

What's in the name_ Caring vs. Conservation Action

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empathy, people, action, caring, conservation, animal, programs, change, outcomes, ace, aquariums, work, zoo, roadmap, behavior, como, theory, acknowledge, network, front

SPEAKERS

Meagan Ashton (Seattle Aquarium), Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo), Bekah Hanes, Erica Johnson, Marta Burnet

 00:07
All right.

 00:13
Hi, everybody. Welcome, welcome. We'll go ahead and get started in just few moments, while we wait for folks to trickle in.

 00:32
But while we're waiting for folks, if you want to pop your name, where you're joining us from so the name of your organization in the chat, so we can all know who's here, that would be fantastic,

 00:46
Oh, there we go

 00:57
So if you do not see my face for the majority of the meeting, That is why

 01:07

we'll go ahead and get started in just a minute here. As folks are joining, if you want to pop your name and where you're joining us from in the chat, that would be fantastic.

 01:25
Okay,

 01:27
now before I kick it off, and hand it over to Bekah, because that's really who we are.

 01:34
Here to hear from today, I just have a couple quick network administrative stuff. So if you all have not met me before, or see me in any meeting, my name is Emily Bernhardt. I'm the empathy network specialist over at Woodland Park Zoo, and I use she her pronouns. And I am either reachable through the empathy at zoo.org email address or just my name@zoo.org email. And I help kind of coordinate the network and create events like this. So before we go ahead and kick it off today, I do want to go ahead and start with our network land acknowledgement. So across the region of the ACE for Wildlife network, we do recognize that we are in the land of tribal people, we acknowledged their stewardship of these places continues to this day. And that is our responsibility to join with them to restore the relationship with the living world around us.

 02:36
And is my slides going to advance There we go. If this is your very first network event, welcome, we're super happy to have you here. Even if this isn't your first network event, it's always good to kind of start off on a shared definition, and the same foot.

 02:53
So, as a network, if you're unfamiliar with us, we're a learning network that creates and shares effective practices to foster empathy for animals and people, leading to conservation actions, which is perfect for today's learning group topic. And we define empathy as a simulated emotional state that relies on the ability to perceive, understand and care about the perspective of another person or animal. And we are made up of 20 AZA accredited zoos and aquariums, called our network partners, and have approximately 250 network members. And we also have over 100 affiliates at 70 Plus organizations outside of our seven state network partner region.

 03:39
All right. now. I am not the one you want to hear from today. So I am going to go ahead and

pass it off to Bekah. But before I do, I just want to let you all know that you will be getting a post event email or post event survey started popping up in your internet browser after you leave the Zoom meeting. So if you could just take a couple of minutes to fill that out after this event concludes that would be super helpful to make sure that we can continue to create relevant and applicable events for y'all in the future. So I'm going to go ahead and turn it over to Bekah now. Thanks, everybody.

B

Bekah Hanes 04:12

Thanks, Emily. Hi, everyone. My name is Bekah Hanes. I'm the Interim education and conservation coordinator at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, which is in St. Paul, Minnesota. And I was asked to share some of our learnings from some of our recent work through an ACE funded Empathy Project called the roadmap to empathy. I see that some of our Denver partners who were a project partner on this grant are on the call, which which was really exciting. Maybe we'll hear from them as well. But I'm really hoping that the majority of this time can be spent actually having some great discussion around it. This is very out of our brains and minds as we're struggling with certain big ideas. It is not a research theory, it is a working theory. And we'd love people to actually poke holes in it and challenge it and bring new ideas to it and flush it out for us. And let us know if there might be some value in exploring it further as a network. So with that, I'm going to start by presenting, and I'll introduce you to the project that this all came out of. Let's share my screen here. All right, can people see



05:53

getting a thumbs up from see the slides on the side as well?

B

Bekah Hanes 05:57

Oh, yeah, we don't want that. Okay, who can tell me who has this technology trick about how you get rid of those side slides?



06:21

You might need to unshare your screen and then set it to play the slideshow and then reshare it? Awesome. I don't know. But that's that's a guess.

B

Bekah Hanes 06:34

I'm gonna try that.



06:46

Okay. Oh, yes.

 B

Bekah Hanes 06:55

How does that look for everybody. Perfect. Perfect. Okay, amazing. Thanks for whoever jumped in and helped me out with that. All right. So we had fun coming up with this the title for this learning session of what's in a name caring versus conservation action, because it really is what are those words even mean? As far as what we're talking about with empathy and behavior change at our institutions?



07:33

Okay, well,

 B

Bekah Hanes 07:36

we were so close you



07:38

When I just did my screenshare. I had to click on the slide instead of the arrows if that's helpful. Okay. Do you guys see the next slide now? Yeah. Okay, perfect. All right.

