

# 1.5-Degree Lifestyles Magazine

*stories & strategies about everyday sustainable living.*







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*Note: The names of all individuals in these stories have been changed, unless otherwise indicated.*





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Photo by Becca  
McHaffie

# FINDING CREATIVITY

Some of the most prolific innovations have emerged from what may seem like hindrances — from limitations that restricted what could or couldn't be done. Twyla Tharpe famously follows a strict daily regimen to create her world-renown dance works. Juan Carlos Ceriani invented the popular sport futsal in response to limitations of physical space. Dr. Seuss' most famous book (*Green Eggs and Ham*) was written on a bet that he couldn't complete an entire book using only 50 words.

In one sense, these limits can appear to stifle freedom and opportunity — wouldn't it be better to use the full range of language rather than containing yourself to only 50 words? — but the most accomplished artists know that limits are actually the key to the most remarkable accomplishments, creations, and discoveries. As the visual artist Phil Hansen

put it in his TED talk, "We need to first be limited in order to be limitless."

While the limitations that come along with a sustainable lifestyle may appear burdensome, or even oppressive, they also set up fertile ground for creative expression. Sustainable living is ripe for experimentation and surprise. At IGES, we've heard incredible stories from people who are turning the constraints of sustainability into an opportunity to discover some new and interesting solution. Rather than viewing sustainability as a chore, they are looking around themselves and asking "what can I turn this into?" or "what can I use that's already available to solve this problem (instead of buying something new)?"

Yes, this approach puts limits on them. The good news about such restrictions is that, rather than impede opportunity, they counterintuitively create opportunity instead...

Find out how four individuals are discovering fertile ground for creativity and personal expression through sustainable daily living.

**"We need to first be limited in order to be limitless."**



## What can I turn this into? What can I use (that I already have) to solve this problem?

### Healthy, Beautiful, Sustainable Flooring

In Japan, Mayumi's family has been running a traditional mat-making shop (called tatami) for over 200 years. At the heart of the industry is a natural, health-supporting product that cleans the air in the immediate area, leaves a sweet smell, and supports physical movement and health. It's more beautiful and more environmentally sustainable than most forms of modern flooring. In honour of the connection that tatami brings — to the past, to the natural environment, and to daily living and wellbeing, Mayumi has been examining her work through a new 1.5°C Lifestyles lens and has been thrilled to realise that her work with tatami exemplifies the opportunity to find joy, health, and function all in one environmentally sustainable item!

### Healthier, Cleaner Skin

Meanwhile, Zanele in South Africa has been experimenting with homemade beauty and personal care products. In addition to reducing the amount of plastic packaging in circulation, she knows where her care products are coming from and can work to source them locally from vendors she trusts... with the end result of a healthier, more cost-effective product, tailor-made for her, that she loves and can boast about whenever her friends compliment her radiant skin! She's also beginning to experiment with homemade cleaning products, using ingredients such as vinegar and orange peels instead of the harsh chemicals typically found in commercial cleaners.

### Old & New: Sustainable Reconstruction

Back on the other side of the world, the Japanese *kyomachiya* is a traditional architectural style found throughout the country. It's an iconic element of the city streets in downtown Kyoto, where Takashi lives. A few years ago, Takashi found himself in need of doing some major renovations on his 130-year old *kyomachiya* home. Rather than turn to typical solutions and buy all new materials, however, he repurposed the previous pillars in his home, turning them into a new "box staircase" with built-in storage and a modern look. The aged materials bring a special texture to the space that you can't get from new materials... with 100+ years of stories in their pores, the aged elements keep the room feeling homey, while their repurposed functionality modernises the space for the current owners' 21st-century needs. The natural bright colours of the material usher in an added layer of warmth and joy.

Not only does this creative approach promote ecological sustainability, it also can accumulate substantial cost savings. How much would it have cost to have the old materials removed from the site and disposed of, and then to purchase new materials and have them delivered and installed? Similarly, in Zanele's case, she's reducing her personal expenses simply by treating her skin (and the environment) more kindly! By embracing some limitations on consumer convenience, they're finding far more benefit opening up in front of them.



Photo by Diana Akhmetianova



## Mother-Daughter Bonding Time

Youko's daughter is already eight years old, and growing fast. While delighting in watching her daughter grow and mature, Youko faces the same challenges every parent goes through, including the frustration of outgrown clothes that her daughter has only worn for a short time and that are still in excellent condition. In response to the challenge, rather than constantly buying new clothes and begrudgingly throwing away the old ones, Youko has found an opportunity instead. She turns the situation into a chance to bond with her daughter over an enriching art project, altering the clothing for ongoing use. This step rounds out Youko's sustainable approach: she first purchased the item second-hand from another parent with a fast-growing child. As her daughter grows, she fixes the length to extend its usability, and then, when it finally comes time to move onto new clothing, she resells the item again online.

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These solutions enable us to find/create high-quality products that also show our personal style in a special way... There's only one you, and when you start applying your unique taste to the limitations of sustainability, the sky opens back up again. In embracing those limits, you just might find a new freedom that you didn't know you had lost in the unlimited convenience of unsustainable living.

