

the planet calls

MAGAZINE



how to kickstart a zero waste lifestyle

why do you think I am nothing without a partner?



why supporting local helps fight climate change

love shouldn't hurt




LOVE IS LOVE



sustainable gift guide for valentines day



valentine's day edition



“Never doubt that a small
group of thoughtful,
committed, citizens can
change the world. Indeed,
it is the only thing that
ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

After launching our first issue of The Planet Calls Magazine, I am excited to grace you with our second issue. Given that it is the month of February, the magazine is themed around Valentine's Day and love, but not in the usual way. In this issue, we want our readers to know that Love is Love, and similarly, it's okay not to have that special someone or to prefer to wander the world with friends, family, or your pets by your side.



Love is not black and white; who we choose to love is entirely up to us, and if we decide it is not for us, it is truly no one else's business. You should be allowed to live your life however you please and do whatever makes you happy! Beyond the love theme, this issue is packed with articles on various other issues. One new category is food with features on how to eat more sustainably and even a recipe from one of our fantastic team members, Leslie Maliepaard. Additionally, you will also find tons of insightful interview articles, resources and details of sustainability events occurring this month across the globe.

I want to thank all of our fantastic writing contributors for bringing this issue to life - *Breffni O'Brien, Eurico Borges, Ugne Aksiutovaite, Erryl Ho, Roisin Carter, Amour Setter, Sally Brown, Anneke Andrews, Vani Bhardwaj, Sonia Mehta and Leslie Maliepaard.*

Similarly, I would like to express my gratitude to the dedicated and hard-working magazine team without whom none of this would be possible. Thank you, *Amour Setter (Editor in Chief), Matthew Apping (Project Manager), and Denial Keco (Graphic Designer).*

I would also like to thank all who have supported our magazine, including our partners - ***Profit With Purpose Magazine, Business Spirit Platform, and Chance for Children (C4C).*** The work you do is incredible, and we are so grateful to work alongside you and join forces to drive change.

I would also like to thank the wonderful people who agreed to be featured in our magazine and who gave incredible insights - *Szilvia Szabo (Editor in Chief, Profit With Purpose Magazine, and Business Spirit Platform), Bogdan Glogovac (Sustainability Manager, Ducky), and Patrick McKeown, (Founder of The Oxygen Advantage).*

Our final thank you goes to our readers; thank you for taking the time to download and flick through our magazine; we hope you thoroughly enjoy it. Stay tuned for issue 3 coming soon.

Happy Valentine's Day, whether you are spoken for or single from all of us at The Planet Calls!

Bronagh Loughlin

Executive Editor

THE **PLANET** CALLS

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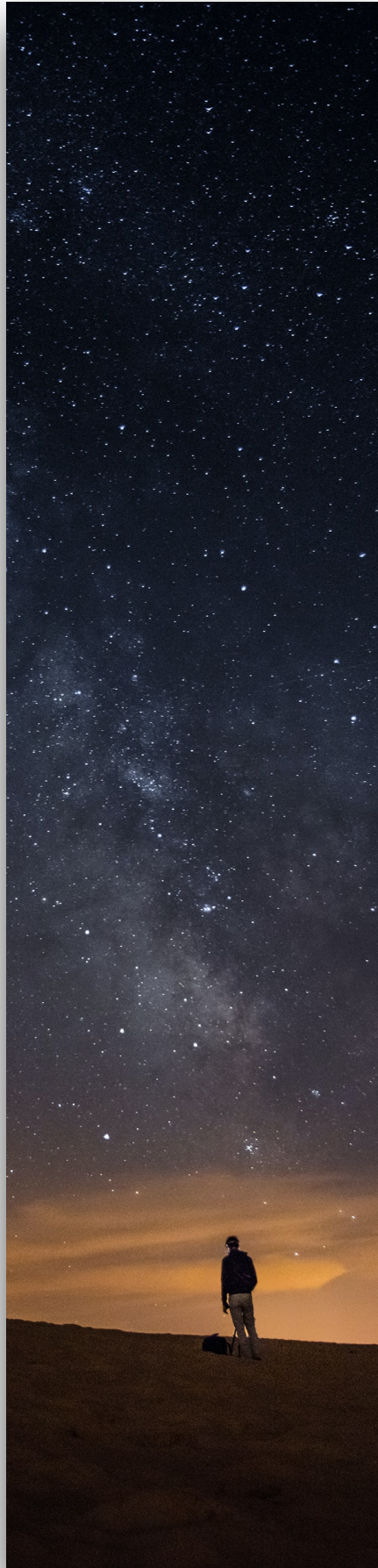
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LETTER FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS



With yet another COVID Christmas behind us, we started the new year with realistic optimism. We say realistic because we know how unpredictable this pandemic has been so far and around every corner there seems to be a new surprise lurking. The holidays provided our hard-working team with a much-needed break and opportunity to

recharge our batteries. The year ahead is paved with wonderful opportunities and the inevitable challenges that go with campaigning for a better, more sustainable world.

This year sees us kicking off as proud participants in the Lifesaver Project, funded by the European Union. After two long years of blood, sweat, and tears we feel enormously proud of this accomplishment. Add to that the Moving Water Alliance and Content Brats projects and we're almost at full throttle. We are so grateful for our fantastic volunteers, as without them we would not have made the progress we have.

We are also enormously proud of our second digital magazine issue which is both a celebration and labour of love, considering Valentine's Day. It is our love for the planet and our desire to make a difference that gave birth to this publication. So whether you have a sweetheart or not, we encourage you to read this magazine from cover to cover as there are so many inspiring articles that are sure to get you moving forward towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

May February bring more love into your life in general, and may 2022 be kinder to us all as we strive to be kinder to the planet.

Leslie Maliepaard and **Amour Setter**

Co-founders

THE **PLANET** CALLS



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ZERO WASTE

LIVING A ZERO WASTE LIFESTYLE: OUR TIPS ON GETTING STARTED

By Breffni O'Brien



The climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges of our time but don't fret, there are plenty of things that we can do to help the situation. One of the main things that can help is following a zero-waste lifestyle.

Don't worry; no one expects you to become a 'Level 5 Vegan' who pocket-mulches like Jesse Grass from that episode of *The Simpsons*. However, we do have some tips on how you can kickstart your zero-waste lifestyle.



IN THE KITCHEN

Let's start in the kitchen, our favourite place in the house, and the spot where we generate the most waste.

A Little Meal Prep Never Hurt

Okay, don't panic. We don't mean that you have to allocate Sunday afternoons to packing bland meals into little Tupperware boxes for the rest of the week. Breathe out. By 'meal prep,' we simply mean planning your meals in advance.

Take a couple of minutes at the beginning of the week to set out a list of your meals for the week ahead. You don't have to stick to any particular order, but it helps to know what's on the menu, so you don't over-buy. Try to opt for meals that use the same ingredients to avoid veggies accumulating at the bottom of the fridge, growing more wrinkled and miserable by the day. For instance, root veggies are in season now, and they're super healthy. You can use the same handful of ingredients to make hearty stews, mouth-watering casseroles, belly-warming soups, or a classic roast dinner. Similarly, peppers, onions, mushrooms, legumes, and greens all work well in all manner of dishes. One evening you can opt for an Asian dish; the next night, you could roast the same veggies and have them with pasta. You just have to be clever about it. The planet and your pocket will thank you!

It's also handy to have some 'leftover' recipes in the bank, just in case. Don't worry; we have all had random ingredients leftover at the end of the week that we're not sure what to do with. Instead of chucking them out or letting them wither away, you could scroll through Pinterest for recipe inspo, or you can check out this [leftover recipe generator](#). Just pop in your random ingredients, and it'll provide you with endless possibilities.

What About the Scraps?

When we're cooking, we tend to generate quite a lot of waste too, but we have some super simple ways that you can cut down. When you're finished peeling your root veggies, you can compost them. But, you can also use them to make your own stock. Pop the peels and off-cuts into a container and store in the freezer. When you have gathered a good amount, chuck them all into a large pot or slow-cooker, and boil with herbs and water for a couple of hours.

Use a sieve to remove the peels, pop them in the compost bin, and pour the stock into ice-cube trays. Then, you can add one or two to your cooking whenever you need them.

Composting is a wonderful way of cutting down on kitchen waste. You can compost food waste, as well as teabags, eggshells, and used kitchen rolls. Over time, your food waste will break down into a nutrient-dense fertiliser. You can then use this fertiliser to help grow your own veggies and plants in the garden.

Other scraps and leftovers can be stored in stainless steel lunch boxes, glass jars, or in beeswax/vegan wax wraps to keep them fresh. The number one way to kickstart your zero-waste journey is to use whatever you already have. You don't need to go out and buy new jars and containers if you have a drawer full of mismatched Tupperware at home.

Picking up the Groceries

Avoiding plastic has never been easier! Many supermarkets are promising to replace plastic wrapping with paper or recyclable alternatives, but until then, you can always pop to the farmer's market for your veggies. At local markets, most produce is loose, and you can avoid buying anything wrapped in plastic.

There, you're not only helping to support local growers, but you're also reducing emissions. Many fruit and vegetables are grown overseas, and transporting them to your local supermarket can have detrimental effects on the environment. Grab a reusable tote bag and fill 'er up!

For pasta, rice, nuts, grains, and other dried goods, you can pay a visit to your local zero-waste store. Many of these shops are popping up all over the world, and they're amazing. You can bring jars or containers and fill them up with whatever you need.

You then pay per weight. It's a zero-waste and cost-effective way of topping up on food cupboard essentials.



IN THE BATHROOM

Next, let's move on to the bathroom. So many typical hygiene products are made using single-use plastics. Luckily, reusable and eco-friendly alternatives are widely available these days.

Personal Hygiene

You can swap plastic toothbrushes for bamboo, or you can opt for recyclable toothbrush heads if you're an electric toothbrush user. Swap plastic toothpaste tubes for toothpaste tabs, plastic floss for compostable floss, and plastic interdental brushes for bamboo versions. You can even buy reusable Q-tips now.

Some zero-waste bathroom swaps are far more apparent, though. Ditching liquid hand soap in favour of solid soap bars removes the need for plastic packaging, and the same can be done with shower gels. Opting for solid shampoo and conditioner bars have the same benefit, and they last much longer too. You can even swap traditional deodorants for cream or solid deodorant sticks.

Disposable razors are not only a pain for us, but they're also a pain for the planet. Instead, opt for metal safety razors with replaceable blades.

They offer a much better shave, and they're better for the environment. If you're a shaving foam kind of person, you can replace aerosol cans with an old-school shaving brush and bowl and a shaving lotion bar. Who doesn't like pretending they're in a period drama, at least for a couple of minutes?

Have a Sustainable Period

If you're a person who has a period, you might be aware of the waste generated during your time of the month. But this doesn't have to be the case. There are tons of options that allow us to have sustainable periods.

Traditional tampons can be replaced with menstrual cups, and disposable sanitary pads can be swapped for washable fabric versions.

Alternatively, you can opt for 'period underwear,' super-absorbent undies that you can chuck in the wash and wear again and again. What a time to be alive!



Can I Be a Zero-Waste Clean Freak?

If you're a bit of a clean freak (guilty as charged), you might have a stash of cleaning products, all stored in plastic bottles. While most of these bottles are recyclable, it's better to opt for a reusable version in the first place. Luckily, there are multiple ways to do this.

You can collect some glass bottles from your local zero-waste store and use lemon juice and baking soda to make your own cleaning products. Or, you can choose eco-friendly, refillable cleaning products, which you will also be able to find in your local zero-waste store. One of our favourites is the eco-egg - a refillable laundry egg that reduces the need for laundry detergents and fabric conditioners.

For the dishes, you can say goodbye to the washing-up liquid in favour of solid dish soap and swap plastic scrubbing brushes for wooden versions. You can even ditch traditional plastic sponges for scouring pads made from durable natural fibres. Coconut and hemp scouring pads are amazing!

Out and About

When we're out and about, we are surrounded by single-use plastics. They're convenient if you're eating out or grabbing coffee to go. However, single-use coffee cups and plastic cutlery can be avoided with a bit of planning.

