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A journey of emotions from a young environmental activist

Florence Halstead[1], Lucie Parsons[2], Ally Dunhill[1] and Katie Parsons[3]

[1]Energy and Environment Institute, University of Hull, Hull, UK

[2]Independent activist, UK

[3]Department of Geography, Geology and Environment, University of Hull, Hull, UK

Abstract

The Earth is currently undergoing a sixth global-scale ecological crisis. The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report of 2021 high- lighted a need to curb global heating at 1.5 degrees above the pre-industrial base- line, and outlined a range of likely impacts of climate change on global societies should no action be taken, particularly in relation to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Despite this need, policy-based action at a nation state level is lacking, with talks at COP25 failing to reach necessary agreements. In response to this, and as we approach COP26, a significant global youth movement has been activated, with children and young people taking it upon themselves to highlight a need for climate and environmental action, calling for others to follow. This paper follows the emotional journey of one of its co-authors, 11-year-old environmental activist, Lucie. Through the innovative approach of co-production with Lucie, in this paper we detail the role of emotion in one youth activist's journey. From her initial reactions watching BBC's *Blue Planet II*, to the multifaceted highs and lows that have followed as she strives for change, we il- luminate the emotional implications such experiences may have on children and young people.

KEYWORDS

children's rights, climate change, emotion, environmental activism, participation, youth activism

1 | INTRODUCTION

When I first became aware of the destruction of the world through climate change, I felt very upset and angry, but also a little worried. What was going to happen to my world? And what was everyone going to do about it, including me? (Lucie, 2019)

The Earth is currently undergoing a sixth global-scale ecological crisis (IPBES, 2019). The available science almost unanimously positions human activity at the heart of this crisis, with anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gasses, pollution, land degradation, and deforestation all contributing factors (O'Connor et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020). The most recent IPCC report (2021) demonstrated the need to curb global heating at 1.5 degrees above the pre-industrial baseline, and highlighted a range of likely impacts should no action be taken, particularly in relation to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Despite this need, policy-based action at a nation state level, though increasing, remains lacking, with talks at COP25 failing to reach necessary agreements to curb emissions (UN, 2019). However, a significant global youth movement is now underway, with children

and young people taking it on themselves to highlight a need for climate and environmental action, calling for individuals, society, businesses, and governments to follow. Pre-pandemic, Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future (#FFF) movement regularly appeared in mainstream media. This slowed in response to COVID-19; however, in the run up to COP26 and in light of an increasing portfolio of climate-related disasters, momentum is rebuilding.

While there is growing literature that explores the role of emotion in climate change and other forms of environmental communication (Meijnders et al., 2001; Nabi et al., 2018; Nairn, 2019; Ojala, 2012, 2015, 2018; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014), to our knowledge, there is no investigation that follows and documents the emotional journey of a child who has chosen to take such action. This paper is unique in that it follows the emotional journey of one of the co-authors – Lucie – who at just 9-years-old, and after watching the BBC's *Blue Planet II*, decided to become a champion for change (iWill, 2019):

Watching Blue Planet II, and seeing the wildlife being destroyed, made me feel very sad and upset and made me realise that this was happening around the world and we were the problem. I wanted to take action to help. (Lucie, 2019)

Lucie has since spoken at international conferences, conducted her own research with other children and youth, organised regional litter picks and beach cleans, and has become an ambassador for the national charities *iWill* and *Kids Against Plastic*. As her activism has gained momentum and as she has become increasingly aware of wider environmental issues, her focus on plastic pollution has broadened to include the climate crisis, and overall environmental degradation. We aim here to highlight the role that emotion has played within Lucie's journey. Lucie's words are included as quotation and italicised such that her voice is amplified and her emotional experiences, hopes, and fears surfaced (Pain et al., 2010).

2 | CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS AND THE RISE OF YOUTH ACTIVISM

"We are in unprecedented territory when it comes to climate change. How young people choose to tackle this problem will be a major factor that sets the world on its future path." (Ojala, 2018, p. 11)

The terms activism, child and youth underpin much of the discussion herein and thus are key elements to define. Activism can be defined as "the use of vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2020, n.p.). Activists are often portrayed by mainstream media and wider society as a disruptive and troublesome group of individuals, and the label activist can bring negative connotations (Parsons, 2016). However, programmes such as the UN's international year of volunteers and the UK's 25-year environmental plan encourage children and youth to become green ambassadors through social action. Though social action is typically less disruptive than activism, given their shared goals, the two terms are interrelated. For the purpose of this paper, the term activism is used to encapsulate the two.

