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OUR BEAUTIFUL BLUE PLANET

HAS BEEN GOING STRONG FOR

OVER 4 BILLION YEARS

(OLDER THAN YOUR GREAT GRANDMOTHER)

BUT NOW IT DESPERATELY NEEDS OUR HELP. I TRIED CALLING THE AVENGERS BUT THEY ARE BUSY SO IT'S UP TO US TO SAVE IT, AND GUESS WHAT?

WE TOTALLY HAVE THE POWER TO DO IT!

Hi! My name is Dougie.

I'm from the same (I think) awesome blue planet as you. Earth. I've always thought this giant ball of rock and gas was amazing, even when I was a kid. In between jumping around in my bedroom playing guitar (badly at the time) and skateboarding I used to find myself glued to the TV watching nature programs, climbing trees, observing ants that were farming aphids in the garden, and breeding lizards (ok, those last two are kinda weird). I guess you could say I'm a HUGE fan of Earth.



And the thing is, Earth is in trouble. You've probably heard this stuff all before, right? I know I have.

If you're like me then you're often left feeling confused. Why aren't grown-ups sorting it out? Is it actually true?



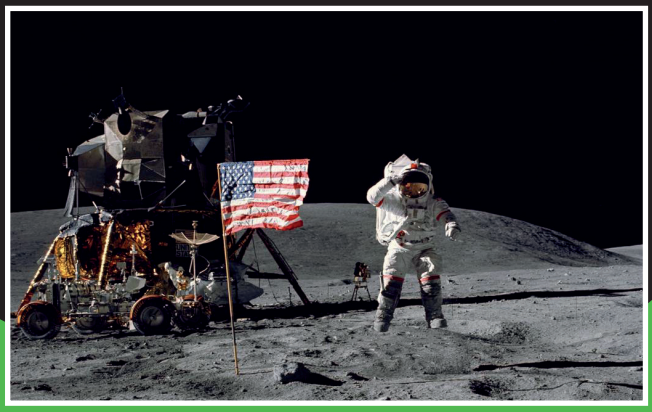
How on earth could I help? I'm just one person out of 6 BILLION people on the planet! There is a lot of information flying around out there. Especially now with so many different social media platforms

it's hard to know what's really going on and some of the info is terrifying!

'If only there was a book that pointed us in a simple and correct direction of CHANGE so we could save the world AND still have time to play football and do cool ninja chops before bed,' I hear you say. Well ladies and gentlegerms, boys and girls, cats and dogs . . . YOU'RE ALEADY READING IT!

Just by being a tad more aware of your surroundings you are helping out in a HUGE way. Somewhere along mankind's very rad evolution we picked up more bad habits than we did trash. Humans are very, very intelligent creatures. We went from inventing the wheel to landing on the moon in just a blink of the eye in earth's history.

If we spill our dinner while eating in front of the TV and make a mess on the living room floor we usually take a tiny bit of time to clear it up. We don't want to live in our own rubbish and make our parents angry, right?



Sometimes we even change our behaviours to prevent that mess happening again – for example, by using a TV dinner tray (best invention since the wheel). If we look at our problems a little like that (earth being our living room and Mother Nature being our parents) then it shouldn't be too hard to clean up some of the mess and change our behaviour without changing too much of our lifestyle.

That's where YOU come in.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

This amazing lady called Jane Goodall said

'FOR THE FIRST TIME IN EARTH'S HISTORY A SPECIES HAS THE ABILITY TO PREVENT ITSELF FROM EXTINCTION, THAT SPECIES IS US...'

5 SCARY FACTS ABOUT OUR PLANET:

1 OUR FORESTS ARE UNDER SERIOUS THREAT

31% of the Earth is covered in life-giving forests. These green areas of the world breathe in the carbon dioxide that we breathe out, and in return they produce the oxygen that we all breathe and need to survive. So as you can imagine, the more forests that are cut down, the less oxygen we have. And let's not forget about the amount of animals (more than half of the species we know of) that live in these forests that are left without homes whenever we destroy their habitat.



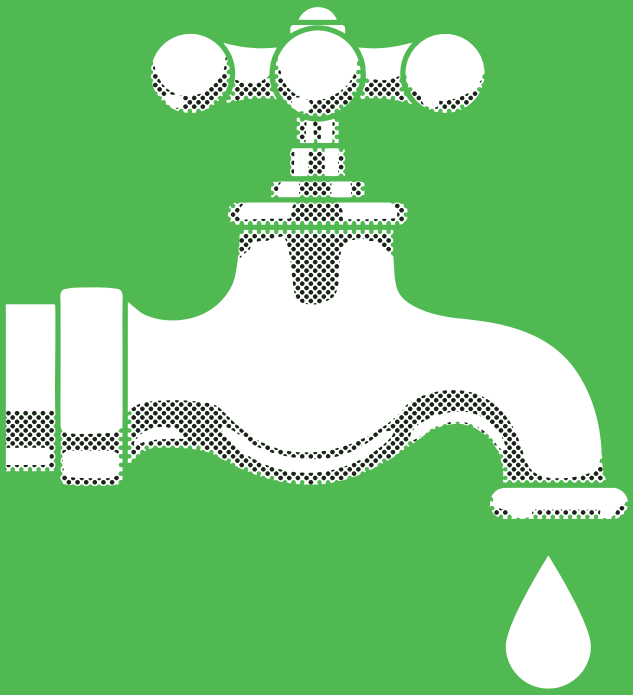


2 ANIMALS AND PLANTS ARE DISAPPEARING AT RECORD RATES

And it's not just the big ones that are under threat, like tigers and rhinos, but unseen but vital insects like dung beetles and earthworms, as well fish and coral reefs in the oceans. That's not just a tragedy in itself, but it can change whole ecosystems. If you don't have lions, for example, then the zebra and gazelle populations explode and they eat all the grass and turn huge parts of Africa into deserts. And that affects our ability to feed ourselves, discover new medicines and keep the places where those animals live healthy.

3 YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THAT THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING, GETTING WARMER ALL THE TIME

You might think that sounds great because there will be more sunny days, but in fact, it is leading to big problems like rising sea levels, more droughts and more floods, more disease and more wildfires. It's younger people who are going to feel the worst effects of climate change. That's why thousands of schoolkids around the world have been going on school strike - to tell the grown-ups to hurry up and start sorting it out.



4 THERE'S A REASON THE EARTH IS KNOWN AS THE BLUE PLANET

Most of it is water. That water is vital to all life and it's one of the most important reasons that we're here. But most of it is seawater and not available to us. Only 3% of it is fresh water that we can drink, and we're not taking enough care of the water that we do have. Most of it goes into growing crops, which is great, but it is often used wastefully and we need to be smarter about how we use it. More than a billion people don't have access to clean water and cities around the world are running short.

5 OUR AIR IS POLLUTED

We all take for granted the ability to get around in cars, buses, trains and planes, and the stuff that we use that's produced in factories around the world. But all these things pump pollution into the atmosphere and that is bad for our health. It makes it difficult to breathe and causes all sorts of other serious problems, too. On top of that, this pollution helps to cause climate change and makes it harder to grow food.

So let's recap. The forests that give over 80% of our plants and animals their homes are being cut down, at the equivalent to 27 football pitches a minute. The forests are cut down for farm land, paper and wood and more space for people to live. SCARY STUFF RIGHT!?! I had heard all that stuff before too but there was never really a SOLUTION. It seemed like it was just 'hey isn't the planet beautiful? Well, it's being destroyed. Ok bye'.