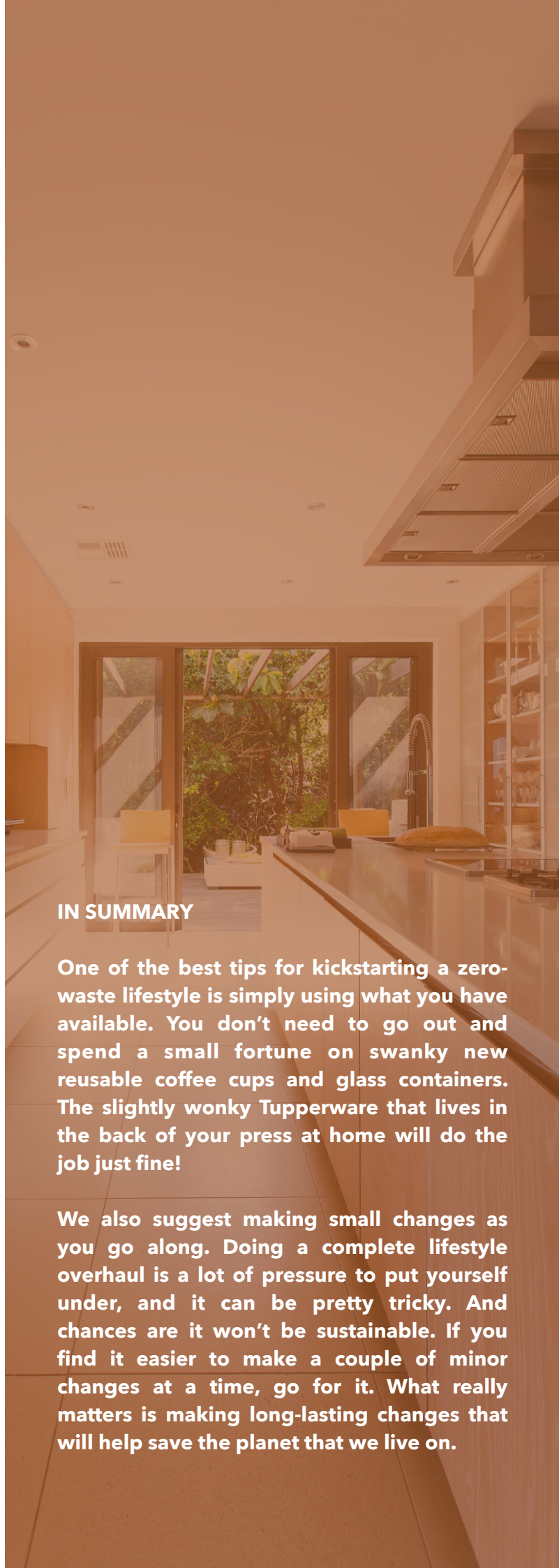
We recommend making an 'out and about' bag to make sure you can live your best zero-waste life on the go. All you need is a small tote bag, a reusable coffee cup, a metal straw or two, a fabric napkin, and a set of bamboo cutlery. If you're commuting to work, you can pop your lunch into a reusable sandwich bag or some metal lunchboxes. That's it. You're good to go!

When you're heading out the door, simply pop your 'out and about' bag into your regular bag, and you're prepared for anything. When you get home, just wash everything and pack it away again.

IN SUMMARY

One of the best tips for kickstarting a zero-waste lifestyle is simply using what you have available. You don't need to go out and spend a small fortune on swanky new reusable coffee cups and glass containers. The slightly wonky Tupperware that lives in the back of your press at home will do the job just fine!

We also suggest making small changes as you go along. Doing a complete lifestyle overhaul is a lot of pressure to put yourself under, and it can be pretty tricky. And chances are it won't be sustainable. If you find it easier to make a couple of minor changes at a time, go for it. What really matters is making long-lasting changes that will help save the planet that we live on.



HOW TO CREATE A COMPOST BIN EVEN IF YOU LIVE IN THE CITY



By Anneke Andrews

In my twenties, my goal was to be the ultimate recycling, composting, vegetarian woman. No word of a lie; I was even taking out library books (yes, we used to do that) to fill my head with all the essential information about veggies, herbs, and even chicken poop!

I lived in a similar environment to where I now live, but I was not quite as informed. Today, in my forties, I'm very proud of my beautiful compost bursting with wiggling earthworms. Granted, it's not exactly a normal thing to get excited about, but to me, it is. This is because it essentially grants me tastier and better vegetables! What more could you ask for?

Being a composting enthusiast, as I like to think I am, people always approach me with the same question, "How do I start composting?" so I've put together some basic points so you can begin your composting journey today.



LET'S DIVE IN...

- **Composting must become a habit. Get your family involved! Do whatever you can to encourage them to take part.**
- **Place a bucket next to your normal rubbish bin, so you remember to actually separate your trash.**
- **It can also be helpful to place a small bucket next to your kitchen cutting board. That way, you will remember to keep the scraps.**
- **For composting in a flat use a 20 litre bucket with an airtight lid (an old paint bucket is ideal.) Make holes in the lid and some on the sides. This is for the compost to breathe and to help prevent a bad smell. If you can place the bucket outdoors, this would be helpful, but if not then make sure the contents of your compost bin is not too wet or soggy. If it is, then add some sawdust to dry it out.**
- **You will need a space outside, not too close to your house, to dump your precious scraps. In a farm environment, you can create a structure out of pallets and recycled materials so long as there is some breathing space. The ideal size is around 3 feet wide by 3 feet deep. (I started my compost area in the outside area of the chicken coop. A corner of the fence was used to build a structure out of recycled materials. A bigger area is also used for composting, where the chickens can help themselves to scraps while also contributing with poop!)**
- **You can still compost in a smaller area, such as a flat, since tonnes of composting products are available on the market. I recommend buying a compost bin in this instance.**
- **Remember to always TURN your compost. Usually, around once or twice a week is good.**

WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

Another question I am often approached with is "what can I compost?" so I've included a handy list below for you to follow.

Greens (Nitrogen)

- Food scraps
- Vegetable scraps
- Teabags / Coffee grounds
- Chicken / Livestock manure
- Stale bread

Browns (Carbon)

- Leaves, straw, hay
- Shredded newspaper
- Crushed eggshells
- Egg boxes - remember to remove any glossy stickers on those boxes!
- Ash from wood (not charcoal ash, though)

WHAT SHOULD I NOT COMPOST?

Below are items that should **NEVER** enter your compost.

- Meat
- Bones
- Fish
- Milk products
- Pet poop
- Glossy paper

SO, AFTER ALL THAT EFFORT, WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

There are many benefits to composting at home. These include better soil health, reducing greenhouse gases, and recycling nutrients. In addition, composting helps you keep your kitchen bins as stink-free as possible.

Likewise, the uses of your new, beautiful soil are endless. It can be used as a mulch or added to potting soil. Alternatively, it can be worked into crop beds, used on your lawn, in pot plants, and even around your fruit trees. The soil also suppresses plant diseases and pests while retaining moisture.

While I only have a small greenhouse, it was transformed into an experiment lab with all my different kinds of soil. The soil we have on our property is not great; however, I can see the crops getting better and better within two seasons.



Composting is a slow process but very worthwhile. Studies claim you will increase the water-retaining capacity of your soil by 30%-50% by adding 5% organic compost to your garden. Of course, this does depend on the type of soil in your garden.

There are also compost toilets, a kind of dry toilet that treats human waste via a biological process. A carbon additive can be used too, such as coconut coir or sawdust. In addition, you can produce soil-building fertiliser for trees to thrive. Hopefully, this will be used more in the near future as currently, they are mainly used in places such as eco-tourism resorts, rural areas in developing countries, and off-grid homes.

With so many choices at our fingertips and how easy it is to get started, composting is a small sacrifice for our stunning planet. After all, we must make individual contributions to saving our world and what's more, composting packs a punch, allowing us to reduce our impact in many ways.

OUR FAVOURITE ZERO WASTE STORES

By Eurico Borges

As we know, the impact that waste is having on our planet is significant, and for that reason, we need to begin adopting a zero-waste, low-consumption lifestyle. Kickstarting this sort of lifestyle can be tricky and a bit daunting.

With plastic everywhere around us, you wonder how to avoid it and you start thinking about everything you use daily that is wasteful. To help you along your way, I consulted our global team of eco-warriors at The Planet Calls and asked them what their favourite zero-waste stores are!

**Amour Setter - Co-founder/Director at The Planet Calls
Prague, Czech Republic**

"Kohoutek shop is a small zero waste store in Prague 8. Their products are produced in the Czech Republic and Slovakia which is great if you're super conscious of your own personal carbon footprint. Their natural household cleaners can be poured into the customer's own containers thus eliminating single-use plastic. Their e-shop launched recently, and there will be an English version very soon. Their prices are great and the owners, Fadi and Hana, are both passionate about zero waste and sustainability."

www.kohoutek.shop
info@kohoutek.shop
Tel: +420 703471901



Hana and Fadi - Kohoutek Prague, CZ



Leslie Maliepaard - Co-founder/Director at The Planet Calls
Graz, Austria

"Damn Plastic is an Austrian plastic-free store and event consulting company. They encourage businesses and individuals to be accountable for their plastic waste and implement changes. Another zero-waste store in Austria that I love is Bee Change. They offer CO2 neutral shopping and recycled packing. Their motto is Gandhi's famous quote, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

<https://www.damnplastic.com>

<https://www.beechange.com>

Aina Oluwatimilehin - Frontend Developer at The Planet Calls
Lagos, Nigeria

"My favourite zero-waste store is Wecyclers. They transform waste PET bottles into usable commodities like bricks and shoes. Wecyclers gives households a chance to capture value from their waste while providing a reliable supply of materials to the local recycling industry."

<https://www.wecyclers.com/>

Tel: +234 909 743 9630

Email: founders@wecyclers.com



Pablo Corona Ugalde - Project Manager - Moving Water Alliance
Mexico City, Mexico

"I would have to say the Mexican store Estado Natural. It was founded in 2017, and now there are 14 branches in Mexico City, with country-wide shipments through the online store. Offering hygiene products and kitchen accessories, they "want to fill your pantry and your house with good things."

<https://estadonatural.com.mx/>

**Jennifer Damian - Chairperson - Oversight Committee, Moving Water Alliance
Los Angeles, USA**

"I love Hive Brands. They were founded in 2020 and are an online marketplace with hundreds of natural and sustainable brands offering carbon-neutral shipping. I am also a big fan of Grove, which is a sustainable, cruelty-free, carbon/plastic neutral company based in California that is using their Beyond Plastic scheme to become 100% plastic-free by 2025 for home and personal products".

<https://www.grove.co/>



**Jeannine Matthews - Bookkeeper at The Planet Calls
Cape Town, South Africa**

"The Green Tap Store is a family-owned home and body products shop in Cape Town. They ship worldwide with reusable packaging, and customers are encouraged to bring their own containers to the physical store. All products are natural and cruelty-free."

<https://www.thegreentap.co.za>

Tel: 083 321 3255



**Barbora Kučeríková - Filmmaker at The Planet Calls
Barcelona, Spain**

"I frequently visit a regional ecological shop here in Barcelona called Frooty. It's a family business with their own farm, all their food is sold in ecological packaging and there are also some products you can refill products here. Great vibe also!"

www.frooty.es





**Pat Kane - Reuzi
Dublin, Ireland**

**Bronagh Loughlin - Executive Editor at The Planet Calls
Dublin, Ireland**

"I love Reuzi and The Kind Co. They are both based in Ireland and provide everything you could need to start a zero-waste lifestyle. They sell many amazing products from bathroom essentials to on-the-go items, plastic-free skincare, and everything in-between! Reuzi Founder Pat Kane also runs several recycling and sustainability workshops to inform, inspire and connect people. She is dedicated to making the business the educational hub of all things sustainable living. Reuzi has more than 100 zero-waste brands on their website so their customers can avail of zero-waste, plastic-free, biodegradable, vegan, natural, and cruelty-free products."

<https://reuzi.ie>

<https://thekind.co>



As you can see from our team's responses, there are a plethora of zero waste stores across the globe for you to kickstart your journey. Be sure to check out some of these shops and let us know what your favourites are on social media!



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ACTIVISM

FROM VILLAGE PROTESTS TO GLOBAL CLIMATE MOVEMENT

By Sonia Mehta

THE CHIPKO ANDOLAN


When Greta Thunberg began to challenge world leaders at only 15 years of age, she probably had no idea so many would join her climate strike movement. We learnt from Greta's actions that when we come together, we can ignite real change. Another movement that did this was the Chipko movement, also called Chipko Andolan. It was a series of nonviolent, ecological movements started by rural villagers, particularly women, in India in the 1970s.

Aimed at protecting trees and forests slated for government-backed logging, the movement originated in the Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh (later Uttarakhand) in 1973 and quickly spread throughout the Indian Himalayas. The Hindi word chipko means "to hug" or "to cling to" and reflects the demonstrator's primary tactic of embracing the trees to impede the loggers.

The Chipko movement was a non-violent agitation in 1973 that was aimed at the protection and conservation of trees, but, perhaps, it is best remembered for the collective mobilisation of women from the Bishnoi community for the cause of preserving forests, which also brought about a change in attitude regarding their status in society.

With the conclusion of the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1963, the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh experienced growth in development, especially in the rural Himalayan regions. The interior roads built for the conflict attracted many foreign-based logging companies that sought access to the region's vast forest resource.





Although the rural communities depended heavily on the forests for subsistence—both directly, for food and fuel, and indirectly, for services such as water purification and soil stabilisation—government policy prevented the villagers from managing the lands and denied them access to the lumber.

With huge trees falling and deforestation taking place in the hills, the trees were becoming few and far. The village women, who rely mainly on the forest resources for sustenance, found it difficult to spend enormous time and energy in collecting the necessary fodder and fuel. Ultimately the reckless deforestation had denuded much of the forest cover, resulting in the devastating Alaknanda River floods of July 1970, when a major landslide blocked the river and affected an area starting from HanumanChatti.

The floods completely wiped out villages, sweeping away thirty buses and thirteen bridges in the area and locals were very concerned about the forest. Local community leaders investigated village member's opinions on the cause of the flood and their perception based on years of living in the forest. They came to the conclusion that deforestation was the main explanation. As a result, the Chipko Movement of the 1970s was born as an effort to end deforestation in the local community forests.

It represented an indigenous community's fight for two main changes: self-rule over their native lands, and advocating for their traditional lifestyle while operating an economy of use rather than profit in the forests. The unique elements within the Chipko Movement serve as a true example of self-determination by employing traditional indigenous strategies and by remaining independent of assistance from larger institutions.

The method of protesting was agreed upon and methodically planned via the local communities; the members of the Chipko Movement would cling to the trees, hugging them, in hopes of preventing them from being chopped down.

