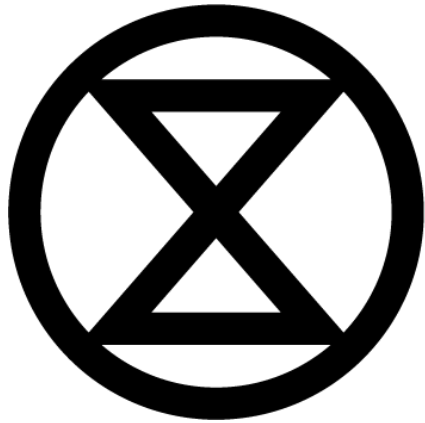


ka



**extinction
rebellion**

XR Training 2

Length: 3 hours

Introduction

Welcome! This training is for people who are excited about the Extinction Rebellion and who want to organize local Extinction Rebellion groups in their countries and cities.

Here, we go over:

- Personal resilience and organisation
- Organising basics and helping organise with others
- Structural organisation

In another training we will go over the different working groups in more detail and the necessity for much of the unseen work, such as arrestee support and wellbeing.

The main requirements of a country/local coordinator are:

- Helping distribute information from the International Expansion Team to local groups

- Coordinate between local groups, organising meetings for local XR groups so that they can share information on a country-wide level
- Help establish the working groups for national/local infrastructure
- Taking part in the country coordination calls with UK-based organisers to stay up to date with what the wider XR network is doing

The commitment per week for coordinators will depend on how many people in their respective countries are involved in XR, and how many coordinators there are in total. However, we expect it will be between **10-20 hours a week**. We are proposing that coordinators form groups of **four-to-ten people**. This is to share the responsibilities between the team members as things may begin to change and accelerate very quickly!

What can we expect from future trainings?

- More information on arrestable actions and the necessary arrestee support plus information on the tech aspects of organising nationally and internationally
- How to organise effective outreach training and integrate people into different working groups

Go over Group Agreements

Group Agreements for the training:

- Don't tell people what to do, get them to discover what to do
- Get people to embody the organizing- don't talk at them, get them to speak and do. When people speak, they start to believe what they're saying.
- Good enough is good enough – we're trying to create something good enough.
- **“Good enough for now, safe enough to try.”**
- **Exaptation** – Concept from evolutionary biology - take a way of doing things from one sphere and take it over to another. For example learning from corporate literature how to organise and run organisations and adapting it for the greater good

Firstly, it seems important to highlight the different working groups that we have at Extinction Rebellion:

Action & Logistics

Arts

Finance

Media & Messaging

Wellbeing and Regenerative Culture

Research

Outreach & Training Tech

Here we have a link to the XR Campaign overview, which is constantly under revision:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gN92NvQEAw4MJ5rNAf3kVIJtLcc3KDUJVVYHQjtB-9E/edit>

Where We Are Today:

There's a UN report that says we've got 12 years to transform the world to a zero carbon economy.

We live in the worst and best of times to be alive. We can change the world, and it's **terrifying and exhilarating!**

Hopes and Fears go around: Have people share hopes and fears about joining this project. One hope and one fear each. To save time you can have them type it into the chat window and have the facilitator read them aloud.

Building a Foundation for the Rebellion

Split all participants in the room in two groups and let one of the groups discuss one-to-one practices of personal resilience and the other one personal organisational practices

Personal Resilience

Personal resilience – organizers get depressed and stressed and burn out, key thing is to be able to stay in the game over a long period of time

Get up early – sleep enough, eat right, go into the sunlight and exercise.

Tom - Go to sleep, go to the woods, play with cats, see family and friends, going dancing, swimming

- Retreat to nature - to get perspective and have time to think. Breathe mountains, woods, sea
- Grounding - get into your body, tune in and be present. Simple exercise: pick a color, name everything you see that's that color. Other grounding tools: Scents, food, hot tea
- Anchoring – remembering the outside good things tied to a time when you felt centered, purposeful and well. You can anchor by having a specific posture, visualization, or phrase that you use when needed.
- Cook a fat meal and eat it
- The Hinterlands - Have your anchor, your happy place that you can use to pull yourself away from a dark place. It should be ordinary and non activist
- Mindfulness – develop a way to watch yourself freaking out. And when you watch yourself freaking out it's like you're not freaking out, you're watching yourself freak out.
- Make a list of what to do when you freak you/depressed/pissed off – reflex, when you notice these things, you have a reflex to do a thing that helps you in those situations.
- Transcendence – main goal of life.
- It's not about what people do, it's about what I do. – Washing up is the first thing you burn out on. Just do it yourself. If other people don't do the stuff, that's the way it is. You can only control how you respond.
- READ The Power Of Now, – all we have is right now. That's all

Phenomenology

One reason people get depressed and anxious is because they tell themselves a story about who they are— a voice in your head telling you it's going badly.