Experiment, see what works (and don't fear failure — it's part of the creative process!). You may be surprised by the freedom and opportunity you discover within the bounds of intentional sustainability. ■

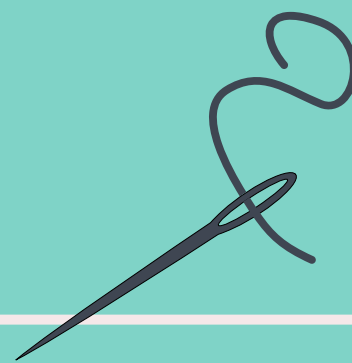


## WANT TO FIND MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY IN YOUR SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

- **Day-to-Day Living.** What can you do to reduce your consumption? How might you re-work your current wardrobe to create an all-new variety of outfits? What small pieces might serve as an interesting accent? How might you turn old scraps into something unique, fun, or simply useful? Oh, the possibilities...
- **Transportation.** Can you turn your daily commute into a new opportunity? Can you transform a carpool into something everyone loves and looks forward to — not just the usual drudgery, but something that creates value for everyone involved? Or, instead of flying to another continent for that vacation (again), what regional treasures might you be taking for granted that could become a new local haven for you?
- **Food.** Meals are the perfect opportunity to mix-and-match and to experiment within the bounds of set limitations. How many different ways can you find to work only with this season's produce? Challenge yourself to create ten unique dishes that each feature the same food item in a different way. How can you share and swap produce with others? How might recycled water play a role?



# TAP INTO YOUR INNER MUSE...



1

## SHOPPING BAGS

Take old fabric scraps and give them a new life by turning them into a reusable shopping bag! Now, whenever you go to the market, you have a one-of-a-kind, sustainable bag to bring your items safely home in.

2

## CREATE EXPERIENCES

For your next celebration or holiday, instead of turning to goods, create an experience instead. Host a clothing swap party, a DIY art project, a cooking party, or simply play a game with your loved ones... you'll find these experiences to be much more memorable than the item you bought them last year.

3

## HOME OFFICE

What can you repurpose to build your own home office? How about those old crates or furniture you're thinking about throwing away? Instead, take them apart and build a new item using whatever materials are still in good condition.

4

## CREATE OUTDOOR SPACE

Give yourself (and those around you) a reason to spend more time outdoors and locally by creating a pleasant outdoor space! Construct your own hammock or treehouse, sew together some colourful pillows, or build a fire pit or table using materials that are currently lying around.

5

## LIGHTING

Don't like the way LED light changes the lighting in your space? What do you have lying around that you can use to modify the light's appearance? Try reusing materials to create your own lamp shade!

6

## NEW/OLD PLANTERS

Introduce some life in your home with more indoor plants. Design your own planters or even composting bins using old milk crates, pallets, or wire fencing. Make it beautiful by applying your own creative touch.



## Have you seen the 1.5°C Lifestyles interactive City Scenarios maps?

Go to [hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles](http://hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles) to find interactive sustainable living suggestions for your city that you can implement right now!

Point your smart phone at the QR code (to the right) to be taken straight to the website!



IGES

One planet

live with care

Chula

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# BUILDING COMMUNITY

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# BUILDING COMMUNITY

New connections, Meaningful Relationships,  
& Generational Purpose  
Found in **Environmental Sustainability**

In the midst of our growing capabilities for connection, loneliness seems to be rising twice as quickly.

But the pursuit of sustainable living gives us a reason to connect. To come together, build relationships, and help each other live more inspired, more invigorated lives. Some of the most encouraging stories we've heard at IGES have been about all of the ways in which people are gathering — either to foster sustainable living amongst each other or simply as a byproduct of personal sustainable lifestyle choices. These initiatives may often seem humble, but they're a

truly powerful antidote to the loneliness and isolation that have been cropping up all around in our modern world. While in pursuit of a globally healthier lifestyle, many people are building up their local communities, one simple action at a time.

For example, Hina has told us that "on the first Sunday of every month, we hold a community gathering (although it is a small community). Recently, the number of young people living alone, as well as young families in the community, has been increasing little by little." While their monthly dinners may seem simple, they're a powerful avenue for bringing everyone together, fostering local camaraderie, and building one another up. Hina says that even though it is currently somewhat stagnant due to the disaster of COVID-19, the relationships in their community remain strong and they have been able to continue to support one another in building more healthy and environmentally sustainable lifestyles.







Photo by Stefan Vladimirov

## Meeting Around The Table

*An onion shared with a friend tastes like roast lamb. —African Proverb*

Throughout human history, the table has always been one of the best gathering places. Sharing food, sharing time, and sharing one another's presence for a small window in the day bring something magical along with it. Although we're constantly looking for ways to speed up and cut out table time, when we find ways to instead slow down and give it a bit of space, we can discover

Some of the stories we've heard come from people who have been expanding their table to host larger community dinners. In some places, these dinners are even sourced from neighbourhood gardens. Each stage in the meal preparation process is an opportunity to come together: gardening, cooking, and eating each present a chance to share a part of your day with someone else.

Along with her neighbours, Keiko has been holding a café for parents and children — what they call Community Cafeteria — for about seven years now. The meals are prepared by mothers in the community and give them all a chance to get together, work together, laugh together, and share new ideas and challenges with one another.

Although COVID-related concerns can make mealtime gathering more difficult than it used to be, many are making the most of a difficult situation through outdoor or reduced-group arrangements. Even virtual gatherings can be better than no gathering at all.

Furthermore, as responsibilities for the event are shared, the burden of coordinating such gatherings becomes lighter. When you find others who are motivated to see it through, they'll work with you to make it happen!

*What if no one wants to participate? you might ask...*

It's true we all have busy lives. It's also true that there's a huge void of real connection for most people. While we all hesitate to show it, everyone craves that social connection, and many are lacking it. And all it might take to get something rolling could be a simple suggestion *from you*.

Maybe this will be the right time for such a gathering, and maybe not yet... but you'll never know until you ask.



## Raising Up A New Generation

There are also many who feel an urgency to support and educate the younger generation.

