If Americans really cared ...

You really can change the world if you care enough.

(Marian Wright Edelman)
They seem to get it's happening and why

(Leiserowitz et al. 2018)
AND a lot of them worry about it...

A Majority of Registered Voters Are Worried About Global Warming
- % who say "very" or "somewhat" worried -

(Leiserowitz et al. 2018)
So what is going on here?
### Most Liberal Democrats Say Global Warming Will Be a Very Important Issue When Deciding For Whom to Vote in the 2018 Congressional Election

**Rank by "very important"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>All Registered Voters (n = 1,067)</th>
<th>Liberal Democrats (n = 265)</th>
<th>Moderate/Conservative Democrats (n = 204)</th>
<th>Liberal/Moderate Republicans (n = 149)</th>
<th>Conservative Republicans (n = 276)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>The economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The economy</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Environment protection</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Moral/family values</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Development clean energy</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>Improving roads, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Tax reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Gun policies</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Income gap</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Russian election interference</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Developing clean energy</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Federal budget deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Disaster relief</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Race relations</td>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Global warming</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
<td>Economic gap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How important will the candidates' positions on the following issues be when you decide who you will vote for in the 2018 Congressional election?**

How much do they pay attention? And is it important enough to act on it?

Figure 2: Information-Processing Propensities Among the Six Americas

- Less willing to exert effort to process information
- Weak belief that global warming is occurring
- Likely to engage in counter-arguing & motivated reasoning
- Unlikely to change beliefs

Attitudinal Valence

Source: Roser-Renouf et al. (2014)
Very different underlying worldviews

Possible explanation #2

For details, visit: http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication/article/climate_system/
Why should I if others don’t act?

Possible explanation #3

Source: Leiserowitz et al. (2019a)
Lack of political engagement

Source: Leiserowitz et al. (2019b)
Lack of a sense of political efficacy

Confidence among registered voters that they can influence decision-makers at various levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reg</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>Mod/Con</td>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Unweighted base)</td>
<td>(996)</td>
<td>(466)</td>
<td>(295)</td>
<td>(168)</td>
<td>(95)</td>
<td>(356)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How confident are you that people like you, working together, can...?</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... affect what local businesses in your community do about global warming?</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... affect what your local government does about global warming?</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... affect what your state government does about global warming?</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... affect what corporations do about global warming?</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... affect what the federal government does about global warming?</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: adapted from Leiserowitz et al. (2019b)

Possible explanation #4c

A Majority of Americans Think Humans Can Reduce Global Warming - But few are optimistic that we will -

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- **Denial**
  - Global warming isn’t happening (9%)
  - Humans can’t reduce global warming, even if it is happening (14%)

- **Cynicism**
  - Humans could reduce global warming, but people aren’t willing to change their behavior, so we’re not going to (22%)

- **Fatalism**
  - Humans can’t reduce global warming and we are going to do so successfully (6%)

- **Optimism**
  - Humans could reduce global warming, but it’s unclear at this point whether we will do what’s necessary (49%)

Doubt

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

Source: Leiserowitz et al. (2018)
This doesn’t look like a people who don’t care…

About Seven in Ten Americans Are “Interested” In Global Warming
- Fewer Feel Other Emotions -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Not very</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpless</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeful</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outraged</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69%
53%
51%
49%
51%
51%
56%

Source: Leiserowitz et al. (2018)
Why are people where they are on the climate crisis?

Summary: Influences on people’s opinions and attitudes

• Competing issues > varying degrees of paying attention (experiences can help)

• Knowledge of climate change and depth of information processing

• Knowledge of how to create social change and acceptance/objections to changes/solutions

• Various degrees of political engagement and sense of political efficacy

• Emotional responses to climate change

• Prevailing social norms

• Deeply held values

• Difficult-to-change beliefs and worldviews

Early concerns:
How to talk about climate change, raise awareness

Early trainings:
How to educate people about climate change

Then:
How to deal with climate skeptics

Recent trainings:
How to help people cope with climate grief, maintain hope
Not just change – but inevitable loss

Loss of health
Loss of life
Loss of home
Loss of livelihood
Loss of places/sense of place
Loss of social connection
Loss of species
Loss of diversity
Loss of habitat
Loss of landscapes
Loss of seasons
Loss of life support systems
Loss of sense of security
Loss of certainty
Loss of well-being
Loss of trust in future
Loss of identity
Loss of hope
What if we actually care a whole lot?!

- Threat to all we love (our families, communities, place where we live, places we treasure, nature...)
- Threat to all we have
- Threat to all we depend on for life and livelihood
- Threat to future generations
- Threat to our identities
Psychological responses to existential threats

“We either reduce the threat…or… We reduce the feeling about the threat

“I don’t want your hope. I don’t want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic ... and act as if the house was on fire.”

Because it is!

