

Opinion*nation*

Ecoanxiety in youth:

The evidence, the impacts
and how to work with it

Maxime Boivin, PhD Researcher, INSPQ; Associate Professor, Université Laval

Maria Vamvalis PhD Candidate, University of Toronto; Consultant, Educator, Researcher

Angelo Maurer Youth Climate Justice Advocate; Director, Shake Up The Establishment

30 April 2024

*Institut national
de santé publique*
Québec 

 **EcoAnalytics**

A project of
 **MakeWay**

Eco-anxiety under study



Research partner: Anne-Sophie Gousse-Lessard (UQAM)

- Eco-anxiety and environmental engagement (SHRC)
 - Literature review (until January 2024) (n=201)
 - Qualitative focus groups (n = 40)
- Psychosocial impacts of the pandemic (section on climate change) (CIHR) (Mélicca Généreux)
 - Populational survey (n=11 321)

What is eco-anxiety?

Recommended definition:

A state of psychological and sometimes physical discomfort of varying degrees, characterized by the apprehension of a more or less distant threat in the future regarding climate change, the ecological disaster and their impacts on people's way of life

(Boivin et al., to be published)

What is eco-anxiety?

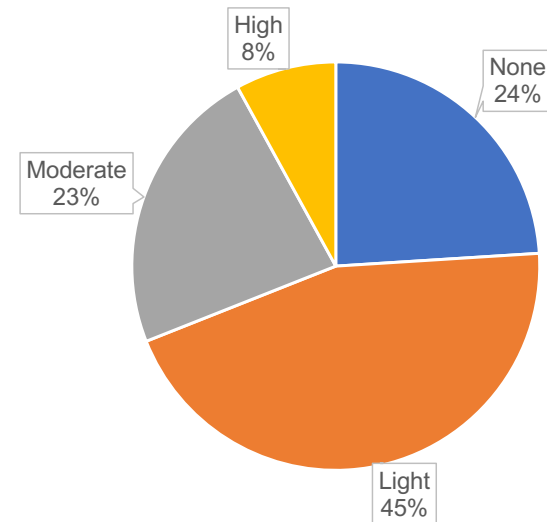
Recommended definition:

A state of psychological and sometimes physical discomfort of varying degrees, characterized by the apprehension of a more or less distant threat in the future regarding climate change, the ecological disaster and their impacts on people's way of life

(Boivin et al., to be published)

Intensity of eco-anxiety in Quebec

- 76% of people live with eco-anxiety
- Average eco-anxiety level: Low (1,75/5)

