

# Starting and Developing Your Local Group

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# What is a Local Group?

Extinction Rebellion organises in autonomous groups distributed around the world. We are working to build a movement that is participatory, decentralised, and inclusive.

**Local Groups** bring a feeling of togetherness and shared purpose to local people and are a great way to connect a local area to the wider XR community. Local groups also provide a crucial mechanism for planning and implementing actions, growing XR, and building links with other sympathetic groups to create a movement of movements.

Local Groups in the UK are connected via their Nation or Region to XRUK. They follow the [Principles and Values](#), and take action towards [XR's three demands](#).

Click [here](#) to learn more about how [Local Groups fit in to the structure](#) of XRUK.

## **Principle 10: WE ARE BASED ON AUTONOMY AND DECENTRALISATION.**

We collectively create the structures we need to challenge power. Anyone who follows our core Principles and Values can take action in the name of Extinction Rebellion.

Local groups vary massively in size- some are small, and some are large enough that they need their own working groups to manage all of the activities they are doing.

There are roles for everyone in Local Groups, and if your Local Group doesn't have anyone working in the area you're interested in (eg. Arts or Outreach), you can create that team yourself!

## Why do we need Local Groups?

Local Group supporters help in a number of ways. Ideally, we do need people willing to protest in London since that is where the main seat of political, financial and media power exists. But we also need people to put pressure on institutions in the local area, and to spread the word locally. Those who cannot travel to London can [support from home in various roles](#) and by doing outreach or taking action locally.

# Find or Start a Local Group

## Find a Local Group near to you

You can look for a group close to where you live on the [Local Group map](#). If you can't find a pin on the map close enough to you, then click on the hourglass symbol to contact your Nation or Region.

## Local Group Support team is here to help

This is an UK-wide team with dedicated volunteers focused on helping Local Groups. These volunteers are called '**Gardeners**' - they are a local person focussed on helping Local Groups in your particular Nation or Region and they can support and guide you through any of the items listed below.

Contact this team on their [Mattermost reception](#) or by email - **LGsupport@extinctionrebellion.uk**

## Find local rebels

If there is no Local Group close to you, you can still get in touch with the Local Group Support team. They will be able to help you find individual rebels close to you to either form an Affinity Group or perhaps set up a new Local Group.

## Set up a new Local Group

The follow list is not a list of essentials and not necessarily in sequential order. Depending on the size, skills, time capacity and focus of your group, some of these will be more relevant to you. You are free to organise in whatever ways suit you.

- Connect to your Nation/Region Gardener (see above)
- Have a meeting
- Choose a name for your group
- Set up a [contact email address](#) for your group
- [Choose a messaging chat](#)
- Set up one or more [social media channels](#)
- Apply for a new (or get access to an existing) [Action Network email list](#)
- [Make your group visible](#) to the rest of the movement

# Developing a Local Group

Depending on the size, skills, capacity and focus of your group, some of these will be more relevant to you. You are free to organise in whatever ways suit you.

## Information, support and connection

- Talk to your [National / Regional Gardener](#) and find out when meetings are held to connect you to other local group coordinators in your area.
- Join the [Rebellion Broadcast](#) Telegram channel. This is a UK-wide broadcast channel where you will hear the latest news, updates about UK-wide actions, and strategy updates from the UK circles.
- Join the [Movement Broadcast](#) Telegram channel. Like the Rebellion Broadcast, this is a UK-wide channel, but focused on talks and training.
- Join a [nearby action or event](#)

## Ideas for growing your group

- Plan some ['outreach' to find even more people](#) near you
- Read more about ['integrating' new rebels](#)
- Organise some [arts and making activities](#)
- Organising some in-person training for your group (ask your Gardener help find a trainer to visit your group, or [train to deliver these yourself](#)) Example trainings are:
  - [Heading for Extinction](#)
  - [Welcome to XR for Local Groups](#)
  - [Prepare for Action \(NVDA training\)](#)

With all your activities, think about how to advertise them. This could be [via social media](#), or [outreach](#) (posters, flyers, outreach stalls, survey boards), or your own [email list](#). It could be reaching in to your own current social networks (book club, choirs, walking group, sports teams, faith groups etc).

## Choosing a campaign direction for your Local Group

Local Groups (unless they are huge!) tend to be more productive when they are focused on one of two areas of campaigning. Otherwise it can feel like a small number of people are trying to take on

every problem in a local area, instead of focusing on smaller topics which can feel more achievable, and present more areas for collaboration with other organisations.

Consider running a 'What Next?' meeting for your Local Group. Advertise it widely to the local community, other local environmental organisations, and people who have been involved with XR previously but aren't any more.

Use a loose **People's Assembly format** to hear from everyone in the room about what they think the key issues for the area are, and what they think the local group should be focusing on. Get each small group to feed back their opinions and have a whole group discussion to find a focus that works for the group.

It's really important to follow up this activity with another meeting to progress the plan, or to form working groups who will go away from the 'What Next?' session to develop areas of the group's campaign.

If you would like someone to help you facilitate a meeting like this, **contact your Regional or National Gardener**.

# Make your Group Visible

Does the rest of the movement know your group exists?

- If you're a local group, it's *really* important your group is on the [Local Group map](#) and the 'pathway', as this way new joiners can find you, get in touch, and get looped into your meetings and actions. If you need support setting up a joining form and mailing list, read [this page](#).
- If you're a community group, make sure you're listed in the Community Group section on [this page](#), with accurate contact info.
- **XR Organism**: ensuring your Group is on The Hub, and your contact information is up to date, makes it easier for other groups to find you. [Contact the Tech Team](#) for support adding or updating Hub groups.
- Share what you're up to! Join the [Live Action Content chat](#) on Telegram to share with the rest of the movement your best photos and videos.

# Meetings and Decision Making

Using elements of our Self Organising System (SOS) in your group

# Coordination of your group

If you have a small group or are just starting one, you'll need a few people who are doing the basic planning for the group. This doesn't mean the coordinators should do all the work! There are just some things it is easier to do with a small number of people.

At a very basic level, a Coordinating group would:

- Plan dates and venues for local group meetings and agree who will facilitate the meetings and take notes if needed.
- Contact with your Nation//Region and perhaps any larger Local Groups nearby
- Understand the **Principles and Values**, our **demands**, and have a basic understanding of the **structure of our Self-Organising System** within XR.

When a group becomes larger, there is a need to have more structure. This might be in the form of individuals or Working Groups given a mandated task or responsibility. Also it could mean electing External and Internal coordinators.



# How to Run Meetings

The [XRUK Facilitation Circle offers training](#) in meeting structure and culture, facilitation, minute-taking, and decision-making. You may also find the following agenda guide and template useful:

- [Agenda Document Guide \(Google doc\)](#)
- [Agenda Template \(Google doc\)](#)

## Types of Local Group Meetings

The aim is to have inspiring meetings where people connect and feel a sense of community amongst those who really understand the criticality of the climate and ecological emergency, and that together we can take positive action.