 B

Bekah Hanes 08:00

So this is part of a very long initiative that Como has been working on since 2018. Denver Zoo has been working on this, even before that, and it's something called the roadmap. And it's, it stands for reaching our audiences by developing mission aligned programs, and is a mission aligned to Capacity Building Initiative. It isn't. It's a package or a suite of visitor engagement strategies, processes and tools for developing programs using backwards design principles. It also involves some staff and volunteer training, lots of great resources built off of best practices, lots of mentorship, and how Como has adopted it is that it's simply the way that we do our education and our engagement work. So a little bit of history about this thing called the roadmap. So back in 2011, Denver's zoos education team developed this system for program development and engaging with guests. And in 2016, they started to train professionals in the zoo and aquarium field around using this roadmap, including Como Park Zoo and Conservatory. And then in 2018, Como received funding to begin work on an initiative inspired by Denver's roadmap. And we spent several years little pause around COVID But several years, basically, Como icing roadmap to make it work for our institution. And then in 2021, we received funding from the ACE for Wildlife network Woodland Park Zoo, for both Como Como and Denver as partners to launch what we call the roadmap to Empathy Project. And so basically, what we started to understand was that the Roadmap process and resources was a great place to embed all of the empathy learnings and tools that we were receiving from the ace to network. So the project was launched To enhance our roadmap, tools and our process to operationalize empathy, best practice. practices. So basically, if you're using the roadmap, you were embedding empathy when it was the right tool. So that was a really great project. And there were several steps that Denver and Como took to launch this program. The very first thing that

we did was ask ourselves, what do we already know or think we know about empathy. And I just threw this up here sort of to laugh at ourselves a little bit. This was our Miro board that we use for this brain dump that we did, we went back into the fields. We dug through all of ACEs resources, and MECAP. And we looked at Denver's empathy, resources and knowledge and tools and Comos. And, and just anything that we can find. And we threw it on this miro board and started, you know, making a murder board, basically an empathy. And as we went through this, there were some things that really solidified for us were like, okay, like, it's tracking? This is what we've been thinking for a long time, this is making sense, we're going to move forward with us. And then there were other things that were really starting to hurt our brains a little bit. And we were kind of struggling and having a hard time moving on before we were figuring certain things out. And one of those things, which I'm sure you all are in the same boat was this idea of empathy. And then there's all this mysterious stuff in the middle. And then behavior change. And we often when we talk about empathy and behavior change within the ace network, or within a lot of the projects that we're working on through the grant funding, I think that we sometimes make the leap, you know, sort of assuming or knowing that we know there's a bunch of gobbledygook in the middle. But we I think it's sometimes do ourselves a disservice by not really thinking more strategically about what that stuff is. And then we also were struggling with this idea of conservation action as the only behavior change that we could influence through empathy, and that maybe there were other things out there or, But the first thing we wanted to do was basically just define what action we can Inspire, Inspire with our empathy programs and empathy works. Now I know that Woodland Park Zoo And it takes a lot for people to get there. And what can we actually do at our zoos and aquariums and the conservatory are thinking about como as well, that where we can see more of a straight line from empathy to an action. And we were thinking a lot about this idea of carrying action and trying to kind of parse it out from conservation action and give it some more definition for us. And so here's what we did. So we were thinking about caring action as when a person shows positive behavior towards or engages in direct action to help a specific individual animal or plant, for example, self regulates behavior to make the animal feel safe, or provides direct care for the animal or plant. So a couple examples of that, if we think about a lot of the stuff we do around visitor engagement, where we might use empathy, best practices and language to try to change visitors behavior, around our animals in their environments, like, you know, maybe they're not, they shouldn't be banging on the glass on the for the gorillas, or you know, that kind of stuff, we're we're going to use a gentle to finger touch, or we're going to keep our bodies quiet, and we're going to keep our voices quiet. So those were things that those are immediate, caring actions when there is an individual animal directly in front of that person, and they can take an action that has an immediate impact on that animal. So that's how we're kind of viewing carrying action compared to conservation action, which is more traditionally what we're thinking of right, where someone is taking action to help species, ecosystems, the environment, so not particularly, you know, an individual animal. So it's things like donating to conservation organizations, or making an eco friendly lifestyle choice, right. So that could still be something that comes out of an experience that they have at a zoo, or aquarium or a conservatory. But it's a, it's a more global action versus a more immediate local action with an animal or plant right in front of them. So we decided to define those two types of actions. In our theory of change, as we thought about our programming and our outcomes. The next thing we wanted to do was sort of acknowledge that there are of course, additional motivators of and barriers to behavior change. And we really wanted to kind of lay that out for ourselves and just kind of let it sink in a little bit. So the first one is the identifiability effect, which I hadn't really thought about until I think it was an ace conference, or an ace presentation where someone was talking about this effect. And it really resonated with me. So this is the idea that you're much more likely to act on empathetic feelings or have them in the first place, if there's a specific individual in front of you compared to larger, vaguer groups. So it's strongest when the

