

TURNING CLIMATE PANIC INTO PROGRESS *(even though the news is dire)*

If Americans are hearing anything about climate change, it is likely the bad news. [Our planet](#) and [oceans](#) are warming faster than predicted, causing billion dollar weather disasters, a myriad of health impacts, climate refugees and more, with little time to turn it around. We need to do as great leaders do and inspire those around us, and those in positions to shift policies and outcomes, to act in everyone's best interest by acting on climate. The following Talking Points will help. If someone approaches you in panic about the dire state of our climate, here is what to say:

1. **There is a lot of bad news on climate change, and it is concerning, but we still have time to do something about it.** We can make real progress now while there is a small window of time.
2. **When you look past the headlines, you'll see there's as much good news as bad.** Climate change is a fixable problem, and solutions are here and now, all around us.
3. **There's no doubt that we CAN solve climate change — the question is WILL we.** We have the solutions and mounting national resolve to implement them, but we need to show Americans they can make a difference, and that solutions come with personal benefit.
4. **We have the technology, resources, and window of time to transition to a clean energy economy, but we need to move quickly.** The choice is ours to make. We have the technology to power our homes and communities with clean energy and eliminate our climate impact, but we need local and national leadership on solutions to make this transition at scale and with speed.
5. **When we transition to a clean economy, the benefits to our health, communities, and prosperity will be vast and enduring.** Smart investments in clean energy protect our health, attract new business, create jobs, and build stronger communities for our families and future generations.
6. **We all need to act now — each of us can make a big difference.** We can get our families, workplaces, and communities to switch to clean energy, find practical ways to eliminate our impact, use our votes to elect officials who have a keen understanding of the problem, and use our voices to implore their resolve to fix it.
7. **Start now!** Together we can find and act on sensible solutions now.

COUNTERPOINTS

Following are arguments that people might give on why it is too late for climate change action, along with suggested responses.

1. **If you look around, the seas are already rising, and wildfires are burning all over the world. It's too late.**

Response: Yes. Things are bad, and we're just beginning to see all the signs of a changing climate. But we have the resources and a small window of time to fix this. We can slow, stop, and reverse the impacts of climate change if we begin taking action now. We have the technology and solutions at hand, it just takes the will to make them happen. We can all reduce our climate impact, and ask our local, state and national leaders to bring solutions forward. Let's do what we can to be part of the solution.

2. **Those technologies you talk about, they cost too much. It will lower our standard of living and hurt poor people. We can't do that!**

Response: Right now, producing coal or natural gas energy costs more than producing wind and solar energy. It will take some investment to make a just transition to clean energy, but in the process we will create good local jobs! Overall, shifting to clean energy will actually save us a lot of money, and make us more prosperous. The costs to Americans — from the wildfires, floods, and hurricanes — is enormous and increasing every year. Investing in prevention will reduce the cost of disaster recovery.

3. **Even if we do everything we can, it won't stop others like China and India from polluting. It's hopeless.**

Response: Most of the world is rapidly moving toward climate solutions. And, if the US leads, it will put pressure on China, India and others to follow. Instead of throwing in the towel, let's show the world how we can lead on climate and produce energy that benefits industry and all citizens. We created the car, the computer, and the internet. We can also create solutions to climate change that increase our health and prosperity at the same time.

4. **I agree, we CAN do it but we WON'T. And there's really nothing I can do about it.**

Response: You can make a difference. Every bit of progress on every issue in our society has been made by smaller groups of committed people taking effective action. Do what you can and leverage what you do by engaging others in it, and you can help your community and the country move closer to solutions. In addition to action in your personal life, remember that your vote, and your voice, are some of the most powerful tools you have to make progress — use them!