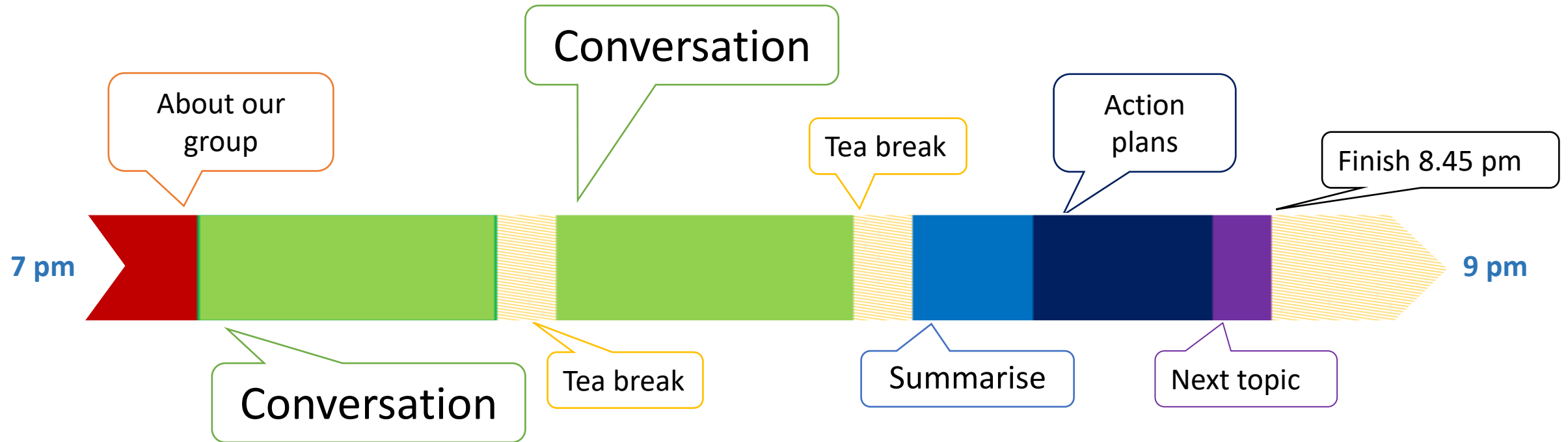


# Climate Conversations

Peer support for the climate crisis

# Our plan for today



# The principles of peer support

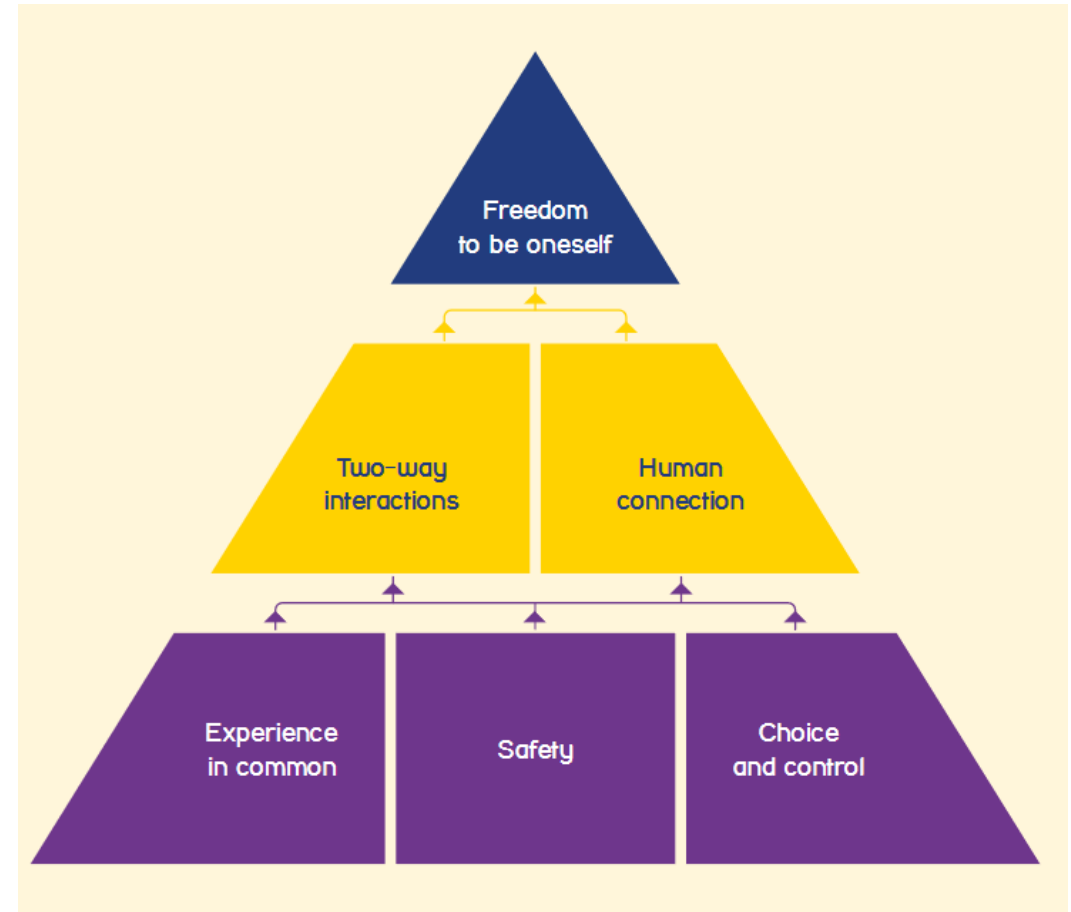
Peer support is a group of people who get together with a common concern to give and receive support.

