



*Inspiring young people to think about the world,
their relationship to it, and their ability to
influence it in an entirely new way.*

Jaimie P. Cloud, President
www.cloudinstitute.org

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Sustainability

“The possibility that human and other life
will flourish on the planet forever”
John R. Ehrenfeld

Sustainability

“The will and capacity to thrive over time
in our interdependent, diverse and ever-changing world”

Jaimie P. Cloud

Dear Mom, Dad, Ethan and Dylan,

I am writing to you about something we are learning in school. It is called Sustainability and it means when people get what they want without trashing the world so animals and other people can get what they want and need.



Are we Educating *for* un-sustainability by Educating *about* un-sustainability?

What the new brain science
is telling us about the effects...

What system dynamicists say about
the effects of treating symptoms

One Problem is the focus on Problems and on their Symptoms...

- The more you focus on the problem, the more you reinforce the thinking that caused the problem
- When we focus on the problems, we generate dopamine in our brains and it's exciting...but it doesn't contribute to our ability to make systemic change
- When we focus on the problems, it puts our brains in a threat state, thus shuts down creativity, systemic thinking, learning, empathy, futures thinking, mindfulness, meta-cognition...
- When we focus on the symptoms of the problems, we make things worse over time and create new problems.
It is an archetype in system dynamics called, "Shifting the Burden"

“Problem Admiration”

Problem admiration is
the tendency to describe a problem so well
that the focus shifts to dwelling on the description
instead of actually addressing the problem.

Current examples in Curriculum and Instruction

- “I teach my Pre-K students about the environment – we focus on air pollution”
- “I spend 6 weeks teaching my 1st grade students about climate change”
- “...all fourth and fifth graders study Earth – Human’s Negative Impact on the Environment”
- “In this module students focus on improving human life to reduce the impact we leave behind”
- “I introduce the concept of eco-anxiety. I explain that it is perfectly normal and isn’t something to be afraid of...”
- “We teach about Natural Disasters!”
- “Sustainability is in the curriculum – we teach about climate change, loss of biodiversity, pollution, poverty, inequity, injustice, deforestation...”

Examples of current student thinking

(my graduate students)

“We can build a machine that replicates photosynthesis...”

What does the Conservation Law have to do with me?

Why do we need to take care of nature? We are on the top of the food chain!”

Examples of current student thinking

(my graduate students)

It wasn't me! I meant well...

Examples of some State Education Departments

“We are discontinuing our
Diversity Equity and Inclusion Programs”

[Fairness only applies to “us”, not to “them”]

1. Scarcity Is Presented as an Axiom

From New Jersey (grades K through 12, repeated across every grade band):

- "6.1.1.A: Identify scarcity of resources within the family."
- "6.1.2.A: Identify scarcity of resources within the school community."
- "6.1.4.A: Identify scarcity of resources in a local community."

From a New York standard:

- "K.9c: Scarcity is the condition of not being able to have all of the goods and services that a person wants or needs."

2. "Scarcity" and "Limited Resources" Are Used Interchangeably

"Explaining that scarcity (limited resources) requires people to make choices..." (Virginia, repeated across elementary and high school)

"Scarcity is the condition of not having all the goods and services wanted because resources are limited." (New Jersey, 6.1.6-8.D)

"1.9a: Scarcity means that people's wants exceed their limited resources." (New York)

3. Scarcity Is Introduced at the Earliest Possible Age and Never Revisited Critically

From the NJ standards progression:

