



NATIONAL PROJECT MANUAL

Sustainable Style: Mindful Consumption

2025-2027

FEDERATED WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF CANADA

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Introduction & Project Overview

1.1 Executive Summary

Overview of the National Project and its goals

Sustainable Style: Mindful Consumption is a comprehensive three-year project¹ that acts as a framework for WIs to delve into and include in their monthly meetings and activities. It is meant to unify and focus the target audience while organically achieving the project objectives. As a framework, it includes multiple 'moving' parts which are not yet identified. Participants at all levels are co-creating the project parameters and content. Communication through the monthly newsletter (WI Connections), Facebook, E-Mails, and Virtual events will support uptake of the national project.

Target Audience

- Primary Audience is WI members, Branches, and Districts
- Secondary Audience is the public at large/citizens of Canada whom we hope to inform and encourage to act in support of choosing Sustainable Style and Mindful Consumption

Project Objectives

- Awareness
- Participation
- Education
- Action

How to Use This Manual

Branch Presidents and/or Secretaries please consider printing the manual and setting up your Project Binder, and keeping all of the resources together in one place as an easy reference. Additions will be forwarded as they are published on a monthly basis.

¹ FWIC identified the need of a national project to unify WIs in Canada with a common cause.

Purpose: FWIC is a national, united voice of women, promoting family, community and personal development through learning and friendship.

Objective #1-To provide a united national voice for all Women's Institutes of Canada

Objective #2-To initiate national programs and provide resource material.

Objective #3-To provide a medium of intercommunication among the units of the Federation

1.2 Overview: Six Key Aspects

There are six key aspects of national project- Sustainable Style: Mindful Consumption:

Quality Over Quantity: Instead of constantly accumulating new things, mindful consumers tend to focus on quality, long-lasting items. They may choose to buy less but invest in durable, high-quality products.

Ethical Choices: It involves supporting brands and products that are ethically produced, respecting fair labor practices, and promoting social good. People may choose to avoid companies with harmful business practices or those contributing to exploitation.

Health and Well-being: Mindful consumption also focuses on the impact of what we spend on our own health and well-being. This includes being aware of the clothes we wear, the products we use on our bodies, the food we eat, and how these contribute to both our personal health and the planet's health.

Environmental Impact: Mindful consumers think about the ecological footprint of their purchases. They may prioritize products that are sustainably sourced, eco-friendly, or have minimal waste.

Reduction of Waste: Mindful consumption often means reducing waste—through Rethinking, Refusing, Reducing, Reusing, Repairing, Regifting, or Recycling. It encourages buying items that are longer lasting, have less packaging and supporting circular economies where goods are reused, repaired, or recycled.

Action Practicing mindfulness in consumption means regularly reflecting on one's habits—asking questions and taking action from either a personal perspective or by our provincial and federal organizations: Questions to ask ourselves: Do I really need this? Is this purchase aligned with my values? How will this choice affect the world around me? What are areas of concern that should be put into resolutions?

2.Sustainable Style Project Overview

Sustainable Style Project Overview		
2025-Year 1	2026-Year 2	2027-Year 3
<p>January – February 2025</p> <p>Advance Promotion Overview of Project-3 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindful Consumption • Reducing Waste • Impacts on the Environment • Let's put all this Information into Action! <p>.....</p> <p>Outreach Project - Denim Quilts and other items to make during triennium. Items to be used, gifted, or donated to individual communities.</p> <p>Members, Branches, and Provinces to please document and report to Brenda Devauld on a yearly basis (December/January) so we can share our story of making a difference in Style Sustainability.</p>	<p>January 2026 Encourage members to look into the clothing stores in their communities for sustainability Sharing Circle: ?</p> <p>Program: Eco-conscious Brands Brands focusing on sustainable practices, like using green energy, reducing water usage, and minimizing waste, are key to promoting sustainable style. Examples include brands like Patagonia, Stella McCartney, and Everlane.</p> <p>Take Away: Maybe watch a film, Marketplace, read articles.</p>	<p>January 2027 - Minimalism/Slow Style</p> <p>Sharing Circle: ?</p> <p>Program: Is it better to buy one more expensive, sustainable piece of clothing versus buying several that are less sustainable?</p> <p>Take Away: Challenge - A 60 day (or longer) Challenge of not purchasing new clothing, footwear, accessories</p>
	<p>February 2026 Let's Go Shopping...</p> <p>Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: labels, practices and marketing, Lynn's sister video interview</p> <p>Take Away: reading labels</p>	<p>February 2027 Capsule Wardrobe</p> <p>Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: 4-H Lesson</p> <p>Take Away: Clothing planner for comparison to actual closet for assessment.</p>
<p>March 2025 International Women's Day Sustainable Style Overview</p> <p>Sharing Circle: *What is the oldest garment, footwear, or accessory that you still use? 10, 20 or 30+ years old?</p> <p>Program: Work towards educating our members to know where their clothing comes from</p>	<p>March 2026-International Women's Day How fashion affects our self-image Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Do a 30 Wear Test - it used to be that the benchmark for how long a piece of clothing should last was 30 wears. Should we aim for longer?</p>	<p>March 2027 International Women's Day Secondhand and Vintage Style</p> <p>Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Benefits of sustainable sourcing, ethical shopping practices. Buying pre-loved clothes is an excellent way to reduce waste. Thrifting and shopping at vintage</p>

Sustainable Style Project Overview

2025-Year 1	2026-Year 2	2027-Year 3
<p>and the practices behind the production How our choices impact the planet Make a checklist on what to look for. Overview of Project-3 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindful Consumption • Reducing Waste • Impacts on the Environment • Let's put all this Information into Action! <p>Take Away: Gear up for next 3 years; electronic schedule, and Game-Conscious Consumers Quiz</p>	<p>Take Away: monitor clothing choices for 30 days to reflect on self-image.</p>	<p>stores contributes to a circular economy where clothes are reused instead of discarded.</p> <p>Take Away: Reach out to local organizations such as secondhand stores, invite speakers from these organizations</p>
<p>April 2025 –Zoom Earth Day</p> <p>Synthetic Materials Facts They are created using a chemical process. Discuss the process They are often made from a non-renewable source such as petroleum Rayon, polyester, nylon, acrylic, spandex, synthetic rubber are examples</p>	<p>April 2026 -Earth Day</p> <p>Landfill Issues and Style Sustainability</p>	<p>April 2027 – Earth Day</p> <p>Water and Sustainable Style the recent pollution of a river in India, where the foam on the river was 2 feet thick. Clothing factories helped to cause this.</p>
<p>May 2025 Ethical Production of Style & Fashion Items - Eco-friendly Materials Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Organic fabrics: Cotton, hemp, and linen grown without harmful chemicals. Recycled materials: Fabrics made from recycled plastic</p>	<p>May 2026 Upcycling & DIY Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Reimagining old clothes into new items or repairing them instead of discarding.</p>	<p>May 2027 Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Summary of Sustainable Style National Project</p>

Sustainable Style Project Overview

2025-Year 1	2026-Year 2	2027-Year 3
<p>bottles, old garments, or other waste. Natural fibers: Wool, bamboo, and silk produced with minimal environmental impact. Take Away: Spring Fling Fashion Show-optimum time to wear a repurposed revamped or an old favourite garment, shoes, handbag etc.</p>	<p>Take Away: Revamp or mend an existing piece of fashion and photograph. Have patterns on FB and in WI Connections (I have a pair of mitts that have been made out of sweaters, they are warm and cute)</p>	
<p>October 2025 Canadian Made Style and Entrepreneurs</p> <p>Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Made in Canada/Buy in Canada, Create a checklist of Canadian designers and manufacturers. Zero Waste Materials and Practices Designers and brands can adopt zero-waste cutting techniques, use scraps for new items, or create garments designed for easy recycling at the end of their lifecycle.</p> <p>Take Away: Have discussions on the Canadian Brands we currently own...are they sustainable? (Example Columbia, etc)</p>	<p>October 2026 Eco-Conscious Brands and Retailers</p> <p>Sharing Circle:</p> <p>Program: Ethical Production Fair wages: Supporting workers with fair wages and safe working conditions. Local production: Reducing carbon footprint by manufacturing clothes closer to the consumer. Transparency: Brands openly sharing information about their supply chain and labor practices.</p> <p>Take Away: Visit or follow a design school in your area or interview a local seamstress</p>	