When the time came, the local people of Gopeshwar and members of nearby native communities marched to the marked trees with drums and song. They reached the allotted trees and embraced each one, not letting go until the men contracted to cut them down retreated back to town. The Forest Department attempted to make a compromise, offering the protesters a tree, and then upped the offer to a couple of trees if the contractors could continue with the planned arrangement. The offer was declined, and the first Chipko event was successful.

Soon after, news came that the same contracting company would be attempting to cut trees down in the Phata Forest. Leaders of the Chipko Movement visited and educated villagers near the Phata Forest about the resistance and unique methods of protest. One of Chipko's most salient features was the mass participation of the female community. As one of the first protests ignited in Reni, women had to take the lead. With the men detained in town, women and children undaunted by the workers marched into the woods.

As they hugged the trees in protest, the trees remained standing. After the initial success, nearby communities organised a continuous watch at the site of the trees and multiple rallies throughout the time the contract allowed cutting. Eventually, the contract expired and the women of Reni were successful in saving the trees. This specific protest at the Reni Forest highlighted the efforts of women villagers in the Chipko Movement.

After the Reni Forest protests, women of Gopeshwar began protesting the falling of oak trees near their village in 1975 and were successful. Two years later in 1977 through to 1978, women in Chacharidhar used Chipko strategies to save 10,000 trees. Also, in 1978 women of Bhyundar Village, settled in the Valley of Flowers, resisted the cutting of trees that were planned to help build a Badrinath Temple.





Stopping the trees falling stood for more than protecting a couple hundred trees, even more than preventing another flood, the Chipko Movement was an indigenous communities' fight for the ability to govern the lands native to their culture and maintain their traditional lifestyle of sustenance from the forests. The Chipko protesters wanted the government to understand that native people, especially the women, should have an important input in the decisions made about the forests.

Chandi Prasad, a prominent leader in the Chipko Movement stated: "The main goal of our movement is not saving trees, but the judicious use of trees." The native communities believed local control was beneficial in preserving the forests, and that the forest villagers should be recognised as rightful protectors of the forest.

After a decade of Chipko Movement efforts, the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 was created which banned all use of forest land without permission from the national government. This not only proved the success of the movement but also ignited the development of policies to further support the native villages in the forest.

The Forest Conservation Act was a direct result of the Chipko protesters' efforts to stop deforestation and demonstrated the power forest communities could have. The Chipko Movement protesters fought for the right to self-govern the resources and land and live traditionally from the forests.

The Forest Department and other powerful logging companies were challenged by ordinary forest dwellers and lost. It was the results of the Chipko Movement that proved the voiceless villagers now had a voice.

If we are to learn anything from the Chipko Movement, it is that we have a voice and the power to stop our planet from being destroyed. If we work together, we can accomplish real, ever-lasting change.

VOLUNTEER AND BE PART OF A DREAM TEAM

By Erryl Ho



A few months ago, I wrote a blog post about the benefits of volunteering at The Planet Calls. Volunteering at this non-profit foundation has fed my soul in more ways than simply gaining work experience.

This time I thought it would be interesting to find out what some of the other team members felt about their time at The Planet Calls.



"My name is **Amour Setter**, I'm the Co-founder and Director at The Planet Calls. A fun fact about me is that ten years ago I sold up all my worldly possessions and hit the road with my then 16-year old son to travel Southeast Asia for a few years and home

school him along the way. One of the most satisfying accomplishments has been building such an incredible volunteer team. When we are able to pull projects across the finishing line together, it feels fantastic to be part of a winning team. I just love our volunteers, they are like family."



"My name is **Leslie Maliepaard**. I'm the Co-founder and Director at The Planet Calls. A fun fact about me is I start every day with an ice bath plunge. It's absolutely FREEZING but it's like rocket fuel to kick

start my day. My most satisfying accomplishment to date at The Planet Calls was landing the Horizon Europe Grant for the LIFESAVER project as a consortium partner."



"My name is **Pablo Corona Ugalde**, I am the Project Manager at Moving Water Alliance, one of The Planet Calls side projects. An interesting fact about me is that I'm a videogame developer in my free time. I'm also an animal advocate and vegan. I

decided to volunteer because I want to use my time for something that really matters, and meet people with the same way of thinking. The Planet Calls has definitely helped me in my career. I've improved my English and got the chance to work with people from all around the world. My most memorable experience was when a member of our Oversight Committee at Moving Water Alliance became so involved that she eventually became our chairperson."



"My name is **Parth Gupta**, I am the Partnership Coordinator at The Planet Calls. I love gardening, and I find myself spending time with nature a lot. I feel that everyone has their way of contributing to society. With my current job, I could not contribute too much time. But at

The Planet Calls, I would be able to use my skills to contribute back to society. Volunteering at The Planet Calls is an escape from the hectic lives that we all experience. I feel refreshed to attach my work life while contributing new ideas to the team. It's crazy how different and diverse the team is, and I'm inspired when I realise that this rigid path I'm visualising is NOT the only way. My best moment was when I was asked to host a podcast. Something I had never done before – it was a surprise to me. But it didn't end there. I literally 'winged it,' expecting huge backlash and that the entire thing would have to be edited. But what left me in awe was when the co-founder said she was fine with it, and it was entirely up to me. It's this level of trust and responsibility that I will never forget."



"My name is **Bronagh Loughlin**, I am the Executive Editor at The Planet Calls, and I have a mischief of pet rats! I decided to volunteer for The Planet Calls partially because I wanted to get more experience writing about sustainability and the environment with the goal that this

would be one of my niche areas. My time at The Planet Calls has not only done a lot for my soul and mental health but also my career. I started as a Writer and was eventually promoted to Executive Editor, which looks great on my CV. I'm also very proud to be writing about the true challenges of our time - racism, climate change, inequality, animal welfare, the list goes on. Having The Planet Calls on my CV has helped me secure numerous freelance writing and editing gigs! Not to mention, define my niches - sustainability and mental health. My most memorable experience at The Planet Calls was probably in November and December when we were getting our first digital magazine over the finish line. It was really tough at times, but we all worked together and helped each other out. It felt incredible to finally launch it for the world to see. This project had been in the works since August 2021."



"My name is **Matthew Apping**. I am a Project Manager at The Planet Calls. I am originally from the Caribbean. However, I don't like the beach or the sun. I decided to join The Planet Calls because I love working on projects that positively impact society and the

environment. I've learned quite a lot during my time here. For example: How to manage a creative team to complete milestones on time without hampering the creative process. My most memorable experience will have to be the night before we launched our December 2021 Digital Magazine Issue. I remember the entire team was up on Slack late that night, ensuring that everything was perfect and nothing was left out. That moment was when I realised that the core team was the Dream Team we wanted to build. Now we've got it!"



"My name is **Denial Keco**, I'm the volunteer graphic designer at The Planet Calls. A fun fact about me is that I cook amazing world cuisine dishes (from Japanese to Italian). I decided to join this volunteer program because the work done in this company is something I wanted to

be a part of for a long time but didn't have the chance to try. It has benefited me in many aspects of work experience. I'm doing versatile design and I have freedom to express my ideas in designing different things. Most memorable would be our magazine design which I was dying to make amazing for all of us to be proud of. Also the feedback from the colleagues regarding the magazine design is something that I will never forget. I had tears of happiness in my eyes."



"My name is **Charly Stringer**, I'm a volunteer blog writer for The Planet Calls. A fun fact about me is that I love to freedive and have dived to around 42m deep so far... and hoping to get deeper! I wanted to volunteer for TPC because I'm passionate about the environment.

I've spent the last 10 years travelling and diving in different oceans around the world, and seeing first hand the damage that is being done. I like to do my part to protect the oceans and to help the planet in whatever small ways I can. I discovered my passion for writing a couple of years ago and figured that was a great way to spread the word of being more eco-conscious. When a friend put me in touch with the guys at The Planet Calls, I thought it would be a good way to give back and I have the time to volunteer writing a few blogs, so why not? When you're writing about things you're passionate about it really doesn't feel like work anyway. When I started writing for The Planet Calls I had only one year of experience in writing, and not much experience writing in the eco niche. So it's definitely given me some great additions to my portfolio that I can show to future employers. Writing about eco topics outside of the ocean was new to me and I've learned so much from researching those blogs. I think volunteering for The Planet Calls in general will be memorable as everyone who works here is so kind and so passionate. It's lovely to see people going the extra mile simply because they care, not because of money."

As you can see from our team members' experiences, there are many benefits to volunteering. From career advancement and securing work experience to meeting like-minded people on a similar mission where you feel you belong, learning new skills, and, of course, having fun!

If you are interested in volunteering at The Planet Calls, please check out our website for our current openings:

<https://theplanetcalls.com/volunteer-program/>

Are you ready to add more meaning to your life while also driving change?

Calling all Volunteers

Add more
meaning to
your Life!

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THE PLANET CALLS

A photograph showing several hands of different skin tones resting on a tree trunk in a forest. The hands are stacked vertically, symbolizing unity and support. The background is a lush green forest with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The word "LEADERSHIP" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters in the center of the image.

LEADERSHIP

PROFIT with purpose

MAGAZINE

Winter
2021



MAKE
CHANGE
HAPPEN

Inclusive Incubation | Sustainable Hedonism | Pro Social Disruption | Can Sustainability Be Funny?

HARNESSING THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION TO DRIVE CHANGE

By Bronagh Loughlin

As we know, encouraging people to lead more sustainable lifestyles and pressuring governments and businesses to think green requires messaging and communication. In order to drive change, we must educate people about the problems we are facing and their scale. We do this by putting research and statistics into easy-to-understand language and sharing people's experiences and stories to show their true impact.

Szilvia Szabo, Editor in Chief at Business Spirit Platform and Profit With Purpose Magazine knows too well the power of communication in driving change and putting sustainability on the agenda.

From being a brief thought in her mind to 4 issues later, Szilvia has featured numerous entrepreneurs who are #makingwaves. These individuals and businesses are value-driven and have sustainability and innovation in their DNA. We caught up with Szilvia to talk about the power of communication in making change happen.

Before we get into exactly how Szilvia's magazine is empowering innovators and entrepreneurs to create a sustainable and just economy, it seemed only right to go back to where it all began.



When asked about when she began her journey, Szilvia says: "Technically, all of this began 5 years ago when we organised our first international conference, the Responsible Innovation Summit. The summit brought together researchers, business leaders and policymakers to explore further what responsible innovation is about."

"In a nutshell, it is about being mindful of the output of your innovation and considering these outputs in the process of making innovation happen. While it may sound like a simple thing to do, when you think about ethics and technology, it's not always that straightforward. After witnessing the power of bringing people together and the language they used to communicate these concerns in an easy-to-digest manner, we knew we had to start our online platform. Many of the attendees of the summit were already collaborating, sharing ideas and connecting with one another and we hoped to continue encouraging that and these conversations."

"The platform was all about publishing news and open calls as well as finding the language that would attract attention from different audiences while still working towards the same goals. This was really the breakthrough moment for me to start something online and the print magazine was essentially the cherry on top."



With everything being online nowadays, many may question why Szilvia decided to follow her online platform with a physical, print magazine. However, it was all in the timing. The conversations around launching a magazine collided with the COVID-19 era and during this time, most employees were working from home. This meant they were spending more time than usual looking at screens. Szilvia saw an opportunity here, to give people something physical to hold in their hands and read while drinking a coffee, that wouldn't add to their current screen time.

"We wanted to create something you can touch and feel, and have your little bit of me-time with a cup of coffee or even a glass of wine if you are feeling that way inclined! We also believe in the power of reading and felt physical magazines enhance the reading experience and readers better absorb the content. The magazine came about as a means to get people focused and really think about what they are reading."



Each magazine is seasonal and focuses on one central topic, for example, carbon, building back better from COVID-19, linking sustainable development to the business sector and making change happen. The magazine is A5 and is produced with every care to ensure it is environmentally sound from start to finish, including the use of Carbon Balanced paper for printing. Profit With Purpose also collaborates with Vita Ireland, the non-profit organisation that manages carbon offsetting to ensure the magazine is carbon-negative while also supporting women in Africa. The magazine comes out twice per year and they are treated as small books in that they feature engaging design and easy-to-digest, time-proofed content.

With every venture, be it personal or professional, there are ups and downs. There are moments where we wonder if we should give up and then times where it becomes crystal clear why we chose this path and how necessary it is for us to do this. Speaking on these, Szilvia says: "When I started the magazine, I wasn't alone which definitely helped and this was due to having done the conference which provided me with a network of people who wanted to change the world for the better. I also spoke to a number of people asking if they would be interested in something like this and whether they felt it would work. Our selling point with the magazine was really that we deliver the information in an easy-to-digest way without overusing jargon."

"When thinking about how to make this idea of mine into a reality, one of my greatest supporters was and still is Dublin City Council. Everything began from this conversation with them about how we can discuss innovation with business leaders in a way that would attract them and inspire change. We worked directly with the Economic Development Department who are all very driven at achieving our exact goal. The first issue acted as an experiment and we took all the feedback into account and made important changes. We received funding from the department to make the magazine work too and this gave me the opportunity to come as far as we are now and build up the brand, content and audience."

