

ALICE CHENG
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#PGC2016 DAY 29/30
Change (GREENER)
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30th October, 2016

Project Green Challenge - Turning Green
PO Box 1146
Ross, CA 94957
United States of America

Dear Project Green Challenge 2016 Finalist Selection Committee,

A highly driven high school student currently enrolled in the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Victoria Park Collegiate Institute in Toronto, I am writing to express my keen interest in becoming one of sixteen finalists selected for this year's Project Green Challenge with Turning Green.

Attached below you will find 10 unique documents, each one distinct in their own respect, but similar in the sense that they contain tens of hours of laborious hard work and effort, a result of the innumerable tears and sweat shed, the combination of passionate social media revelations and real-life speeches delivered, the countless late nights and early mornings spent awake typing away profusely on the computer, in addition to the impalpable ounces of a dedicated soul determined to see the effects of global warming reversed and climate change deemed no longer a risk in her lifetime.

Ultimately, I included the cream of the (Non-GMO) crop; my proudest submissions over the last 30 days.

I started PGC off by submitting a worked extensively evaluating and re-thinking my carbon footprint with the Day 1 (FOOTPRINT) Greener Challenge, which was also the first challenge I won. On the topic of firsts, it was also the first PGC related topic I posted about on my Facebook page, a decision that was greeted with plenty of supportive reactions, comments, etc., something I certainly didn't expect. In hindsight, I reckon that the prospect of voicing my thoughts on important issues in such a public manner is only frightening if one makes it out to be in their mind - this challenge has certainly shifted my stance on leveraging the power of social media to influence public opinion for the better, and now, I can safely say that I am even more confident and knowledgeable on continuing to do so without fear for all great topics.

My willingness to adapt quickly to changing trends (e.g., social media promotions) demonstrate a large deal of flexibility and open-mindedness, but beyond that, my PGC2016 involvement has also instilled in me effective communication skills, as demonstrated in my submission for Day 2 (ORGANIC)'s Greenest Challenge, where I recorded an oral conversation between a close friend and I, as well as having documented the written conversations with five others - that's six people in total! Not only did this require immense amounts of logical thinking, seeing as I did not want to repeat questions in the interactions, but it also showed my capability to extract the most important components in an often long response.

As an "IB Student", I do admit I possess many of the stereotypical traits we are subjected to, including a knack for research and lengthy reports, however PGC2016 truly gave me opportunities to step out of my shell and express myself creatively, something I don't get to do much at school everyday. For instance, Day 3 (ZERO WASTE)'s Greenest Challenge and its connection to Lauren Singer, an active blogger/online video content creator, inspired me to write "more from the heart". With a casual yet informative blog post, I began to shed the "scientific persona" I had long donned, and began coming off as more genuine and thoughtful, thus shedding light on my skill to carefully craft my words in ways that would appeal to a wide range of communities and audiences from teenagers to adults/seniors, something that would prove incredibly beneficial for the responsibilities of a PGC2016 Finalist in dealing with press coverage, etc.

Up until this point, all of the submissions featured have won a challenge level in the program. However, I am a person who certainly will not discredit or undermine material that hasn't received numerous accolades, attention, and the like, as evident in my selection for Day 8 (BODY)'s Green submission for this portfolio. Despite the lack of value placed on Green level deliverables in PGC challenges in contrast to the

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the other levels, I have certainly demonstrated my consistency and drive; even if this particular submission did not have prizes as an incentive, I put in my best work and gave it my all regardless. For me, I was more motivated by the educational aspect of PGC rather than obtaining items of material worth, and the same idea goes for how I view practically all other commitments in life; I don't find loopholes, slack, or find "the easy way out" but instead, I make sure to tackle the obstacle head on with a confident, relaxed attitude.

While doing such, however, I am also extremely aware of the importance and necessity to uphold a strong self of self throughout the process. When I worked on Day 10 (Meatless Monday)'s Challenge, I made sure to stress and emphasize - not just merely mention - my ethnic, cultural, and ancestral roots. Since this challenge called for me to reflect and document with precise detail the food I consumed, it definitely did trigger plenty of negative flashbacks of elementary school, when I, an first-generation Asian immigrant was ostracized and outcast for my consumption of seafood (I was told it reeked) and other absurd Chinese/Japanese delicacies such as pig's/chicken's feet. These days, I am more than happy to fully embrace the historical and traditional significance behind these foods, so instead of hiding aspects of my personal background, I decided to bear it all, demonstrating my unapologetic approach upon writing.

Albeit my verbal prowess when sharing sensitive topics, I also showcased my interest and proficiency in design and innovation in general. As a continuation from Day 10 (Meatless Monday), I was encouraged to produce a public service announcement and answer a few thought-provoking questions for the Greenest level of this challenge theme, though I decided to take things above and beyond the average standard, another asset characteristic of myself. I pushed myself further, preparing a thorough infographic slide series in conjunction with a video featuring spoken word, a whiteboard lesson/presentation, as well as a call to action, which resulted in my first "double win"; I was recognized for my work in both the Greener and Greenest challenges, which reminded myself that anything was possible if I put my mind to it and did not cave in to the face of adversity.

I soon came to realize that food played an essential aspect of our lives, hence serving as a testament to my sharp observation skills. Patterns tend to come fairly naturally to me, a trait only intensified by Day 18 (Non-GMO)'s Greenest Challenge. At this point, I had become familiar with the conventional industries' tendencies to lobby governments and deceive ordinary citizens, but I also noticed that when I tended to feel strongly for a cause, I did not keep those thoughts to myself. Rather, I notified people close to me of these happenings right away, and even providing engaging circumstances for them to participate. In the case of this submission, it was the first "official" report/write-up summary of an event I held during PGC2016, but to tell the truth, it is more fitting to say "my entire lifetime". In the end, I was highly proud of the professionalism I exuded in a relatively concise manner by combining mediums (pictures, text, etc.)

The next submission I highlighted was from Day 22 (HEMP)'s Greener level, one of the more open-ended prompts/challenge guidelines, yet it acted as a wonderful outlet for me to channel my strength and when teaching or sharing content - even if I personally am a new student to the subject, enforcing the notion that I am a lifelong learner, eager to absorb anything previously unknown (e.g., 3 insightful facts on hemp) and interpret the material with a fresh twist in order to then pass on to others. Ultimately, I am always looking to gain, and to give, all the while being unafraid to add in my personality and creativity (which does come in abundance) along the way. In other words, I would have no problem turning a boring passage of an encyclopedia into a quirky animation, but in this case, hemp was already quite intriguing of a topic. That did not stop me from surpassing the basic requirements and making a fun, "talk-show like" lesson in video form but not forgetting to capitalize on what I do best: research reports!

That being said, I am a staunch backer of the "quality over quantity" mantra, but that fails to include quality content in grand quantities, which I certainly displayed in Day 26 (ECO-HERO)'s Greener Challenge, an instance where I went to great lengths to share Safia Minney, a sustainable fashion advocate/entrepreneur's story. Some may argue this was a blatant example of a disregard for word limits, but the way I see things, it purely reflects my indifference to any and all limits, period. Being genuinely fascinated by Safia's life and accomplishments, I did not stop myself and my meticulous work-ethic from documenting all, publishing what was a ~5 page e-book that I now bask with tremendous joy in.

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Last, but not least, was my submission for Day 27 (RIPPLE)'s Greenest Challenge, arguably what was the most painstaking yet rewarding piece of work. By then, the challenges had grown to such a scale where it was beyond simple day-to-day actions whose impacts are restricted to a few people. This time around, I had to support my friends (3, in fact) in implementing sustainability initiatives/carrying out environmental acts of kindness which, by extension, affected not only them but everyone THEY impacted as well. The change which was conducted was on such a brilliant scale that I felt compelled to create a presentation series at least a fraction as moving. After this theme, I experienced a turning point in my life. I would, for the first time, consider myself not just eco-conscious, but an eco-conscious leader who had successfully induced not ripples, but WAVES of change in three large student communities.

In closing, I hope the following reports, presentations, images, videos, and other content are as eye-opening, thrilling, enjoyable, informational, and most of all, life-changing to you as much as they were to me throughout the month of October 2016.

I do realize it is practically impossible to fully summarize everything my entire journey in a matter of megabytes, but this is my attempt.

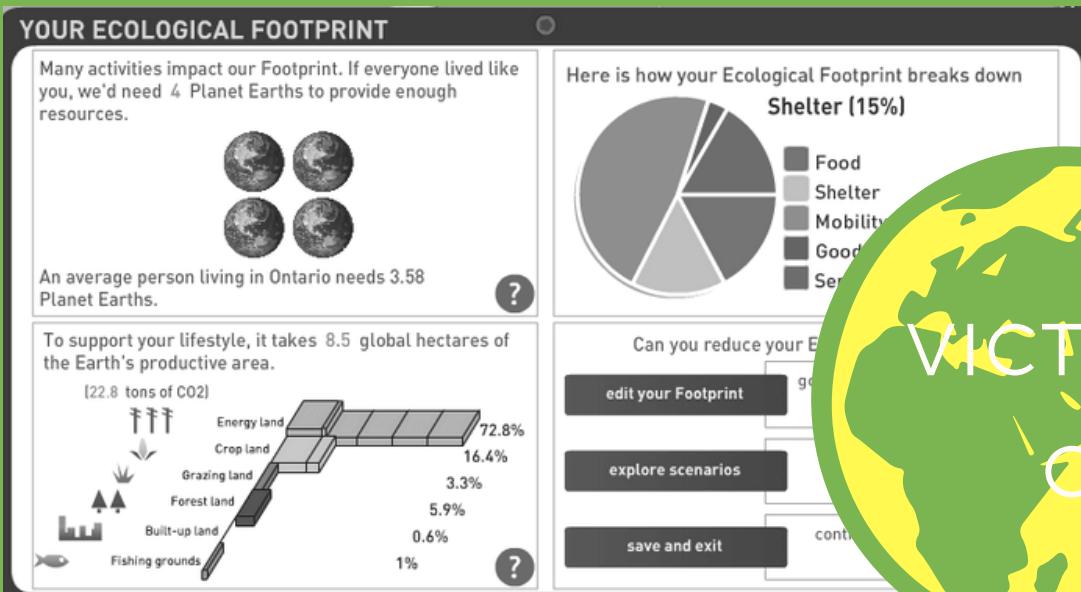
I truly would like to thank everyone who has played a role, no matter how large or small, in shaping this year's Project Green Challenge. I can only hope that I will be honored with the opportunity to advance my journey one step further by being selected to attend the PGC2016 Finals in San Fransisco.

To me, this month was as if a dream came true, so I could only imagine what

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alice Cheng



ALICE CHENG
alicecheng



VICTORIA PARK COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

MY CARBON FOOTPRINT

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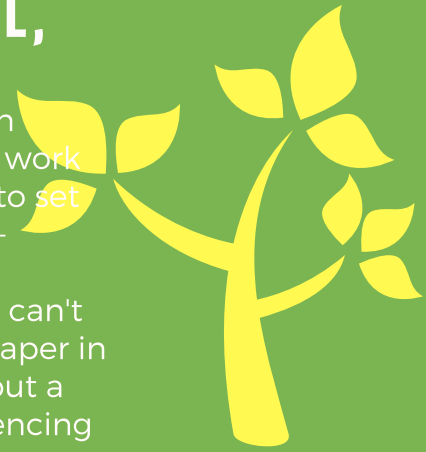
TOP 3 CARBON-INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES

In order to support my lifestyle, FOUR Planet Earths would be required, with the most impactful elements being Mobility (47%), Shelter (15%), and Food (17%).

