

‘What did you do when you learned about climate change?’

Rabbi Judy Weiss, Brookline, Mass.

Kudos to Dave Ullman for his excellent column on how the earth’s geological history helps us understand modern human-caused climate change (Loud & Clear, Aug. 26, 2017), and why we must create our own path for how to restore stability to the climate system. Ullman is certainly right when he says “While we can each do our part as individuals, lasting and substantial change must come from our institutions.”

When I think about climate change, I think about my grandkids, and I wonder how old they’ll be when they first ask me: “What did you do when you learned about climate change?” What will I be able to say to them?

I can tell them that first I stopped eating meat. Then over a period of years I slowly added other things: installed LEDs, composted kitchen waste, restricted my air travel, opted to buy 100 percent locally produced renewable electricity, supported journalism that covers climate well and grew vegetables on the roof of my apartment building. Each of my efforts is a tiny step forward, and this problem really needs institutional-sized giant leaps.

So in the middle of walking my personal climate change path, I joined Citizens’ Climate Lobby. Then I joined other climate change organizations too. Different groups carve out their own paths to approach the problem.

I’ve learned that it’s easy to choose one thing to do, and after doing it for a while, it feels real good. It makes me want to add another, and another. And it’s easy to keep adding just one more little thing because my love for my grandkids keeps pushing me. And none of it is too hard, and it’s all for the greater good.

So, what will you tell your grandkids?

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