When it comes to low points in the journey, Szilvia says it does come back to the launch in the middle of COVID-19 and after the release of the fourth issue, still being in the COVID realm. She says: "I never had the experience of getting to go to an event and handing the magazine over to someone. I'm really hoping this year, I will be able to experience this. Besides missing this experience, I am delighted the magazine has found its way across the world; we have supporters in every country. We opened up our online shop last year and we are getting orders too which is great. Another downside though is that we do have limited funding and this makes the magazine a very careful step by step strategy. But, hopefully, as things open back up, it gets a bit easier."

"In relation to the feedback we received when we released the first issue, people really requested to make the content easy to read. When you are working in the sustainability space, you want everything in order and perfectly described and almost technical so you can rest knowing you are not sending out incorrect information. After all, it is a serious matter and we have to remember this is about the people. Unless you have people who get involved and engaged, none of this really matters. This is still a learning point for me, the content has to have a face and story and something you can put into action. This is a big thing for businesses avoiding sustainability as they worry they will make mistakes or not do it perfectly and be attacked as the bad guys even if they try."

We need to give business owners a reason to put sustainability on the list since they are so busy and if it is not easy enough, it won't happen. Given this, with the magazine, we aim to strike a balance between people who have this at their core and others who shifted and transitioned."

"I also experienced moments of self-doubt, could I actually do this, am I capable? But when you do see the feedback and people posting about it, you realise you are doing something that is worth the effort. Being alone all the time, despite being on calls, you don't get the personal touch and to connect appropriately with others. Like any business owner, I experience burnout too but I am very lucky to have my wonderful daughter who helps me gain back my sanity and get to leave the desk and go for walks and of course, have to attend to her whenever she needs me. With burnout too, you need to know yourself well to get over it."

When speaking about her goals with her business for 2022, Szilvia says: "We have a feature we have been working on since last year and it is a search platform within Business Spirit Platform where you can very easily find information that is relevant for you. It is essentially a search engine built in to help you find partners and how to get involved with the impact space which acts as a shortcut. It isn't that easy to find relevant information so it'll be interesting to see how this can benefit innovators. Plus, Google is often biased due to SEO and keywords and generally won't help you to find local solutions."

The Planet Calls is delighted to have Szilvia's two businesses in its partnership network and we're huge fans of her magazine. We are also in awe of her success and very proud of her for taking such bold steps to empower others in their sustainability journeys while leading the way for powerful change.



MINIMALISM



HOW TO CREATE A MINIMALIST LIFESTYLE

By Amour Setter

Google the word “minimalism” and you’re sure to find a plethora of information touting the advantages of embracing this kind of lifestyle. From decreasing your carbon footprint to improving your bank account, minimalism can have an enormously positive impact on the planet. And your mental health.

Besides the obvious environmental advantages, minimalism also really helps you define what’s most important in your life. Consumerism has taught us that we are what we own, and nothing could be further from the truth. Society has conditioned us to believe that the only way to happiness is to own a house, a car and a ton of material possessions. This flawed premise has resulted in a society of people working jobs they hate in order to accumulate possessions they actually don’t need, to impress people they don’t even like. Put that way, it seems quite ludicrous to be in pursuit of a materialistic lifestyle.

For me personally, minimalism is also about drawing the line at “enough.” In other words, having what you need and no more. Minimalism and greed are not compatible and minimalists avoid the accumulation of excess material possessions. I always say, if you need to buy storage containers to store your “stuff,” you own too much “stuff.”

That said, how do we simplify our lives and embrace a minimalist lifestyle?

Let’s start with decluttering. Going through all your physical possessions in your home and deciding what to keep and what to get rid of can be a gruelling exercise, but it’s a necessary activity if you’re trying to simplify your life.

There are many wonderful charity stores where you can take your unwanted items, or you can sell them on the internet. But whatever you decide to do with your excess stuff, please do not throw it in the bin! Our landfills are overflowing and it’s putting an enormous strain on the planet. ([Watch our video on landfills.](#))

Once you’ve decluttered you may well find that you have furniture that is no longer functional (and perhaps only served as storage space for all your clutter.) Get rid of that too. Creating a spacious living area with less furniture also means creating a more peaceful and tranquil space.

Next, it’s time to tackle your wardrobe. I always say if you haven’t worn an item of clothing for the past year or two, you are probably never going to wear it again. Add it to the charity store bag. Honestly, do you really need 5 coats? Be ruthless, keep only items that you actually wear. Anything you don’t wear is just clutter.



Now, this might sound strange, but the next thing to tackle is your social media accounts so go ahead and unfollow people and accounts that promote consumerism. You want your personal values to be totally aligned with your actions so you cannot be drooling over the latest fashion range while preaching minimalism, right?

Once you've cleaned out your living space and you're left with material possessions that you actually need and use regularly, and you've relieved yourself of all the surplus stuff in your life, this would be a good time to evaluate your carbon footprint moving forward. That means thinking carefully before buying anything. If you must buy anything, shop locally and shop at thrift stores. Doing so reduces your carbon footprint tremendously. Next time you want to order a clothing item being shipped from China (assuming you live in Europe), consider the huge cost to the environment, even if the end price isn't all that much.

The same applies to your food. Buying what's in season and what is offered locally in your own country means lowering your overall carbon footprint. That also goes for eco-tourism. Travelling responsibly means being kind to the environment you're visiting and choosing to stay in accommodation that is eco-friendly.

Becoming conscious of everything you buy means you not only consider the impact your shopping has on the planet, but also on the lives of people. For example, do you buy clothing from companies that practise ethical and sustainable business? If you don't know this, it's time to start researching your favourite brands. You will be very surprised to learn that many of the brands we support are huge contributors to environmental harm and some even contract companies that use forced labour (I kid you not!) Imagine wearing a jacket made by people imprisoned for their religious beliefs. I don't know about you, but I couldn't wear anything like that.

Once you get to this point in your minimalist journey, the natural progression will be to embrace a zero-waste lifestyle. And one of the biggest aspects of a zero-waste lifestyle is to completely do away with single-use plastic.

That means keeping fabric shopping bags in your car (or in your handbag) so you never have to buy plastic bags. And avoiding food items that come in plastic or non-degradable packaging.

It's worth paying that "green premium" to buy goods that come in glass or paper that can be recycled or bio-degraded. After all, your budget should be looking good at this point in your minimalism journey. If you're buying less stuff, you can afford to shop green.

And last but not least, it would be remiss of me not to mention that shopping for experiences (instead of things) has become a huge part of a minimalist lifestyle. I'd much rather catch a train to a lovely eco-friendly destination and go hiking in nature than buy the latest expensive designer jacket.

The minimalist lifestyle is all about understanding what matters most in life and leading a responsible, purpose-driven, and meaningful existence that doesn't harm Mother Nature. "Planet over Profit" is a great philosophy to live by while understanding that people and nature are more important in life than things.



A minimalist interior scene featuring a round, light-colored wooden table with three legs. On the table sits a white teapot and a cup. A white, distressed wooden chair is positioned next to the table. A large, arched floor lamp with a silver, perforated shade is positioned behind the table. A potted plant with long, green leaves is on the right. The background is a white, paneled wall. The floor is light wood, and a white, shaggy rug is under the table. The word "LIFESTYLE" is overlaid in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

LIFESTYLE

LOVE IS LOVE

By Eurico Borges

Diversity represents human plurality. After all, each human has their distinct characteristics, which together form an identity as a society. In this sense, the harmonious coexistence of various aspects is essential for constructing a fairer society that respects what is different.

One of these aspects is sexual diversity, which concerns individuals' various orientations and gender identities. Many people still consider homosexuality a deviant behaviour from "normal" social standards, even being criminalised. However, there is evidence that these relationships have existed and been accepted by ancient people in human history. Data indicates that, despite being condemned and discriminated against, homosexuality is an innate characteristic or quality in our species.

In Greek and Roman societies, considered the cradle of Western civilization, homoaffective relationships were common among its citizens. In Greek culture, sex between men could even be seen as a rite of passage for young men in their military training. In this sense, homosexual acts were neither persecuted nor condemned. The idea of beauty constructed in ancient Greece had the male figure as its reference. Although female homosexuality was also allowed, the woman's social role was focused on heterosexual marriage, family, and domestic activities. At that time, tribadism was used to refer to lesbianism.

Roman civilization also lived with homosexuality without discrimination or persecution against those identified. This changed after the 3rd century AD when the death penalty was established for those who committed homosexual acts. The cultural shift mainly occurred due to the influence of the Catholic Church, which during the Middle Ages considered sodomy one of the forms of heresy, with punishments as severe as death. Consequently, homosexuality was increasingly persecuted and criminalised in Europe.

LGBTQIAP+ rights only began to be recognised in the second half of the 20th century, after the publication of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Despite expressing that all human beings, without exception, should have their fundamental rights and dignities respected, the document does not explicitly mention the gay community.

Later, in 1969, the Stonewall bar was a meeting place for socially marginalised groups, such as the LGBTQIAP+ community. In the early hours of the 28th of June, the police decided to raid the bar, which did not have a liquor licence.

The police officers arrested employees on the grounds of prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages and began physically assaulting transgender patrons who were in the bar. A total of thirteen people were arrested in the violent police action. Revolted by the situation, the crowd that witnessed the scene decided to react and retaliated to the aggressions, throwing stones and bottles at the police and triggering a riot.

The episode became known as the Stonewall Uprising. It generated a wave of protests and demonstrations in the city, which called for the recognition of LGBTQIAP+ rights. In these demonstrations, expressions such as "Gay Power" and "Gay Pride" echoed, symbolising the unity and strength of the community. Today, the 28th of June is celebrated worldwide as "International LGBT Pride Day."

The importance of Stonewall in the history of LGBTQIAP+ rights does not only focus on the US but the international level. Same-sex marriage is now legal in 31 countries. The promotion of human rights by international entities such as the United Nations has led to recognising sexual diversity worldwide. Nevertheless, 70 countries still criminalise homo-affective relationships worldwide: 33 in Africa and 22 in Asia, together representing more than half of the total. The main reason for these laws of sexual diversity repression lies in their colonial period.

During this time, their system was moulded around the European one, with religious oppression. The independence of a large part of these countries only occurred in the 20th century, and its current laws are strongly influenced by those imposed during the colonial era.



Since the late 1980s, the UN has been more active in the debate on LGBTQIAP+ rights. Some events have gained prominence, such as the removal of homosexuality as a disease by the World Health Organization in 1990, as well as the judgment of the case of Nicholas Toonen against the Australian state in 1994.

Toonen's judgement is a massive landmark for LGBTQIAP+ rights, as it was the first judgement by the United Nations Human Rights Committee that found Australia's laws to be violative of LGBTQIAP+ human rights.

Australian laws at the time criminalised same-gender sexual acts, and Toonen complained to the Committee, arguing that the ban violated his right to privacy. As a result, the International Committee on Civil and Political Rights, linked to the Human Rights Council, declared that laws that violate LGBTQIAP+ rights violate human rights.

The Yogyakarta Principles are an international manifestation of the need to include the entire LGBTQIAP+ community as human rights subjects. The relevance of this document is precisely in pointing out the recognition of this inclusion worldwide.

The declarations exposed in its 38 principles influenced the implementation of public policies and legislative measures by states to protect the LGBTQIAP+ population, even if indirectly.

Thus, the document demonstrates a need for a legal document recognised by international law, which addresses this issue. Or even that the Yogyakarta Principles themselves achieve this character, as it could formally demand from States an active role in guaranteeing LGBTQIAP+ rights as human rights.

The dialogue on the need to protect the rights of the LGBTQIAP+ community in international human rights systems is essential. And as more countries pass laws to protect the right for people to be and love whoever they want, we become a more inclusive and unified society.



A photograph of a rocky cliff partially covered in ice, with the words "CLIMATE CHANGE" overlaid in large white text. The cliff is dark grey and jagged, with a prominent peak on the right. The ice is a pale blue color, hanging from the cliff and covering the ground in the foreground. The sky is a pale, overcast blue.

CLIMATE CHANGE

HOW DUCKY IS REDUCING CITIZEN EMISSIONS GLOBALLY

By Erryl Ho

I had the pleasure of interviewing Nigel Powell, the International Relations Director of the climate change startup, Ducky. He shared how Ducky grew to become a company that fights the climate crisis at the frontlines – and what strategies they've come up with to put a stop to it.



Nigel Powell
International Relations Director at Ducky

TELL ME A BIT ABOUT YOURSELF

"I initially trained in law, but for 20 years, I was a technology columnist and feature writer for the Times and Sunday Times newspapers in the UK. My conversion to environmentalism happened after I covered COP21 in Paris in 2015. I emerged from that experience traumatised at the scale of the climate crisis and decided to dedicate my efforts to that issue from then on. My role in Ducky is to manage our international partnerships outside Norway and help drive the adoption of our consumer emissions tool kit."

HOW AND WHY DID DUCKY START?

"Ducky was formed in 2014 in Trondheim in Norway. The company was created to tackle a big question. How could people be encouraged to take action to reduce society's carbon emissions at a personal level? Most environmental activism at that time focused on large-scale projects, like improving infrastructure with solar and insulation. This was great, but it kind of ignored the fact that a considerable percentage of global CO2 emissions - Scope 3 emissions - happen because of our personal consumption habits. We buy stuff, which increases emissions.

The idea behind Ducky was to help people realise this fact and gently, without guilt shaming, help them learn ways they could reduce emissions by modest lifestyle and habit changes. The Ducky platform, the vehicle we built to do that, is now acknowledged as a state-of-the-art toolset to tackle consumer CO2 emissions. Bottom line - we're one of the world's leading consumer emissions technology experts, with seven years of experience helping people and organisations track and reduce consumer emissions."

