

Post Action Blues - a Guide to coming down to earth



The last few years have been both a productive and challenging time for Extinction Rebellion. The movement has had to learn on its feet and adapt to a continuously changing landscape whilst experiencing new tactics from the police, and new laws from Parliament. Many conversations have been brought to light in the critiques of XR and we have seen some of the flaws within our own processes and systems.

However, we **have** changed the conversation. Through the action we take as a movement we continue to turn the focus upon the climate and ecological emergency. Through our creativity, adaptability and resilience we are all engaged in the mission of raising the alarm and remembering what it truly means to be humans as part of nature – that we are a part of the Earth.

We acknowledge that many communities are already living on the front lines of the climate and ecological emergency. These communities are already living a regenerative and resilient response in the face of the challenges, as the waters and temperatures rise. There is much to be learned

from these communities and the cultures that are living on the front lines of the climate and ecological emergency.

A regenerative culture and regenerative action cycles are what can support this movement to sustain its work and to develop resilience in the face of the emergency. Reflection & learning are all part of the process of regenerative care and it feels as though there is much work to be done.

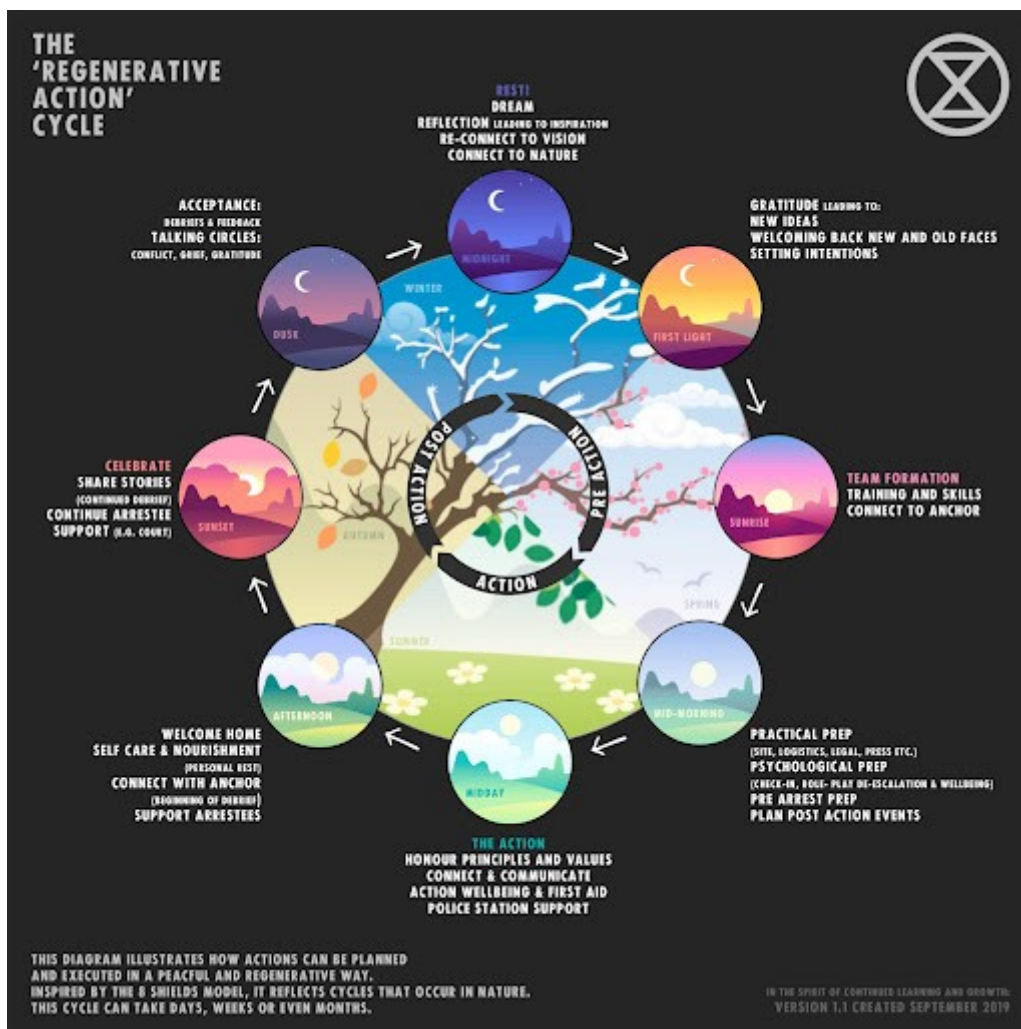
Practical Next Steps

On the frontline of activism we are confronted with many feelings. The impacts of the events, both positive and negative, can have long-lasting and wide reaching effects on the individuals involved. The action doesn't end when you leave the site and go home; there could be social implications with court cases, family or workplace issues. Simultaneously, the emotional journey can unfold in subtle ways. People may feel isolated, alienated or estranged, filled with self doubt or even shame. The extent of the impact may not be apparent in the immediate aftermath of the action, and often can build over time if it is ignored.

Long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations is easier to cope with when you have a way of being with and processing the emotional states that the situations evoke. Taking time to rest, reflect and recover after big actions is essential to processing these feelings and avoiding burnout, especially with the potential for more sustained and frequent attrition actions. Buddies, anchors, support from your Local Group, talking circles, and other ways we can resource ourselves. Exercise, time-out, nature, mediation, yoga, spending time with loved ones, can all support. Self-care is not selfish. Only by taking the time to refresh and renew ourselves as individuals can we collectively bring our best to future actions and ongoing commitments.