individual is in your presence, or is known to you. So for example, some of my friends on the call, and they're at work, and they're sick, and they're right in front of me, and they look miserable, and I can hear them coughing, and I feel so bad for them. And I'm going to bring them some of my cough drops or whatever, right. So like, because they're right there in front of me, I am more likely to feel empathetic and have a desire to help and then actually act on that desire. Once they go home. As much as I love them, I'm actually going to get distracted by life, I'm going to think about them less, I'm going to worry about them less, I might forget to text and check in and make sure they're okay. Right, because kind of out of sight out of mind. So the same kind of idea where you think about an individual animal at your zoo or aquarium that visitors are right in front of, versus the polar bears in the Arctic, right? Like humans just have a harder time feeling empathy for groups, and things that are farther away and not right in front of them. So I thought that was a really interesting thing for us to think about. Of course, we think about all those other intrinsic aspects and values that affect people's desire to act. So empathy is one of them. But of course, we know there's so many other things that you know, are either motivators or barriers for people to act, including their affinity towards nature, their emotional self efficacy, positive experiences in nature, that kind of stuff. And then the other big thing I think, that's is really influential in getting people to actually act is you know, conserving the methods that are found within conservation psychology in particular community based social marketing, right. So there are so many things that we can be doing to either motivate people or reduce barriers, to make it more likely for them to act, you know, community based social marketing is kind of the same in the same vein as how people marketed to us to buy stuff, consumerism, right, it's the same tricks of the trade. And so there's something really important there where it's really hard. And it takes a lot of work to actually get anybody to do something different. There are strategies there, and there's things they can do. But it's a lot of work, it's not something you can do in a 10 minute interaction. So those are some things that we wanted to just acknowledge as part of our theory of change. Then we wanted to think a little bit more about our outcomes, and again, parse them apart a little bit more, and not just say empathy, or not to say action. So the first thing we thought about was something that is now burned in my brain, from so many years of listening to our all of our empathy, friends, talking about what empathy is, and what it isn't. And talking about things that are building blocks to empathy, like love, curiosity, interest, that kind of stuff, they're not empathy, but they can be building blocks towards empathy, which are also really important. So we did want to make sure that, that we place value on those building blocks, outcomes, so positive related emotions, accurate knowledge and perspective and skills and related behaviors. Then we get to the like, real pure empathy, which is affective empathy, cognitive and motivational, which are all intrinsic. And I think we had to remind ourselves that even motivational empathy is still an intrinsic feeling. It is the desire to do something doesn't mean you're actually going to do it. But that desire is there. But that's still internal. And then our action outcomes extend or extrinsic outcomes, the caring action and conservation action that we that we defined earlier. So really kind of laying out what are the outcomes that we might be able to target with our empathy programming. And then we wanted to make sure that we were really understanding our impact. So either our potential, or even acknowledging some of our limitations. And I know this is a lot of words on the screen. But this was this is sort of our rationale for our theory of change. And basically, what this is saying is that we're using this theory of change to develop our roadmap or empathy based roadmap, resources and tools. And that we want to use the theory of change to help us consider what is achievable for different audiences, programs and experiences. Oh, and I'm sorry, I'm realizing that I'm like behind a slide. Am I doing that to you guys? We see understanding our impact. Yeah, I'm so sorry. Okay, now, where are we there? What's in the name? And then oh, there we are. Okay, good. Something weird happened for a second, but we're back. Alright, so we're in the right spot. It was flipping back and forth for a second. In some cases, we can then also target specific motivators to achieve some of those