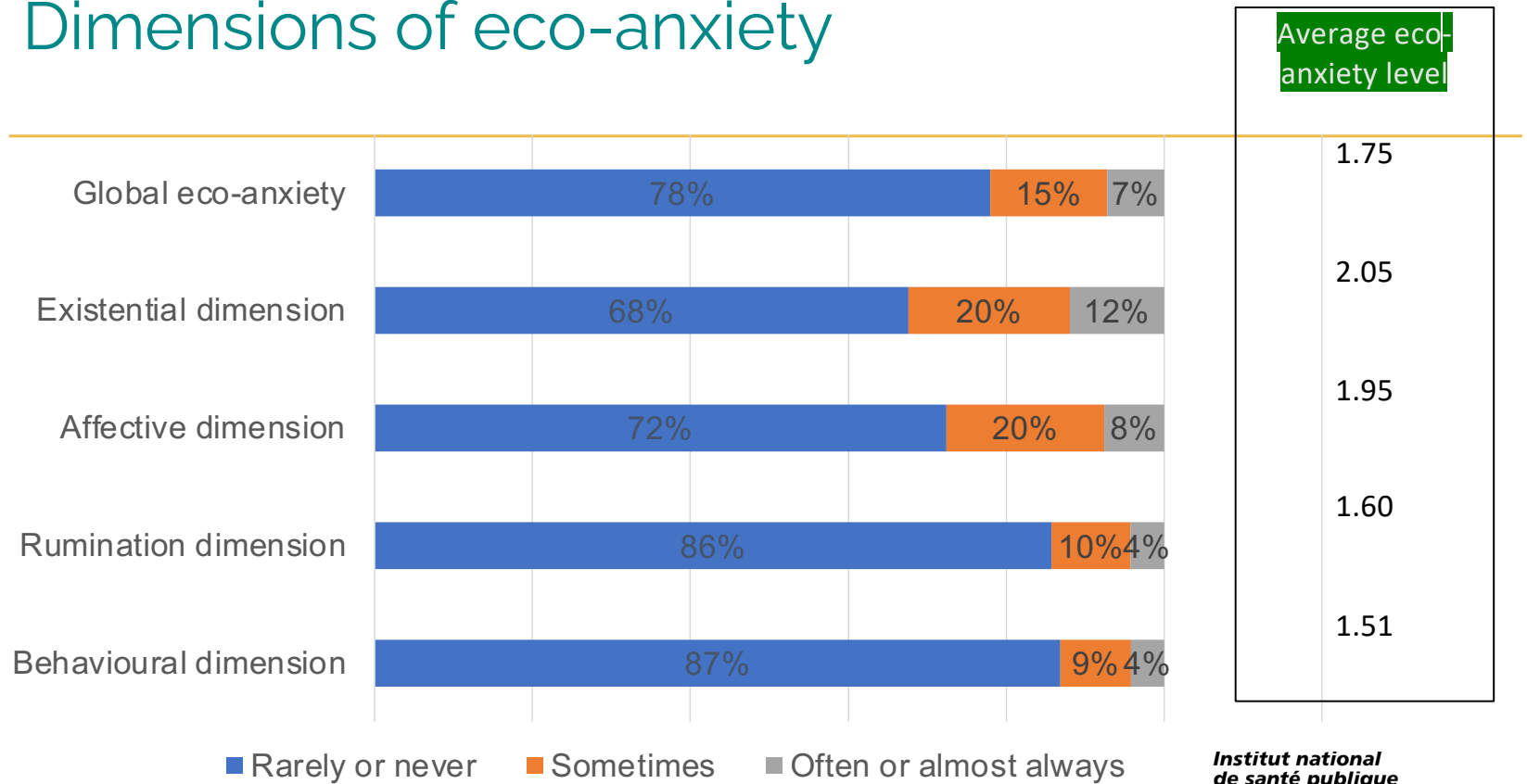


Dimensions of eco-anxiety

- **Affective dimension**
 - ❓ Worries, fears, anxieties
- **Rumination dimension (cognitive)**
 - ❓ Intrusive thoughts (past, present and future events)
- **Behavioural dimension**
 - ❓ Impacts on sleep patterns, work, social life and relations
- **Existential dimension (negative impacts on the planet)**
 - ❓ Personal impacts, self-efficacy, worries about the future of humanity

Adapted eco-anxiety scale (Hogg et al., 2021) (Gousse-Lessard et al., à paraître)

Dimensions of eco-anxiety



■ Rarely or never ■ Sometimes ■ Often or almost always



Dimensions of eco-anxiety: Impacts on well-being and engagement

- Affective dimension
 - ❓ associated with symptoms of generalized anxiety
 - ❓ no impact on probability of environmental engagement
- Behavioural dimension
 - ❓ associated with symptoms of generalized anxiety
 - ❓ associated with symptoms of severe depression
 - ❓ limits probability of environmental engagement