A mix of in person and online meetings may be useful for those who cannot/do not want to travel & those who prefer not to attend online meetings. Some meetings & events should be focussed on attracting new members. So, this could be by having a guest speaker, a film night, a presentation of the [Heading for Extinction talk](#), a [Welcome Meeting](#), or a climate cafe.

It is important to have an **accessible venue** where people feel safe. It also makes your meetings feel more friendly if you provide refreshments. A prepared list of simple jobs people can undertake afterwards will help new members feel engaged with the group. Some meetings may be more focused on existing supporters, such as a meeting to decide the next six months' worth of activities.

## Meeting Culture

Whether you have an online or in-person meeting, XR has a unique meeting culture that has roots in our Self-Organising System and our vision for accessible, inclusive, and functional workspaces. It can feel very different from other work cultures, but once you are used to it we hope you will value and appreciate it.

Most of our meetings will include the following:

- Check-ins, where we introduce ourselves and share how we are doing.

- A regenerative culture reminder: we remind ourselves to be kind to one another, pay attention to our feelings and not to take on too many tasks.
- A facilitator: a person whose job is to make sure everyone is heard and that we stay on task.
- A minute taker: a person who writes down the key things mentioned in the meeting, including any action points (tasks that people agree to take on).
- Check-outs: we briefly say how we feel the meeting went or what we are each looking forward to today.

## Hand Signals

We use hand signals in our meetings to avoid talking over one another. These are the most common ones:



### **I would like to speak**

*The facilitator will invite you to speak next or add you to the queue of people waiting to speak*



### **I have a direct point**

*Your point has direct and significant relevance to the current point being made. The facilitator will invite you to speak next*



### **I agree**

*Wavy hands indicate that you agree with the current point.*



### **I don't agree**

*Downward wavy hands indicate that you don't agree with the current point.*



### **Clarification**

*You need clarification about a phrase, term, idea etc. The facilitator will address this asap.*



### **Technical Point**

*A suggestion to help the meeting flow better e.g. you can't hear the speaker or the speaker is giving out of date information*

By following these ways of meeting, it means that no matter which part of XR you are in, if you go to another space you will know what is happening and how to participate.

## Meeting Structure

### Standing Items

#### Attendees list

A list of who was at the meeting is important for managing accountability for decision-making, and if a name is not recorded, there is no evidence that they were at the meeting. Some people may want to use pseudonyms on documents.

## Assign a facilitator and minute-taker

A facilitator holds the meeting, upholds any agreements made, and manages time and contribution.

A minute-taker keeps an accurate record of what happened in the meeting, including what was decided and what tasks need to be done.

We recommend both roles be filled by trained people who hold no other roles in your group.

## Check-ins

Check-ins are a core part of XR's vision of regenerative cultures. They help both the facilitator and those attending the meeting to understand where each other is coming from in terms of feelings, as well as being clear on how to address each other respectfully.

Be mindful that check-ins are there to learn how people want to be addressed, and to see how they are feeling before starting work. It is important to structure check-ins, especially with a time limit, as check-ins can easily take over a meeting.

Check-ins should not be used for updates on any work or any feedback. It's purely a short personal update, and the facilitator can give some guidance on how to do it - which can be varied each meeting.

Example check-ins:

- "Please check in by saying your name, your pronoun preference, naming one "feeling word" you are with today (Happy/sad etc), and name a non-human animal you relate to. Could you do that in about 20 seconds, then choose someone to pass on to!"
- "Please check in by saying your name, role in this meeting, something fun you've done today or recently. Then choose someone to pass on to!"

## Regenerative cultures reminder

"We are transitioning towards (regenerative) cultures where we respect and listen and do not interrupt. We deal with conflict when it arises using short feedback loops. We cultivate healthy boundaries by slowing down our Yes and returning tasks we are unable to complete and we do not blame and shame. These are cultures built on care and support, where we arrive on time for commitments. We are all crew."

This is a very standard 'regen' reminder, but could also choose to share a short poem or look through this [longer list of suggested options](#).

## Group agreement

Now may be a good time to read out (or point out if it is displayed), your [Group Agreement](#).

## Purpose of the meeting

It is helpful for everyone to be clear as to what the meeting is about so that everyone knows what to expect and to keep the meeting on track. As a Local Group, your meeting will likely be your regular weekly/fortnightly/monthly meeting. At times you may organise a meeting about a specific issue, action or event.

## Action point review

Action Points from past meetings are reviewed. This should be brief and is not a discussion. This should be an open opportunity for people to ask for help, or hand back tasks they are no longer able to complete.

## Updates

For example there could be updates from the following:

- Anyone who has something to bring up from a sub-circle or working group that is relevant.
- The **External Coordinator** of your group if they have attended a Regional or National meeting.
- Anyone who has attended a relevant non-XR meeting or event.

Each update should be concise. They should not be discussions, but if they need to be talked through they should be added as items to the agenda.

# The Agenda

By now you may have taken up a large chunk of the meeting already! So depending on how long the meeting is planned for, the rest of the agenda should fit comfortably and not feel rushed. You may want to 'roll-over' items to the next meeting if time needs to be spent on more urgent items.

## Build and finalise the agenda

There are different ways to compile an agenda. Typically it would be through the **Internal Coordinator** (the person who makes sure the team is healthy and achieving its mandate) before the meeting, but it could also be done in the meeting by asking everyone if they have anything to add.

To help direct an agenda item, consider what you need from the attendees:

- Report - Share information or give updates

- Explore - A discussion, time to generate ideas
- Decision - Make a decision

Also, when framing an agenda item, consider:

- What are you bringing?
- Why are you bringing it?
- What do you need from this meeting?

## Deliver the agenda

The **facilitator** will then deliver the agenda. Items should be time-limited, and by the end of the item there will usually be a list of next steps; perhaps the item needs to come back to a future meeting, or there will be a list of tasks that need to be allocated and completed- these are known as Action Points.

## Action points

The **minute-taker** should record all the Action Points from the meeting, including what is to be done, who is doing it, and when it is to be done.

These action points can be noted in bold in the minutes- e.g

**AP Greta - make school strike placard**

## End the Meeting

The last 10 minutes of the meeting should be used to bring it to a close.

## Set the date of the next meeting

If your meeting is regular, take time to remind people when the next one is.

If the meeting is irregular, take time to set a date for the next meeting before everyone leaves.

Some groups also use this time to find volunteers to be the facilitator and minute taker for the next meeting.

## Check-outs

Like check-ins and the regenerative cultures reminder, check-outs and the vision reminder are core parts of XR's commitment to creating regenerative work environments.

Run check-outs as you would a check-in.