Fatima felt fresh inspiration after participating in a 1.5°C Lifestyles Workshop and household experiment. She now plans educational events where people come together and discuss ways they can live a more decarbonised lifestyle. These events are attended by all three generations, so that the whole family can work together.

Similarly, Tomoko works with her community to organise an environmental study group, called Eco-Schule. Here also, all three generations get involved, with special hands-on activities for children.

"Participatory workshops of this kind help individuals share opinions, extract their knowledge, and solve problems in a collaborative and creative manner," Fatima tells us. "It allows you to reflect on issues and on your own experiences. You analyse, share, and enhance knowledge."

And as Lawana commented, "The methodology of sharing wisdom rather than downloading [information] definitely [makes] decarbonised living more accessible." We learn by doing, and we 'do' more effectively when we have other brains helping us along.



Photo by Tony Pham

## New Practices — Together

New habits are easier to form when you pursue them with a group of motivated others. Whether it's exercising together, having experiences together (rather than buying goods or spending time on a screen), enjoying nature hikes or other activities, organising a clothing swap, cooking or gardening together, building something together, or any other group effort, when you've got a strong cohort around you (even if it's small), you'll find that they help you make much more progress than you would achieve if entirely on your own.

In Thailand, Pensri has been gathering her friends for regular exercise sessions. She's found that it's far more motivating to work out when you aren't the only one trying to push yourself. Plus, you can find ways to play games together (which are a much more

enjoyable approach to physical fitness than monotonous reps!). Whether it's a formal sport or simply a gamified version of a typical exercise, moving together is a great way to add a little more play into your workout regimen.

Hiking (and other activities in nature) are another fantastic opportunity to get outside more and connect with others. While solo outdoor exploration can be wonderful for head-clearing, going together can promote fresh conversation and gives you the *space* to connect more deeply than you might in other settings.

Additionally, cooking, gardening, or composting together provide an opportunity for getting important work done in a more enjoyable way. The same

goes for other sustainable lifestyle practices, such as repurposing or DIY projects. It's simply more fun when you do-it-yourself with others!

What habit do you struggle most with? Are there others around you who love to do that thing? What if you joined forces with them, tapped into their energy, and used that as a source of camaraderie and accountability?

We can often forget that there are others who love to do the things we least enjoy. When that 'thing' is an important habit that we want to develop in ourselves, one of the most useful tools at our disposal is to simply reach out and connect with someone who loves to do that very thing.



## Empowering Local

In addition to forming and strengthening new neighbourly connections, many people are also finding that by shifting focus to local programming, business, and development, they empower those in their community to succeed and to then pour more back into the community. It's a win-win-win-win: a win for you, a win for them, a win for the local area, and a win for the environment.

**A win for you.** When you buy local, you know where the product is coming from — there are no doubts about the ethics of its origin. And when you invest yourself into local programming and development, you can see exactly where that effort is going and know that you truly are making a difference.

**A win for them.** We all can feel a bit lost in the bigness of our electronically-connected world. Having someone in your space, however, who notices and invests in you

can make a world of difference to a person. That small investment of trust — whether it comes in the form of a business transaction or simply your personal time and attention — can be the difference in the entire trajectory of an individual's life.

**A win for the region.** When individuals are built up, then the community is built up. This kind of empowerment spreads with a network effect and can influence the wider area very rapidly.

**A win for the environment.** Locally-focused living reduces the carbon emissions that come with driving and mass transportation. Additionally, opting to shop in community markets instead of from larger retailers reduces long distance shipping of goods.

When you choose to focus on local, you might also find that you're walking or bicycling more... leading to a happier mental state, more energy, and overall better personal health (see *Radiating Health* on page 16 for more on this).

Cutting out distance travel also buys you the one thing you can't get more of: time. As many of us discovered during COVID-related lockdowns, when we're spending less time travelling places and more time within a smaller radius, we find more time in the day and more opportunity to do something new, to build a connection with someone, or to simply rest and refresh.

Of course, the world is a large and wonderful place, and we never want to become too isolated within it... but there's a lot to be discovered in our own backyard, if we'll merely keep our eyes open to it.



Photo courtesy of OCG Saving The Ocean



## Tapping Into The Group's Energy

When you engage actively in community (especially when it's around a shared goal):

- ... you find new ideas
- ... you find new motivation
- ... you notice things in a different way than you did before
- ... you find encouragement
- ... you find support
- ... you find accountability (to achieve your own goals)

When Mai first found her community, she remarked, "It was so good to hear [others] pointing out that within Yokohama, some roads have more ups and downs than others, and the road conditions are different, as well as the traffic manners.

While the use of bicycles to reduce carbon footprint was widely mentioned, it was good to hear [this]." Everyone encounters the same struggles. When you're dealing with those struggles alone, however, you might feel like you're the only one or like there's something wrong with you for not having an easy time with it. But when you hear that others are working to overcome the same difficulties you are, you can find

fresh encouragement as well as new ideas to help you troubleshoot the challenge.

It can also be encouraging to realise you're not the only one fighting. Paulo recently shared the following personal insight with us: "Even though it may seem that small actions are limited (considering a global issue like the climate crisis), when they are combined with others and practised consistently, we may bring about a huge impact." In isolation, it can be easy to forget that there are others working toward the same goals you are. But when you join with others in shared activities, it becomes easier to see the combined effort that is accumulating all around.

