



## *Climate Changed Podcast Discussion Guide* Season 2, Episode 2

**Guest:** Susi Moser

**Title:** How Can I Keep Going?

### **Welcoming Activity**

At the start of this episode, Katie Patrick describes what behavioral psychology researchers call the value-action gap. To put it simply, this gap exists where a value that someone holds does not translate into their actions or behaviors. She points out that simply educating people about an issue in, say, local food systems, often does not lead to changes in their behavior. Asking people to take an action, however, helps them to traverse the value-action gap. Spend a few minutes reflecting on where in your life a value-action gap might exist, then write it down. Think of one action you will take that crosses that gap, and write that down, too. Allow a couple volunteers to describe the connection between their value and the action they will take.

### **Introduction To Episode**

In this episode, Ben Yosua-Davis speaks with Dr. Susanne Moser, a researcher who works on climate change, adaptation, and resilience. Dr. Moser — who also goes by Susi — shares about what it means to build psychological support for facing the climate crisis, especially within frontline communities. They also address the prevalence of burnout, spiritual practices for this time of climate change, and frameworks for engaging in important yet difficult conversations. Afterwards, Ben and Nicole reflect on how these topics connect to their own lives.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Susi recounts a time early in her geography career when she wondered, “If we understand what we’re doing to the environment, why are we not stopping it? Why are we not trying to prevent this changing [of] the earth in profound, fundamental ways?” Have you asked similar questions to these? How does it feel to hold such immense and important questions?
2. What does ecological conversion mean to you? Can you remember the circumstances of your own ecological conversion process?
3. Among the advice that Susi offers about how to have climate conversations, she recommends that we use the phrase “I have to tell you something hard” before telling someone about some reality of climate change. Then, she says, we ought to stay with that person in the conversation rather than leaving them to bear the weight alone. What would it look like for you to use this phrase — “I have to tell you something hard” — in conversations about climate change or environmental issues? Is there a different phrase that you use for such occasions?
4. Ben and Susi talk about the reckoning of values, histories, beliefs, and relationships that must occur across institutions during this time of ecological crisis. A “deep, deep... spiritual reckoning,” as Susi describes it. This includes communities of faith and environmental groups. While honoring the fact that each person is in-process (i.e., allowing volunteers to share only what they are comfortable with), where do you recognize this reckoning already taking place? What are its effects?

5. Who is on the frontlines of climate change in your community? What kind of support do they need (if they have been explicit about it)? What kind of support do you need?

### **Closing Activity**

As a group, discuss the concept of information deficit model, or the idea that if only people were to learn the correct information and enough of it, then they would change how they lived and acted. Share examples of what this looks like in your own lives and characteristics of this approach to change. Make a list of reasons why the information deficit model is not an effective way to pursue systemic change. Commit to turning away from the information deficit model for one week (and longer, if you would like). Instead, take up Ben's final challenge to show up in conversations with curiosity and a readiness to listen. You may be amazed at how your conversations with others will change.