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# Carelessness to Awareness

- a new approach to climate communication



## Master Thesis

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*And it's probably just because I as a human being have an interest in the world I live in, and what I stuff myself with. I think we all have a responsibility that we do not just go totally berserk. And then one can ask, do I make a difference, when they are going totally crazy in USA or in Bolivia. But then, if I don't do anything... Change begins with oneself, and then it can spread like rings in the water. I know that I cannot take on the whole world, but I can begin with myself and then I can do what I can.*

**Excerpt from an interview with a self-identified green person**

## PREFACE

*“Nothing ventured, nothing gained”*

- Benjamin Franklin

This thesis represents the final chapter of my five years of being a university student. I wish to thank everyone I have met during this journey who has inspired and helped me to achieve this accomplishment, that being university staff, fellow students, friends, family and colleagues. A special thanks is given to my supervisor Andreas Malm, for his always honest, inspiring and constructive feedback. I furthermore wish to thank all of my informants for participating in this research – thank you for opening your homes and minds for me.

On a more personal note, I am grateful to my boyfriend and roomie, Mads Sørensen, for his encouraging words and wise advice during the writing process.

Without any of you, this thesis could not have been possible.

It is with an ambivalent heart I hereby write the last sentence of my preface for a paper I hope you will enjoy.

Kolding, Denmark – May 2016

**Stella Steen Jensen**

## **ABSTRACT**

Climate change is the biggest challenge we as a human species have ever faced, but still some people seem to have a careless approach to how they live their lives. This paper is contextualized within Kolding Municipality and aims at developing a new approach to climate communication based on the motivation of self-identified green-people in order to inspire non-green people to obtain a green lifestyle. Reviewing non-green people's incentives to obtain a green lifestyle and also identifying barriers connected to current climate communication, the new approach turned to motivation of green people. Through a grounded theory approach a substantive theory of motivation was developed, where the green people's motivation was connected to solidarity, justice and ideal self. Validated through a formal theory of motivation it was consolidated that green people are motivated to fulfill their human needs of "growth". Using the need of growth to the motivation of non-green people it was established that climate communication should focus on connecting green lifestyle with a matter of personal growth, and to identify which benefits in connection to health, future generations and solidarity a green lifestyle can contribute with.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Scientists agree that anthropogenic climate change is real and that it is a very serious threat on multiple levels for the entire planet. Economic, social, political, and biological systems are all said to be in trouble. Moreover, the window of opportunity for dealing with the problem is limited. At the same time, the public around the globe is mostly apathetic” (Smith and Howe, 2015: 1).

Although we are facing our biggest environmental issue in our time, and scientists agree that climate change will affect every aspect of our lives, people around the world remain mostly silent (Smith and Howe, 2015: 1). But how can we overcome this silence? Most social scientists look backwards in offering a diagnosis for the failure of climate awareness and actions. But “by relentlessly indicating the magnitude of the task we face, then itemizing barriers to climate awareness and action, it arguably contributes to the mood of fatalism it purports merely to analyze. It normalizes the status quo rather than trying to open doors” (Smith and Howe, 2015:6). Although I believe that an identification of current barriers are needed in order to move forward, my contribution is to look into the future with hope, and to open doors in the field of climate communication in order to promote public climate action. Because “like it or not, climate change takes on a certain set of properties once it moves from nature and science and into the public sphere” (Smith and Howe, 2015: 7). Communicating climate change in the public sphere in the *right way* is thereby crucial to securing public engagement and consequently securing a sustainable world.

### 1.1 AIM OF STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Climate communication, motivation and human behavior are all complex and big fields of research. During the process of conducting my research, I learned that everyone (scholars to non-scholars) have an opinion about these fields. Many people therefore fear conducting this kind of research, as they feel overwhelmed with the pitfalls and the different opinions that are connected to the field. This I find a tremendous loss as many municipalities, companies, institutions etc. are actually working with climate communication, motivation and human

behavior on a daily basis. I thereby think this field is of extreme importance, and that research should support this kind of daily practices in order to suggest possible improvements.

Although I wish to influence non-green people's behavior, I wish not to elaborate on which green behaviors I am advocating for. I am more interested in *why* people behave as they do, and not in *what* they do. By investigating the *why* I hope to gain knowledge on how we can possibly influencing people's behavior through climate communication. I acknowledge that there are other fields such as e.g. nudging, which are working directly with changing and influencing people's behavior, but this is not within my aim of study.

Classic communication strategies are about the sender – the message – the receiver. I propose a new strategy to climate communication where a fourth component is brought into play: the inspiration. By inspiration I mean that climate communication should consider which type of inspiration the sender wants to pass on to the receiver. The inspiration in this study, I find through the self-identified green people, as this is how we want the receiver to behave. Using Kolding Municipality and its citizens as my field of research, my aim of study then becomes to investigate:

**What motivates self-identified green people in Kolding Municipality to be green, and how can their motivation be used in a new approach to climate communication with the purpose of inspiring non-green people in Kolding Municipality to become green?**

To answer this question I will further identify:

1. Which motivational factors in relation to a green lifestyle do non-green people of Kolding Municipality identify?
2. Which barriers are connected to current climate communication?

By identifying these aspects, combined with the motivation of self-identified green people, it will enable me to give the best possible recommendation for a new approach to climate communication. The two subsidiary questions will be investigated and answered already



during “Chapter 2: setting the scene”, while the overarching research question will be answered during “Chapter 6: Discussion of a new approach to climate change”

In order to answer these questions, I will first give the reader a presentation of the scene in which this research is to be understood. First I will relate my research to the field of human ecology, whereas I afterwards will present the reader to the city of Kolding and its citizens, and lastly I will identify the barriers connected to current climate communication and relate it to the representation of climate change in local newspapers of Kolding Municipality. After having introduced the scene of my research, I will introduce my research design and strategy, which will be followed by an analysis of my substantive theory of motivation purely based on my empery. To validate my substantive theory I will afterwards formalize it through a formal theory of motivation. Lastly I will discuss my results and empirical contributions in establishing a new approach to climate communication, which will be followed by a conclusion and ended with my contribution and future research.

But first I will provide the reader with a brief word explanation in order to establish a common ground of understanding.

## **1.2 WORD EXPLANATION**

- *Self-identified green people*: My informants are “self-identified green people”, which means that they have identified themselves as being green or having an environmentally friendly behavior. As I have just explained in the “Aim of the study” I will not to investigate *what* people do, but *why* they do it. This paper does therefore not address certain behaviors associated with a green lifestyle, which means that the notion of “being green” becomes a subjective marker for my respondents, as they are the one’s who have identified themselves as being green. No checklist or questionnaire has been conducted to establish if they behave green in comparison to a certain standard. The only thing that holds a value for my research, is that they identify themselves as being green. This was a choice a made due to the complexity of green behavior, as I do not have the answer to when people are green and when they are not.

- *Green*: The word “green” I use to describe both a group of people and a certain lifestyle. To define what the word means for my respondents, I asked them during each interview what

they connected to a green lifestyle. The basic traits were that they connected it with a sustainable lifestyle and an awareness to what consequences your actions have for your surroundings. They stressed that one should have a holistic approach to life, and that one's choices should include everything from eating organic to take care of the ozone layer.

- *Climate communication*: The concept of climate communication refers to the media's role of communication the diverse field of climate change-related news, information, knowledge, emotions and meanings.

Having established a common ground of understanding in relation to some key words used in this paper, I will now set the scene of my research by presenting the reader to the context in which it should be understood.

## **CHAPTER 2: SETTING THE SCENE**

By setting the scene to which context this paper should be understood in, I wish to give the reader an understanding my field of research. I will begin by putting my research into the context of human ecology, afterwards I will give the reader an introduction to Kolding Municipality and the average citizen. Lastly I will identify the barriers connected to current climate communication, where I will end this chapter by a quick review of the representation of climate change in the local newspaper of Kolding Municipality.

### **2.1 HUMAN ECOLOGY – CULTURE, POWER AND SUSTAINABILITY**

The first step of setting the scene of my paper is to connect it to the field of human ecology, since it is within the context of the human ecology program this research is situated.

The formal definition of ecology is “the relations and interactions between organisms and their environment, including other organisms” (dictionary.com). Human ecology is therefore related to how we as humans relate and interact with the environment surrounding us. However, Steiner and Nauser (1993: 99) argue that the relationship between person, society and environment have been investigated separately by researchers. They therefore propose a “new, that is integrated form of science” (Steiner and Nauser, 1993: 99), where the notions of

'person', 'society' and the 'environment' are integrated in what they call the human-ecology triangle. In my research I thereby wish to make a meaningful connection between the notion of the person (e.g. motivation of green people), the society (e.g. Kolding Municipality, the division of social groups in green/non-green) and the environment (e.g. climate change).

By finding these connections, I would argue that my research touches upon the main components of my program: Culture, Power and Sustainability, as I conduct an analysis of motivational factors embedded in a cultural context in order to promote a sustainable lifestyle through the influence and power of climate communication.

Having established the more overall context of my research, I will now turn my focus to the specific scene where this context is situated: Kolding Municipality.

## **2.2 KOLDING: A CITY IN DENMARK**

Denmark is a country situated within Scandinavia in Western Europe, and with its 5,6 million people it is the 21<sup>st</sup> richest country in the world. In the years of 2013-2015 Denmark was ranked as the happiest country in the world (Helliwell et al, 20: 2016), while also being the second safest place on earth, just after Iceland (economicsandpeace.org, 8: 2015).

Denmark is therefore a country where the population's basic needs in terms of economic safety, happiness and security is very much fulfilled.

In relation to the environment, Denmark was in 2014 ranked the highest on the climate change index. This index ranks all countries in the world according to which effort they do in order to fight climate change (Burck et al, 8: 2014). Denmark is thereby acknowledged as being a country that does a lot to prevent climate change. Although this might be true, they are still ranked as the 4<sup>th</sup> country in the world with the highest ecological footprint<sup>1</sup> (WWF, 2014). This indicates that even though Denmark develops policies and other initiatives in order to prevent climate change, they still require a lot of land/water area by population to support their lifestyle. That means that there might be an inconsistency between Denmark's intentions and the actual reality when it comes to how environmental friendly Denmark is in comparison to other countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of Ecological Footprint: "It account for the flows of energy and matter to and from any defined economy and converts these into the corresponding land/water area required from nature to support these

Kolding is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest city of Denmark, and inhabits around 91.000 citizens in the municipality. Kolding is an old industrial city with deep roots in especially the transport, logistic, energy, iron and steel industry. Today Kolding is known for its innovation and design, where it encourages young entrepreneurs to follow their dreams (trekantomraadet.dk).

The municipality of Kolding's motto is "We design life", which means that they try to incorporate design processes and innovative solutions in all aspects of their work. In the Climate and Sustainability department of Kolding Municipality this is also the case, as they in 2015 won the Green Purchasing Award, because of their purchase of eco-friendly hydrogen vehicles (ansvarligeinkob.dk, 2016).

Besides sustainable transportation, the department also tries to create strategies to ensure a sustainable future. They have developed both a Sustainability Strategy and a Green Strategy to ensure the best future for the people and the environment within the municipality. Although these strategies work on an overall level, they also have concrete initiatives to ensure a more sustainable future, e.g. Green Shops<sup>2</sup>, Green Street<sup>3</sup> and a Facebook page called Green in Kolding. The Climate and Sustainability department therefore tries to create a foundation for the citizens in order to inspire them to make more green and sustainable choices in their everyday life.

