

Four Ways to Combat Climate Anxiety

As climate change affects our health and environment, more and more people are looking for ways to relieve the stress it causes in their daily lives. But as we're faced with conflicting data and information, it's often difficult to figure out what to do as individuals to really have a positive effect on our planet. So here are four proven ways you can lower your carbon footprint and your anxiety as you strive to address this global crisis.

Two Ways to Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Shop Local

Instead of driving to the supermarket, try getting your goods and staples from local merchants or [your closest farmers' market](#). Bike or walk to downtown boutiques instead of taking your car to the mall and contributing to road congestion, pollution, overdevelopment, and loss of natural habitat for animals, birds, and insects. Don't forget to take your reusable shopping bags with you! And if you want to make even more of an impact in your community, go to your next city council meeting and bring up the idea of [biophilic design](#) to turn your town into an eco-friendly haven.

Launch a Green Business

If you want to be proactive in the fight against climate change, start a business selling eco-friendly products, or launch a company encouraging and promoting a greener lifestyle. Some ideas include offering house or office cleaning services using only natural products; starting a small nursery in your backyard; or becoming an eco-friendly party planner, using only sustainable and recyclable products for invitations, party favors, plates, and cutlery. Whatever your passion is or what you're skilled at, you can turn your idea into a [business promoting green living](#) to people in your community and beyond.

Once you have an idea, you need to put a business plan together. This document should detail your marketing strategy, how you'll structure your business, financial projections, your funding needs, and more. To learn more about writing a business plan and steps you need to take to open a business, read this [great how to guide on starting a business](#).

Two Ways to Reduce Your Anxiety Levels

Plant a Garden

Playing in the dirt is a great stress reliever. And [adding green to your surroundings](#) is also good for the planet. Plant some fruit trees or berry bushes in your backyard; grow tomatoes, cucumbers, fresh herbs, and other edibles. You'll not only save money by harvesting your own

produce, but you'll also eliminate the need for packaging that ends up in landfills, which in turn contributes to pollution and climate change. And let's not forget the [health benefits of eating fresh](#), organic, pesticide-free foods. You'll get the vitamins and nutrients your body needs, you'll have more energy during the day, and this will translate into less stress and anxiety.

Go Forest Bathing

When you feel stressed or anxious, plan a walk to your nearest park or wooded area and try [forest bathing](#). Research has found that people participating in this activity experience lower cortisol levels. And since high cortisol levels are linked to weight gain, stress, and sleep issues, a walk among the trees will help you fight all those problems. Forest bathing practitioners and enthusiasts have also noticed a decrease in their blood pressure, a strengthened immune system, and better, more restorative sleep. Looking at trees has a calming effect, and [nature therapy](#) may be just what you need to alleviate the stress caused by climate change.

You can heal the planet and heal yourself by going green. If you're worried about not having much of an impact on your own, reach out to your community and find ways to make positive, eco-friendly changes that will benefit everyone. Look for sustainable alternatives for the things you use every day, and take time to commune with nature to boost your mood and your energy levels.

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