Child and youth are two expressions often used interchangeably when referring to a homogenous group defined by age; however, there are marked differences. While both words are interpretive, varying in definition across socio-cultural, spatial, and temporal scales, the definition of child is more widely agreed. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides perhaps the most commonly subscribed definition both across governmental and societal laws, stating a child is "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (UN, 1989, n.p.). The term youth, however, is more ambiguous. The UN defines youth as anyone between 15 and 24 years, adding the clause "without prejudice to other definitions by Member States" (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013, p. 1), highlighting the complexities of applying a fixed definition. We use the terms child and youth herein as catch-alls, applying them interchangeably throughout to refer to anyone within these two age categories. We do this intentionally as Lucie has, under the UN definition, not yet reached an age that is considered youth, yet is engaged in a wealth of activities that are considered as youth activism.

Children are not only one of the groups most adversely affected by the impacts of modern-day environmental change, they are also the generation that will continue to suffer the consequences of the human impact on the climate and environment into the future (UNICEF, 2015). As MacDonald attests, “the interpretation and implementation of human rights as environmental human rights should explicitly consider children as the holders, recipients or beneficiaries of environ- mental rights” (2006, p. 2). Indeed, the UNCRC places the rights of children into international law and policy, and ensures children are raised in a safe and healthy environment (United Nations, 1989: Article 2 and Article 24). Meanwhile, the Report on the Rights of Children and the Environment recognises a need to facilitate the participation of children in environmental decision-making processes, and protect them from reprisals for expressing their views on environmental matters (UNGA, 2018).

Within this context, there is a growing movement of children and youth challenging the adult-led world, asking for their voices to be heard, and pressing for change (O'Brien et al., 2018). Dissatisfied with adults’ continuous mistreatment of the planet, they are seeking participation in traditionally adult domains and rising against the global status quo of “business as usual” (O'Brien et al., 2018). These youth increasingly view adults as irresponsible stewards of the planet (Bandura & Cherry, 2019, p. 2) and feel their own contributions are excluded or discredited by adults (Trajber et al., 2019).

In some cases, these inherently negative emotions are channelled positively and, much like Lucie, a growing number of youth are making change through social action, with a recent study finding 74% (>4000 people) of young people believing they can make a difference in the world (iWill, 2019):

It feels like I have a responsibility and I am making the world a better place. I can tell important people like the government what I am doing with more confidence as I’ve done it before with the NCB. (National Children’s Bureau)

We are making species that are already under threat critically endangered, even extinct! Whales gulp down plastic and seahorses grab onto earbuds as the current carries them away. I am doing this because I want people to listen. People need to listen. Otherwise bye bye human civilisation. That’s why I am doing this so that people will listen. (Lucie, 2019)

This activism is directly challenging the stereotype of “lazy, entitled, self-obsessed” (Pires, 2018) youth. Instead, they enter debates that dissent from prevailing norms, beliefs, and practices, and consequently challenge the unjust use of power in decision making (O'Brien et al., 2018). They act as political agents in diverse ways, and use innovative approaches to make positive contributions to their local society and the world at large (O'Brien et al., 2018; Trott, 2021). Nonetheless, the rise of youth activism does not translate to *all* youth participating in such matters, and for various and compounding reasons, there are many who do not, or are unable to, engage in such debates (Head, 2016; Machin, 2013; Meijnders et al., 2001; Ojala, 2015; Walker, 2020). For those children who are, however, their right to do so is not always embraced and realised, and is instead contested and resisted.

Children and youth are viewed through a myriad of lenses. Their shorter life experience compared with that of adults often excludes their voice from meaningful debates, with decisions to do so being framed within the notion of “adults know best” (Checkoway, 1996; Taft, 2019). Particularly within the framing of global issues, youth are rarely positioned as unique beings with worthwhile opinions and consequently many express a dissatisfaction towards the condescending responses their activism receives (Gordon & Taft, 2011). Further silencing their voice, when activism threatens the key economic interests of the state, businesses, and individuals, active attempts to silence, exclude, or repress these voices are made (O'Brien et al., 2018). Despite the barriers posed by adults, however, the movement of children pressing for change is increasing.