Dimensions of eco-anxiety: Impacts on well-being and engagement

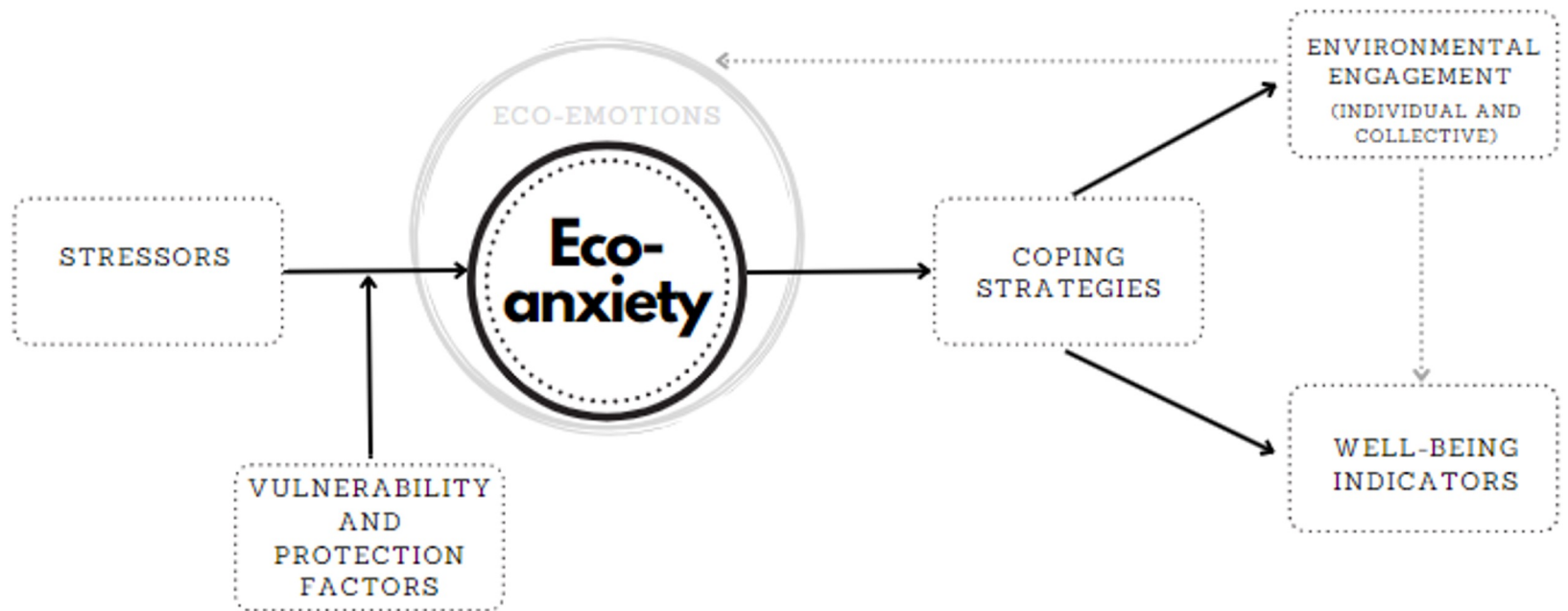
- Rumination dimension
 - ❓ No links found with anxiety or depression
 - ❓ no impact on probability of environmental engagement
- Existential dimension
 - ❓ No links found with anxiety or depression
 - ❓ Increased probability of environmental engagement

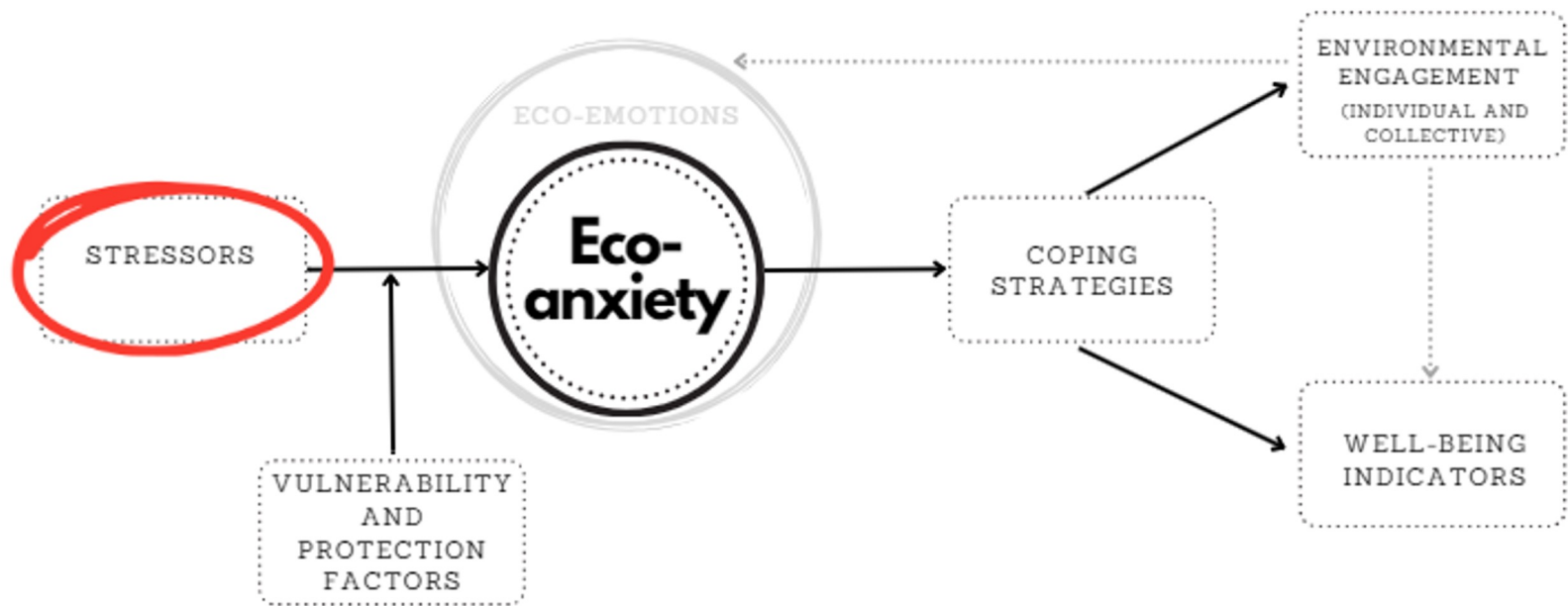
What is eco-anxiety?