BELOW I'VE INDICATED 3 SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES MOST LIKELY TO BLAME FOR THE ABYSMAL FINDINGS, WHETHER OR NOT THEY'VE SURPRISED ME, AND HOW I CAN CHANGE THEM TO BE LESS CARBON-INTENSIVE

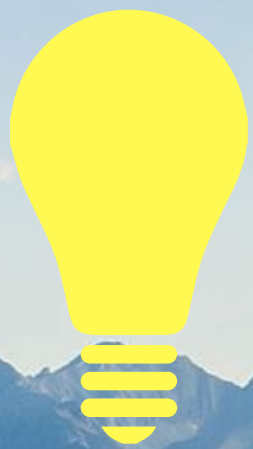
EATING MORE PLANT BASED, NATURAL, AND LOCAL- FOOD

As someone who only consumes meat/fish occasionally, I was quite taken aback when this was my 3rd carbon-intensive area, though I still need to work on reducing meat/fish/dairy/egg consumption; I think a reasonable goal to set would be a maximum of one meat or fish serving per month, and one bi-weekly dairy/egg serving (infrequently). However, I think my biggest food downfall is not buying enough locally produced/grown foods (only 1/4) - I can't use cost as an excuse here, because most times eating local is much cheaper in the long run. I haven't grocery shopped with my parents in a long time, but a good step would be to start again, advising, informing, and directly influencing their choices (changing the ratio consumed to 3/4 local).



SAVING ENERGY IN THE HOME

To save on hydro, my family almost never utilizes heating/AC in the colder/hotter months, but I'm definitely going to propose integrating solar energy and taking advantage of government incentives. Other than that, the calculator does not account for household appliances/lightbulbs, but I must make note that not all appliances around my home are certified efficient - definitely something to look into! In the future, I want to use less energy by turning off appliances when not in use, switching to energy saving bulbs, and convincing my parents to do some investing in energy saving appliances/objects.



TRAVELLING MORE GREEN - MOBILITY

I live in a more suburban area just Northeast of downtown Toronto, so granted, I'm frequently travelling to and from the city centre, either using subway, bus, or my dad's very outdated, fuel inefficient SUV from 2001. Considering 1/3 of the world's gas emissions are because of vehicles, I should avoid travelling using my car as much as possible in order to reduce my overall kilometres travelled in a car per year (minimize to less than 2000km/year). I'm not too sure about the finances, but I can definitely also start a conversation about the fuel efficiency of our vehicle with my dad and look into possible solutions from there.



RETAKE THE QUIZ...

After adjusting my responses for 'food', the amount of Earths I would require remained unchanged. After implementing changes for mobility, though, I would need only 3.9 Earths and 8.3 global hectares. Finally, I decided to indicate changes in heating my house; should I choose to lean more toward solar, geothermal, etc. - I would only need 3.4 Earths and 7.3 global hectares!




SOCIAL MEDIA

The little things make a difference - but when one uses tools such as Social Media platforms (e.g., Facebook) to reach a wider audience, it is then the change has great potential to be magnified.

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED WHEN I NOMINATED 5-6 OF MY CLOSE FRIENDS TO TAKE ON THE SAME CHALLENGE + CALCULATE THEIR OWN CARBON FOOTPRINT OVER FACEBOOK! TAKE A LOOK!

MY SCREENSHOTS



Alice Cheng [Update Info](#) [View Activity Log](#) 5 ...

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★ 5 Pending Items

Intro

Environmentalism/Performing Arts Enthusiast/
Political Aficionado. I advocate for youth-led
change.

- Rink Guard at City of Toronto
- Founder/CEO/Owner at Global Figure
- Event Coordinator at Toronto Youth Environmental Council - TYEC
- Went to Victoria Park Collegiate Institute
- Lives in Toronto, Ontario
- From Shenyang, China
- Followed by 188 people



Status Photo / Video Life Event

What's on your mind?

Public Post

Alice Cheng 7 hrs · Public

So excited to be taking part in Turning Green's Project Green Challenge, also known as #PGC2016, which runs everyday during the month of October!

Today's theme was FOOTPRINT, so I encourage you all to calculate yours using Global Footprint Network's calculator:
<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/.../ind.../GFN/page/calculators/>

After doing so, I know one significant change I'll be making is cutting back on the amount of processed/non-organic food I consume. I challenge Helen Lin, Yanning Wang, Felix Wang, Hannah Nie, and Chris Ho to make that same change for at least a week (or more)! :))

Footprint Calculator

How much land area does it take to support your lifestyle? Take this quiz to find out your Ecological Footprint, discover your biggest areas of resource consumption, and learn what you can do to tread more lightly on the earth.

FOOTPRINTNETWORK.ORG

Alice Cheng Timeline Recent



on the amount of processed/non-organic food I consume. I challenge Helen Lin, Y... See More

Footprint Calculator

How much land area does it take to support your lifestyle? Take this quiz to find out your Ecological Footprint, discover your biggest areas of resource consumption, and learn what you can do to tread more lightly on the earth.

FOOTPRINTNETWORK.ORG

Like Comment Share

Caitlyn Liu, Panya Tang and 12 others

Chris Ho So glad you're taking on this initiative! For me, packaged snacks have always been my biggest weakness, though I will certainly try to seek out more natural alternatives.
Unlike · Reply · 2 · 7 hrs

Chris Ho SAME
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Alice Cheng you all get major high fives for the willingness to do this.
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Chris Ho XD
Like · Reply · 6 hrs

Write a reply...

Yanning Wang this sounds really cool but i'm not sure if i can do this. organic foods are really expensive and i'm not sure if anything non-processed will taste that good.
Like · Reply · 1 · 7 hrs

Chris Ho me too
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Write a reply...

Helen Lin Thanks for the tag Alice!!!! Today I had the opportunity to partake in the UN sustainable development goals training which was heavily focused on climate change and now I'm hella inspired to get involved w eco initiatives lmao hmu b!!!!
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Felix Wang We need to realize that our carbon footprint makes a huge difference. Other than diet, perhaps another huge factor is transportation. In addition to trying to eat organic and local, I pledge to try to walk more.
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Alice Cheng replied · 3 Replies · 6 hrs

Helen Lin #TurnDownTheAC
Unlike · Reply · 6 · 6 hrs

Helen Lin replied · 2 Replies · 6 hrs

Hannah Nie Go Alice!! This seems like a great goal; eating organic and local is beneficial to the environment as well as health and the thriving of community businesses and sustainable farming--win-win-win situation 😊 Will definitely try this myself!
Unlike · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Alice Cheng ❤️
Like · Reply · 1 · 6 hrs

Write a reply...

Write a comment...

PROJECT GREEN CHALLENGE 2016

~day two~

~organic living~

ALICECHENG | ALICECHENG012@GMAIL.COM | VICTORIA PARK CI

ALICE + EMILY

GATHERING
OPINIONS &
SHARING
KNOWLEDGE RE:
ORGANICS

DISCUSS AND CONNECT



“

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=800uj9vwEU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=800uj9vwEU)**

. . .

VIDEO LINK ATTACHED ABOVE
(SIMPLY CLICK - IT WILL REDIRECT AUTOMATICALLY)!

GIVE IT A WATCH; HOPE YOU ENJOY!

THE CONVERSATIONS DON'T STOP THERE

I DISCUSSED ORGANIC LIVING WITH 4 OTHER PEERS



LILY BARRACLOUGH, 18 -
THE 'SEASONED ENVIRONMENTALIST'



CAITLYN LIU, 17 -
THE 'APPREHENSIVE ADVOCATE'



AMANDA YU, 13 -
THE 'BEGINNER TO ECO-CONSCIOUS LIVING'



HELEN LIN, 14 -
THE 'EMERGING SUSTAINABILITY ENTHUSIAST'



lily

TAKES KEEN INTEREST IN THE SCIENCES; WAS ESPECIALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT RUNOFF, UNSUSTAINABLE FOOD BUT REALIZED FULL SCOPE OF ORGANICS

ALREADY VERY CONSCIOUS, VEGETARIAN; TRYING TO BE VEGAN, DISCUSSED THE ETHICS & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF ORGANIC MEAT CONSUMPTION



caitlyn

FREQUENT ORGANIC EATER; DILEMMA OF FOLLOWING 'MAINSTREAM' CULTURE; VERY CONCERNED OVER NON-ORGANIC CLOTHING/BEAUTY, NOW MORE AWARE



outline

NOT TOO FAMILIAR WITH DEFINITION OF 'ORGANIC'; MOSTLY A LEARNING DISCUSSION TO BROADEN SCOPE OF UNDERSTANDING; UNSURE OF WHETHER SHE WILL APPLY ORGANIC LIVING



helen

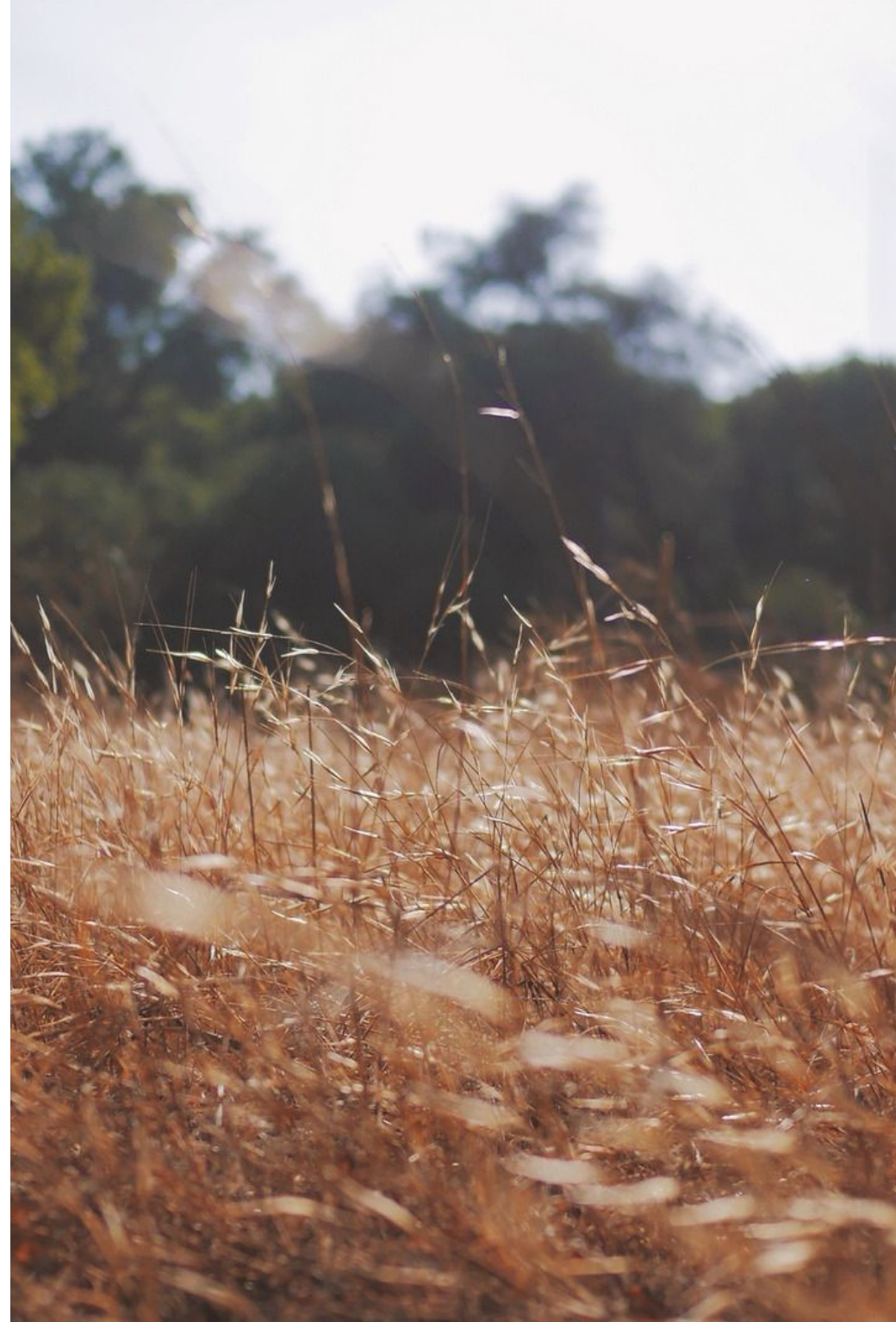


amanda



SUMM -ARY

MOST FRIENDS ONLY HAD A VERY NARROW UNDERSTANDING OF 'ORGANIC' - MOSTLY FOOD - BUT WERE DEFINITELY INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE, SO IT'S LIKELY THEY TAKE THE INFORMATION I PRESENTED AND BECOME MORE ECO-CONSCIOUS.