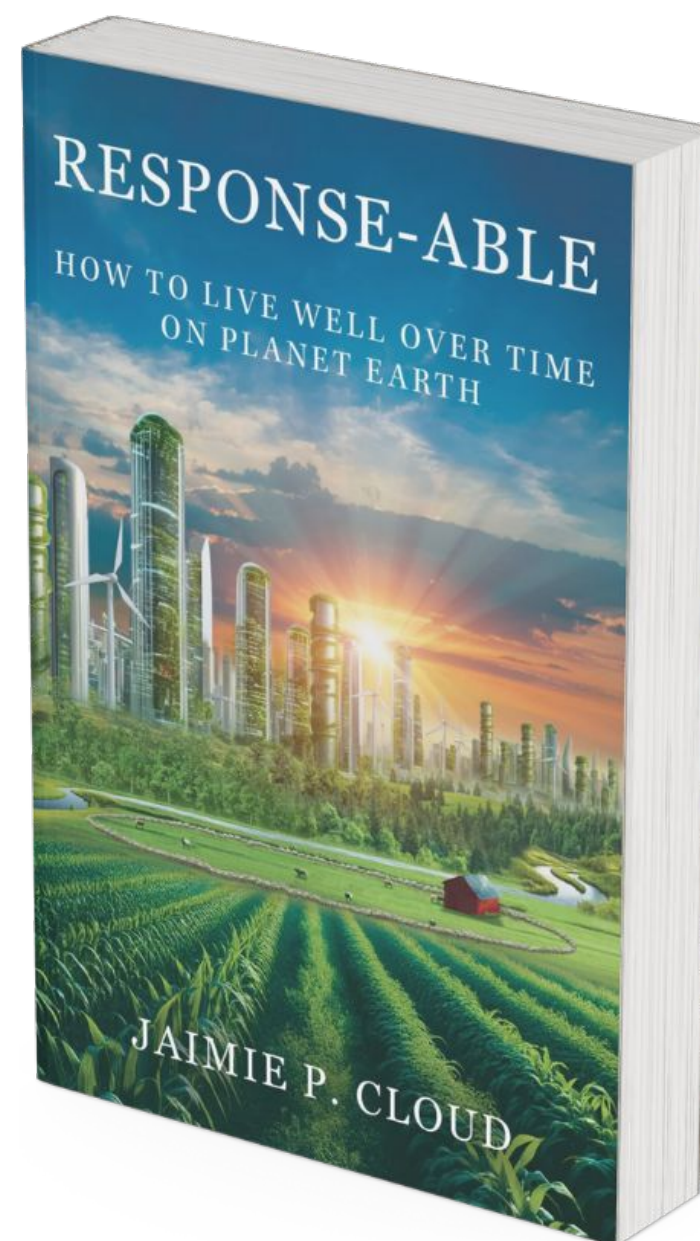
- Kindergarten: "Identify how scarcity influences choice."
- Grade 1: "Identify scarcity of resources within the family."
- Grade 2: "Identify scarcity of resources within the school community."
- Grade 4: "Identify scarcity of resources in a local community."
- Grades 5–8: "Explain how limited resources and unlimited wants cause scarcity."
- Grades 9–12: "Predict the long-term consequences of decisions made because of scarcity."

Response-Able: How to Live Well Over Time on Planet Earth

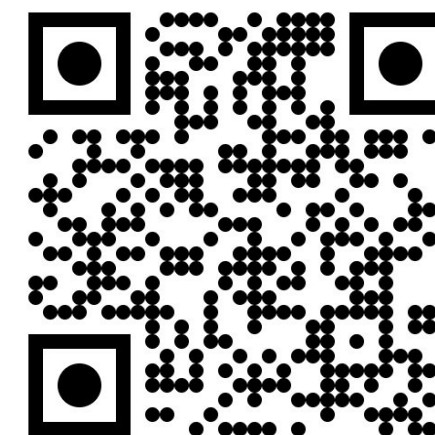
This book is for young people and all those who love them. It is an uplifting and practical book of wisdom. Written with a *game on* mindset, *Response-able* is a must read for those who want to participate in the grand course correction toward a sustainable future.



Jaimie P. Cloud is the founder and president of the Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education.



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Contact Us:



www.cloudinstitute.org



jaimie@cloudinstitute.org

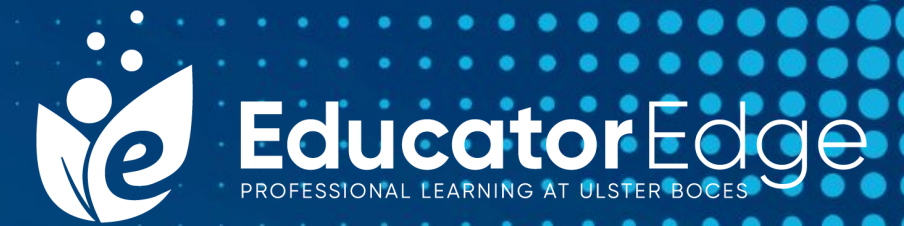
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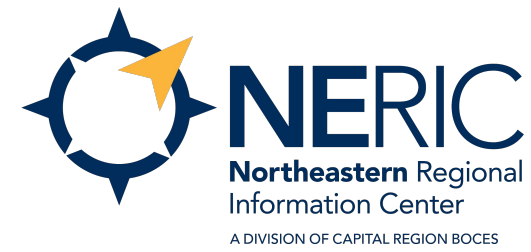
THANK YOU!



ClassDojo



alongside





THANK YOU!