3. Year 2 Outline

Year 2 of Sustainable Style Project (2026)

Suggested Activities

October 2025 Seasonal Wardrobe Changes

- Building a Wardrobe that works well in every season
- Environment: The impact on natural resources from constant new clothing releases

November 2025 Reviving Clothing Repairs

- Winter Project, reviving the lost art of mending, keeping clothes longer and why it matters
- Environment: Thrift shopping, the good and the bad

December 2025 Conscious Holiday Shopping

- “ Need versus Want”
- Environment: The global impact of over production and consumption

January 2026 Being Intentional & Aware

- Building Intentional Habits at the start of a New Year
- Challenge: A Year Without Buying New Clothes
- Environment: Deforestation for Fashion

February 2026 Quiz Month!

- Mindful Consumption, Take the quiz and find out where you stand!
- Environment: Follow one piece of clothing from manufacturing overseas, to end life (probably in a landfill here or overseas) The cost to people,) low wages, bad conditions etc.) and the environment.

March 2026 - Self Image

- How we portray ourselves, self-image and clothing
- Environment, The true cost of “ Cheap”

April 2026 Earth, Our Home

- Facts about our amazing Planet and why we should care
- Environment, Recap on the 7's, is there an 8th?
- Perhaps this would be a good time to make up a poster that we include in the Connections? This could be something that members could print and put on bulletin boards or their fridges to remind them?

May 2026 , Practicing Mindful Consumption

- The Key Aspects of Mindful Consumption and how we can get there
- Environment, How Do We Dispose of Something Responsibly?

June 2026 - Quiz, What have You learned?

- Recap of the past Year of Learning
- Environment, maybe a list of good books on Sustainable clothing, Mindful Consumption, some web sites?

4. Educational Articles

4.1 What is Sustainable Style?

Submitted by Brenda Devauld, Chair of National Project & BCWI Representative January 2025

Welcome to the Sustainable Style Initiative project, our WI Canada FWIC National Project! We are thrilled to present this initiative and look forward to starting this journey towards eco-friendly fashion choices and innovative ideas. Our goal is to blend fashion with sustainable practices and, in doing so, make a difference for ourselves, our communities, and our world.

So, what is the Sustainable Style Initiative Project, and what does it mean?

Sustainable style is about creating a wardrobe based on the following: environmental considerations, waste reduction, mindful consumption practices, and ensuring fair practices for those who make our clothing. This is not a program about guilt or taking the pleasure out of our clothing choices, but about learning new skills that will give us the satisfaction of knowing we can make a difference through our actions. In this time of fast fashion, of a throwaway mentality and overconsumption, it has never been more important to practice sustainable fashion. When we consider the price of fast fashion: environmental degradation, climate change, the exploitation of people, unfair practices, we know our choices can and will make a difference.

By adopting a mindful approach to our wardrobes and clothing, we can have a profound effect on our mental and physical well-being. This will encourage us to reflect on what we are buying and ask ourselves these questions: do we need it, do we want it, how was it made, is it a fleeting pleasure? Our self-esteem would benefit in such a positive way if we knew that our choices are good ones and we don't need endless "fast" fashion to shine.

This initiative is about building a new relationship with our clothing, one that depends on quality over quantity. Many of us may already be practicing sustainability when it comes to clothing and may have been doing so for years and we hope you will share your insights with all of us. We are going to delve into creativity for reusing and repurposing our old clothing items, so nothing is wasted or ends up in the landfills.

This is the perfect time to revive those practices of mending and sewing our own clothing. The WI could host classes or demonstrations in our local communities to help educate and promote creative ways to extend the life of our clothing. Patches on jeans could be fun, learning to darn our socks could be a new way of thinking for people that do not have these skills.

We will be reaching out to you over the next 3 years providing informative articles and facts, through the WI Connections, Facebook and the FWIC website.

A suggestion for this is incorporating a "sharing circle" time into your meetings. We have found this to be a fun and informal way in which members feel empowered to contribute. We will be providing ideas for sharing circles to help facilitate this practice.

We will also be providing Take Away ideas that are related to every article. These are ways in which we can participate and to learn to understand the problems of fast fashion. We will be posting along with this article a full list of Take away ideas for those branches that plan their yearly agendas.

The Outreach Committee will be spearheading repurposing projects, such as making denim quilts and other items during the triennium, to be used, donated or gifted to individual communities.

We also ask that the Members, Branches and Provinces please document and share your experiences and stories on a yearly basis, (December/January) to Brenda Devauld (bdevauld8@gmail.com). We would like to document this Project as much as possible.

The Mary Stewart Collect says " Teach us to put into action our better impulses, straight forward and unafraid." That is what we will be doing, learning and sharing, one step at a time. Our learning will hopefully not only change our lives but those of our families.

“ I am only one, I can't do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.” Edward Everett Hale

4.2 Buy Less, Choose Well, Make it Last with key questions

Submitted by Brenda Devauld

Buy less, choose well, make it last.” - Vivianne Westwood

This quote seems to be a very appropriate way to open a discussion on Mindful Consumption this month with our Sustainable Style Project. It seems that the more research and investigation that is done on what sustainable fashion really means has led us to understand that the practice of mindful consumption is the main answer to many of the problems associated with the fashion industry and this is a concept we should apply to all of our fashion buying decisions.

Buy less, choose well, make it last.” - Vivianne Westwood

This quote is by fashion designer Vivianne Westwood, and it advocates for society to buy less, but when you need to buy something, choose high-quality and durable products. Vivianne Westwood was in the fashion industry, but she was a vocal advocate against overconsumption and believed that buying less and choosing well was the most environmentally friendly thing that people could do.

We have put together some questions, followed by insights into the questions. These questions are not meant to be judgemental but should be used as a tool to help bring awareness to our fashion choices. Consider sharing these questions with your branch and have a fun, open discussion! There are many tips we, as WI members, can share with each other on how we source our clothing, how we care for and repair our clothes, what we have in our closets, and our thoughts on mindful consumption and how we get there.

Mindful Consumption Clothing Questions:

1. Do you have items in your closet that you have never worn or worn very rarely?
2. Do you read the labels on your clothing? Are you aware of where and how your clothing is made, and what it is made of?
3. Do you follow fashion trends?
4. Would you consider that you buy with the longevity of your clothing in mind or is this something you have never really thought about?
5. Do you repair and/or refashion your clothing?
6. What is the most mindful choice we can make for our wardrobes?

Answers - Question Review:

1. According to some studies, on average, people do not wear around 50% of their clothing. A common observation has been made that about 20% of clothing in a wardrobe is worn 80% of the time, and the remaining 80% is rarely used.

2. Besides including the size of the article, clothing labels in Canada provide essential information about a garment. Labels must specify the type and percentage of fibers used in a piece of clothing.

They must also provide care instructions on how to wash, dry, and iron the garment.

Labels must provide the country of origin, and they must also provide identification of the manufacturer by a number or by name. This number called the CA Identification Number, is a five-digit number that identifies Canadian manufacturers, importers, and sellers of textile products. The RN number is for those companies in the United States. Tracing a garment that was made in China, exported to the U.S., and then on to Canada shows the journey of the garment and how profitable this industry must be.