## Vision Reminder (Solemn Intention Statement)



“Let us take a moment to consider why we are here. Let’s recall our love for the whole of humanity, in all corners of the world. Let’s remember our love for this beautiful planet that feeds, nourishes and sustains all life. Let’s recollect our sincere desire to protect all this, for now, and for generations to come. As we act today/this week, may we find the courage to bring this sense of peace and appreciation to everyone we encounter, to every word we speak, and to every action we make. In this emergency. Together. Rooted in love. We are all we need.”

## Online Meetings

Online options are great for non-local meetings. Many of our online meetings use Zoom, but you don't need an account to join a meeting. If you have not used zoom before, have a look at our page on [Zoom meetings](#)

# Making Decisions

## How can we make decisions in a self-organising system?

There are several different ways we make decisions in XR, and you will likely come across each of these fairly quickly.

### Role Mandated Decisions

"Does this need to be decided by the group?"

Many of the decisions you come across do not need to take up time in a meeting. The first thing to consider would be if anyone has a mandate for the decisions that need to be made. It may be that you can make that choice without consulting the team because you have the responsibility (or mandate) for that thing. Or it may be that someone else does, in which case you should ask them what should be done.

### Temperature Checks

"Is this a simple, non-controversial group decision?"

The question is usually phrased as "How do you feel about..." and then the group displays their enthusiasm by either raising their hands (positive) or lowering them (negative). A neutral response hovers around the middle.

These are often used to gauge how controversial something may be. If everyone is hands-up happy then there is no need to dive deeper into a longer process. But if some people have concerns, then it's advisable to move to the Integrative Decision Process or something similar.

### Integrative Decision Making

Is this a more complex decision?

The nature of what we do in XR means we are constantly making difficult decisions. There are often going to be strong divergences of opinion. Using consensus (everyone agreeing) means long meetings and slow decisions.

For this level of decision making use **consent**, rather than consensus. This speeds up the process, reduces the likelihood of conflict and encourages ideas and innovation. It is very important for meeting attendees to understand this process.

**There are three positions** someone can take within this process:

**I LIKE THIS IDEA** - I'm happy to agree to the proposal.

**I CAN LIVE WITH THIS IDEA** - I don't like the idea but its not going to stop me doing my work. It's "Good enough for now" and "Safe enough to try".

**I OBJECT TO THIS IDEA** - Carrying out this proposal would interfere with me being able to do my work. It's not safe enough to try.

The object is to find a solution that everyone thinks is '**safe enough to try**'. The process follows these steps:

1. **Stating Proposal** - Whoever is making the suggestion brings their proposal to the group.
2. **Clarifications Round** - Everyone in the meeting is then asked, in turn, if they need anything clarified to fully understand what is being proposed.
3. **Reactions Round** - Everyone then has a chance to react to the proposal, what they think of it, how it may affect their work, any foreseeable problems etc.
4. **Chance to Amend Proposal** - The person who brought the proposal has a chance to make any changes to it, any additions or changes to phrasing etc. They can also choose to withdraw the proposal or bring it back in another meeting.
5. **Objections Round** - Everyone in the meeting is then asked if they approve or object to the proposal. Objections must come from the role the individual is holding (not a personal view) and they must be concrete objections, either that the proposal will cause harm to the movement or it will stop existing work from being done. [Read more about testing objections.](#)

If there are no objections to a proposal, it is passed and enacted immediately. However, if someone raises an objection to the proposal, the group comes together to try to integrate that objection.



6. **Integrating Objections** - The objection is stated for the group and the floor is opened to suggestions on how this objection can be integrated into the original proposal. It may be that the wording needs to be changed or that the scope needs to be limited in some way.

The outcome of this process will either be the original or an amended proposal passed by the group or, if the facilitator or person bringing the proposal chooses, it can be taken away to be worked on between meetings and brought back at a later date.

## Your Power Within the System

We have created our Self-Organising System with the intention that every rebel has a voice. On an individual level, there are several things that you can do within the system.

- Any rebel can bring a proposal to their team.
- Any rebel can ask to bring a proposal to another team - by contacting the Internal Coordinator.
- Any rebel can ask for an election for a role - if they wish to step back or feel like someone isn't fulfilling their mandate.
- Any rebel can give back Action Points if they are unable to complete them.
- Any rebel can refuse to take on anything new and give back things they are struggling to fulfil.

# Mandates and Working Groups

## Interacting Between Teams

Our '**SOS**' structure is a series of circles (teams) within circles (wider teams). Each circle contains the role of **External Coordinator** who attends the meeting of the **wider circle**. (and the EC of that circle will do the same, and in this way information is passed through the system.)

This applies to your Local Group External Coordinator (EC) attending Nation/Region meetings. But this also applies if you have a large local group and you want to create 'sub-circles' that feed in to your regular group meetings.

External Coordinators also feed FROM the wider circle back into your team.

**Note:** This should not be the sole interaction between teams. It is recommended if you are working on something that overlaps or sits close to a team many circles from you, that you reach out to them directly. Your External Coordinator should be able to find their contact details.

## Mandates

We use mandates to distribute power through the movement. They help us manage without managers, and make our organisation transparent and accessible, with no mysterious 'black boxes'.

Simply put, a mandate outlines your purpose within the system, what is expected of you and what you are responsible for.

Lets say your group wants to organise a fundraising disco. You'll need someone (or a small team), to organise each element of the event. Different people can be given the responsibility to organise the venue, the food, the music, and the advertising. Each of those people has an informal 'mandate' to make plans in their area- they don't need to check every decision with the rest of the group.

But sometimes these responsibilities overlap, and it's important that people communicate effectively with each other. For example, if the venue team arranged a venue that closed at 9pm,

but the music team had booked a DJ from 7-11pm, there would be a tension between their decisions. That's why its important to communicate your actions with the rest of the team, and check there is no harm in them, even though you're not having to get permission to do everything (like you might have to in a more heirachical organisation).

## Learn more

If you want to [learn more about XR's Self-Organising System](#), then you can attend regular online training on this or request specific SOS training for Local Groups.

# Regenerative Cultures

## Reminders / Intention

## Statements

Link to [original doc](#)

### **Regenerative Cultures Reminders**

This collection of intention statements / regenerative reminders can be helpful for the start or end of sessions. If you have a contribution, please contact the Rebel Toolkit team via their Mattermost [Reception](#) or email [LGsupport@extinctionrebellion.uk](mailto:LGsupport@extinctionrebellion.uk)

Choose an invitation: pause, breathe, close eyes/lower gaze and share:

The Vision Reminder (also known as the Solemn Intention Statement), is often read out at the end of an XR meeting/event.

“Let us take a moment to consider why we are here. Let’s recall our love for the whole of humanity, in all corners of the world. Let’s remember our love for this beautiful planet that feeds, nourishes and sustains all life. Let’s recollect our sincere desire to protect all this, for now, and for generations to come. As we act today/this week, may we find the courage to bring this sense of peace and appreciation to every being we encounter, to every word we speak, and to every action we make. In this emergency. Together. Rooted in love. We are all we need.”