What we've learnt is you aren't who you are, you are what you are. Phenomenology – you don't experience the world as it is, you experience it as what you perceive.

We need to work on our **mindfulness muscles which prepare us to go into our fears**. This is essential to prepare ourselves and our colleagues for arrest and potential imprisonment. It can be a very daunting experience.

It is important to mention the structural racism and oppression that many suffer at the hands of the justice system. A white person can have a very different experience in prison to their non-white counterpart. There is an implicit racial bias within the police force and these experiential differences are very real. However, it is therefore important that those who can exercise their privilege offer to do so where others may will be punished more harshly.

Personal organisation

Get the other half of the participants to share their practices of how they organise themselves, some examples can be found below:

Personal organization – chaotic, mess, - **easy to want to give up**

- Make different sorts of lists
- Ask a big question – make a list around it.
- Know where you're going when you make a list
- Be critical of your lists: Are they realistic? Is everything you're doing important?
- Prioritization
- Important and urgent – do now. Important not urgent – can wait. Urgent but not important – doesn't have to be done too well, can probably be delegated to get done now. Not important and not urgent- get rid of it.
- Delegation – how do you get someone else to do it.
- Take continuous feedback from your environment and reassess your situation.
- READ **The Seven Habits of the Most Effective People**– Stephen Covey? Hold your nose
- Keep the saw sharp
- Have downtime –
- Hinterland – what thing do you do when you're not changing the world

- Break out, personal resilience -

Organizing basics

We'll talk about creating the relationships and the structures we need to organize the rebellion.

How do you personally relate to people?

How do you speak to people to **empower them**

- Treat them like they're already empowered, talk to them this way
- Properly listen to people – don't listen to speak. Listen to listen. Take what they say in and digest it before you formulate a response.

- Avoid preaching to people. Give them an open space to learn
 - Be patient
 - Make what you're saying more accessible by using humour etc.
 - Lead with why; explain to people why you are asking them to do something a certain way.
 - Non-violent communication – **make it emotional don't just dictate to people** - when you do this it makes me feel that and I'd rather you do the other – the other is very specific.
- Don't say, "this needs to happen and you need to do it", say "this is what you do, this is how it makes me feel, this is what I would like you to do"
- HUMOUR IS KEY IN EMPOWERMENT – releases tension. When they're tense they don't wanna do stuff.
 - Appreciation – very important. Appreciate people. Ring them up and tell them it was great.
 - SEE. **S**mile, **E**nthusiasm, **E**ye contact

How to deal with tricky people

- Aggy people – Ignore the fact they're aggy – see through the bullshit. Listen to what they're saying and stay calm
- Leave them if that's all that can be done.
- What if people talk loads compulsively and they're so disruptive that people can't talk. Get in the way of facilitation etc.
- Set the ground rules at the beginning of the meeting. – Key in teaching people to facilitate and having a good meeting. (we're all like herd animals. If everyone's behaving, then everyone behaves.) we're all gonna respect each other, we're all gonna give each other time to speak, and we're all gonna support each other cause we're all here to help each other.

How to empower people in meetings (most effective way to have meetings)

- When people come into the room, have someone welcome them face to face
 - Lead people ideally to a table where people are facing each other
 - Chairs and tables in little groups – want people to chat and relax
 - Have an ice breaker for people to get to know those in their group
 - **Set ground rules at the start**
 - At least 60% of meeting be participatory – act of speech empowers people. Not listening. Info won't create the revolution. Speaking it will
 - Must have food
 - Everyone who leaves the meeting gets phoned up afterwards – ask them how they got on. Human connectivity and appreciation. **Not about info in the meeting, feelings.**
 - Create an atmosphere where people are happy and feel valued and it's exciting (sexy) etc.
- Accessibility: Sound system, child care, wheelchair accessible space, language and/or sign language interpretation, etc.