In the civil society, there are also some organizations and communities that try to inspire other citizens to change their lifestyle. One organization is called Young Energy, which tries to encourage and activate young people in the issue of sustainable energy. Another organization is called Kolding's Ecological Food Community, and they provide people with local and ecological food, while trying to create a sense of community.

Although the municipality and the citizens thus show interest and willingness to convert into a green lifestyle, it is still only a minority of people that are actually doing it actively. Some of these people are the ones I have reached out to during my research. But before I look deeper into the green people of Kolding Municipality, I will elaborate on the average citizens of Kolding Municipality.

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<sup>2</sup> Learn more: [https://www.kolding.dk/borger/miljoe-natur-klima/klima-og-baeredygtighed/groenne-butikker?test\\_sef=1&title=Gr%C3%B8nne%20butikker%20|%20Gr%C3%B8nne%20butikker](https://www.kolding.dk/borger/miljoe-natur-klima/klima-og-baeredygtighed/groenne-butikker?test_sef=1&title=Gr%C3%B8nne%20butikker%20|%20Gr%C3%B8nne%20butikker)

<sup>3</sup> A yearly event directed towards the citizens, where an entire street is transformed into green street with trees, flowers etc.

### **2.2.1 THE CITIZENS OF KOLDING MUNICIPALITY**

The average citizen of Kolding is female and is between 40-49 years old. She has a vocational education and works 37 hours a week and earns about DKK 234.900 a year in salary, and is expected to live until she becomes 80,2 years old (Kontur, 2015: 24-42).

In comparison to an average citizen in a neighbor municipality, the citizen of Kolding has more doctor visits and sick days, and often encounters more stress and nervousness on a year's basis. In the everyday life they feel safe and have trust to their surroundings, and do not feel lonely. Although they in general are satisfied with their life and the things they have achieved so far, they sometimes does not feel that they have the possibility to change their life (Kontur, 2015: 24-42).

The average citizen of Kolding has a climate behavior that is worse than the average citizen of Denmark, due to the 7,0 ton of CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions and 138 gigajoule of energy consumption they emit (Kontur, 2015: 18). While they feel that they posses the knowledge needed to change their habits into a more climate friendly direction, and furthermore do not feel that it is difficult to change their current behavior into a more green direction, they still do not change their habits. (Hoff et al, 2013: 26).

To establish what would motivate the average citizen of Kolding, a research of their motivation related to a more climate friendly behavior were conducted in 2013, where the top three motivational factors/incentives turned out to be:

1. My family's or my own health
2. Economic advantages
3. Future generations existence

(Hoff et al, 2013: 6-11)

By identifying these three motivational factors in relation to a green lifestyle, I have answered the first subsidiary research question of: "Which motivational factors in relation to a green lifestyle do non-green people if Kolding Municipality identify?". I tend to use this knowledge in chapter 6, where I will discuss a new approach to climate communication, where this will serve as an important indicator of what should be considered when this new approach is developed. But for now, I will turn my attention to the more content-based context of climate communication and its barriers.

### **2.3 BARRIERS TO CURRENT CLIMATE COMMUNICATION**

Climate communication is a diverse and complex field with many different opinions and emotions. As stated in the word explanation, this paper sees climate communication in relation to the role of the media, and its attempt to portray climate change-related news, information, etc. To answer my second and last subsidiary research question of: “Which barriers are there to current climate communication?”, I thereby find it relevant to look at the current climate communication and its barriers, while identifying the representation of climate change in the local newspapers of Kolding Municipality.

Reading literature about the topic, I came to realize three main barriers for why climate communication fails to engage people in a green lifestyle: fear, risk and denial. However, I acknowledge that reality is often more complex than this, and that these three barriers only serve as an indicator to why people are not engaging in a green lifestyle, but I have found these to be the main reasons.

### **2.3.1 FEAR**

I will begin with “Fear” as my first barrier, as I found that this seemed to be the emotion that climate communication tries to invoke in its receiver. In this section I will take a critical stand, and argue why this approach does not work.

“The most significant channel for information that the general public receives about climate change is the mass media, which arguably has a great influence on people’s perceptions of the issue” (O’Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 357).

As the media then possesses a great power by reaching millions of people with information, it is important how climate communication is represented in this field. But research shows, that climate communication is most commonly communicated in the media, when a climate catastrophe or other dramatic climate event occurs in the world (O’Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 358). The media is thereby inducing fear at its receivers due to their focus on portraying climate change as something dangerous and catastrophic. Fear is thus intended to be “a communications tool that will break through the routine of everyday life and catch the viewer’s attention” (O’Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 359). These dramatic representations of climate change impacts might catch people’s attention, due to its ability to portray the issue as



knowledge claims, and high stakes". Due to climate change's "wicked" nature it consequently becomes an issue, which people look upon as being impersonal and distant. (O'Neil and Nicholson, 2009: 362). Using fear as a communication tool to strive for change therefore becomes difficult to sustain in the long run, as people "feel that dangerous climate change will not affect them for some considerable years, if at all" (O'Neil and Nicholson, 2009: 362). It also becomes a challenge if one considers that the notion of law diminishing returns can exist:

"If this exists, fear approaches need to be made more intense as time goes by because of repeated exposure to threatening information in order to produce the same impact on individuals" (Hastings et al 2004, cited in O'Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 362).

Having people sometimes both temporally and spatially disconnected to climate change, which combined with fear inducing content and visualization causes climate communication to face big challenges (O'Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 360-362).

I therefore find the use of fear as a communication tool to be inadequate to portray climate change and successfully engage people with the issue - one reason being that people cannot stay in a state of fear for a very long time, so the use of fear as a motivator seems as a short time solution. I also argue that the wicked nature of climate change combined with fear-inducing images of a drowning polar bear in the media makes the issue a distant and impersonal experience. Another important point in relation to fear is also that people need to feel that they are at risk, before fear can even be manifested in its receiver. The notion of risk will therefore be elaborated in the next section.

### **2.3.2 RISK**

In the introduction I argued that we as species are facing our biggest challenge yet, and that the magnitude of climate change will influence all aspects of our lives. I therefore wish to elaborate on people's perception of this risk in the following section, and showcase why climate change should not be portrayed as one.

"Humans have always had to face risks of one kind or another, but today's risks are qualitatively different from those that came in earlier times" (Giddens, 2009: 193).



We have shifted from external risk to manufactured risk according to Giddens (2009: 193), where the risks that threaten us are no longer unrelated to human actions but are in fact caused solely by human actions, as “they are the outcomes of our own interventions into nature”. There have always been external environmental risks, such as e.g. drought, but now we face manufactured environmental risks, such as e.g. pollution, that are a product of human activity. Risks in our modern society therefore take on a whole new character than societies before us have had to face:

“Automobile and plane crashes, toxic chemical spills and explosions, nuclear accidents, food contamination, genetic manipulation, the spread of AIDS, global climate change, ozone depletion, species extinction and the persistence of nuclear weapons arsenals: the list goes on. Risks abound and people are increasingly aware that no one is entirely safe from the hazards of modern living” (Jaeger et al 2001, cited in Norgaard, 2011: 81).

Ulrich Beck calls this modern living a “risk society”, where the notion of risk is becoming embedded in the consciousness of the public (Norgaard, 2011: 83), which means that the negative effects of progress are now more present in the social debate than before:

“the adoption of ‘risk’ as the imprimatur of our age marks a significant refocusing of social thought. The foundation of Western thought since the Enlightenment – from Comte, Spencer, Marx, Parsons, Habermas and others – has been the expectation of progress of continued improvement in the social world. The emergence of a ‘Risk Society’ abruptly challenges that assumption” (Jaeger et al, 2001: 15, cited in Norgaard, 2011: 84).

Some would claim that progress has resulted from the emergence of fossil fuel and their use, which in return has caused the climate change we are now facing. Climate change is therefore one of the greatest risk we are facing in our modern society. But since modern society is so preoccupied with risk, I propose the same questions as Norgaard (2011: 33):

“If so, in what sense are people preoccupied? In their daily lives? If people are so preoccupied, why is this concern not visible? If community members consider global warming a significant problem, why does it receive so little serious attention?”.

Research conducted by the Danish Trygfonden (2015) showed the top five things that the Danes worry most about:

1. To not get enough care when I get old
2. To not be able to find work when I finish my education
3. To have illness in the family
4. To not get the sufficient treatment, if I get sick
5. To have the climate change issues out of control

(Andersen et al, 2015: 10, translated by the author).

Health and employment issues are something Danes worry more about than the issue of climate change. This could be due to the fact that the other risk issues are more immediate and visible on a daily basis, whereas climate change can be a less noticeable and abstract issue of concern (O'Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 357), which I also argued under the theme of "Fear". Viewing climate change as less of a risk than other issues could be one of the barriers to the lack of engagement by the general public in the climate issue (O'Neil and Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 357). Giddens's paradox explains this as:

"since the dangers posed by global warming aren't tangible, immediate or visible in the course of day-to-day life, however awesome they appear, many will sit on their hands and do nothing of a concrete nature about them. Yet waiting until they become visible and acute before being stirred to serious action will, by definition, be too late" (Giddens, 2009: 2, cited in Smith and Howe, 2015: 2-3).

As I mentioned earlier, the mass media is the most significant channel for information delivered to the general public. Often the issue of climate change is portrayed through the mass media's notion of "news". A core ingredient to becoming newsworthy is through the element of surprise. Although new scientific discoveries and climate disasters are happening on a regular basis, climate change rarely makes it to the news studios. This is because:

“any scientific findings will confirm what is already known: climate change is happening. Often there is a rider – the change is happening ‘faster than expected’ or ‘ahead of schedule’. This too is becoming too familiar to be interesting” (Smith and Howe, 2015: 118-119).

Competing with visible and immediate risks such as terror and the refugee crisis, climate change seems to be a lower risk to society. By being less newsworthy than other risks, climate change faces a challenge in staying current and relevant, which might make people react more to other risks brought in the spotlight by the media.

Although we are living in a society preoccupied with risks, climate change is not the only risk people are facing. Competing with more visible and immediate risks on a daily basis makes it hard for climate change to reach the headlines in the media. Portraying climate change as a risk is therefore not the right way to successfully engage people in the issue, as it is not on the top of their list when it comes to their daily concerns. But how can we live in a rational modern society that does not prioritize climate change as a risk, when it is one of the greatest risks we as a species have ever faced? Maybe the answer is to be found in the next section of “Denial”.

### **2.3.3 DENIAL**

The theme of “Denial” serves as my last barrier to climate communication’s failed attempt to motivate people to obtain a green lifestyle. I find this theme relevant, as it serves as the basic barrier to why people are not motivated by things such as fear and risk – because when you do not acknowledge a problem, how are you supposed to fear it or even perceive it as a risk? In the following I wish to elaborate on why people are not reacting to the major challenge we are facing.

“Passivity and silence may *look* the same as obliviousness, apathy and indifference, but may not be the same at all. We can feel and care intensely, yet remain silent” (Cohen, 2001: 9, cited in Norgaard, 2011: 33).

Living in a rational modern society, which is currently preoccupied with risks, as was established in the section above, one could imagine that when we are faced with serious risks

or threats to our society, we would generate a social response. But this is not how the reality is (Norgaard, 2011: 33).

