



Roll up your sleeves



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» **Every change that happens in societies and organizations needs *individuals* who initiate it.**

The World in 2050. Transformations to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), 2018.

» As individuals we cannot seek to change the world, but we can choose to change where we are. And what we do may very well one day have changed all that is far beyond our reach.

According to: Rachel Donald. planetcritical.com/how-to-change-the-world. 2026.02.02

» The world now needs courageous people. Courage in the climate crisis means: saying what is. And also: saying what could be.

Courage grows above all where there are many of us. Where we look very closely in search of hope and see who is already doing something, where something has already been moving, where small bright spots join together to form rays.

Translated from: Luisa Neubauer, climate activist. Book: Was wäre, wenn wir mutig sind. 2025

» Climate anxiety and despair are not only caused by horror scenarios, but above all by political inaction, empty optimism and false comfort.



Hope, perhaps even something like a desire for the future, does not arise theoretically, not by talking and concepts alone. And certainly not by waiting for the world's powerful to agree on a masterplan. It comes from *lived joint action*.

We need a future narrative with the working title «The fight against the climate catastrophe and me».

Translated from source: Daniel Graf. Ja, Zukunftslust, verdammt! REPUBLIK 14.02.2023



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» **It is actually breathtaking how many opportunities we have to create a better world or preserve a good world.**

Never in the history of mankind have we had so many powerful tools at our disposal. We cannot afford not to use these tools for the betterment of eight billion people.

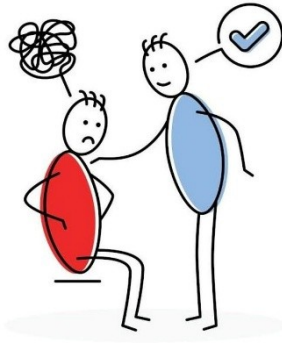
Translated from: Joachim Laukenmann and Martin Läubli. Klimaforscher Hans Joachim Schellnhuber über Lösung der Klimakrise. Tages-Anzeiger 31.12.2024.

» If you are living today, you are in a truly unique position to achieve something that was unthinkable for our ancestors: to deliver a sustainable future.

What makes us different from ancestors is that economic and technological changes mean we have *options*. We can make responsible choices that move us forward. But we can also stick with the status quo. A sustainable future is not guaranteed - if we want it, we need to create it. Being the first generation is an opportunity, but it's not inevitable.

Hannah Ritchie. Book: Not the End of the World. Surprising facts, dangerous myths and hopeful solutions for our future on planet Earth. 2024





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» **One of the hardest questions is, what can I do? What can each individual do to make the transition possible and make the world more sustainable?**

A vital role that people can play is to help themselves as well as their friends and families to remain positive and not fall into despair.

To a great extent, the main challenge in the current situation individuals will face is mental. It will be hard to maintain a happy outlook in the face of so many difficulties. It will be hard for people to feel optimistic when they will have so much to worry about, whether it is access to water, falling living standards or frightening weather.

Individuals can only really have a major impact by acting collectively, as activists, shareholders and voters. They can push for change in the political system and the education system. They can demand that the costs of the transition are shared fairly, so that the rich pay much more than the poor. They can stand for election.

According to: Graeme Maxton. Book: [Change! Why we need a radical turnaround](#). 2019. PDF

» **The first encouragement** is to be grateful for living in a time that challenges us so much to change and awakens that sensual instinct in us to sustain life.

The second piece of advice is: Don't be afraid of the future that lies in darkness, don't be afraid of uncertainty, stress, loss, because all that is part of a drastic change. Everything new first matures in the dark. And we cannot wait for ready-made plans to take the next step.

The third tip is to roll up your sleeves. Get involved politically, get an overview, ask questions about purpose and meaning. Anyone can do that. Don't sit back, don't get discouraged or paralysed. There is so much to learn and do at this time.



Fourthly, I would say: have courage of vision. We must allow positive visions of the future to blossom within us. For nothing new will come into the world through us that has not previously taken shape in our consciousness.

Translated from: Geseko v. Lüpke. Book: Politik des Herzens. Nachhaltige Konzepte für das 21. Jahrhundert. 2015. p. 93 - 105: Im Gespräch mit Joanna Macy (1929 – 2025), Eco-philosopher, Activist and System Scientist.



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Book recommendations

Human Nature - Nine Ways to Feel about Our Changing Planet

Kate Marvel, Climate Scientist, 2025

» A captivating exploration of climate change that uses nine different emotions to better understand the science, history, and future of our evolving planet.

Quote from the book cover

The Beginning Comes After the End - Notes on a World of Change

Rebecca Solnit, Author and Journalist, 2026

» Beautiful and inspiring this book gives us the courage to face change, and to make it.

Quote from George Monbiot on the book cover

