



re-use

10 WAYS TO SAVE THE PLANET



JOJO CARMELLO

BY JOJO CARMELLO

April 22 is Earth Day! This is a perfect time to raise awareness of what everyone can do as individuals and as a community to improve the health and wellbeing of the planet and all its inhabitants.

Here are some planet-saving solutions to celebrate the Earth every day:

1 BRING YOUR OWN BAGS WHEN YOU GO SHOPPING.

The manufacturing of plastic bags requires millions of barrels of oil every year, and only a small fraction of plastic bags are recycled into useful new products. Plastic bags add to the trillions of pieces of toxic plastic waste in our oceans and waterways, proving fatal for birds and marine life. To keep your reusable shopping bags germ free, wipe them down with a solution of white vinegar and water or place them in the sun for an effective natural germ killer.

2 BRING YOUR WATER BOTTLE EVERYWHERE YOU GO.

Last year, Americans used approximately 50 billion disposable water bottles, the majority of which ended up in landfills and waterways. More and more businesses like Sky Harbor Airport, the Desert Botanical Garden, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, fitness centers and more now offer refillable water bottle stations.

3 MAKE YOUR OWN “TO GO” MORNING BEVERAGE. In addition to the millions of plastic cups used daily in the U.S., we also throw away tens of billions of Styrofoam cups every year. Like plastic, Styrofoam is made from petroleum. It also has little to no recyclability and can take up to 500 years to decompose. Whip up your breakfast smoothie at home, and be sure to take your reusable cup with you to the local coffee shop.

4 BUY CONSCIOUSLY. When shopping, consider the environmental impact of product packaging. For example: buy powdered laundry detergent instead of liquid detergents in plastic containers. Reuse hand soap containers by refilling them with your own soap solution. Consider making all-natural, antibacterial household cleaners using white vinegar, lemon juice and essential oils.

5 USE IT UP. WEAR IT OUT. MAKE IT DO, OR DO WITHOUT! And, shop less. You'll be surprised how resourceful you'll become when digging a little deeper in your pantry, closets and garage.

6 RECYCLE OLD JEANS AND SNEAKERS – DON'T TRASH THEM. Old denim can be recycled into home and automobile insulation and old sneaker soles can be transformed into sport courts.

7 ALWAYS RECYCLE ELECTRONICS. Do not throw any electronics or batteries in the trash. Check your local municipality for community electronic recycling events. Most Target and Best Buy stores offer electronic recycling bins so you can drop off old electronics any time. Old cell phones can be deposited into a designated bin at the Phoenix Zoo entrance to help save gorilla habitats in the Congo.

8 ALWAYS DONATE. What you no longer need may be exactly what someone else is looking for. Donate your discards to a local charity-supporting thrift store. Support them further by shopping them for clothes, furniture, home decor and more. When you shop secondhand stores, charities, the planet, and your wallet all benefit.

9 FOLLOW CURBSIDE RECYCLING GUIDELINES. What is accepted for recycling can vary from city to city. Get an up-to-date list of recyclables for your community. Recycling guidelines are simple and very specific. When these guidelines are not followed, recyclables can be contaminated and result in all those good intentions going to waste. Effective recycling is everybody's business.

10 SAVE THE PLANET AND HELP OUR SCHOOLS! Organize an end of school year donate-a-thon. At the end of the school year arrange for donations of usable binders, backpacks, pencils, books and other supplies to a local organization or charity like Treasures4Teachers. ■

Jojo Caramello is a Life Transforming Professional Organizer, speaker, and founder of 2Sistaz Organizing. Originally from Boston, Jojo has been a small business owner in Arizona since 2004. 2Sistaz Organizing is committed to environmental sustainability and strives for zero landfill with every organizing job by repurposing, recycling and donating excess to local charities. You can reach Jojo at 480-421-8363 or 2sistazorganizing@gmail.com.

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