Recommended definition:

A state of psychological and sometimes physical discomfort of varying degrees, characterized by the apprehension of a more or less distant threat in the future regarding climate change, the ecological disaster and their impacts on people's way of life

(Boivin et al., to be published)

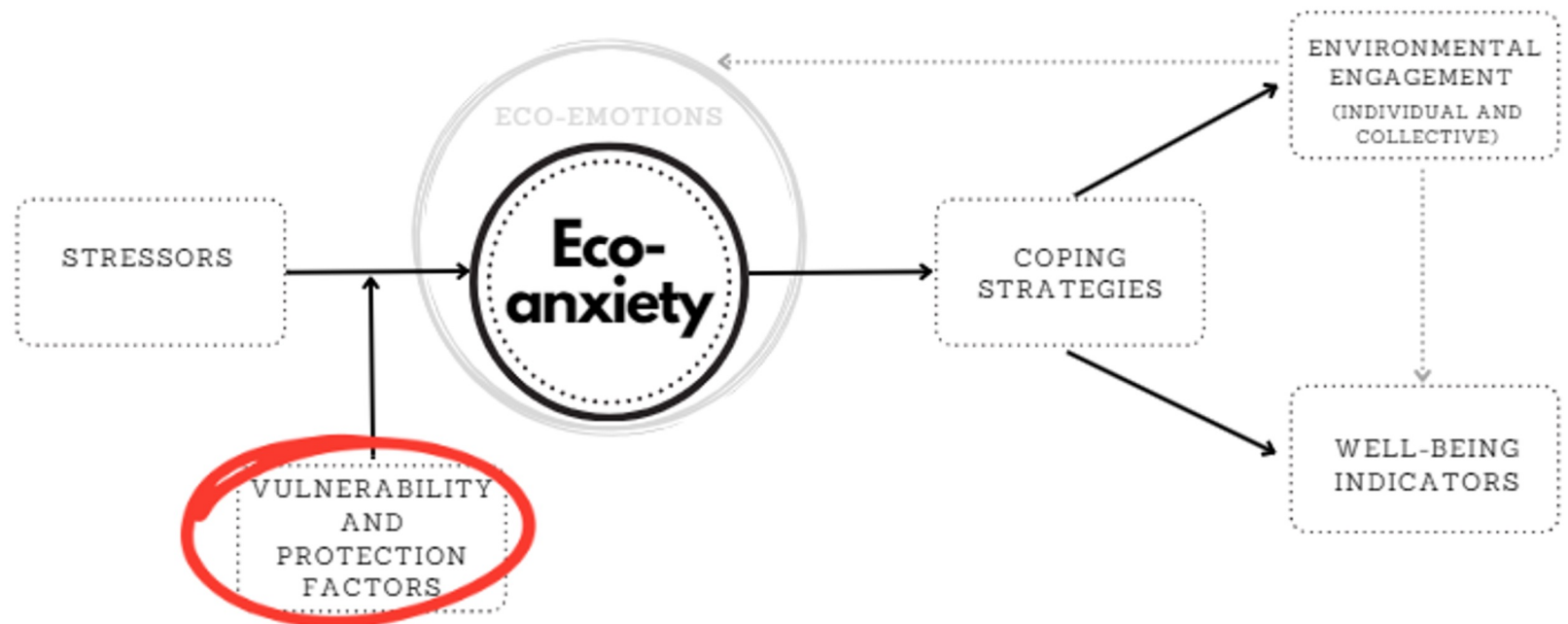






Stressors of eco-anxiety

- Direct experience with climate change
- The media coverage of climate change
- Low perceived personal, collective and political efficacy

