

MEGAN KENNEDY-WOODARD

AND DR PATRICK KENNEDY-WILLIAMS

ILLUSTRATED BY JORDANNA GEORGE

YOU ARE UNSTOPPABLE!

**HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR
FEELINGS ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE
AND TAKE POSITIVE ACTION TOGETHER**



You Are Unstoppable!

*How to Understand Your Feelings
about Climate Change and
Take Positive Action Together*



**Megan Kennedy-Woodard and
Dr Patrick Kennedy-Williams**

Illustrated by Jordanna George



Jessica Kingsley Publishers
London and Philadelphia

How to Use This Book

It's not like flicking a switch – although turning off the lights saves energy!

Changing our mindset and our behaviour takes time. You don't have to read this whole book in one go. And you don't have to do climate work perfectly, either! If you have a friend or family member who is also experiencing big climate emotions (which we sometimes also call **ECO-EMOTIONS**), why not read through and do the work together? Take it step by step and chapter by chapter.

Climate journaling – the power of writing it down

Have you ever seen a pot on a stove bubble over? That's what our brains do sometimes: they bubble over with thoughts and emotions. A great way to turn down that mental heat is to pour out some of what is in the pot. We can do this by writing down how we feel.

Throughout this book we will ask you some BIG QUESTIONS. Try to really think about what they

mean and how they feel for you. Yes, you! Because you matter, and your feelings and actions matter. It's a great idea to have a climate journal where all your climate emotions, thoughts, ideas and goals can collect in one place. This will be a great tool to organize your plans to help the planet.



You can use this journal as you work your way through this book, but you can also reach for it ANY TIME to write down how you feel, or any new ideas you might have! You might also want to show it to others so they know how you are feeling and what you are working on.

Hand this book to your parent or guardian and tell them it would mean the world to you if they read the last chapter, 'For Adults and Educators'. Go on, put them to work!

Allies are people who are on our team. They often believe in the same causes, and are in a good position to help us achieve our aims. We can also be allies for others.



Chapter 1

New Bee-Haviour

All this pollution doesn't make me feel good, so at home we do a lot of things like composting and recycling. I don't like wasting. My dad had an idea. We made a bug hotel. We used old recycled wood and pine cones and bamboo and flowers. We were painting it all together and we were all happy and smiley and laughing. We didn't buy anything for it, just used what we had; now it's a home for lots of animals. It was so fun, and we like going and seeing what might be in there.

Camilla, France

Think about the change you could ignite by championing our most valuable **ASSET**: the planet!

Wait, we take that back! The planet is not an asset...and that is part of the problem. We usually think about the Earth as something we take things from, and this has to change. We need to think of ourselves and the Earth

as partners. We need to give more and take less. This starts with each and every one of us. As we learn to care for the Earth and take climate action, we become one small (but important) part of the solution.

Consider this African proverb, quoted by the Dalai Lama: 'If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito.' That one little thing will make a big difference to you when you wake up, covered in itchy bites. But what if there were millions of mosquitos? You'd certainly know it in the morning!

It's helpful to think about climate action in this way too. Yes, one person can make a small difference, but guess what? There are millions of people taking millions of positive actions, and this can make a BIG difference. In a recent survey in England, over 80% of young people (aged between 8 and 15) said that they want to take action to help the planet.¹ That's around 5.5 MILLION young people in England alone!²

Let's be more like the honeybees!

The problem is, for a long time, humans have been treating the planet a lot like mosquitos treat us – we've been taking something away and causing harm.³

Let's talk about **SYMBIOSIS**.

Symbiosis is a relationship that is cooperative, where two (or more) different things get along together and help each other out.

So instead of something that takes away or extracts, like mosquitos, let's think about something that cooperates... like bees. Although some species of bee are solitary (meaning they live alone), many species (like our sweet friend, the honeybee) are social. This means they live together and support each other. But it doesn't end there.

Honeybees have a symbiotic relationship with flowering plants, because the flowers provide nectar to feed the bees, and in return, the bees carry pollen from one plant to the next, which helps the plant species to reproduce.



The extra wonderful thing for you and me (besides the delicious honey, of course) is that bees also help pollinate loads of different fruit and vegetable species (like oranges, blueberries, apples, peaches, tomatoes and cucumbers), meaning that we depend on these little guys too. With each single effort from millions of bees, think of all the species that are supported, and all the food that is produced because of their cooperation with each other and with their environment.

Bees set a great example of how to be an ally to the planet. Did you know these cool facts about these buzzy-fuzzy folks? We have a lot in common with them!⁴



Honeybees probably don't want to sting you because if they do, well, they'll die.

Just like a bee stinging someone, if we hurt the planet, we hurt ourselves. The more pain we cause the Earth, the more it hurts other humans, other species and the rest of the natural world. Everything we do has an effect on our planet...but this is good news, because our positive actions have positive effects!



Honeybees are constantly working together – every bee has a role to play.

Bee colonies help one other by caring for the sick, sharing food, even keeping each other at the perfect temperature (not too warm, not too cold). Just like the buzzy bees, every human has a role to play too. Whoever we are, it's

important that we pay attention to and learn about the experiences of people different to ourselves and become each other's allies.



Can you believe that there are over 20,000 different species of bees that can be found on all the continents, except Antarctica?

