

Sustainability by Reyaan Hameed 2019-095

Sustainability to me is reducing the actions which cause harm to the environment. It's about reflecting on your choices and thinking of a better solution to problems in which the world around you doesn't get impacted in a negative way. It helps conserve a better world for future generations so they can enjoy the planet without fear of natural resources being depleted.

The way I apply sustainability to my life is by making small changes in my lifestyle. One such difference I've made is switching from a normal plastic toothbrush to a bamboo one since a plastic toothbrush never fully decomposes. Along with that, I've swapped plastic bottles and straws in my household to metal ones which last longer. I've also purchased reusable food wraps as a substitute for plastic cling wrap. Even though these differences are small, the less things being sent to the landfills, the better. If everyone were to reevaluate their life choices and make little changes, our actions would collectively save the environment from a considerable amount of damage.

I think a sustainable change in our community could be done in the fashion industry. How fabrics are made, how we buy them and how we eventually dispose of them are very critical to saving the environment. To keep up with the new fashion trends, fast fashion stores can produce new articles of clothing almost weekly. 1000 billion clothes are made yearly of which 3/5 end up in a landfill within a year of purchasing. And these clothes are often not biodegradable since 60% of them are made up of synthetic fibers. A solution to this could be to produce clothing from eco-friendly fibers either from natural resources such as wool, jute, wood pulp, hemp, etc. or a mix of both synthetic and natural.

However, there is a problem with a majority of brands not providing these sustainable options. The fashion industry, just like any of industry, works on demand and supply. If we, as consumers, start demanding more eco-friendly material, companies would have to start supplying us with those options.

Another suggestion could be to thrift and recycle. Many thrift and second hand stores exist in the west and I think the same principle can be applied over here as well. Online thrifting sites such as Depop can also be introduced. The goal being to reuse an item which already exists and give it a new life instead of dumping it into a landfill.

A problem which I've noticed around campus which I would like to tackle is the unnecessary amount of printing. Multiple times I have witnessed students from theory based departments such as psychology or business come to the photocopier to print booklets every week which get tossed after the year ends. To combat this issue, these booklets can be introduced in the format of E-books. Since every student either has a phone, tablet, laptop, or even computer access in the BNU labs, these books can be downloaded thus decreasing the strain on the environment.