“

not all of my friends shared the same values, worldviews, and passions that i did - and that's perfectly fine.

- FINAL REFLECTION OF DAY 2 -

. . .

BECAUSE I HAD REACHED OUT TO SUCH A LARGE VARIETY OF YOUTH, EVERY CONVERSATION WAS DIFFERENT. BUT WHAT IMPACTED ME THE MOST WAS THAT ALL OF THEM WERE EAGER TO LISTEN AND TO AT LEAST TRY AND DO THEIR PART - NO MATTER HOW SEEMINGLY LITTLE/INSIGNIFICANT. AFTER TODAY, IF ONE PERSON DECIDES TO BUY ORGANIC COTTON SOCKS, I WOULD STILL FEEL TREMENDOUSLY PROUD, KNOWING THAT THEY, TOO, ARE NOW WELL EQUIPPED TO SHED MORE AWARENESS ON THIS LIFESTYLE TO THEIR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, THUS AMPLIFYING THE EFFORT.



ZERO WASTE LIVING IOI

I carried everything I would normally throw out in a single bag for 24 hours – and here's what came out of it.

Above image taken at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre: a much improved alternative to the conventional, environmentally damaging plastic water bottle – my favourite glass bottle with Lake Ontario in the background.

Picture by Alice Cheng

2001 — it was the year I was born; a year of great change and development — socially, environmentally, technologically, among countless other areas. Most of all, though, it was the year following the world's thrust into the new century, one which signalled not only a massive paradigm shift, but also a myriad of changes to our societies' value systems as a whole.

Production efficiency and capacities skyrocketed, incomes and standards of living in nations across the world increased dramatically — so did the need for additional goods/services, the rapid disposal and waste of resources in order to fulfill such needs, and thus, you could well say that I, too, was born into a global culture where a system of promoting unsustainable economic growth and the infatuation with mass-consumerism were second nature; highly revered and commonplace.

Most of my early formative years were spent in vain; I occupied my days comparing yet correlating my materialistic wealth and possessions with my popularity, which subsequently influenced my

self worth (or lack thereof). On a daily basis, I was inundated with mixed messages; advertisements promised me a paradise where I'd have it all; the latest trends and the hottest brands — I was promised pure bliss, but much to my disappointment, it was the complete opposite.

It would take me the latter portion of my lifetime to realize replacing my wardrobe with cheaply manufactured products on a monthly basis would not contribute anything toward my long-term well being, but fill me with anxiety and dread instead. And as I gradually built up my understanding of how my actions as an individual affected much more than simply myself, I began to change my perspective.



We only have one planet, so let's all do our part in reducing our negative impact – one major aspect would be reducing our waste production!

Image sourced from Apple Pages



Sometimes, it's about looking at the glass half-full, not half-empty; it's about perspective. I began to make the most of the situation and realize my potential when it came to making a meaningful change.

Picture by Alice Cheng

As I surrounded myself with more like-minded peers, I started thinking to myself, *“What would people in the future — myself included — think of our current behaviour? What would the world look like several decades later, and what can I do **now** to affect the outcome down the line? Am I satisfied with what I value, or would I like to make a change — empowering others to follow suit in the process? Most importantly, can I*

guarantee in 50 or 100 years' time, the planet would resemble anything it does today — for the better or worse?"

Zero Waste & Our Environment

Enter my involvement with environmentalism. It first began within the walls of my middle school in the seventh grade, but before long, I was expanding my efforts to the municipal level, speaking at large-scale conferences, hosting workshops/events, spearheading campaigns, and the like. Just this Summer, I was selected as a recipient of Corporate Knights' Magazine's 30 Under 30 Sustainability Leaders Canada award — it was an honour and a true testament to my progress or *'awakening'*, if you will, over the past few years.

Being someone who is never satisfied with the status quo, I always strive to go above and beyond, which is exactly what inspired me to register for Turning Green's *Project Green Challenge 2016*, in hopes that it would incentivize me to do just that — break out of my comfort zone and explore new territory when it came to leading sustainable lifestyles. It has done just that, and Days 3/4 + *The 24 Hour Zero Waste Challenge* have just solidified my sentiments.



It takes plenty of persistence and determination, but it's possible.

Picture by Alice Cheng

The 24 Hour Zero Waste Challenge

If anything, carrying everything I would otherwise discard in a single bag for 24 hours has taught me a plethora of extremely important life lessons. First, it's that *'living zero waste'* is a lot harder than it sounds; we surround ourselves and interact with waste in practically every situation life has to offer, be it in the shower, at the dinner table, the clothes we wear, or the work we do.

That being said, however, this certainly leaves plenty of room for experimentation and self-discovery; such a multi-faceted issue(s) require thinking outside the box — beyond the traditional of approach of stopping at a reusable lunch bag and/or recyclable bottle — those are great first steps, but there is certainly more to be done!



As a variety of components to everyday life (e.g., fashion, food/agriculture, transportation, resource production, etc.) become more mechanized/'artificial', we beg the question, "How does humanity coexist with the frailty of the natural world?"

Picture by Alice Cheng

GOING DEEPER: 4 Further Ways – Live Zero Waste

Opt for Alternative Products/Reduce Packaging

- Organic products over conventional, heavily processed/refined/ packaged products results in much less waste and benefits for consumer and the environment!
 - E.g., avoid toxic conventional air fresheners; many natural options available from much purer/simpler ingredients which don't require aerosol cans (extremely taxing to dispose properly of); even small actions make a difference.
 - Buy in bulk whenever possible! Save money and the amount of waste produced in the long-run.



Check out these locally-grown, organic onions taken at the Farmers' Market I volunteer with every weekend located in the East-end of Toronto! And, not to mention – they're not packaged at all, but rather sold in bulk!

Picture by Alice Cheng

Channel Your Inner Resourcefulness/DIY-Spirit

- Repair and/or repurpose (upcycling!) instead of constantly replacing and disposing; will help you see the utility and value in the most seemingly insignificant things!
 - Make your own — of practically everything; more likely to pick up more natural ingredients and end products can be very multi-purpose (e.g., general DIY natural cleaning agent/soap); homemade products are much more safer and less wasteful of resources than those found at the typical store!

Ditch Disposables

- Single use items such as plastic cutlery, plastic bags, plastic water bottles are unfortunately a reflection of how reliant on plastic our society has become.
 - Defy this ‘norm’ and take a stance with your decisions; bring your own cutlery (reusable) next time you eat out — same goes for drinking water in a reusable bottle (BPA-free, of course!), shopping with a canvas bag, etc.
 - Make the shift to electronics; mail, flyers, news/magazines, books — paperless is great for tree, energy, and water conservation!

Mason jars are a great alternative to plastic, single-use, disposable, unsustainable and highly polluting/wasteful packaging options.

Photo by Alice Cheng



Second Hand Becomes Second Nature

- Don't be afraid buy used clothing (take part in a clothing swap; it's a great way to exchange ideas/have a discussion with fellow sustainability enthusiasts!)
 - Buy used furniture; sometimes vintage and/or antique pieces are made better (not being 'churned out' on a production line fuelling present-day consumer culture, for instance) — you'll have an excellent idea of **how long** it holds up and thus, reduce the risk of having to dispose of it (generating waste).
 - Buy used dishes, used books, used household products — second hand is by no means inferior; instead, it shows you are mindful as to not produce more waste than there already exists!

Markets such as these are great for exchanging gently-used, second-hand items/products in order to reduce waste production/unnecessary disposal of goods.

Photo by Alice Cheng



GREENER DAY 3 – My Experience/Future Changes

Overall Experience

My participation in Project Green Challenge 2016's Day 3 was arguably the most memorable task yet. Having been the first challenge conducted over the course of 2 days, this experience has provided me with the time to fully address my problems, as well the necessary steps I must take to hopefully improve/solve them.

I've always been quite conscious of what I was throwing out since I first opened my eyes up to environmental issues and the rate of waste production, but have never given much thought to the *accumulation of all my life's waste* over the years. Just the amount I produced for one day was enough to leave me a bit stunned, but I am glad I got to see this sooner rather than later in life, so that I can implement changes (outlined below) right away!



Photo sourced from Alice Cheng's Instagram account @aye.cheng

Specific Changes I Will Implement?

The Challenge may be over, but in a way, this experience will never actually leave my mind; it will be bound to stay in the crevices of my thoughts for years to come — but starting tomorrow, here are some goals and plans that I will work hard to accomplish.

Consuming Less

Throughout this process, I've learned that it's not always about having 50 articles of the 'latest fashion trend', only for those to go 'out of style' and having to constantly be beholden to consumerism and materialistic wants. Instead, I'll choose to appreciate/keep the items I have now, and if absolutely need be, I'll invest in well-made, sustainable products which I know I'll cherish for a long time.

Engaging More

As the video has shown, corporations have been steadily gaining power over government in recent times, however that's more of a reason for me to take a stand. Besides spearheading change with my own purchasing power, I will actively voice my thoughts online, in casual conversation, etc. - and will certainly partake in engaging with my community/social circles in any capacity I can.

Making the Switch

Lastly, the combination of lessening consumption (future circumstances) and increasing engagement will allow for me to control my present. I've avoided talking to my parents (who have much control over my life in terms of living, eating choices, etc.) about converting to an organic diet/range of household products — though it is certainly about time. This challenge has prepared me well, and I believe it's something I am confident in resolving in the very near future.

Fun Facts About Waste

*“The benefits of living a zero waste lifestyle far outweigh any of the negatives that you could imagine. I save money because I’m not paying for the **embedded costs of packaging**, I shop **secondhand**, and I only **buy what I need**. I eat better because I don’t have the option to buy processed foods package-free, so instead I eat **fresh fruits and vegetables** and bulk nuts and grains. And when you eat better, you feel better. My weight has stabilized, I have more energy, and I need less sleep. I’m happier because for the first time in my life, I’m living in direct alignment with my values.”*

- Lauren Singer (Trash is for Tossers)

Interested in how an inspiring individual fit all 2 years’ worth of trash in a single mason jar? Visit this video link for some serious motivation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BMWQZkBgM>

Read this insightful post on Kleen Kanteen’s blog regarding France’s recent ban on single-use plasticware!

<https://www.kleankanteen.com/blogs/blog/france-bans-single-use-plasticware>

Curious about how switching to better alternatives from conventional products will benefit the world? How about mitigating the oceanic microbead problem? Check out The 5 Gyres Institute’s Plastic Free Shopping Guide to avoid buying products which will one day have grave consequences!

<http://www.5gyres.org/plastic-free-shopping-guide/>

#PGC16GREEN

May 8: Body

RETHINK - SOLUTION FOR FACT

#1: Don't be so easily swayed by superficial packaging - always judge by actual ingredients, not catchy slogans. By doing adequate research beforehand, I'll be equipped with the knowledge to navigate around toxic, unpronounceable chemicals.

RETHINK - SOLUTION FOR FACT

#2: I need an innovative way to still maintain good physical care but not overload myself with toxin buildup; I can look toward multi-purpose, TRULY NATURAL products (e.g., coconut oil) which can take the place of haircare, body moisturizing, lip balm - the list is endless!

A L I C E C H E N G
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FACT #1: When it comes to labels on cosmetics, legal definitions of enticing terms such as NATURAL, HERBAL, ORGANIC - don't exist, meaning brands can market their product however, effectively deceiving consumers by greenwashing!

FACT #2: The average American woman uses 12 personal care products everyday, exposing herself to ~126 unique chemicals, many of which are TOXINS linked to cancer, infertility, birth defects, but mind you, there are plenty of people who use OVER 12 products daily!