The inspiration of others is contagious. After participating in a 1.5°C Lifestyles Workshop in Brazil, Marcos told us that "what I liked most about this whole process was realising that there are other people trying to go the right way, and that motivates me more. I was also able to get some tips during the discussions, and this helped me in the experiment." ■

**"It's amazing when you see an effort to bring together people from different walks of life. Their experiences and lessons help everyone to reflect and help bring new meaning and purpose in today's context.**

**...Every experience has a story to tell. Every story has a lesson to unravel. Every lesson learnt is worth practising in action."**

— Binita, 1.5°C Lifestyle Workshop participant

## WHAT OPPORTUNITIES MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

What possibilities might be hiding in plain sight in your own world? Consider some of the following...

- ✓ simply relax and enjoy the outdoors with a friend
- ✓ reduce screen time by scheduling in-person time with a friend
- ✓ organise a book swapping event
- ✓ organise a clothing swapping event
- ✓ organise a leftovers-sharing meal
- ✓ coordinate a carpool to work or to activities
- ✓ schedule a weekly walk with a friend, or coordinate with a coworker to walk or cycle together to and from work
- ✓ give yourself a personal goal of meeting someone new on public transportation
- ✓ plan a cooking schedule with a friend or two and make meals for each other on your scheduled day

For more ideas, be sure to check out the 1.5°C Lifestyles interactive City Scenarios maps. You can find them at [hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles](https://hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles) or by scanning the QR code below:



Illustration by Tania Vicedo



What opportunities are there in **your** city?



**STRENGTH.**

**STABILITY.**

**SELF-  
CONFIDENCE.**



# DISCOVERING JOY IN INDEPENDENCE

Going hand-in-hand with the strength of **community** is the strength of **self-sufficiency** (though they're important in different ways).

Aristotle once said that "Happiness belongs to the self-sufficient." While the ins and outs of happiness can be endlessly debated, there's certainly a level of satisfaction, freedom, and confidence that comes with self-sufficiency. It can be incredibly empowering when you know you're able to stand on your own two feet rather than needing to rely on any external circumstance or system.

What's more, you get to enjoy the freedom, beauty, and insight that come with hands-on doing something yourself. As Nin put it when commenting on her simple habit of cardboard composting: "I've been practising cardboard composting on my balcony for a while now. The garbage is returned to the soil, and I am able to use it to grow garden vegetables. I am enjoying such circulation of life."

## Preparedness & Peace-of-Mind

Gaining self-sufficiency can also contribute to personal peace-of mind. Aya, in Japan, has shared with us the ways in which she and others in her neighbourhood are empowering their community, and the effect this has had on their mental state. Through efforts that promote disaster prevention and safety, they're doing what they can to ensure that if disaster strikes, they're able to meet it as readily as possible. Using vegetable waste in planters for mini-composting and a separate store of water, they now feel more prepared for emergencies than they were previously.

While disaster preparedness can be an important reason for taking matters into your own hands, it's certainly not the only reason...

## Stepping Up To Take Action

Others are learning that when the city doesn't provide, you can do it yourself. Iminathi's town, in South Africa, doesn't provide recyclable collection. So in addition to reducing her consumption of goods that would need to be recycled in the first place, she also coordinates with friends to share and repurpose such items, in order to reduce waste.



Photo by Pat Whelen





Photo by Conscious Design

### Gaining New Competencies

Finally, in India, Dayaram tells us about improving his grey water system. Although they had previously installed the harvesting system (harvesting water from the kitchen sink and washing machine), it was just going out, wasted, for about a year before they were able to more efficiently redirect that water to the vegetable garden. They've now installed a second grey water harvesting system (for bath and wash basin water from the toilets), which they're able to use to water plants on the other side of the house. In addition to the environmental benefits and the "free" water he gets for use in his garden, he also gains confidence in knowing that he's done it himself and that he isn't as much at the mercy of external failures as some others might be.

By maximising utilisation of resources that are already within reach, Dayaram (and others like him) are discovering an exciting lesson: there's tremendous power in self-sufficiency. When you develop your own capacity to more completely manage the resources that you have, you gain a new level of both stability and personal satisfaction.

Not only that, but you get to enjoy the freedom and new insight that comes along with this approach as well. You get to actually see how these processes come together and can enjoy the full circulation of life as it plays out. ■

**“When you develop your own capacity to more completely manage the resources you have, you gain a new level of both stability and personal satisfaction.”**

## HOW CAN YOU STRENGTHEN YOUR WORLD?

How might you begin to bring more strength and autonomy to your own world? Consider some of the following...

- ✓ repair your own items when they are worn or damaged
- ✓ organise an exchange system in your community for used items
- ✓ learn to can your own preserves from the garden
- ✓ gather others in your community for a cleanup or beautification day in your neighbourhood... maybe even build a park or garden together
- ✓ gather others in your neighbourhood to discuss your area's disaster preparedness, and identify actions you can take to be better prepared
- ✓ begin growing one thing
- ✓ pick one small problem that's been bothering you and focus on developing ideas to solve it yourself

For more ideas, be sure to check out the 1.5°C Lifestyles interactive City Scenarios maps. You can find them at [hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles](http://hotorcool.org/future-lifestyles) or by scanning the QR code below:



Illustration by Tania Vicedo



What opportunities are there in **your** city?





# RADIATING HEALTH





Photo by Mi Pham

# THE TRUE MEANING OF 'SUSTAINABILITY'...

What does "sustainability" actually mean?

Sustainability is taking the long view over a shortsighted one. It's aiming for total, deep health, which means creating the right conditions to promote that — in ourselves, for future generations, and in our environment. *Sustainability* is another word for *longevity*, and longevity means *health over the long term*. It applies in a much wider sense than simply finding ease today.