## The foundations:

1. We're all concerned about what's happening to our ecosystem and climate change.
2. Together we create a safe environment to talk in.
3. You can go at our own pace and decide what's right for you.

## When these foundations are in place:

- We can begin to have real conversations and feel connected to others.
- Hopefully, you feel comfortable to be yourself.



# Creating a safe space to talk in

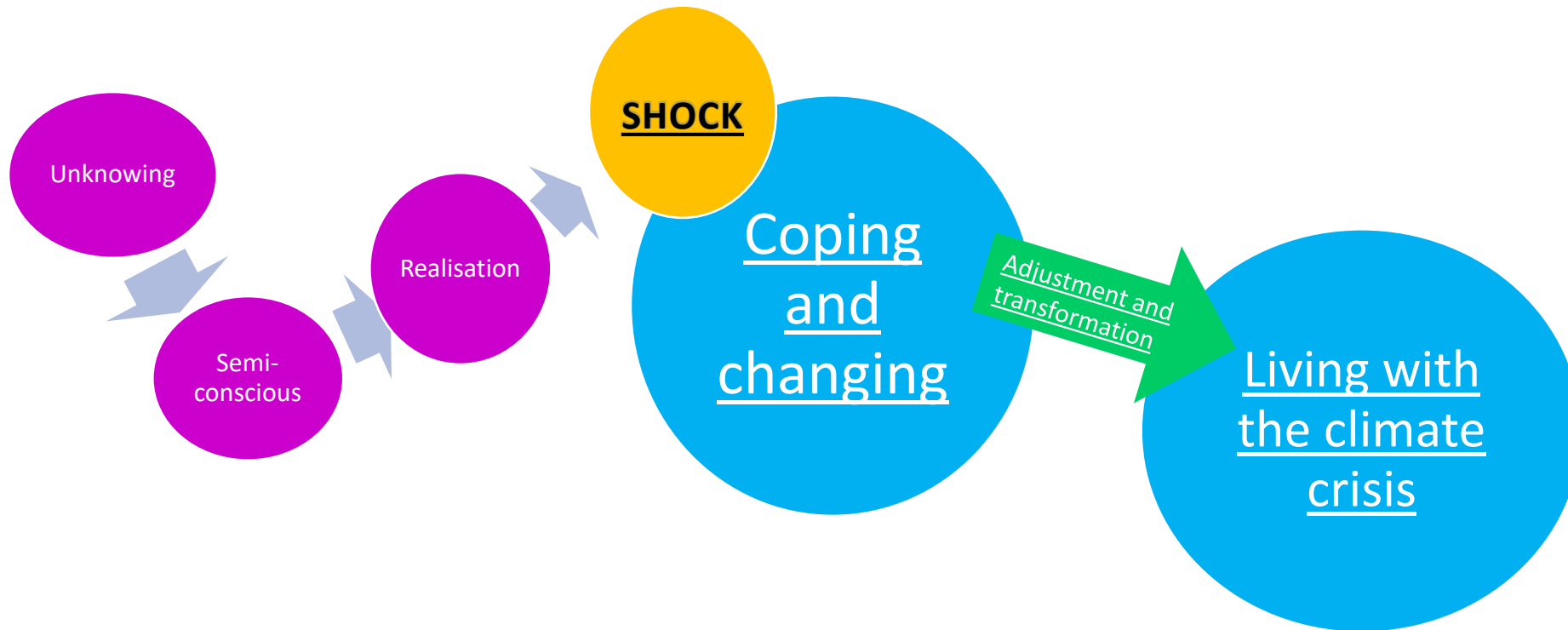
Talking about climate change can be difficult. To create physical and emotional safety we have a facilitator and a [plan](#) that structures our conversation. We also use this group agreement, so we know what to expect from each other and share responsibility:

## Group agreement:

1. We listen to understand each other.
2. We avoid giving advice - unless it's requested!
3. We keep each other's details and stories confidential.

Can you agree to do this? Is there anything else you need?

# The process of climate anxiety and grief



This research tells us:

- We're not the only ones struggling.
- It is possible to adapt and cope.
- There aren't any quick fixes.