3. Exploring fashion trends can be fun and an exciting way to express yourself, but “Fast” fashion, as we are seeing globally, comes with a big price tag, both environmentally and ethically. Unfair labor practices, child labor, and poor environmental standards are rampant in the fashion industry. Fast fashion is also contributing to a negative self-perception and how people see others. It is having negative impacts on mental health by the never-ending message that we “are” what we wear, and we can never just be enough.

So, if you want to be creative in your clothing habits, why not mix it up? Explore thrift shops for unique finds, invest in key pieces that you can mix with trendy items, and don’t feel pressured to follow every trend. Trendy clothes are often of poor quality and only meant to last for a very limited time before being thrown away, which is a waste of money and material.

4. Buying clothes with longevity in mind is a smart way to save money, reduce waste, and build a sustainable wardrobe. Here are a few tips:

Invest in well-made clothing, and look for details like reinforced seams and good stitching

If possible, opt for natural fibers like cotton, linen, silk, and wool. Try to avoid synthetic fibers (like polyesters and rayon). They tend to be low quality and made from oil products that do not biodegrade. Natural fiber clothing usually tends to be more expensive than synthetic clothing, but they are more breathable, more durable, have antibacterial qualities, and retain their shape for many years.

Choose versatile pieces that you can mix and match with other pieces and ones that won’t go out of style. Make sure the garment fits well and is comfortable. Poor-fitting clothes tend not to be worn as often.

5. Repairing our clothes seems to have gone out of fashion, but perhaps it’s time to rethink this.

Get a basic sewing kit, needles, thread, pins, and scissors; it’s easier to repair things if we have the tools. If a button is missing, sew it back on, patch up holes, repair hems that have become undone, and replace zippers (or find a local person who will do these repairs). The point is don’t throw out clothing that just needs simple repairs. Consider having a demonstration in your community or at a WI meeting where these types of skills can be taught. We might be surprised at the number of people that would like to learn.

6. Last but most importantly, the most mindful choice we can make for our wardrobes is to choose the one we already have. As we buy new, yes, let’s buy for sustainability and longevity but it doesn’t make sense to replace the clothes we already have bought with others. All fabric, whether natural or synthetic, has environmental and/or ethical impacts. Challenge yourself not to buy any new clothing for a month, 6 months, a year, whatever you feel comfortable with, and wear what you already have.

We hope this article encourages people to take control of their own clothing practices and to feel good about themselves in doing so. Mindful consumption is called the “New” way of looking at ourselves and living, but it is also the way many of our grandparents lived, and many people are already living. It is about educating ourselves and being responsible for our choices. Nothing goes “away”, it just gets relocated.

4.3 Let's Talk Natural Fabrics, May 2025

Submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI

Natural fabrics, which are all bio-degradable are derived from natural renewable sources such as plants or animals. Some common examples of natural fabrics include cotton, linen, bamboo, hemp and wool.

Some Fun Facts:

From Plant Stems, we get flax (linen), jute, hemp

From Plant Seeds, we get cotton

From Plant Grass, we get bamboo

Natural fabrics have been used for thousands of years

There is evidence of flax and wool being used for textiles over 30,000 years ago

Cotton emerged in Egypt about 3000 BC, while silk was being used in China about 2500 BC

Cotton

Both types of cotton, conventional and organic, use large amounts of water although organic cotton farming practices generally lead to more efficient and sustainable water use. Conventional cotton farming uses heavy amounts of pesticides and insecticides while organic cotton is grown without harmful chemicals.

Linen

Linen is derived from the flax plant, and is a smooth, strong cloth while more expensive than other textiles is durable, sturdy, cool to wear and breathable.

Bamboo

Bamboo clothing are know for their ability to keep you dry, cool and odour free. They are widely used in active wear.

Hemp

Hemp is a plant from the cannabis species and is known for its fast growth rate and diverse applications. It is considered a low-impact sustainable crop and compared to cotton requires little water and pesticides. Hemp clothing is breathable, very durable and long-lasting, and has hypoallergenic properties.

Wool

Wool is a type of product derived from the hair on animals, which once harvested are spun into yarn. Wool is naturally odour, stain, flame and wrinkle resistant, has a very long lifetime and can keep you warm even when wet. One disadvantage is some wearers find it itchy although this does tend to be the lower quality types of wool.

Natural clothing does tend to be more expensive than synthetic materials, but they are all durable and long lasting. Going forward I hope we can make choices based on our knowledge of what we are buying, keeping in mind the idea of sustainability and the environmental impact of fabrics.

4.4 What Are We Wearing? – The Real Meaning Behind the Textiles

Submitted by Wen Shen | Graduate Researcher, Sustainable Textiles, Toronto Metropolitan University

Have you ever stopped to think about what your clothes are really made of? Not just the color, style, or brand, but the actual fibers. In our fast-fashion world, where supply chains are global and often invisible, it's easy to forget that every garment starts as something raw: a plant, an animal, or petroleum.

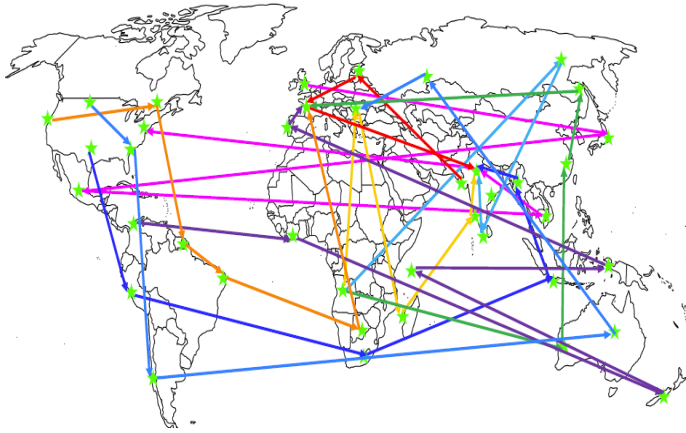
From Fiber to Fashion

Clothing doesn't start on a store rack; it begins with fiber. Cotton from a farm, polyester from oil, wool from a sheep—these are the building blocks of every outfit. Fiber becomes yarn, yarn becomes fabric, and fabric becomes the garments we wear.

Those fibers impact the environment, shape global trade, and even affect human health. And the steps from raw material to finished garment rarely happen in one place.

For example, a single piece of clothing might involve cotton grown in India, spun into yarn in China, woven into fabric in Turkey, dyed in Italy, and sewn in Vietnam. As you can see on this global map (Figure 1), each color represents a different stage of production. Each stage adds transportation miles, energy usage, and carbon emissions. Nike, for instance, collaborates with over 500 factories in 41 countries, highlighting just how sprawling and resource-intensive nature of modern fashion production is.

Notes: Global production map. Photo Credit: dirk de waal



The Three Fiber Families

All textiles begin with one of three main fiber categories:

- Natural* – from plants or animals (e.g., cotton, wool, angora (rabbit), alpaca (llama))
- Synthetic* – made from petroleum-based chemicals (e.g., polyester, nylon)
- Semi-synthetic* – derived from natural sources but chemically processed (e.g., rayon, bamboo)

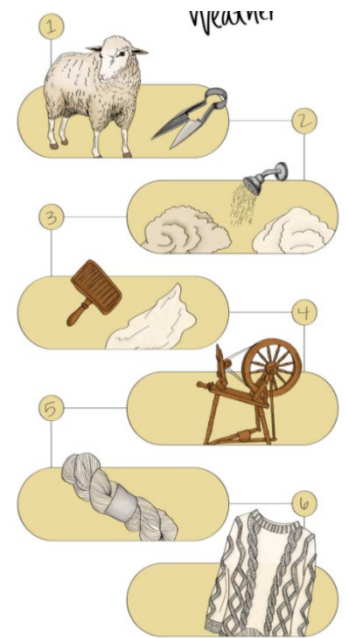
Fiber	Pros	Cons
Cotton	Breathable, natural	Water-intensive, pesticide use
Wool	Renewable, warm, durable	Needs care, methane emissions
Polyester	Cheap, durable	Made from oil, sheds microplastics
Bamboo	Soft, feels eco-friendly	Chemically intensive to manufacture

How They're Made

Natural fibers

Cotton is harvested from plants, cleaned, spun into yarn, and woven into fabric. Wool is shorn from sheep, then scoured, carded, and spun. These fibers are renewable and biodegradable but can still carry environmental costs. Cotton uses significant water and pesticides, while sheep farming produces methane.

