**Sustainable-Sense: The Common-Sense Methods for Living Sustainably**

In a world where instant gratification reigns supreme, and mindfully living gets put on the backburner, taking the time to go over your environmental impact can be crucial to our planets sustainability. A staggering report (https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/) released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently shed a heavy light on the track our planet is on. The report estimates that by as early as 2040, crisis around the globe could occur regarding food shortages, wildfires, and sea-life. This kind of global crisis can seem daunting to most, and you may be wondering what you can do to help. Aside from raising awareness and being politically engaged with these issues, there are simple everyday things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint. Imagine if everyone on the planet implemented these practices, and it’s not hard to see how we could drastically change the path of our planet for the better:

**1. Buy bulk**

I’m sure you’ve walked by an aisle in your local grocery store and seen their bulk section before, and what most people don’t know is that buying in bulk is good for you – as well as the environment. The most important thing about bulk is buying the staple items you know you’ll use and won’t just take up unneeded space in your pantry, and eventually just get tossed out. You’ll save money, reduce food packaging and your foods chemical exposure, as well as reusing. Reusing means you can use this opportunity to bring your own mason jars, storage containers, or cotton/hemp bags to put the bulk items in. Pro tip: the cotton and hemp bags are easier to manage because they can easily be purchased on Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/purifyou-Reusable-Double-Stitched-Lightweight-See-Through/dp/B00XSHEJ90/ref=sr\_1\_4?keywords=reusable+bulk+bags&qid=1553028039&s=gateway&sr=8-4) and you don’t have to worry about having the cashier weigh it before and deduct the weight of the container.

**2. Composting**

The idea of composting may be a little daunting, especially if you live in the city. However, there are many different websites you can utilize, like this one from the EPA (link: <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>) that will walk you through the essentials. Compost is essentially organic goods that you save that can then be added to soil to help plants grow. Some items that are compostable consist of fruits, vegetables, eggshells, coffee grounds, and paper. If you live in the city and don’t have anywhere to use your compost, you can always drop your compost off at a local farm or city compost center. The benefits of this practice are endless – including enriching soil, reducing the need for chemical-filled fertilizers, and reducing methane emissions.

**3. Bring your own**

This one is pretty simple – get your own everyday items you would need for shopping, eating out, stopping at a coffee shop, etc. This is the #1 easiest way to practice waste management methods. A few items you can bring yourself: reusable bags, containers for food, silverware, glass or metal straws, and water bottles/coffee cups. These items are often times extremely inexpensive and can save you money in the long run – all while reducing the carbon footprint.

**4. Learn more about local waste guidelines**

Learning about your neighborhoods waste guidelines is an essential step in developing the plan to reduce your carbon footprint. For example, Kansas City, MO residents receive services such as weekly trash collection, weekly curbside recycling, leaf and brush drop-off centers, and various recycling drop-off centers. A simple internet search can provide you with acceptable materials for recycling, unacceptable materials (in Kansas City, glass recycling is done separately and often times has to be taken to glass dumpsters).

**5. Support sustainable companies**

This step speaks to the saying “put your money where your mouth is.” If you are looking for new clothing, hygiene, or household items, buying from companies who understand the importance of clean, sustainable products is always a good idea. Some clothing brands include Everlane (everlane.com), Alternative Apparel (www.alternativeapparel.com), and thredUP (www.thredup.com). The desire to switch to sustainable brands stems from the reality that doing so will reduce the amount of clothing discarded to landfills and stray away from the detrimental effects of agro-chemicals that occur in various fibers. Everlane, for example, has a ReNew clothing line that is made up of completely recycled bottles – in one sweatshirt 15 plastic bottles were renewed. To supplement this, buying second-hand is a fantastic way to reuse and not add to the problem of creating waste.

**7. DONATE**

Last but certainly not least is to donate. That’s where websites such as ours come into play. Have you recently had a spring-cleaning session with your house? Implemented the Kon-Marie (www.konmarie.com) method and aren’t sure what to do with your unwanted items? The wrong answer to these questions is to throw them away. You want to enact a mindful practice of letting go of these items, and there’s no better way to do so than to give them away to companies or individuals that have a need for them. Not only will they not end up in landfills, but the items will also make someone’s life better. Utilizing our website to mindfully get rid of your items is the next step to reducing your carbon footprint while living sustainably and in-tune with our planet.

Additional Outreach:

Tweet with this linked article could read:

“Interested in reducing your carbon footprint and living more sustainably? These easy tips can be implemented as soon as today.”

Photograph included with this kind of post on Instagram, blog, or Facebook could consist of a photo of reusable items mentioned in the blog laid out in an aesthetic manner that is minimalistic (I could even take on myself with the items I have at home, on a white backdrop).