- **When people derail:** Acknowledge / thank them for their comment, then restate the question on the table. "Does anyone else have thoughts to share?"
- [Guide to dealing with challenging meeting behavior](#)
- Even out the airtime: breakouts, go-rounds or use [alternative brainstorming strategies](#) to give structure to big picture conversations

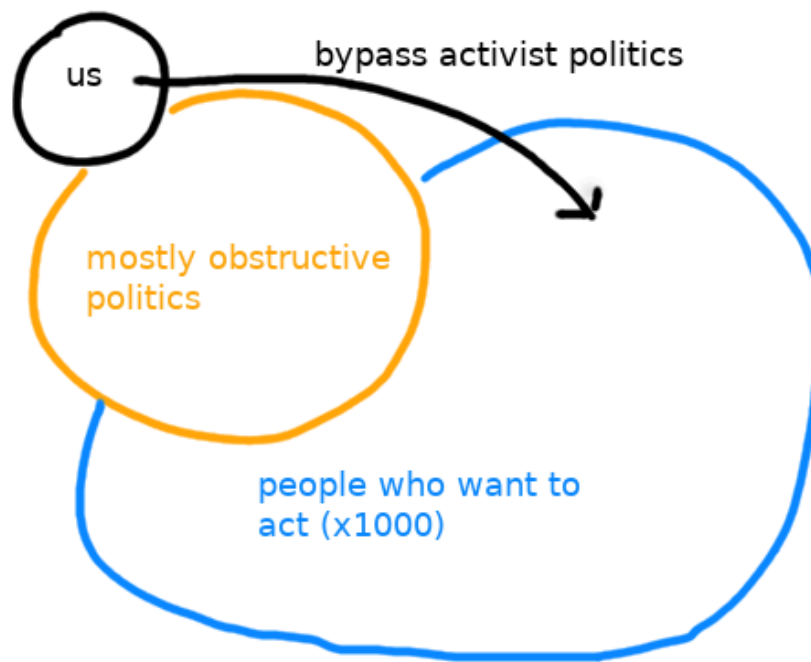
Caring for Well-Being in Meetings and Other Events

- Open and close the meeting with **check in, check out**
- Rituals: celebrate birthdays, sign cards for people who are sick, do something special to recognize new members at each meeting
- For more: see [our handout on Building Group Culture](#)

Structural organization

- Have a plan
- Communication
- Roles
- Have a party -
- Have a clear message
- Roles –dreamer, planner, doer, celebrator
- Have consistency and regularity to make people confident that things will continue
- Have it be enthusiastic.
- **DELEGATION IS IMPORTANT**
- RUTHLESSLY DELEGATE - To deal with people who don't do much stuff, RUTHLESSLY DELEGATE. Even if they're gonna make a mess of it. People get better by making mistakes
- Persist at delegating - If one person didn't do it, maybe they were the wrong person, find another person. Head hunting.
- Autonomy creates empowerment
- Balance structure with participation. People need to participate in decisions that affect them, but they also need to know that they are part of a well thought out plan -- if there isn't an organized structure for them to plug into, they will feel lost and it'll be harder for them to participate

How to organise groups of people to rise up



Mass organizing

What XR is trying to do is to bypass the bubble of political people whom people all too often rely upon when they set out on creating radical change. People in this sphere often get bogged down in ideological discussion.

Beyond this bubble are a whole lot of people who are not already situated within any movement but who are nonetheless ready to act and to get on with things.

Types of political engagement in people:

- People who want to get things done
- highly political people

- people who're shitting themselves and want something to be done but aren't highly political

The first group go to the second, when they need to go to the third.

- Gotta tell them it's not perfect. They're not interested in political effectiveness, they're interested in things being perfect and good. This is not a personal judgment, but it won't help.
- This is how you mobilize lots of people.
- Don't have a Q & A. This allows the extreme people who want it to be one way to bring everyone else down. 80% are normal people 20% political absolutists. There to appropriate your energy.
- Have a general meeting. Use participatory design.
- Most successful socialist movement in the world is – Mondragon experiment in Spain – central concept is balance. Not socialism or anything. Trying to practically create a better world. There are too many separate concepts and issues to focus only on one.
- Books to read - The Psychology of Persuasion
 - The Radical Think Tank (Roger H) - how to organise meetings!
 - How to Win - section on the website

Paradigm Shift

Over the last 3 years, trying to promote culture change in British activism from immature phase (everyone trying to be nice, neo-liberal logic) to mature phase (sacrifice is necessary, acts of resistance should be normalised)

Trying to get rid of fear - although there is economic disruption, behind this is fearlessness. This is what will get us through it. Fearlessness is liberating, exciting!