Synthetic fibers made in factories from fossil fuels; these fibers are melted into liquid plastic and extruded into filaments. Polyester, nylon, and acrylic are strong and inexpensive, but they require high energy input and shed microplastics into waterways with every wash. They also persist in landfills for centuries.



(Textile and fibre science Gate PREPRATION, 2022)

Making Sense of Fibers and Fashion

The truth is, no fiber is perfect. Every material has trade-offs: “natural” doesn’t always mean sustainable, and “synthetic” isn’t always the villain. What really matters is the full life cycle: from how a fiber is grown or produced, to how long a garment lasts, to what happens at the end of its life.

This complexity often leaves consumers unsure about what to trust, and that’s where marketing can blur the lines. Buzzwords like eco-friendly and sustainable appear on countless tags, but without clear standards, they can be little more than greenwashing (claims that make a product sound responsible without any real accountability). To cut through the noise, it’s important to look for transparency, third-party certifications, and specific details about sourcing and production, rather than relying on vague promises.

So where does that leave us as consumers? While the system is complicated, there are simple, practical steps we can take:

- Read the label and pay attention to fiber content and where the garment was made.
- Buy less, buy better, choose quality pieces that will last rather than fast-fashion quick fixes.
- Care well by washing less often, air-drying when possible, and mending minor damages instead of discarding.
- Support transparency by choosing brands that share honest information about their materials and practices.

At the end of the day, sustainable fashion doesn’t begin in factories; it begins in our closets. The most sustainable garment is often the one we already own. By wearing our clothes for longer, caring for them properly, and choosing more thoughtfully the next time we buy, we can reduce waste and lessen our environmental impact.

So next time you get dressed, ask yourself: What am I really wearing, and what story does it tell?

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4.5 The Impact of Seasonal Clothing

submitted by Margie Taylor, President WINS

Winter fashion layering inadvertently contributes to environmental impact through increased resource consumption and waste production.

Winter apparel choices, often driven by style and necessity, can conceal environmental concerns stemming from the materials and manufacturing processes involved.

When searching for fashionable and functional winter clothes, consumers must be aware of how their personal style choices contribute to the ecological footprint, from unsustainable sourcing to excessive disposal. Choosing recycled clothing materials in winter can help reduce the environmental impact, and selecting insulation materials, such as wool-insulated garments and down-alternative winter jackets, can also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Sustainable winter fashion trends can drive demand for eco-friendly winter clothes while promoting sustainable winter apparel practices. So, when planning your winter wardrobe this year, choose your fabrics wisely and become environmentally conscious about what you wear.

4.6 Building A Year-Round Wardrobe

Submitted by Brenda Devauld

For many of us, the changing seasons are a signal that our wardrobes need to be updated to match the season approaching. However, with growing awareness of the impact of fashion on the environment, we as consumers are trying to adapt to a different way of thinking when it comes to our clothes. So, the question is changing from “Do I need to buy some clothing to reflect the new season “ to “ Can I have a wardrobe that works for all the seasons, and if so, how do I go about it?”

The answer is absolutely! We can have wardrobes that work for all seasons while still keeping our values of sustainability by planning and implementing some of the following ideas.

Core Wardrobe Essentials

Align With Your Lifestyle: Consider what makes you feel confident and comfortable in the clothes you already have.

Staples: Identify the staples in your wardrobe. These are the pieces that you wear most often and feel most confident in. These might be sweaters that you wear in any season, footwear that is comfortable, trousers or jeans, skirts or dresses that can be worn alone or with a blazer.

Colour Palette: Choosing a neutral base colour like black, grey, white, navy, or beige allows for mixing and matching of different items.

Mix and Match Pairing our clothes is one of the best ways to extend our wardrobes because it maximizes the clothes we have.

Accent colours: Choose accent colours that complement your base colours. Focus on the colours that you like and that suit you.

Layering: To accommodate temperature changes, layering is the answer. A sleeveless blouse worn in the summer becomes a great pairing in the cooler weather with an open sweater.



Accessorize:

Using accessories like scarves, hats, jewelry, and bags can change our clothing to match the season. It is also a great way to emphasize the **Classics:** try to focus on high-quality pieces that can be worn many times and can be dressed up or down

Quality Over

Quantity: If you are choosing to buy new clothing choose carefully. It is better to buy an item that will last for many years, rather than one that will only be worn for a short period of time.

Fabrics: Choose breathable, renewable fabrics, like cotton, linen, denim, and wool.

Trends: Try not to get caught up in trendy clothing. It has been found that they are short-lived, and much of the “trendy” clothing ends up in landfills.

Second Hand Stores: Shopping at second-hand stores is fun and can lead to some great finds. Take the time to browse through the Thrift stores where you live; you never know what treasures you may discover.

Have fun! You are unique, and having a wardrobe that reflects you and your likes is a great way to express yourself. With key items and strategies, you can build a wardrobe that works well and transitions between the seasons. Happy Styling!!

Tip

Have you ever heard of the 333 Challenge? This might be a fun exercise to try alone or with others. This is a method where you choose nine items from your closet: three tops, three bottoms, three pairs of shoes. The challenge is to create as many outfits as possible using these three items. You can use accessories, but just not any other items of clothing. Try it, it might be an eye-opener!

Environment -Impact of Seasonal Clothing

Seasonal clothing can have a significant impact on the environment due to the fast fashion cycle, which emphasizes rapid production and consumption. Let's look at the issues this presents:

Fast fashion brands produce clothing in large quantities for each season, leading to an oversupply of Unsold items often end up in landfills. It is estimated that millions of tons of clothing end up in landfills each year.

Textile production requires a substantial amount of water, energy, and raw materials.

The fashion industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions largely due to transportation, manufacturing, and the energy-intensive processes involved in producing garments.

Many seasonal clothing pieces are made from synthetic materials derived from fossil fuels. They do not biodegrade and are contributors to microplastics.

Sustainable style...

refers to fashion and design choices.



- It focuses on waste and reducing the negative impact of clothing and accessories on the planet, people, and ecosystems.
- Adopting a sustainable style helps reduce fashion's environmental footprint while encouraging thoughtful consumption.

#TogetherWeRise



The fast fashion cycle encourages consumers to view clothing as disposable, with products seen as “outdated” after one season.

The focus has shifted to producing clothing of inferior quality and lower prices.

Addressing the issues of overproduction and seasonal clothing requires collaboration among consumers, policymakers, and the fashion industry. By making informed choices and supporting sustainable practices, we can help reshape the fashion industry. Our choices of embracing timeless fashion can help pave the way to a more environmentally friendly future in fashion. Every small step counts!

4.7 Thrift Shopping the good and the bad

Submitted by Margie Taylor, President, WINS

When it comes to slow fashion, sustainability doesn't stop at purchasing an eco-friendly item. How we tend to our clothes and make them last is a crucial part of sustainability and longevity. It's great that old clothes can get a second life in someone else's closet, but the truth is that many donations to Thrift stores end up in landfills.

Thrift stores can't sell everything they receive, and the overflow has to go somewhere. As such, donating things to Thrift stores may not be as good for the environment as you realize. Sadly, not all Thrift stores are clear about where their donations come from. Some items may come from the unsold stock of morally questionable brands that support poor labor practices. You may be trying to make ethical choices, but the story behind your thrifted items isn't always that green.

