities, an estimated total damages and losses cost equivalent to \$12.9 billion and a trail of destruction across central Philippines.

VIETNAM

MOST THREATENED BY RISING SEA LEVELS

The Southeast Asian country of Vietnam is most threatened by the risk of rising sea levels. It's estimated that if there's a 1m rise in sea level over 20% of Ho Chi Minh City will be flooded, impacting up to 12% of Vietnam's population and resulting in potential losses of around 10% of GDP.

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The science of climate change

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**'The biggest obstacle to dealing with
climate disruption lies between your ears'**

Per Espen Stoknes (TED talk, 2017)

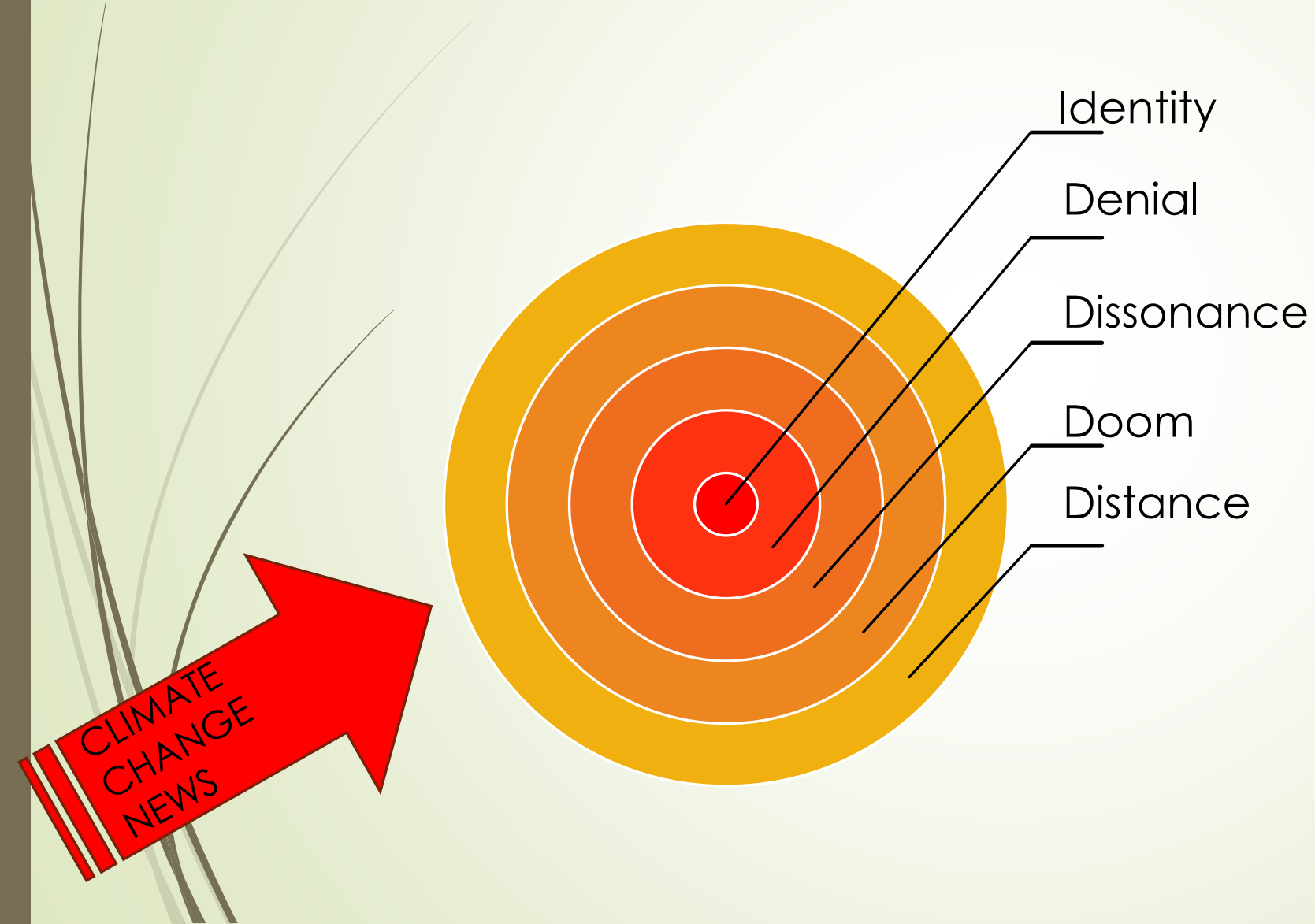




How can Psychology help?

- Psychology behind the **perceptions** of climate change
- **Communication** of climate change
- Psychological **impacts** of climate change
- Human **responses** to climate change

Climate Change Communication



(Stoknes, 2014)

Social Identity and Climate Change Communication

- Social Identity
- Group categorization
- Perceptions polarized based on Political Identity