Norgaard (2011) did a field study in a Norwegian city called Bygdaby, where her findings suggested that people lived in a kind of collective denial. This denial was partly created by the media, when they portrayed e.g. unusual weather events connected to climate change:

“These stories talked about the weather in ways that were subtly reassuring. In mid-November 2000, a large spread of photos and text described the new snow cannons and efforts that would go into the making of snow. This story has a reassuring quality; snows were late, but with the wonder of technology the ski season would be saved, and all would be well” (Norgaard, 2011: 47).

Although this information could easily be connected to climate change, no connection was made. It thereby became a way to “normalize” climate change by keeping the issue separate from the events that was occurring around them in their daily lives:

“Instead, information about global warming remained outside the sphere of normal life, normal thought, and the sense of what was normal reality. People were aware that there was the potential for climate change to alter life radically within the next decades, and when they thought about it, they felt worried, yet they did not go about their days wondering what things would be like for their children, how farming might change in Bygdaby, or whether their grandchildren would be able to ski on real snow. They spent their days thinking about more local, manageable topics” (Norgaard, 2011: 58).

As so, you can have the knowledge about a certain problem, such as climate change, but live in a different world or reality, where this knowledge does not comply with your daily reality.

By choosing to ignore these issues of climate change, one does not have to deal with the issues associated with it. Denial therefore becomes a tool for self-protection, when the issues connected to climate change are too overwhelming:

“Because of the degree of destruction of life and potential for destruction of life, ‘pain is the price of consciousness in a threatened and suffering world,’ and ‘apathy is the mask of suffering’” (Macy and Brown, 1998: 26-191, cited in Norgaard, 2011: 58-59).

Denial is then a privilege for the people who are living in the part of the world where you can afford to ignore the effects of climate change:

“The perspective of denial draws attention to an increasingly relevant psychological predicament for privileged people in this globalized ‘information age’ when capitalism creates both a wider divide between the material conditions of the lives of haves and have-nots and reorganizes space and time in ways that bring privileged people ever closer to the worlds of those people they exploit through cheap airfares and quality digital Internet images. As Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens tell us, these new conditions of modern life have profound implications for our understanding of self and place, and for social actions. For the well-educated and ‘nice’ people who live in relative security, these circumstances make for disturbing contradictions. Under the surface of the rosy, serene picture of their lives are dark concerns” (Norgaard, 2011: 61-62).

Using denial as a self-protection tool thereby creates a huge barrier for climate communication. A barrier which it reproduces itself by normalizing e.g. strange weather events. Climate communication should therefore take it upon its own shoulders to make local weather events connected to climate change in order to contribute into breaking this collective denial. Although the reality can be hard to face, and the medallion always has a backside, awareness and most importantly acceptance of the problems both capitalism and climate change arises, are needed in order to make a change.

Having identified these three barriers of current climate communication, I wish to briefly look at how climate change is presented in the local newspaper of Kolding in order to identify if they are subjected to these barriers I have just presented.

#### **2.3.4 CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS OF KOLDING**

Since one could write an entire thesis based on how climate change is framed in the media, this serves only as a brief indicator of how climate communication is used in Kolding Municipality. Other channels of communication such as social media, TV etc. are not included.

To base my argument, I have picked two of the most influential newspapers in Kolding: Kolding Ugeavis and JydskeVestKysten.

Kolding Ugeavis provides locally and focuses solely on local news in Kolding, whereas JydskeVestKysten provides the entire area of Southern Jutland with news, while also focusing on national and international news as well.

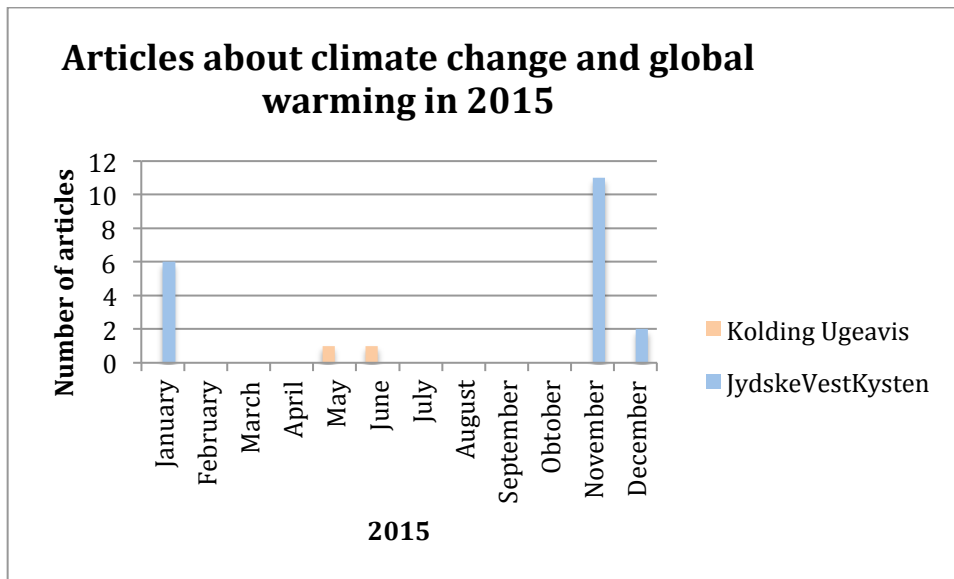
Through the two buzzwords of:

- Climate change
- Global warming

I looked at both how many articles was published, at what time of the year they were published, and in which context climate change and global warming was presented. I acknowledge that there could be other buzzwords connected to climate change, so this will not function as an exhaustive elaboration, as it only provides an insight into the context of these two buzzwords.

In Kolding Ugeavis there were two stories connected to the buzzword of climate change, while there was zero stories when I searched for global warming. A different reality became apparent when I looked at JydskeVestKysten, as eleven stories were connected to climate change and eight to global warming.

The below table shows when the articles were published during the year of 2015.



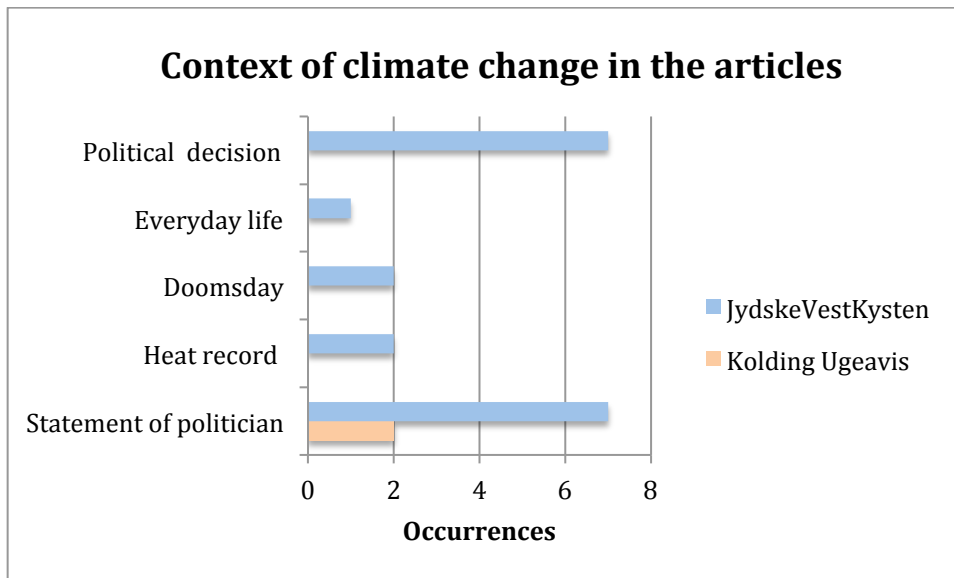
(Table 1: Articles about climate change and global warming in 2015)

As table 1 suggests, there is a clear concentration of articles about climate change and global warming at the beginning and at the end of the year. The tendency is therefore that climate change is not a theme that is evenly communicated throughout an entire year, as it seems to have months where it is more newsworthy than others. Climate change is thereby struggling with staying current and relevant, which I identified as being one of the obstacles under the barrier of risk. A possible explanation for the increase in November and December 2015 could be due to COP21 in Paris, which made climate change and global warming a newsworthy topic.

Due to the human brain, information is best processed and most importantly embedded in our future habits and memory when it is repeated (Palmgren, 2010). It therefore becomes problematic to only mention climate change and global warming 2-3 months a year, instead of it being evenly distributed and repeated all months of the year. Although I am not claiming that people are forgetting about climate change per say, but if people were reminded on a more regular basis that we are facing climate change, maybe it would have a greater impact on their everyday lives.

Other barriers were connected to which context climate change is presented in, e.g. if the context tends to normalize strange weather events or if it focuses on inducing fear.

In total I identified 21 articles where climate change or global warming were presented within both newspapers. From these 21 articles I was able to divide them into five different contexts:



(Table 2: Context of climate change in the articles)

Table 2 indicates that the main contexts where climate change or global warming were presented, were when a political decision was made, either at the expense or to accommodate climate change, or when a politician made a statement about the issue. Typical headlines within this context were stated, like:

“Denmark will remove the governmental support to coal, oil and gas” (JydskeVestKysten; Appendix 1, translated by the author)

“Obama: We have the power to change the planet’s future right now” (JydskeVestKysten; Appendix 1, translated by the author)

Using governmental support and quotes from the United States President the problem of climate change becomes a somewhat distant problem that is disconnected to the everyday life of the citizens of Kolding Municipality. When climate change is brought into the local arena of Kolding Municipality a typical headline would be connected to the local elections:



“SEE THE PICTURES: This is how the politicians of Kolding wants to win the election”  
(Kolding Ugeavis; Appendix 1, translated by the author)

Climate change is thereby brought into the political arena instead of being brought into the everyday lives of people reading the articles. This is problematic since citizens of Kolding and Danes in general have a historically low level of trust to the politicians, as only 28% of the entire population finds politicians trustworthy (Mortensen, 2015). Due to Aristotle’s appeal of ethos, it is stated that a message is best received when it comes from a character of credibility (Smith and Howe, 2015: 74). By bringing climate change into the political arena and associating it with specific politicians, it becomes associated with something political and untrustworthy.

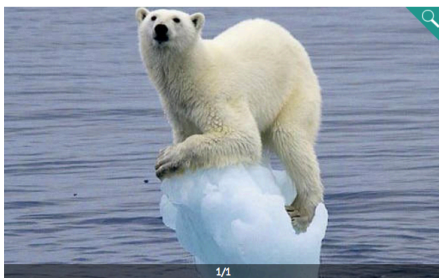
Another barrier was also connected to the inducing of fear. Two articles of the total of 21 were directly pointed to the fact that we are on the edge of catastrophic events, like e.g. this headline:

“Now its three minutes to doomsday“(JydskeVestKysten; Appendix 1, translated by the author)

As we established earlier, the use of fear in connection to climate change causes the reader to feel overwhelmed, which can make them distance themselves from the problem, or even to turn to self-protection by going into denial. A visual representation from JydskeVestKysten of a polar bear on a melting piece of ice, causes the same barrier:

### **Biolog fortæller om isbjørne**

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Not only does it create an emotional distance, but it does also connect climate change with a geographical distant problem, as we do not have polar bears in Denmark.