MY PRODUCTS

Toluene

FACE: Cleanser, toning water, day cream, eye cream, face scrub, BB cream

HAIR/BODY: Bar soap, liquid hand soap, body scrub, body lotion, hand cream, shampoo, conditioner, hair mask/butter treatment, hair oils, detangle agent, perfume/fragrance, nail polish/remover

MAKEUP/OTHER: Lip balm, eyeliner, mascara, lipstick/lipgloss, eyeshadow, makeup remover, feminine products

Note: I seldom wear makeup/never deoderant, hence limited product range

Making a Change - WHAT & WHY?

Starting today, I commit to making a change in the number of different products being employed for similar uses - soap, for instance. Many are conventional, made cheaply (with micro-beads; I'd love to forego them). Above all, I wish to reduce the number of overall personal care products to under 10; this also decreases the number of unique toxins I expose myself to over the years, as well as allowing me to fully take advantage of existing multi-purpose products in my house, especially food, such as making facials out of oatmeal/honey, thus generating less waste and benefiting all parties involved.

LOCATED IN MY NAIL POLISH, TREATMENT, HAIR DYE. USED TO 'SUSPEND COLOR', FORM SMOOTH FINISH ACROSS NAIL/HAIR. FOUND NATURALLY IN CRUDE OIL, TOLU TREE; ADDED TO GASOLINE.

HEALTH IMPACTS: Organ system toxicity, developmental and reproductive toxicity in the fetus, irritation on skin. LOW TO MODERATE workplace exposure - temporary tiredness, confusion, nausea, weakness, memory loss.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS: Classified a hazzard by US EPA; affects biodiversity - species other than humans. Slightlu adverse effects on the liver, kidneys, and lung and high-frequency hearing loss have been reported in some chronic inhalation studies of rodents.

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I Gave Meatless Monday A Try

I also enlisted my friend to do the same. Here's how it went.

A Food Journal — Live Tracking the Results



Pictured above: I'm one of the four executives of the "ToCL — Team of Club Leaders" at my school, and for this challenge, my friend Verna (blue shirt, second from left) has agreed to participate/send me reports of her progress the day. Let's start tracking results of our food consumption (meatless, that is)!

Name	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Alice	<p>1 small bowl of instant oatmeal with apprx. 2 tablespoons of brown sugar and 1 cup almond/coconut milk (leftover from my #PGC Food Challenge) + 1 large banana + 1 large peach — VEGAN!</p> <p>—</p> <p>On a side note, the peaches and banana were abnormally large, in my opinion, which really leaves me to question how/why — I'm thinking heavy GMO and pesticides, but perhaps it's just me being paranoid.</p>	<p>Today at around 11 AM, I left the house for a sub-committee meeting for the TDSB SuperCouncil (I'm the Executive Secretary-Treasurer for North America's largest school board student senate representing over 260, 000 students so although I'm not too huge a fan of Starbucks as a corporation, I can't deny their atmosphere/their suitability for conducting meetings)</p> <p>—</p> <p>With that said, I ordered a small green tea latte with soy milk, a spinach feta cheese with egg white wrap, and in addition, I also stole some of my friend's bubble tea/fries/pizza (cheese), which were purchased from other food joints in the area, but only in small amounts. My lunch mainly consisted of the Starbucks meal.</p>	<p>For dinner, I had 1 serving of Shandong (a Chinese province) style ramen noodles, tofu, a steamed "egg-brûle" with green onions on top, as well as a radish-spinach soup (this soup had no flavours/other ingredients at all besides plain water — it might seem bland, but foods like this is what I truly live for; I love experiencing the pure taste of the vegetable)!</p> <p>—</p> <p>I also had a few nibbles of a steamed squash/carrot salad medley, but didn't find it to be too appetizing, so I didn't eat a substantial amount. Other than that, I don't tend to overeat for dinner as I am very sedentary afterward and don't require large amounts of energy to fuel my activities.</p>
How Alice Feels Throughout the Day	<p>Amazing — refreshed, energized, and ready to tackle on the day! When I do happen to eat meat early in the morning (rarely happens), I feel lethargic, heavy/weighed down, and generally uneasy/nauseous, which really affects me for the rest of the day. Same goes with milk, especially those with a high fat content, but somehow I don't mind eating an egg occasionally for breakfast. I do feel like the brown sugar and banana did give me a "boost" to start the day off right, and the oatmeal provides a steady of stream of energy as opposed to white starches, etc. — highly appreciated.</p>	<p>Not too great — over the years, I've come to realize eating out rarely is a better alternative eating home cooked food, regardless of whether I am consuming meat or not. I can't control the amount of sodium/sugar, which does happen to be a huge problem at places such as Starbucks, McDonalds, Chatime, etc. Personally, I add little/no flavour to my usual food, so right now I feel the need to drink infinite amounts water and/or consume some fresh fruits and vegetables. The food I consumed was overpriced and if anything, my emotional well-being took a hit (I spent \$10; a lot for me).</p>	<p>Calm and appreciative — many would consider this dinner extremely boring/bland (according to friends I've invited over in the past), but it is in fact the meal I look most forward to each day. The lack of spices and other frivolous toppings, garnishes, etc. really encourage me to be appreciative for the abundance of food I have at the ready, as well the various tastes each food brings — there is in fact no need to overdo the spices, dressings, etc. (which may seem harmless at first, but they quickly accumulate and serve little to no actual benefit) if the combination of foods are paired well.</p>

Name	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Verna	3 cups of lemon water, 1 bowl of greek yogurt with mixed berries on top (raspberries, strawberries, blueberries) topped with a handful of granola chunks + a cup of coffee with a splash of 2% milk	<p>I was a bit curious about different diets, since the meal I had earlier today was my first exposure to something other than my usual “meat focused” foods, so I decided to give vegan eating a try. After researching some recipes, I discovered this amazing chickpea sandwich.</p> <p>—</p> <p>I blended chickpeas, lemon juice, mayonnaise, chopped onions + clery, water, and spices for the main mixture and put this filling between 2 whole wheat sandwiches with some lettuce and tomatoes too, so it’s sort of like a better alternative to tuna sandwiches.</p>	In my spare time, I regularly browse the internet in search of the latest food trends — typically with your conventional meat recipes, though. Today I decided to add “vegetarian” after my search query on YouTube and discovered a simple yet creative twist to spaghetti — using squash! I baked a spaghetti squash until it was soft and ok to run a fork through — it naturally becomes this pasta texture and practically identical to spaghetti, which I then cooked in a pan with butter, onions, spices, pasta sauce, and mozzarella cheese — I also had a side salad of mixed greens, too!
How Verna Felt Throughout the Day	I’m in my final year of high school, which is a very stressful period. Every morning, I’m always in a hurry to get to school and catch up with friends on the previous day’s homework, so this leaves very little time for me to eat a proper meal. Today was slightly better, since it was a day off, but usually I just scarf down yesterday’s leftovers (usually heavy meat-based dishes). I couldn’t do that with this challenge, so I tried my best to make something meat-less, which I rarely do. I felt really hungry — but not drained — a few hours in, but overall nothing too bad Next time though, I’ll take Alice’s advice and opt for more energy-packed foods such as bananas.	I was so glad I discovered this recipe! My go-to, easy-to-make meal is always a tuna salad — it’s so simple to open a can, mix it with mayonnaise, and slather the mixture between bread slices, but this meal has taught me to really pay more attention to how I prepare my food. It also teaches me that there are plenty of alternatives which are better for the environment. In a conversation with Alice, she told me that many tuna species contain high amounts of mercury due to bioaccumulation and water pollution, as well as the benefits eating less fish has on sustainability and conservation of natural resources. I feel great — especially after knowing I won’t be ingesting the fish’s toxins into my own body as well!	I’m at a lost for words. If I were to summarize my feelings, it would be “mind-blown”. It never crossed my mind that spaghetti squash could be used for actual spaghetti — before starting this challenge, I would have never bothered to touch weird foods such these, mainly because I was never exposed to how they are generally cooked, etc. Now that I’m at the end of my day, I feel rejuvenated — physically and mentally. It was really challenging for me to constantly come up with cool meal ideas given the strict restriction (though at this point I think of being vegetarian not as a hinderance, but an added perk to try more new recipes), but in the long-run, I feel satisfied at how much I’m benefitting my health and the planet’s.

What now? A Thoughtful Post-Challenge Reflection...

My meals for the day have officially come to an end! Here's me looking back on the whole experience.

I grew up in an Chinese household (though I was born and raised in Japan — Osaka, for that matter — a port city where sushi and other delicacies are made fresh from seafood caught just hours prior). As you would imagine, my family consumed fish regularly, and by that, I mean I would sometimes have 2, 3 even 4 different types of fish served at a single meal. Just as common was to feast on pig ears, chicken feet, various animal organs of the sort — though this was not frequently done as my origins are from Northern China, not the South, where these peculiar customs would be highly normal.

Being immigrants to a new country, money is tight, and as my parents struggled to resettle, we became extremely resourceful and mindful of wasting as little as possible. Chicken legs were only eaten if the bone marrow was hollowed, and beef was seldom purchased due to its extremely high price in comparison to other cuts of meat. That being said, my parents still placed great importance and value on meat consumption, as it was seen as a sign of great wealth and power in their formative years; the China of the 70s and 80s.

For many years, I was highly in agreement with their way of thinking and followed suit — but it wasn't until I went to school, interacted with more people (many of which were vegetarians), and began to get further involved with environmental advocacy/sustainable living that I decided my actions and diet were becoming increasingly contradictory. It was time for a change, one that was only affirmed by the discovery of wonderful resources/films such as **FOOD INC.** and **Forks Over Knives**, among many others. I've been a flexitarian now for a few months, and have never felt so at ease, both physically and mentally. To give additional insight regarding my current views on this lifestyle shift, I will quote a passage from my #PGC2016 Day 10 “Green” Challenge deliverable, where I analyze more of the reasoning behind my transition to this diet. It is as follows:

*“The most compelling point which convinced me to readjust my eating habits was the environmental damage and the decreasing **quality** of mass meat/animal by-products; it was taking a toll on not only my family’s wallet (which was already strained to begin with), but also on the welfare of other living creatures, as well as the earth — something so crucial for ensuring our generation’s future! Now, I would have **no more than one serving of meat/fish (typically only 1 meal) on a daily basis** — and even then, this happens not too regularly — I would say I do this roughly half of the week; **2-3 out of the 7 days.**”*

*Just knowing that I was ridding my body of many **unnecessary antibiotics/hormones** (before I was consuming multiple servings of meat/fish at every meal, everyday — and have certainly not felt that great, health-wise, afterward) is enough to make me feel pride in my decision, but now that I know just how much **positive impact** my actions have on the environment/animals/rights of exploited workers makes me feel **empowered to continue.**”*

— Alice Cheng, #PGC2016 Day 10 Green Challenge Reflection



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PROJECT GREEN CHALLENGE 2016 DAY 10 - MEATLESS MONDAYS GREENEST: A SCHOOL PROPOSAL

BY ALICE CHENG

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A woman with blonde hair is shown from the chest up, holding a whole lemon in her hands. She is looking down at the lemon. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall image has a slightly desaturated, muted color palette.

CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR
MY MEATLESS MONDAY PROPOSAL

A VIDEO PSA

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=KSCBR3LDCYU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSCBR3LDCYU)



MEATLESS MENU ALTERNATIVES

- Pizza is a popular dish, so on Mondays, let's introduce another topping(s) beyond pepperoni and/or cheese; any veggie combination is great!
- Flavoured/simulated tofu is a wonderful alternative to any "large chunks" of meat; this includes meatballs, burger patties, hot dogs, etc.
- Increase the amount of non-meat sides available (e.g., beans replacing bacon bits in nachos, etc.); people will naturally gravitate to newer options!
- Replace chicken stock with vegetable stock

PLEASE NOTE THAT MY SCHOOL CAFETERIA MENU IS ALREADY EXTREMELY LIMITED AS IS; NOT MANY CHOICES TO BEGIN WITH, BUT MOSTLY ALL MEAT.

