

# Green Feminism

## EXTENDING THE CONCEPT OF CARE

Snippets from *Dare to Care*



# THE BOOKLET

- These slides present snippets from the booklet “Dare to Care: Ecofeminism as a source of inspiration” (Green European Foundation & Oikos, 2022) by Marie-Monique Franssen, Philsan Osman and Dirk Holemans.
- The booklet sources inspiration from ecofeminism and explores the potential in care to lead us out of the harmful systems of the present day

"Can care offer us a fresh start based on interconnectedness, and generosity? How can care, as an emancipatory principle, underpin politics and the economy?"



# ECOFEMINISM AND INTERSECTIONALITY

"Ecofeminism is first and foremost a political framework, a lens through which to look critically at the world, exploring 'the interconnections of dominance between humans and between humans and the earth'. It is a perspective that clearly shows that environmental destruction and social oppression have the same origin."

"As a child of third-wave feminism, ecofeminism has historically made the connection between gender, race and the destruction of the environment, but now the time has come to incorporate intersectionality into the movement. With the help of new discourses about care, responsibility and justice, we can introduce a breath of fresh air into the various ways in which humanity relates to nature."



# THE CONNECTION OF ECOFEMINISM & CARE

“One of the main themes running through this body of thought [ecofeminism] is the question of care for the community. What are the social, biological and emotional conditions for looking after, repairing and healing damaged communities and environments?”

“We need a new logic, one that views each person as part of a web of relationships, that ties individual wellbeing to the flourishing of others and considers the importance of healthy relationships and context.”



# The Distorted Starting Point: THE NATURE AS AN OBJECT

"Many historians and philosophers of science point to the Enlightenment and the advance of modern science as the period in which people began to atomise, objectify and dissect nature. In doing so, we evolved from an organic worldview to a mechanical one."

"This [legacy] is reflected in, among other things, the way governments and industry try to solve the climate crisis: they are hoping that by throwing more innovation and more technology at the problem they can fix both the earth and the climate, as though they were a machine and its thermostat."



# The Distorted Starting Point: DUALISM

"On one side of the dichotomy you had the superior ratio, the mind, culture, transcendence, science and the masculine. On the other side inferior matter, the emotional, physical, caring, natural, the feminine."

"Household chores form the background that facilitates 'the real work', the work of men. Non-human nature is viewed in the same way: it is still seen as the backdrop against which human life unfolds."



# ADAPTING CARE IN SOCIETIES

"Our new view of humanity: relationships, connectedness, empathy, solidarity and dependence."

"All new-born babies are helpless and dependent on care and love. That is not a shortcoming, but the reality of human nature."

"Human beings want to care and be cared for."

"Competition and competitiveness will never disappear. It is our environment that helps determine what kind of behaviour reigns supreme. So imagine designing society in such a way that competitiveness does not push care away, but that instead we start competing to offer the best possible care. This can make competition a force for good that enables us to take increasingly better care of one another and the planet."



# EXTENDING THE UNDERSTANDING OF CARE

"Who do we want to take care of? Acknowledging that we exist in-and-through relationships gives us an answer to that question. Acknowledging that we are at one with life forces us to look after the plurality of life forms and encourages active solidarity. It transcends what we traditionally define as 'care'."

"There is nothing idealistic about care and caring; it can be joyful as well as demanding, incredibly absorbing but also exploitative. The latter is particularly true in an unequal world in which women and carers from marginalised groups still experience discrimination. Under a collective approach to care, we would share and divide caring responsibilities."



# WANT MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT?



**Read the whole booklet:**

**[www.gef.eu/publication/dare-to-care](http://www.gef.eu/publication/dare-to-care)**