



LIVING MORE SUSTAINABLY AND MINDFULLY TO PROTECT AND HONOR OUR SACRED EARTH

Led by Sundance Metelsky, September 12, 2021
WiseWoman Forum



Potomac River, Brookmont, Maryland

Agenda

- Welcome!
- Living Planet
- Building Relationships with the Land and Beings on the Land
- Personal Sustainability Ideas
- Corporate/Government/Business Sustainability Ideas
- Resources

Thank you to the WiseWomen who contributed ideas to this presentation! April Barrett, Brenda Freeman, Dale Miller Hill, Janet Fox, Janet Kane, Janice Derr, Margaret Placentra Johnston, Misha BearWoman, and Rhonda Williford!

With Gratitude, Sundance Metelsky

[Living Planet](#) by Jay Mankita, Performed by Magpie

If all the world were peaceful now, and forever more
Peaceful at the surface, and peaceful at the core
Then all the joy within my heart would be so free to soar
And we're living on a living planet, circling a living star

*CHORUS: I don't know where we're going,
but I know we're going far*

*And we can change the universe by being who we are
And we're living on a living planet, circling a living star...*

If all the world knew justice now, and forever more
Justice at the surface, and justice at the core
Then all the joy within my heart would be so free to soar
And we're living on a living planet, circling a living star...

If all the world knew freedom now, and forever more
Freedom at the surface, and freedom at the core
Then all the joy within my heart would be so free to soar
And we're living on a living planet, circling a living star...

If Mother Earth were honored now, and forever more
Honored at the surface, and honored at the core
Then all the joy within my heart would be so free to soar
And we're living on a living planet, circling a living star
I don't know where we're going, but I know we've gone too far
And we can heal this planet by changing the way we are
Time to heal this living planet...



Spiral Speak by Sam Brown



Rose Quartz and Flowers, Greenbelt, Maryland, April 2021

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LAND

We will spend about 10 minutes connecting with the land where we are, with an invitation to be particularly aware of building relationships and honoring the land. Follow your heart/guidance as you take time outside to connect with All that Is on the land - the flora and fauna, birds, insects, animals, the soil, the trees, the waters, the weathers, stones, gardens, Ancestors of the Land, etc.

- If you wish, say a prayer.
- Go outside if you are able. If not, look out a window to the Land.
- Introduce yourself to the Land and the Beings and let them know you would like to meet them. If you have already met them, let them know you would like to get to know them better.
- Take time to walk mindfully or just stand/sit and listen.
- Notice what you are drawn to and follow that.
- You may have your eyes open or closed.
- Be open to what you see/hear/feel in this process.
- When you are ready to return, thank the Land and Beings for meeting with you.
- When you return, you may want to jot down notes/sketches.

PROTECTING OUR PLANET STARTS WITH YOU



BIKE MORE DRIVE LESS



EDUCATE

When you further your own education, you can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.



Volunteer!

Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed too!



reduce REUSE recycle

Cut down on what you throw away. Follow the three "R's" to conserve natural resources and landfill space.

CONSERVE WATER



The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually end up in the ocean.

choose sustainable



Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.FishWatch.gov.



Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.



Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA

Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also flip the light switch off when you leave the room!



Don't send chemicals into our waterways.

Choose nontoxic chemicals in the home and office.



PLANT A TREE

Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.



PROTECTING OUR PLANET STARTS WITH YOU!

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:



RECYCLE

Recycle what you can to prevent adding waste to landfills.



SKIP THE BOTTLED WATER

Pick a nice reusable water bottle and fill up at water stations instead.



SHOP WISELY

Use reusable shopping bags so you use less plastic.



CONSERVE WATER

Turn off water when you're not using it and make an effort to use less.



SCOOP SMART

Use biodegradable pet waste bags to prevent plastic waste.



HERE'S A BRIGHT IDEA

Use LED bulbs to be more energy efficient AND save money on electricity.



UPGRADE FROM PAPER/PLASTIC

Stop using disposable plates and cups to decrease single-use items that end up in landfills.



FINISH THOSE LEFTOVERS

Before buying more food, use your leftovers (by eating, cooking or composting) to prevent food waste.



TURN IT OFF

Unplug and turn off any devices not in use to save energy. Even standby mode still uses electricity.



TAKE IT DIGITAL

Opt in to paperless billing whenever you can to prevent unnecessary paper waste.