A COST ANALYSIS

It's impossible to give an accurate estimate as of now, since cafeterias and their suppliers have deals for foods purchased in bulk which are not released for the public to see - however, I CAN address some common cost-related complaints!

Many argue that vegetarian food (e.g., pre-made meatless patties) is too expensive/hard to find, and even takes too long to make. Others would argue the entire transition process would be costly and bring undue hardship (emotional cost) to the student body. However, plenty of manufacturers/distributors sell vegetarian foods at comparable prices to meat and animal products. And the long-term benefits of being globally conscious/foregoing meat for a day greatly outweigh the slight upfront fees.





LOGISTICS | TIME

CAN LARGE QUANTITIES OF A VEGETARIAN MENU BE MADE IN A CAFETERIA SETTING?

- Current system: plenty of "instant", "pre-processed" foods reliant on frying, quick grilling, etc. - all cooking methods which could **still exist**
- Technology is constantly evolving; as a school, we could better allocate our budget toward improved kitchen improvement, **more staff**, etc.
- Unlike meat, foods made with vegetarian ingredients **are not as easy to go bad**; could very well mass-produce in batches at once, use in subsequent intervals, put in storage for longer.
- Could enlist the help of students with a spare; volunteer hours - opportunities are endless!



IN THE END, DO I THINK IT IS POSSIBLE?

**IT WOULD BE A HARD FOUGHT
BATTLE WITH THE CAFETERIA,
THE ADMINISTRATION, AND
EVEN THE BOARD, BUT YES.**

A FURTHER REFLECTION ON THIS PROPOSAL

THE POSSIBILITY DOES EXIST

Despite the Toronto District School Board - TDSB having one of the most stringent policies when it comes to overseeing change (even positive ones) at the school level, I truly believe I would be able to successfully champion this initiative.

Introducing the concept as a "pilot-project", one-day a week campaign would be helpful in allowing the entire student body time to adjust and take things in.

As I do serve on the executive of both my school's environmental council and my board's student senate, I can effectively lobby both administration for improvement. However, know that food preparation is outsourced to an external catering company, so things can go both ways. Being an independent company, they may be more easily persuaded by teens, or it could be the opposite, with their main incentive being profit, not food quality, environmental/social ethics, or the well-being of students. Today was a day off (Thanksgiving), so I could not speak with anybody, but I will tomorrow - here's to hoping their reaction is the former!

IN THE END, I ONLY HAVE UNDER 3 YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL REMAINING. I MIGHT AS WELL MAKE THE MOST FULFILLING, MOST MEANINGFUL ONES TO DATE; WHY WAIT UNTIL UNIVERSITY WHEN YOU CAN EXERCISE YOUR VOICE **RIGHT NOW?**



VICTORIA PARK COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

@ALICE CHENG | #PGC2016

THANK YOU FOR READING

REMEMBER TO GIVE MY YOUTUBE PSA VIDEO A WATCH!

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=KSCBR3LDCYU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSCBR3LDCYU)



Non-GMO Study Breaks

Yes, they're a thing – I hosted one today, and I shall proceed to

Pictured above: My friend Emel and I casually munching on some non-GMO chips while watching a documentary on GMOs!

NOTE: I have a YouTube video to accompany this write-up. Despite initial upload issues, I have since updated this document.

You can access the video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jqFx0l8alw>

As a high school student who has to juggle exorbitant amounts of schoolwork, extra-curricular activities, and a plethora of other responsibilities, I admit that I'm guilty of "stress-eating"; taking all my pent-up feelings of being overwhelmed out on my snacks.

Unfortunately, I can safely say there have been multiple occurrences (though this number has decrease lately) where I would consume bags of chips and other snack foods within a matter of minutes – only to feel sick to my stomach at the end.

PGC has brought to light the practice of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in the food/agricultural industry, leading me to question whether or not the GMO foods I had previously consumed were to blame.

You see, I never really gave much thought to what I was putting into my body. Most foods,

You are cordially invited to...

A Non-GMO Study Break at the Toronto Reference Library, Study Room 3.5 on the 29th of October, 2016 at 1:30 P.M.

Arrive promptly and dress to express, not impress. In other words, casually.

Bring with you 1 (one) non-GMO snack.

*Be aware filming will occur in compliance with requirements of Turning Green's PGC2016 Day 18 (Non-GMO) Challenge, Greenest Level. Screening of *The Future of Food* will occur. Be ready to share thoughts."*

-Alice Cheng

especially processed snacks, that I consumed didn't seem all that great for my health, nor did they have any informational labels – but I ate them happily nonetheless.

The Event Details

Today, I wanted to get serious about GMOs and decided to conduct an experiment: I would snack on all non-GMO foods and observe how I felt afterward. To make things a bit more fun (and more accurate from a scientific method perspective), I asked my good friends Emel, Alexandra, and Bonnie to participate as well.



It wasn't enough to simply eat! We educated ourselves, too, by watching the film, "The Future of Food" during our gathering.

However, not all of them wanted to be seen on camera, so they simply brought their share of snacks and assisted with the camerawork.

Regardless, my friend Emel Tabaku and I had a blast trying out all the different non-GMO snacks today! Originally, Emel and her friends wanted to feature me in a documentary they were filming for their Environmental Studies class, so they had messaged me over **Facebook Messenger** to schedule a date/time/place, as follows:

Date: 2016.10.29 (SATURDAY)

Time: 1:30 PM EST

Location: Toronto Reference Library, Floor 3

I guess you could say, then, that I didn't have any need to create a guest list – it was already pre-existing, in a sense! I still wanted to give some guidelines to my willful participants on what to expect, since I didn't want anyone to be taken by surprise. I created a very informal "invitation", shown below:

The Agenda for the Day

To make matters engaging, I compiled most of the experience in an 8.5 minute video which you can find on YouTube. To avoid problems, the link will be sent to info@turninggreen.org.

In the video, Emel and I discuss more about GMOs and the snacks we ate rather than the video screened, so I thought I would address the nature of the documentary film, **The Future of Food**, more in depth in this section.

Though the overview's "video" button linked to this film on the PGC challenge webpage for Day

18, I did browse a number of other GMO-related films prior to selecting this one to screen.

The reasoning behind my decision was that this film was largely historical, addressing the progression of GMO crops in the world, the evolution of the agricultural industry (+ the actions of major players/corporations), and to some extent, the effects of GMOs on the environment, humans, other plants, and animals.

This was contrary to what I noticed in plenty of other films, where they mainly presented controversial, not 100% accurate facts regarding the risks of GMOs on human health while failing to go far into depth about the involvement of heavy synthetic chemical usage, historical significance/events, and the like.

As always, PGC never fails to recommend valuable resources to easily educate others on!



In this picture, we can see an eager Alice having found the video and preparing to press the “play” button – let the action (and GMO induced atrocities) begin!

Our Reactions/Responses to the Documentary

Emel’s Thoughts: Highly concerned about domination of “big agriculture” companies influencing entire industry to convert to GMO crops/practices (association with toxins/synthetic chemicals); very displeased with how plant species/varieties decreased drastically/have become mass-produced – results in massive change of food culture; unsustainable situation

Alice’s Thoughts: Shares Emel’s feelings of shock and surprise RE: loss of biodiversity with addition of inorganic materials into food systems + drastic change of genetics and natural forms of species (e.g., Bt Corn; self-produces pesticides by itself, known to cause death to rats) is alarming, harmful. Appalled at large corporations’ desire for more profits



'Knack, 'knack. Who's there? "s'Knacks." — A Profiling

Evidently, I don't exactly have the "knack" for snack-related jokes, but what I can deliver is a comprehensive profiling of each product – both the facts and opinions derived from today.



Product #1: Lundberg Rice Chips

- Gluten-Free
- Whole Grain
- Contains 70% Organic Ingredients
 - Remaining 30% = Questionable
- Fiesta Lime Flavour
- "Delicious Brown Rice Crunch"
- #NonGMOProject Verified
- Product of the USA
- Certified CCOF Organic – not USDA
- "Lundberg Family Farms"; since 1973





Product #2: Terra Exotic Vegetable Chips

- Low Sodium – very true; minimal flavour
- Gluten-Free
- Product of the USA
- Made with “Non-Genetically Engineered Ingredients” – unsure if 100%
 - NOT #NonGMOProject Verified..
- Not much else to say RE: ingredients; ultimately leaves much unknown..



Product #3: Endangered Species Dark Chocolate

- Natural Dark Chocolate with Natural “Forest Mint” Flavour
- 72% Cocoa
- Fair Trade Certified
- #NonGMOProject Verified
- Certified “GF” – Gluten Free
- Certified Vegan
- 10% Net Profits to Non-Profit Partners Protecting/Preserving Wildlife
- Sustainable Packaging: 10% Unbleached Post-Consumer Recycled Paper, Water-Based Inks with Quality Information (Interior)



Pictured in left column: some of the non-GMO products (though the Terra chips were highly debated concerning the issue of “made with” and “genetically-engineered”) featured in today’s PGC Greenest Challenge! For the full reactions, please visit our video on YouTube!



As I mention in the video, I'm not the biggest fan of sweet beverages. But I have to admit, this coconut juice was the only juice-like drink I've tried in years which I could actually be able to gulp down without regurgitation

Product #4: Coco Libre Cocount Water

- No Added Sugar
- USDA Certified Organic
- #NonGMOProject Verified
- Certified "GF" – Gluten Free
- Fat-Free
- Cholesterol-Free
- Flavoured with Pineapple Juice
 - From Concentrate; Not the Most Fresh

For further information on WHY these products were chosen + whether we would REPURCHASE, refer to responses in **video**, linked above^^^.



Emel and Alice desperately trying to create profound quotes for video viewers. In the end, we managed to reflect on how today's session helped us learn more about GMOs and what everyday citizens can do in their communities to enact change. Of course, this applies to them too! Alice and Emel provide ample statements of what THEY will do to say NO to GMOs!

A Couple of Last Quotes from Emel and I RE: Takeaways

"Today I learned we should be more aware of what we're putting into our bodies – even if that means sacrificing a little more; GMO foods tend to be a little more expensive than the conventional version, but even if we pay an extra buck, it's truly worth it" — **Emel Tabaku**

"Non-GMOs are much better for our health and our sense of a clean conscience. It's very important to act on [the information] through our purchases" — **Emel Tabaku**

"Holding public screenings in schools & community centres, encouraging others to realize the goodness of non-GMO foods through sharing (like I did today) are just a few of the ways one can take action; write letters to the government = more support for the conscious food/agriculture industry" — **Alice Cheng**

Raising Awareness — It All Begins With a Plan.

Talking points will forever remain words, not actions if nothing happens to be done. It's crucial for dedicated young individuals to promote & raise awareness RE: #nongmo living.

The best place to do so? A school/campus. Learning is not limited to classrooms/lecture halls. Ideas can sprout anywhere, but it takes many to FOSTER it – my friends and I did just that today after our discussion/taste test.

Our great idea, you ask?

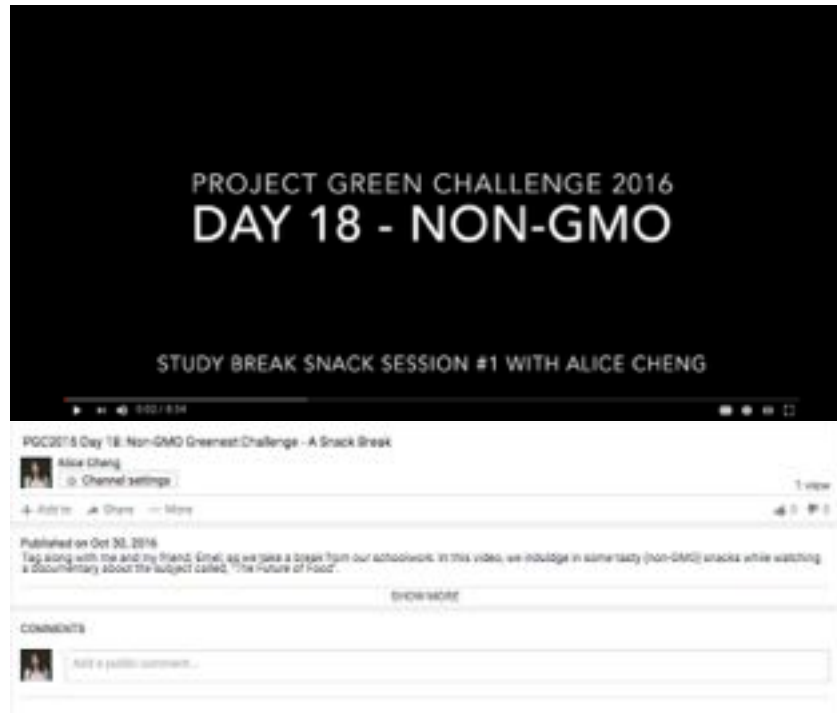
Simple.

