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I have officially run out of enough serenity to accept the things I cannot change. There's simply just not enough [Bleep!] serenity to be had at this point. Maybe this is a supply chain thing too, I don't know.

5:21 PM · Jan 14, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



How are you doing, Dear Optimists? There's a lot going on. This is [actual footage](#) of what it was like trying to write a newsletter on optimism this month.

So, instead, we'll talk about hope. "Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up," said environmentalist David Orr. "Optimism leans back, puts its feet up, and wears a confident look."

I, too, have sometimes wanted to punch optimism in the face like the pompous jerk it can be. Which is why I love that hope is available any time we're ready to work for it. Hope is totally within our control, even when so many uncomfortable things are not.

The benefits of hope are so powerful that some doctors use it as a [therapeutic tool](#)—it can make you feel better, create measurable improvements in health, and inspire action to overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges.

If you're overwhelmed by a handful of existential crises, or perhaps rankled by a smattering of profound inconveniences, I hope you find something useful in this issue. Our theme is climate change, but the conversation applies to whatever calamity may bubble up while you're reading.

So what does “working for hope” look like to you? To me, it can look like showing up in all the ways a climate activist should. But lately it looks more like doing small things that feel good—like checking out pictures of [heat pumps that look like George Clooney](#). Because creating delightful moments helps clear away yucky feelings long enough for hope to rush in.

And once that happens, it feels like anything is possible.

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THE MEDICINAL PROPERTIES OF HOPE

A prescription for the world-weary.

Our advisory board member [Dr. Howard Frumkin](#), Resident Doctor of Hope, wrote an excellent piece on [Hope, Health, and the Climate Crisis](#). It's worth reading in full, but here's a summary for fraught attention spans:



A sticky paradox: Hope is essential for inspiring climate action, but the climate crisis can lead to hopelessness and inaction. The good news is ...

Climate hope is justified: Against the backdrop of scary climate trends are reassuring developments: Technology is evolving quickly, costs are falling fast, renewable energy is growing exponentially, policies are taking hold, activism is thriving, public opinion is shifting, and the [health benefits of climate action](#) are clear. So ...



Don't fall for climate doom narratives: Climate doom is the new climate denial, because it also leads to inaction. Take heart in the age of “[Ok Doomer](#),” where young activists encourage action over dread. And besides ...

Hope is good for your health: It can help you live longer, think more clearly, and improve how you manage stress, while hopelessness can wreak havoc on your body, mind, and spirit. So for the low, low price of reading this newsletter, take some of these ideas for a spin ...

STRATEGIES FOR DRIVING HOPE

If hope is both justified and necessary, where can we get some? Dr. Frumkin provides a roadmap. Vroom vroom!



Tell the Truth: We need to talk about facts even when they're hard to hear, *and* we need to hold two separate thoughts at the same time: 1) we're in a crisis, and 2) there's a lot we can do to fix it.



Acknowledge Grief: Accepting what's lost and processing the pain is the first step of coping with grief for a planet, which is so common they came up with a name for it: [*Solastalgia*](#).



Envision Success: We can build a foundation of hope by imagining the totally-possible, no-carbon future that awaits us, if we all push decision makers to decarbonize.



Identify Pathways to Success: We have the technology we need to achieve our climate goals, we just need to implement it faster.



Empower People to Act: Action begets hope and hope begets action! Focusing on small, manageable projects is all any of us needs to do. ICYMI, see our issue on [finding your place in the climate movement](#) for some ideas.



Cultivate Solidarity: When you start taking part in the solution, you meet others working for the same cause, and suddenly you can see that the goal is achievable.



Make Room for Joy: Investing in joy every day—even committing to it like a workout—can open the door to hope and help avoid burnout, says Wajahat Ali in his TED talk on [finding hope in hopeless times](#).

NEED HELP SPARKING JOY?

I Marie Kondo'd Twitter off my phone and feel a bazillion times lighter.*



Instead of drowning in bad news, try sipping it carefully, as if from a tea cup: I feel informed but less frenzied thanks to these mind-shifting episodes of *Offline with Jon*

Favreau:

- **If you're in a constant state of FOMO**, harbor a news addiction, or find it hard to pay attention to anything longer than a tweet, [this episode is for you](#).
- **What we need in times of great uncertainty** is not more information, but more friendship. Learn how to [defeat doom scrolling](#) with more human connection.

This American Life episode [made up entirely of stories about delight](#) could inspire you, as it did me, to create more delightful moments in your life.

**I still check it on my computer, but less frequently, and I follow the [Doom Scrolling Reminder Bot](#), which suggests alternative activities about once an hour.*

CHANGING THE CLIMATE CONVERSATION



We have to take our heads, which are worried, connect them to our hearts—why we care—and then connect our hearts and others' hearts to our hands, so we act.

DR. KATHARINE HAYHOE
CLIMATE SCIENTIST AND AUTHOR
ON HOW TO TALK ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE
VIEW ONLINE: QW.LY/LOOS50IUCIA

If you want to feel like climate change is solvable, watch Katharine Hayhoe talk about [how to talk about climate change](#). Key takeaways:

- **Almost no one talks about climate change.** But if we did, we could become an unstoppable force that could halt climate change once and for all.
- **Our job isn't to convince people who don't believe**, it's to help people who want to help but don't know how.
- **We don't need to talk about facts;** just about why we care about climate change and how we can fix it. For conversation starters, [skip to this part](#).

If you talk about climate change this month, [let me know how it goes](#).

WE *HOPE* YOU'LL JOIN US

March 31, 3:00 pm ET: The White House Health Equity Forum—Our Climate MD Leader Dr. Renee Salas will join a White House event to discuss the connections between climate change, environmental justice, health



equity, and key provisions in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that meaningfully address environmental harms that disproportionately impact our nation's most vulnerable patients. [Register here](#)



April 14: Fossil Fuels, Health, and Frontline Indigenous Communities—Hear from Indigenous leaders Lisa DeVille, who has witnessed firsthand the effects of oil extraction on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota; Kandi White, who has been a leading advocate against fracking and pipeline projects; and Harvard faculty about how we can uplift Indigenous voices and curb the impacts of climate change on frontline communities. [Register here](#)

WE'RE HIRING

Join our stupendously amazing yet very humble team.



We're seeking a Research Assistant for [our project](#) on Building Climate Resilient Community Health Clinics. This position will help bring the best available science on climate, health, and resiliency to develop an integrated Climate Resilience Toolkit for community health clinics. [Learn more and apply.](#)

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