MAKE YOUR PLEDGE AT [JCCDALLAS.ORG/EARTHDAY](https://www.jccdallas.org/earthday)



PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS - 1

New Ideas and Attitudes

- Creativity - find solutions that work, be open to new options
- Re-think consumer practices - consider using thrift shops, having clothing swaps with friends, repairing existing items
- Explore "[Buy Nothing](#)" groups or start one!
- Use [Freecycle](#)
- Shift away from "throw away" culture
- Re-think latest/greatest when purchasing
- Bring mindfulness to purchases; watch out for impulse buying
- Re-think "gift" culture - give experiences or consumables rather than things, or limit number of things to gift
- Consider minimalism/simple living/reducing "stuff"
- Zoom, telecommuting, technology - can reduce driving, not use up personal energy
- Consider the distinction between habitual behaviors / actions / choices and exceptional ones. E.g., habitually use washable dishes & silverware, with allowing occasional use of disposable / consumable ones during exceptional circumstances. (Avoiding "all or nothing" thinking, using a more flexible, adaptable approach).
- Include "repurpose" as an aspect of reuse in reduce-reuse-recycle
- Re-think/reduce travel/travel options



- Remember that WE are part of the environment also. Our energy represents calories consumed from foods, water and nutrients used up by our metabolism, etc. So how much energy we expend is part of the environment balancing equation.

Connect with Nature

- Express gratitude for the beauty of nature
- Notice the nature around you - flora, fauna, all that is
- Get to know your local yard/region flora, fauna, stones, rivers, lakes, animals, trees, etc.

PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS - 2

Food - Growing/Shopping/Cooking/Composting

- Grow your own food/garden if possible
- Check labels on produce to seek out locally-grown items
- Support local farmers/community-supported agriculture (CSA), farmers' markets
- CSA - leave produce you don't want so that someone else can pick it up
- Eat more plant-based meals/consider going vegan (or vegan days)
- When possible, cook in bulk to limit the time/effort/energy to prepare and store food.
- Pack your lunch
- Some foods can be pre-soaked before cooking (e.g., rice) to speed up the time to cook
- Use heat-retaining cooking vessels (such as Corning's Visions ware, cast iron, etc.) and remove the pot from the heat source (stovetop, oven) before the contents are finished cooking. Put it on a trivet and let it finish cooking while it sits.
- Use more energy-efficient methods such as a convection oven, pressure cooker, etc., that take less time and use less energy (electricity, gas, wood).
- Buy in bulk, bring your own containers, at MOMs, co-ops, etc.

- If you want to compost your food but don't have a composter, there are compost bins available at some Whole Foods stores and at MOMs (My Organic Market); you can save your compost in compostable bags in the freezer and take them when ready.

Dining

- At fast food/delivery: Keep napkins, silverware with you and let the server know that you do not need napkins/plasticware/straws and skip or limit the condiments
- At a restaurant: If a server brings "extra" food to your table that you don't want (e.g., chips, bread basket), ask them to remove it before they put it down.

Kitchen

- Use cloth napkins, cloth towels rather than paper products
- [Well Earth Goods](#) - plastic-free household goods and products
- [Reusable Produce Bags](#)
- [Silicone Food Storage Bags](#)
- [Silicone Food Coverings](#)
- [Silicone lids for microwave, etc.](#) (instead of plastic wrap et al)
- [Responsible Products](#) - Compost trash bags and dog waste bags, other products
- Use the reusable grocery bags all the stores sell now

PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS - 3

Home

- Seek sustainable homes/contractors who use sustainable practices when making changes to homes
- Go solar/use wind power if possible
- Turn heat down in winter, only heat room/s you're in
- Turn AC down in summer, only cool room/s you're in or use fans and open windows when possible



Potomac River, Brookmont, Maryland

Bathroom

- [BlueLand Hand Soap](#) - buy the very solid glass bottle once, fill with water, add tablet and it dissolves.
- [Zero Waste Cartel Products](#) - kitchen and bathroom products including shampoo and conditioner bars
- Use more sustainable cosmetics/beauty products
- Take shorter (and cool!) showers; turn off water when lathering up
- Shower/bathe less frequently (as possible)
- Turn off the water when brushing your teeth/washing your face
- Use water that has been used (e.g., for soaking something) for toilet flushing, watering plants (if non-toxic), etc., rather than pouring it down the drain
- Flush only when necessary
- Consider a composting toilet

Laundry

- Hang up clothes to dry
- Wash clothes with cold water
- Consider laundry detergents in sustainable packaging (no pods)
- Use sun and wind to help clean clothing/removing scents - dip and drip
- [Wool Dryer Balls](#) - use instead of fabric softener
- [Earth Breeze Eco Sheets](#) - Environmentally-friendly laundry detergent in sheets in sustainable packaging

PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS - 4

Clothing

- Recycle/reuse clothes and cloths
- Keep old t-shirts and put them in a "rag bag" for washing the car or cleaning up spills
- There are people who work old clothes into quilts. I myself got a "memorial t-shirt quilt" made for my deceased son out of his t-shirts, jeans and bandanna.
- Old clothes can be made into utilitarian things like aprons
- An old skirt or blouse can be fashioned into a scarf
- Animal shelters take old bedding, towels, cloths, etc.