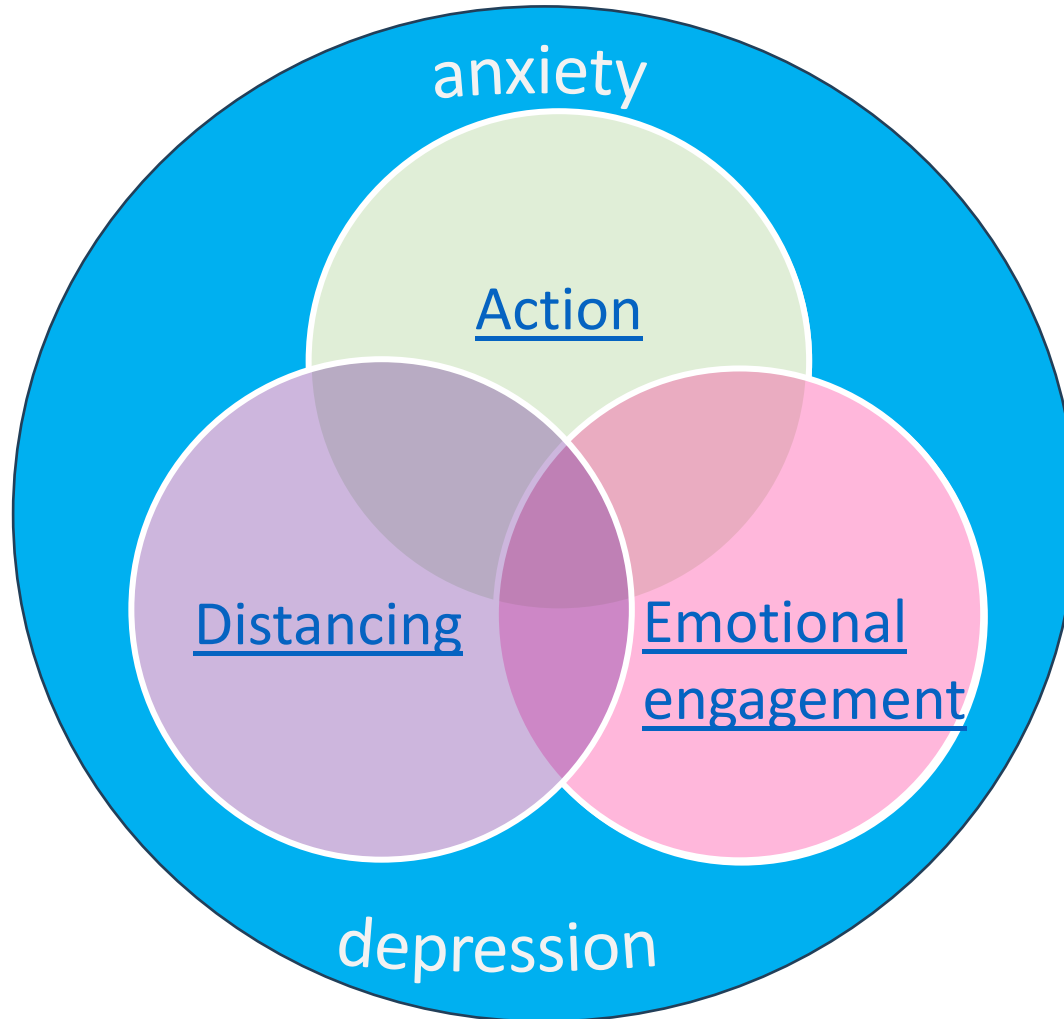
Peer support can offer:

- Social support
- Long-term

Adapted from Dr Panu Pihkala's Process model of eco-anxiety and ecological grief

⇒  
[conversation](#)

# The coping and changing phase in detail



Adapted from Dr Panu Pihkala's Process model of eco-anxiety and ecological grief

This research tells us:

- Once we know about climate crisis, we have to respond.
- Our responses might be automatic or deliberate.
- We all respond differently.
- Healthy coping needs all three areas.

Peer support can offer:

- Opportunity to explore what we can do.
- Space to think and reflect.
- Choice and control over what you engage with.



[process diagram](#)



[conversation](#)

# Adjustment and transformation

## Coping and changing



## Living with the climate crisis



# Conversation

Tolerating distressing emotions: why would you want to and where do you start?



# The Compassionate Mind Approach to distressing emotions

1. Build self-compassion
2. Soothing
3. Distraction
4. Deciding to tolerate distress
  1. Deciding to tolerate distress about the climate crisis: pros and cons
  2. Preparing: what could you say to yourself
  3. Planning: experiment with delaying soothing or distracting for a few minutes

Goss, Kenneth. *The Compassionate Mind Approach to Beating Overeating*. First Edition. Robinson Publishing, 2011. p137-143

Do you have any ways of coping or avoiding distress?

Why tolerate distress?

# Deciding to tolerate distress

What are the pros and cons of learning to tolerate our distressing feelings about the climate crisis?

# Preparing to tolerate distress

*If* you decide to try tolerating distressing feelings, what could you say to yourself in the moment when these feelings arise?

For example:

- Reminding yourself why you want to learn how to do this.
- Expressing confidence in your ability to cope.

If you decide this tolerating distress isn't for you, what could you say to yourself at difficult times.