3 | OUR APPROACH

The purpose of this paper is to give the reader a glimpse into the emotional journey of a climate activist. We recognise that Lucie is just one subject and that the journey of any activist is a unique experience. We also recognise that youth implement their action via various means and are motivated

to do so for a multitude of reasons, all the while experiencing different emotions and having access to varying degrees of socio-economic capital. Nevertheless, by providing a detailed and individualised lens to Lucie's journey, and drawing links between this and the wider academic literature, we provide a qualitative piece that contextualises, develops, and offers an alternative perspective to existing research.

We have embodied a children's rights informed approach, where Lucie, the child, is viewed and treated as an individual with a distinct set of rights, instead of a passive object of care, protection, and charity. Through the process of information-sharing and interactive dialogue among writers based on mutual respect (UNCRC, 2009), the “duty bearers” (adults) ensured Lucie was supported and encouraged to be an active participant throughout (Marshall et al., 2015).

All authors have an existing relationship with Lucie (one co-author is her mother, one a close family friend, and one has worked with Lucie on a previous research project). As three academics with an interest in youth activism, all have closely followed her activism journey from the outset. During exploratory discussions, the adult authors asked Lucie if she would like to collectively write a paper to communicate her personal journey. We decided the adult role within the paper was to enable Lucie to be both the researcher and the researched, co-constructing the meaning of her journey together, and enabling Lucie to shape the scope and direction of the paper. We thus adopted an autoethnographic approach, and co-constructed knowledge via collaborative dialogue.

As Anderson succinctly writes:

“Participants in collaborative-dialogue are always on the way to learning and understanding and being careful to not assume or fill in the meaning and information gaps. In other words, participants mutually ‘inquire into’ something that has relevance for them. ... a listener-speaker not only listens attentively but also responds so as to make sure that they have heard the other person as best they can.” (2014, p. 67)

This matched our unique circumstances, close relationships, and the spontaneity of data collection (often *ad hoc* conversations), though we realised we needed to situate this within a more rigid framework of overarching questions to guide and shape the research. Lucie made it clear that initially, she would prefer written questions, explaining “*I am much better at giving an answer when I have time to think about it. I prefer writing answers to answering on the spot*.”

The questions were formulated by the adult researchers and were given to Lucie to respond to in her own time. This provided space to gather her thoughts, and enabled the adult researchers to reflect on her responses before presenting further dialogue. Lucie also kept a diary of her activities, and the emotions that she felt before, during, and after key events. Not only did the diary allow space for Lucie to consciously reflect, when shared among the team it was particularly useful in extending dialogues. A mix of oral and written dialogues between Lucie and the other authors took place over the period of one year.

Though we make no claim that this paper is omitted of adult interpretation, Lucie's perception and opinion has always been forefront and centre. By adopting the approach of co-constructed autoethnography, the window of opportunity for collecting data was much wider, blurring the lines between data collection and analysis, allowing Lucie's input to be on- going, reflexive, and emergent, as opposed to the constraints of fixed data collection points.

As the paper approached its final draft, the co-authors met with Lucie, where collaborative dialogue provided further quotations, context, and amendments as Lucie changed, clarified, or removed elements of the paper to suit her experiences, thoughts, and emotions. We believe this iterative process allowed Lucie's story to be accurately represented, though again, we highlight the multiple lenses of the adult researchers through which this story has ultimately passed.

Indeed, not all of Lucie's words could be included in this paper and a selection process was necessary. It was import- ant, we felt, to ensure that Lucie's key points were made clear in her own words within the paper. We decided this would best be achieved by categorising her direct responses into themes of emotion, and ensuring her words were used to rep- resent each of these themes within the paper. The language used in this paper has been agreed and understood by all the authors, and clarity has been provided where needed.

The creative artistic representation (Figure 1) was developed to support the text, and visually demonstrate Lucie's emotional journey. It also acted as a useful engagement tool between the four researchers. Lucie explained to the rest of the team that she would like to present her journey in a format suitable for children and adults, deciding on drawings as the most accessible format. Having already seen a co-author's artwork from a previous project, Lucie asked for their support in creating this visual representation. Lucie's diary entries provided the context for a first draft, which was further developed and modified under the direct instruction of Lucie.