Of course, "health" doesn't equate to "without problems"... healthy tension and friction are important. If anything, this is actually the lesson we've learnt from our modern pursuit of endless convenience and comfort: the pursuit of comfort is not sustainable, healthy, or life-giving.

To live in a healthy way means to embrace challenges and resistance, without necessarily turning to convenient solutions. It means *living*. It means opening our eyes to the life around us and embracing it all, even while we may be working to change it at the exact same time.

"The reason for our lives is to be content."  
—Dalai Lama

A huge part of sustainability lies in finding contentment in whatever the moment presents. When we do, we find a new **vitality**, and that vitality begins to permeate every part of us and begins to touch everything that we touch.

When we choose the long perspective over the short one, we choose to sometimes opt for less-than-easy answers. The counter-intuitive outcome of this, however, is that

*“Longevity means health over the long term.”*

we find greater fulfilment and energy when we take the more difficult but more meaningful road. And *that* manifests itself in every one of our pores — in our physical health, in our mental and emotional wellbeing, in our social interactions, and in our productive engagements. As a byproduct, everything around us can be healthier as well: our relationships, our community, and our physical world all benefit by this modest pursuit of *sustainability*.



## Fresh Eyes, Clear Head: 3 Unexpected Advantages to Ditching Old Modes of Transportation

In South Africa, Amahle began riding her bicycle to work in order to reduce her carbon footprint (and, admittedly, to avoid traffic congestion during rush hour). What she gained in doing so, however, turned out to be much more...

### Movement

*Leave for work. Sit in the car. Go to the office. Sit at your desk. Grab your lunch. Sit and eat. Back to the office. Sit again. Time to go home. Sit in the car. Family time. Sit and rest. End of the night. Lie in bed. Up and do it again.*

Most of us have forgotten how to use our full range of motion.

In the modern world, many of us spend most of our time in a more-or-less static position that does not integrate very full movement. But very small behaviours, like riding a bike or even walking, can reintroduce just enough movement into the day to have an enormous impact on your overall wellbeing. Not only does this influence your physical health and energy, but even your mental functioning and emotional health are improved when you simply move a little bit more.



Photo by Maria Vojtovicova



Photo by Steve Douglas

Amahle found this in her situation, reporting that her new bicycling habit has brought her more physical freedom and health than she had previously possessed. And this brings us to our next point...

### A Clear Head

Amahle also has found that by commuting via bike, she now has time to clear her head before and after work. Bicycling has given her that space to think and process, and the physical component keeps her blood flowing and her brain working at the same time that the fresh air, the natural temperature on her skin, and other environmental stimulations keep her connected to the present moment.

It keeps her perspective more open and fresh than when she was driving to and from work each day. And this relates to a third benefit...





Photo by Jack Alexander

### Fresh Eyes

We need beauty to live.

By cycling to work, Amahle gets to see different trails and different parts of the city than she did before. Instead of a metal roof, she has the sky and birds overhead, and instead of a mechanical motor, she feels the power of her body connecting through the pedals and wheels with the ground beneath.

Yes, she travels more slowly than she did by car. But this slowing-down helps to awaken her to the beauty that's around.

Although she initially undertook the task in an effort to promote environmental sustainability, Amahle doesn't intend to revert back to her old driving habit any time soon. She tells us, "I started riding my bike to work thinking that would be a good way to not get stuck in traffic and to reduce my carbon footprint. What I didn't expect was the added benefit that it gives me time to clear my head before and after work and to enjoy seeing other parts of the city."

Of course, it doesn't have to be only during your commute that you take time to encounter the beauty all around us in the world. Misaki likes to visit a nearby garden in Kyoto. She says that she likes the "scenery that reminds [her] of what life is like when people are living in a state of nature, close to what it is." Simply gifting yourself with some time to walk can completely shift your perspective in a revitalising way.

**“Yes, [Amahle] travels more slowly than she did by car. But this slowing-down helps to awaken her to the beauty that's around.”**

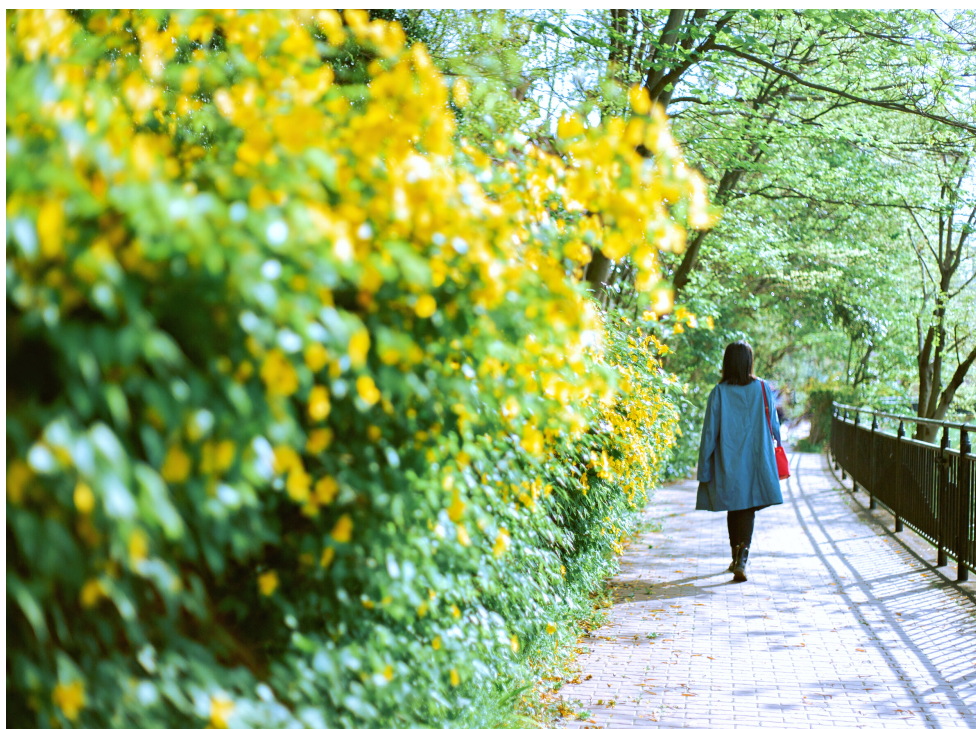


Photo by Sophia Ayame



## WANT TO FIND MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY IN YOUR SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