# Planning to tolerate distress

1. Think about which feelings you want to work on.
2. How long do you want to try tolerating this feeling for?
3. At the end of the set time turn to your coping strategies (the idea is to postpone turning away from your emotions – not to stop altogether immediately).
4. As you feel more confident you can extend the length of time you aim to tolerate the feeling for.

“On some days you will find tolerating your feelings easier than on others; as always, just go at your own pace and use your compassionate mind to guide you”.

*Beating Overeating* by Ken Goss p.143

# Resources

## Self-help

- [Compassionate Mind Foundation](#) – book list and other resources
- Centre for Clinical Interventions – free self-help workbooks
  - [Facing your Feelings](#) – tolerating distress
  - [Building Self-Compassion](#)
- *The Compassionate Mind Approach to Beating Overeating*. By Kenneth Goss, 2011.
- Part 3 ‘Emotional Pain’ in [Why Has Nobody Told Me This Before?](#) By Julie Smith 2022
  - Includes some alternatives to the Compassionate Mind approach.

## Therapy

- [Climate Psychology Alliance](#) – One-to-one climate aware therapeutic support
- [Self-Help Services](#) – information and referrals for help with mental health problems in Manchester

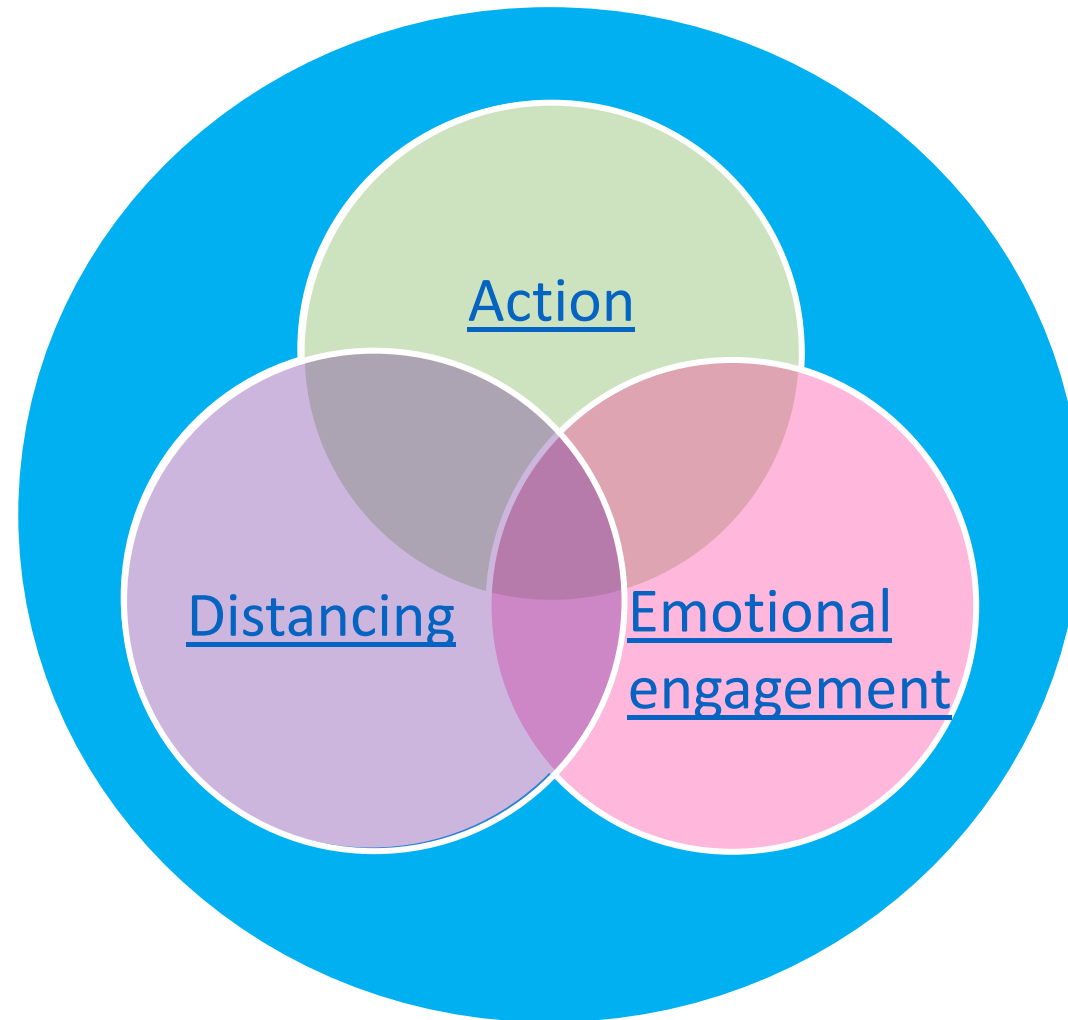
# Notes

We share notes from the meeting to our email list and on the website.

- What would you like to remember from this meeting?
- What might be useful in the future?
- Is there anything don't want us to include?