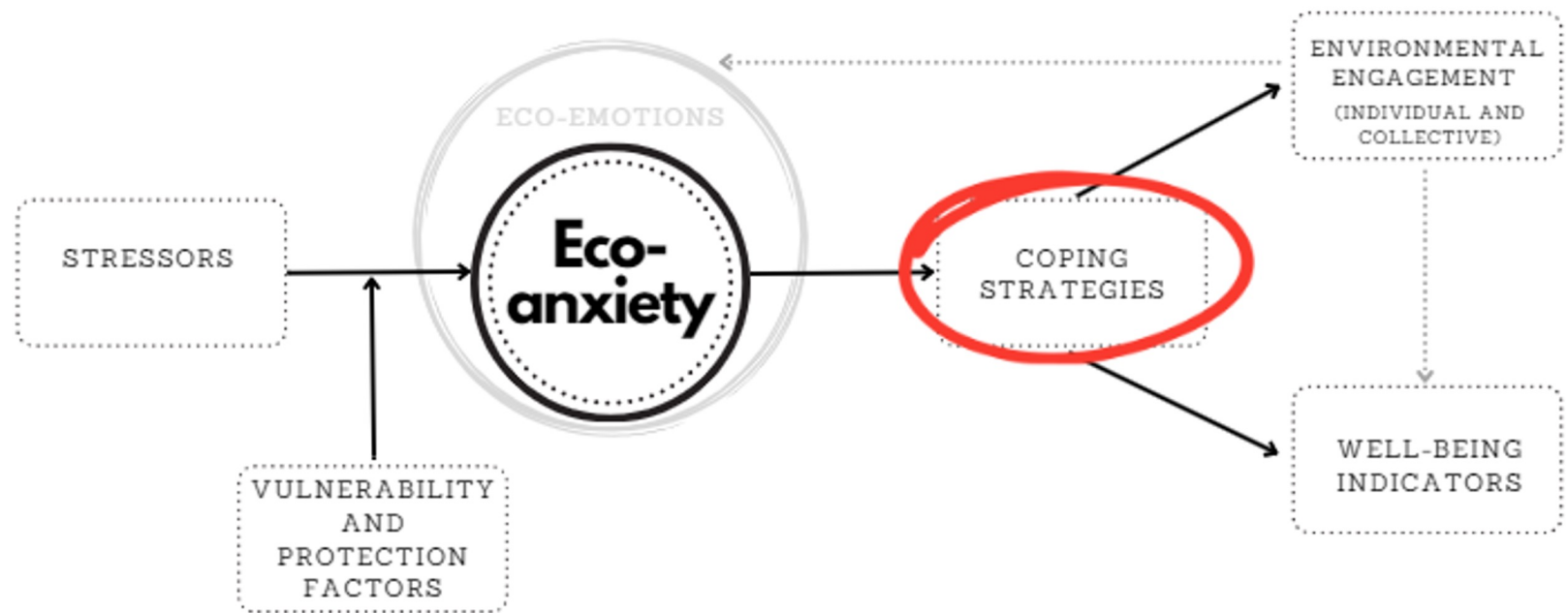




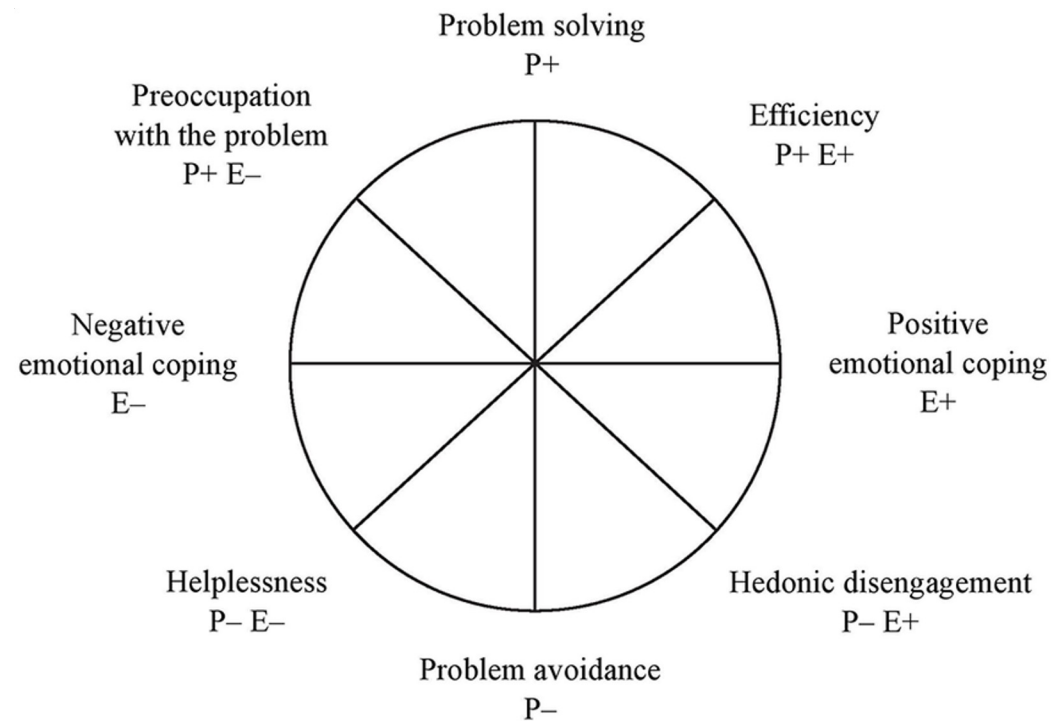
Vulnerability and protection factors of eco-anxiety

- Age
- Gender
- Profession