intrinsic outcomes. We and I'll show you in a minute when when we pull up the theory of change, but we tend to feel like caring action outcomes are easier to achieve with more people in a shorter amount of time, especially on you know, at the zoo. So there's a way that we can target specific motivators. To get people to be more likely to develop some of those, or show demonstrate some of those caring actions, whether it's a commitment to act or an actual act around caring. And then if we're really getting ambitious, we can target additional motivators remove barriers, and then that can make mean we're more likely to achieve those conservation action outcomes. And so basically, what we're saying here is that many of our empathy based programs will not single handedly achieve institutional goal of conserving action on behalf of wildlife, but that every outcome level on theory of change is valuable, and that all empathy based programs support guests on the path to empathy and action. And so I think we were trying to acknowledge our capacity as zoos and aquariums and conservatories. Acknowledging the time we have with people, what we can do in a, you know, in a given environment in a given program, and then saying, this is all important. And there's value to each of these elements, even if we're not always getting someone to never use straws again, or even donate. So we really wanted to think through and understand our own impact and where we should put our energies. So this is our, again, Word Art, theory of change. And I will talk you through this really briefly. And there's one other little element I want to point out that was sort of interesting to us. And then I really want us to just kind of break this out, talk through it, ask questions, challenge it, I would just love to hear your your thoughts on this. So I know this is a little bit tiny, but the very bottom is just basically our you know, everything we know about empathy from the fields, best practices and research that strengthens and informs our organizational intervention, which is the programs and the experiences that we create using our roadmap tools and resources, which have empathy, best practices, and, and tools built in, that can develop or strengthen our first set of outcomes, which are those building block outcomes. And then those can support the development of our empathy outcomes. And then this is where that you know, that question mark from earlier about where the messes like then, when paired with things like the identify identifiability effect, other intrinsic aspects and values, and all of the tools in our tool belt around conservation psychology, that can lead to hearing action, conservation, action, action on behalf of wildlife. The one little thing that I want to throw out before I let you guys blow this up, is this little bit right here that's circled. What we found really exciting is that, we see a pretty clear path from empathy program paired with the identifiability effect, which we do really well at zoos, and aquariums, because the animals are right there to some sort of caring action, because people can then take very small but very caring actions right there in the presence of the animal, the plant. And so we saw this as a really nice pathway, where we can kind of complete the loop fairly quickly at our institutions, knowing that all of these things and you see all of our fun little arrows, you know, influence other things that could be more complicated. You know, we know that if you want to, you know, take the other path with values, psychology, conservation action, that's something we can do. But it takes a lot of work. Like that's a conservation campaign potentially, versus a you know, a half hour class with some preschoolers or something like that. So we did have some excitement around the idea, the concept of caring action action, because we can see a path towards Yep, we did it, and being able to evaluate it, and seeing the impact right in front of us, instead of wondering what happens later after people have left. And I did also then throw back up our definitions here of caring action and conservation action for you guys to look at. So that's, that's where we're at. So we keep this and we kept this in mind as we developed our resources and I think we're always sort of gut checking ourselves against this to make sure we're not getting too big for our britches and but also feeling good about the work we are doing and knowing that it's just stair stepping or visitors you know, the ripple effect that through cumulative effect, we are getting people higher on on the theory of change. So, Emily, that's what I got.

 29:41
Amazing.

 29:44
We're like, at a stunning 30/30 divide Oh, look at that perfect. 30 minutes of chat time.

 29:53
Yeah, I think at this point, we can like open it up to the whole group, and people can ask questions and brainstorm and see how this, like resonates with them do some reflecting. And for folks who maybe feel more comfortable using the chat, definitely feel free to do that I can then be your voice, I suppose, and bring it up to the whole group. And that way we can have people talking or in the chat, and then people in the chat won't get like glossed over. I'll be monitoring that. Yeah, I guess if we want to stop screen sharing, they can see everybody and have a conversation if that Yeah. And

 B Bekah Hanes 30:33
I can always pull stuff back up to if people are wanting to look at something again.

 30:41
And I see that we already have a comment in the chat. And it says, it sounds so complicated. It seems so straightforward and simple. stair stepping our visitors is a great visual. Yeah, I mean,

 B Bekah Hanes 30:59
there's a lot going on there visually with a theory of change. But if you think about and now that it's not on the screen anymore, but the bottom chunk is just stuff we're already doing. And then you're deciding what level you're going to target with your program. And then you're just acknowledging that, you know, there it is, humans are very complicated, and there's a lot going on. And you just need might need to put a lot more energy and time into something that's actually going to get people to have conservation action, behavior change. And that's fine. But it's just sort of acknowledging that that's going to take a lot more effort and time and strategy. I think Marta has her hand up.

 M Marta Burnet 31:43
Thanks Bekah for this great presentation. I think it's really fascinating to see the work that you all put into this question for you do is it really intentional, when you're doing the planning as to okay, we're going to focus on the building blocks versus, or is it kind of in real time that you're

like, Oh, I'm realizing this audience may be getting them up to caring action isn't possible. So I'm going to focus more on one of the, the earlier steps. So we created

B

Bekah Hanes 33:17

It looks like we have a couple questions populating the chat. So we have one from Lauren is there a way to get a larger version of a theory of change? to it? Yes, I, I will definitely share it. I'll have to just figure out how to make sure that people don't take it too seriously. Yeah, so definitely still draft version hasn't been, you know, again, studied or researched or gut checked at all. But yes, happy to share it. Because if it feels useful to you, I love it.



