

For me plastics represent both crisis and opportunity for us as a species on Earth. As recently as two years ago, I believed that plastics could be recycled and as long as our family put them in the big blue bin, all was good. What I've learned: around 5% of plastics are actually recyclable, the rest are burned or buried. By now we know that as plastic degrades micro- or nano-plastics get airborne which we can breathe or into earth or water where they infiltrate the food we eat and have serious consequences for our health. It's predicted that by 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish. And, you probably guessed already: it takes burning a lot of fossil fuels (e.g., oil & gas) to create them, which has climate impacts. That's the crisis part.

The opportunity part is to become more conscious of our interdependence with all life, of the earth-wide consequences of our actions and of the urgent need to rethink our place in the universe. Continuing to act as if we can with plastics exploit the land, air and each other endlessly, without consequences is living the Old Story. Turning away from plastics and "convenience" and creating with others new, non-harming options is living the New Story. ...so I'm now part of a team of 8 in [Elders Climate Action at the state level](#) to reduce our use of plastics through educating and by advocating for changes in laws. To view the latest activity watch: [Public Health & Plastics: Reduce Impacts Now!](#).

From: **Dave Damm-Luhr**

How is the New Story enriching your life?