Another way of causing denial is by normalizing climate change. This is also something that is done by the local newspapers of Kolding Municipality by e.g. this article:

“Prepare you garden for water” (JydskeVestKysten; Appendix 1, translated by the author)

This article introduces the reader to how they can prepare their garden for more water, and how it can actually benefit garden-use that more and more water is coming. By focusing on the benefits, it has reassuring qualities and states that all is well even. As was argued earlier, this is how climate change gets normalized, and taking out the everyday events, which enable people to live in denial.

Having done this brief investigation of climate change in the local media of Kolding Municipality, it is clear that their climate communication are facing and enabling the same barriers as were identified in this section.

All in all, it has been established that that climate change should be communicated evenly through out a year, so it stays relevant and current. It should also be communicated within the right arena and by the right senders, so it develops credibility and relevance. We also established that the three themes of fear, risk and denial serve as barriers to current climate communication’s ability to successfully engage people in a green lifestyle.

Raising the emotions of fear and the perception of risk through climate communication do not serve a purpose as long as people are living in denial. Breaking the barrier of denial then becomes crucial, if climate communication is to be successful in motivating people to obtain a green lifestyle. To break this barrier I wish to look towards the “good” examples – the people who have already obtained a green lifestyle. By uncovering why they have chosen to live green, I hope to find the key to unlock the state of denial many people are living in. I therefore propose a new approach to climate communication, where motivational factors such as fear

and risk are replaced by some alternatives, which will be uncovered during my analysis. But before we dig deeper into this, I will first present my research design.

### **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN**

Due to my research question of “What motivates self-identified green people in Kolding Municipality to be green, and how can their motivation be used in a new approach to climate communication with the purpose of inspiring non-green people in Kolding Municipality to become green?”, I knew that I needed an inductive research design to answer this question.

As so, I asked my respondents to show me through a picture *why they live green*. Based on their pictures I conducted interviews, which was recorded and later transcribed. My research strategy is based on Grounded theory, where I found three concepts that will form the foundation for my analysis. The notion of grounded theory will be elaborated later in this section, but first I will account for how I have approached my field of research and how I acknowledge the world around me through my philosophy of science.

Two directions have influenced my philosophy of science during my research: phenomenology and critical realism. This is due to my inductive approach to my research area, where I have used the phenomenological principles of intentionality and epoché, however I take the stand as a critical realist as I acknowledge that there is an objective truth behind the phenomena.

Beginning with the philosophy of phenomenology, it is known to be based upon the notion that reality is a series of phenomena that are perceived and understood by human consciousness in their own lifeworld (Jacobsen et al, 2011: 162). During my research I have let my informants’ understanding of their lifeworld create the foundation for my understanding of the research area, because I have let the data presented to me guide my direction, and further because I have gone into the field with an open mind, as I have not been fixed on any predetermined theory beforehand.

However, as a researcher one cannot obtain the true reality about a phenomena, but one can only acknowledge the world as it is presented before us (Jacobsen et al, 2011: 160). This means that I need to be aware of my own subjectivity when presenting my results, as reality can appear different from person to person. I am therefore aware of my own intentionality,

and I have tried to apply the principal of epoché, where one tries to suspend any preconceived opinions or judgments about a given phenomena, and thereby examine the phenomena as objective as possible (Jacobsen et al, 2011: 161). To accommodate this, I have tried to suspend any preconceived understandings of my research area by coding my data as specific and objective as possible through Grounded Theory, but as reality is a product of human consciousness' constructive principals (Jacobsen et al, 2011: 240), I am aware that my results still will be a product of my own perceptions and values.

When speaking of epoché I am acknowledging that there is an objective truth to be revealed, I am therefore obtaining a worldview connected to critical realism, and taking the same stand as Smith and Howe (2015):

“Drawing on the vocabulary of critical realism, we can state that nature is ‘intransitive’. This means that there are real causal mechanisms at work and that the climate has an objective reality that has consequences regardless of how we choose to think about it. Islands will go under water, houses will be destroyed, people will get sick, and economies will suffer regardless of the symbolic constructions we or others put upon them. Human symbolic constructions and forms of knowledge can impact this reality only if and when they come to shape action and policy” (Smith and Howe, 2014: 206).

I thereby acknowledge my field of research as an objective reality, but due to my inductive approach I am using phenomenological principles of intentionality and epoché, as I am studying a phenomenon. Having established my philosophy of science, I will now elaborate on how I approached my informants' lifeworlds through my research strategy.

### **3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY: GROUNDED THEORY**

“If, as Kant suggests, science is organized knowledge, then qualitative researchers have a special challenges because of the nebulous nature of their raw data” (Hahn, 2008: 2).

Qualitative research does not have the same limitations that quantitative research has, due to their demands of sample sizes and measurement of predetermined variables. The qualitative data thereby have the opportunity to discover “the quality and lived experiences” (Hahn,

2008: 2) of a certain phenomenon. Although an often comprehensive view on the studied phenomenon is achieved, the nature of the data can sometimes appear overwhelming and unorganized. To live up to Kant's notion of science being organized knowledge, I have chosen to use Grounded theory and coding to achieve this.

Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the 1960's, and became a popular qualitative research strategy to develop new theory that was grounded in data (Charmaz, 2006: 4), Grounded theory is defined as being:

"(...) an inductive approach to research, in which hypotheses and theories are generated from the data collected. It is a mean of systematically collecting and analyzing the data to generate theory about patterns of human behavior in social contexts" (Engward, 2013: 37).

Grounded theory is therefore developed to understand human behaviors that are not already "pre-formed or pre-theoretically developed with existing theory and paradigms" (Engward, 2013: 37). Since the aim of this research is to investigate what motivates green people within Kolding Municipality to live green in the hope of creating a new approach to climate communication that can inspire non-green people, there is no preexisting theory to support this. Grounded theory is thereby suited to support my aim of research.

According to Charmaz (2006) grounded theory is based on four different levels of data analysis. The first level is initial coding, the second level is focused coding, the third level is axial coding and lastly the fourth level is theoretical coding. Coding is an important and essential part of grounded theory, since this is where you ensure that your theory will be grounded in your data. In the following there will be an elaboration on how these four levels of data analysis have been included and performed during my research.

The first level is initial coding, which is where the researcher should attempt to stay open minded to what the data is presenting and try to code each action as closely to the data as possible, rather than applying preexisting categories to the data (Charmaz, 2006: 47-48). An example from my own data is this quotation from my informant:

“The way I look at it, is when I see a picture like this, or when I stand in nature, I think about how vulnerable it is. And we have to take care of it, and try to shape our lives accordingly” (Informant 7, translated by the author)

This quotation was coded under the initial coding of “Vulnerable nature”. This procedure was conducted with all the interview material, which I chose to label on post-its to get an overview of my different initial codings, as the pictures shows:



I chose to use this method in my coding process, as it gave me an opportunity to engage with my data in a more involving and comprehensive way, than if I only had the different initial codings written on the same piece of paper.

It also became an advantage in level 2 of the data analysis (focused coding), as it enabled me to move codings around and to create different groupings

based on the initial codings.

Focused coding means, “using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data” (Charmaz, 2006: 57).



In this level you review your initial codings and try to see patterns and categories within your data. This form of process is more direct, and the researcher tries to “synthesize and explain larger segments of data” (Charmaz, 2006: 57).

As so, the above quotation of “Vulnerable nature” was together with other initial codings focused into the category of “Risk”, as all initial codings within

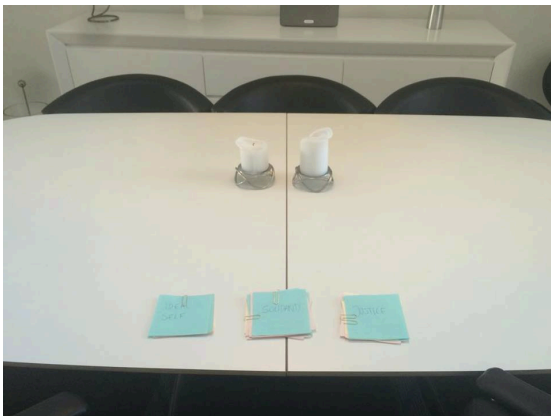
this category describes how my informants feel that their surroundings are at risk.

After creating these focused codings, the next level of the data analysis is axial coding. Chamaz (2006: 60) describes axial coding as relating to “categories to subcategories, specifies the

properties and dimensions of a category, and reassembles the data you have fractured during initial coding to give coherence to the emerging analysis". As so, the axial coding supports the development of the above focused codings/categories, because it "follows the development of a major category" (Cresqell 1998, cited in Charmaz, 2006: 60). I therefore reevaluated all my focused codings/categories in exploring the relationship between these categories and tried to make some connections between them. For example some categories such as "trends" and "them vs. us" were connected in a new category called "mainstream", as the dimension of these categories were generally the same when looking into the initial codings.

After this I only had the last level of data analysis left: the theoretical coding.

Theoretical coding "is a sophisticated level of coding that follows the codes you have selected during focused coding. (...) In short, theoretical codes specify possible relationships between categories you have developed in your focused coding" (Charmaz, 2006: 63).



After being in constant dialog with the data material, I ended up with three theoretical codings: Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self.

An important point in grounded theory is that it differentiates between substantive and formal theory, where the substantive theory is:

"(...) empirically close and rooted in the studied social setting, the latter [formal theory] is an abstract conceptual understanding, and if solid can be applied to other settings to test its viability, It can be argued that substantive and formal theories represent two different levels of theoretical generalizability" (Alvesson and Sköldbberg, 2000: 16, cited in Jerneck, 2010: 8).

One can therefore argue that:

"Formal GT [grounded theory] makes substantive findings 'meaningful on a larger scale', and extends the applicability of a substantive grounded theory across contexts, settings, or both" (Kearney, 2007: 131, cited in Holton and Walsh, 2016).

This means that it is actually possible to move substantive theory into the territory of formal theory by “generating abstract concepts and specifying relationships between them to understand problems in multiple substantive areas” (Chamaz, 2006: 8).

There are two ways of conducting this type of theorizing, which are:

“*incremental theorizing* (theorizing while using existing concepts/constructs) or *rupture theorizing* (theorizing while using new concepts/constructs)” (Walsh 2014, cited in Holton and Walsh, 2016).

I plan to use both types of theorizing. I will develop my substantive theory through rupture theorizing, since I am developing three substantive concepts that will be purely based on my empery – no extern data or theory included. Then I will attempt to formalize these substantive concepts through incremental theorizing, where I will use already existing theory to support and validate the substantive theory I have developed. This will both enable me to use my findings in other substantive areas, and to further develop my empery into a more theoretical context.

However, going from substantive to formal theory is often a process that requires much time and much data, I therefore am aware that I can not claim to have a fully developed and exhausted substantive or formal theory at the end of this paper, but I believe that I am taking the first step in doing so.

As so, there are many positive aspects of conducting grounded theory, but there are also some negative sides: The cons of grounded theory are that the researcher becomes a part of the project, although it claims to be very inductive. Some could thereby argue that the substantive theoretical codings could have been labeled under different names, but as the aim of grounded theory is to build a bridge between the empirical data and analysis, the right name for the theoretical codings as such becomes irrelevant:

“We construct our codes because we are actively naming the data – even when we believe our codes capture the empirical reality, it is our view: we choose the words that constitute our



codes. Thus we define what we see as significant in the data and describe what we think is happening” (Charmaz, 2006: 47).