While thrifting promotes sustainability, it can also encourage overconsumption if shoppers buy items simply because they are inexpensive or cheap. For shoppers who aim to practice mindful consumption, it's essential to be aware of this pitfall and approach thrift shopping with intention. The negative environmental impact of overcrowded landfills, caused by items such as clothing, results in impaired air, water, soil, and ecosystems. The most effective way to reduce the environmental impact of landfills is to reduce waste generation. So, the next time you purchase an item of clothing, think about where it will end up after you're done wearing it.

4.8 Reviving the Art of Mending

Submitted by Brenda Devauld

“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make”.
Jane Goodall

We have been learning about the implications of fashion on the planet and how we can help lessen the impact by being smarter consumers. So, the question remains, *“What can we do in our own homes? How can we help?”* *What difference can I really make?*

We can fix our clothing and teach others to do the same. We can revive the art of mending, replacing zippers, buttons, hems, and fixing ripped seams.

By repairing what we have, we throw away less, save money, and help to foster a deeper connection to our wardrobe, promoting a more mindful approach to consumption.

Tip: Extending a garment's life by just 9 months can cut its carbon, water, and waste footprint by 20-30%.

We, as WI members, may already practice mending, but many younger people don't. Let's spread the word and become teachers. The following are some guidelines to help us get started, either individually or as a group.

Sewing Kit

Gather the essentials: needles, threads, scissors, patches, fabric glue, a thimble, and maybe a seam ripper. It's nice to have all these things in one place.

Types of Mending

Sewing, for small holes and repairs
Darning, Great for knitted items
Patching
Visible Mending, highlighting repairs artistically
Replacing zippers or buttons

Learn Techniques

- Review and practice different methods
Have a learning night with your WI Branch or host a community class
Share your mending projects with others
Books, local classes, YouTube tutorials

Get Creative

use colour threads to add fun elements to your mends to create visible mending
Use embroidery or other embellishments
Use different patches
Use old clothes to mend new items

Advocate for Sustainable Fashion

Discuss the importance of mending and encourage friends and family to repair it rather than replacing it.

Some Fun Questions to share with your Branch:

What is the most creative patch you have ever seen or used?
What is the funniest clothing disaster you have ever had to mend?
What's one clothing item you'd never want to part with, even if it needs serious repairs?

Have fun! Remember, every positive action counts, no matter how small, and by these actions we can make real change happen. Like the above quote, we must decide what kind of world we want.



4.9 Do We Really Need It?

Submitted by Margie Taylor, President, WINS

As a child growing up, my dad always used to say 'If you need it, then get it,' and lots of times my wants would turn into needs, but did I really need it? As consumers in today's society, I feel we need to recognize the difference between needs and wants to make a positive impact on our environment.

Consumerism drives excessive purchasing, resulting in significant waste, and, of course, we know that the higher the demand for goods, the more it leads to the overexploitation of natural resources, which in turn affects water, land, and energy use. Plus, the production and transportation of goods generate emissions and pollution, contributing to climate change and harming ecosystems.

So, what does this mean to a person who loves to shop during the holidays but wants to make better choices for the environment? By choosing better sustainable products and reducing waste via overconsumption, we can diminish our environmental impact and promote a more sustainable future for our planet. Shopping sustainably requires adopting new habits, like buying fewer items and focusing on quality rather than quantity. Making a conscious effort in our shopping habits during the holidays will make us feel better about our purchases and help the environment at the same time; not to mention, the less we buy, the easier it is on the wallet.

4.10 Building Intentional Habits

Submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI

Here we are at the start of a New Year, and with that comes the idea of New Year's Resolutions. The idea in itself is a good one, but sometimes I know for myself I have had very lofty goals, which I have mostly not been able to keep. I think maybe that is because for many of my resolutions, I was trying to stop doing something, so I was focusing on negative actions, not positive ones.

This year, I am trying to build intentional habits for myself, not too many, but some that really resonate for me and line up with my core beliefs. For me, this means being very conscious of what I buy so I can create less waste and challenge my mind (as we age, we know that is a good thing!) by trying new things or spicing up the things that I already do. I find that the more I practice, the better I get!

So, how do we know what Intentional Habits are, and how do we start?

Intentional habits are those that you try to do because they align with your true core values and what actually really matters to you.

They help you live with more purpose because they are action-oriented.

They help add focus and meaning to your everyday living because they are positive actions that you are adding to your life. Rather than things that you are going to stop doing.

They are often small, conscious choices that you have decided to take towards building a feeling of well-being, rather than leaving it to chance.

They support self-development and long-term happiness.

Our intentions work not only in helping our development ourselves, but also help to give us a sense of calm and direction in our lives. They help us focus on what really matters to us and help us create the life we want. By merging our Sustainable Style message regarding fashion with Intentional habits, we can create a life of living mindfully and responsibly, which not only benefits you personally and the world around us.



“Every sunset is a chance to reset” - Richie Norton

4.11 Deforestation for Fashion-A Year Without Buying New Clothes

Submitted by Margie Taylor, President, WINS

Fast fashion significantly contributes to deforestation, with over 200 million trees cut down annually for textile production, impacting biodiversity and ecosystems worldwide. Tree logging for textiles to produce cellulosic fabrics, like viscose and rayon, occurs in ancient forests, which are crucial for maintaining biodiversity and regulating the climate. Deforestation driven by the fashion industry destroys habitats for countless species.

As forests are cleared, the ecosystems that support wildlife are disrupted, resulting in a decline in biodiversity. Since 2000, forests have been estimated to have removed an average of 2 billion metric tons of carbon from the

atmosphere annually. However, when trees are removed from their environment, higher CO2 levels result, leading to the greenhouse effect and heightened global warming.

By understanding the connection between fashion, deforestation, and biodiversity loss, we can make more informed choices and support sustainable practices that protect our planet's vital ecosystems. When shopping for clothes, we must understand what has gone into making the garment. As consumers, we have the power to transform the fashion industry for the better by spending our money on clothing made sustainably and ethically.

So, let's shop responsibly, buy intentionally with quality over quantity in mind, maybe create that capsule wardrobe, and perhaps we could be the person who avoids shopping for new clothes in the new year!

4.12 How do our fashion choices impact the environment?

Submitted by Margie Taylor, President, WINS

When you buy a new cotton T-shirt, do you ever wonder how it came from a cotton field to your wardrobe? Behind every piece of clothing is a complex journey involving multiple countries, thousands of workers, and a supply chain that turns raw materials into a finished garment, encompassing sourcing, manufacturing, distribution, and sales. It connects millions of workers, multiple industries, and **every single one of us** as consumers. Did you know that producing a single cotton T-shirt requires approximately 2700 litres of water, enough for one person to drink for two and one-half years!

So, why should we care? By understanding where our clothes come from and the process of making garments, we can make better choices that support workers, protect the planet, and reduce waste. Once a garment has been purchased and worn, it is usually discarded within a year, especially fast-fashion pieces. Some are donated, but a huge percentage ends up in landfills or shipped to second-hand markets, with only 1% of textiles actually recycled into new clothing.

As consumers, we need to be aware of how our choices impact the environment and shift our thinking. The next time you are shopping, take a moment to think about who made the garment, what impact it had on the planet, and where it will go when you're done wearing it.

4.13 Clothing and Self Image

Submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI

Clothing and self-image are very closely intertwined. What we wear can significantly affect how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us.

Fashion trends often promote unrealistic body standards, leading to feelings of inadequacy or low self-worth among those who do not fit them. It's important to recognize this negative aspect and work towards a healthier self-image.

Society often makes judgments based on clothing choices. Social media and celebrity culture can lead to constant comparisons with others, causing anxiety and dissatisfaction with one's own appearance. This can influence how you are treated in various settings, including work and social situations.