- Environmental Identity (e.g. Activists v/s Deniers)

Political polarisation over climate crisis has surged under Trump

Revealed: divide exacerbated by fossil fuel industry's record contribution to Republicans

Why we need political action to tackle the oil, coal and gas companies - video explainer



Biden sets to work on reversing Trump policies with executive orders

1 hour ago



President Biden quickly signed executive actions on coronavirus, climate change and racial inequality



Social Media and Climate Change Communication



‘Eco Anxiety’

- ▶ Increased awareness
- ▶ Psychological response to climate change
- ▶ Adaptive function
- ▶ Sense of powerlessness



Interventions for Climate Related Anxiety

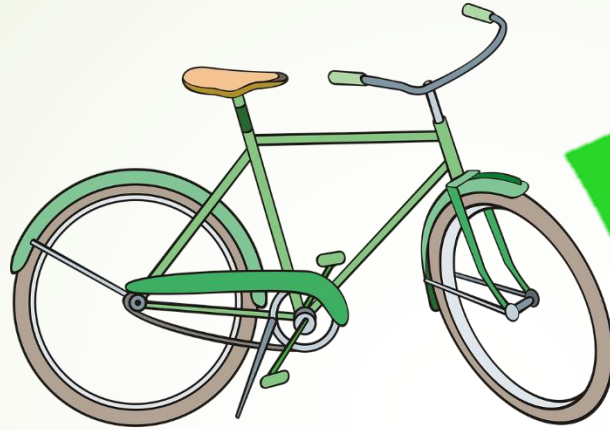
- Complex challenges to mental health
- Clinical interventions
- Social support (Clayton et al., 2017)

Study:

Are activist groups a form of intervention?



Individual behaviours can make a difference

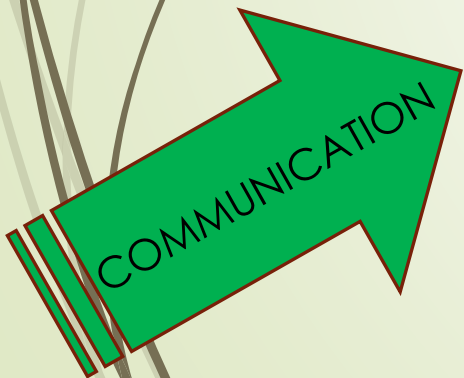


(Williamson et al., 2018)

Climate Change Communication



(Stoknes, 2014)





Presenting Climate Change and Climate Breakdown as a Choice

THE YEAR IS 2050.

THE WORLD IS BREATHING.

