



One of our very favourite organisations, [The Reader Organisation](http://www.thereader.org.uk) ([www.thereader.org.uk](http://www.thereader.org.uk)) introduced us to power of reading aloud groups. Their ‘Get Into Reading’ groups are springing up all over the country and we think they’re an amazing way to **connect**, **keep learning**, **take notice**, **give** and **care**!

We were inspired to use their approach in our DIY Happiness ‘Planet: care’ workshop and discovered the power of reading this piece out loud in a group setting.

Because thinking about how to save the planet can sometimes feel completely hopeless, we use this piece by Carl Sagan to inspire and connect us all to the bigger picture. It’s a great reminder that we’re all in this together.

## What to do

Volunteers can each read a paragraph aloud to the group. Encourage group members who are not used to reading to give it a try - but don’t push people. If you’re a group leader and no one volunteers – read it aloud yourself! (Please note: Reading it in silence is much less powerful.)

Once the group has finished reading, it’s useful to start by discussing the impact of the words themselves on the group, and then widen the discussion to explore ‘sustainable happiness’ and encourage group members to share what they know about ways to save the planet.

For a useful framework for sustainable happiness – see the [happy planet index](http://www.happyplanetindex.org) ([www.happyplanetindex.org](http://www.happyplanetindex.org))

## Don’t forget:

Collect all your great tips about caring for the planet and places that care for the planet and post them on the WoW website!



# Wheel of Well-being that pale blue dot



It's been 20 years since the famous "pale blue dot" photo was taken – the Earth, as seen from Voyager 1, while on the edge of our solar system (about 3,762,136,324 miles from home). American astronomer, astrophysicist, cosmologist, author and highly successful science communicator, Carl Sagan's words are always worth reading aloud.

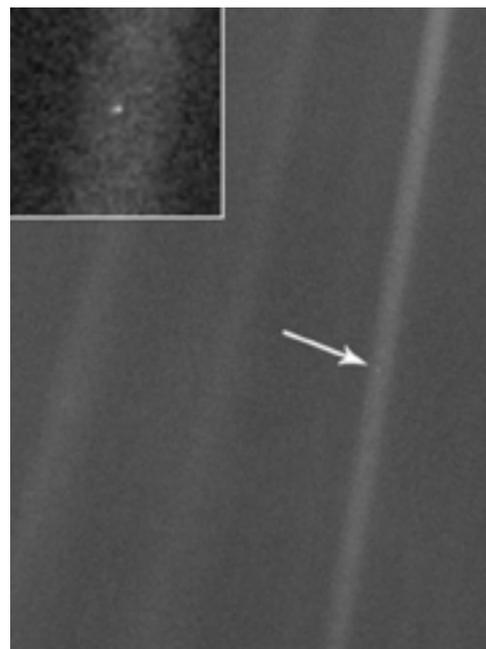
*"Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every 'superstar,' every 'supreme leader,' every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there – on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.*

*The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.*

*Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.*

*The Earth is the only world known so far to harbour life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment the Earth is where we make our stand.*

*It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character-building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."*



Carl Sagan, 14 Feb 1990