WHO OWNS AND RUNS DUCKY?

"Ducky is majority-owned by a non-profit foundation in Norway, but we are also a Teal company. This means that all of the people working here are treated as equally responsible for the direction and goals of the company. We do have a CEO and board members, but they act more like advisors to ensure we operate according to our internal governance rules and commercial law in general. It's an incredibly empowering but demanding environment, as we each share responsibility for the success of our mission."



DO YOU HAVE ANY SUCCESS STORIES YOU COULD SHARE ABOUT YOUR COMPANY?

"We have worked with major corporations such as IKEA, Toyota, Volvo, Intel, and many more. To find out more, please check out our website at <https://www.ducky.eco/en/project/>."

HOW CAN PEOPLE GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR COMPANY?

"We are always looking for partners around the world. We currently operate in the Nordic countries, the UK and Ireland, and Japan through our partners. However, this is not a mission any one company can do alone, so we need to collaborate with everyone who recognises the need for rapid, effective action to try and mitigate the worst of what's happening to the climate at the moment.

To find out more, please check out our website at <https://www.ducky.eco/en/project/>"

HOW CAN ORGANISATIONS BENEFIT FROM USING YOUR SERVICES?

"There are several challenges facing business in the 21st century. The climate crisis is no longer a distant threat to our society, and companies are coming under increasing pressure to take the lead in tackling the worst. This means they're desperate for real solutions, not just greenwashing, to tackle climate change and inspire their staff and customers to follow their lead. There are three main products we offer to help them do this.

The first is a gamified app, Ducky Campaign, which organisations use to teach their staff and customers how to reduce their personal climate footprint. Historically green projects in companies are limited to writing annual reports or a few employees doing some eco activity now and then. Running a Ducky Campaign engages everyone in the company, who compete in teams to save CO2 using their phones. It delivers real-world action, which is hugely motivating for staff and customers.

The second product is the Ducky Data API. While a Ducky Campaign provides a tool for groups, Ducky Data is designed to motivate individuals to reduce their carbon footprint directly through their shopping habits. Any business with a website or an app can use our tool to inject CO2 values into their customer transactions. So, for instance, a bank can automatically add a CO2 value in their customer app to show their clients how much of an impact their purchases have in terms of carbon emissions. We motivate people with green hints and tips as well.

The third part of our platform, the Ducky ZEC Map, is probably the most exciting. We have created the world's first public consumer emissions map, displaying real-time data on a region's CO2 consumer emissions. By showing people, planners, and politicians a breakdown of their consumption emissions (e.g., food, transport, energy, goods, services, etc.), we can encourage change on all levels. The first iteration of the map is in Norway, and it's already creating a stir as people realise that they can see the results of policy changes in hard numbers for the first time. <http://carbonhero.org> temporarily points to the Norwegian version of the map."

WHY SUPPORTING LOCAL HELPS PREVENT CLIMATE CHANGE

By Eurico Borges

The way we produce and consume has contributed to many existing environmental problems, namely climate change, pollution, depletion of natural resources, and biodiversity loss. Our quality of life depends on our ability to live within the limits of available resources.

Sustainable consumption and production involve consuming less and better, considering environmental, social, and economic impacts. It is a process that includes using natural resources and energy more efficiently, thus reducing pollutant emissions and other types of environmental impact.

With this new way of consuming and producing, it is desired to satisfy the needs for products and services while enjoying a better quality of life while ensuring that future generations have the resources they need.

Practises that reduce energy and water consumption, separation, and correct disposal of solid waste, hiring local labour and suppliers, supporting the communities around the company, and commitment to sustainability are some of the sustainable actions that small businesses are adopting across the world.

The main reasons for adopting sustainable practises, such as energy efficiency, waste management, and support to the local community, are environmental preservation, cost reduction, and even marketing and advertising.

By adopting sustainable practises, small businesses contribute to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, part of the United Nations Agenda 2030, adopted by 193 member countries in 2015 in New York. These principles are divided into 169 goals.

Poverty eradication, health, wellbeing, clean energy, reducing inequalities, sustainable communities, responsible production and consumption are some of the main advantages of supporting small businesses.

Consumers have increasingly valued businesses that engage with environmental causes, and companies are aware of that. By showing the public their sustainability values, they are more likely to raise financial resources.

Also, small companies usually do it quietly, contrary to large corporations that fill the news and social networks with incredibly minimal practises to reduce waste. Promoting this concept is about a commitment to improving the quality of life for current and future generations with a strong and viable local economy.

The intensive production of large industrial companies has overtaken small producers, who have seen their incomes fall. Moving towards a more local economy ensures a reduction in the ecological footprint and more sustainable management of energy resources.

As direct relations between producers and consumers become less common, alienation flourishes. While food production aims to feed people, workers do not see that connection, and customers are separated from their production.

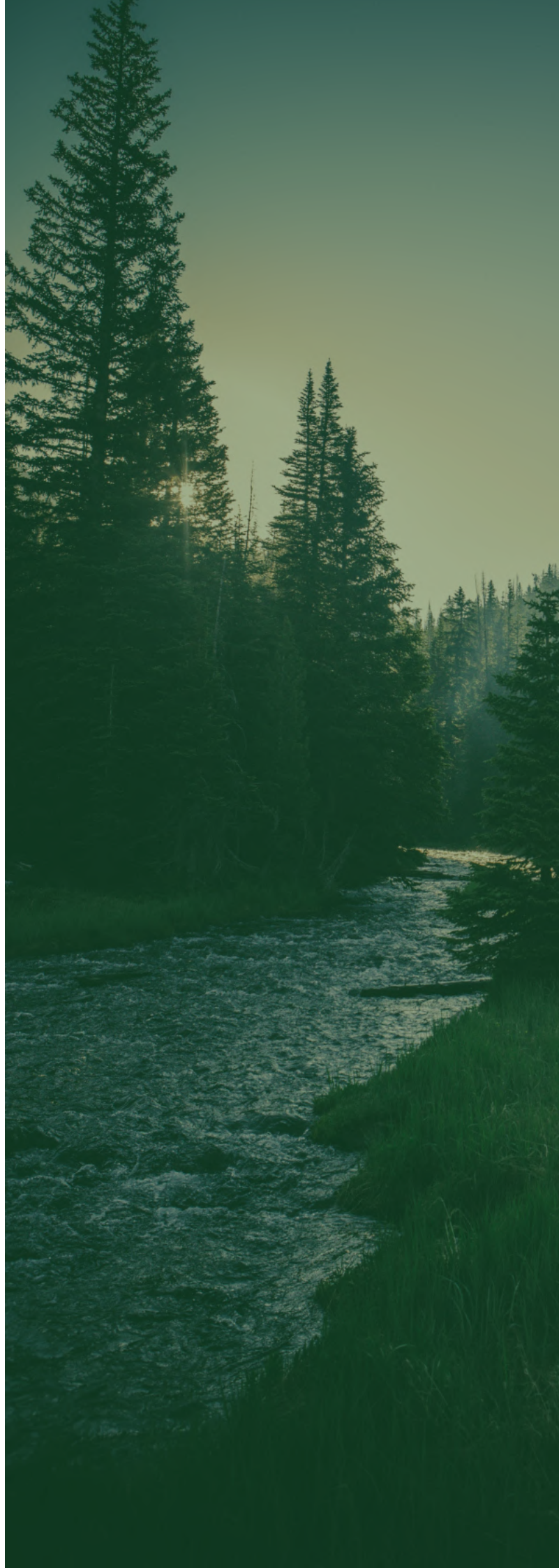
This trend affects everyone and their future. A more balanced and ecological production process by adopting new technologies and production systems to discover sustainable activities is essential in the fight against consumerism.

As consumers pay attention to social and environmental issues, they change their habits and consume local products motivated by quality instead of a commodity.

Economic incentives such as improving farmers' and other first-level producers, combined with the environmental motivation to maintain the landscape and protect the world, are necessary to save the planet.

If customers choose to keep consuming local, ethically sourced products, there will be an improvement in everyone's wellbeing. While automation and mass production are more convenient and cheaper in the short term, eventually, the price will be significantly higher.

What's more, as a consumer, you have full transparency about where your product is coming from and the exact impact it has had on the planet. This is precisely why we need to support local.



WHAT'S ON THIS FEBRUARY?

By Roisin Carter

Eager to get immersed in climate knowledge? We've searched high and low for some of the best online climate change events to fill up your calendar this February.

Monday 14th February 17:00 - 18:45

Twilight Talks - Sustainable Building: Clay Blocks (Online)

Twilight talks are hosted by The Green Register; an organisation focused on training those in the construction industry to build better, more climate-friendly homes. This month's online training focuses on building with lower carbon materials.

While aimed towards those in the industry, Twilight Talks are informal and relaxed, so if you're thinking of building your own home or just love flexing your sustainable building material knowledge, this session could be for you.

You can register at: [The Green Register](#)

Tuesday 22nd February, 10.00 - 11.45

Applying Behaviour Change Techniques To The Climate Emergency, Sustainable Travel and Health Inequalities (Webinar)

This is a government-funded webinar aimed at those working within government, charities, and senior executives, but it's free for all to attend. Providing insights on how behavioural changes can improve climate response within companies and communities. The webinar will also address litter reduction and encourage active travel such as walking and cycling.

You can reserve your place at: [LGA Events](#)

Various dates in February

Spring into action with Plantlife (Via Zoom)

For those of you with green fingers, it's worth jumping into one of Plantlife's many courses throughout February as part of their Spring into Action digital event series. Plantlife's focus is on protecting our local wildlife.

They cover topics such as storytelling, plant identification, listening to nature, and growing your own earth-saving greenery. This series offers a chance to learn more about the nature around you.

You can view the full programme and book your place here: [Plantlife](#)

Available from 1st February onwards

Future Food: Sustainable Food Systems for the 21st Century - Online

If your new year's resolution is to eat healthier, then where better to start than learning about food that is healthier for the planet. The University of Exeter is offering this online course which will explore how different elements of our food systems impact our climate.

Working through industrial concerns such as how food production impacts the environment to how we can re-evaluate our view of food as a commodity. This course also addresses how sustainability ties into our diets and food choices.

You can find further information on the course here: [Future Learn](#)

21st February to 6th March 2022

Fairtrade Fortnight (Online)

Fairtrade is responsible for certifying products to show that they are ethically produced and of high quality. Fairtrade prioritises sustainability and environmental protection as part of their work.

During Fairtrade Fortnight, the focus will be on how we can raise our voices to make sure the promises for next year's climate summit are turned into action. Due to the ongoing pandemic, many events for this year's festival will be online, including quizzes, expert panels, and online coffee mornings.

Full programme and how to get involved can be found at: [Fairtrade Fortnight](#)

A woman with long brown hair, eyes closed, stands on a light-colored, textured rock formation. She is wearing a light green, long-sleeved, belted dress with a subtle grid pattern. The dress is tied at the waist and has a flowing skirt. The background is a clear, deep blue sky and a dark blue ocean. The lighting is soft, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

FASHION



THE 10 MOST UNSUSTAINABLE FASHION BRANDS IN THE WORLD

By Ugne Aksiutovaite

More people are becoming aware of fast fashion's detrimental impact on the environment. As a result, sustainable and up-cycled clothing is the best alternative for making more environmentally and economically responsible fashion choices.

However, sustainable fashion has found itself amid the culture of trends and is quickly becoming a buzzword. Many fast fashion brands are trying to capitalise on this while not actually putting in the work. Unfortunately, more often than not, it is just another case of greenwashing.

Continue reading to find out which fashion brands are the most problematic for the environment.

SHEIN

Shein is one of the newest clothing brands and rose to success due to social media. This Chinese brand has over 20 million followers on Instagram and adds around 500 new products to its website every day for ridiculously low prices.

The cheap clothes that are updated daily add to the throw-away culture that fast fashion is promoting, which comes at the cost of the environment.

There is very little information about where the products are made, and Shein is very opaque about its supply chain.

The brand has commented on this issue to assure its customers that they do not engage in child labour or forced labour and offer their employees above-average wages. However, this doesn't really add up when you consider the price point of their products.

Watch video [here](#).

PRIMARK

This Irish company has become one of the biggest retailers in Europe. The company claims to donate unsold clothing to charities. It is supposedly a member of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, which assesses environmental and social sustainability throughout the supply chain. However, they lack a great deal of transparency when it comes to the locations of their factories.

This has been a growing concern among customers as they have discovered SOS messages sewed into their clothing, written by Chinese inmates working in garment factories.

These inmates claimed to be working 15 hours a day and were subjected to inhumane labour practices.

H&M

H&M is a Swedish brand and the second-largest fashion retailer in the world. While the brand claims to be implementing sustainable practices, it is infamous for creating horrible working conditions for its employees. The brand has made minimal progress in eliminating harmful chemicals like PFC's, phthalates, and APs/APEOs from its products. In addition, they supposedly run a textile programme to recycle unsold and used clothing.

However, the problem here is that it is simply another greenwashing tactic as only 35% of their clothing actually gets recycled.

The rest is burned. H&M has continued to fail to pay over 800,000 of its workers a living wage and turns a blind eye to claims of sexual abuse, violence, and inhumane labour practices.

boohoo

This British fashion retailer has experienced exponential growth in the past decade. Unfortunately, it is another fashion company lacking in transparency. Its factory lists and purchasing practices remain undisclosed. An investigation by The Sunday Times found that workers in a Leicester factory were making as little as £3.50 per hour, which is far below the national minimum wage.