Having established my approach to grounded theory, I will now elaborate on how I collected the data used in my grounded theory.

### **3.2 PHOTO ELICITATION INTERVIEWS**

To collect my qualitative data, I chose to use the photo elicitation interview method, which is based on the idea of bringing a photograph into a research interview. Using a photograph in an interview might give a different output than if the interview was solely based on words, due to the different physical basis:

“the parts of the brain that process visual information are evolutionarily older than the parts that process verbal information. Thus images evoke deeper elements of human consciousness that do words” (Harper, 2002: 13).

Images are thereby good when establishing communication between the researcher and an informant, who do not share the same taken-for-granted cultural background. Having an image to steer the conversation might then help to overcome possible difficulties (Harper, 2002: 20). Although my informants and I live in the same society and thereby share the same cultural background, I am approaching the field as an outsider, because I wish to portray their lifeworld as objectively as possible. Photo elicitation then became my tool into their world, where the photo created a mutual ground for our conversation. Besides this good quality, I also used photo elicitation to start a reflection process within my informants. By asking them before the interview to show me why they live green through a photograph I was assured that they had thought about the topic, so I would not be met with a standardized answer.

Although a picture is worth a thousand words, I will clarify that the photographs taken by my informants will be a part of my analysis, but my emphasis will lie on the spoken word. As so, photo elicitation is used primarily as a method to achieve the best possible interview.

### 3.2.1 INFORMANTS

I initially thought that I would find my informants through social media and green organizations in Kolding. But as I only received a few contacts through these platforms, I started a snowball effect instead. When interviewing the few people who contacted me, I asked them if they had other people in their network, which would identify themselves as green people. Through this method I then came to meet my 10 informants.

### 3.2.2 REFLECTIONS

Through the process I found that it was not so easy for my informants to show me through a picture why they live green, even though I made an effort to stress that I was not interested in *what* they do, but I wanted to see *why* they do it.

This was still not as clear to all, as e.g. one of my informants sent me this picture of a washing machine.



**Figure 13 (Picture from informant 10)**  
Misunderstanding between informant and researcher

machine.

Through this photograph the informant wanted to show me that he/she made an effort to save both power and water in his/her daily routines. This photograph did not show me *why* she thought it was important to save both power and water, but I came to realize that I needed to be more clear in my directions to my informants.

As I thereby have had close contact with my informants, I have had some ethical considerations.

### 3.3 ETHICS

My ethical considerations in relation to my research have been mostly related to maintaining my objectivity. I have therefore not tried to put my own interpretations onto the pictures I have received from my informants without consulting with them under the interviews.

When analyzing the interviews I have also tried to maintain my objectivity by using the above described grounded theory to ensure that the result is presented in the most objective and ethical way possible. Another challenge I faced during the process was that my interviews are conducted in Danish. I am therefore aware that some things have might get lost in translation, as I have translated all my quotations used in my analysis into English.

Another ethical consideration I focused on during my research was the anonymity of my informants. I therefore stressed, when I first approached them, that their names or other identification would not be visible anywhere in my paper. I decided this mainly because of the personal things I am revealing about my informants in relation to their private life and lifestyle. During my analysis I will thereby assign numbers to my informants, stressing that their assigned number is not corresponding with the order in which they were interviewed. Addressing these personal topics, I allowed the informants to lead the way during the interviews to ensure they did not feel that I was invading their personal space, because I am aware that:

“Research can give rise to conflicting emotions: participants might enjoy taking part or might feel you have intruded into their lives for no good reason (...)” (O’Reilly, 2005:63).

Having established my research design and strategy, I will now move on to my analysis, where I will first present my findings of grounded theory and then try to develop a substantive theory based on this.

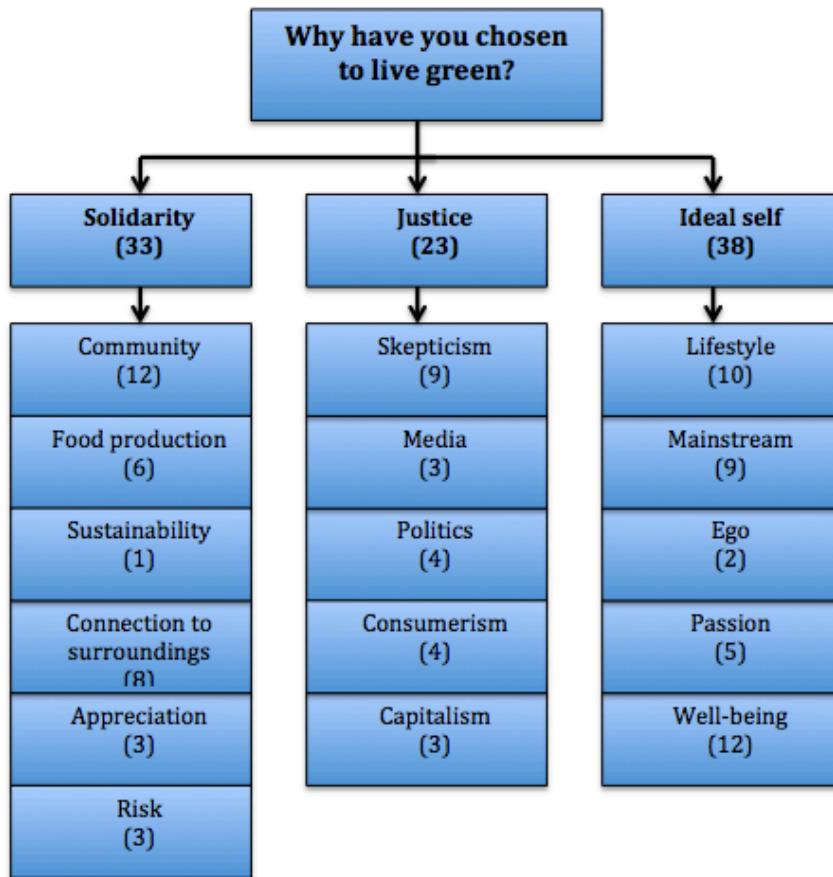
## **CHAPTER 4: EXPLORING THE MOTIVATION OF GREEN PEOPLE IN KOLDING MUNICIPALITY**

In the following text, I will use my categories to support the theory based on the three concepts of: Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self, which will provide a framework to why green people in Kolding Municipality have chosen to live green. In this analysis I will use no established theory, as I will create my own context related substantive theory based on the three substantive theoretical concepts. To develop these, I will use my empery in the forms of quotations and pictures. All quotations presented in the text are translated by me.

In the next chapter I will formalize the substantive theory that will now be developed. But first I will briefly make a presentation of the findings of the grounded theory.

#### 4.1 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

During my data analysis, which was carefully described in chapter 3, I coded all my interview material. The below figure shows the result of my coding:



(Figure 1: An overview of my results presented in a code diagram)

As the figure shows the three theoretical codings of Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self are created on the basis of the categories that are presented right below the concepts. The numbers under each word is the number of initial codings supporting each category. This number is not an indicator of the frequency of each coding, as it only suggests the number of initial codings that are grouped under the same category.

In the following text, I will use my categories to support the substantive theory based on the three concepts of: Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self, which will provide a framework to why green people in Kolding municipality has chosen to live green. In this analysis I will use no established theory, as I will create my own context related substantive theory (rupture

theorizing) based on the three substantive theoretical concepts. To develop these, I will use my empery in the forms of quotations and pictures. All quotations presented in the text are translated by me. We will begin with the substantive theoretical concept of Solidarity.

## 4.2 MOTIVATION DUE TO SOLIDARITY

“(...) It should of course not be a question about being so lucky to be born in the wealthy part of the world. There live many people in areas of the world, who are affected by the impact our behavior give rise to. So it is a somewhat solidarity way of thinking about the world, which we are affecting with our behavior” (Informant 8, from the category: community).

As the above quotation suggests, I quickly became aware that my respondents were relating their motivation to a feeling of solidarity. The substantive theoretical concept of Solidarity was created on the basis of the categories: Community, Food production, Sustainability, Connection to surroundings and lastly Risk, which all supports this notion. Through these categories a substantive theory will be developed, where I wish to engage the reader in how my respondents connect the feeling of solidarity to their own motivation to live green.

For my respondents the feeling of solidarity surpasses both time and space. This was expressed in multiple ways, as for example by Informant 8, which quotation we began this section with. As the quotation explains, it is a matter of thinking about how your behavior is affecting people on other areas in the world, which you are disconnected with in space. By looking beyond the space that can be seen and the people that one knows, Informant 8 is motivated by the compassion she/he feels for others.

Her/His solidarity also reaches beyond time, as she/he connects the feeling of solidarity towards



**Figure 2 (Picture from Informant 8)**  
These are Informant 8's grandchildren, which symbolizes that she wants to secure the future for the next generation by living green.

future generation and their ability to live a good life, as her picture in figure 2 shows. Here Informant 8's grandchildren are playing in bike park, which was a symbol for Informant 8 that she/he wanted the grandchildren to have good place to grow up. The strong feeling of solidarity is motivating my informant to live a green lifestyle, as she/he feels obligated to look beyond her/his own space and time.

Living green for the sake of future generations was a theme that reoccurred within my informants.

Informant 3 also expressed this kind of solidarity, as the picture of figure 3 below indicates. Besides feeling solidarity towards future generations, Informant 3 also expressed this feeling towards other species:



**Figure 3 (Picture from Informant 3)**  
This is a picture of Informant 3's grandson, which is a symbol of her/his dedication to a green lifestyle, as she/he wants to secure the world for future generations.

"I was in a conventional pig stable – it is probably 15 years ago – where my daughter was taking the veterinary assistant education, and she had received an internship there. It was just horrific! It was so horrific how the pigs were treated. Space wise, it was just so awful! This was how it started in terms of animal welfare for me, because I did not want take any part of that" (Informant 3, from the category: food production).

Informant 3 is thereby motivated by the feeling of solidarity to change her/his lifestyle, as when confronted with something not in line with the values she/he posses in life, a focus on the problem occurred. When I asked further into this notion, Informant 3 stressed that it is not only about future human generations, but also that animals and the environment are just as important:

"But also animals and the environment in general. What is it that we are doing to our earth? Should we not treat our earth as good as we treat ourselves? It is all connected" (Informant 3, from the category: community).

In relation to “as good as we treat ourselves” my informants also connect the notion of health to their feeling of solidarity, as they feel that when they are living green and e.g. avoiding pesticides, they are indirectly contribution to securing the world for future generation:



**Figure 4 (Picture from Informant 1)**  
Picture of Informant 1's son in the forest.

“Well, some part of it is because I don't want my son to be subjected to pesticides and endocrine disrupters. (...) But it is also about that he should have a nice place to raise his own children. And that they also should have – you can see on the picture that we are out in a forest – the opportunity to go out there. To go out and experience nature” (Informant 1, from the category: connection to surroundings),

Informant 1 therefore finds multiple reasons to why she/he is motivated to live green, as Informant 1 connects health, future generations and the environment with a feeling of solidarity. The environment is thereby also a theme, which my informants direct their solidarity towards:



**Figure 5 (Picture from Informant 7)**  
Picture that symbolizes the vulnerability of nature.

“The way I look at it, is when I see a picture like this, or when I stand in nature, I think about how vulnerable it is. And we have to take care of it, and try to shape our lives accordingly” (Informant 7, from the category: risk).

