

EXTRA EXTRA!

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How New Yorkers share their climate worries

This is an edited version of a story from
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In a small room in Lower Manhattan, a group of eight New Yorkers sat in a circle sharing their climate fears against the background of pattering rain and wailing sirens.

It was an example of a new grass-roots movement called climate cafes. These in-person and online groups are places for people to discuss their grief, fears, anxiety and other emotions about the climate crisis.

They are springing up in cities across the United States — including Los Angeles, Seattle and Boston — and around the world. It isn't clear how many exist, but Rebecca Nestor of the Climate Psychology Alliance, a nonprofit that trains facilitators, said the number of cafes had greatly increased in the past three years. The group has trained about 350 people to run climate cafes in the US, Canada, and Europe.

Since June 2023, Olivia Ferraro, 24, who works in finance, has hosted more than 20 intimate climate cafes in New York City that have had between five and 20 attendees.

On a recent drizzly, unseasonably warm



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January evening, Ms. Ferraro prepped for her meeting.

She arranged 10 chairs into a circle near a brick wall, and set out grapes, sparkling water, plantain chips and brought out reusable cups.

Slowly, people from every part of the city trickled in. After some small talk, Ms Ferraro shared the rules for the evening. She explained that it was not intended as a substitute for clinical care.

The attendees, over the course of an hour, described worrying for their future children and future generations more broadly. They described feeling overwhelmed, not only by climate change but also by the political climate.

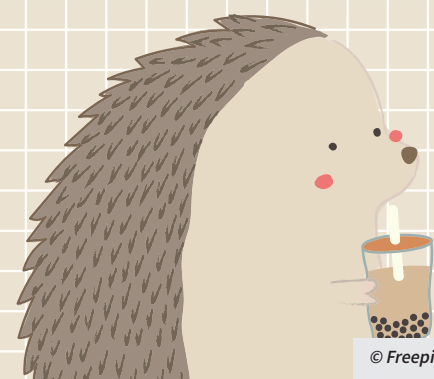
"I can't buy into the narrative anymore that there's no choice in how this ends and that major corporations have complete control over my future," said Sheila McMenamin, 32, who lives in Brooklyn.

"They do not have total control, and I refuse to cede that," she said, as other participants hummed in agreement.

TRUE OR FALSE?

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In Japan there are special hedgehog cafes, for fans of the spiky animals.



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