Non-GMO Open Gardens VPCI — 2016's Coolest Initiative

General Overview/About: At our school, there's a great gardening program which is open everyday after school, though only a very small minority of students who take part in it. Usually, the food is donated to charity before it has any opportunity to be used at the school level, but our idea would enable the student body to come and taste just what the non-GMO food in our garden would taste like, cooked in a meal – though they would have to earn it!

Plan: Since it's almost November, this event would have to happen fairly soon. Here's how.

1. Talk to teachers responsible for garden (Mrs. Schwartz), food & nutrition programs (Mr. Brown), and lastly my supportive vice-principal (Mr. McNeill), pitch idea
2. Once their approval/suggestions received, begin promotions. Among our group, delegate tasks: announcements, posters, pamphlets, social media activities – then execute event!



Don't forget to give my YouTube video a watch!

Again, the link is as follows:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jqFx0l8alw>

PGC2016 DAY 22 — Hemp

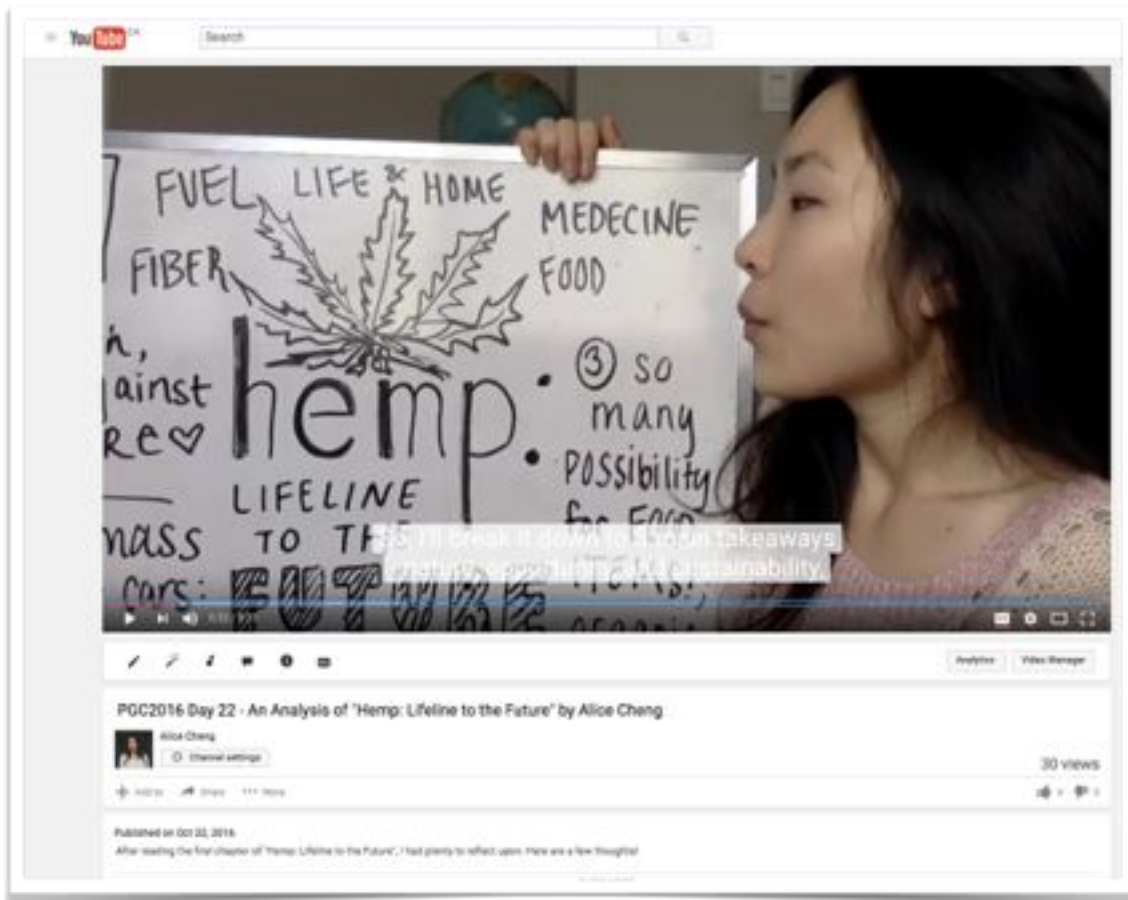
GREENER: Reflecting Upon “Hemp: Lifeline to the Future”

For this level of the challenge, I was feeling much too passionate about the topic to simply reduce my thoughts and opinions to a mere few paragraphs (but knowing me, it would be pages). Not only would my facial expressions, tone of voice, and overall “attitude” be negated, it just would not have the same sincerity, and ultimate impact (more people will be able to feel the effect of my words if I had chosen an alternate medium).

And so, I was compelled to brainstorm/storyboard, make props/supporting infographics, film, edit, annotate, and finally share a video addressing the discussion points on YouTube. You can visit the link here to see more of what I had to share.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9XJ8UGAXjI>

Do give my video a watch using, and make sure to turn on annotations! The background music might be little loud. I have also included a transcription as follows:



Introduction

“Hi everyone, I'm Alice, and I'm here with yet another whiteboard presentation. Today I'll be addressing hemp, since it's Day 22 already of the Project Green Challenge 2016 - WOAH! I read "Hemp: Lifeline to the Future" which was so insightful; generally it talked about how hemp can be used in every aspect of our daily lives; really radically transform the way we live. So, I'll break it down to 3 main takeaways - nature, opportunity, and sustainability, you know - FOOD.

The Three Main Important Points in the Chapter

So, for the first one, I learned that hemp can replace so many everyday items; storage, school supplies - even that rug over there *gestures* - we can really begin to work WITH nature, not against it. For example, these things I've just shown you are made from petrochemicals, the rug's from synthetic fibres, most likely, however the chapter discussed that we can use hemp for practically anything - fibres, fuel, medicine, food...that bookshelf behind me; when made from hemp fibre can be strongly reinforced, and those books over there - that just really reduces the amount of waste produced, and really maintains a sustainable lifestyle. This just goes to show you that hemp is not just a novelty item. Previously, hemp was associated with niche dresses and the like - essentially, "special" things, meant for adorning, etc, but not really meant to be fully utilized in our everyday lives, but this chapter taught me that is actually not the case. Hemp is extremely versatile and functional, so it's about time we start integrating it into the production of our everyday items.

Also, I learned that there's also opportunities for innovation; an example given would be cars - the auto industry, so hemp-ahol is a biofuel - one that we often don't associate with biofuels; we often think of animal waste or the burning of corn, but seldom hemp. But in addition, the chapter talked about combining hemp with a type of steel to create this very lightweight frame for a twist the "traditional car", thus lessening the carbon footprint/emissions - the vehicle is now more fuel efficient. Ultimately, it's about incorporating very unique, creative ways using hemp to challenge the status quo.

The last takeaway would be food; it's love, it's life - but also a scarce resource for many people around the world, and I certainly don't consider it to be such, but my actions also impact others around the world, so by encouraging consumption of more sustainable, organic alternatives such as hemp food products as opposed to conventional foods, we can really cut back on the amount of waste produced, as it is an extremely serious issue. Diverting more of our attention to hemp food products (e.g., hemp seeds, oil) will be beneficial; its cultivation has very minimal

environmental impacts; it's very eco-conscious; this chapter certainly encouraged more consumers to buy/choose hemp.

My Personal Thoughts on a Hemp Lifestyle — Do I Think It's Possible (YES + WHY)?

While all of this may sound great, the truth is there's still more work to be done. For instance, the US - like many other countries - have not legalized hemp. Now, some may say that hemp is a species of the cannabis plant, which is closely related to marijuana - it is, but the fact that the THC amounts in hemp are too little to be actually used as a drug, far less than that of marijuana's. Industrial hemp is something of great use, but not many people are taking advantage of it.

Many industries (e.g., cotton, petrochemical, synthetic materials) don't see hemp - rather, they don't WANT to see hemp enter the mainstream market to serve their own agendas, something very dangerous because people in positions of power preventing the legalization of hemp, so it's very hard for the common consumer to suddenly expect a change/make informed decisions.

However, more and more consumers are demanding this shift and for actions to be taken and for the usage of hemp to be common in everyday products - and the market has responded!

In the Green level of today's PGC Hemp Challenge, I featured a domestic business, Hemp Oil Canada, a producer of hemp foods, and an example of a company which has successfully tapped into this growing trend/demand for hemp products. In the end, it's still very dependant on consumer choices. You may be asking - how is it possible? How can consumers start to incorporate hemp into our everyday lives?

How does One Incorporate Hemp into their Daily Lives?

At first, this topic might seem daunting, but here are a few examples. You can buy more clothes made of hemp and/or buy less clothes from other materials, such as conventional cotton, which has a great deal of pesticides + uses a lot of water.

Also, one may switch their food staples such as oil. It's common to use olive/canola oil, but hemp oil is certainly worth a try. Same goes for other foods.

Another thing I want to emphasize is fibre. If you look at this entire bookshelf behind me, think about all the fibres involved - even the toilet paper I have on the ground with me is fibre. So what are these fibres actually made of? By choosing hemp, you're sending a resounding message to the companies. This also applies for petrochemical products, which can be replaced by hemp. Hemp also works wonders as a natural alternative to prescription drugs/conventional medication. Those are just some of the few ways one can incorporate hemp into our daily lives. There are more possibilities, but I do hope you give the suggestions I mentioned a try.

Outro

Thank you so, so much for watching and listening to everything I had to say. If you agree/are really interested in hemp, I highly encourage you to conduct further research, but also take action; advocate and spread the word to your family, friends, peers. Stay tuned for the next video and have an amazing day!

So...that was it, as far as the video goes. But how about what happens behind/after the (makeshift Apple OSX Photobooth/Macbook Webcam) filmset?



There's even a moment in the video when I give real examples of petrochemical-derived everyday products, and ponder about the possibilities had hemp been involved! Check it out! :))

I would also like to share my takeaway(s) in the following "thoughtful response".

Some Final “Parting” Words

In the above heading, you can see that I’ve put parentheses surrounding *parting*; despite today’s challenge theme coming to a close, my newfound infatuation with hemp will only continue to grow. Prior to today, I knew **of** hemp, but it would be a reach to say I knew much **about it**. For the longest time, I had presumed hemp was just like any other material/plant — flax/linen, cotton, etc. Because of its lack of popularity in contrast to cotton, for instance, I had often associated hemp with a “rare, novelty item” which “was strictly for those with above-average lifestyles/financial circumstances”. However, today’s readings & research topics proved my assumptions wrong. I educated myself about the *real* reasons why hemp was not coming to the forefront of the textile industry/mainstream market — despite its numerous uses, environmental/health benefits, **and** its historical significance. I began to open my eyes to yet another injustice to sustainability occurring in countless parts of the world, and the sheer misinformation/stigma — or rather, **inaccessibility to the appropriate facts** that were out there — even for the top experts, researchers, policy makers, and other such officials.