**THE AIR IS FRESH. NATURE IS
THRIVING.**

**ENTIRE POPULATIONS HAVE
A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.**

(Figueres & Rivett-Carnac, 2020)

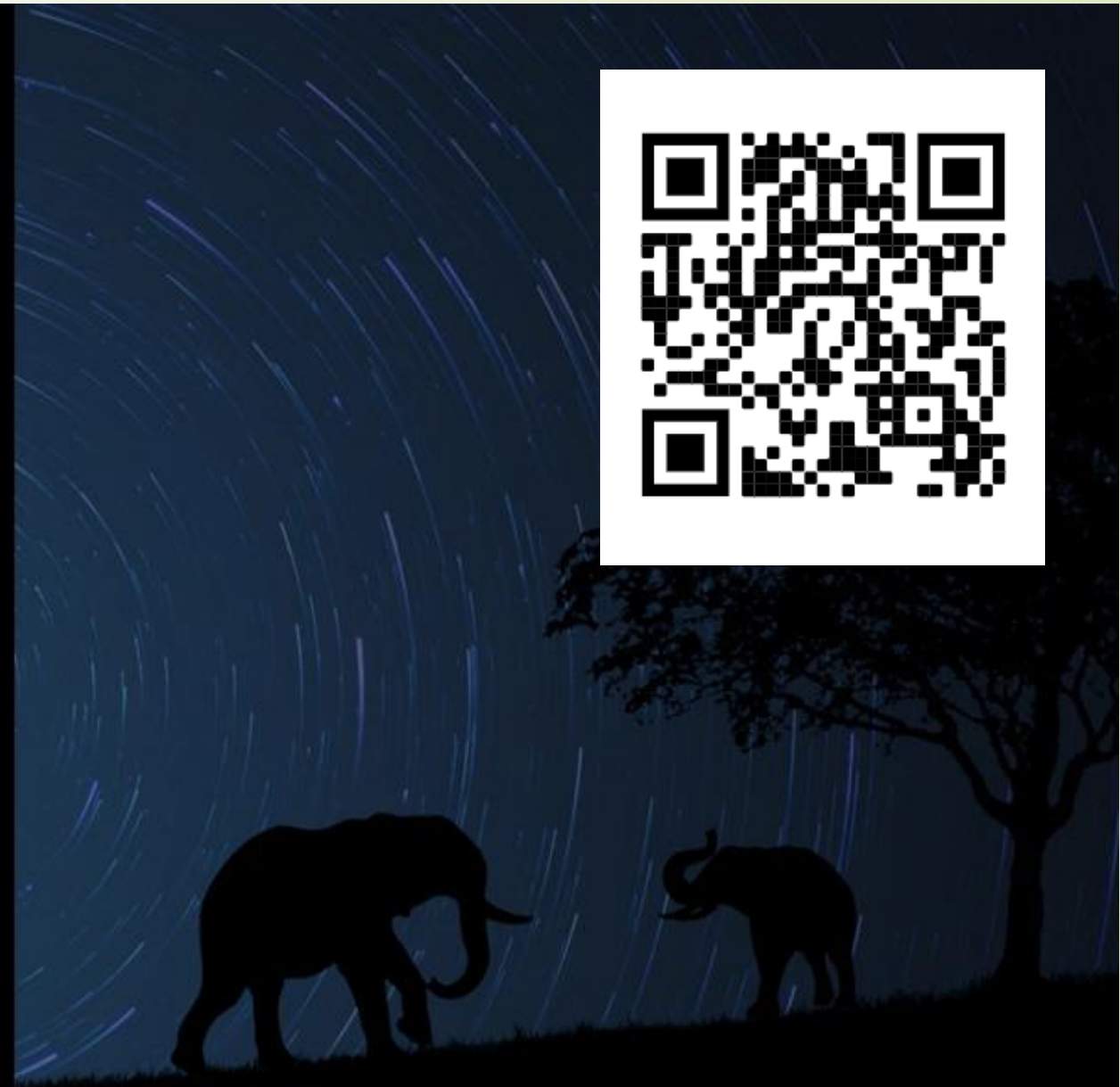
Climate Change & Psychology

- How do we **perceive** climate change?
- How do we **communicate** what we know about climate change?
- How do we experience the psychological **impact** of climate change?
- How are we going to **respond**?



HOW BIG IS YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT?

Find out with our environmental footprint calculator



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