- Culture
- Climate literacy
- Environmental identity
- Sense of place

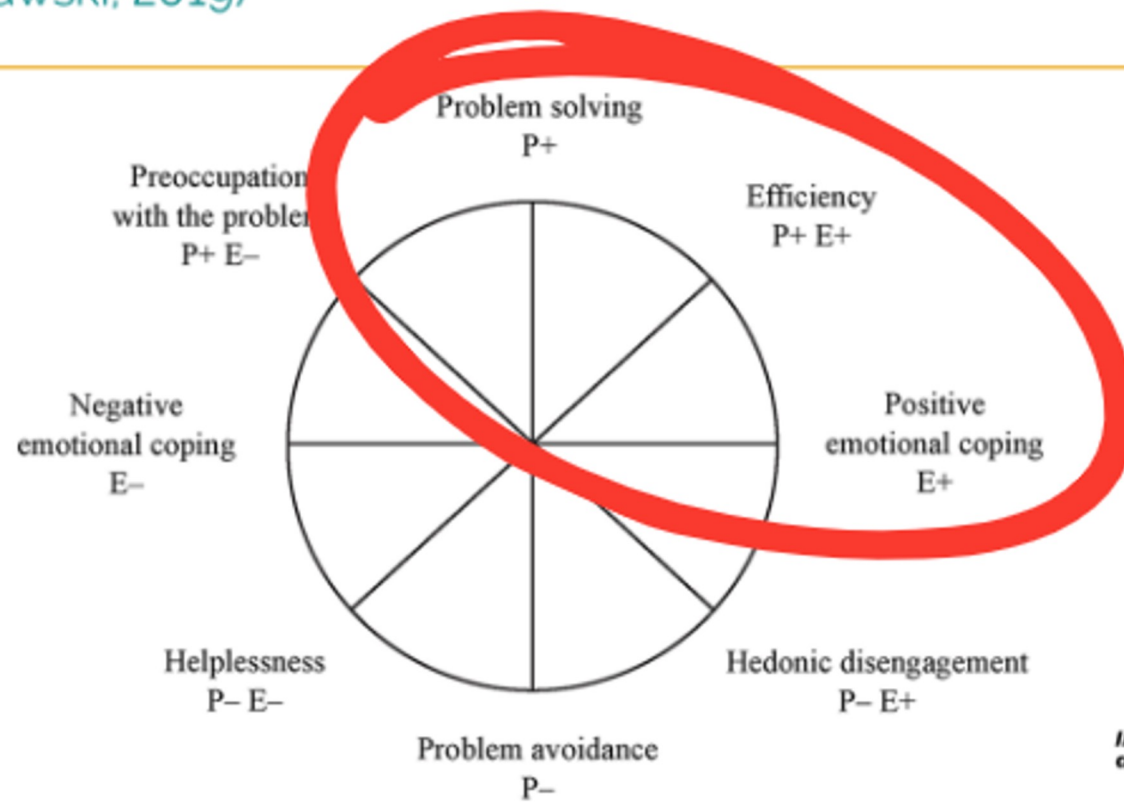
- Social networks
- Mental health issues