- **Short Distance.** Walking is the simplest short-distance transportation method. What are some ways you can make your walk more pleasant? What are some ways you can make your walk more practical? How can you enrol others in your walking habit?
- **Medium Distance.** Bicycling is a common answer to the question of medium-distance transportation, but there are other options here as well. Whether it's a scooter, skateboard,
- **Long Distance.** Public transportation and electric vehicles can both aid in reducing your carbon footprint while still allowing you to travel longer distances. If public transportation is limited or nonexistent in your area, then carpooling can be a great place to start.

**For more specific ideas, be sure to check out the 1.5 Degrees Future Lifestyles scenarios...**



Photo by Korie Cull





Photo by Amoon Ra

## Eating Clean In A Fast-Paced World

It isn't easy to eat clean in our fast-moving world.

There will always be some "good" days and some "bad" days... but every time we opt for (and manage to achieve) a healthier option, it's a win, even if it doesn't quite work out the way we'd like every single day.

### Reducing Eating Out

Adiele in South Africa discovered during COVID-related lockdowns that by spending more time at home, she was eating out less. Since then, she tries to maintain the habit by reducing time away from her home and neighbourhood, so that can eat more straight from her kitchen.

### Remaining Conscious Of The Source

Similarly, Kai has developed an increasing awareness of her food's source. When grocery shopping, she now pays more attention to where it comes from, how it was produced, and whether there's a plastic-free option.

### Growing Your Own

Ibrahim has recently begun growing his own small vegetable patch, along with a fig tree. Getting used to the new responsibility has been an adjustment, but he's enjoying the fresh produce that he can pick right from his own garden! Because it's in his own backyard, he knows exactly where it comes from and doesn't need to be concerned about chemical pesticides in his food.

### From Earth To Plate: The Full Cycle

Sakura has been working with her community on an even larger scale project. Together, they have formed an Eco Promotion Committee, that cuts weeds and uses them to make humus in a section of the local elementary school. This is a long-term initiative they've begun in order to both reduce the amount of burnable garbage in the area and to create humus for use in growing vegetables that can be used as food. She says that once the vegetables grow, they also intend to try eco-cooking with them.

\*\*\*

No matter what you're doing, the ideal is to do it well, with a long perspective in mind. Of course, real life doesn't always bend the way we might like it to... but every small action matters. It all adds up in the long run.

*This is the meaning of sustainability: it's **living well**, for the long haul.*





# BUILD HEALTHY PRACTICES INTO YOUR ROUTINE...



1

## MOVEMENT

If you live in a small town, go for a walk and spend time saying hello to your neighbours. Maybe even invite them along with you. Also, try occasionally choosing the less-convenient option: Park at the back of the parking lot and walk a little further. In the kitchen, instead of using a blender, try hand mashing. When you have an option between taking the escalator or the stairs, make a conscious choice to use the stairs.

2

## NATURAL BEAUTY

Spend time noticing the beauty that's already around you. It can be as simple as the sun in the sky, the little bug crawling across a leaf, or a wrinkle in a friend's smile. Pause and notice these things occasionally, without rushing on to the next thing.

3

## MEDITATIVE HOBBIES

What clears your mind? A bike ride? A long walk? Trying new recipes in the kitchen? Journaling by a babbling brook? A visit to your favourite garden? Experiment with different activities until you find one that helps clear your head, and then build intentional time into your schedule to do that practice.

4

## CLEAN EATING

What is your favourite "clean" food? What about your favourite clean food producer? Is there anyone in your region who is working hard to produce clean food or to cook it in a delicious way? Where can you look to discover those who are doing so? Try visiting a new market or local event to discover local clean food connections, so that you have more options to help you maintain your healthy eating goals.

5

## TIME OUTDOORS

Try a new sport. Invite some friends over for a campfire. Play a game with your children (or with any children in the neighbourhood). Go for a walk and meet someone new. Travel to a mountain you haven't yet climbed or to an ocean you haven't yet swum in.

6

## TURN OFF THE ELECTRONICS

Instead, spend some time sitting quietly alone or with someone you love, dreaming, talking, experimenting, or playing. Visit a nearby garden or park. Go for a walk, a bike ride, or a swim. Experiment with new ideas and discover new activities that you really enjoy, and make those a priority in your new lifestyle!



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# NEW, SUSTAINABLE HABITS





# THE SNOWBALL EFFECT...

## Building Sustainable Habits & Overcoming Hurdles To Develop The **Lifestyle That *You* Want To Build**



*It happened slowly at first, then all at once.*

That's how most things go. Whether good or bad, every "overnight change" typically happens only after some prolonged repetition of small, slow, seemingly insignificant actions that accumulated in mostly imperceptible ways.

Like a snowball rolling down a hill, those small contributions add up until they can't be ignored — until they've become a powerful and unstoppable force.

