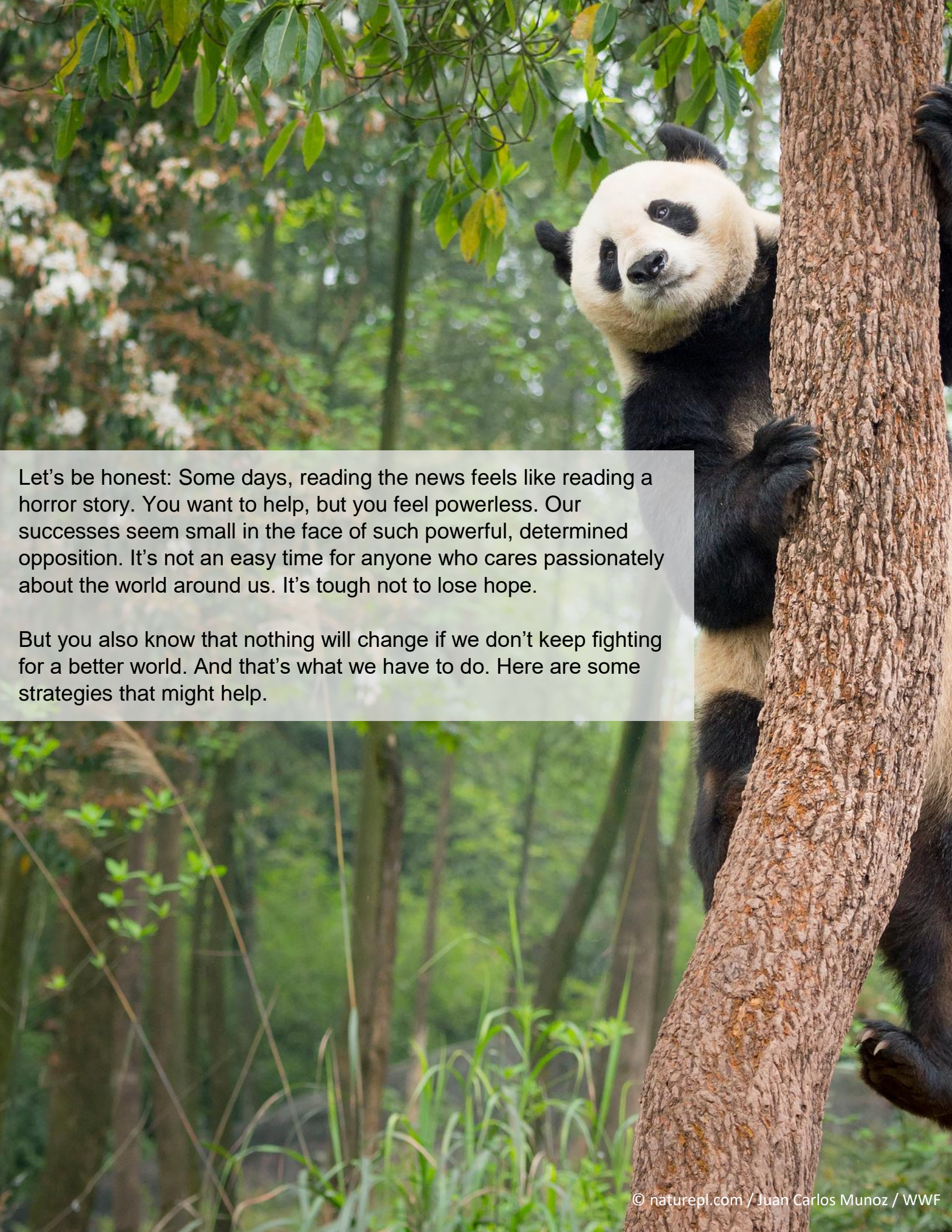




How to

**STAY POSITIVE
AND KEEP AT IT
(EVEN WHEN THINGS SEEM PRETTY BAD)**

Panda Ambassadors



Let's be honest: Some days, reading the news feels like reading a horror story. You want to help, but you feel powerless. Our successes seem small in the face of such powerful, determined opposition. It's not an easy time for anyone who cares passionately about the world around us. It's tough not to lose hope.

But you also know that nothing will change if we don't keep fighting for a better world. And that's what we have to do. Here are some strategies that might help.

Take a break from the news and social media

Being informed is important. We wouldn't be the people we are if we didn't care about the world around us. But sometimes it just gets to be too much. When you can't focus at work or school and just feel sick and worried all the time, it's time to take a break.

Make a conscious decision to avoid the news and social media for a few hours, a day, or longer if you need it. Let your news-junkie friends know ahead of time so they don't text you with the latest updates. Or even better—turn off your phone, unplug, and go spend some time in your favorite nature spot. Go for a hike, go bird watching, jump in puddles—get outside and do something that reminds you why this world is worth fighting for. Recharge and allow yourself to emotionally heal.

If you come back to the news and it's still too much, take a little more time. When you come back, you'll be stronger.

Talk to your fellow Panda Ambassadors

If anyone knows what you are going through, it's your peers in the Panda Ambassador program. You can always log on to the Facebook group and let people know you're having a hard time and need support. You can talk about the issues and try to come up with ways you can work together to help. Or find out what is inspiring others to keep going. Maybe you just need to see pictures of everyone's pets and favorite nature photos.

Keep a log of all the good stuff

Write down—physically write down—a few good things every day. These can be things you are thankful for, things you're looking forward to, or things that give you hope. Maybe it's a major conservation win or maybe it's the new Beyoncé album. Anything that puts a smile on your face can go on this list. Jot down a short list every day.

When you're having a hard time and it seems like the whole world is terrible, flip through these pages and remind yourself of all the good stuff in the world.

Practice self-care

Even when there are terrible things happening in the world, it's still OK to enjoy your life. In fact, it's crucial that you do. You need a reason to keep working, to keep fighting, and to keep believing that the world can be better. Don't let anyone make you feel guilty for enjoying a sports game, a good meal, or a night out with your friends. This is the stuff that keeps us sane and recharges us for the hard parts of life.

Stay informed, do what you can to help, and live your best life.

Do what you can, but know your limits

There are going to be problems that you have no control over and no power to stop. As doers and problem-solvers, this frustrates us. It's maddening to come up against a problem with no solution. But we need to accept that we won't win every battle—at least not right now. Some issues we'll just have to file in the “fix it later” category.

For right now, all we can do in some cases is register a formal complaint, express support for challenges in the courts, and stay informed. In a few years, we may be able to do more.

Stay focused

Instead of dwelling on the problems we can't solve, direct your energy where you can make an impact. And there are plenty of opportunities for impact, especially on the local level. If every major city in America works to reduce their emissions, we still win, whether we're in the Paris climate agreement or not.

Local action is the foundation for real, lasting change. No one can tell us not to care and no one can tell us to stop improving the world around us. Keep engaging your community. Educate those around you about environmental issues and explain why they should care. Get people, especially young people, excited about voting. Share your vision for a better world.

Know that change is coming

Things will get better. It's going to be a long, tough road, but we'll get there. As Panda Ambassadors, our job is to keep people engaged on environmental issues and the importance of safeguarding the planet for all people. Keep leading by example, not giving up even when things seem bleak. We absolutely have a bright future ahead of us—and we're all going to make it happen together.