As this quotation suggests, Informant 7 is motivated to take care of nature due to its vulnerable state. By indicating that nature is “vulnerable” informant 7 is implicit allocating human emotions to the representation of nature, as the word is typically used for people in need of protection. Informant 4 also uses a personification of nature:

“You could say that the overarching thing is sustainability of mother earth, which I am most occupied by” (Informant 4, from the category of: sustainability).

Using words that are often associated with human beings could be one explanation to why my informants feel solidarity and a connection to things surpassing human beings. As so, it suggests that my informants are motivated to secure the well being of others (including nature), and that this motivation and incentive succeeds any lifestyle or comfort that could be found beyond a green lifestyle.

The substantive theoretical concept of Solidarity is thereby disconnected both from time and space, and is directed towards humans, non-humans and nature. My informants uses the feeling of solidarity to explain why they live green, and it thereby constitutes a motivational factor, which I might be able to use in establishing a recommendation for future climate communication and to influence non-green people of Kolding Municipality. Now I will turn me focus to motivation due to justice.

#### **4.3 MOTIVATION DUE TO JUSTICE**

“(…) Here in Western Europe we have starved a whole continent, that being Africa, by our colonization, and now we are trying to keep them out by the border boom and everything. It is obvious that we can only keep them out, as long as they do not see how we live, but now they can look on the Internet to see how we are living. And now we have consumed their resources, is it fair?” (Informant 9, from the category: media)

Like the above quotation suggests, the notion of justice was something that I found my informants were occupied with when they talked about why they have chosen to live green. The substantive theoretical concepts of Justice, is grounded in the categories of: Skepticism, Media, Politics, Consumerism and Capitalism. Through these categories there will be an elaboration on what my informants connect to the concept of justice, and a further insight into what it is that motivate my informants in relation to justice.

By suggesting that my informants find motivation due to justice, is partly because my informants have a conscious in terms of what happens to other people, as was established by the concept of Solidarity. But it is also because my informants are in some way political



oriented. As the quotation at the beginning of this section shows, Informant 9 is drawing a parallel to the current refugee crisis we are now facing in Europe and the historical past of the exploitation by colonization. Arguing injustice both from a political and a human side causes the substantive theoretical concept of justice to be constituted through these two aspects.

Informant 6 stressed the importance of the political aspect when she/he gave me a picture of a political movement that Informant 6 was part of when she/he was young. When I asked, how this picture was connected to a green lifestyle, Informant 6 replied:

“For me, and that was actually also what I wanted to say with the picture, that it is simply a reaction to the deepest skepticism. Well now I use nuclear power as an example, but in terms of technology, and also that we are have the ability to use technology in relation to our surroundings and future and life possibilities. I have the deepest skepticism. And the nuclear power resistance came in my youth in a period where it got me thinking about the threat of nuclear war, and that got me to think about the surrounding we live in. Nature, cosmos, the world and the human being is just a small piece, and you have to respect other organisms and life that exist besides the human being” (Informant 6, from the category: skepticism).



**Figure 6 (Picture from Informant 6)**  
This picture represents Informant 6's political background.

There are two aspects in this quotation: the political and the human aspect. The political is apparent in how Informant 6 has a deep skepticism about political decisions made on behalf of other people, whereas the aspect of solidarity is connected to how she/he actually cares about “other people”, but also that there is a respect about other organisms. Fighting for justice therefore motivates Informant 6, as e.g. exemplified when she/he was part of a political movement that fought against political decisions related to nuclear power.

Although the political movement of “Nuclear Power? No thanks” was established due to a political debate about the establishment a nuclear power plant on Danish soil (which was later rejected), my informants are also concerned about justice issues in other parts of the



**Figure 7 (Picture from Informant 5)**  
Plastic island represents different environmental disasters.

world. Informant 5 was one of my informants that made this point clear, as she/he was very occupied with the injustice that are occurring around the world, which also was stressed by the picture I received from her/him:

“Well, this was actually a picture I just had. Have you also heard that we are sailing ships to India and chop them up? And the Indians get f\*\*\* sick. There have been so many insanely awful stories, it is so crazy. Bhopal, have you heard of that? An Indian town, where there was a factory. Then there came a spill on the factory and many died, thousands died. And it was an American factory, which was in India. You know, an American factory that was not allowed in the USA, so therefore they established themselves in India instead” (Informant 5, from the category: politics)

This picture thereby becomes a symbol for other horrific environmental disasters that are happening around the world. The fact that Informant 5 stresses that it was an American factory that caused the spill in India, indicates that she/he is aware of the unequal distribution of environmental burdens that occurs when big companies are outsourcing their production to other countries, where environmental legislations often are not that strict. It therefore becomes a question both about political justice, but it also relates to the human justice as informant 5 focuses on the effects on humans that this political injustice is causing. This argument is further developed, when Informant 5 talks about this injustice in the context of consumerism:

“Right now in Indonesia you cannot breathe, because they are burning down the forest. And it is the rainforest, and the orangutans are dying. If you want to make a campaign, then you could use this. It will go straight to all the mothers, but the fathers, they will f\*\*\* have their mahogany tables, so it can look really nice and expensive” (Informant 5, from the category: consumerism).

Consumerism thereby also becomes a question of justice, as these examples show that it is often on the expense of someone else, that we are able to consume as much as we do in our part of the world.

Informant 9 worries about this consuming culture we have embedded in our society:

“An example that can totally turn me off is for example all those cultural offers in Kolding. Who the hell is going to these? I do not go. But there must be someone who does go... Then there was the Oktoberfest, then there was the cake competition on the street... And all of it is *consuming* activities. None of them are *creational* activities” (Informant 9, from the category: consumerism).



**Figure 8 (Picture from Informant 9)**  
This picture symbolizes the culture of consumerism that we have in this part of the world.

Informant 4 suggests a solution to this culture consumed with consumerism and the injustice that is often connected to it, by focusing on local produced food and products, while still pointing to the injustice of our current capitalistic system:



**Figure 9 (Picture from Informant 4)**  
This is a picture of a local farmer producing local products.

“(...) Instead huge fuel companies go and buy the developing countries soil, and grows big energy crops to burn in our cars. So the basic principle is to produce food where you live. This means of course, that in my sustainability principle, there is some sort of difference on the wealthy part of the world and the poor part of the world. It makes no sense that we are not that far from equator, where people are dying of starvation, while we are driving around in our cars here in Europe” (Informant 4, from the category: capitalism).

Informant 4 thereby criticizes the current world system, where she/he believes that rich countries are taking advantage of the poor countries in the world. The issue of justice is thereby also prevalent in this context both in the form of human and political justice.

The substantive theoretical concept of Justice is thereby defined through a political and a human aspect. Due to the fact that my informants bring their reasoning to why they have chosen to live green to a matter of justice, shows that they are human beings with an agenda and an opinion about what is right and what is wrong. Not only do they have an opinion about this notion, they also constitute their morale of right/wrong into a green lifestyle, which influences almost all aspects of their lives. Being this dedicated to their beliefs, can cause some conflicts due to the society of consumerism they are living in. So why do they do it? This brings me to the next substantive theoretical concept of the Ideal self.

#### **4.4 MOTIVATION DUE TO IDEAL SELF**

“I basically think, that [a green lifestyle] has something to do with being aware of one’s lifestyle and consume. Knowing when you do something right and something wrong. And then of course, try to live after what you consider to be the right thing” (Informant 8, from the category: lifestyle).

Making parallels to both the theoretical concept of Solidarity and Justice, the concept of Ideal self describes how my informants use a green lifestyle to constitute an Ideal self. This ideal is not only a question of fulfilling individual needs and goals, as it also deals with fulfilling moral values in terms of living in accordance with what they consider ethical due to their notion of right/wrong. The development of this substantive theoretical concept of Ideal self will be formed by the categories of: Lifestyle, Mainstream, Ego, Passion and Well-being.

Looking at the moral and ethical values that were presented in the section of Solidarity and Justice, the Ideal self is an image of how my informants think they ought to be. As Informant 8, in the quotation at the beginning of this section, states that you should “try to live after what you consider to be the right thing”, she/he is connecting her/his lifestyle to a moral question about what is right/wrong. By doing this it implies that Informant 8 considers the right way of living is through a green lifestyle. Sustaining this lifestyle thereby becomes a question about fulfilling moralistic goals presented by the ideal self, as it sets a standard of how my informants ought to live their lives.

Informant 3 further connects the lifestyle to something related to your relationship with yourself:

“I actually think that it started for me in general when I began to take myself more serious” (Informant 3, from the category: well-being).

Trying to live up to their Ideal self is thereby not only a reaction to the external events of injustice that are happening around my informants, it also becomes an internal process, where they are prioritizing their relationship to themselves by taking themselves more serious. By “more serious” Informant 3 is referring to how she/he has learned to reflect and listen to both the signals of her/his own body and to the world around her/him. Having learned to do this, Informant 3 believes that she/he is living more “right” than she/he did before this learning.

Although the motivation to fulfill the notion of an ideal self is connected to moralistic values and an internal process, Informant 10 also argues that there is some kind of prestige connected to living green:

“Well, I don’t mean to make myself seem greater than anybody else. But there is a signal value when you can say to your surroundings, that I care about sustainability. But there is a difference in doing it for the sake of sustainability and the signal value, and then doing it because you actually have an opinion about it. And I have an opinion” (Informant 10, from the category: ego).

Trying to live after your ideals thereby also becomes a platform for Informant 10, where it is possible to show to the surroundings that she/he is living in the “right” way. It therefore implies that there is some prestige or self-glorification connected to living up to your ideals, which also motivates my informants to sustain their green lifestyle.

However, an important and interesting tendency I noticed when interviewing my informants, was that they almost all have had a drop in their sense of motivation. Some of them noted that they have become less fanatic about their lifestyle during the years, as it became almost impossible to engage successfully in social settings, as Informant 7 describes in this quotation:

“The first years, where I was occupied with the environmental issues, I could get angry and depressed. And I could push people away from me when discussing, because I was so ossified and engaged in the issue. So during the years, I have learned to be more casual, and also allow myself to drive a car, which I absolutely would never do in many years. So I have become more moderate” (Informant 7, from the category: passion).

Living and fighting for your ideals can thereby have some consequences for how you interact with other people, as the quotation shows. Informant 7 has learned from the consequences of this, and has prioritized to engage successfully in social settings rather than continue fighting for her/his ideals. Connecting your ideal self with too high standards leads to unrealistic goals, where my informants have to compromise with their ideals in order to function in the “normal” world. Informant 5 also discusses the conflict of the feelings related to the ideal self and how she/he ought to live, and compares it to how she/he in reality is living:

“Of course there is a little religion in it, I would almost say... A little self-glorification. Because I like saying to people, that they should watch how much they drive and travel. However, I do it myself! We are travelling. They always say that one should not travel more than one flight a year. But we fly more than that. You know, we don’t think about that. But I have friends who could never dream of driving one meter in a car. I have friends who work in other cities and who bike there. Yes I promise you. But I simply don’t bother doing that. It should be... Do you know what, we are a part of a larger whole man. And I would rather spend my life doing a bunch of stuff than suffer by only doing a few stuff correctly. Well, I don’t make my own muesli anymore, but I have done that in the past” (Informant 5, from the category: mainstream).