An overemphasis on appearance, focusing too much on clothing, can lead to superficiality, valuing people based on their looks rather than on their personality or abilities.

Negative associations with certain styles and brands can lead to judgments and discrimination based on appearance, affecting social opportunities and self-esteem.

The desire to wear trendy or designer clothes can also create financial stress, leading individuals to overspend or go into debt to maintain a certain image.

It is important to recognize these negative aspects and work towards a healthier self-image that values individuality and self-acceptance, irrespective of social pressures.

Wearing comfortable clothing makes you feel good in your clothes, and you are likely to carry yourself with more confidence. Finding a balance between comfort and style is essential.

Clothing can often be a great expression of self-identity. It can reflect your interests, personality, and cultural background. Wear what you love, regardless of fashion, and limit your comparisons to others. Celebrate your unique style and body and remind yourself that your worth is not defined by clothing or appearance.

Focus on what makes you happy and confident!

4.14 Do Cheap Clothes Really Cost the Environment?

Submitted by Margie Taylor, President of WINS

When we feel good in our clothes, we feel good in our skin, but at what cost? The real cost isn't what we see on the price tag; it's what the planet pays to make that \$10 T-shirt or \$20 dress when we fall victim to fast fashion. It is easy to forget what happens before a T-shirt or dress reaches our online shopping cart or store. The environmental cost of cheap clothing is a significant concern, as the fast fashion industry contributes to pollution, waste, and climate change. The speed and scale of fast fashion make it one of the most environmentally damaging industries in the world.

Why does "cheap" clothing come at such a high cost? The environmental price includes water depletion, chemical pollution, the release of microplastics into the oceans, mountains of waste, and carbon emissions from energy-intensive production and global transport.

So, remember the next time you go shopping, don't just think about how good you look in your clothes, but think about how good the garment looks and buy with intention, not impulse.

5. Activities, Quizzes, and Presentations

5.1 Quiz: Mindful Consumption: Sustainable Style National Project

Submitted by Brenda Devauld-BCWI, April 2025

“Sustainable fashion is not a trend, it's a responsibility,” Livia Firth

This month's quiz touches on the question of how well we know our clothing. We hope this sparks your interest in learning more and will help us to make sustainable clothing choices.

How Well Do We Know Our Clothing Quiz

What is the most commonly used natural fibre in the clothing industry?

- a) Cotton
- b) Wool
- c) Linen
- d) Silk

2. What synthetic fibre is known for its durability but also contributes to microplastic pollution?

- a) Cotton
- b) Acrylic
- c) Polyester
- d) Hemp

3. Which of the following is NOT a sustainable clothing material?

- a) Organic cotton
- b) Bamboo
- c) Nylon
- d) Tencel

4. What is the primary environmental concern associated with conventional cotton farming?

- a) Water usage
- b) Air pollution
- c) Soil erosion
- d) Deforestation

5. Which clothing is biodegradable and made from the cellulose of beech trees?

- a) Nylon
- b) Tencel
- c) Acrylic
- d) Polyester

6. How long can polyester take to decompose in landfills?

- a) 1 - 5 years
- b) 20 - 30 years
- c) 100 - 200 years
- d) Over 500 years

7. Which of the following brands is recognized for its commitment to sustainability and eco-friendly practices?

- a) Zara
- b) H & M
- c) Nike
- d) Tentree

8. What does “ethical fashion” typically emphasize?

- a) Low-cost production
- b) Speed of production
- c) Labor rights and sustainable practices
- d) High Fashion

9. What plant is linen made from?

- a) Cotton
- b) Hemp
- c) Flax
- d) Bamboo

10) Linen is a more sustainable option than cotton because it requires less water and pesticides to grow

- a) True
- b) False

Answers:

A- cotton: Cotton has been cultivated for over 7000 years and is a natural, bio-degradable textile. It is a staple in the global textile industry.

C – Polyester: Polyester is a synthetic material made from petrochemicals. When washed, polyester sheds microscopic fibres (micro-plastics), which are tiny particles and can easily enter rivers, lakes, and oceans. Once in the environment, they can be ingested by marine life, which poses a threat both to wildlife and humans.

C – Nylon: Nylon is a synthetic material derived from petroleum, so its production and disposal can have environmental impacts. Nylon is not considered a good material for direct contact with skin. It is not breathable, which can trap moisture and heat, which can lead to discomfort, rashes, and overheating.

A - Water Usage: Cotton production is a water-intensive process, requiring significant amounts of water with estimates ranging from 7,000 to 9,000 litres to produce just one kilogram of raw cotton.

B – Tencel: Tencel fibres are derived from sustainably sourced wood pulp, typically from beech, birch, or spruce trees. It is known for its softness, breathability, and moisture-wicking properties.

C - 100 - 500 years: Polyester, being a plastic product, takes up space in landfills and takes hundreds of years to decompose. The toxic materials can leach into the soil and groundwater, causing contamination of local areas.

D – Tentree: Tentree is a Canadian company with headquarters based in British Columbia but founded in Regina, Saskatchewan. They focus on sustainable and ethical apparel. They ensure fair labour practices in their factories, using organic and/or recycled materials in their clothing.

C - Labour rights and sustainable practices: Unsafe working conditions, child labour, long hours, low pay, abuse and harassment, and environmental degradation are all widespread in the fashion industry.

C – Flax: Linen is derived from the fibres of the flax plant.

True: Linen is known for its breathability, durability, and eco-friendliness. It requires less chemical and water use than traditionally grown cotton. Flax is a naturally pest-resistant and drought-tolerant plant.

5.2 How Sustainable are you?

Submitted by Brenda Devauld, BCWI

Have you ever wondered how sustainable you really are?
Take the quiz and find out! Answer the questions honestly to get a better idea of where you stand.

1. Before making a purchase, how often do you think about the necessity of the item?

Always
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

2. Do you research products and brands before buying?

Always, I want to know everything.
Usually, but only for bigger purchases.
Never, I just buy what I see.

3. How often do you consider the environmental impact of your purchases?

Always, it's a top priority for me.
Sometimes, especially for bigger purchases.
Rarely, I tend to focus on price.
Never, I don't want to think about it.

Do you prefer buying second-hand or sustainably made products?

Yes, whenever possible!
Sometimes, if I come across them.
Rarely, I usually shop for new,
No, I prefer brand new products.

5. How often do you think about the social impact of your purchases (like free trade, or workers' rights)?

Always, it guides my decisions.
Sometimes, I consider it for certain brands.
Rarely, I focus more on personal benefit.
Never, it is not something that I think about.

6. Are you aware of your impulse-buying habits?

Yes, I monitor and control them.
I try to keep it in check.
Occasionally, but I still give in
No, I don't think about it.

7. How often do you evaluate your belongings and declutter?

Regularly, I like to keep things minimal.
Sometimes when I feel it's necessary.
Rarely, I let things pile up.
Never, I keep everything I own.

8. Do you go shopping with a list to avoid unnecessary purchases?

Always, I stick to my list.
Usually, but sometimes I stray.
Rarely, I often buy on whim.
Never, I buy whatever catches my eye.

9. How often do you consider repairing items instead of replacing them?

Always, I prefer fixing over buying new.
Sometimes, depending on the item.
Rarely, I usually replace them.
Never, I don't think about it.

10. When you shop, how often do you buy from local businesses?

Always, supporting locals is important to me.
Sometimes, if it is convenient.
Rarely, I usually shop at big chains.
Never, I prefer online or larger retailers.

Scoring Your Results.

Mostly A's (A Mindful Consumer)

You're a very mindful consumer! You make thoughtful choices and consider the impact of purchases on society and the environment.

Mostly B's (Generally Mindful)

You have a good understanding of mindful consumption but might benefit from being a bit more conscious in some areas.