### **1) Transitioning towards regenerative cultures**

We are transitioning towards regenerative cultures. These are cultures of respect and listening, in which people deal with conflicts when they arise, using short feedback loops to talk about disagreements and issues without blaming and shaming. They are cultures in which we cultivate healthy boundaries by slowing down our yes’ and returning tasks when we are unable to follow through. They are healthy resilient cultures built on care and support, where people arrive on time for commitments. We are all crew.

### **2) Online sessions**

Let us take a moment to be present with each other, despite the physical distance we have to maintain. Let's remember that we are transitioning to regenerative cultures. These are cultures of respect, understanding, inclusivity and listening where we arrive on time for commitments, slow down our yes, return tasks we cannot complete, where we do not blame and shame. We deal with issues and conflicts as they arise, using short feedback loops to talk about disagreements and issues without blaming and shaming. These are also cultures where we understand and celebrate that we are all deeply connected to the natural systems that sustain us, and that what affects us in one time and place will come to affect all of us. We are a part of nature, a part of each other, never apart. Let us embrace this time of isolation and reflection as an opportunity to revisit our principles and values. Let's use the time and space as a cocoon in which we transform, ready to continue our rebellion in new beautiful and creative ways when we reemerge. We are all crew.

### **3) You can't be neutral on a moving train**

You can't be neutral on a moving train...

The world is already moving in certain directions – many of them are horrifying.

Children are going hungry, people are dying in wars.

To be neutral in such a situation is to collaborate with what is going on. We will not collaborate and choose instead to rebel.

Howard Zinn (1997)

### **4) Arundhati Roy**

“Our strategy should be not only to confront empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness – and our ability to tell our own stories. Stories that are different from the ones we're being brainwashed to believe.

The corporate revolution will collapse if we refuse to buy what they are selling – their ideas, their version of history, their wars, their weapons, their notion of inevitability.

Remember this: We are many, and they are few. They need us more than we need them.

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.” — Arundhati Roy

### **5) We come from a world which makes us weary**

If you would like to close your eyes or lower your gaze..... We come from a world which makes us weary. And we have volunteered to be wearier. We know that by fighting for this planet we will be poorer, more tired, and more stressed than the versions of ourselves who did not do this. Thank you all. We have put ourselves at risk for others. But whilst we fight for a different world, let us each take a moment now to decide a way that we will enjoy a glimpse of that world. Decide now how you might take a day, or an afternoon, or even an hour. To enjoy the qualitative over the quantitative, the odd over the one-size-fits-all, the joyful over the productive, the community over

the individualist. In some small way which is meaningful to you, commit to it, to keep you going, through all the amazing work that you do.

## **6) XR Youth grounding**

We have the right to self sooth, To take care of ourselves throughout the day,

We have the right to self care, To make our lives ones in which we can find enjoyment,

We have the right to community care, To be a part of networks who look after one another,

We have the right to structural change, To live lives in which we are not exploited and are not required to exploit others

We have the right to a planet all life is able to thrive on

Let us make this meeting one which is understanding of the need for each of these things,

That they look different to each to us,

That we don't always get it right,

And that we need each other to make it happen.

## **7) Think from the gut**

Think from the gut

Follow from the heart

Act with the brain

Do what's right for the self

The planet will not thank you for worrying about it, unless the self is at peace.

XR is an intra capitalist organisation.

It needs warriors at peace within, not burnt out individuals. Nothing is worth that.

Especially not extinction.

It's not going away. Step back: take time to observe the self especially when quiet!

Now is all you have. Get peace now and the future will take care of itself.

And enjoy lots of clever, interesting books on how.

## 8) A poem by Becky Hemsley

"She sat at the back and they said she was shy.  
She led from the front and they hated her pride.  
They asked her advice and then questioned her guidance.  
They branded her loud, then were shocked by her silence.

When she shared no ambition they said it was sad.  
So she told them her dreams and they said she was mad.  
They told her they'd listen, then covered their ears,  
And gave her a hug while they laughed at her fears,

And she listened to all of it thinking she should,  
Be the girl they told her to be best as she could,  
But one day she asked what was best for herself,  
Instead of trying to please everyone else.

So she walked to the forest and stood with the trees,  
She heard the wind whisper and dance with the leaves.  
She spoke to the willow, the elm and the pine,  
And she told them what she'd been told time after time.

She told them she felt she was never enough,  
She was either too little or far far too much,  
Too loud or too quiet, too fierce or too weak,  
Too wise or too foolish, too bold or too meek,

Then she found a small clearing surrounded by firs,  
And she stopped...and she heard what the trees said to her.  
And she sat there for hours not wanting to leave. For the forest said nothing, it just let her  
breathe."

Becky Hemsley

## 9) Quick Quotes

"Go where the energy is." – Kate Rayworth

"Let this radicalise you, rather than lead you to despair" - Mariame Kaba

"In our struggle for freedom, truth is the only weapon we possess." – Dalai Lama

"Enthusiasm is common. Endurance is rare"- Angela Duckworth

"Turn your face to the sun and the shadows fall behind you". – Maori proverb

“Take into account that great love and great achievements involve great risk.” — Dalai Lama

“Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying 'I will try again tomorrow.'” - Mary Anne Radmacher

‘We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers’ – Bayard Rustin

“Compassion is the radicalism of our time.” — Dalai Lama

“What surprises me most is “Man”, because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future that he doesn't enjoy the present; The result being he doesn't live in the present or the future; He lives as if he's never going to die, and then he dies having never really lived.” – Dalai Lama

“Whether one is rich or poor, educated or illiterate, religious or non-believing, man or woman, black, white, or brown, we are all the same. Physically, emotionally, and mentally, we are all equal. We all share basic needs for food, shelter, safety, and love. We all aspire to happiness and we all shun suffering. Each of us has hopes, worries, fears, and dreams. Each of us wants the best for our family and loved ones. We all experience pain when we suffer loss and joy when we achieve what we seek. On this fundamental level, religion, ethnicity, culture, and language make no difference.” – Dalai Lama

## **10) Rediscovering Our Belonging (Joanna Macy).**

Being fully present to fear, to gratitude, to all that is, we rediscover that we belong. We can develop a practice of mutual belonging and find ways to remember, celebrate, and affirm this deep knowing of our inter-existence. We belong to each other.

We belong to the living body of Earth and nothing can ever separate us. We are already home. The practice of mutual belonging is the medicine for the sickness of the self-isolated ego and will accompany us through the hard times upon us.

The field of belonging is rooted in the living body of Earth, in the flows of time and relationship that form our bodies and communities, our land and climate.

## **11) We hear history calling**

“We hear history calling to us from the future. We catch glimpses of a new world of love, respect and regeneration, where we have restored the intricate web of all life.

It's a future that's inside us all – located in the fierce love we carry for our children, in our urge to help a stranger in distress, in our wish to forgive, even when that seems too much to ask. And so we rebel for this, calling in joy, creativity and beauty.