It frustrated me greatly at the same time I was in sheer awe of the potential and power of this “cash crop”. Not long after, though, this feeling soon morphed into determination — a fierce desire to drive change locally to start, but ultimately with a much larger, global impact. A while ago, I started a non-profit organization of my own called *Global Figure*, a social enterprise which has humble beginnings in selling egg-carton sculptures with proceeds benefiting projects of youth who are tackling sustainability-related issues/causes. As I am not Michelangelo, this didn’t work out quite the way I wanted to, so I had to pivot the directives of my social enterprise, instead choosing to simply **feature and spotlight** the work, thoughts, and intimate moments with young change-makers/leaders in sustainability (though I had to take a brief hiatus due to PGC).

That being said, I had always wanted to make a strong comeback with *Global Figure*; for the longest time, my friends and I joked that one day, I’ll be the CEO of a hemp kimono plant, since I epitomize a passionate environmental leader with a relentless obsession for asian culture/pride for her “roots”; her ethnic background. I notice a big problem in effectively reaching out to the generation of my parents, particularly family friends who are also first-generation immigrants and couldn’t be too bothered to make initial conscious changes in their conventional lifestyles. By combining my basic sewing/fashion design abilities, my ties and love toward my Chinese/Japanese culture, and of course, a willingness to make positive contributions toward the hemp/sustainability movement, I believe the idea of hemp kimonos (though I will probably start with smaller tote bags, etc. with a portion of the proceeds going toward an environmental cause/young leader; embodying elements of social enterprises) will no longer be an inside joke, but rather, a fruitful reality.

safia minney

my eco-hero for **PGC2016's day 26** greener challenge



Alice Cheng | Victoria Park Cl | alicecheng | alicecheng012@gmail.com

the concise yet inspiring journey of a pioneer in sustainable business

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safia's story

what comes to mind when you think of the current-day fashion industry — or better yet, western consumer culture? do you associate such concepts with words such as “exploitation”, “injustice”, and “unsustainable”?

if you did, you're not entirely wrong — today's market is dominated by large companies and producers who tend to be more concerned with amassing the most profit as opposed to looking out for the future of our planet and the humans/organisms which populate it (namely, the various inputs of production — especially land/natural resources and labour).

entire safia minney, the founder & ceo (now coo) of *people tree*, a pioneer in the sustainable (organic), ethical (fair-trade) fashion industry — one that is notorious for its disregard for the environment, its workers, and subsequently, the quality of most of our common clothing.

of course, safia minney has a myriad of countless other achievements under her belt (which, given that it is from her brand, would certainly be eco-consciously sourced) — many of which I will share with you in greater detail. all in all, safia minney is not only a social entrepreneur, but a staunch advocate, spokesperson, author, philanthropist and mother.

humble beginnings

born in britain to a swiss mother and a mauritian father in 1964, safia grew up in england's suburbs but was attracted to the city of london, where she moved to aged 17. there, safia become exposed to the power of communications to amplify the voices of social and environmental justice issues/causes as well as the opportunity to unleash her creativity working in the advertising, marketing, and publishing industries for companies such as *creative review magazine*.

an abundance of accomplishments

what's more, safia minney is highly proficient in japanese, an ability gained through moving to tokyo in 1990 with her husband while working for companies in publishing, *amnesty international*, and *the body shop*. prior to this, she had spent 3 months in south east asia; backpacking alone between bali and myanmar gave her a complete new perspective and passion for the importance of fair-trade/human rights, as well as an awareness of the environment's importance.

the combination of these experiences led her to start a number of successful organizations; a social marketing consultancy, as well as *global village* (environmental campaigning group with a focus on all things sustainable/organic living related: compiling information, designing and selling fair-trade items at various local fairs, and eventually opening a

successful shop in Tokyo). By 1995, *global village* had been renamed to *fair trade company* — one that never ceased to grow. As the company expanded to 17 staff members and 500 shops in 2000, it was time for a rebranding. That same year, the registered trading name *people tree* took the place of the *fair trade company*.

Safia Minney would have no idea how her life was going to change. She had no idea that...

- in **2014**, she would be shortlisted for the *social enterprise women's champion award*, and that *people tree* would be voted one of the *top 5 ethical retailers in the UK* by *ethical consumer*, **and how...**
- in **2013**, *people tree* would win *best organic textile product* at the *natural and organic products Europe awards*, and would be *highly commended* at the *London Sustainable City Awards* in the *sustainable fashion retail category*, and how her *rag rage* campaign launched that year would garner the pressure+signatories of over 1 million supporters of cleaning up the fashion industry's practices, **and how...**
- in **2012**, Safia Minney would win the *SOURCE Award* as *the most outstanding contributor to sustainable fashion* as well as the *outstanding contribution award* for *furthering sustainability in the fashion sector* and how *people tree* was a finalist, both of the latter accolades being at the *guardian sustainable business awards*, **among innumerable other awards, opportunities, and successes felt worldwide.**

challenges & obstacles along the way

yet, *people tree* and its ensuing success did not come easily. Safia Minney said this of the initial startup process (which is perhaps the most challenging part of establishing any enterprise, but arguably even more so for those in the fashion industry — the **slow fashion** one, at that)!

“When I started out, I wasn't very realistic on how difficult it would be to make People Tree work. We were investing in labour-intensive process while the industry was going in the other direction: mass-manufactured fashion, using synthetics instead of natural materials. We were dealing with very disadvantage people in remote places, and the business costs were huge. It was a massive undertaking, but it needed to be done.”

— Safia Minney, 2011

Additionally, *people tree* took a massively daring step when it decided to expand to England in 2001 and break through to the European fashion industry, where fair-trade was extremely uncommon (almost unheard of!) at the time, thus changing mindsets and demonstrating her/his company's prowess as a true trailblazer.

sketching designs yet drawing me in — what resonated with me?

how often do you hear of fashion labels being awarded with the *world fair trade organization fair trade product label* (in fact, *people tree* was the first company to acquire this, in 2014)? and, by no means is this a recent occurring — *people tree* has been committed and accountable for ethical practices for well over a decade — around 10 years ago, *people tree* “launched the first clothing range to meet the *global organic textile standard* certified by the *soil association* in the so-called developing world.”

to me, there’s something about *people tree* which distinguishes from all other brands, ethical or not.

just the amount of dedication and focus put into every detail of the well being of workers (fair wages, great working conditions, company transparency for the most part, ensuring equality among all levels of the company) as well as the environment (sourcing, manufacturing, transporting/distribution, stores, their campaigns/social media in general) from very early on have undoubtedly influenced and set the bar extremely high for plenty of the current sustainable fashion labels **as well as** conventional fashion labels when it comes to placing heavy emphasis on each and every component of their supply chains.

but most of all, it’s not all about taking, making, selling, and then profiting — it’s about **giving**.

i could go on and on about the quality and depth of engagement/improvement within communities affected by *people tree*’s social responsibility programs, but i’ve managed to break it down to a few key areas. they are as follows:

- using fashion as an empowerment tool for the farmers, producers of *people tree* garments
 - actively supporting 2000 farmers + artisans in 15 developing countries
 - making 50% advance payment on orders
 - putting their money where it matters — into the communities; funding education for children who would otherwise face inadequate access to this important resource
 - *people tree* has set up the 1st organic cotton project in bangladesh (garment industry is unfortunately rampant with negligence in this country; rana plaza collapse, etc.)
 - *people tree foundation*, a UK based charity was started in 2009 by safia minney to further support + campaign for fair trade, sustainability

ultimately, there’s something so touching and inspiring about safia minney’s story, as well as that of *people tree*’s. if one thing’s for sure, i know that i will surely be purchasing a lot more from them in the future!

one

taking it further

the power of the internet, social media, emails, and my personal feelings/questions

receiving the opportunity to...meet *the* safia minney?!!

to be quite honest, i first became exposed to *people tree* and safia minney around june or july of 2016 (this summer), when i **thought** i had exhausted the list of all possible environmental issue related documentaries — until i came across *the true cost*.

prominently featured in the film was safia minney, and after hearing everything she had to say, i was beyond compelled to find out more about this remarkable woman, as well as her company. what i found was fascinating, but looking back in hindsight, it certainly couldn't have been doable had she not have agreed to the appearance on film.

to me, this was one of the most **impactful** moments we “shared”, albeit virtually. after that, my life (for a good few weeks) consisted of search after search on the internet for more documentaries on this devastating industry, as well as uplifting stories of game-changers who are making positive impacts — but none of them left the same impression on me as safia minney did in *the true cost*.

upon researching, i have discovered safia minney is highly keen on using her status in the industry to voice her opinions and educate more people on this important subject, which many founders are definitely not **as proactive in doing**.

so, i'd like to share my gratitude toward safia minney. thank you — for taking countless hours out of your life to speak at conference after conference, writing books, engaging individuals on social media networks, consistently launching campaigns and contributing to the welfare of the less fortunate groups, uplifting entire communities out of poverty. you don't **have** to do this, yet to tirelessly work to improve the livelihoods of people, of the industry, of the environment, while giving hope to youth like me that change **is indeed possible**. thank you.

not one, not two...but three (questions i'd ask)

- if i'm not mistaken, most, if not all, of *people tree's* manufacturing is outsourced to overseas developing communities — what compelled you to make this decision and forego having the majority of garments produced domestically (in england) — was it cost? the ability to reach groups of people who previously haven't been able to access opportunities such as education? or was it another reason(s)?
- despite the admirable contributions you have made for various communities over the years, i'm curious to hear about how that initial point of contact or integration was like — did you find it to be quite difficult? how did the communities where the manufacturing was set to take place react to your endeavour?
- ending on a more happier note, what is a unique “success story” from a community *people tree* has positively impacted with their conscious practices?

learning a thing or two about e-mailing...my eco-hero!!! *gulps*

at this point, i think i've made it pretty evident that safia minney is **indeed** my eco-hero, a point further backed by the fact that i've written almost 2,000 words (just slightly above the limit) about her. i decided it's time to put my (excessive) writing skills to use...and get in touch with her at a more personal level.

i e-mailed safia minney at info@saffia-minney.com. here's a screenshot of that exchange.



sharing with my greater social circles via instagram

of course, this wouldn't be a complete pgc2016 challenge if i didn't show my love toward my work — and the work of so many brilliant, like-minded innovators such as safia minney — on social media, where it has the potential to reach a much broader audience, inspiring them to take action and reevaluate their current lifestyles as well. here's a screenshot of my post!



what I had written for the caption:

“Meet Safia Minney, founder and CEO (now COO) of People Tree, an ethical, sustainable fashion label currently making waves around the world for its ability to bring social change to communities around the world.

•

For Day 26 of the Project Green Challenge by @turninggreenorg, I had to profile a global eco-hero who was making a difference. •

How often do you hear of fashion labels being awarded with the World Fair Trade Organization Fair Trade Product Label? In fact, People Tree was the first company to acquire this, in 2014. But by no means is this a recent occurring; People Tree has been committed and accountable for ethical practices for well over a decade — to me, there's something about this organization which distinguishes itself from many other brands.

-

The sheer amount of dedication and focus put into every detail of the well being of workers as well as the environment from very early on have managed to set the bar extremely high for plenty of the current sustainable fashion labels as well as conventional fashion labels when it comes to placing heavy emphasis on each and every component of their supply chains.

-

*Follow @peopletreeuk for a dose of eco-consciousness in your IG feed!
#PGC2016 #ecohero”*



.the
Ripple Effect
PGC2016 DAY 27 | ALICE CHENG

alicecheng | victoria park ci | alicecheng012@gmail.com

ONE VOICE

*has the power to influence
a million more. just like
how one seemingly
insignificant impact in
water can send waves of
change in all directions.
BUT...*



IS IT POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE? ACTIONS CAN GO BOTH WAYS.

*for me, pgc2016 taught me to make a difference
for the greater good of my health, future, and
that of our environment by transitioning to a
conscious, green lifestyle.*

*so in return, i'm going to return the favour.
changing the world cannot be done alone.
that's why i'm challenging 3 of my close
friends to commit to living sustainably by
taking 1 small (yet significant) action today.*



1

begonia zhong

remember my good friend from day 3: zero waste?