The Environmental Audit Committee published a report that named Boohoo one of the least sustainable fashion brands because of its cheap and low-quality clothing.

ZARA

This Spanish brand is similar to H&M in its claims of sustainable practices and fair treatment of its employees. Zara also supposedly has a textile recycling programme and claims it uses recycled packaging. However, they are not entirely transparent about the number of resources that go into their products.

What's more, similarly to H&M, it is unclear as to how much of the clothing actually gets recycled. The company has revealed a list of suppliers but not for its entire supply chain. It is known that the company does not pay its garment workers living wages, and secret messages have also been found within their clothes.

MISSGUIDED

Missguided is a British fashion retailer that openly markets itself as fast fashion. They add 1000 new styles a week. By doing this, the brand is promoting over-consumption, which adds to massive textile waste each year.

Like Boohoo, Missguided was named one of the least sustainable brands in the UK. It is unknown if their workers are paid living wages.

URBAN OUTFITTERS

This fashion retailer has been around longer than its counterparts. It was founded more than 50 years ago and is one of America's biggest brands. They claim to have LED lighting in their stores and solar panels in their distribution centres.

Still, they don't disclose any specific information about what they are doing to help the environment. Customers do not have access to information about their suppliers, and there is no evidence that their workers are paid fairly.



VICTORIA'S SECRET

This famous American lingerie brand signed the Greenpeace "Detox my Fashion" campaign to eliminate harmful chemicals from its products by 2020. However, it is still unknown if they have reached their target, meaning this could be another greenwashing tactic.

Most of their clothing is made from unsustainable materials. Official labour standards do not verify their supply chain, and they have been accused of using child labour in the past.

T O P S H O P

The business model of this fashion retailer in itself is unsustainable and unethical. They produce low-quality cheap clothing and promote over-consumption and trends. Topshop has started a vegan shoe collection and a clothing line using sustainable materials. However, there is no proof or certifications to show that they are actually using sustainable materials.

The brand also hasn't set any targets to reduce greenhouse emissions or hazardous chemicals in its products. Some of the staff that worked in Topshop stores reported that they had not been paid living wages, but their concerns were met with bullying and victimisation, and nothing was done to rectify the situation.

FASHION NOVA

This American retailer is one of the most searched fashion brands on the internet. However, it is also one of the most opaque, scoring 0% in the Fashion Transparency Index 2021. Fashion Nova releases around 600 new products each week and promotes the idea of hyperconsumption.

Most of their clothes are made from unsustainable synthetic materials, such as polyester, acrylic, and nylon. Their factories in Los Angeles have been accused of paying their staff as little as \$2.77 per hour.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Anyone who wants to become more sustainable in their fashion choices should remember that many popular brands will try to implement sustainable and environmentally friendly practices to appeal to a bigger market.

However, many factors need to be considered before a brand can be named sustainable.

These include their greenhouse emissions, supply chains, products and materials used, their ethical practices regarding fair wages, and the working conditions they provide.

A sure way to be more sustainable is to invest in more expensive and high-quality clothing that will last. It is also a good idea to seek out second-hand and upcycled clothing from reselling platforms like Depop, ThredUp, and Tradesym.

Charity shops and thrift stores have a wide range of unique and everyday clothing items to choose from. What's more, your money goes to causes and people in need.

Sustainability is about making things last and getting long-lasting use out of items for many years and even generations. It is also not just about caring for the planet but all living on it.



A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white long-sleeved top and white wide-leg trousers, stands on a rocky shore. Her arms are raised high in the air, palms facing forward. She is looking out towards the ocean. The background shows a calm sea with gentle waves, a distant shoreline with trees, and a bright, clear sky. The overall mood is peaceful and uplifting. The text "MENTAL HEALTH" is overlaid in the center of the image.

MENTAL HEALTH



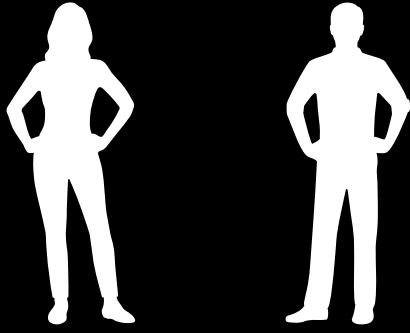
LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT

By Ugne Aksiutovaite

Domestic violence defines a pattern of behaviour within a relationship that is used to maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Sexual and physical abuse always provoke strong reactions, but many other forms of abuse can go unnoticed.

Sometimes the victim may not even realise that they are being abused because they have been manipulated to believe they deserve it or that the patterns in their relationship are normal. Domestic abuse can be perpetuated by a partner, child, or any person who has a close relationship or lives with the victim. In this blog, we are going to delve into the subtle forms of domestic violence that no one seems to acknowledge.

Emotional abuse is a strong tool of intimidation and manipulation of the victim. This happens when the abuser constantly puts down their partner and makes them feel insecure about themselves.



It includes name-calling, playing mind games, and humiliation. If the victim tries to fight back, they will be made to feel like they have been acting crazy or feel ashamed and burdened with feelings of guilt. It can be done very subtly so that others may not even notice the abuse. It is a truly insidious form of abuse that can completely wear down the victim's self-esteem and mental health.

Economic abuse is a way of keeping the victim dependent on their abuser, where they may feel trapped within the relationship because of their lack of self-sufficiency. The abuser may restrict, exploit or sabotage their victim's access to money and other resources.

This includes preventing their partner from getting or holding down a job, which then leaves the victim having to ask for money or an allowance of some kind. It can also mean that the abuser takes their partner's money. It can be very difficult and intimidating to try and break free and go out into a world where money is needed for everything. It may seem even more difficult if the person feels like they are incapable of providing for themselves.

Isolation is another more subtle form of abuse, which plays a major role in domestic violence cases. It is a psychological tactic that isolates the victim from their friends and loved ones who may otherwise be able to notice the destructive patterns within the abusive relationship.

Isolation occurs when the abuser has total control over their victim's social activities and interactions. The victim may have to always report their whereabouts to their abuser. They may also be threatened by the abuser, who claims they will cause harm to their loved ones or ruin their reputation. When the victim finds themselves in a completely isolated environment with their abuser, it may become tough to see themselves outside of that relationship.

Male privilege may also be used by male abusers to reinforce the position of power they are viewed to have. However, the victim is not necessarily always a woman. Sometimes the abuser will turn their victim into a submissive servant, where the abuser acts like the king of the castle and makes all the big decisions. They single-handedly define and enforce the roles within that particular relationship.

Coercion and threats are used to obtain control through making and/or carrying out threats that hurt their victim. The abuser may also threaten to leave their partner, or they may threaten to commit suicide or report the victim if they leave instead. The victim is usually left feeling cornered, carrying the weight of these proposed consequences of their actions. They may end up dropping any charges and staying with their abuser in fear of what could happen if they leave.

Domestic abuse covers a wide range of psychological tactics, as well as coercive control and sexual and physical abuse. It is important to acknowledge all the different types of abuse and bring them up for discussion more often. People may not be aware that what they are experiencing is considered abuse because emotional and coercive control is often used to manipulate them into thinking that they deserve to be treated that way. We need to look after ourselves and know when to ask for help and support.

Please share this article as it may help someone realise they are in an abusive relationship if these above-mentioned issues apply to them.

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR STRESS AND ANXIETY

By Amour Setter

As a long-term anxiety sufferer, I feel like I've tried everything on the market to help me manage my anxiety. At high-stress points in my life, I felt compelled to resort to pharmaceutical drugs prescribed by doctors but always stopped taking them due to their unpleasant side effects.

Lately, I've been experimenting with CBD oil, valerian root and lavender essential oil and I seem to be having good results. If you suffer from anxiety you'll know how quickly it can get out of control. Something triggers you, you feel anxious, your body tenses, you move to high alert and then it's downhill from there. Racing heart, sweaty palms, dry mouth, trembles and if you're as unlucky as me then dizziness and nausea are sure to follow.

It goes without saying that a healthy, balanced diet, regular exercise and a healthy sleep routine are vitally important to help you manage your anxiety. But what if you're already doing all of that and your anxiety is still out of control? Reaching for a tranquiliser every time you have an anxiety attack isn't recommended, especially considering how highly addictive these pharmaceuticals are. Not to mention that they do not mix well with other pharmaceuticals and can cause medical issues over the long term.

According to the University of Michigan Health, Valerian is used for relieving the symptoms of anxiety, depression and insomnia. With very few known side effects, this herb seems to be tolerated well and is often combined with other herbs such as passionflower, lemon balm and kava. Sold as an over-the-counter herbal supplement in pharmacies and health stores, it's a common anxiety "helper". I definitely noticed an improvement in my sleep patterns after I started taking this supplement. If I happen to forget my nightly dose, I definitely wake up a few times during the night. In general, this herbal supplement seems to help me have a deeper sleep.



Cannabidiol (CBD) is a natural compound derived directly from the hemp plant that may help treat anxiety disorders and other conditions, according to a recent article in Medical News Today. Not only is it being used to treat anxiety, but studies suggest that the product can be beneficial for epilepsy, PMT, Opioid addiction and more. Don't be put off by the price as one needs only a tiny amount for therapeutic effect. I've taken "shots" of the oil mixed in some water when I felt an anxiety attack coming on and it minimised the severity of the attack within minutes.

My other go-to natural anxiety remedy is lavender essential oil. You might have heard your grandmother say that lavender under your pillow at night would make you sleep better, and she was right. Lavender essential oil helps to relax the body and mind while also being able to treat several other issues like PMT, fungal infections, allergies, and insomnia to mention a few. An aromatherapy burner is a great investment as it allows the oil to be conveniently distributed through the air while making the room smell wonderful. You could also try adding a few drops to your daily bath or mixing it into your organic massage oil where it will be quickly absorbed into your body.

It goes without saying that you should always buy organic products and try to shop for them locally to keep your carbon footprint low. If you cannot find them at your local health store or pharmacy and must buy them on Amazon, make sure you are getting them from suppliers who are as close to home as possible.

It's worth mentioning that anxiety can stem from a number of factors, including past traumas, a medical condition, previous abuse, etc. So visit your medical practitioner if anxiety is becoming a problem for you. He or she may recommend that you see a mental health practitioner to help you uncover what is driving the anxiety. Learning what your triggers are and what effective coping skills you can use can make all the difference.

RE-EDUCATING YOUR BREATHING FOR ENHANCED MENTAL WELLNESS

By Bronagh Loughlin

BREATHING IS SOMETHING WE DO NATURALLY AND WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

BUT DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE BREATHING TECHNIQUES THAT CAN HELP CALM YOUR MIND AND MINIMIZE YOUR STRESS LEVELS?



As the Founder of The Oxygen Advantage, Patrick McKeown has helped people across the globe improve their breathing techniques to enhance their physical and mental wellness. Like many people today who increasingly struggle with issues such as anxiety and sleep difficulties, breathing guru Patrick shares with us some exercises you can incorporate into your everyday life to alleviate these issues.

Firstly, The Oxygen Advantage method teaches you to adjust to nasal breathing as opposed to mouth breathing. The reason for this is that nasal breathing has many benefits and mouth breathing can act as a barrier to many health ailments. To give a brief overview, nasal breathing increases oxygen uptake and circulation, humidifies and warms the air you breathe in, improves lung volume, slows down your breathing and encourages your diaphragm to work more efficiently.

How does this relate to anxiety and sleep issues you may ask? When it comes to sleep issues like insomnia, sleep apnea and snoring, mouth breathing is not particularly helpful. In fact, it actually can make these issues a lot worse. This kind of breathing does not appropriately relax the body or a racing mind. However, this is essential in order to rest and recharge your batteries.

What's more, breathing through your mouth causes you to breathe hard and faster, putting more strain on your body. While you are asleep or in an anxious mode, your body enters fight or flight and you either awaken abruptly from sleep or find yourself panicking further. In the case of insomnia, this kind of enhanced anxiety and panic presents an additional barrier to achieving deep sleep, which is absolutely essential for the human body. With snoring, you will also find yourself awakening during the night abruptly and disturbed.

In addition to this, when you wake up in the morning after a night of mouth breathing, you will likely find your mouth dry and not feel adequately refreshed and ready to take on the day. As well as these physical symptoms, your mind and brain are likely to be impacted too, with focus and concentration becoming a challenge.

However, by simply switching to nasal breathing, you can calm yourself down from an anxious state and allow your body and mind to enter relaxation. With sleep, nasal breathing will enable you to achieve a deep sleep that will recharge you and leave you feeling more energised in the morning.

Sold yet? Below are some breathing exercises you can begin to incorporate into your daily routine to alleviate these problems and enhance your mental wellbeing. If you want to get a good quality of sleep without interruptions throughout the night, you want to stimulate the vagus nerve as this is what counteracts that fight-or-flight response that makes the body feel under threat, causing you to awaken.

For starters, try down-regulating before you go to sleep. You might be wondering what this means. Well, essentially the last 10 minutes before you go to bed at night should be devoted to switching off. A racing mind can impair sleep quality greatly so it is essential to learn how to switch off. Try the below exercise to do exactly that and achieve optimal sleep.

You can do this exercise when you are watching TV or whatever suits you best. To start, place one hand on your chest and one on your naval and tune in to your breathing patterns. You should be aware of the slightly colder air entering your nostrils and the warmer air as it exits the nostrils.

