



PRESS RELEASE

New Creative Learning Module Invites Participants to Explore Eco-Anxiety Through the Elements and Therapeutic Arts

Lefika La Phodiso and Creative by Nature introduces a warm, accessible online learning experience that helps participants process climate distress through creativity, reflection, and collective care.

Lefika La Phodiso, Africa's first organisation offering community art counselling training in collaboration with artist and fellow community arts counsellor **Pauline Borton (Creative by Nature)**, has announced a new long-form learning and reflection module, *Exploring Eco-Anxiety through the Elemental and Creative*, designed to support participants as they navigate the emotional realities of climate change through creative practice, nature-based reflection, and community-centred dialogue.

Developed within the context of community arts counselling, the module responds to a growing need for spaces that acknowledge eco-anxiety as a valid human response to environmental disruption. Rather than approaching climate distress only as an intellectual or policy issue, the programme creates room for participants to engage their feelings of fear, grief, uncertainty, anger, and hope through carefully structured creative activities. The result is an invitational journey that centres lived experience, emotional literacy, and reconnection with the natural world.

Built around a five-part structure and delivered in an online format, the module is intended to make participation practical and accessible from anywhere. The elemental framework offers a manageable path through complex emotions, using metaphor and artistic exploration to help participants move from overwhelm toward grounded reflection. By linking creativity with embodied attention to earth, water, air, metal, quintessence and fire, the programme encourages participants to reconnect with the more-than-human world in ways that are both personally meaningful and collectively relevant.

At the heart of the module are several guiding messages: eco-anxiety is a valid response; creativity can help people process what words alone cannot; shared reflection can transform isolation into meaning and action; and a thoughtfully paced structure can make difficult inner work feel approachable. The tone of the learning experience is warm, grounded, hopeful, and non-clinical, making space for people with different levels of climate distress and different relationships to environmental change.

Participants will encounter a range of thought-provoking creative practices inspired by community art counselling and related therapeutic modalities. These may include reflective writing, image-making, nature-based observation, symbolic exploration of the elements, and collaborative discussion. The intention is not to overwhelm participants with theory, but to offer a grounded process through which emotional responses to the climate crisis can be witnessed, expressed, and transformed into deeper connection, resilience, and capacity for action.

The launch comes at a time when psychologists and researchers continue to describe eco-anxiety as a real and increasingly visible form of climate-related distress, especially among younger people and communities already carrying the weight of uncertainty and loss. Current research highlights that climate anxiety can include ongoing worry, grief, guilt, and helplessness, while also pointing to the importance of meaning-focused coping, collective response, and supportive spaces that help individuals move from paralysis toward purposeful engagement. For organisations working in psychosocial support, arts education, and community wellbeing, this creates an urgent opportunity to develop responses that are humane, creative, and accessible.

This course was written and designed by **Pauline Borton**, founder and director of **Creative by Nature**, whose practice brings together creative healing, ecological awareness, and reflective learning. Her contribution to the course helps shape its distinctive approach, drawing on nature-connected, arts-based processes that support participants in exploring eco-anxiety with depth, imagination, and care. Through this collaboration, the programme is further enriched by a perspective that honours both personal experience and the wider relationships between creativity, wellbeing, and the natural world.

Lefika La Phodiso, which means “the rock of holding and healing,” has a long-standing commitment to creating safe creative spaces and expanding access to mental health support through the arts. Founded in 1994, the organisation has built national capacity for empathy by training community art counsellors and facilitating art-based psychosocial programmes in a range of settings. This new module extends that practice into the urgent terrain of climate emotion, inviting participants to consider how creativity, relationship, and collective care can help people live with uncertainty while imagining more hopeful futures.

“This module recognises that climate distress is not simply a private burden to be managed alone. It is a shared emotional reality that calls for creative, compassionate, and collective forms of response,” said Rozanne Myburgh, director of Lefika La Phodiso.

“By exploring eco-anxiety through the elemental, participants are invited to reconnect with nature, honour their emotional experience, and discover practices that can turn isolation into reflection, and reflection into action,” said Pauline Borton, course author and facilitator.

The programme is suitable for learners, facilitators, practitioners, and community members interested in the intersection of climate emotion, creativity, and psychosocial support. Media, partners, and prospective participants are encouraged to contact the organisation directly for programme dates, enrolment information, and interview requests.

About Lefika La Phodiso

Lefika La Phodiso is a Johannesburg-based non-profit organisation and training institute focused on community art counselling, psychosocial support, and creative learning. Known as Africa’s first organisation offering community art counselling training, Lefika creates safe spaces for healing and growth through the arts, with programmes that support children, communities, and practitioners in South Africa and beyond.

About Creative by Nature:

Creative by Nature is a South Africa-based creative practice and consultancy founded by **Pauline Borton**. Based in Johannesburg, the company integrates creative healing, ecological awareness, and biomimicry through workshops, collaborations, and consulting work that help people rethink how they live, create, and sustain themselves in a time of climate change and social uncertainty. Its work brings together nature-based learning, visual storytelling, and reflective practice, offering approaches that connect wellbeing, imagination, and the living world.

Eco-anxiety deserves care, creativity, and community 🌿 ✨

Join us for a gentle online journey of reflection and exploration.

Starts 25 July 2026 | 9:30–11:00 am

Read the full story and book your spot via the links:

Info here: <https://lefikalaphodiso.co.za/news/a-creative-online-space-to-explore-eco-anxiety-with-care-reflection-and-community/>

Purchase here: <https://lefikalaphodiso.co.za/product/exploring-eco-anxiety-through-the-elemental-and-creative-module-a/>

Media Contact

Rozanne Myburgh

065 094 2152

Pauline Borton

079 316 9579

Email:

rozanne@lefikalaphodiso.co.za

creativebynature.online@gmail.com

Websites:

<https://lefikalaphodiso.co.za/about-us/>

<https://creativebynature.online/>

Images:

Pauline Borton

Greenside Student Photography

Nicole van Niekerk

Rozanne Myburgh