We rise in the name of truth and withdraw our consent for ecocide, oppression and patriarchy.

We rise up for a world where power is shared for regeneration, repair and reconciliation.



We rise for love in its ultimate wisdom.

Our vision stretches beyond our own lifespan, to a horizon dedicated to future generations and the restoration of our planet's integrity."

## **12) Anti-Regen Reminder?**

We refuse to wait any longer

We have been chosen by time

When we see injustice

We must speak out

There is no room for silence

When we feel defeated

We must stand tall

There is no time for despair

No place for self-pity

No time to grieve

No time to rest

When confronted

We must challenge

We must push as hard as they push

And then push harder

When we feel anger

**ACT!**

Act with audacity

Relentless audacity

We are a movement

An unstoppable movement

The need for protest will never end

Either we all live in a decent world or nobody does!

When the history of our time is written

We will be the heroes

### **13) From Joanna Macy**

Out of this darkness, a new world can arise, not to be constructed by our minds so much as to emerge from our dreams. Even though we cannot see clearly how it's going to turn out, we are still called to let the future into our imagination. We will never be able to build what we have not first cherished in our hearts."

"The biggest gift you can give is to be absolutely present, and when you're worrying about whether you're hopeful or hopeless or pessimistic or optimistic, who cares? The main thing is that you're showing up, that you're here and that you're finding ever more capacity to love this world because it will not be healed without that. That is what is going to unleash our intelligence and our ingenuity and our solidarity for the healing of our world."

### **14) Active Hope is not wishful thinking**

"Active Hope is not wishful thinking.

Active Hope is not waiting to be rescued . . . .by some saviour.

Active Hope is waking up to the beauty of life on whose behalf we can act.

We belong to this world.

The web of life is calling us forth at this time.

We've come a long way and are here to play our part.

With Active Hope we realise that there are adventures in store, strengths to discover, and comrades to link arms with.

Active Hope is a readiness to discover the strengths in ourselves and in others; a readiness to discover the reasons for hope and the occasions for love.

A readiness to discover the size and strength of our hearts, our quickness of mind, our steadiness of purpose, our own authority, our love for life, the liveliness of our curiosity, the unsuspected deep well of patience and diligence, the keenness of our senses, and our capacity to lead.

None of these can be discovered in an armchair or without risk."

## 15) The Three Beings

### The Three Beings

"We call first on the beings of the past: Be with us now, all you who have gone before. You, our ancestors and teachers, who walked and loved and faithfully tended this Earth, be present to us now so that we may carry on the legacy you bequeathed us. Aloud and silently in our hearts, we say your names and see your faces...

"We call also on the beings of the present: All you with whom we live and work on this endangered planet, all you with whom we share this brink of time, be with us now. Fellow humans and brothers and sisters of other species, help us open to our collective will and wisdom. Aloud and silently we say your names and picture your faces...

"Lastly we call on the beings of the future: All you who will come after us on this Earth, be with us now. All you who are waiting to be born in the ages to come, it is for your sakes too that we work to heal our world. We cannot picture your faces or say your names — you have none yet — but we feel the reality of your claim on life. It helps us to be faithful in the task that must be done, so that there will be for you, as there was for our ancestors: blue sky, fruitful land, clear waters."

— World as Lover, World as Self

## 16) Roots by Steve Turner

It's a quiet job being a root. No one hugs you, climbs you or praises your intricate ways. Roots work in the dark. And it's hard work tunnelling, travelling, finding nutrition. But when the storms come it's our fingers which cling. When the drought comes it's our lips that drink. Without us, the ground would crumble. Without us life would fall. Everyone needs roots.

## 17) Standing on a precipice

Facing the reality that we're standing on a precipice right now, as a species and as a whole planet, is sobering, to say the least. But facing what is real opens the heart to grief, which somehow opens the heart to love even more deeply... When you reconnect with the alive world in a more compassionate way, and when you realise that the whole world is a living system that can only thrive when death makes room for new life, you may feel a calm settle inside you. You may find yourself with the energy that comes from love to embrace the whole story including the necessary emptiness and loss... When we look toward what has been lost with the climate crisis or other ecological damage that our species has inflicted, we do still need to strive toward repair, but the cure is in our own mentality. The mentality that love really is as strong as death compels us to regard those of us who remain - forests, polar bears, wilderness, people - with fierce love, looking toward how we can all live our highest quality of life together as a beloved community, no matter what. We don't need to minimise or overlook the pain and tragedy we encounter as we live in this time of interwoven crises. Eventually, when we recognise that the pain is directly connected with our love, we can embrace it. We can move into actions of restoration that are firmly planted in love. From "Church of the Wild: How Nature invites Us into the Sacred" Broadleaf Books 2021

## **18) The Peace of Wild Things**

By Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

## **19) The emancipation of the proletariat**

"The emancipation of the proletariat is not a labour of small account and of little people; only they who can keep their heart strong and their will as sharp as a sword when the general disillusionment is at its worst can be regarded as fighters for the working class or called revolutionaries."

(Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Political Writings 1910-20, p.349)

## **20) Thankful to our Mother, the Earth**

"We are thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us everything that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk upon her. It gives us joy that she still continues to care for us, just as she has from the beginning of time. To our Mother, we send thanksgiving, love and respect.

## **20a) Now our minds are one**

Intention Setting Statement.

At a foundational level, regeneration requires us to RESIST. We are in resistance.

We ARE the resistance.

Resistance against a failing government.

Resistance against corporate greed.

Resistance against a system that is killing us.

In resistance we need to reframe how to fully show up in our humanity, at this, the most critical point in human history.

We refuse to wait any longer.

We have been chosen by time.

And we must do what is necessary.

The task at hand, our great calling is to ACT.

When we feel anger,

ACT.

When we feel love,

ACT.

When we are alone,

ACT.

We cannot treat social injustices and ecological crises as separate. When we see injustice,  
We must speak out,  
There is no room for silence.

The need for protest will never end.  
Either we all live in a decent world or nobody does!

When we feel defeated We must stand tall When confronted We must challenge We must push as  
hard as they push And then push harder

There is no time to waste on projects that make us feel good but lack deeper impact.  
There is no time for despair or distraction.  
There is no time for infighting or division.  
There is no time for navel gazing, self pity and ego.

There is no time...  
There is. NO. TIME.  
All we have is now!