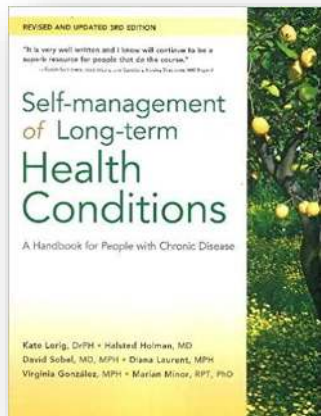


Topic for next time?



# Putting it into practice

Dream big, start small!

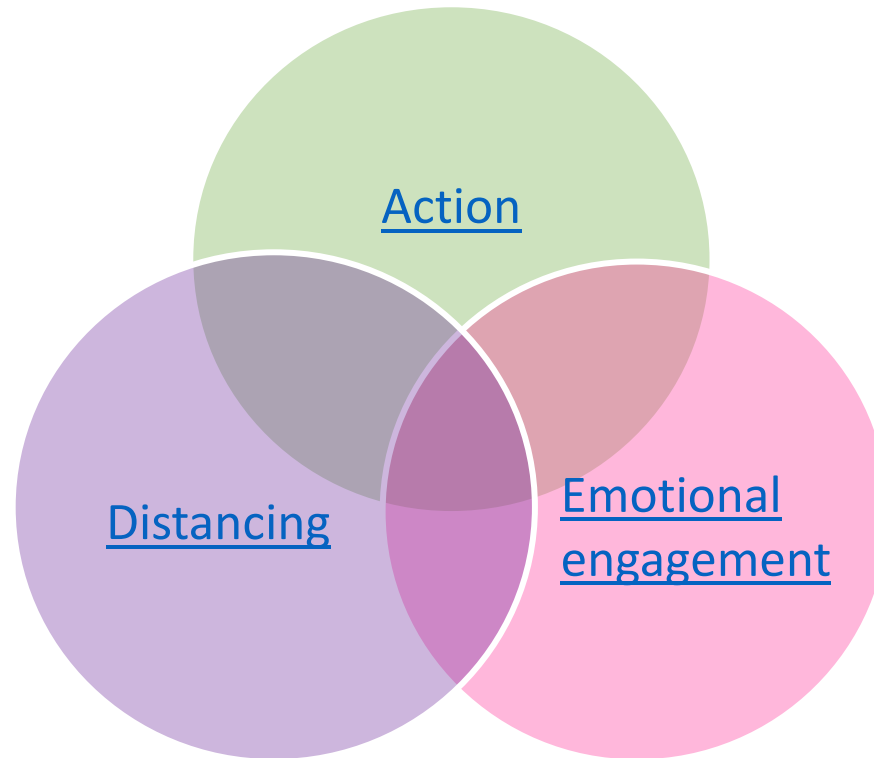


*'Self-Management of Long-Term Health Conditions'*, written by Kate Lorig and other authors and published in 2014

# What do we mean by action?

Giving ourselves rest from grief and rest from action:

- Rest and relaxation
- Self-care
- Work and other commitments
- Distraction



Things we can do to directly tackle the crisis:

- Personal
- Political
- Practical

Finding ways to process our emotions around what's happening.

Any tasks, from any area, that will help us with coping and adjusting to the climate crisis.

# It doesn't always go to plan!

## **If you didn't complete your plan...**

- Did you learn something useful from doing it?
- Can you adjust your plan and try again?
- Or do you want to set it aside for now and work on something else?
- Sometimes, when we've tried everything we can think of we have to admit the problem isn't ready to be solved.

How did you get on with your plans?

# Action plans

1. Identify a problem or goal.
2. Make a list of ideas.
3. Choose an option to experiment with.
4. Plan what you will do in the next two weeks: say exactly what, when, where, how much, and how often.
5. Write out your plan and keep it somewhere visible.

## **Example:**

I will keep a diary of when I use the car. I'll write it in my diary after dinner on 10 days. I'll set an alarm on my phone to remind me to fill out the diary.

# Step 1. Identify a problem or goal

1. List some of the things that matter to you.
2. Choose one to work on and mark it with a star.

## Examples of problems

I can't give up my car as I need it to get to work.

## Examples of goals

I want to use my car less.

## Step 2. make a list of your options

1. List all the ways you can think of to solve your problem or reach your goals.

Tip: Don't be too quick to discount an idea.



## Step 3: choose one option to try out

1. Put a star next to one item on your list.
2. Don't worry if it still seems too big, or if it seems too small.

Tip: make sure it's something that matters to *you*.

## Step 4: Decide what you will do in the next two weeks

1. Be specific. Think about what, when, how often or how much?
2. Is your plan realistic? How likely are you to carry it out? (adjust the plan if you need to).
3. How will you remember to follow your plan?

Tip: start slowly and start from where you are. Carry out a reality check and adjust your plan if you need to.