Mostly C's (Somewhat Mindless)

You're on the right track, but there is room for growth. Consider integrating more mindful practices in your shopping habits.

Mostly D's (Mindless Consumer)

It seems you may not be considering the bigger picture when it comes to shopping. Reflecting on your consumption habits could lead to more conscious decisions.

5.3 Skit on Sustainable Style for a Meeting

Cast: Secretary- Helen
 Member- Annette
 Member- Win
 President- Linda

Linda:

Good Day everyone – Today I want to tell you about the new FWIC Project – Sustainable Style
It is the first national project for WI since before Covid and it is multi-faceted. There are six aspects to it.
They are...

1. Quality Over Quantity: Sustainable closet ideas
2. Ethical Choices: Support ethically produced products
3. Health and Well-being: How our clothing impacts our well-being
4. Environmental Impact: Ethical footprints on the planet
5. Reduction of Waste: Impact of microplastics and the 7 R's
6. Action: Resolutions & Activities

Helen:

Well this must be some of the information that came through the e-mails. It looks like a lot of reading to me.

Linda:

There is a lot that goes with the project for sure, yet it is designed for WI Branches to use as much or as little as they wish.

Win:

Well what's it all about Linda – in the short version?

Linda:

Sustainable Style- as the national FWIC project... it is about how we as women choose to spend our fashion wardrobe dollars wisely and mindfully. All with our society and environment in mind.

Annette:

Well, that won't involve me much. I haven't bought any new clothes since 2004. I'm not a shopper you know.

Win:

Me neither. If I buy anything it is usually at a yard sale or secondhand store.

Linda:

That's awesome girls! Too often we shop for 'retail therapy' or to be in the latest trends. And those latest trends are killing our planet and our pocketbooks.

Helen:

So what will we have to do for this project Linda? Are there commitments we need to meet?

Linda:

It is up to our Branch what we choose to participate in. We can pick and choose our focus once we learn more about the options.

Win:

Sounds like a lot of homework and reading to me!

Annette:

I don't have time for that. Count me out.

Helen:

Oh dear. I'm sorry Linda, I don't think that Brockway WI will be able to participate.

Linda:

Well, that is our choice to make together – but before we do, I'd like us to answer a couple of short questions. Could we try that?

Win, Annette, Helen:

Oh yes, Sure, Why not?

Linda to do Quiz Questions.....

What percentage of our wardrobes, on average, do we wear on a regular basis throughout the year?

40 %

20 % (correct answer)

70 %

2. How many kilograms of textiles are thrown away each year in Canada? This includes clothing, shoes, and household linens.

500 million kilograms (500,000 metric tons) (correct answer)

250 million kilograms (250,000 metric tons)

100 million kilograms (100,000 metric tons)

85 % of the textiles thrown away in Canada end up in landfills. Only 1 % of textiles worldwide are recycled. Used clothing, worldwide about 700,00 tons yearly, that does not sell at Thrift stores or other used clothing stores are shipped overseas, usually to poorer countries. Once there they are sold to distribution outlets that sell them to local vendors. Many of these used items do not sell and are taken to the local landfills of these countries where they are creating a massive environmental impact.

Win:

Well now that we have heard the quiz questions, I had no idea how harmful the fashion industry could be to our planet.

Helen:

That's right Win. I wonder how we could help?

Linda:

Well one of the easiest ways to help is consider the new 7Rs for recycling.

Annette:

You mean reduce, reuse, and recycle?

Linda:

Well sort of Annette. But because we have become such a wasteful and throw away society the 3Rs have become 7Rs now.

Win:

Well that's news to me. I never heard tell of 7 Rs. What are they?

Linda:

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink, Refuse, Repair, Repurpose

Win:

Well I feel kind of like we should DO something as a WI Branch for our community.

Annette:

Yes, maybe we should try to do something – but what?

Helen:

What does FWIC suggest?

Win:

I'm sorry...I'm a little lost here. Who and what is FWIC?

Linda:

FWIC is the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. It is our national WI organization, and they act as a unifying voice for all the provincial WIs. This national project was chosen by all the provinces together.

Annette:

So - do they have ideas for what we can do in connection to Sustainable Style?

Linda:

Yes they do. There is a list and a booklet outlining ideas and information. One great one is to sponsor an information session on the 7Rs. And another would be making a throw quilt from recycled materials for homeless shelters or food banks.

Win:

Well shoot-why don't we hold a clothing exchange and whatever is left over we can take to the food bank.

Helen:

But what if we get overcome with donations? What would we do then?

Annette:

We could just limit items. Say maybe 2 bags per person maximum?

Win:

We really won't know till we start. I think we should try it and see what happens. It's not much different than having a yard sale.

Annette:

Yeah, and yard sales are a lot of work!

Helen:

Well, at our age, anything is a lot of work...but do we think the people of our community would enjoy this idea of a clothing exchange?

Linda:

Yes - I think they would!

Helen:

Then I move that we give it a try!

Win:

And I second the motion!

Linda:

Well thank-you both, now let's consider the details...

5.4 Presentation Earth Day, April 22, 2025

Sustainable Style/sustainable fashion

- Ethically, environmentally responsible
- Eco-friendly materials produced
- Conscious clothing consumer



Emphasizes ethical; and environmentally responsible production and consumption of clothing, aiming to minimize negative impacts on the environment and workers. It involves eco-friendly materials, reducing waste, promoting fair practices, and encouraging a circular economy where resources are reused and recycled.

MINDFUL CONSUMPTION

One of the best ways to simplify your life while making a positive impact on the environment.



Building a sustainable wardrobe is one of the best ways to simplify your life while making a positive impact on the environment.

- Environmental impact
- Ethical choices
- Health and well being
- Quality over Quantity
- Reduction of Waste
- Reflection



When I think of the Household Recycling we do for a household of 2, it is really mind blowing. It's not unusual for me to go to the recycling depot at our local dump twice a month. I have been mindful of the waste, and have been recycling for several years now, and when I think of the garbage that went to the landfill when we were a household of 5, it's even more mind blowing!

Four New R's

Rethink Refuse

Repair Regift





Synthetic Materials
=
Fossil Fuels



What is the trade-off?

Polyesters, nylon, acrylics, spandex have revolutionized fashion and outdoor industries



Process of Creating Synthetic Fibers



Refine crude oil

Form Plastic Chips

Chips are heated and melted

Form plastic fibres



refining of crude oil yields petrochemicals

- These petrochemicals are the building blocks of synthetic materials
- Petrochemicals including ethylene, propylene, benzene, and toluene
- Once extracted they are mixed with chemicals to form plastic chips
- These chips are heated and melted
- They are passed through various machines to form plastic fibres

refining of crude oil yields petrochemicals

- petrochemicals =building blocks of synthetic materials
- Include ethylene, propylene, benzene, and toluene
- mixed with chemicals to form plastic chips
- chips are heated and melted
- forms plastic fibres

-from these fibres, synthetic materials are formed

-different synthetics are made from different chemicals, having their own properties

How do Synthetics Affect our Land, Air, and Water?