## **21) The Seasons**

May you all enjoy the beautiful colours of spring, the fragrant Summer breeze and glowing sun, the gold and crimson leaves of autumn, and the cool, beautiful light of winter. May you remember also that every being with whom we share this beautiful planet is also a precious gem. May you enjoy everyone around you and not wait until it is too late, until everything is nothing more than a dream. Sister Chân Không (Cao Ngọc Phương)

## **22) XR Intention**

"If you would like to close your eyes or lower your gaze.  
Let us take a moment to consider why we are here. We are all here out of a sincere love for the Earth, who is still sustaining us and nourishing us after all the hurt that has been inflicted on her. Even as she burns, she is still feeding us. Sometimes this feels like too much to bear. We are all here because something deep inside each of us compels us to action. Call it conscience or courage, maybe even fear, or just love. We are all propelled by the same wish to protect our Mother and all our fellow beings who she gives life. Today, let's take a little extra time to show love and compassion to ourselves and to each other as we walk this difficult path together. Choose the generous word over the snarky one, choose the act of self care over the act of self criticism. Remember that, different as we all are, we are all joined in the most important work that has ever been. Let's take a moment to cherish each other. We are XR, and you are us."

## **23) Blaming Never Helps**

Blaming Never Helps (Thich Nhat Hanh) When you plant a lettuce, if it doesn't grow well, you don't blame the lettuce. You look into the reasons it is not doing well. It may need more nutrients, more

water or less sun. You never blame the lettuce. Yet if we have problems with our friends or our family, we blame the other person. But if we know how to take care of them, they will grow well, like the lettuce.

Blaming has no positive effect at all, nor does trying to persuade using reason and arguments. That is my experience. No blame, no reasoning, no arguments, just understanding. If you understand, and you show that you understand, you can love, and the situation will change.

One day in Paris, I had a lecture about not blaming the lettuce. After the talk, I was doing walking meditation by myself and when I turned the corner of the building, I overheard an eight year old girl telling her mother, "Mommy remember to water me. I am your lettuce." I was so pleased that she had understood my point completely. The I heard her mother reply, "Yes my daughter, and I am your lettuce also. So please don't forget to water me too." Mother and daughter practising together, it was very beautiful.

## **24) The Fragrance of the I am She**

The Fragrance of the I am She

When the Fragrance of the I am She is upon the Wind  
The Bee of the Heart Finds the Flower of it's  
choice And nestles there, caring for no other thing

Kabir - 17th Century Sufi

## **25) Starhawk from The Earth Path**

"We give thanks for all those who are moved, in their lives, to heal and protect the earth, in small ways and large. Blessings on the composters, the gardeners, the breeders of worms and mushrooms, the soil builders, those who cleanse the waters and purify the air, all those who clean up the messes others have made. "Blessings on those who defend trees and who plant trees, who guard the forests and who renew the forests. Blessings on those who heal the grasslands and renew the streams, on those who prevent erosion, who restore the salmon and the fisheries, who guard the healing herbs and who know the lore of the wild plants. "Blessings on those who heal the cities and bring them alive again with excitement and creativity and love. Gratitude and blessings to all who stand against greed, who risk themselves, to those who have bled and been wounded, and to those who have given their lives in service of the earth. "May all the healers of the earth find their own healing. May they be fueled by passionate love for the earth. May they know their fear but not be stopped by fear. May they feel their anger and yet not be ruled by rage. May they honor their grief but not be paralyzed by sorrow. May they transform fear, rage, and grief into compassion and the inspiration to act in service of what they love. "May they find the help, the resources, the courage, the luck, the strength, the love, the health, the joy that they need to do the work. May they all be on the right place, at the right time, in the right way. "May they bring alive a great awakening, open a listening ear to hear the earth's voice, transform imbalance to balance, hate and greed to love. Blessed be the healers of the earth."

~Starhawk from The Earth Path

## **26) Just show up, as you are**

"Just show up, as you are. You don't have to look or feel great. You don't have to be prepared for each challenge or know all the hows of every situation. You don't have to be fearless, or have all the answers, or be 100% ready. Nobody is any of those things. Nobody ever was. It's not about being perfect, at all. You just have to show up, as you are, despite all the objections and insecurities in your mind, despite each and every fear that threatens to hold you back, despite the limitations and criticisms others will place in you. To hell with it all. This is your life, your journey, your adventure, and all it's asking is to show up for it, as you are. That's enough, That's more than enough. That's everything."

Unknown of Facebook

## **27) All we can do in a crisis is try**

The human spirit is an unwavering force that shines brightest in the face of adversity.

When crisis strikes, it is our innate resilience that propels us forward.

Despite the overwhelming challenges that may surround us, we find the strength within ourselves to persevere and adapt.

It's in these moments that we discover the extent of our capabilities, fueled by an unyielding determination to overcome.

Though the road ahead may seem uncertain, the human spirit reminds us that all we can do is try. In the midst of chaos, we rise above, forging connections, offering support, and demonstrating the remarkable power of our collective will to endure and emerge stronger on the other side.

Ned Evans

## **28) Hold onto Hope**

Amidst the challenges of the climate and ecological crisis, let's hold onto hope. Humanity has a remarkable history of overcoming adversity and finding solutions. By working together, embracing innovation, and fostering a deep connection with nature, we can forge a path toward a more harmonious and sustainable world. Every step we take today, no matter how small, brings us closer to a future where nature thrives and generations to come will be grateful for our unwavering determination.

Ned Evans

## **29) Gratitude**

Looking into mental health and wellness this week, I found out more about Gratitude as a practice. I found out that by expressing Gratitude, it allows us to recognise something which we shouldn't take for granted. (It helps us build resilience and not feel bad when something is taken from us, as it wasn't ours by right.) I also found out that Gratitude is best done in detail, really saying what I'm grateful for, so not just "the flowers, my latest book, the sunset ...".

So here is what I'm grateful for today: I'm grateful for the space we make when we come together in XR communities. I'm grateful for the way we build and make bridges in our work, carrying out a

purpose, and strengthening our bonds. I'm grateful that working together helps me overcome "I might do this wrong, I'm afraid to start". I'm grateful for the love and respect I am encouraged to show, and that I receive.

Mariah Huff

### **30) Fear Nothing**

You're a ghost driving a meat-coated skeleton made from stardust, riding a rock, hurtling through space.

Fear Nothing

Boaty Jim

### **31) Pessimistic or Optimistic**

When asked if I am pessimistic or optimistic about the future, my answer is always the same: If you look at the science about what is happening on earth and aren't pessimistic, you don't understand data. But if you meet the people who are working to restore this earth and the lives of the poor, and you aren't optimistic, you haven't got a pulse. What I see everywhere in the world are ordinary people willing to confront despair, power, and incalculable odds in order to restore some semblance of grace, justice, and beauty to this world.

Paul Hawken

### **32) A love like that...lights the whole sky (poem by Hafiz)**

Even after all this time  
The sun never says to the earth,  
"You owe Me."  
Look what happens with  
A love like that,  
It lights the Whole Sky.

### **33) Why Rebel?**

The human conscience needs to be corroborate with the natural world and aligned to it's ethic, furthering a politics of kindness. But a political stance that is the opposite to kindness is on the rise: libertarian fascism with it's triumphal brutality; it's racism and misogyny; the politics that loathes the living world.

