



Tool 1.4

Acknowledging climate emotions

CLARITY Competence Area:

Taking care of climate emotions and trauma

GreenComp Competence Area:

Acting for sustainability

Why use this tool?

This tool enables learners to become familiar with different methods that they can mobilize, either individually or with others, including in small groups, to engage with their climate emotions at a deeper level. This can be particularly valuable for older students who study climate change on a prolonged basis, or for students who are very sensitive to climate change impacts, and are looking for sustainable ways to feel and navigate such emotions, including climate grief. This tool also helps experience the benefits of community care for our emotional and mental wellbeing.

Activity 1.4.3

Grief practices

Overview

This activity consists in researching, exploring and possibly engaging in local (ancient) grief practices to deal with the grief associated with the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. This activity intends to explore grief practices that can be used to grieve the losses and damages to the more-than-human world that are occurring as a result of climate change. They can also encompass grieving for the lives that the learners would have liked to have but cannot because of climate change and its impacts.

Curriculum linkage

Literature, Social Issues, Geography, Arts.

Competences built

(Self-)compassion, empathy, community-building, presence, interconnectedness

Prep Work

- Researching local traditional grief practices.
- Researching traditional grief practices from different parts of the world
- Identifying locations where grief has been traditionally expressed in the community
- Reflecting on the cultural sensitivity of engaging with grief through the arts
- Reading about climate grief in advance



BASIC INFO

Age range:

11+

Duration:

From two work sessions of 45-60 minutes with homework for the younger learners, up to individual or group assignments spanning several week or months for older learners.

Group size:

Open

Level of difficulty:

Advanced

Materials/space required:

Depends on the scale of the activity

Location:

Flexible

Engagement of external stakeholders:

Yes



Competences/activities to practice first by the teacher:

Creative practices (1.4.2.)

Levels in the activity

1. Short exploration with younger learners (11-18)
2. Group project (18+)

Level 1: Short exploration with younger learners (11-18)

1. In the first session, introduce practices that were traditionally used for grieving the dead in the village/city/region over the past century/centuries. This can include grieving deaths in the human and more-than-human realms. This can include introducing places where grieving used to take place.
2. For homework, ask the learners to ask Elders in their family or community (e.g. grandparents and senior neighbours that they admire) about the grieving practices they took part in or witnessed as children, and to write down the stories.
3. In the second session, invite some learners to share the stories they collected, and have the group reflect on both convergences and divergences between the stories.
4. Invite learners to imagine what grief rituals for the more-than-human beings impacted by the ecological crisis could look like.

Level 2: Group project (18+)

1. Invite the groups of learners to research practices that were traditionally used for grieving the dead in the village/city/region over the past century/ies. This can include grieving deaths in the human and more-than-human realms. This can include researching places where grieving used to take place.
2. This research can include interviews with various Elders, as well as research into literature or old imagery (e.g. photos, paintings) associated with grieving. In some cases, ancient grieving songs or singing practices could also be included.



3. Optional: Invite learners to research grieving practices from other regions or parts of the world. This research could include a visit to a local ethnology museum.
4. Invite learners to write about the different grieving practices, including their history, geographical locations and legacies. Invite learners to observe the convergences and divergences between the different grieving practices.
5. Encourage learners to explore literature on eco-grief and practices that are designed and offered to young people suffering from eco-grief to grieve the loss and damage associated with climate change, with a focus on the more than human world.
6. Invite learners to imagine what grief rituals for the more-than-human beings impacted by the ecological crisis could look like. This can include mobilizing the arts through the writing of stories, drawing, painting, collages, performances or theatre plays...
7. Invite learners to imagine what grief rituals for the lives they wished they would have but feel they may not be able to have because of climate change, and its impacts could look like. This can include mobilizing the arts through the writing of stories, drawing, painting, collages, performances or theatre plays...
8. Give space for a collective reflection on this artistic experience and on the space given to grief in today's society.



Dos and don'ts

Do

- Bring up this activity if some climate grief has been expressed in the group
- Invite a diversity of grieving stories. If this implies calling Elders who are relatives living in other countries, this should be encouraged.
- Make space for artistic illustration or representation of grieving practices.

Don't

- Don't engage with the grieving practice suggested at the end of level 2 (i.e. steps 6 and 7) without making sure that the topic of climate grief resonates with the learners. If no interest came up in the previous steps, it may not be the right activity for the learners.
- Don't make students engage in grieving practices, even through the arts, when they do not wish to.



Adaptations

We invite you to adapt this activity to the specific needs of your learners, including by taking into account their neurodiversity. When adapting tools and activities for neurodivergent learners, please note it is not about treating others how *you* want to be treated, but how *they* want to be treated. Ask, listen, and stay open to different ways of learning and engaging.

References

The activity was designed by One Resilient Earth.

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