33:56

Awesome. Sounds great. And then I question from Kelsey. And I would like to posit this both to Bekah and to the group as a whole?



34:06

Because I yeah, I think would be a very interesting question for the conversation. Do you think people can take conservation action without caring action? You have them side by side, but I find caring action, parentheses, caring about what's in front of you, is almost a stepping stone to conservation action. And so I would open up kind of a, I'd be interested to open up a discussion around that both from Beckah your perspective, and since we do have a variety of zoos and aquariums and other organizations represented in our audience.



34:40

Other perspectives on that question, because I think it's a really interesting one.

B

Bekah Hanes 34:47

I would love to hear people's thoughts before I jump in. I think Tish raised her hand Oh, you're Follow me



35:06

Can you hear me now? Yeah. Yeah. I think that's a real spot on description, because I teach a lot of little people. And I teach a lot of adults too. But I think, without even realizing it, I'm saying use two fingers, sit quietly, don't flail, your hands, Don't scream, don't squeal.



35:29

And then I get their attention. I bring this magnificent animal out to teach with. And then then I

say, Okay, this is why we need to do this in our environment. This is why we don't squash bugs, you know. So it is definitely is a stepping stone. I would agree 100%. I don't think you can do the conservation action before the caring action.

 35:55

And I think your tagline was feel learn act. That kind of sums it up right there.

 36:07

And I will bring up, Sharon just dropped a very interesting counterpoint in the chat it is it possible to take a conservation action without caring as an example, someone could write a big check to a conservation organization with motives other than quote unquote, caring? Which is unfortunate, but true.

 Bekah Hanes 36:26

Yeah, I think like my gut is that we would love the path to be caring action leads to conservation action. But yeah, I do see a world where using social psychology, you can have people take conservation actions, even if they're not, they don't necessarily care why. But that's not that's not the goal of our institutions. And so I you know, I don't think that that's a huge deal. I mean, if they do it great for the world. But I think we want to create a little more sustainable motivation for folks to take conservation action.

 Marta Burnet 37:11

Maybe there's a piece of that that's like, is it an action versus like, a conservation identity? You know, I think if you Yeah, taking one action, maybe, maybe I bring my cup with me to Starbucks, because I want to save those 10 cents or something. But But if it's something that part of your identity, I would argue that it's much more likely to have the caring component. You're not just but I'm sure there's always exceptions to the rule. Yeah. Okay, I see that you got your hand up. Yes, thank you.

 Erica Johnson 38:00

That was interesting, what Tish just said about, you know, working with small children, and, you know, kind of leading those caring actions. Have you talked about anything about like audiences, and distinguishing between, you know, a caring action might be most appropriate with a small child, whereas, if you're my age, and the whole, end all and be all, of what comes out of your zoo visit is that you I don't raise my voice. On in indoor exhibits, right, that there's a little bit of a so what question I have there, if it's, if it's an older audience?

 Bekah Hanes 38:43

No, I think that's a really good point. I mean, I think how we framed it is that building block outcomes and caring action are more achievable for more people and more programs, more types of programs. But I mean, I wouldn't even imagine things like carrying action being you know, your there's a there's a, there's a enrichment building station set up in our, you know, our polar bear Odyssey exhibit where you can create something for the for, you know, Nan and Neil to play with later in the day, and you know, that it's going to help them you know, so there's, I think that there's other versions of caring action, besides, you know, being quiet or the two finger touch. But I think it's more about the idea that you are the animal is, is right in front of you and taking some sort of action to care for that animal in the moment. Which seems more achievable, like I said, for younger audiences, and first for shorter programs or less in depth in depth programs. But yeah, I do. And I also think there's something to be said for, and I think this happens for any You think that we're doing about? Well, how Where are people coming in at? You know, Erica, if you're coming in at a certain level, we probably could get you higher quicker. So I think that's something interesting, too. But yeah, I think that we would probably feel let down at ourselves if we were targeting. Erica, you as an audience, and the only outcome we were targeting Was that you, you know, didn't scare the animals.

 Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo) 40:31
Reasonable? Yeah.

 Erica Johnson 40:34
I would also love to see the thing, the theory of change that I'm not going to take too seriously. Because I couldn't read the

 Bekah Hanes 40:43
It's a combination of my eyes and the size of my screen. So if that is possible, it's a point though. Yeah. So and just just so you know, like, basically what those orange box boxes at the bottom are all the things that are, you know, the seven best practices of empathy at it. I mean, the MECAP stuff, the ACE stuff, it's, again, a set field knowledge that were that were that is how little I could see. Thank you. Sorry about that. Yeah, that'd be I can also just like screen share of the actual document, if anyone just wants to get their eyeballs on it. But I'm absolutely happy to share the real thing.

 41:21
Yeah, and I can send that out to everybody. And like a post, event email, as well, so that everybody who registered, but maybe wasn't able to attend today can get that too. Oh, my gosh, yay. We have hands up. Jen. I think your hand was first.

 41:37
Everyone. Yeah, mostly, I think a comment. But I just I'm thinking about how interesting this is as a framework to be intentional and realistic about what our outcomes are of a program. So

as a framework to be intentional and realistic about what our outcomes are of a program. So that point you just met made Becca about how, you know, achieving caring action is more relevant or or appropriate for, you know, that one time zoo visit or that preschool program? Or? Yes, and so those kind of one off short term experiences. But so then if we are calling ourselves conservation organizations, and we're saying that that is what we are trying to achieve, do we need to think intentionally about where the resources go? So do we put all of our resources behind preschool programs? Or do we try to put resources behind programs that are more in depth to build conservation action? So I just that it's it's making me think about where are those outcomes? are and how organizations can think about the resources if they for what they want to achieve? I don't know, making sense?

B

Bekah Hanes 42:51

No, I think that makes perfect sense. And I think to your point about if we're, if we are more clear about what our outcomes are, you know, putting energy into that, but I also think it's not that conservation action is in it is not achievable. But it does take a lot of resources. I mean, I think we all know this, that it is so hard to get people to change behavior. But I also think we know we have all the tools, we know how to do it, but it takes a lot of thought and work and preparation and multiple different you're approaching people with multiple different angles. And, you know, again, that social psychology and you're you're lowering barriers, and you're increasing motivation and at the thing, and so yeah, so I think that our institutions do need to put more resources behind the real work that it takes for conservation behavior change. But I also think that we can do so much with with the ladder build, you know, taking people up the ladder to I love that comment.



44:02

Crystal, I think your hand was second.



44:13

Good afternoon, everyone, Becker, you're doing a fantastic job. I first want to start off by saying that and I just wanted to bring out some of the other things that were in constant conversation as we were going through all of this and working on our theory of change and so forth.



46:06

they are knocking on the glass because they're not disturbing the animal and they're making sure that the animal feels safe and comfortable in their home, which then can easily transcend into hopefully their daily lives and then create the environmental stewards that we want for for our next generations. So first, I wanted to start it off by saying that, and Kelly punctuate that really quick crystal, your second point? Yes, like, I'm sure we've all heard Kathy say this. Like, can we can zoos be the place that people practice empathy?

B

Bekah Hanes 46:44

The training ground. And so I think that's exactly it, crystal that. If people are reinforced for their caring actions at our institutions, then when they see an injured animal on the side of the road, or they see you know, they see someone in an animal in their neighborhood or their backyard, they're more inclined to help that individual animal in some way or care for that animal. And it also feels achievable for them. It's something that they know they can do in their lives, and it doesn't feel too big. Let's say, what's the point, right? And then I think it does, like you said, flow over into things like we're not going to rake our leaves because we're caring for the insects and weren't, you know, so I think there is something to that point that I just wanted to like, put an exclamation point on.

 47:31

Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. And then the other thing that I was going to

 47:39

just re recap to for everyone listening today. One of the examples that I like to utilize too, when thinking about, you know, caring action versus a conservation action, one of the ones that we often say around here is thinking of something as Bekah, explain something that you're doing for physical animal right in front of you, like the bird feeders that we might put up in our in our backyards, or in our neighborhoods, that were physically caring for that individual animal that might come and visit our homes, versus where a conservation action might be where I'm putting, you know, maybe

 48:23

the strike film on my windows to help migratory birds be able to safely pass through my neighborhood that has a bit larger impact on, you know, a whole species of birds that may be coming through my area, I might not see the individuals. But so they might have, again, a larger conservation impact. Yeah, just wanted to add that to

 **B** Bekah Hanes 48:49

know it's great, really good example.

 48:52

Yeah, I appreciate that example, Crystal, because I one of the things that I always not struggled with, but like, I've had issues separating the two circles in my head, they were like very much overlapped in this regard with like, bear proof boxes, for example, right? Like that is very much I think, an individual caring action, but it's also conservation action. And I was like, I don't know where this sits like if we're talking about bear proof messaging, what box is that in.

 49:00

11 49:20

But that example of the bird, like migratory bird tape kind of helps us out a bit more for me, so thank you. Yeah, absolutely. Good. I hope that that's helpful. And a lot of you are expressing that, that someone you know, caring actions may be a stepping stone for conservation action. And I think that that is that is absolutely true. Because as we have been talking about that, hopefully, you know, these

11 49:46

these little actions that our guests take away or that they exhibit during a during a visit to one of our organizations, then again, hopefully leads to larger behavior change because of course worse. I know across all of our organizations, that's ultimately what we're striving for right is to affect behavior change. And so, yes, I, I would absolutely say that caring actions should and hopefully lead to larger behavior change and conservation action.

11 50:23

Your hand is up. Thank you for being so patient

M Meagan Ashton (Seattle Aquarium) 50:32

All right, um, I'm not sure if you call on me, I'm, I'm having trouble hearing your audio for some reason.

B Bekah Hanes 50:40

Yep, she called on you, Megan. Okay, great.

M Meagan Ashton (Seattle Aquarium) 50:43

Thanks. So didn't want to step on. Anyway. Um, I, one of my most interesting parts of that theory of change that I like that just like really struck me was the, you know, that additional behavior motivation barrier section?

B Bekah Hanes 51:11

Or is it just like, a common, like, a common thing that we need to think about? And I'm just thinking that kind of implications for our programming? And, like, should we be thinking, in addition to the practices that we're integrating into our, into our programming, like, what additional steps are we taking in order to reach the outcome that we're going for? I don't know if you could talk a little bit more about that. Yeah, no, I really appreciate that question. So I think so the one of those boxes was, you know, those other intrinsic aspects and values. And that comes from I think, the original MECAP white paper around empathy as a as a pathway towards acts of behavior change. And even then there was this acknowledgement that this is

just one of many things that can motivate people to change their behavior. And it's can't be a silver bullet. And it's going to get either tamped down by some of those other intrinsic motivators or lifted up by other intrinsic motivators, and some of those things we can control, but some we can't. And so I think I think it is really important to acknowledge that, you know, someone is coming, you know, with no experience in the natural world, or feeling very much like I can't, what am I supposed to do? How can I, this one person ever make a change, like, it's going to be harder for empathy to lift them. So you know, if the barriers, the dam and the water or whatever, it's going to be so much harder to get the water high enough to get over the dam, if you know, some of those other values, and motivators are already really low. So I think that it is really important to acknowledge, and then, you know, this conservation psychology, community based social marketing stuff, it's that same thing, it's like, just, you know, we learned this, what 10-20 years ago, we finally had this aha moment in our field of environmental education, that knowledge doesn't actually make people do anything different. And that emotion, and some of those intrinsic values are just as important, which is why we're here. So I think we're having the same moment again, with like this community based social marketing and conservation psychology is that there's, we just have to acknowledge that humans are complicated. And there's so many other things that can attribute, you know, can make someone do something or not. And but, and also, we're starting to learn what those things are, and how to move the levers on all of them. So I think that's really important that we're starting to get to a point where we know how we can move those dials up and down and actually lower the dam, so it's easier to get the water over. And then the identifiability effect, again, was sort of a new concept to me from, I think, one of these learning sessions, or one of these ace conferences, but it was so huge to me where I was like, of course, of course, it's easier to feel empathy when there's one person or one animal when you know that animal, and when they're right in front of you. And I think that speaks to a lot of the empathy best practices we've already been utilizing about. We want people to spend more time with our animals, we want people to observe our animals and get to know them. We want them to know their names and their pronouns and their personalities and their likes and dislikes. I think we're already leaning towards that. But there is research around that identifiability effect that's not mine, that says this is actually a really, really huge indicator of whether someone's going to feel empathy and then act on it. So I think again, something really important for us to acknowledge but also something really important for us to know we can really easily take advantage of because we're a zoo and an aquarium and we have animals.

M

Meagan Ashton (Seattle Aquarium) 54:47

Yeah, thank you. I think what I'm hearing I think is that kind of like empathy is in there as one of those same kind of motivators. along with the others as well. So it's not necessarily supposed to be like a linear this and then this equals your outcomes. It's kind of like all in emotion there together. Yes. The

B

Bekah Hanes 55:11

downside of again, Word Art? Yeah, I think it would be a little more of a mess if we if we tried to show the true nature of how everything is connected. But I think what, what we were trying to do here is that if we're already starting with the goal, or the the intention that we're building an empathy based program, and that is our intention, then that becomes like the the main focus

of this theory of change. And then we know that there's all these other factors as well that we need to think about, but like, what, how many things can we level up on around empathy? So that's why this is the sort of specific to empathy based programs.