We need to make major life changes - be willing to give up our futures for the cause (Youtube - Children's March, Birmingham, US, 1963)

We need to strengthen this spiritual muscle which allows us to let go of fear.

Literature shows we only need a very small number of people to make this change!!

Two schools of thought: community organising model, and mass organising model

Community organising model

If you want people to do stuff you have to get them to carry out these actions ruthlessly (leafleting, phone calls etc), practical, grounded method that escalates slowly over time and focuses on building long-term organizations that represent the interests of specific neighborhoods / communities.

Downside - very slow to build, mass of people going on a march but nothing happens.

Mass organising model

big aim, prophetic, different logic that says if you give people a big aim, they're more likely to mobilise, more inspiring - or they're not because it's too big, often it fails, BUT society under stress often leads to tipping point where people take this big idea on.

Books to read - This is an Uprising (Mark Engler)

Non-linear dynamics - like a rubber band, can never predict when it'll snap, but you can predict that it will snap eventually. (i.e. Rebellion/social disruption is inevitable, but don't know when - we're trying it out now)

Extinction Rebellion

Community organising model starts off - delivering talks across the country, postering and flyering, sparking conversations, builds up momentum by doing back office work
Suddenly XR gets into press by George Monbiot and it creates a whirlwind - into the mass organising model, into a non-linear structure

What does this mean?

Fundamental change against entrenched interests only happens when there is mass economic disruption

Economic disruption is non-linear, it is exponential, it gets bigger, faster

Holy Grail of social disruption - civil resistance method

Between 5-15 days regime comes to the table and there is significant change, otherwise regime collapses

Why? **Putting regime into dilemma action** - either they let you get away with it or they repress you - either way they have lost (you go and do it again, or they are put in a bad light)

The worse a regime is, the more likely it is to fall - there is a logic to it

Fracking - civil disobedience is consistent and then it flips, 16 month prison sentences. This then backfires, spreads wider, and the judge lets frackers out.

Another variation on theme

Jail scenario (Gandhi)

If you get people arrested, in prison, hurt - this creates a **political drama**

People start reading about it - psychology says that, even if these people aren't liked, they are respected and sacrifice is understood. If they are liked then they are highly respected, and more likely to be joined.

Leipzig - someone had enough of regime, marches out to centre of square, people follow, police let them get away with it, it happens again. Police is a top-down system so has to get instruction from top, delays process, all the while more and more people are gathering - creates tipping point. The fear among people has gone, police had lost control, regime falls.

Again, non-linear dynamics - (e.g. Archbishop of Canterbury supports XR, shifts this consciousness, spreads to people who wouldn't normally be aware of it, and they join)

Important Note: This is different than how some other groups around the world do civil disobedience. We are **NOT** working toward any of the following:

- A. A single protest or week of protests that's the culmination of a long campaign, after other methods of making change have failed
- B. A single protest that closes down a street or building, or puts pressure on a fossil fuels target, or
- C. A protest where everything is carefully choreographed and goes according to plan, in order to get media coverage

We are instead talking about creating a *sustained, multi-day economic disruption that has no end in sight*. This should force governments to negotiate with us, at which point we ask them to agree to our demands.

What are we doing? How will we get there?

As we build up to that point, we can use these strategies:

- A. Outreach events** about the need for an extinction rebellion (there is a great curriculum for outreach available from XR in the UK)
- B. Trainings** that teach people to operate in small groups (affinity groups) and get people comfortable with taking nonviolent direct action -- with protesting in a way that breaks the law, and risking arrest. XR has a sample training outline available to share. You may also wish to work with direct action trainers in your area.
- C. Smaller protests**, whether arrestable or non-arrestable, that perhaps close down streets or buildings, garner positive media attention, and then grow, escalate and garner attention (i.e. from the press, from potential participants, etc.) Think of these as practice for the larger rebellion :-)
 - a. We know that many of you have not planned actions before and that's okay. [We have created this slides presentation to get you through your first several actions.](#)
 - b. You can also check out the [Ruckus Action Strategy Guide](#) and [Beautiful Trouble](#) for ideas of how to get started. Please note that **these are tied to other organizing models that escalate more slowly**, so some of the steps they list out (i.e. set goals, build organization, target) do not apply. Also note that they **are**

fine for planning smaller actions, but do not provide a roadmap for the large scale disruption we eventually want to create.