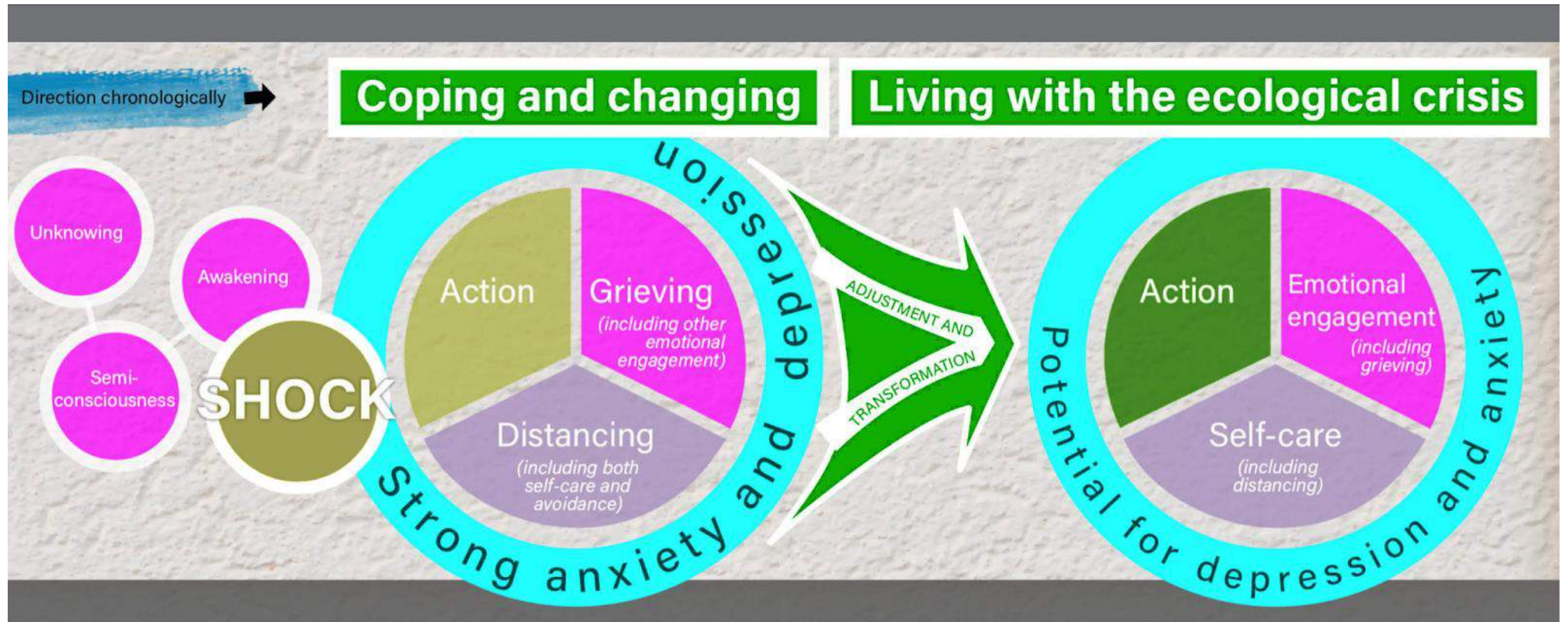
# Action plans

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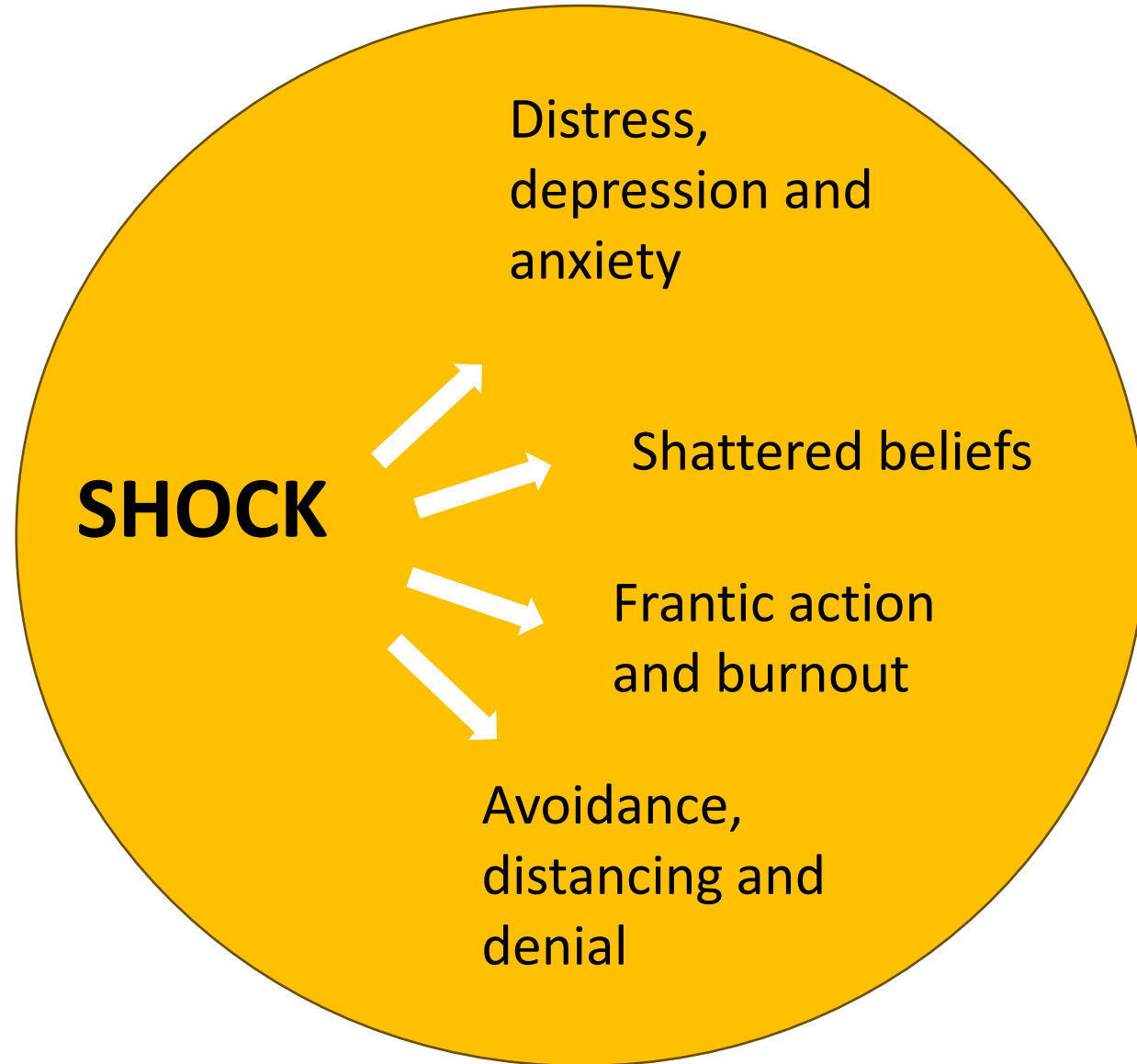
## **Example:**