Informant 5 has also had to adjust her/his ideals in accordance to what is made possible by the society. It seems that Informant 5 actually finds a conflict in how she/he *ought* to live, and how she/he in fact *wants* to live. Just like Informant 7, she/he has had to “allow” herself/himself to compromise with her/his ideals – where Informant 7 exemplified it through driving a car, Informant 5 exemplifies it through the making of muesli.

The substantive theoretical concept of the Ideal self is therefore based on my informants' motivation to live a lifestyle that complies with their moral values of solidarity and justice, as it supports the internal process of personal development, while at the same time enable the hope of gaining admiration from your surroundings. An important point in this substantive theory is that the Ideal self should encompass an element of realism, as it otherwise can turn into frustration leading to decrease in motivation or compromises on the behalf of the ideals.

My substantive theory of motivation of green people in Kolding Municipality is thereby based on the relationships of the three concepts: Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self.

In order to validate my findings, I now wish to formalize my substantive theory and bring it into a formal theoretical context based on already existing theory.

## **CHAPTER 5: FROM SUBSTANTIVE TO FORMAL THEORY**

Having established my substantive theory of why people in Kolding Municipality are motivated to live green, this section will hopefully provide a validation of the findings, as it will now be brought into context of formal theories (incremental theorizing), as I in this section will add a formal theory of motivation in order to further consolidate my findings.

The notion of motivation originates from the Latin word of "movere" which means "to move" (Goleman, 2011). Although it seemingly seems as a simple definition, the field of motivation is complex and not easy to define, as many different scholars and people have used it for different purposes.

Some people argue that "if people only knew" e.g. about climate change they would be motivated to change their behavior (Norgaard, 2011: 64). According to Robbins (2006) you can know what to do intellectual, but not apply this knowledge in reality. This was also established in "Chapter 3: Setting the scene", where it was argued in the section of "Denial" that people were actually aware of the problem of climate change, but chose to focus on more manageable problems in their daily lives. Furthermore, I have also argued that people of

Kolding Municipality actually express that they feel that they have enough knowledge to change their habits into more environmentally friendly ones.

Knowledge and information are thereby not the determining factors, when people's habits or behaviors need to be changed. Our decisions consequently have the ultimate power, since this is where we decide to make a change and to use this intellectual knowledge we have (Robbins, 2006).

Robbins (2006) states that often when people fail to reach a goal or change a habit, they give reasons such as; "I didn't have the time, the money, the technology, the contacts" etc. These arguments are claims to missing resources, which might be accurate, but these are not the defining factors. The defining factor is never resources but resourcefulness. So it is the decisions that shape our destiny, and decisions are based on our human needs (Robbins, 2006).

Similar to the field motivation, human needs theories are defined in various ways and used in different contexts. I have chosen to formalize my data through the theoretical framework presented by Clayton Alderfer and his ERG theory. His work is based upon Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where he tries to offer an alternative way of relating issues to need-satisfaction to strength of desires – and thereby strengthening motivation.

"This alternative theory is based on a three-fold conceptualization of human needs: existence, relatedness, and growth (E.R.G,)" (Alderfer, 1969: 142).

Just as Maslow the ERG theory is based upon a hierarchical structure, where the notion of 'satisfaction progression' is employed when a person has satisfied his needs at one level he will progress to fulfill the next (Alderfer, 1969: 151). However, different from Maslow more than one level of needs can cause motivation at the same time. Adding this complexity to the hierarchy, he also employs the 'frustration regression principle', which is when a person's needs remain unsatisfied at some high level, then the person will in frustration regress to a lower level and seek to fulfill the needs present at that level (Alderfer, 1969: 151).

I will begin by presenting the first level of human needs: existence.



*“Existence needs include all the various forms of material and physiological desires”* (Alderfer, 1969: 145).

As established in “Chapter 3: Setting the scene” the average citizens/non-green people of Kolding Municipality has all existence needs fulfilled, due to both economic safety and a relative good physiological health. The green people of Kolding Municipality also have these prerequisite, but they express some concerns connected to this fulfillment, as they are occupied with the injustice related to having material desires fulfilled on the expense of someone else’s, which Informant 4 stresses in this quotation:

“It makes no sense that we are not that far from equator, where people are dying of starvation, while we are driving around in our cars here in Europe” (Informant 4, from the category: capitalism).

Informant 4 is thereby bringing awareness to the unequal fulfillment of human needs across the globe, where people in Europe can desire some material luxury item such as e.g. a car, while people are dying from starvation in another part of the world. It thereby supports the substantive theoretical concept of Justice, as my informants are concerned about the justice related to people’s fulfillment of existence needs.

This brings me to the next level of relatedness:

*“Relatedness needs include all the needs which involve relationships with significant other people (...) People are assumed to satisfy relatedness needs by mutually sharing their thoughts and feelings”* (Alderfer, 1969: 146).

The mutual sharing does not always has to be a positive one, as an important part of social interaction is to express e.g. anger (Alderfer, 1969: 146).

Again returning to the non-green people of Kolding Municipality, it was stated that they do not feel lonely, which could serve as an indication of their relatedness needs are somewhat fulfilled. This must therefore also be applicable for the green people, although they take the notion of relatedness beyond being a relationship with significant other people, as was also

argued in the substantive theoretical concept of Solidarity. Here it was established that the green people feel a sense of connection or relatedness with people they are disconnected with in time and space, while also non-humans and nature.

Reaching beyond a relationship with significant others, my informants must be satisfied within these relatedness needs. They are therefore progressed onto the last level of human needs, which must mean that it is here we find their human needs related to their motivation.

The last level of human needs is connected to growth:

*“Growth* needs include all the needs which involve a person making creative or productive effects on himself and the environment. Satisfaction of growth needs comes from a person engaging problems which call upon him to utilize his capacities fully and may include requiring him to develop additional capacities. A person experiences a greater sense of wholeness and fullness as a human being by satisfying growth needs” (Alderfer, 1969: 146-147).

The non-green people of Kolding Municipality do not feel that they are able to change their current lives. Although I am not claiming that they are unable to fulfill their growth needs, but it does appear as though they are experiencing some sort of limitation to creating a change in their own lives, which could cause difficulties in reaching their full potential and growth needs.

In the substantive theoretical concept of the Ideal self, we learned that the green people of Kolding Municipality actually have changed their lives into a green lifestyle based on their ideals and moral values. One informant talked about this change as a result of a personal growth:

“I actually think that it started for me in general when I began to take myself more serious” (Informant 3, from the category: well-being).

It therefore suggests that my informants are motivated to fulfill their growth needs, as they are occupied with reaching their own full potential while using their capacities to help others

as well. My informants are thereby utilizing their capacities to create a positive effect for themselves and the environment.

But does this mean that my informants are whole and fulfilled people? No. As it was established in the substantive theoretical concept of Ideal self many of my informants have experienced a drop in their motivation. This can be explained through the 'frustration regression principle', which is when a person's needs remain unsatisfied at some high level, then the person will in frustration regress to a lower level and seek to fulfill the needs present at that level (Alderfer, 1969: 151). Informant 7, actually exemplifies the principle with this quotation:

"The first years, where I was occupied with the environmental issues, I could get angry and depressed. And I could push people away from me when discussing, because I was so ossified and engaged in the issue. So during the years, I have learned to be more casual, and also allow myself to drive a car, which I absolutely would never do in many years. So I have become more moderate" (Informant 7, from the category: passion).

When I asked Informant 7 why she/he thought that his motivation had changed, I received this answer:

"Well, it was a realization that I don't like to be so... I could feel in my way of teaching that I became more and more ossified in my way of influencing the students with the right environmental opinions. And then I gradually felt that it did not really catch on. The first years of teaching about these issues, I could influence the young people with an enthusiasm that we should do something about it, where some of the students then went out and made some environmental initiatives and things like that. But then I got even more engaged in it and even more ossified. And then I could eventually feel that people created a wall and maybe pulled themselves a bit away. And to dinner parties where you end up with discussions with your dinner partner, and sometimes it could feel unpleasant. And this I realized at some point and I had to do something to change that. So I am no longer so diligent in discussions, although I can feel that when I approach a discussion which has something to do with these issues, my heart rate increases" (Informant 7, from the category: passion).

Using the frustration regression principle to explain Informant 7's decrease in motivation, it seems that she/he got negative feedback from her/his surroundings, which actually led my Informant into reevaluating her/his priorities in life. Informant 7 therefore became unable to satisfy the growth needs, which then caused her/him to regress into a lower level of needs, in this case relatedness. At this level she/he is trying to satisfy the needs present, which are related to creating a relationship with significant others. The quotation as well suggest that Informant 7 values these relationships higher, as she/he does not want to push anybody away anymore due to strong values she/he connects to her/his lifestyle.

However, I would still argue that Informant 7's motivation is related to the growth needs, as the motivation connected to Ideal self was expressed during the interview.

My informants are thereby motivated by the growth needs, as these are a way for them to reach their full potential and their Ideal self. Although they are struggling to find the balance between their green lifestyle and the surrounding society, and it might cause a decrease in their motivation, they are still the greenest people in Kolding Municipality that I have ever met.

I have thereby taking the first step in formalizing my substantive theory, the motivation of green people, in the formal frame of human needs. This formalized version of my grounded theory represents a higher level of generalization. This means that the motivation of green people can be used in other substantive areas for analyzing alternative motivational reasoning. Human needs and especially that of growth can be used in substantive areas where themes as lifestyle and motivation are in focus.

Figure 10 represents a visualization of the interplay between my substantive and formal theory.



Figure 10: Visualizing the substantive and formal theory

Yet again I will stress, that formalizing a substantive theory can be a long process, so this is only seen as the first step of doing so. However, I will claim that my formal grounded theory can be applicable to other substantive areas, which I will further discuss in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF A NEW APPROACH TO CLIMATE COMMUNICATION**

Having established the motivation of green people in Kolding Municipality, it is now time to return to the notion of climate communication. At the beginning of my paper I stated that classical communication strategies works within a sender – message – receiver model. I then proposed a new approach by including a fourth component: the inspiration. I have found my inspiration to a new climate communication through the motivation of green people in Kolding Municipality. Together with the incentives of non-green people to change their lifestyle, a consideration to current barriers and this inspiration of motivation of green people, I will now try to make my recommendation for a new approach to climate communication.

First I will begin by discussing the barrier of denial, since we cannot succeed to influence non-green people if they continue to live in denial. After a discussion of this and the other barriers identified in this paper, I will turn my focus to connecting non-green people to the formal theory of human needs, while finding a common denominator in the motivation of non-green people and green people in Kolding Municipality. I will end this discussion with a recommendation for future climate communication by including all of the above-mentioned aspects.

At the beginning of this paper we identified three barriers to the current climate communication: risk, fear and denial. We further argued that denial is the barrier of highest importance, since it does not make sense to talk about risk and fear if people are living in denial. Denial will therefore be the main focus of barrier, but I will include elements from the other barriers as well.

During “Chapter 2: Setting the scene” we found that denial is closely connected to the notion of self-protection, due to the overwhelming consequences of climate change. The media plays a big role in reproducing this kind of denial, as they are normalizing e.g. local weather events

connected to climate change by creating a belief that everything is well, and by not acknowledging climate change's impact on local events. Climate communication therefore needs to allocate their focus from global to local, and thereby try to present climate change's impact on the environment that people actually live in. This might also help the need for self-protection, as the issues of climate change becomes less overwhelming when you do not carry the weight of the world on your shoulders, but only the things you can see and experience with your own eyes. This was also a point I stressed when I discussed the role of fear in climate communication, as fear enables denial by inducing distance and remoteness to the issue. This is e.g. seen in the visual representation of climate communication in the media, where urgent and catastrophic events often are portrayed.



