



and share the light, and a favorite I like to tell the children, put on a sweater if you are cold, rather than turning up the heat. I also have a marvelous therapy bag filled with flax seed and lavender that I heat in the microwave for three quick minutes on chilly evenings and take to bed like a water bottle. It is simply the most luxurious way to heat you up, and negates the need to adjust the thermostat in the bedroom.

Sustainable World Sustainable You

By Nicole Goldman

Sustainable living could be defined as a lifestyle that can be sustained without exhausting any natural resources. It's a laudable goal that many of us aspire to, and a few dedicated souls may even reach. For the rest of us, who have been conditioned and cultured in an American way of life, breaking free of some of our bad habits and embracing, at least a few, healthier behaviors will help us contribute to the improvement of our own health and the health of those we share our lives with, as well as the environment we profess to love.

Success is best achieved in any program by creating obtainable benchmarks that will collectively help you reach your goal. To radically transform your life, such as going on a crash diet, you will probably not meet with the success you desire. So my advice is to begin your quest for a more sustainable lifestyle by engaging in reasonable steps that will last you a lifetime.

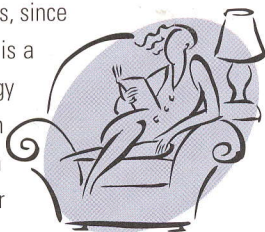
Lesson One – slow down.

You will instantly expend less energy while gaining valuable insight and awareness of the world around you. A few practical applications – put one less thing on your to do list each day, or remove one that you couldn't resist writing down. Chances are you probably won't get the whole list done, so why not reduce the pressure and the wasted energy of worry, by removing the item you know you can't get to from the outset. Or add in relaxing time, time for yourself to do absolutely nothing at all. The first time you try this be prepared for some awkwardness. But get in the habit of it and you will fiercely defend the time you carve out for yourself each day.



Lesson Two – relax at home.

My first instinct is to suggest that you clean up less, since I am not much of a scrubber, but a healthy home is a clean home. So let's just talk about electrical energy —turn the lights off when you leave a room, turn the computer off for the evening (also helps with lesson one), sit in a room with a family member



Lesson Three – eat well.

This simple phrase has been interpreted widely throughout the history of people-kind... I do not suggest eating *too* well. My definition of eating well includes such tenets as:



1. **Eating locally-produced foods;** produce that has not traveled hundreds of miles to reach your plate. Local honey, for instance, is known to keep you healthy by warding off allergies to local plants and pests, and is often organic.
2. **Eating naturally;** dairy, meats, fish, chicken, and produce that have been raised organically and are not enhanced with questionable additives.
3. **Making and eating your own food** using natural ingredients and avoiding packaged foods. Packaging and additives are equally non-sustainable.
4. **Eat a balanced diet;** a variety of natural, local foods help to support your health and the health of your community.

Lesson Four – be conscious.

Be aware of your actions. Consider how you are making decisions about the materials and toxins you live with. Look at the labels of items you use in your home, such as cleaners, paints and glues, make-up, shampoos and plastics. Are these made from eco-friendly materials or are there many chemical substances lacing the purity of these liquids and powders that touch your skin, your hair and nails that are toxic, cancer-causing and just plain nasty to smell?



Consider what makes up the air you breathe in your home from the finish on your flooring to the ventilation in each room.

Lesson Five – breathe.

If you have advanced to Lesson Five and have slowed down, are eating carefully, are expending less energy and are making conscious decisions about your life, Lesson No. Five will come very easily. Breathing is deeper and richer when done more slowly. Breathing is easier when you are healthier from eating well. Breathing is more satisfying and restful when you have expended less energy (and spent less money and reduced stress from money worries). Breathing brings greater awareness when you are conscious of its rhythm.



Now that wasn't too painful, was it? And you have energy left to recycle this magazine (but reuse it first by passing it along to a friend). **cha**

Nicole Goldman, founder of 'g' Green Design Center in Mashpee Commons, is an interior designer who works with commercial and residential clients to create green environments that are comfortable, affordable, inspiring and sustainable. She shares her experience in design through contributions in many publications as well as in speaking opportunities for professionals and homeowners. Nicole is a speaker at the Cape & Islands Wellness Expo.