

Ecological Living

Every creature on Earth has some impact on the environment. It is impossible to live and not affect the ecology we all share, we humans have been doing so for thousands of years. The problem in the 21st century is that our impact has reached such a level, helped by our technological prowess, that the damage we do now often outweighs the proposed benefits. We have to change!



Along with the growth of technology we have lost a fundamental understanding our ancestors had been undeniably aware of due to the closeness of their lives to nature.

In the words of eminent Canadian scientist and environmentalist Dr. David Suzuki:

"Most of us have forgotten that it is nature that supports everything we do. By leaving nature outside of our day-to-day decision making we are seriously damaging the environment and threatening our quality of life".

An ancient Indian concept, which was adopted as a guide to daily living by Mahatma Gandhi, was known as "Ahimsa", which is translated as "do the least harm". Living an Ecological Lifestyle means being constantly aware of one's actions and living whilst "doing the least harm".

It is up to every individual to go as far down the path of least harm as they feel comfortable with. This is made more difficult due to the consumer driven culture we have created. You will find that, contrary to popular myth, life generally improves the more you adapt to living an Ecological Lifestyle through health improvements, lowered stress levels and a heightened appreciation for what it is to be alive.

To help us start down this path the Suzuki Foundation has produced " The Nature Challenge". The challenge offers 10 lifestyle items. People can adopt as many of these challenges as they choose, go as far and as deep as they choose, and discover the personal, social and environmental benefits for themselves.

The challenge can be found at:

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge/10steps.asp>

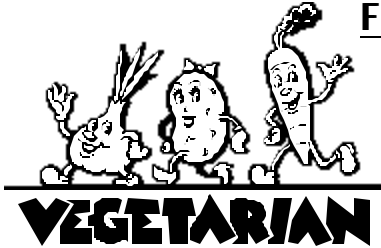
It is broken down into:

Home

- Find ways to reduce your home heating & electricity use by 10%.
- Make energy efficient major purchases. Check to see if appliances are Energy Star approved and homes meet the R-2000 standards.
- Replace chemical pesticides on your lawn, garden & houseplants with non-toxic alternatives.



Food



- Choose at least one meal per day per week to eat meat-free meals in your household.
- Prepare your meals with food from local farmers and producers for one month this year.

Transportation

- Check the Canadian Government's Auto Smart ratings for the next car you intend to buy to make sure it is fuel-efficient and low polluting.
- Walk, bike, carpool, or use transit to get to one of your regular destinations each week.
- If you are moving, choose a home within a 30-minute bike, walk or transit ride from your daily destination.
- Support alternatives to the car. Contact you local media or government, urging improved public transit and bike paths.



Personal Commitment



- Learn more about conserving nature and share what you've learned with family and friends.

Living an ecological lifestyle is a journey, not a destination.

Give up health, social and environmentally damaging actions at your own pace and allow yourself time to adapt. Changing your life too radically is often a recipe for failure as thousands of dieters have discovered.

Live more peaceably with yourself knowing the world will be a better place for generations to come thanks to your actions.