I will keep a diary of when I use the car. I'll write it in my diary after dinner on 10 days. I'll set an alarm on my phone to remind me to fill out the diary.

# The Process of Eco-Anxiety and Ecological Grief



# Shock

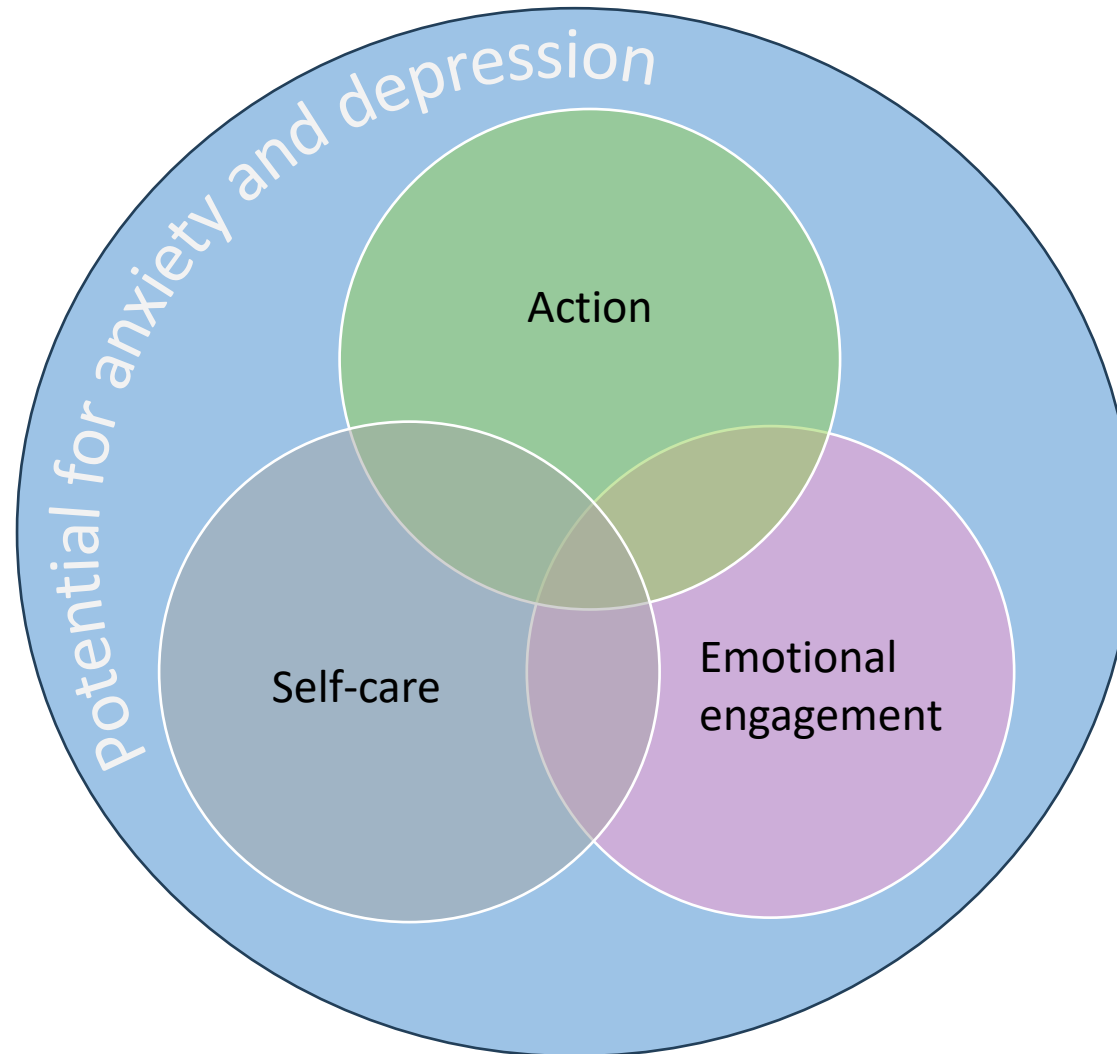


[Adapted from Dr Panu Pihkala 'Process model of eco-anxiety and ecological grief'](#)

[← Back to process diagram](#)

# Living with the climate crisis

- More balance, understanding and control.
- Still a need for all three areas.
- New shocks might create new needs for coping and changing.
- Happening against a background potential for depression and anxiety.



[← Back to diagram](#)

# Emotional engagement

Surprise

Shock

Anger and moral outrage

Sadness and grief

Depression

Guilt

Tolerating distressing emotions: why and how?



Caring

Inspiration

Hope

Pleasure