Here then, the causes for rebellion: survival and awe; beauty and necessity; grace and grief. There is an uprising of life in rebellion for life, those who are grief struck and furious for the tawny ones, the creatures of feather and fur, demanding that media and governments tell the truth about the emergency we are in, fighting for life in this shared wild home. Only when it is dark enough can you see the stars, and they are lining up now to write rebellion across the skies. Why rebel? Because nature is not a hobby, it is the life on which we depend.



From the book Why Rebel by Jay Griffiths (that got Pickle into XR)

### **34) "Hope" is the thing with feathers**

"Hope" is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest -  
in the Gale - is heard -  
And sore must be the storm -  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -  
And on the strangest Sea -  
Yet - never - in Extremity, It asked a crumb - of me.

By Emily Dickinson

### **35) Justice as a verb**

Justice is:

- . . . the actions we take
- . . . the choices we make
- . . . the standards we hold ourselves to
- . . . the way we treat people
- . . . the things we care about
- . . . the difference we make for people.
- . . . the opportunities we accept (and turn down)
- . . . doing the right thing, right now.

By reclaiming justice as something that we do, instead of something done to us, it becomes a stronghold in the storm, a guiding light out of the dark. By committing to doing the right thing, here and now, we create for ourselves an internal compass that guides and directs us home.

Ryan Holiday

### **36) Never doubt...**

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead, anthropologist, 1901-78

### **37) Regroup**

You lend your strength to justice.  
You hold in tears.  
You carry anxiety like an ember on your palm.  
The hungry seas of human affairs churn beneath your boat.  
Come ashore for a day.  
Touch something green.  
Let the whispering life in you speak to nature and find its voice renewed.

a poem by Jarod K Anderson

## **38) Rebellion**

I incite this meeting to rebellion

Emmeline Pankhurst, 1912

## **39) BEANNACHT / BLESSING**

On the day when the weight deadens on your shoulders and you stumble, may the clay dance to balance you. And when your eyes freeze behind the grey window and the ghost of loss gets into you, may a flock of colours, indigo, red, green and azure blue, come to awaken in you a meadow of delight. When the canvas frays in the currach of thought and a stain of ocean blackens beneath you, may there come across the waters a path of yellow moonlight to bring you safely home. May the nourishment of the earth be yours, may the clarity of light be yours, may the fluency of the ocean be yours, may the protection of the ancestors be yours. And so may a slow wind work these words of love around you, an invisible cloak to mind your life

By John O'Donohue

## **40) Anger**

Keep my anger from becoming meanness.  
Keep my sorrow from collapsing into self-pity.  
Keep my heart soft enough to keep breaking.  
Keep my anger turned towards justice, not cruelty.  
Remind me that all of this, every bit of it, is for love.  
Keep me fiercely kind.

~Laura Jean Truman

## **41) Hopeful in bad times**

To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic.  
It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, and kindness.  
What we choose to emphasise in this complex history will determine our lives.

If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something.

If we remember those times and places – and there are so many – where people have behaved magnificently. This gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.

And if we do act, in however a small way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvellous victory.

Howard Zinn

## **42) It is an important and popular fact...**

"It is an important and popular fact that things are not always what they seem. For instance, on the planet Earth, man had always assumed that he was more intelligent than dolphins because he had achieved so much, the wheel, New York, wars and so on - whilst all the dolphins had ever done was muck about in the water having a good time. But conversely, the dolphins had always believed that they were far more intelligent than man for precisely the same reasons."

Douglas Adams

## **43) Tomorrow**

So, the bad news is, we have to keep going tomorrow. The good news is, we'll keep going with you.

Bored Panda

## **44) Sit for Climate**

We sit in gratitude

For sudden rain on slate grey roofs  
Beating a heavy refrain Clouds swollen like a purple bruise  
Probing fingers bringing life

For ice-sheets, and oceans Maritime winds that sweep across continents  
Bringing dew to the parched mountain  
For the cloud in my teacup

For vast coral reefs  
And swirling blooms of plankton Blue whales, barnacles And the ancient song of the orca

For rainforests and a million unnamed species  
For the soil on my boots teeming with unseen life We sit in gratitude. For the whole damn lot

We sit to say, no more

To endless extraction To Seared landscapes and foul run-off  
To the cost born by the young in far off places And at home

To the bloated consumption of the few That leaves a child too drawn and weak To flick away flies  
From crusted cheeks

To the solitary farmer  
Standing sentinel over threatened fields  
Playing Canute  
To the tendrils of an angry emboldened sea

To denial, delay and debate That challenges the inferno we all see  
And feel and know in our bones The gathering storm

To the coloniser Whose boots still leave prints and shape the world With debt and dollars and cash  
crops of coffee  
We say, No more

And we sit in hope

Hope that change is coming, that there is still time That compassion, connection and reason will  
prevail And humanity can grow and learn And maybe then nature can flower and with it her  
children.

Carl XR Newark

## **45) Not - by Erin Hanson**

You are not your age, nor the size of clothes you wear,  
You are not a weight, or the color of your hair.  
You are not your name, or the dimples in your cheeks.  
You are all the books you read, and all the words you speak.  
You are your croaky morning voice, and the smiles you try to hide.  
You're the sweetness in your laughter, and every tear you've cried.  
You're the songs you sing so loudly when you know you're all alone.  
You're the places that you've been to, and the one that you call home.  
You're the things that you believe in, and the people whom you love.  
You're the photos in your bedroom, and the future you dream of.  
You're made of so much beauty, but it seems that you forgot  
When you decided that you were defined by all the things you're not.

## **46) It's not that life is short - it's that we waste a lot of it.**

We watch our money.  
We protect our property.

Yet we fritter away the most valuable of our resources, the most finite of them—the one thing we can never get back, that they aren't making any more of.  
The time that passes, belongs to death.  
It is gone forever, never to return.  
Once a dawn happens, it is gone to you forever.  
Once a day ends, it's done for you for all time.

Act accordingly.  
Protect your calendar accordingly.  
Say "No" accordingly.  
Do it now...before it's too late.  
Memento Mori

Seneca

## **47) Patience visited me**

Patience visited me  
And it reminded me  
That good things take time to come to fruition  
And grow slowly with stability

Peace visited me  
And it reminded me  
That I may remain calm through the storms of life  
Regardless of the chaos surrounding me

Hope visited me  
And it reminded me  
That better times lay ahead  
And it would always be there to guide and uplift me

Humility visited me  
And it reminded me  
That I may achieve it  
Not by trying to shrink myself and make myself less  
But by focusing on serving the world and uplifting those around me

Kindness visited me  
And it reminded me  
To be more gentle, forgiving and compassionate toward myself  
And those surrounding me

Confidence visited me  
And it reminded me  
To not conceal or suppress my gifts and talents

In order to make others feel more comfortable  
But to embrace what makes me me

Focus visited me  
And it reminded me  
That other people's insecurities and judgements about me  
Are not my problem  
And I should redirect my attention  
From others back to me

Freedom visited me  
And it reminded me  
That no one has control over my mindset, thoughts and wellbeing  
But me

And love visited me  
And it reminded me  
That I need not search for it in others  
As it lies within me.