Circumplex coping model (Stanislawski, 2019)



Circumplex coping model (Stanislawski, 2019)



Centre d'expertise et de référence
en santé publique depuis 1998

Questions?

www.inspq.qc.ca



Responding to Crisis

In Greek, crisis stems from the word for “decision point”.

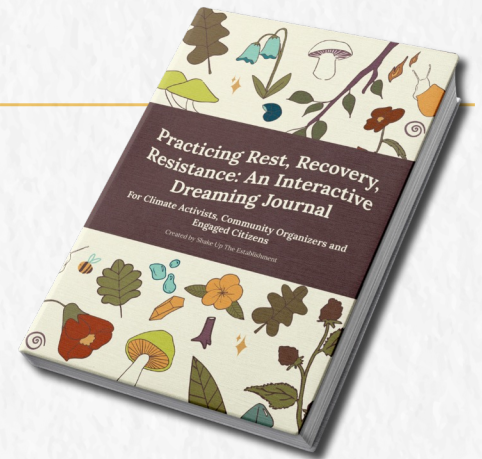


Where to Purchase *Practicing 3Rs*

All proceeds from book sales go towards supporting our anti-colonial educational platform, **Righting History**.

RH's website hosts many resources researched & written by BIPOC youth.

- ★ [Webstore](#) (\$45/book with shipping available across Canada & Internationally)
 - Bulk orders (40+ copies) available at discounted rate (\$35/book & free shipping)
- ★ **Independent Canadian Bookstores**
 - Massy Books (Vancouver, BC)
 - Iron Dog Books (Vancouver, BC)
 - Another Bookstore (Toronto, ON)
 - A Different Booklist (Toronto, ON)



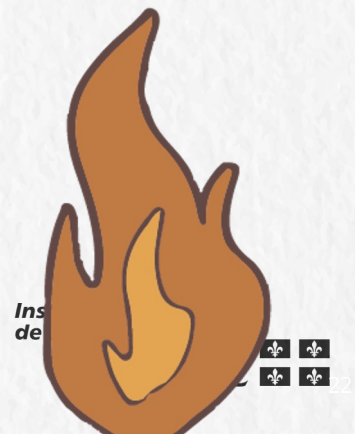
SCAN



Institu
de san

Support Our Work

- ★ **Buy** our book (*Tip: if you get PD money, use it on this!*)
-
- ★ **Forward** our emails to your contacts, departmental list-servs, & other relevant educational networks
 - ★ **Invite** us to speak in your educational and/or work setting about our work & this book (*email us at [info@shakeuptheestab.org!](mailto:info@shakeuptheestab.org)*)
 - ★ [Hire us for your professional service needs](#)
 - ★ [Subscribe to our LinkedIn newsletter](#)
 - ★ [Donate to our organization](#) (we are youth-led & largely volunteer-run!)





Join us

ecoanalyticscanada.org/join-us/