- c. We will have a future call that goes into affinity group roles, and action planning along the spectrum from small actions to mass disruption

D. Communications tools -- bringing people in through email and phone lists and social media. Your goal with these is always to get people to take action offline.

E. Other ideas that you can experiment with locally.

//////// pause //////////

Key message

we have until [NEXT BIG MOBILIZATION DATE] to get a critical mass of people into national capitals and other major cities around the world. .

If you have a big demand, you get a big commitment

We have a big demand, it is credible

Rules for revolutionaries - Bernie Sanders, one of the fastest mobilisations in history

Neo-liberal logic - don't ask for too much, you won't get it, be realistic

Need a paradigm shift - always a cultural lag, but discourse is shifted so more and more people get on board

We need a critical mass of people who will sustain unrest

Motion, not information

The people who will lead this rebellion will be young people (under 18s), old people, women - they are different, they will create this emotional reaction, different paradigm (to the standard emotionally repressed news report)

It's not about climate change information, it's about the emotional way that we say it - needs to create that emotional response, personal reactions are incredibly powerful

How do people get involved? What structure do we have to support them?

Integration process

- Online - people come into movement either by liking FB page, being contacted after attending being 'interested' in event on FB and then often emailing us
- By giving outreach talks - get contact details and follow up with emails. Often that key person who comes up afterwards and is super interested - get them more involved!

- Nonviolent direct action (NVDA) - follow up after talks, create affinity groups
- **Define what an affinity group is:** Group of up to 12 people that takes action together and can operate independently to plan actions (when needed) and take care of themselves
- After NVDA trainings, building trust and comfort, enabling them to go forward with direct actions. This moves on to these groups doing their own thing (disco road blocks)
-
- Movement is moving on from just symbolic activism towards actual structural change
 - Around 65 outreach talks since early May - key point about these talks is to have experienced and inexperienced speaker at talk, so that more and more people are learning how to do talks
 - 18k likes on FB, going up by about 50 people per hour
 - 300-400 people up for getting arrested
 - 200-300 people up for going to prison
 - We need to take these numbers forward and make it into real change
- How XR is structured in the UK
 - Affinity groups that have been trained and are able to work independently and/or plug into central coordinating structure
 - Outreach/Local groups - mobilising people for protests leading up to the rebellion
 - have meetings, create sub-groups (direct action groups, arts group, wellbeing groups)
 - Community organising groups - getting mass mobilisation, getting more and more people from local area to do their own thing and set up groups from there
 - National working groups - Outreach and Training, Media and Messaging, Wellbeing, operations, etc
 - These, again, have different sub-groups in them
-

The aim is to get groups in each country to have their own take on these strategies, that is relevant to their local area

- **National and local** groups should each have 2 coordinators minimum (mixed gender, mixed level of arrestability/non-arrestability) who will feed back into the national sub-groups
 - Full coordination - taking on a role but delegating, noticing key people who can take energy forward and make it their own, process repeats.
- Online calls with one of coordinators of each local group, create sense of inclusivity, and provide support

Non-linear process:

- We want a political moment rather than symbolic action

- Initially it looked to be a way of showing to other countries different ways of mobilising
- What it's now looking like is a mass civil disobedience movement

Motivation and Commitments:

- We face a future where we are living on a different planet and billions of lives are at risk
- There are risks to taking action; there are even more severe risks to not asking.
- We need to be prepared to process the grief that is involved and not let it break us, it is a natural thing for human beings living in these times and shying away from it won't be of any use
- We are going to do several go-arounds to share where we are at with this work.

First, share: What will you do tomorrow, and what will you do this week, to move forward the Extinction Rebellion in your area? What other information or support do you need to move forward?

[Do go around, offer ideas for people who need support wherever possible]

Next, share: What questions do you have that need to be answered to move forward in this work?

[Answer questions]

Last: share a feeling word.

[Recap plans for next check in / Next call]