✍️ Tahlia Hunter

## 48) Girls

there is power in being a girl  
but there's also sadness  
struggle  
anger  
uncertainty  
and most of the time it's hard to find strength in being a girl  
except in knowing that the sisterhood is rising,  
we're coming,  
a force to be reckoned with  
and nothing to stop us

there is power in being a girl  
and there is also inevitability

✍️ Kimi Sanchez

## 49) Chris Packham on Trump's re-election



**Chris Packham** ✓  
@ChrisGPackham

**Follow**

Things have just got a lot more difficult . Here's what I think . I had no control over what just happened . None . But I do have control over how I will react to it . And I am not going to give up on the beautiful and the good , the grip on my dreams just got tighter .



## 50) A quote from Thomas Merton

1915-1968 (American Trappist monk, writer, theologian, mystic, poet, social activist and scholar of comparative religion)

"There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most

common form, of its innate violence.

To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to violence.

The frenzy of our activism neutralizes our work for peace. It destroys our own inner capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of our own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful."

## **51) Keep Telling of Gaza**

To love the land,  
Even when its burnt.  
To love freedom,  
Even when it looks impossible.  
To love justice,  
Even when its far away.  
To love the old house,  
Even when its just rubble....  
Such is to practice love.  
In a loveless world, ...Daily.

From Poet Khawla Badwan

<https://sidhe-press.eu/books/keep-telling-of-gaza/>

## **52) Pessimism is for Lightweights**

Think of those that marched this road before  
And those that will march here in years to come  
The road in shadow and the road in the sun  
The road before us and the road all done  
History is watching us and what will we become

This road is all flags and milestones  
Immigrant blood and sweat and tears  
Built this city, built this country  
Made this road last all these years

This road is made of protest  
And those not permitted to vote  
And those that are still fighting to speak  
With a boot stamping on their throat

There is power and strength in optimism  
To have faith and to stay true to you  
Because if you can look in the mirror



And have belief and promise you  
Will share wonder in living things  
Beauty, dreams, books and art  
Love your neighbour and be kind  
And have an open heart

Then you're already winning at living  
You speak up, you show up and stand tall  
It's silence that is complicit  
It's apathy that hurts us all

Pessimism is for lightweights  
There is no straight white line  
It's the bumps and curves and obstacles  
That make this road yours and mine

Pessimism is for lightweights  
This road was never easy and straight  
And living is all about living alive and lively  
And love will conquer hate.

Salena Godden

## **53) Do it. Do what you can**

It could fail. It could go badly. It could be harder than you expect. It could.

But how will you know? How will you know until you start?

That's the one thing all fools do, Seneca said. They delay to start. They put it off. They let their fear or their laziness win. This is where two essential Stoic virtues come in: Courage and Discipline. We have to be brave enough to push past our fears. We have to be strong enough to will ourselves to do what needs to be done.

And perhaps this is also where a third virtue comes in: Justice. What you're doing might be important. It could make a real difference. It could fail...but it could also help people. And here you are putting it off. Here you are taking counsel of your fears, letting the resistance win. This is not without cost...to yourself and to others.

Don't be afraid to start. Don't put it off any longer.

Do it. Do what you can. Do good.

# Support in Case of Conflicts

If you're having difficulties or conflict in your local group, XR has a team that can support. But before conflict arises, it's a really good idea for Local Groups to have a Group Agreement, to develop healthy ways of working together. This is part of our Regenerative Culture.

## Group Agreements

### Why do we need group agreements?

Group agreements are about understanding each other's values around working, how you'd like to work together as a team and agreeing on things you can hold each other to.

Group agreements can be more or less formal, depending on what the group wants and needs. **The most effective group agreements are ones written by the group themselves, not just copied from a template.**

Remember, if your group agreement isn't working, you can change it!

### Brainstorming Your Agreements

What's important to you about the way this group works together? What agreements would you need to make this team a safe and respectful place for us to work in?

- It's important that everyone agrees with the elements of the agreement. If some people don't agree, you're setting the agreement up to be unsuccessful in its purpose.
- Try to make them practical.
- You may want to use the [XRUK Ways of Working document](#) to provide inspiration. But group agreements for local groups benefit from being simpler than this- that way everyone can remember the elements!
- Take for example "*it's alright to disagree*" - how would this work practically? You could add "*... by challenging what a person says, not criticising the person themselves.*"
- Another example is *Confidentiality*. This is also quite vague and you will need to discuss what people understand by it and what level of confidentiality they expect from the group.
- The agreement should be displayed at future meetings and explained to new members of the group.

### Template agreement 1 - from Regenerative Cultures Circle

- **Aim to make this a safe-enough space:** what may feel safe for one person may not be for another. We come with different experiences.
- **Time:** please be mindful of allowing everyone equal opportunity to be heard, and please share time keeping or keep time for others in break out rooms.
- **Respecting difference:** Please use 'I' statements, and hold curiosity about your reactions. Please listen and be heard openly, to learn and experience together.
- **Confidentiality:** everything shared in session remains here. The 'essence' can be shared with others, but not attached to individuals, you are free to share your own learning and reflections, as long as respect confidentiality
- **Invitational:** All aspects invitational. If you don't want to, or it feels difficult for you to participate in a session, you can opt out. If you need to take a break, or leave the call for a moment to self-regulate, stretch, journal, please send a message to one of the facilitators.
- **Emotions:** Please be aware we all respond differently to our own and others emotions, try not to take another's response personally.
- **Intersectional:** recognising that we come with different oppressions, and wounds from different experiences of marginalisation. Some of these may be aroused at different and sometimes unexpected times.

## Template agreement 2 - from XR Birmingham

- Respect everyone and their opinion
- Speak Slowly
- Consider Structural power in your group
- Use I statements
- Aim not offend or intimidate in language or behaviour
- W A I T (Why Am I Talking?) [this means thinking through why you're speaking before you come in, and don't use the groups time repeating what has already been said]
- Use hand signals when relevant
- Work towards openness and honesty
- Slow your yes, and say no
- Work on appreciation of yourself and others
- Be conscious of time
- Be relatively agenda Free [as in not coming into the meeting with your own agenda, not having a meeting with no agenda-d items]
- Take responsibility for how we work as a group
- Be willing to give and receive feedback in a non-judgemental way
- Confidentiality is important

## When you need more support

If conflict in your group has gone beyond what you can deal with yourselves and cannot be handled by your group agreement, your Regional or National team or the Transformative Conflicts Team may be able to help.

To find contact details for your Region or Nation, click on the large hourglass in your area on the [Local Groups Map](#).

To request support from Transformative Conflicts, email **[HealthyTeams@proton.me](mailto:HealthyTeams@proton.me)**