

PANDEMIC WINS / CLIMATE CONVOS / GARDEN REFUGE

LIVES

5 PERSPECTIVES

A Greener Planet, One Person at a Time

These experts are working tirelessly on climate solutions—and they invite you to play your own important role.

BY SHARLENE BREAEKY

RZCREATIVE/STOCKSY

1

Take a (gas-free) joyride.

It's time to consider buying an electric vehicle. They've come down in price, and most models can travel 100 to 300 miles without needing a charge. There are already more than 20,000 charging stations across the country. You can also plug it in at home, and it doesn't increase your bill any more than air-conditioning would. I know a man who became a Lyft driver for a weekend just so he could spread the word about electric vehicles to his passengers.

LEAH STOKES, PHD, IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA.

2

Go eco at your day job.

Think about the power you have right where you are, at your job or in your community. If you're an administrator, push to add more plant-based catering options at your company. If you run a clothing store, pick sustainable brands to introduce to your customers. Architects and designers can become more knowledgeable about green design, and contractors can advocate for electric water heaters, stoves, and heat pumps. Opportunities to be climate leaders are all around us. What might yours be?

KATHARINE K. WILKINSON, PHD, IS AN EDITOR, PODCAST HOST, AND COFOUNDER OF THE ALL WE CAN SAVE PROJECT.

The more we can envision a world we want to live in, the more we will be inspired to move toward it.

3

Be in the room where it happens.

Many cities have empty board seats, and parents are uniquely qualified to serve. The Moms & Mayors program raises awareness about these positions and encourages climate-conscious citizens to apply. From the tree board to the transportation committee, our voices need to be heard. Nobody knows better than parents that fixing harmful emissions helps fix asthma in kids.

HEATHER McTEER TONEY IS THE SENIOR ADVISER TO THE NONPROFIT MOMS CLEAN AIR FORCE.

4

Create the future you want.

We talk about trees, but our coastal ecosystems, like wetlands and seagrass beds, can absorb five times more carbon than forests. There is an incredible opportunity for regenerative ocean farming, in which seaweed and shellfish are cultivated in a way that absorbs carbon and heals marine ecosystems. Part of my job right now is to imagine that future. The more we can envision a world we want to live in, the more we will be inspired to move toward it.

AYANA ELIZABETH JOHNSON, PHD, IS A MARINE BIOLOGIST, POLICY EXPERT, AND WRITER.

5

Electrify your life.

You can dramatically reduce your carbon footprint by replacing any gas-powered appliance with an electric one. Water heaters and boilers can break down after 10 to 20 years, so be ready to move on to an electric version. Or swap your gas range for an induction stove. Financing options can make new appliances affordable. An electrician may need to update your fuse box and wiring—be prepared to spend \$200 to \$2,000, depending on your home—but you'll be set up for a fully electric future.

SAUL GRIFFITH, PHD, IS AN ENGINEER AND THE FOUNDER OF OTHERLAB, A RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LAB FOCUSING ON ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE.