Can we keep the environment in mind while we adjust to renewed freedoms?
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Introduction
The move to practicing social work online brought immense challenges, adaptations and creative thinking and problem solving. Adapting to online work has meant learning to cope with new technologies and ways of building and maintaining professional and personal relationships. This has been an emotional and mental challenge for all. The other side of this coin, however, is that with less travel by students, practitioners and academics, the amount of fossil fuel consumption and other environmental impacts of travelling went through a brief period of decline.

This chapter will look briefly at the environmental impact of social work moving online during the Covid19 crisis and how we can incorporate this awareness as we move back to a less confined existence. This chapter will offer an opportunity for the reader to reflect on what positive environmental changes happened within their own personal and professional spheres during the Covid 10 pandemic. Although within the UK, many of the restrictions have eased, it is hoped that some of these sustainable changes can be maintained as we move into an unprecedented era of climate crisis.

Adaptation of the Profession
Social workers have played a critical role during this pandemic by supporting service users not only with the needs that brought them to a social workers attention in the first place, but within the context of Covid19 which brought additional challenges (Bright 2020). Social workers have had to not only cope with the risks posed to their service users, but the risks that they were facing in their own life. Supporting the range of loss and grief professionally and personally takes a toll on the professionals, especially when they are not able to rely on the face to face and workplace relationships that are so often essential to the wellbeing of social workers (Engstrom 2017).

There is still much to learn about the impact of the pandemic on social work practice and education. What is clear however, is that social work, along with many other professions, needs to be able to adapt to changing environments whilst also keeping the core values and skills that are required to support those that need social work involvement (Golightly and Holloway 2020). The pandemic highlighted and emphasised the inequalities that are already present within society and increased the struggles for those that are most vulnerable and isolated (Abrams and Dettlaff 2020). The profession is adept and trained to deal with crisis situations, in fact this is often a core standard that social work students have to meet (SSSC 2019, Bright 2020). As the global health crisis continues, whilst also being compounded by the global climate crisis, social workers are going to continue to be called on to respond quickly to those that are most disadvantaged, in contexts they may not have experience in.

The Impact of Online Work and Lockdowns on the Environment
The pandemic has caused severe and countless societal and economic changes to all aspects of our day to day lives. Social and physical distancing directives, national and international travel restrictions and quarantines led to decreases in commuting as the messages were given for everyone to work from home, or for others a temporary or permanent loss in

employment (Bashir et al 2020, El Zowalaty et al 2020). However, the impact of these restricted activities also contributed towards moments of a cleaner environment (Bashir et al 2020). Although temporary, these positive environmental effects can serve as an example of how certain changes to day to day lives can demonstrate the efficiency and creativity needed to make further positive changes, such as a shift to clean energy, for the natural environment, which in turn supports human health and wellbeing.

The Covid19 Pandemic is a global health emergency, but it can also serve as an example of how changes in travel and production can improve air quality and reduce the carbon footprint. During the early months of the pandemic when many major cities were in lockdown, there were significant drops in greenhouse gases (GHG) in comparison with 2019. Satellite images from NASA indicated that major environmental pollutants decreased by 20-40% (Knowland et al 2020). Air quality significantly improved as there were lower emissions of air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide in industrial economies (Bashir et al 2020, Wang and Su 2020). Specifically, air pollutants in New York dropped by 50%, coal use in China decreased by 40% with an overall 25% reduction in GHG emissions (Guatam 2020, Saadat et al 2020, Sarkodie and Owusu 2021). There were also reports that there was reduced fossil fuel consumption during this time as there was less demand for coal, gasoline and diesel (Bashir et al 2020, Wang et al 2020, Sharif et al 2020).

Water pollution and the impact of sediment churning due to motorboats were also reported to have improved with noticeable changes in the Ganga River in India and in the canals of Venice (Rupani et al 2020, Saadat et al 2020). Additionally, the reduction of vehicles on the roads were thought to have decreased the number of wildlife species killed and the diminished global travel trade is thought to be associated with decreased movement of non-native species and wildlife diseases (Zellmer et al, 2020, Shilling and Waetjen 2020).

However, although this perhaps provided some emotional relief, the discourse that emerged as a result of reports of animals "reclaiming" or "returning" to spaces that are traditionally dominated by humans, is one that needs to be treated with caution. As Searle and Turnbull (2020) report, celebrating the pandemic as somehow beneficial to the natural world is dangerous as it fails to acknowledge the complexities in which the pandemic emerged as well as plays into the anthropocentric view that humans are separate than nature. Additionally, some animals have evolved and adapted to rely on human practices using opportunistic food sources in the form of roadkill or rubbish heaps, while others are reliant on humans for conservation efforts.

This is where developing an eco-social worldview becomes an important process for social workers and those that they work with. No one would claim to have wanted a global pandemic to happen for these relationships to be highlighted, yet there is now a clear chance to use this new, or reawakened knowledge, to move forward in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

Re-emerging with an Eco-Social Worldview
Social workers are consistently told to think about the person in the environment. This traditionally means the social, political, and economical systems that an individual, family or community is connected to. Those that subscribe to the Green/Eco or Environmental social

work movement push for the environment to not only include the human and built environment, but the natural and non-human environment (Dominelli 2012, Besthorn 2000). Now, more than ever, due to the Covid 19 pandemic as well as the climate crisis that the IPCC (2021) has stated is at "Code red for humanity", social workers have the opportunity to challenge and re-examine the structures of injustices and destruction associated with an anthropocentric worldview that encompasses many workplace systems and practices as well as individual lives.

I have previously written about the importance of embracing an ecosocial worldview, which acknowledges the inextricable relationship between all life on this planet, including humans and more than humans (Engstrom and Powers, 2021). An ecosocial worldview or lens requires us to critically examine and question our current societal structures, practices, policies, routines, values, life-pace, and patterns of production and consumption (Engstrom and Powers, 2021). Humans cannot exist without the natural world, and it is becoming clearer that we need to re-evaluate our relationship with the natural world and see ourselves as part of it, as opposed to separate. Eco or green social work is not new (Besthorn 2000; Dominelli 2012), but with our current overlapping and interconnected crisis's, it is gaining traction as more and more people remember, and come to realise, that the health and wellbeing of people, is inseparable from the health and wellbeing of the planet.

Physical distancing and taking part in collective health promoting behaviours, encouraged us to think beyond ourselves. We had to think collectively about how our behaviours would impact those around us, whether we knew them or not. This is the same mentality we need to continue moving forward in terms of how we support the natural world that we are a part of and that we need to survive. Connection needs to be an integral part of recovery from those that have had a Covid19 diagnosis, as well as for all of us that have been distancing from others for so long. Connection with others, but also connection with the natural world. The relationship that we have with the natural world has been highlighted as an essential aspect of our health (Alcock et al 2014), and as so much of social work practice is relationship based, it seems only a natural progression to include the relationship that service users have with the natural world, as a component of social work practice.

There is a worry that people will rush to return to 'normal' and consume at the same rate, if not more due to missing out while lockdown was enforced, and the pressure to bring back the economy, and the benefits of this "pause" of consumption and movement will be quickly erased. It is essential, especially now with the results of the IPCC (2021) report, that social workers reflect on how they can adapt their practice to support societal change to reduce the impact of climate change. Those that are most vulnerable and least responsible are already bearing the brunt of climate change related events which makes the role of social work in this context even more essential as these individuals, families and communities are potentially already familiar to social work services. Social workers understanding not only the benefits of an ecosocial world view, but the impact of climate justice on those that are most vulnerable in their practice will hopefully support a green recovery and post-pandemic, 'just transition' (Schlosberg and Collins, 2014) that is beneficial for both the human and the non-human natural world.

Conclusion

The global pandemic allowed a brief look at what is possible if there is less carbon entering the atmosphere and the ability for humans to think creatively in a crisis. Recovery from the pandemic, as well as from the climate crisis, needs continued reflection and awareness of what systems and structures support the health and wellbeing of both humans and the natural world. This chapter has briefly explored some of the complexities and nuances of this discussion and the role of social work within it.

Social work must challenge the systems and structures that it finds itself in that create natural as well as social problems in the first place. The individuals, families and communities that encounter social work, are already victims of climate justice as well as many additional injustices. Additionally, social workers themselves will also be dealing with the impact of climate change related events if they have not already, which reiterates the IPCC (2021) report that the consequences of climate change are everywhere.

Moments of crisis provide us with opportunities to reflect on our own worldviews and day to day lives, and there is no longer any room to deny the trajectory that we are on. Social workers are trained to challenge, think creatively, work holistically, and attend to injustices, what is now required is for social workers to include environmental injustices in their remit.

Reflective Questions:
1) What environmentally friendly and sustainable changes have you made either consciously or unconsciously as a result of moving online?
2) What changes can you maintain as restrictions are lifted?
3) How can you incorporate more of an eco-social worldview into your professional (and personal) routine?

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