Greta Thunberg
Environmental Activist

We either reduce the threat.............or..................... We reduce the feeling about the threat
5 Layers of Self-Defense

#1 – Distance
(not thinking/feeling about the disturbing)

#2 – Doom
(not feeling loss, grief)

#3 – Dissonance
(not feeling guilty)

#4 – Denial
(not losing social ties or standing)

#5 – iDentity
(not giving up on self image)

Dealing with the Hopeless • Apathetic • Closed-Minded

Photos (l>r): Psych Central, Genetic Literacy Project, vanguardia.com
Grounds for Hope?
You Can Help Foster Hope -- in Yourself and Others!

**MOTIVATION**
A Desirable Future

Listen
Foster imagination
Vision together
Expand the circle
Invite creativity
“The adjacent possible”
Set the bar high(er)

**FLEXIBILITY/ADAPTABILITY**
Uncertainty & Change

Stay nimble
Expect surprises
Track & communicate progress
Reflect & learn
Adjust strategies

Expect variation in emotions
(hope is NOT a steady companion)

**COMMITMENT**
Agency
(Choice, Efficacy & Action)

Talk about solutions
Show/learn “how”
Tell personal stories
Teach/learn history
Illustrate effectiveness of collective action
Encourage and empower

Break down big goals into smaller achievements
Make narrow goals bigger
Ask questions about how change happened
Seven Ingredients of Grounded/Active Hope

- Clear-eyed diagnosis, with empathy
- Vision of a worthwhile outcome
- Call on my highest self
- Feasible path
- Meaningful role for me
- Doing it together
- Strategy for setbacks and interim goals

Source: Moser & Berzonsky (in prep)
Apathy...numbing...denial

- The thing that **comes after**
  - Consideration of the facts
  - Fear and overwhelm
- It is a **“maladaptive” response** to the threat
  - Not lack of motivation
  - But lack of efficacy
    - Personal
    - Response
    - Collective

- **Countering Apathy**
  - Empathy
  - Listening
  - Finding a spark of caring
  - Validation and affirmation
  - Learning from history, how change happens
  - Linking to how this is contributing to positive change
  - Supporting/joining action

Photos (l>r): familylifecanada.com, businessinsider.com
Passionate, hyperactive, un-strategic & closed-minded

Many variations on this theme
• “My way or the high way...” (e.g., we got to go 100% nuclear)
• “We got to do something, anything...I don’t care what!”
• “My issue is more important than your issue” (e.g., we got to solve racism first)
• “But I do recycle...”
• Etc.

No easy answers!
• Avoid debate where both sides just dig in their heels
• Dialogue
  • Requires time, empathy, curiosity, listening, being prepared to change one’s mind
  • Does not require agreement on solutions
• Joint fact finding about problems, solutions with systemic perspective
• Pick people up where they are and take them to the next step
Thank you!

Susi Moser, Ph.D.
Susanne Moser Research & Consulting

Email: promundi@susannemoser.com
Web: www.usannemoser.com
**Urgency** is that sense that something important must be attended to immediately and cannot wait. It moves us out of the comfort of the status quo to gain the cooperation of others to plan and execute change efforts, and to keep going in the face of obstacles, deep-seated inertia, the ever-present temptation of complacency, or even the necessary small, early wins on the path to deeper transformation.

**Efficacy** gives us the sense that we can affect change (self-efficacy), that we are doing so successfully together with others (collective efficacy), and that the actions we are taking actually make a difference in the ultimate outcome (response efficacy).

Source: Moser et al. 2017)
Motivational Interviewing

“a collaborative conversation style for strengthening a person’s own motivation and commitment to change.”

W. Miller and S. Rollnick, *Motivational Interviewing* (3rd ed.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four processes of Motivational Interviewing</th>
<th>Core Techniques of MI</th>
<th>The spirit of Motivational Interviewing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging</strong> - building rapport and an understanding of their perspective</td>
<td><strong>Open questions</strong> - invite to explore</td>
<td><strong>Collaborative partnership</strong> - each of you brings expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focusing</strong> - identifying a direction of change important to them and goals within this</td>
<td><strong>Affirmation</strong> - acknowledge interest, positive behavior</td>
<td><strong>Profound acceptance</strong> - their life, their choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evoking</strong> - drawing out change talk, with importance of change and confidence for change</td>
<td><strong>Reflective listening</strong> - mirror and draw out common understanding</td>
<td><strong>Compassion</strong> - acting in their interests, not manipulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong> - collaboratively identifying steps and supporting their confidence to take these.</td>
<td><strong>Summarizing</strong> – connect the dots</td>
<td><strong>Evocative</strong> - drawing out from them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Chris Johnstone (2019)
Communication for/amidst a societal transformation: Creating the conditions for a peaceful tomorrow

Ten Tasks

1. Framing the full arc of a transformation
2. Fostering imagination
3. Supporting through empathy
4. Living with uncertainty
5. Course-correcting toward the difficult
6. Resisting numbing
7. Sense- and meaning-making
8. Fostering authentic and radical hope
9. Fostering generative engagement for a just future
10. Living a public love