M Meagan Ashton (Seattle Aquarium) 55:57
So thank you.

B Bekah Hanes 55:59
Thank you for the questions really great.

E Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo) 56:03
And thank you for the note about my audio because right after you said that my headphones died. So that's probably why you had a hard time hearing me. But we do have some interesting, like conversation going on in the chat. But I do want to call out, people haven't seen it yet. Jen said that, I find this as a helpful internal definition and framework. But I wonder how audience outside of the zoo and aquarium profession would define their own actions. Conservation has become a polarizing word. In some cases, caring seems more universal. And there's a couple of responses to it, Marta said, we sometimes use Pro environmental actions or behaviors instead of conservation. And then Tish brought a great point, which is we forget people don't know what we know, which I think is a huge, huge thing in this field. Conservation is so broad, and a popular word right now. And we need to be able to direct what we want to get across. And then Jen said that about every person on this call would define conservation differently, which I think is really interesting as well. And then Sarah shared an awesome resource that hadn't been mentioned yet. From the Emily Reuben developed for San Diego. Awesome. Any resources or things that are shared in the chat? I'll include that in this post meeting email, so folks have them as well as the theory of change?

B Bekah Hanes 57:26
Oh, yes, I think that I've seen this, this isn't. This is another thing that's called the roadmap. But it's very different. And my analogy of the dam, and the water comes directly from this, I love this tool so much. And I think it really speaks to the complexity of what our programs can do, and the impact it has and all the different elements that we need to consider. So yeah, I would highly recommend if you haven't checked out this resource that's in the chat that you do. And I think there's a couple of recorded presentations around this as well. And I think even maybe a chat between Emily and Kathy moon.

E Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo) 58:06
Awesome. We have about 10 minutes left. Oh, Tish amazing, you've got the last question or comment of the day.



58:15

I was just gonna say I also am a writer, and I write about environmental topics. And I have people who stopped me later and say, Oh, my gosh, I love that particular article. And what I try really hard to do is make it very relatable. And in something as simple as telling people, this is why you shouldn't rake your leaves, because there are these amazing insects in your yard. And if you want to see lightning bugs in the summer, leave reliefs alone, we've got to figure out a way to make everything we're teaching relatable to the person in front of us no matter what their age is. And I found that very challenging. And I also don't want to be preaching at someone. That's why I try to find the relatability there. And then you sometimes you see the light bulb go off. You know, if I'm sitting there standing, holding a snake, and half the people are freaking out and half the people are asking questions, the people are freaking out, we're the ones I want to talk to. Because I want to try to at least get them to respect the animal. They don't have to love it, but at least respect it. There's this subjects just so giant, you know, and for me, it's about really breaking it down and getting to the lower level. So you can get people to understand what you're trying to help them appreciate. And then you can move up like we've been talking about.

B

Bekah Hanes 59:44

Yeah, absolutely. I think we're all learning that together is that it really is about making it relatable to the individual which is really hard when you have millions of people coming through your institutions every year. So we definitely have a challenge ahead of us but you know as we're wrapping up, Emily, I had just had this thought I mean, we've we also presented this to the conservation action committee of ACE as well, and people seemed interested in it. So I'd be curious if there would be some sort of ACE group that'd be interested in taking this thing and, and really digging into it and creating a 2.0 version of it, doing some more research and some evaluation around it, I would just love to see this tool be something that everyone at ACE could use. And it doesn't. It doesn't have to be just just ours. But I feel like it needs to have a little more oomph behind it before before we share it with the world. But if there's people that are interested in working on it, I'd love to hear from you. Or we can talk with the ACE team later.

E

Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo) 1:00:50

Yeah, awesome. Sweet. Well, this was fantastic. Thank you so much for doing this Bekah, and for everybody else contributing and being here for the conversation. I do want to recognize that we are at time. So I will send the recording and all the resources mentioned today, as well as theory of change to all the folks who attended or registered today and weren't able to come. So you can access all of those later. And then yeah, as a reminder, when you leave zoom, you'll get that post meeting survey pop up in your browser. So definitely, please take a couple minutes to let us know what you thought of today. That'll be super helpful to make sure we can have more productive conversations later. But yeah, thank you so much, Becca, this was fantastic.

B

Bekah Hanes 1:01:32

Thanks, everyone, for your thoughts and ideas. I really appreciate it. Awesome.

 Emily Bernhardt (Woodland Park Zoo) 1:01:37

Well, have a wonderful day everybody and I will see you all later. Thanks, everyone.