This brings us to an important question: Do your small choices really matter? Does it actually make any difference when you make a choice that prioritizes the long view, when there is so much more to do that's bigger and beyond you?

The answer is a resounding *Absolutely*. In fact, your small choices might be the only thing that really matters in the final summation... because of the power they hold when added together.

**"Although it may seem minuscule, your 'small step' is actually everything."**



Photo by Gabriel Jimenez





Photo by Jonathan Hanna

## The Power Of Habit

When it comes to lifestyle change, many people find it best to tackle the easy wins first.

Adriaan explains her journey with sustainability: "The easier you make it for yourself, the more likely you are to do it. Set yourself up so that these things (recycling bins, composts, shopping bags, geyser temperature, etc.) are easy to incorporate into your habit or right next to the thing you already do in order to make it easier."

She goes on to talk about how easy it was, for example, to "set it and forget it" on her water geyser temperature. "No one in the house even noticed the change in temperature." It was a one-time action with ongoing results. She marvelled at how easy this one small action was to take.

Similarly, Ricardo, from Brazil, recently participated in a 1.5°C Lifestyles Workshop. His biggest takeaway, he told us, was that "I realised I don't need to radically change my routine to contribute. There are small

changes that already make a difference and are easy to do. Before, I had a different and even lazy view of being more sustainable. But it is all so easy that I will probably incorporate these new behaviours into my routine forever."

And as our friend Emica put it, there's even tremendous value in experimenting itself. Simply attempting a change or playing around with an idea — even if it doesn't quite work out right away — can be enough to begin to move you in the right direction. We saw this earlier in this publication, when we met Dayaram. Dayaram had set up a grey water harvesting system that, for an entire year, was simply pumping out the harvested water, unused. But eventually, he found a way to take the next step and redirect that water to his new vegetable patch (see p. 15 for Dayaram's story). It doesn't always come together as quickly as we might like it to, but every step taken is still a success.

Lifestyle change can seem daunting, but it all comes down to small, seemingly insignificant habits. There's no need to change everything in an instant. You can just pick one small thing and begin to practise it consistently. Make it as easy to roll into your current habits as possible, so that you'll be able to stick to it in an ongoing way.

## Stop & Reflect

When it comes to forming new habits, one of the most valuable tools in your tool belt is simple *reflection*.

When you take a moment to look at what you're doing from an outside, analytical perspective, you'll see it in a new way that might reveal solutions or issues that you didn't notice before when you were just going, going, going.

One way to do this is through **documentation**. By writing down what you do and what impact that has, you can begin to see where your effort is best invested more clearly.



"Physically tracking her habits helped [Alessandra] to understand the intensity of the impact she generates on an individual scale."

Alessandra talks about the benefit of visualising your behaviours in such a way. For her, physically tracking her habits helped her "understand the intensity of the impact [she] generates on an individual scale." Carlos adds to this perspective, saying that once you have an awareness of the difference you're making, the behaviours can become even more motivating, driving you with the positive feeling of knowing that what you're doing matters.

Tangibly documenting your behaviours can also help you identify new opportunities that you're currently overlooking. Alessandra explained that her own self-evaluations helped her to "better observe" her current actions, "value the actions" she's already taking, and "find opportunities for change" in other habits.

Similarly, Paulo says that when he took part in the 1.5°C Lifestyles experiment, it caused him to focus on his daily actions more than he used to. "Describing my routine has brought me the consciousness that even though it may seem [small and] limited considering [the global scale] of the climate crisis," his small actions add up "when they are combined with others and practised consistently."

## Taking Advantage Of Disrupted Routine

Another tool that can help when it comes to building new habits is **disruption**.

The events of 2020 have proven to be a perfect opportunity for many to redefine their habits, leading many to spend more time working and eating from home, as well as shopping less. (For example, Philisiwe discovered that she had a former mindless shopping habit that caused her to accumulate "piles and piles and piles of stuff" that she didn't really need. Spending more time at home has caused her to recognise that habit.) It will be interesting to witness how these habits morph again as the virus comes under our control. The gift of the moment, though, is that we each have a built-in chance to more intentionally build our routines around the kind of life that we truly want to live.

Pandemic aside, *any* change in routine, whether imposed or intentional, can provide this gift of new direction. When one thing comes to an end, something else is going to fill that void. It's in those moments that you have the opportunity to choose *what* will fill that gap...

## Hurdles & Momentum

In the *Building Community* section, we discussed the significance of having a community around you to support you and propel you toward your lifestyle goals, especially in those moments when you feel most stuck. This is your strongest weapon in your fight to live a sustainable lifestyle.

There are others who have already been through the exact same struggles you're going through, and some of them have found ways to overcome those obstacles. This can be the answer when you're looking for motivation or momentum: find others on the same journey you're on, and link arms with them.



Photo by Filip Romanovski



## The Sustainable Lifestyle

Lifestyle doesn't happen in an instant. It's a gradual accumulation that builds and builds. But it starts with a single, seemingly insignificant step. Take that one step, and find joy in it alone. Before you know it, the snowball will have amassed far more momentum than you might have imagined was possible for you.

And if there's one lesson we've encountered over and over again throughout the stories in this magazine, it's this: surprise lurks around every corner in the pursuit of sustainability. Although it might seem like a daunting goal, you just never know what unexpected discoveries you're going to make along the way that will help you in your journey! ■

"Surprise lurks around every corner.... You never know what unexpected discoveries you're going to make that will help you on your journey."