We have actively engaged with the Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) (Graham et al., 2013) resources and have aligned our practices to the ERIC Charter. Ethical approval was gained from the University of Hull ethics committees, and included written informed consent to participate from both Lucie and her mother, co-researcher Katie Parsons. We ensured Lucie only participated when and if she wanted, remaining conscious of, and responding to, the naturally occurring power imbalance between parent and child, and adult and child. Consent to participate and include her words in publications was an ongoing process with Lucie.

Before embarking further, it is necessary to provide some context about Lucie. Lucie comes from a white middle- class family residing in England, with two parents who are actively engaged in research. Her race, class, residency in a Global North country and parental occupation mean she has not confronted the same barriers that youth with differing backgrounds might encounter and instead, her identity has likely facilitated her activism. Highlighting this is not to diminish or minimise Lucie's achievements however, nor is it to suggest that she has not faced barriers, or that people from different backgrounds cannot partake in activism. Instead, by providing such transparency, her story offers a relevant and instructive perspective to the wider debate, with recognition of the context in which it is given.

FIGURE 1 Lucie's journey

4 | THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN LUCIE'S JOURNEY

Holding a position as an environmental activist has taken Lucie on a turbulent journey and her emotions have been far from static, often experiencing multiple emotions at a time. They have ebbed and flowed between both those that she deems positive – hope, self-belief, acceptance, empowerment, and confidence – and those that are inherently negative – fear, frustration, exclusion, despair, and anxiety. The following section will take a deeper look into some of these emotions, marrying Lucie's words and experiences with the existing literature. We begin with her initial emotional response to *Blue Planet II*, the catalyst for her action:

I can remember watching that bit, with the mummy whale carrying its baby through the ocean even though it was dead. She had poisoned it with its milk by accident because she [the mother whale] had eaten plastic. I re- member just feeling really, really upset. How could we be letting this happen? As soon as I watched it, I started to make a poster. I said to my brother come on we need to do something about this. So, I made the poster of the baby whale and its mummy, and then my mummy

took a photo and put it on Twitter. I'm not sure if I'd have started doing what I do if I hadn't seen this, it really upset me. (Lucie, 2019)

Lucie recognised the power that emotion played here. She notes how this clip and her subsequent upset prompted her to action and, in 2019, she utilised this knowledge to prompt her peers into similar action, encouraging them to join a child- initiated and -directed lunchtime school club, Eco-Squad:

Me and my friends decided to do a presentation in our school assembly and we showed some of the Blue Planet film. We did that because we hoped it would get people to join our 'Eco-Squad' school group. Only the people who got upset from the film joined though. (Lucie, 2019)

Much of the literature supports the importance of emotional appeal when communicating environmental issues (Damasio, 2008; Gustafsson et al., 2009; Nabi et al., 2018; Ojala, 2015; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014). However, historically, science communication has often failed to recognise this, relying instead on information transfer. Nabi et al. (2018) highlight how alone, this rarely leads to behavioural change within societies and, in light of this, a growing attention towards the role of emotion in the formulation and adjustment of public environmental attitudes has occurred, with both positive and negative emotions found to influence public behaviour (Feldman & Hart, 2016). Emotions of particular interest, both in Lucie's case and within the literature, are fear and hope, and while Lucie believes it was her empathic sadness in response to the *Blue Planet II* footage that saw her take initial action, she recognises fear as one of the main driving forces for her continued action:

It was after my first speech, about 6 months after watching Blue Planet, when I really started to get scared. I started to understand it all a lot more, climate change and stuff. I think that is what has kept me going. (Lucie, 2019)

In continuing within this theme, Lucie has expressed both fear and anxiety over her time as an environmental activist:

I worry that the earth will blow up from the heat and pressure that we are putting on it or that it will turn into a bleak, grey place with no life whatsoever. I'm scared that my village will get wiped out in a heatwave. Then we will start to starve. I will lose contact with my friends and neighbours and then my village will become clogged in smoke and no one will be able to breathe. For my family that's my worst ever fear. For something to happen to them. I keep picturing in my head them not being able to breathe, stale air and covered in plastic. They are in bed with high temperatures, thin, shallow and starving. In my future, I want to have children, to have a nice life. I am scared I'll not be able to live to 50 at this rate. This is so serious. I am scared, scared for the world, scared for my village and for my family and me. (Lucie, 2019)