After doing the brief interview, Begonia was so interested in proper sorting of waste + recycling well!


However, the ripple effect didn't stop there. SHE then enlisted HER friend, Ashely, to help out!!!





THE ACTION IN DETAIL

VP'S RECYCLING AUDIT

- 01 **BEGONIA WANTED TO IMPROVE OUR SCHOOL WASTE DIVERSION BY MAKING INFORMATIVE POSTERS/ART.**
 - 02 **HOWEVER, SHE SOON REALIZED THERE WASN'T ENOUGH DATA; HOW MUCH RECYCLING WAS GOING INTO THE WASTE, AND VICE-VERSA? BEGONIA NEEDED TO FIND OUT.**
 - 03 **TODAY AFTER SCHOOL, SHE STARTED WITH THE CAFETERIA GARBAGE BINS (YES, ALL 3 OF THEM), SINCE THERE WERE NO BLUE/RECYCLING ONES (HUGE RED FLAG RIGHT HERE)!**
 - 04 **THE EVIDENCE SHE FOUND WAS DISTURBING. THERE WERE 2 MASSIVE BAGS' WORTH (PICTURED ABOVE) OF MATERIALS WHICH COULD'VE BEEN RECYCLED, WHICH SHE DID!**
 - 05 **NEXT STEPS? BRINGING THE ISSUE TO ECO COUNCIL + ADMIN + DRAFTING A PSA/POSTER/ACTION PLAN! #CHANGE**
- 



2

meet lisa wang.

a friend from middle school, lisa is quite conscious.

that's lisa!

AWARENESS & EDUCATION

- Elementary school curriculum and lesson plan
- Letters to the Editor on Pollinator Issues
- Template letter to seek approval for pollinator garden at school
- Pollinator Photo Contest



lisa's giving a presentation on biodiversity to her class! this summer, she interned for ontario nature (which is not heavily focused on carrying out their pollinator campaign) but never really knew HOW to take action beyond work, in her local community. today, she finally took the opportunity (or rather, created one) and shared it with the 20 others! talk about a ripple effect - she's such a talented, admirable individual.



3

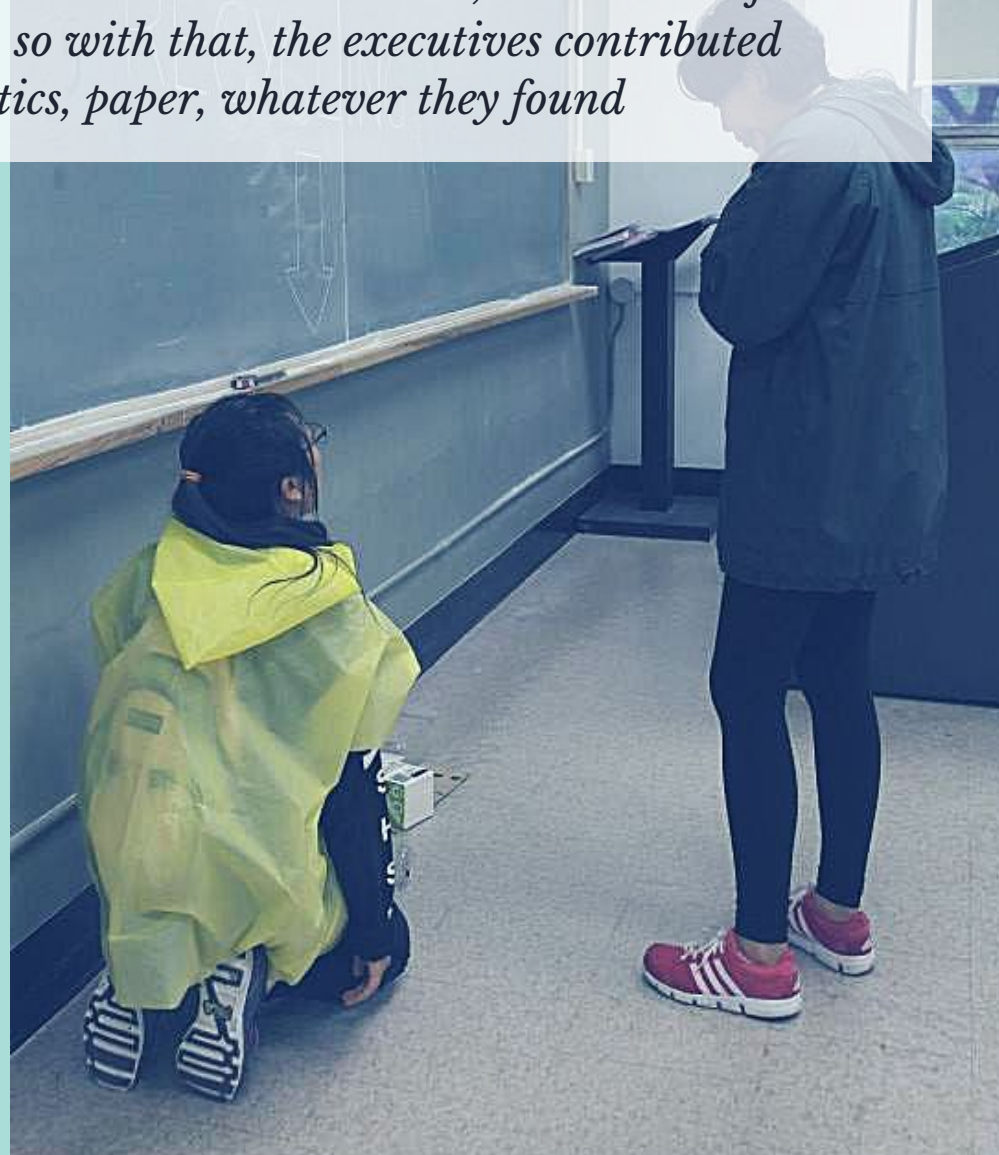
and finally, meet...

janey and rose, friends i've known for years. from elementary to middle school, we've done it all together. however, last year we went our different ways. despite going to different high schools, we keep in touch over social media, and they couldn't be more excited when i asked them to take action.

being the presidents of don mills ci (neighbouring high school)'s eco team, they decided to have an impromptu event. at lunch, the executive team met to discuss the initiative...only to find heaps of litter lying around once people had started eating. it was then janey had an idea: to use the waste to educate the student body on why and how to sort garbage, recycling, compost, etc.



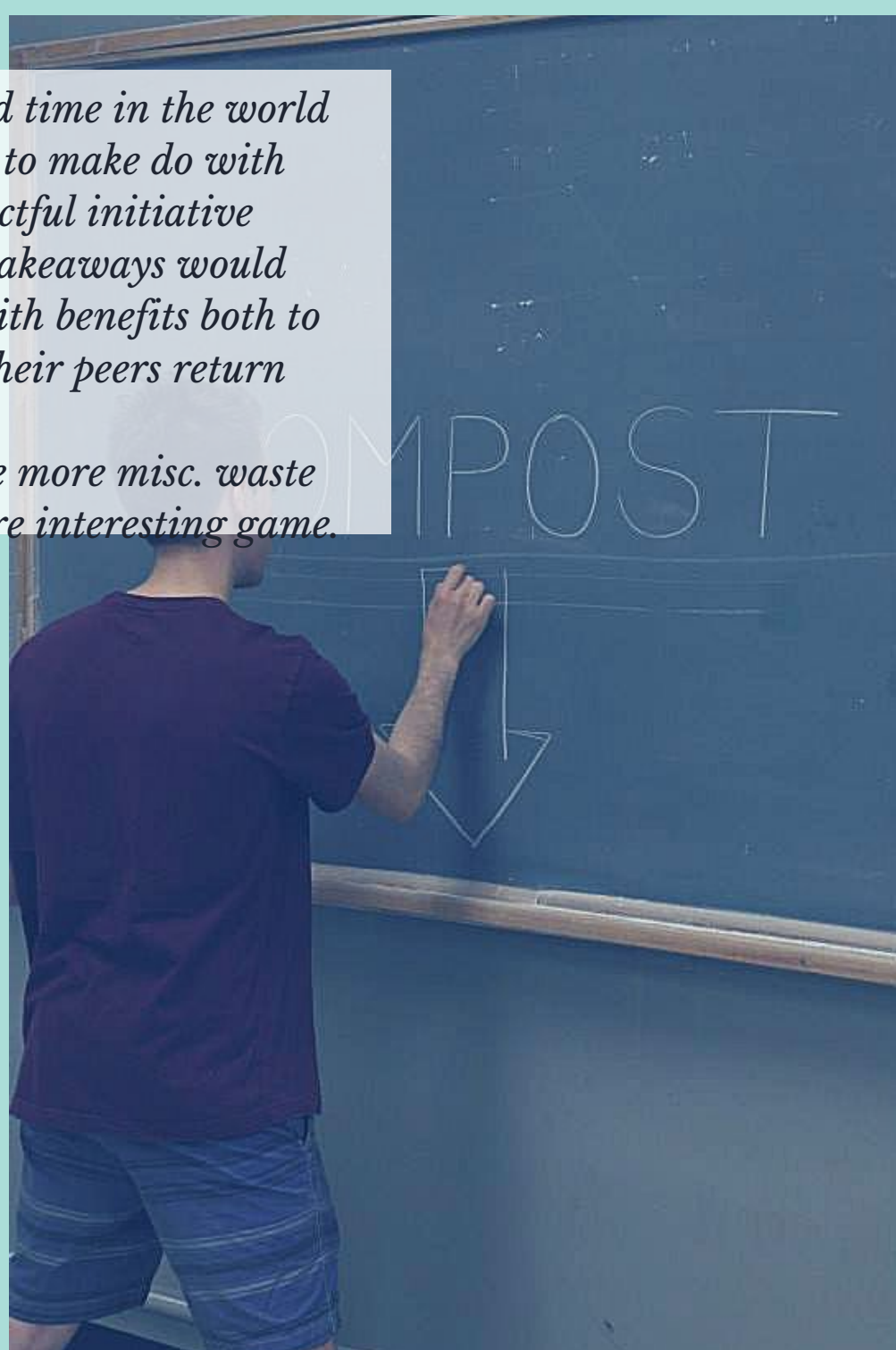
and with that, don mill's eco team executives decided to host an impromptu waste sorting info/contest session after school. since they didn't have much time for announcements and posters, they resorted to making a few posts on a closed Facebook group only for don mills ci students. within minutes, there were a few interested students, so with that, the executives contributed waste: plastics, paper, whatever they found



though they didn't have all the resources and time in the world to pull things off lavishly, instead having to make do with simple labels/props, it was still an impactful initiative nonetheless. turnout was decent and the takeaways would undoubtedly last for a long time to come, with benefits both to the school but also the community when their peers return home.

luckily, teachers were happy to donate some more misc. waste items between classes, so that made for a more interesting game.

recycling





the calm...after the storm?! - a post-ripple reflection by alice cheng

looking back at all the great work my friends have carried out (on a hectic school day), i am both in awe and admiration. it truly is touching to know that my change in lifestyle over the course of the past month has inspired them as well - i'll never again roll my eyes when someone uses the term "ripple effect" after seeing just how much is possible.

that being said, if i just had to single out one initiative/action taken today, it has to be janey and rose's. sure, it wasn't as "data-oriented" like begonia's audit/subsequent report, or as "information-heavy" as lisa's pollinator presentation, but at the end of the day, the way the eco tem executive at don mills ci managed to come together in an hour and work as a team, putting their differences aside, is something incredibly motivating.

also, the way social media was used as the main promotional strategy due to time constraints goes to show you how much our lives have changed, and sends a good message on the need to constantly adapt and be flexible with changing technologies (but also attitudes, surroundings, etc.). but most of all, i loved how their action taken was interactive and thus highly engaging toward a youth audience that way.

in closing, i must commend the leadership abilities of the two presidents, my friends janey and rose. even now, it still blows my mind how such a large group of people (7 executives in total) managed to sort all the details out in such a short amount of time. way to go!!!