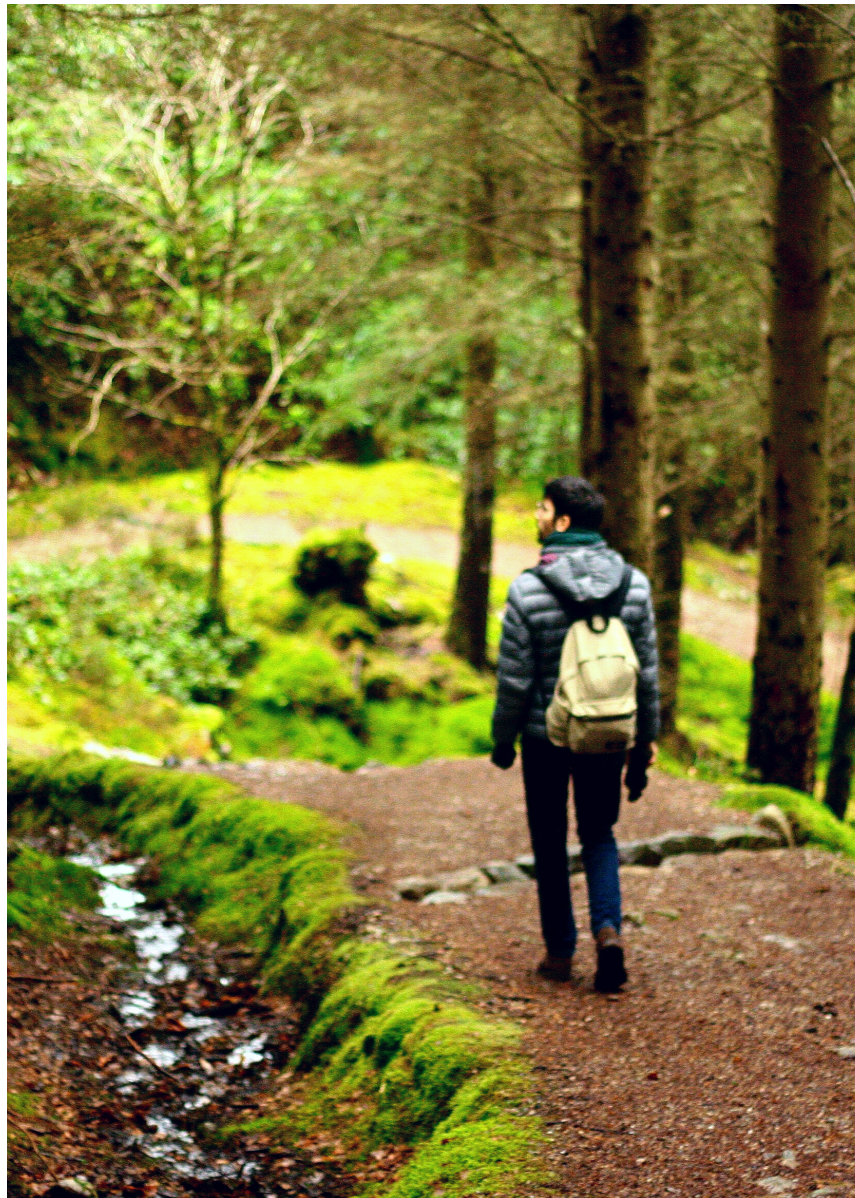


Photo by Tamara Garcevic

## WANT TO FIND MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY IN YOUR SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE, BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

- **Day-to-Day Living.** What is one thing that has been bugging you about your current daily habits that you would like to change? What are your current patterns in relation to that thing? Try documenting them for a week or two. What do you notice? What new patterns can you easily implement to start to replace those old patterns?
- **Household.** What are some "easy wins" you can implement around the house this week? Is there anything you can "set and forget" today that will already begin to have an impact? What are some of your more daunting household goals? Is there one small step that you can take this week that will begin to move you toward one of those goals? What goals do the others in your household have? How can you work together to begin to achieve some of them?
- **Fresh Perspective.** What habits do you currently have that you would like to break, and how might you pre-empt them? What is it that gets in the way of doing so on a regular basis? How might you work with someone else to lighten the burden while benefitting you both? What is one small step you can take toward your food-related goals this week without any dramatic changes to your current habits?



# CREATE YOUR NEW NORMAL...



1

## MAKE IT PRACTICAL

Do you need to keep your shopping bags on a hook next to the door so you don't forget them? Do you need to keep an extra set of clothes at work so you can bicycle your commute instead of drive? Identify the practical barriers to the habits you want to form, and address them directly so they no longer stand in your way.

2

## GIVE YOURSELF A TRIGGER

You can set an alarm for the new habits you want to form, or you can establish other triggers for yourself... Maybe you decide that every time you look at your phone, you're going to go find one person to have a brief conversation with. Or every time you clean the bedroom, you also will water the plants...

3

## SCHEDULE IT

Put a recurring weekly activity (or biweekly or monthly, etc.) directly in your calendar. Coordinate with others involved to plan on this regularly recurring event.

4

## MAKE IT EASIER

How can you make your new habit more enjoyable? How can you make it more energising? If social interaction energises you, try finding ways to do more sustainable activities with others. If beauty energises you, try painting the item you need to use with a colour or a design that you love. If you enjoy competitive challenges, try turning your habit into a game.

5

## AUTOMATE IT

Reduce your water geyser temperature, so you don't have to think about it when you use the tap. Plug your wifi router into a timer so it automatically turns off at night or during other periods in the day. (Use that time to do non-electronic activities.) Find other ways to "set & forget" your new lifestyle.

6

## START WITH ONE

Create a list of ALL the ideas you've thought about or would like to start implementing. Then cross them all off (for now), except for one. Start there.



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