The Cycle of Regeneration

There is much to be learned from the cycles of nature and the patterns of the days and years. The Regenerative Action Cycle has been created from observations of these natural cycles and developed through indigenous wisdom and regenerative cultures. It is a way for us to plan, act, process and reflect in ways that are connected to a rhythm and cycle, bigger than ourselves.



The Regenerative Action Cycle invites us to:

- Take care of ourselves and connect with our anchors as we return home (Afternoon/Late Summer)
- Celebrate and share stories in small gatherings (Sunset/Autumn)
- Accept, debrief, feedback and honour the emotions raised by our actions (Dusk/End of Autumn)
- Rest, reflect and dream new visions (Midnight/Mid-Winter)
- With gratitude, come together again to develop new ideas and set new intentions (First Light/Beginning of Spring)

This then leads into the next steps for future actions:

- Creating teams, training for actions. (Sunrise/Mid Spring)
- Practical Preparation, Pre Arrest prep etc (Mid Morning/Beginning of Summer)
- The Action (Midday/ Height of Summer)

Expanding Circles of Support

We are cultivating a culture in which we are invited to explore and empower our inner and collective resourcefulness. We can learn to draw on our own wisdom and learnings to be able to support ourselves and each other. We can do this through creating experiences of connection and safe spaces in which we are able to express ourselves and be heard and held.

The expanding circles of support are:

1. You – Connect to yourself and your needs.
2. Your buddy – Find someone who you can share support with.
3. Your local/affinity/working group – connect as a community
4. Local trained support – resourcing ourselves through trained support and input.
5. XR Regenerative Culture – resources and services to support local regenerative culture advocates and individual activists.

Debrief! Debrief! Debrief!

Check-ins and debriefs are crucial, yet often omitted in the rush of an action or its aftermath. It can be beneficial to take a moment to ground yourselves, come together as a group and create a connected and caring atmosphere and enquire:

- How am I right now?
- What do I need?
- How are we as a group?
- How can I support the health of this group?

We advise:

Check ins during or immediately after an action → [AG Check-in](#)

Debrief 1-3 days after an action → [Offsite Debrief](#)

Ongoing talking circles/reflective spaces → [Talking Circles](#)

Connection, Gratitude and Celebration

Connection is one of the foundations of a Regenerative Culture. We live in an interdependent web of life; connecting with this web of life is the most natural, yet often most forgotten, aspect of what it is to 'be'. It is essential for us to realise our potential as a species, characterised by our capacity to experience and express kindness, compassion and love in abundance.

Being grateful roots anything we do in an awareness of interconnectedness to all the causes and efforts that preceded us. Gratitude is a humbling process that helps us both diminish the limitations of our limited self and understand ourselves as a part of something bigger. Some people

keep diaries or photo journals, or just a few moments of silent or vocal reflection at the start and end of every day.

Come together to celebrate in whatever way your community enjoys. Don't forget to thank those who have supported you; your families and loved ones, partner groups friends and communities, for the support they have given. National celebrations and debrief will be arranged between national actions to gather lessons learned and feed into future actions.

Emotional Support

Trained Emotional Support Network (TESN) is a collective of professionals with experience in supporting people through emotional and psychological processes.

Grief Tending

Through grief we can expand our capacity to love. Many who love this earth and this life are experiencing grief in some form now. Coming together to grieve can help both our connection to each other, nature and help us stay resilient in the coming days.

Grief tending resources:

The Wild Edge of Sorrow (Francis Weller) The Smell of Rain on Dust (Martin Prechtel) The Healing Wisdom of Africa (Malidoma Somé)

Nature Connection

This can also be a good time to go and be in nature to recharge and restore yourself – sit under a tree, wander timelessly in the woods, stop and listen to the birds, nourish yourself with the beauty of the other than human world. Your practice can be deepened by dropping in to your senses and your breath, to take your body and your felt connection with the wild world for a walk. When you notice yourself drifting amongst your thoughts and with less connection to your environment, then you can return to feeling your connection with the earth, gravity pulling you in to it, and your breath.

Arrestee Support

Some rebels engaging in XR's non-violent direct actions are willing to face arrest. We have a personal, and collective responsibility to support our rebels and need to foster a sustainable and regenerative approach to the consequences of nonviolent direct action. This process begins with adequate pre-action preparation and continues through to reliable post-arrest care. In doing so we are both extending care and compassion to each other, and ensuring the sustainability of our movement.

Please have a look at the Arrest Welfare web-page below for more information about the arrest cycle and the resources and training we have available to support our rebels through this process. Below we include a summary of some of the specific areas of support available.

Arrestee Welfare Webpage

Arrestee and Legal Support Rebel Toolkit pages

Post Arrest Liaison (or PAL Support) can provide signposting to the above resources and also offers a sympathetic ear through telephone contact. Please email us at **xr-arrestwelfare@protonmail.com** if you'd like to arrange a PAL, placing 'PAL Request' in the subject heading.

We are also able to support you in making a self-referral to a trained talking therapist through the **Trained Emotional Support Network**. Just email us at **XR-ArrestWelfare@protonmail.com** and we can forward you the referral template.

The Arrest Welfare team also have a team of volunteers who provide **Court Support and Accommodation** for court appearances. Please email **xr-arrestwelfare@protonmail.com** if you would like to connect with these networks.

For **Legal-related questions** please check out informedissent.info web-page and the for [XR legal support web-page](#)

If you do not find your answer on these pages then please email the XR legal team at **xr-legal@riseup.net**