Belonging

Envy and admiration

Fear and anxiety

Hostile emotions

## Climate Emotions Wheel

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←  
process diagram

→  
conversation

# Action to tackle the causes of the climate and ecological crisis

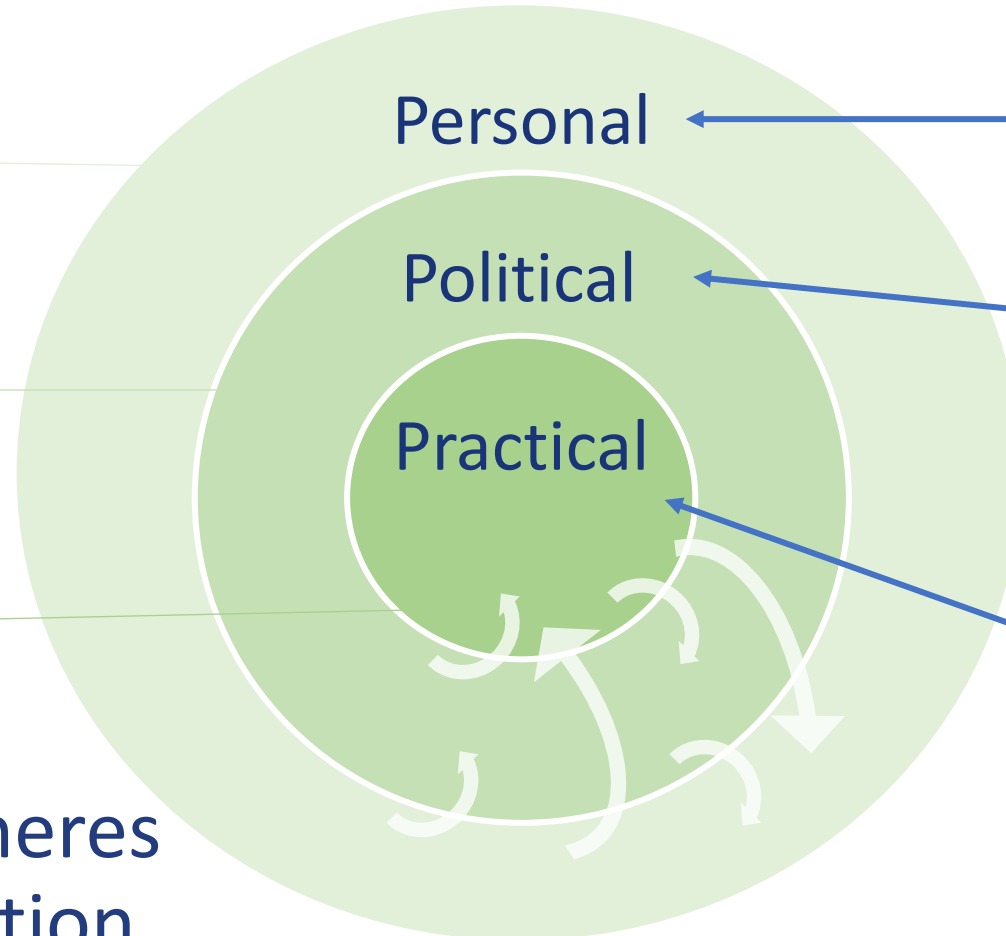
## What?

Beliefs and values

Systems and structures

Technological and behavioural solutions

## The Three Spheres of Transformation



## How?

- Reflection
- Questioning

- Social movements
- Lobbying
- Interest groups

- Strategies
- Behaviour change
- Practices
- Technology

[← process diagram](#)

[→ conversation](#)



# Self-care and distancing

Rest	Soothing	Denial
Relaxation	Self-care and community care	Distraction

[←  
coping & changing](#)

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process diagram](#)

[→  
conversation](#)