Leisure/Hobbies

- Use audio and digital books and media
- Use the public library for physical books
- Shop at used bookstores
- Bike/run
- Recycle art supplies/art swaps

Gifts

- Be mindful with packaging - with gifts, make your own paper, wrap in cloths or cloth bags, wrap in newspaper, etc.



Greenbelt, Maryland

Gardening

- Grow native plants, remove invasives
- Bring a cutting, share plants and seeds with others and avoid buying a new plant
- Create a water well around a tree - planted in a depression - to collect water
- Create a garden bed with a moat to collect water - catchment to catch water
- Use a rain barrel to collect water and then water your plants with it
- Start a rain garden

CORPORATE/GOVERNMENT/BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY IDEAS

- Form a "Green Team" at your workplace to engage in ongoing sustainability efforts
- Provide well-labeled and easily accessible recycling bins in meeting rooms
- Green roof - for new and existing buildings
- Education effort to turn off heating/cooling units while out, particularly on vacation/long weekends, etc.
- Proactively unscrew bulbs/turn off lights in office if you're near a window
- Turn off lights, laptops, printers (or sleep mode), etc., when not in use
- See if computer settings can be changed/set to reduce the amount of time before computers go to sleep.
- Bring your own mug/cup/bottle/silverware to the cafeteria
- Alternatives to plastic straws (paper, reusable, etc.)
- More plants by windows
- Initiate corporate composting program
- Lunch and learn about recycling, reducing plastic use, etc.
- Add refillable water stations
- Use apps for conferences/agendas
- Change default printer setting to widen margins and print double-sided or skip printing completely
- Set faxes to automatically go to someone's email inbox, rather than get printed out
- Purchase "greener" office supplies (e.g. stapless staplers, refillable pens, paper with a high-recycle content)
- Set up a closet / shelf for returning unneeded supplies so others can use them instead of buying new
- Just say no to styrofoam



RESOURCES

- Sundance's Email sundancitaz@gmail.com and [Sundance's Facebook](#)
- [The Great Turning](#) by Joanna Macy is a shift from the Industrial Growth Society to a life-sustaining civilization
- [Reciprocity Matters](#) - A solutions-focused non-profit using psychology to address the pressing problems of our planet
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) Challenges](#)
- [Fish Watch](#) - NOAA website to identify sustainable fish/seafood
- [40 Unexpected Ways to Help the Environment](#)
- [25 Greening Office Tips](#)
- [10 Actions Companies Can Adopt to Fight Climate Change](#)
- [What's Really Behind Corporate Promises on Climate Change?](#) By Peter Eavis and Clifford Krauss, *New York Times*, February 22, 2021
- [My Plastic Free Life](#) - Greenbelt - Beth Terry, plastic-free since 2007; many resources/support to reduce plastic
- [Simple Happy Zen](#) - Netherlands - Vera - YouTuber Minimalist/Simplicity Lifestyle
- [Earth Knowledge and Environmental Solutions](#) - Naturalist Adam Davis website with resources/suggestions/classes
- [Native Land](#) - website and app to identify which indigenous peoples lived in different regions/lands in North America



Sundance holding Heart Rock Gift at Hudson River, NY..

MORE RESOURCES

- [Picture This](#) app - to identify plants and trees
- [Youth Against Plastic Pollution](#) - local Maryland group led by young people to reduce plastic pollution
- [Environmental Working Group](#) - research and advocacy in the areas of agricultural subsidies, toxic chemicals, drinking water pollutants, and corporate accountability.
- [Citizens Climate Lobby](#) - large corporations pay a tax on carbon use - encourage businesses to not use
- [Green New Deal](#) - legislation to introduce new green jobs to the economy
- [The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil](#) - documentary where Cubans share how they transitioned from a highly mechanized, industrial agricultural system to one using organic methods of farming and local, urban gardens
- [Cape Town's Water Shortage](#) - NPR story from March, 2018
- [Fantastic Fungi](#) - film and website about fungi and mushrooms and their important role in the ecosystem
- [Finding the Mother Tree](#) by Suzanne Simard
- [Pick Up Limes](#) - Vegan chef and nutritionist shares healthy and yummy recipes



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