Because of her passion for the environment and its future, Lucie has actively sought information around these topics. She recently read Greta Thunberg's book (2019) and, under the supervision of an adult, has watched relevant documentaries and sought online resources, perhaps exposing her to a larger amount of emotional content and information than most 11-year-olds would typically access. With an awareness of how too much exposure might impact Lucie's mental health, her parents have managed her access. Nevertheless, some of Lucie's expressions manifest signs of what is now commonly termed eco-anxiety (Ojala, 2018). When Lucie talks about her fears for the future, her imaginaries sometimes seem apocalyptic, laden with strong emotions over the welfare of her family and loved ones. Yet, while it may be her active seeking for information that has magnified this fear and anxiety, she specifically sites her activism as the tool that helps her manage these emotions:

Every day I worry about it [the environmental and climate crisis]. I only feel better when I am part of solving it, like when I do speeches, litter picks and when I'm with other environmentalists. That kind of thing. (Lucie, 2019)

For Lucie, her fears and anxiety are accompanied with hope:

Humans made the problem, but humans can also find the solution. Yes, I get scared about the future, but if everyone really tries, we can change it. We just have to be hopeful and believe in ourselves. (Lucie, 2019)

Hope is intrinsically linked to fear in that it surfaces as a response to negative or uncertain situations (Nabi et al., 2018). The difference lies in that hope is associated with more positive expectations for the future. We reside with both Snyder et al.'s definition of hope as "a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy), and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)" (Snyder et al., 1991, p. 287). For Lucie hope is: "*When you believe that something can happen*."

Our collective analytical lens has led us to believe hope as the vehicle that has propelled Lucie through her journey as an environmental activist thus far, and is what enabled her to turn her initial upset and fears into action. Indeed, while Lucie positions her fear and sadness as the motivation for her action, much of the literature criticises the use of fear alone as a motivational tool to engage the public in the climate crisis as "when frightened about a threat that seems individually uncontrollable, many individuals purposively disengage, via psychological distancing, as a form of emotion-focused coping" (Smith & Leiserowitz, 2014). This psychological distancing and emotion-focussed coping is a form of fear control.

A sense of self-efficacy and response-efficacy, that is, the perception that one can take action against a threat and whether or not the action will be effective in reducing the threat respectively, is key in determining an individual's fear or danger control (Feldman & Hart, 2016). Where self and/or response efficacy is high, the chance of an individual engaging in action to mitigate a threat is increased (danger control). However, where one or both of these are lacking, the likelihood of the person engaging in a process of denial, taking no mitigating action to reduce the threat (fear control) is increased (Hart & Feldman, 2014). Lucie demonstrates both high self and response efficacy:

I believe in myself to make a difference and I know what I'm doing will make a change. I think the litter picks make a big difference, and the speeches. I do them to quite a lot of people and to people who can make a difference, like the scientists at EGU and business people at the Waterline conference. So, if they all take something back with them, then that will make a big difference.

Lucie has achieved a great deal during her journey as an environmental activist and has received positive attention from numerous sources in light of this. Lucie recognises her achievements, and the encouraging words of others, as key internal and external motivators for continued activism and as the driving forces for her continuous increase in self-efficacy, and belief that the future will be bright:

I believe in myself more now that I've done all the speeches. There was people at the Waterline conference that said they were going to change their carbon footprint because of my talks so I'm really proud of myself for that. It's so good to actually see the difference you are making.

It makes me feel that people believe in me and if other people believe in me then I believe in myself too. She also believes she will continue to make a difference throughout her life course:

When I'm older I want to be a marine biologist and come up with a way of getting rid of all the plastic without harming the environment. We can solve this.

With Bandura (1997) positioning self-efficacy as the strongest predictor of behaviour, we suggest that as her confidence has increased, so too has the strength and impact of her actions.

Aiding this is the support of Lucie's newfound communities. Over time, Lucie's activism has connected her with like- minded children and adults, transitioning her from a solo activist to one of a community. This collective engagement has provided her a cultural identity and sense of belonging, both of which are determinants in self-efficacy, hope and wellbeing, specifically in relation to environmental issues

(Ojala, 2018). The narrative of not being alone and instead being part of a collective has been important for Lucie:

It's nice to be part of a group, we're all in it together doing our little bit as part of a group. That's a good feeling.