As you feel this airflow entering and exiting your nose, gently begin to soften the speed of your breathing. Slow down the speed of the breath to the point that your breath into the nose is calm, quiet and still. At the top of the breath, bring a total feeling of relaxation to your body so that you are having a relaxed and gentle breath out.



When you need to breathe again, take a very slow, light breath in. You should hardly be able to feel your breath or hear it at this point. Your exhalation should be slow and prolonged about one and a half times longer than the inhalation.

You should feel all the air just leaving the body effortlessly. The main objective of this exercise is to breathe less air and this means you increase carbon dioxide in the blood which gives you a sensation that you would like to take in more air.

If you feel this air hunger, you are doing the exercise correctly. This is precisely what down-regulating is - breathing less air 10 minutes before sleep so our body and mind can enter relaxation and prevent our breathing from putting much strain on the body.

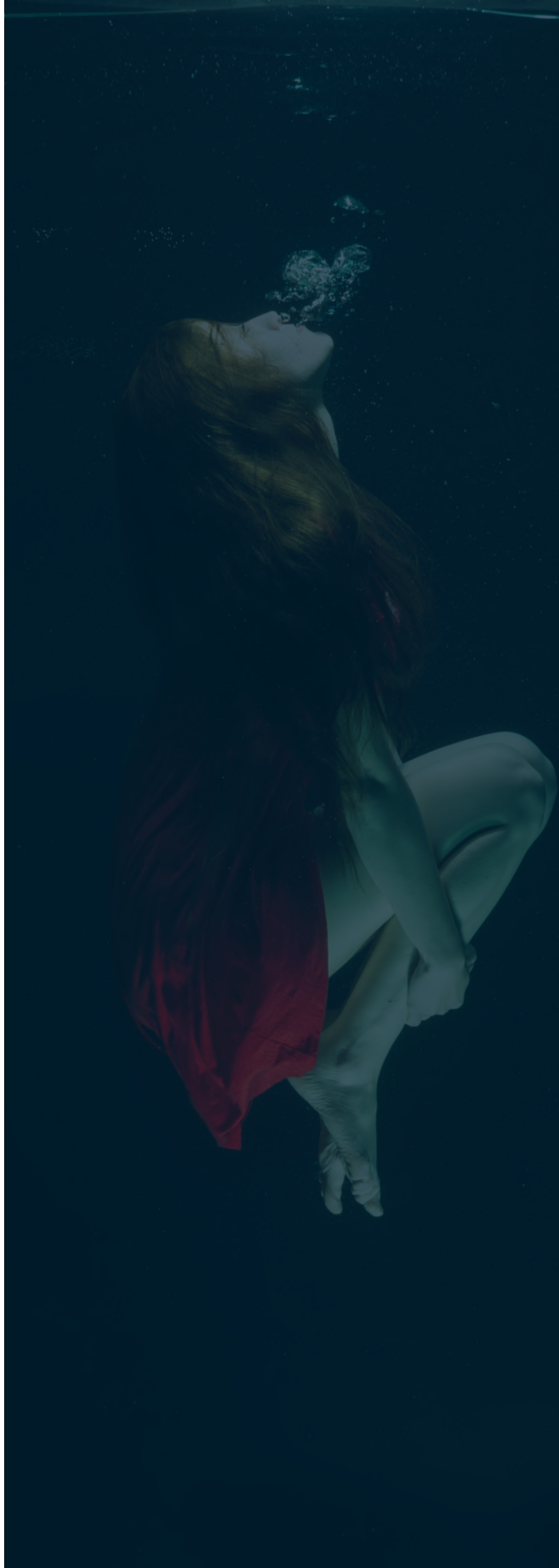
Another sign you are doing it correctly is that you have increased watery saliva in the mouth which means you are stimulating the vagus nerve. Remember to keep bringing your attention back to your breathing and softening it to achieve this air hunger.

The above exercise should see you achieving deep sleep that enables your body to be appropriately recharged so you awaken feeling refreshed the next day.

Remember to breathe through your nose, light and slow. If you struggle with breathing through your nose during the day and would like some extra support as you go about your daily routine and during sleep, you can get tools such as Myotape which restricts the muscles, helping to re-educate your breathing.

To find out more about this breathing technique, visit The Oxygen Advantage.

<https://oxygenadvantage.com/>



FOOD



... it
... If this is
... then it's perfect.
If not, arm yourself with a paper
towel and be ready to wipe.

In the photo of the Raspberry & Vanilla Lollipops, the ice cream was poured directly into the glasses after being made, and it was left to freeze until solid. When the shot glasses came out of the freezer, they were frosty.

These Raspberry & Vanilla Lollipops are still in shot glasses, showing frost, to indicate they were frozen.
(f5, ISO 125, 100mm, Macro L)

For the photo of Pineapple Sorbe because the art director had detected a frosted or dewy look. Yet I still

TRANSFORMING OUR FOOD SYSTEM TO ENSURE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

By Bronagh Loughlin

Our environment and ecology have become an area of concern for us over the last number of decades. The current farming methodologies we use are not sustainable and they have a big impact on the overall ecology and biodiversity of an area.

Alongside this, they have a huge impact on human and animal health. There are numerous examples of unsustainable techniques used in modern agriculture: the use of chemicals and manufactured fertilizers, growing genetically modified and monoculture crops, overproduction and food waste.

In addition, investment in global agriculture corporations rather than local farmers, natural vegetation clearing, raising animals and plants separately as opposed to raising them in a carefully managed agriculture system and finally, wasting water and the use of non-renewable sources of energy.

It is crystal clear that the farming industry needs to update and make their methods more sustainable. Sustainable farming or sustainable agriculture means using farming practices that keep the ecological cycles in mind.

Sustainable farming is sensitive toward the microorganisms and their impacts on the wider environment. This kind of farming is all about farming ecologically by promoting methods and practices that are economically viable, environmentally sound and protect public health.

Sustainable farming draws and learns from organic farming. Not only does this method of farming focus on the economic aspect of farming but it also focuses on the use of non-renewable factors in the process in both a thoughtful and effective way. This is great news because this contributes to the growth of nutritious and healthy food all the while improving the standard of living for the farmer.



There are many benefits to sustainable farming. To name a few: environmental preservation, economic profitability, the protection of public health, social and economic equity and finally, it is the most efficient use of non-renewable resources.

Let's talk about sustainable farming methodologies. The first methodology for sustainable farming is the use of renewable energy sources. In other words, the use of solar, hydro-power or wind farms which are ecologically friendly.

Farmers can make use of solar panels to store solar energy and also use it for electric fencing and the running of pumps and heaters. In addition, running river water can also be a source of hydroelectric power and can be used to run a variety of machines on a farm.

Similarly, farmers can make use of geothermal heat pumps to dig beneath the earth and they can take advantage of the earth's heat. The next methodology for sustainable farming is integrated pest management.

In other words, this means the combination of pest control techniques for identifying and observing pests in the initial stages. Not all pests are harmful and as a result, if they are not harmful, it makes more sense to allow them to co-exist with the crop rather than eliminating them.

What works best when removing specific pests is targeted spraying. This not only helps to remove the pests on the selected areas but it will also help to protect other wildlife from being affected.

A key to sustainable farming is natural pest eliminators. In other words, bats, birds and insects work as natural pest eliminators. Farmers can build shelters to encourage those eliminators to stay close.



Ladybirds, beetles, green lacewing larvae and fly parasites all feed on pests. These pest eliminators are available to buy in bulk from pest control shops or farming supply stores. From there, farmers can buy them and release them on or around the crops and allow them to make the farm their home.

Next on the list to becoming a sustainable farmer is crop rotation. This is a tried and tested method that has been used since ancient farming practices. It has proven to keep soil healthy and nutritious.



There is a logical explanation to crop rotation, the crops are picked in a pattern so that the crops planted this season replenish the nutrients and salts from the soil that were absorbed by the previous crop cycle.

Polyculture farming is another essential step to making your farming practices more sustainable. Polyculture farming involves growing multiple crop species in one area. The species generally complement each other and greater diversity of products can be produced at one plot while fully using the available resources.

High biodiversity makes the system much more resilient to weather fluctuations and promotes a balanced diet and applies natural mechanisms for preservation of soil fertility.

The next methodology sustainable farmers embrace is permaculture. In other words, permaculture is a food production system that is designed to reduce waste and increase production efficiency. The focus here is to use perennial crops such as fruit trees, nut trees and shrubs that all function together in a designed system that mimics how plants in a natural ecosystem would function.

Permaculture design techniques include growing grain without tillage, herb and plant spirals, hugelkultur garden beds, keyhole and mandala gardens, sheet mulching, each plant serving multiple purposes and creating swales on contour to hold water high on the landscape.



There are many reasons to adopt sustainable farming methodologies. One reason is that biodiversity is no joke. The number of pollinating insects has decreased significantly worldwide, which exacerbates an already insecure food supply.

An EU-funded research project reports that pollination services provided by insects are worth €153 billion a year globally, accounting for 9.5% of the total value of the world's entire agriculture food production.

A project was created in Europe called Operation Pollinator which aims to provide essential habitat and food sources for pollinating insects across Europe. The project aims to increase the number of pollinating insects in a means to protect biodiversity and improve crop yields and crop quality.

This project is currently being run in France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the UK. It utilises scientific research findings as a means to develop site-specific ways of creating habitats alongside the working farming environment.

Alongside this, careful site planning and management can significantly decrease soil erosion and help to protect valuable water resources from soil and nutrient degradation. The project illustrates how farmers have an essential role to play in maintaining natural habitats and other ecosystem services to protect biodiversity.

The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) is aiming to align agriculture with the European Green Deal, which sets out to create an inclusive, competitive and environmentally friendly future for Europe.

Similarly to biodiversity, farmers have an essential role to play in several of the Green Deal's key policy areas. However, farmers are not the only ones having to take on this role, agri-food businesses, foresters and rural communities also have an essential role to play here.

The policy areas where they will have an essential role are: building a sustainable food system through the Farm to Fork strategy and adding to the new biodiversity strategy by protecting and enhancing the variety of plants and animals in the rural ecosystem.

In addition, they will need to contribute to the climate action of the Green Deal to achieve the goal of net-zero emissions in the EU by 2050. They also need to supported the updated forestry strategy which was announced in 2020 and aims to maintain healthy forests.

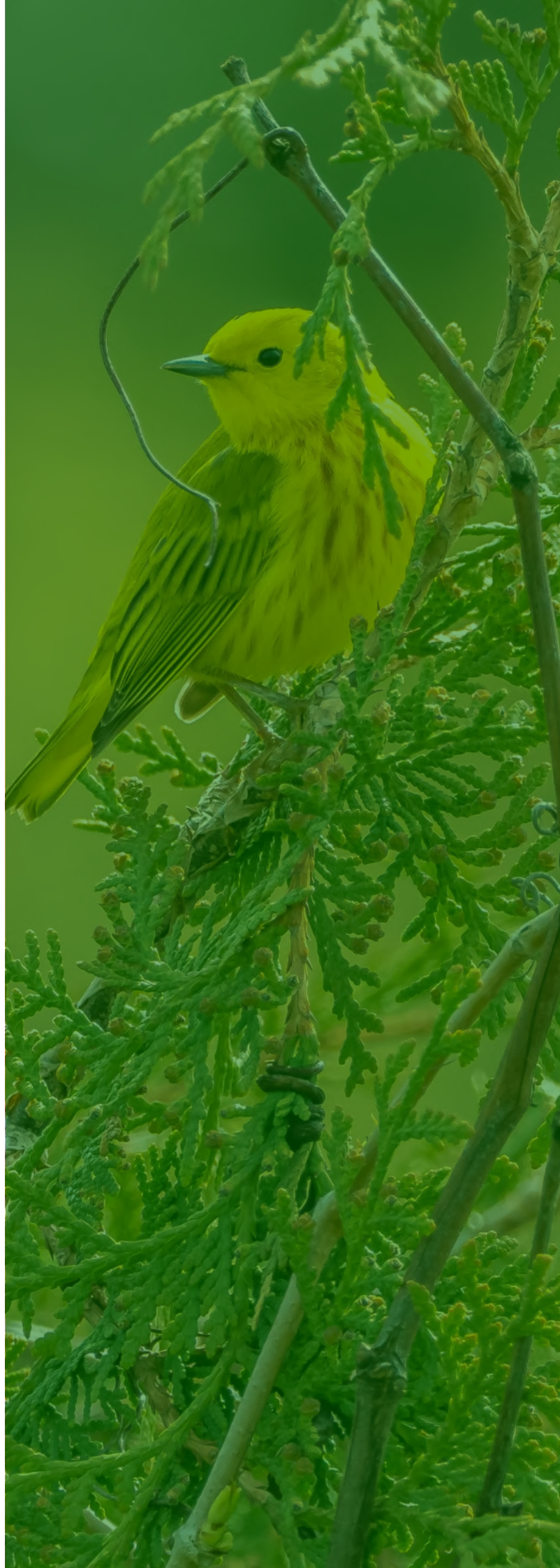
Finally, they will need to contribute to a zero-pollution action plan, which was set out in 2021 by safeguarding natural resources such as water, air and soil. It's not only farmers who need to update their methodologies and farming practises in order to become more sustainable.