**Figure 14: Media vs. my informants' visual representations**

A melting earth, a banner with “climate shame”, a polar bear on a piece of melting ice, politicians in despair – these visual representations all shows the catastrophic consequences if we do not do anything to climate change. Focusing on the consequences, the receiver can end up feeling overwhelmed, which leads to the need for self-protection, which then leads to the state of denial. Instead I propose visual representations in climate communication that instead of focusing on the consequences focuses on what it is we appreciate in our lives and images that represent hope.

Of these nine pictures from my informants, five of them have human beings in them, one has nature, one is a symbol of a political movement and the last two shows some of the consequences such as the plastic island caused by the over consume of (in this case) plastic bottles. These pictures are visual representations of why my respondents have chosen to live green, as so they are images of their motivations. In comparison to the fear-inducing images these images seem less abstract,

as they are portraying something they can relate to: mostly children and local nature. By visualizing something relatable in the context of climate change, climate communication can further help to break the barrier of denial.

Climate communication therefore needs to focus local instead of global, and use positive (although not in the sense of normalizing) visual representations instead of negative in order to hopefully break the barrier of denial. But after breaking their denial, how do we bring them to awareness and into a green lifestyle? As this visualization shows, I believe it is through the right argument.

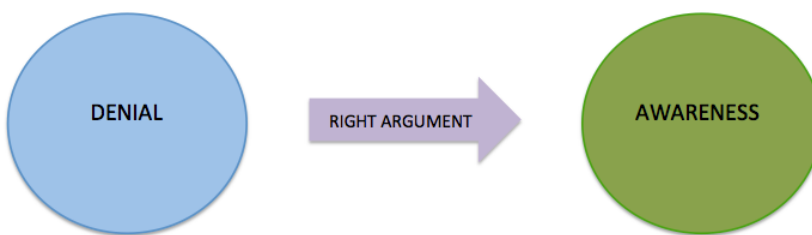


Figure 11: Model of persuasion

During chapter 2, we found that non-green people's top three incentives to convert into a green lifestyle were connected to health, economic advantages and future generations. These incentives

thereby provide us with an important foundation for creating the right argument. However, since these are only incentives in terms of what they *think* could convince them, we need to compare the incentives to what already green people are motivated by. As was argued in chapter 4, green people are motivated by the substantive concepts of solidarity, justice and ideal self. I further formalized these concepts into a formal theory of motivation, where I found that their motivation was connected to the growth needs. Due to this formalization I am able to bring my findings onto other substantive areas, such as e.g. the motivation of non-green people. I will therefore claim that we need to motivate non-green people by talking to their human needs associated with growth.

The green people of Kolding Municipality try to fulfill their growth needs through the substantive concepts of solidarity, justice and ideal self, which means that we also need to connect non-green people's incentives of health, economic and future generation to this need, as figure 12 illustrates:

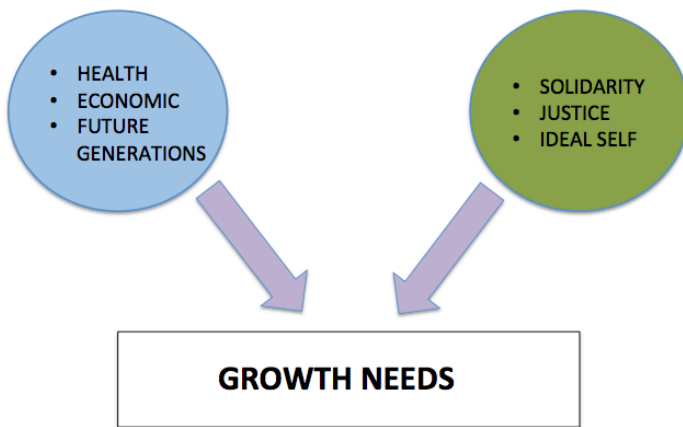


Figure 12: Substantive concepts connected to the formal theory

The human growth needs were connected to the need for self-realization and personal growth, where one can live up to one's full potential. As I argued, my informants were motivated to reach this goal through a green lifestyle, since it became a matter of realizing their ideal self. As stated before, non-green people do not feel that they can change their life, which

indicates an in fulfillment of the growth needs, since they cannot reach their full potential. Although I do not know the reasoning behind this feeling, I would claim that if they were subjected and inspired to obtain a lifestyle different from the mainstream, such as e.g. a green one, they would feel more empowered and in control of their own life – as the green people feel.

A common denominator between non-green and green people we thereby find within the substantive concept of solidarity, since the incentives of health and future generations from the non-green people are indeed connected to this. Climate communication should therefore be focusing on making environmental friendly behavior a choice of personal growth and a way to ensure the relationships with people you care about by giving reasoning to why a green lifestyle benefits both health and future generations existence. It thus becomes a question about communication what climate change and a green lifestyle can do for me, rather than what I can do for climate change.

Having discussed almost all my findings, contributions and reviews, I will end this discussion with a summarize of my recommendations to a new approach for climate communication before I will turn to the conclusion. Table 3 showcases all my findings into "don'ts" and "do's", where it focuses both on how to overcome barriers and to promote motivation to inspire non-green people to obtain a green lifestyle.



<b>A NEW APPROACH TO CLIMATE COMMUNICATION</b>	
<b>BARRIERS</b>	
<b>DON'TS</b>	<b>DO'S</b>
Induce fear in its receiver (both content and visual wise)	Induce hope in its receiver (both content and visual wise)
Portray climate change as a risk	Portray climate change as a reality
Normalize e.g. strange weather events connected to climate change	Create a clear connection with e.g. strange weather events to climate change
Focus on climate change events on a global scale	Focus on climate change events on a local scale
Focusing on climate change in intense short period of time during a year	Focusing on climate change evenly throughout a year
Put it in a political context	Put it in an everyday life context
Connect climate change with a figure of incredibility	Connect climate change with a figure of credibility
<b>MOTIVATION</b>	
Focus on fear and risk	Focus on health, future generations and solidarity
Make it a matter of politics	Make it a matter of personal growth
Communicate: What can I do for climate change/the environment?	Communicate: What can climate change/the environment do for me?

(Table 3: Overview of the new approach to climate communication)

## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION**

This paper originated from a curiosity of why it is only a minority of people that are reacting to climate change, while the rest remain silent and non-responsive, although we are facing the biggest challenge of our existence. Through a research conducted in Kolding Municipality my ambition was to investigate a new approach to climate communication in order to inspire non-green people of Kolding Municipality to obtain a green lifestyle. My approach became based on self-identified green people and their motivation to live green, since I argued that

the best way to investigate how to inspire people is by looking directly towards the inspiration. My research question then became:

What motivates self-identified green people in Kolding Municipality to be green, and how can their motivation be used in a new approach to climate communication with the purpose of inspiring non-green people in Kolding Municipality to become green?

To answer this question in a successful way, I created two subsidiary questions, which would further qualify the new approach to climate communication:

1. Which motivational factors in relation to a green lifestyle do non-green people of Kolding Municipality identify?

Using existing statistical material, I found that the motivational factors that could make the average citizen of Kolding Municipality (non-green people) to obtain a green lifestyle, were connected to their own or their family's health, economic advantage and future generations existence.

2. Which barriers are connected to current climate communication?

By reviewing existing literature and investigating the presentation of climate change in local newspapers of Kolding Municipality, I came to the conclusion that the barriers connected to current climate communication are related to fear inducing content and visualization, the risk perception of climate change, the unevenly spread information about climate change, the incredibility of putting climate change in a political context, and most importantly the state of denial non-green people are living in.

By having established this foundation, I turned my attention to answer my overarching research question. Through a grounded theory approach I found that green people connected their motivation to the substantive concepts of Solidarity, Justice and Ideal self. Through a formalization of these concepts it was argued that these concepts were based on human needs especially that of growth. In order to inspire non-green people to obtain a green lifestyle, I applied the formalized theory of human needs onto their motivational factors of health, economic advantage and future generations. By doing this, a recommendation for

future climate communication became based upon talking to non-green people's need for personal growth through themes of health, future generations and solidarity. As so climate communication should therefore focus on how a green lifestyle can offer this to non-green people.

## **CHAPTER 8: CONTRIBUTION AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

There were many directions one could have taken this paper in and many other things that could have been included as well. The art of limitations has thereby been a key focus for me, as it is purely impossible to cover all aspects of this diverse field of climate communication, motivation and behavioral change.

The strength of the contribution in my paper lies within the new approach to climate communication. To my knowledge there has been no previous research conducted where both the motivation of non-green people *and* of green people have been taking into account.

The weakness of my paper lies exactly within this new approach also. Since the approach is presumably new, this way of conducting a communication strategy has not been proven to work yet. For future research I would therefore propose to take this theoretical approach to climate communication out of this context and into a more practical context – both in developing an actually real example of how this strategies should be used and in testing it on real life people. Because I believe that research conducted *for* reality should be tested *in* reality, and not only scrutinized within a scientific arena of theory and assumptions.

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## APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF ARTICLES

### **Kolding Ugeavis (Kolding's weekly) (2015)**

- Climate change: 2

(<http://ugeavisen.dk/search?keywords=klimaforandringer&catid=30&time=0&startdate=&stopdate=>)

“Candidate-portray in Kolding's weekly: Kim Hyttel, Alternative” (03-06-2015)

“SEE THE PICTURES: This is how the politicians of Koldings wants to win the election” (29-05-2015)

- Global warming: 0

(<http://ugeavisen.dk/search?keywords=global+opvarmning&catid=30&time=0&startdate=&stopdate=>)

### **JydskeVestKysten (2015)**

- Climate change: 11

(<http://www.jv.dk/soeg?all=1&rows=7&archive=1&keywords=klimaforandringer>)

“2014 was the hottest year ever” (16-01-2015)

“Prepare your garden for water” (17-01-2015)

“Scientists anticipate the pointer to be turned to Armageddon” (22-01-2015)

“Now its three minutes to doomsday“(22-01-2015)

“Low oil prices do not tip the green business” (23-01-2015)

“Obama: We have the power to change the planet's future right now” (30-11-2015)

“Hollande: The fights against terror and global warming goes hand-in-hand” (30-11-2015)

“Denmark will remove the governmental support to coal, oil and gas” (30-11-2015)

“Obama pulls Denmark and Bill Gates into climate project” (30-11-2015)

“The world leaders in jointly appeal for the climate” (30-11-2015)

“Løkke believes in a usable agreement at the climate top meeting in Paris” (30-11-2015)

- Global warming: 8

(<http://www.jv.dk/soeg?all=1&rows=7&archive=1&keywords=global+opvarmning>)

“The environment's megastar” (04-01-2015)

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“Danes support green transition” (27-11-2015)

“Connie Hedegaard about global climate march: It does mean something” (29-11-2015)

“Climate minister: We are still the good company” (29-11-2015)

“The world leaders are going for a long-term climate agreement” (30-11-2015)

“Hollande: Climate top meeting is about the future of the planet” (30-11-2015)

“Copenhagen and New York promise to slow down global warming” (16-12-2015)

“Another heat record: 2015 maybe the warmest year ever” (17-12-2015)