For Lucie, her activism has aided the pressures that her fears sometimes put on her. By actively finding and being involved in the solutions to the problems she is anxious about, and basing herself within several groups where collective action is tak- ing place, we return back to the emotion of hope (Ojala, 2018). We believe it is this hope, both individual and collective, that has allowed Lucie to overcome moments of overwhelm, and has facilitated and driven her continued activism:

When anyone puts their mind to something, they can achieve anything.

Nevertheless, while this journey has allowed her to find her place within society, it has simultaneously marginalised her from other groups. Lucie has experienced rejection from some peers, and has experienced active resistance from adults whom have contested her participation and rights to a voice within the context of environmental and climatic change. This has been an upsetting and challenging experience for Lucie:

Some of the people at my school try make fun of me. Some just mess around. Whilst we were trying to organise eco- squad, the boys were going to me, "yeah let's throw plastic all over the place." It does hurt my feelings but I try not to show them that it has got to me. My mum helps me, she supports me.

I don't feel like grown-ups at school listen to me, even though I'm on the school council. I don't think they see children as able to solve problems, instead we are just there to organise events and for them to talk to us. Like "here make a poster." That's it.

Youth participation in social action significantly outweighs that of adults. In a recent study, 68% of youth respondents had participated in volunteering or other forms of social action, while only 5% of adults thought today's youth were very likely to be involved in social action (Partridge et al., 2018). There is a clear disconnect between youths' realities and adult perceptions of youth and, along with the stigmas that exist around children and youth touched on earlier, this may explain some of the resistance Lucie has felt from adults.

The same study also found young girls more likely to engage in social action than young boys. Interestingly, Lucie cites male peers as showcasing the most resistance. With additional studies finding negative peer pressure as one of the main barriers to youth activism (Birdwell et al., 2013) and with the values-perception gap leading to many youth not acting on issues they care about (see Global Action Plan UK and Unilever, 2021), this trajectory warrants further exploration.

Finally, we acknowledge that we present the experience of one individual, and there exists a multitude of reasons why this journey is not directly applicable to all youth activists. Lucie has a significant amount of social capital. As a youth from a white, middle-class household residing in the Global North, she experiences fewer participation barriers than many other youth. She has access to free education and has her basic needs met, allowing her the space to participate in global issues. She is a confident speaker, and under her own admission is "*an emotional person*." There are many activists engaging differently to Lucie, making their mark as they see fit, experiencing and processing emotions unique to them and their journey. As too, there are many youth who, for reasons beyond their capacity, are unable to access the tools, space, or capital that Lucie does. It has never been the purpose of this paper to be representative of a homogenous group. In writing this, we recognise and celebrate the individual lens it presents.

5 | CONCLUSIONS

Children and youth, and their positive contributions in the fight against the climate crisis, are critical as we transcend through the Anthropocene. A deeper understanding of these emotions, how they are experienced, and how they can best be supported and indeed leveraged is critical to ensuring a liveable world in the future. In providing a detailed, yet subjective, account that considers how emotion both facilitates and on occasion hinders Lucie's activism, we have contributed a new angle to an increasing body of literature.

Lucie expresses fear and anxiety over the climate and environmental crisis. However, with a strong sense of self and response efficacy, she is hopeful the future will be brighter than existing predictions, on the condition that people like herself take action. We believe this positive approach to the climate crisis propels her through her journey, with hope being the most imperative of all emotions experienced. Hope comes from her activism, and her activism is the barrier be- tween herself and eco-anxiety. It is the force not only good for wider society, but for her own mental health and wellbeing.

Generally, Lucie has had her participation and environmental rights recognised and embraced; however, there are instances where they are not. Processing these instances has been challenging, but with appropriate support from both adults and fellow children/youth, Lucie has overcome these moments. It is clear the turbidity of a youth activist's emotional journey needs to be considered and handled delicately by those working with, and those closest to, youth activists.

While Lucie's story is personal to her, she is not alone in her fight against the environmental and climate crisis. With children embarking on these journeys around the world, it is hope that all of the authors of this paper take forward.

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