- Leads to habitat loss and deforestation
- Difficult to recycle
- Up to 500 years to decompose
- Takes up valuable space in landfills
- Burning releases contaminants
- Methane gases released
- Microplastics released into water

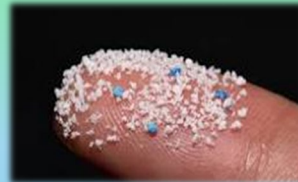


Picture of landfill in India, with clothing waste

- extraction of raw materials to make synthetic materials leads to habitat loss and deforestation
- They are difficult to recycle contributing to more pollution
- synthetic fabrics can take up to 500 years to decompose in landfills
- They take up valuable space in landfills
- This results in poisons leaching in to land and water
- This also results in the releasing of methane gases

Micro-plastics and Washing Machines

- Use cold water
- Use shorter washing cycles
- Full loads
- Wash less often
- Line dry
- Choose natural fabrics
- Avoid delicate wash cycles
- Use less detergents



Micro-plastics and Washing Machines

- Use cold water
- Opt for shorter washing cycles
- Do full loads, this reduces the friction between clothes
- This minimizes the amounts of microfibrils released
- Wash less often
- Line dry, heat causes damage to clothes which in turn causes more micro plastic release

- Choose natural fabrics
- Avoid delicate wash cycles, they increase friction and washing time
- Use less detergents
- heat and friction are the major cause of the release of micro fibres


***Slow* Fashion vs *Fast* Fashion What is the Impact?**



Slow Fashion	Fast Fashion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think before buying. • Consider where and how? • Eco-friendly and innovative materials. • Fair labor practices. • Less greenhouse emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impulsive buying. • Inexpensive, trendy. • Environmental Pollution, waste. • Workers exploited. • Over-consumption- harmful to people and the environment .
	

- *Slow* fashion -thinking before buying.
- whether you really need the latest clothing item on-trend.
- where the garments come from and how they are created.
- Supporting companies that create garments with earth-friendly and innovative materials, with fair labor practices, and less greenhouse emissions.

What's In Your Closet?

- Investigate the material used
- Reconsider the brands you buy
- Look for eco-materials



- Investigate the materials that your clothes are made of and reconsider the brands you buy.
- conscious brands with eco-materials like organic cotton, hemp, or wool are better choices than harmful materials like polyester or nylon.
- only about 1% of clothing is actually recycled,
- 85% of clothes end up in landfills

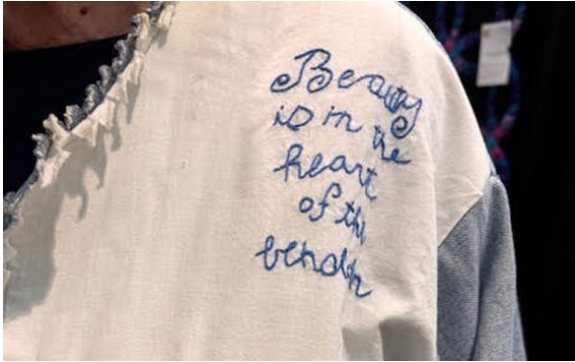
How To Build a Sustainable Wardrobe ?

- Repurpose/regift items in your Closet
- Rethink- Quality instead of Quantity
- Prioritize Sustainable and Ethical Brands
- Reuse -Shop Second-hand and Vintage
- Reduce -one in, one out
- Repair- Care for Your Clothes Properly



5.5 Upcycling and Repurposing Examples

Submitted by Donna Jebb, FWIO



6. Competitions: 2027 Tweedsmuir & Senator Wilson Competitions

6.1 Tweedsmuir Competitions

Tweedsmuir Handicraft Competition

- Make a throw 45 x 60 inches
- Using recycled materials and trims.
- Throws will be donated to homeless shelters or food banks in the location where the 2027 Convention is held.

Tweedsmuir History Competition

- History of a garment
- Written story with photos.

Tweedsmuir Community Competition

- Clothing Swap or Secondhand Boutique/ Rummage Sale
- Held at a WI Branch.
- Write up on the roles and responsibilities of WI workers, where the clothing came from, and what types of clothing were available.
- Include individual stories and pictures of successful shoppers.

Tweedsmuir Cultural Competition

- Pictorial and narrative documentation of a Fashion Show featuring remade, repurposed, or vintage selections of clothing
- Clothing can be worn at various stages in women's lives, such as school, workplace, wedding, maternity, casual, or workout garments.

6.2 Senator Cairine Wilson Empowered Women Competition

Branch Competition: All you can create "Repurpose & Reuse" Project.

- Create as many useful items as possible from a minimum of three or more different, pre-owned garments.
- Include a writeup describing how the women in the branch felt empowered to create the designs,
- Include photos outlining the group participation, design, creation, uniqueness, and finishing steps
- Photos should show all stages of the project, from start to finish.
- Completed items will be brought to the convention to be judged
- Judged items will be donated to the Convention sales table, and whatever remains will go to the AHH Homestead Gift Shop.

7. Branch & Community Examples

7.1 Mindful Consumption Day

Submitted by Marion Green, Past-President NBWI, FWIC Board Member



On October 16, 2025, Burnt Church W.I. and Blackville W.I. jointly sponsored a “Mindful Consumption Workshop” opened to the public. We had 29 interested ladies attend. This workshop and theme were chosen to promote the three-year National Project of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. The materials published in WI Connections, the FWIC YouTube channel, the F.W.I.C. Facebook page, and the NBWI monthly Newsletter were very useful for finding information used at the workshop.

After singing O Canada, the workshop opened with the presentation of the “Sustainable Style Skit,” which provided attendees with an overview of the project and discussed the 7 R's of Sustainability. Members of the WI's had a fashion show with clothing either from their closets or from a local resource center. Marilyn McKenna presented on fabric-wrapped baskets and fabric rugs, along with a display of her work. Linda Gallant demonstrated how to make an apron from a man's shirt, quilts from T-shirts and scrap material, and clothing from old patterns, which were on display.

After a couple of quizzes, door prizes, discussions, and thoughts on the day, the singing of God Save the King closed the day. Those attending left with handout materials, full bellies from the delicious food served throughout the day, and smiling faces.



8. Reference Materials

8.1 Glossary of Terms

Mindful Consumption: This means being aware of how your purchasing choices will impact the environment and society. To ask the question: Do I really need it?

Sustainable: the ability to maintain or support a process over time.

Fast fashion: This is the process of mass-producing clothing designs at low cost and low quality, and bringing them to retail stores quickly. It has huge detrimental environmental and social impacts.

Natural Clothing Material: These are products made from plant, animal, or mineral sources.

Synthetic Clothing Material: These products are made from chemicals and petroleum-based compounds. They are also known as artificial fibers.

Biodegradable: Biodegradable items are those that are capable of being broken down by bacteria or other living organisms into basic substances that are found in nature.

8.2 Resource Links and Reports

<https://earth911.com/how-and-buy/not-so-good-better-best-synthetic-fabrics/>

https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/A-New-Textiles-Economy_Full-Report_Updated_1-12-17.pdf

<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/fashions-tiny-hidden-secret>

https://unfashionalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/UN-Fashion-Alliance-Mapping-Report_Final.pdf

<https://unfashionalliance.org/>

<https://earth.org/fast-fashions-detrimental-effect-on-the-environment/>

<https://globalfashionagenda.org/fashion-industry-target-consultation/>

https://davidsuzuki.org/living-green/the-environmental-cost-of-fast-fashion/?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAiA-ty8BhA_EiwAkyoa3zvPUmNEUwVe-FK8f9-VOLhdYHILi7TZJKCLCxpWkl0yjWQNYUmUphoCdHAQAvD_BwE

<https://www.threadingchange.org/blog/sdg-5>

<https://remake.world/stories/news/how-the-united-nations-sdgs-relate-to-the-fashion-industry/>

<https://www.fashionrevolution.org/the-fashion-industry-needs-to-break-with-its-gender-and-womens-rights-problems/>

8.3 Recommended Reading List

The following book titles were supplied by Alison Delf-Timmerman, PHEc in Manitoba.

- The Conscious Closet, Elizabeth L. Cline
- Fashionopolis – The Secrets Behind the Clothes We wear, Dana Thomas
- The Day the World Stops Shopping, J.B. McKinnon

- Fibershed, Rebecca Burgess with Courtney White

If you are interested in any of these, email me and I can send you a picture of the description/summary of the book.

Good general information from <https://www.facebook.com/HomeAndFamily.net> This Facebook page is operated by the Manitoba Home Economics Association (MAHE).

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