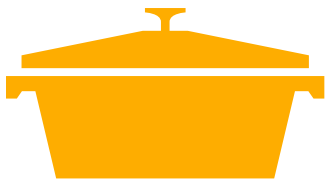
Consumers and individuals can get involved too by making changes that will encourage sustainable farming practises. Individuals can employ sustainable farming methods by purchasing from local farmers and buying organic fruit and vegetables.

Additionally your involvement can include purchasing fruit and vegetables that are in season, growing your own vegetables in your garden, window panes or balconies and by setting up a local community garden.

We need to embrace the sustainable farming methodologies because the current methodologies are not sustainable and they have great impacts on ecology, biodiversity and the health of humans and animals.

We need to welcome sustainable farming methodologies with open arms rather than using methodologies that have so many negative impacts on our world. We don't have much time, either we make small changes or we allow our earth to be destroyed by climate change.





One of the simple pleasures in life can be cooking for your loved ones, whether it's for your partner, your friends, or your family. Sharing a meal with your loved ones is an essential part of daily life, and sometimes if your day has been hectic, it's the only time you can connect, slow down and catch up with each other.

With the 'new normal' Covid-19 enforced on us, most things happen at home now. The house has become the entertainment centre, the restaurant, the gym, the education, and the spiritual realm. It can be challenging whipping up culinary dishes that are simple yet fun and not your usual go-to meals. So I set out to change things up a little in the kitchen.


I had this thought of mastering some authentic Italian dishes and building up my repertoire of classic dishes such as osso buco, homemade pasta, and perhaps an Italian dessert or two such as Tiramisu. My meal preparations are founded on one central philosophy: good ingredients. Think of fresh, organic, and locally sourced ingredients. If you have a reputable source, then everything becomes easy.

Before you even begin cooking, it is essential to have a well-stocked pantry that will allow you to put a nutritious meal together in minutes, especially if you haven't had a chance to go shopping after a busy day. In Austria, our winters are pretty cold, so I need to make sure I have enough in the pantry to create the ultimate comfort meal to enjoy on those long slow evenings. Organic, whole grain, and non-meat foods high in nutrients, fibre, and complex carbohydrates are essential in our house. Organic flour, rice, dried beans, chickpeas, lentils, and a few cans of tomato are the basics that I keep in the cupboard.



LESLIE'S ITALIAN WINTER WARMER RECIPE

By Leslie Maliepaard



In fact, instead of cans of tomatoes, our veggie garden produced hundreds of succulent tomatoes in summer this year. I froze the excess to use them in the wintertime. Perfect for a warm roasted tomato soup that warms the soul from the inside out.

I like to keep the kitchen stocked with fresh foods that are nutrient-rich, low in sugar, sodium, starches, and bad fats. I am never without organic garlic, potatoes, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, onions, mature cheddar and parmesan cheese, and some pickled food like gherkins, peppers, and olives.

I try to buy seasonal and locally sourced fresh foods where I can, but sometimes it's not that easy. If I need something that isn't seasonal, I often go to the frozen food sections to find locally produced frozen bags of spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, peas, and mushrooms.

I love Italian food, so today, I want to share my favourite meal to make from scratch—Butternut Ravioli, which I learned to make in Tuscany with my girlfriends a few years back. We had an amazing time as the local chef taught us the basics of this simple Italian dish.

This meal does require a little more preparation, but actually, it's not that onerous on your time. But if you feel you can't manage it all in an evening, you can always make your ravioli the day before and keep them covered on a tray in the fridge.

INGREDIENTS

This recipe serves 4

BUTTERNUT FILLING

- 2 cups butternut squash (410 g), peeled and chopped
- ½ onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled
- 1 TB olive oil
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- ½ tsp of cinnamon (I use cinnamon instead of 1 TB of brown sugar)
- 2 oz grated parmesan cheese (55 g)

HOMEMADE PASTA (Preparation time: 30 min, Resting: 1 hour)

- 500 g strong white flour
- 5 eggs
- 1 TB olive oil
- 1 pinch of salt

BROWN BUTTER AND SAGE SAUCE

- 5 TB unsalted butter
- 10 leaves fresh sage (4 tsp of dried sage will also work)
- salt, to taste
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 oz grated parmesan cheese (30 g)

PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Add the diced butternut squash, chopped onion, whole garlic cloves, olive oil, salt, and pepper to a baking sheet, tossing until fully coated.
3. Bake until the squash is golden brown and tender, about 30 minutes.
4. While the squash is in the oven, make the dough.
5. When the squash is finished cooking, add it to the food processor and the cinnamon and Parmesan cheese. Pulse until it becomes smooth. Set aside to chill.
6. Rinse the bowl of the food processor.
7. For the pasta: Add the flour, eggs, olive oil, and salt, and pulse to make the dough in the food processor bowl. Work the dough on a board for 10 minutes using the palm of your hand. Add more olive oil or flour if necessary.
8. When the dough is smooth and shiny, shape into a ball, cover in cling film, and leave to rest at room temperature for between 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.
9. Cut 2½ ounces (65 g) of pasta dough from the ball and roll out into large, wide, thin pasta sheets. I use a pasta machine to flatten the dough, but you can do it by hand using a rolling pin.
10. Lay a sheet over an empty ice cube tray, and press the dough down gently into each hole. I use pasta cutter tools to create the ravioli shapes.
11. Fill each hole with a tablespoon of the butternut squash filling. Place a second sheet on top of the ice cube tray. Press down on all the sides of the portions of ravioli. Flip the ice cup tray over to release the pasta and cut off any excess dough.
12. Separate each ravioli with a knife or cutting tool.
13. Cook the ravioli, 3 or 4 portions at a time in boiling salted water until the ravioli floats and firm up slightly, 2-3 minutes. Scoop out the ravioli and set aside briefly to cook a new batch, or dump out the water and start the brown butter sauce.
14. Melt 3 tablespoons of butter in the pan over medium heat. Add the sage leaves and cook until the butter browns deeply and the sage is fried and crispy. Turn off the heat, add the lemon juice, and season to taste.
15. For more sauce, you can spoon 1 cup of boiling pasta water into the butter sauce and simmer for 2 minutes to reduce the sauce. Add the cooked ravioli to the sauce and toss gently to coat the pasta. Serve the pasta with brown butter sauce.
16. Buon Appetit!
17. Variations: You can replace the squash with a spinach and ricotta filling or ricotta and mild pecorino.



I hope this recipe will inspire you to try something new in the kitchen and that you will find as much fulfillment in cooking this as I have. And remember, if you don't succeed at first, amateurs practice until they get it right.

SUSTAINABLE GIFT GUIDE FOR VALENTINE'S

By Vani Bhardwaj

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and you're likely scouring the web to find something for that someone special, right? If you are an eco-warrior like us, you want to make sure you buy something that does not further harm the planet.

This can be challenging if you don't know the right places to shop. We've compiled a list of sustainable gift ideas below so you can express your love for your significant other while not hurting the planet!

Clothing

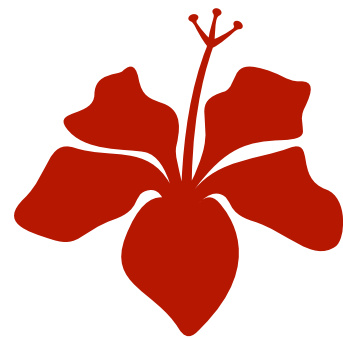
As we all know, fast fashion is wreaking havoc on our planet, but clothing makes a great gift for someone you love. Why not browse [The Planet Calls store](#), where you can find an array of tees and sweatshirts.

All our clothing is [Fair Wear Foundation](#), Certified Organic Cotton grown & produced in ways that do not harm people, animals or the environment & supply chain certified by various independent bodies & standards including GOTS Certified printing techniques which use non-harmful inks & sustainable production methods.

Kitchenware

If your significant other is a food enthusiast, why not treat them to some [reusable coconut shell bowls](#)? These are made from artisans in Bali, Indonesia, and they offer coconut shells a chance at a new life where they can be filled with all sorts of delicious foods. We know what you are thinking, and don't fret, the bottom is flat, so it doesn't go wobbling about.

They are a natural product and come in several different sizes. Beyond being an excellent choice for the environment, they are very aesthetically pleasing. We can already picture the Acai Bowls in these! Beyond bowls, you can also find tonnes of other sustainable kitchenware like bamboo travel utensils.



Reusable Tote Bags

There's nothing cuter and handier than a tote bag. You may be thinking you don't need one but think of all the times you ventured out only to purchase something and were forced to buy a single-use plastic bag. Don't worry, though; if a tote is what you are looking for, we got you.

We have some beautiful organic cotton ones in our online store at [The Planet Calls](#), and with stunning graphics to boot. The tote bags are pretty large, which means the recipient of this gift can use them for groceries, clothing, books, and everything in between. The bags also communicate our message of saving the planet!

Slave-Free Chocolate

Let's face it, when it comes to Valentine's Day and gift buying, we are probably all thinking of chocolate. Unfortunately, while chocolate is a great gift, many chocolate companies engage in unethical labour practices, namely child labour.

Not to worry, though, this doesn't mean you have to give up the delicious treat that is chocolate! [Tony's Choclonely](#) is a chocolate brand committed to ending slavery in the chocolate industry. They have a wide range of flavours - milk chocolate, sea salt and caramel (my personal fave), dark chocolate, almond honey, hazelnut, the list goes on. These chocolate bars make for a perfect slave-free indulgence this Valentine's Day.

Reusable Water Bottles

Despite whether your partner is a pro hiker or runner, it's safe to say everyone could use a good quality water bottle. You can find so many reusable water bottles on the market today, and beyond being incredibly functional, they are very pleasing to the eye.

Some of them, like the [Chilly's water bottles](#), even keep your drinks cold for up to 24 hours and hot for 12. You can find all sizes from 500 ml up to 1 litre.

HOW WILL YOU BE SHARING THE LOVE THIS VALENTINE'S DAY?

We hope this list gave you some inspiration as to what to buy your loved one this Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day isn't just about the gifts, though; remember to get out and do something fun. What's more, buying experiences instead of things is kinder to the planet.

Consider taking your loved one out for a hike to enjoy nature since nature soothes the soul. For all our singletons out there, do remember to get yourself a sustainable gift for some self-love or pop on an organic face mask and watch a film. Remember, as RuPaul says: "If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love somebody else?"





WHY DO YOU THINK I AM NOTHING WITHOUT A PARTNER?

By Sally Brown

I recently received a text message from my sister, whom I don't often speak with as we're not particularly close. It read: "Have you met anyone special yet? You deserve to be happy!"

While she has become a married mother of two, I'm still single, footloose and fancy-free. And quite happy about that, if the truth must be told! But that text message really annoyed me. It suggests that I cannot be happy as a single person and that I must be part of a couple in order to be happy (and acceptable to society). Sadly, this viewpoint seems to be what holds our society together.

I don't have a Tinder dating profile, I'm not putting myself "out there" and not actively looking for a partner either. Been there, done that and I never really had any luck. Could it be because I'm not really "hard-wired" for coupledness? Psychology might suggest that I have unresolved childhood issues (who the hell doesn't?) or that perhaps I'm too difficult to live with. I've had plenty of flatmates over the years to know that the latter is not the case, so I'm finally arriving at the conclusion that I'm just designed to be single. And it appears that so is a large portion of the global population.

According to statistics in the US (2020), 31% of adults are reportedly single. Pew Research Center estimates that by the time today's young adults in the U.S. reach the age of 50, about 25% of them will have been single their whole lives. Not too surprising when you take the average global divorce rate into account. In Europe, the divorce rate varies from country to country, with Luxembourg having the highest divorce rate (88.9%) and Malta having the lowest (13.2%). The average divorce rate in Europe is 42.7%.

We are raised to buy into the fantasy of a big happy family, owning a house with a white picket fence, having two and a half kids and driving the proverbial family sedan. Urgh! Seriously? Life isn't a one-size-fits-all! When you consider how the media influences our lives, think of all the ads you've seen that depict a happy family. Now add to that the dozens of ads for engagement rings, wedding dresses, and baby showers. And houses, family-size cars, and family holidays. The list is endless and the message is clear: get married, have kids. And perhaps that is the reason we exist: to procreate and continue the human race. But then why are there so many single people (and parents) in the world, I wonder?

It's Valentine's Day on the 14th of February, and I'm one of the thousands on this planet that is not celebrating this day with a partner. Does it make me feel bad about myself? In the past, you bet it did! But now I'm happily accepting the fact that I'm different and I'm not necessarily designed to conform to the "couple-norm". I'm realising that it's ok for me to be single and enjoy that status. I don't need to be with someone else in order to feel complete. I don't need to be half of a relationship in order to feel like I matter! I don't need to buy into a cookie-cutter reality that dictates to me what my relationship status should be. Does being single really make me less of a contributing citizen? I pay my taxes like any other working adult.

For all my friends who are currently in relationships, I wish you all a wonderful Valentine's Day. It must be great to be part of a team and know that come what may, the two of you are going to be standing solid and strong. Er. Not quite, Susan! Remember that divorce stat of 42.7% in Europe? If you were to sell me an investment product with the warning that there was a 42.7% chance I'd lose money on the deal, I don't think I'd dive at the opportunity to invest! I mean, would you? Seriously? But hey, enjoy your Valentine's Day, I'd never deny anyone that pleasure.

Some of us prefer to be single, and we do not want to be shamed because of it. I exist, therefore I matter. Regardless of whether or not I'm part of a couple. Thanks, Susan, that will just be one ticket for tonight's show. I'll take a front-row seat.

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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



from
The Planet
Calls team