There are so many of us humans and we are all so different, but we also have so many interests and goals in common. Across the globe, there are people who are just like you, who are doing essential climate work. We may be doing it in different ways and under different circumstances, but we are all invested in the future and connected to our ecosystems (even in Antarctica)!



In order to make just a kilogram of honey, bees basically do the same as flying around the world three times.

Helping our planet takes a lot of work, and this can sometimes feel really hard. That's okay! Even the busiest bee knows it's important to stop and smell the flowers. When we take time to rest and rejuvenate, we're taking care of ourselves and making sure we can keep going with our climate work.




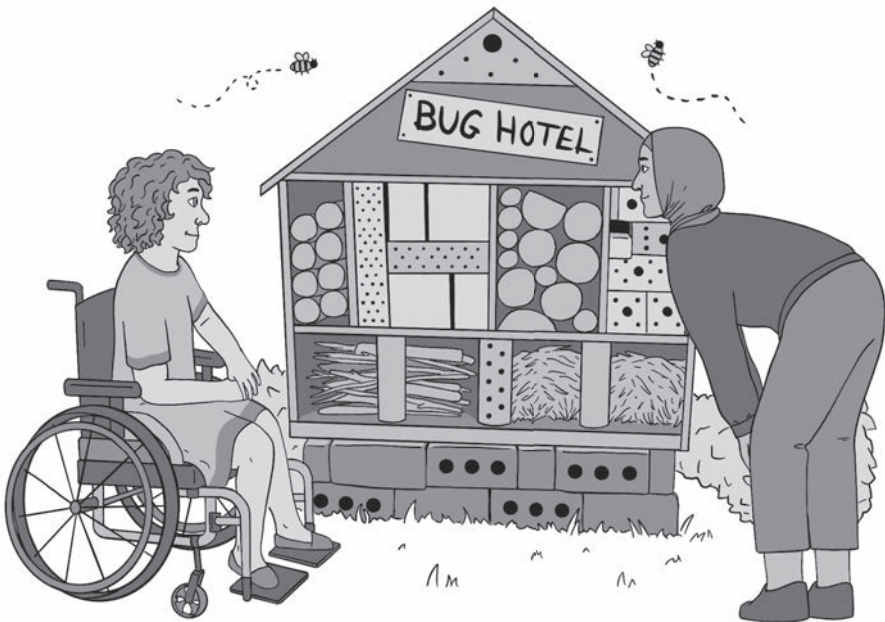
Nearly 75% of our main crops around the world and 90% of wild plants depend on pollination from animals. That means that out of three bites of your food, one is probably thanks to a pollinator.

Wow, that sounds exhausting! Luckily, there are lots of ways we can help our bee friends just like they help us. Try lending a hand to a struggling bee by putting it on a flower or giving it sugar water. Ask your friends and family not to kill bees or damage their hives. Planting bee-friendly flowers and trees in your garden or even in a window box can make a difference in keeping bees busy, us fed and our ecosystems healthy.

Remember this: our ideas and habits can inspire climate positive bee-haviour in others. Before we know it, the world will be a better place!

There are lots of ideas throughout this book to help you be more bee! Look out for the friendly bee icon:

 Remember Camilla (from the start of this chapter)? You could make a bug hotel just like she did. Here are some instructions on how to do it.



How to build a bug hotel



The great thing about bug hotels is that you can use all kinds of materials that you can collect in nature or probably already have. Here are the instructions for you (and a trusted adult) to follow:

1. Start by stacking old pallets and bricks with space in between. These are great for the main structure of your hotel.
2. Then fill the spaces with drilled logs, bamboo or hollowed sticks. Use old, small pots filled with moss, rocks, dried leaves, pine cones, sand, soil, straw, and anything else you think a creepy crawly would enjoy. You can build these up to a metre high (making sure the base is secure), or keep it closer to the ground.
3. Roof time – old tiles or planks on top help keep your bug hotel dry.
4. Finally, encourage your bug guests to visit by spreading wildflower seeds around your bug hotel.

For Adults and Educators (How to Support Your Eco-Warriors)

Adults, could we have a moment? Firstly, your children are amazing for their interest and commitment to the planet, which is probably a testament to you. Well done for cultivating modern climate warriors. While we want to empower our children as well as ourselves, and while we know that climate anxiety can be relieved by climate action, we want to instil the narrative that though our individual work is essential, this is not the responsibility of the individual. We are part of a broken system that has, in a calculated way, led us to this point. As parents or guardians, we implore you to support the action your children want to take and to do this by being an ally. You are in a position of power. Learn as much as you can and talk about climate change.

Actions you can take:

1. Talk about climate change.
2. Switch to a more vegetable-based diet.
3. Switch to a renewable energy supplier.

4. Make your home more energy efficient.
5. Use cars less.
6. Stop flying.
7. Divest your pension from fossil fuels.
8. Divest your investments from fossil fuels.
9. Refuse or reject excessive consumption.
10. Reduce what you use.
11. Reuse as much as you can.
12. Recycle as much as you can.
13. Use your consumer choice.
14. Protest.
15. Vote.¹

Understand what your child or student already knows about climate change

It's best to begin by figuring out what your child or student already knows. Ask open questions:

- What have you heard about global warming or climate change?
- Who talks to you about this?
- How do you feel about this happening?
- How do your friends feel about climate change?
- Is anyone doing anything about it?
- What could we, as a family (or school or community), be doing about it?