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By Marcy Franck

As we head into COP26, watching Congress cut climate policies from the infrastructure bill like Edward Scissorhands on a sugar high has put even the most optimistic among us on edge. So, just like every other inflection point in our political landscape, I've glued myself to Twitter.

I like to scroll inside my house, I like to scroll beside a mouse! I will scroll to find good news, but only seem to find the blues! And panic, rage, and existential dread about the future!

But enough about me. How are you?

A coworker suggested I call the NYTimes' [primal scream line](#). She was joking, but I called it. I wanted to scream, but I was up so late the night before, scrolling through the frenzied headlines about our impending doom, stashing away some real primal zingers, that by the time I clicked the number I was too raw to feel rage anymore.

If they ever choose to play my recording, God forbid, you'll hear an exhausted mama struggling to piece together coherent thoughts, pausing a bit too long here and there, until the recording shuts her down mid-sentence. Blaze of glory, Dear Optimists. Blaze of glory.

But my message had merit, I think. Something like, “I’m tired as hell. Tired of stories that make me think my kids’ future is totally hosed. Maybe sprinkle a little hope in them? Mention some progress already underway? Yeah, that would be great thanks,” I said, as if asking them to redo their [TPS Reports](#).

I hung up the phone feeling mildly better, because I remembered how toxic it is to immerse myself in nothing but bad news, so in this issue we’re going to take a closer look at why climate doomism is dumb and dangerous.

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WE INTERRUPT YOUR DOOM SCROLLING WITH A MESSAGE FROM REALITY

Sorry to barge in on all the cortisol, but we need to talk.

I thought I was nailing the info consumption thing, having curated my intake with carefully vetted sources. But nope! The news itself—even the unbiased, fact-based kind—could be distorting our sense of what’s true.



- [News outlets write more negative stories](#) because they capture our attention, leaving us to believe the world is worse than it actually is.
- [We are hardwired](#) to fixate on bad news, which isn’t great when *all the news* seems bad.
- [Consuming news on social media](#) leads to more depression, anxiety, and stress vs. consuming news on traditional media. You don’t saaaaaaay.

Our brains—the ones inside our very own heads!—[can play into the doom cycle](#). So let’s force them to read some more productive stories about climate hope. Behold:

WE NEED TO SHIFT OUR MINDSET FROM DOOM TO HOPE. HERE'S HOW.

The advice applies on [bones days and no-bones days](#).

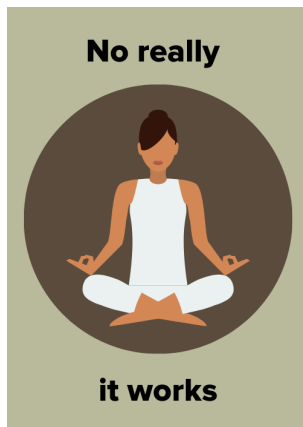
[The case for ‘hope punk’ when talking about climate change](#)

- **Climate doom is the new climate denial**, because it’s just as effective at creating inaction. This was an aha moment for me and some of my colleagues.
- **To be hopeless is to be uninformed**, because we’re saturated by gloomy news stories that don’t accurately reflect climate progress.



- **Talking about hope doesn't prevent people from taking urgent action:** Knowing that things are moving in the right direction helps people stay engaged, while hopelessness leads to apathy.
- **Focus on solutions:** There are caches of good news out there, like the Solutions Journalism Network's [database](#) of climate solutions.

[Anxiety about climate isn't going away. Here's how to manage it.](#)



- **If you sometimes feel unmoored by climate change,** and you're looking for practical advice to manage that discomfort, you're going to want to click on this one.
- **You'll find five tools** to build emotional resilience over the long haul.
- **And a 17-minute** accompanying podcast from NPR's Life Kit, which I found riveting, helpful, and oddly soothing.
- **Subscribe to [GenDread](#):** a newsletter about staying sane in the climate crisis.

FINDING HOPE IN THE FREE MARKET

Changing our mindset is easier when you understand why our planet is not really doomed.

[The unstoppably good news about clean energy](#)

Journalist David Roberts felt grim enough this month to whip out a stash of good news he's been keeping like a "break-glass-in-case-of-emergency thing." Best bits:



- "We are on the front end of a massive, precipitous wave of change to rival the Industrial Revolution — one that will unfold even if policy support is weak and erratic, purely on the strengths of economics and innovation."
- "There are no fundamental limits to the spread of zero-carbon energy. The key to succeeding on climate change is simply accelerating what is already underway."

Yeah baby, that feels just like [the GOAT driving my Tesla!](#) This week Hertz placed an order for 100k Teslas, putting Tom Brady at the wheel of an ad campaign.

FINDING HOPE IN CLIMATE POLICY

Yes, even as some of our preferred policies get a haircut, and pundits scream that international pledges at COP26 aren't enough.



There's always hope we can't yet see: Announcing EPA's Clean Power Plan, which was projected to reduce power plant emissions 32% by 2030, helped lead to the Paris Agreement. It was stayed by the Supreme Court, and yet, *we've already surpassed what the CPP set out to do.* That time felt similar to when a certain senator blocked the Clean Energy Performance Plan—a piece of legislation that was heralded as the most likely to help us reach our climate goals.



The budget reconciliation bill is poised to be “The biggest climate bill in human history. At least half a trillion dollars. That's a pretty good story to tell at the Conference of Parties (COP26)," said Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii).



And new EPA rules for vehicles and methane going into COP26 will regulate 93% of fossil fuel infrastructure for the first time. Research from our visiting scientist found that targeting methane emissions is an essential and undervalued strategy to protect public health, and our researchers have found that modernizing transportation systems offers important opportunities to slow climate change, improve human health, and alleviate inequities.

ALL EYES ON COP26

Beyond COP26: Next steps in the fight against climate change

Thursday, November 18, 12-1 PM ET
Presented jointly with The Weather Channel and Pattn



Stephanie Abrams
Meteorologist,
The Weather Channel



Eric Christian Olsen
Actor, writer, and producer



Renee Salas
Yerby Fellow, Center for Climate,
Health, and the Global
Environment



Muhammad Ali Pate
Julio Frenk Professor of the
Practice of Public Health
Leadership



Jeff Nesbit
Executive Director, Climate Nexus



"Every fraction of a degree matters for health inequity and the U.S. has an opportunity to make the urgent sweeping actions that we need," said Dr. Renee Salas, our Climate MD leader and lead author of the 2021 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change: U.S. Policy Report. She's taking the policy recommendations to COP26, where she'll call for:

- Urgent and equitable greenhouse gas emission reductions;
- Incorporating health-related costs of fossil fuels into the social cost of carbon; and
- Rapidly increasing funding for health protections.

Follow along from home

On day one of COP, tune in to Nature's Newsroom on 11/1, for a conversation with our Director Dr. Aaron Bernstein about how climate action can prevent the next pandemic. [Livestream here](#) at 7:45 am ET.

For a post-COP analysis, join us on 11/18 to hear from Dr. Salas, Jeff Nesbit, and The Weather Channel's Stephanie Abrams fresh from the halls of COP26. [Register and livestream here](#), [submit your questions here](#).

You can register to watch U.S. events via the U.S. Climate Action Center, the virtual platform for COP26. [Learn more](#).

Check out two health-related events from the U.S. Government:

- **Climate and health equity: Advancing clean energy access to households**, with the U.S. Agency for International Development & U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 11/4, 3:00 - 4:00 pm. [Learn more](#)
- **Healthier lives on a healthier planet: Linking climate change and health equity**, with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 11/8, 4:30-5:30 pm. [Learn more](#)

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