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NEW EDGE



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The background is a solid yellow color. Scattered across the page are several small, detailed illustrations of flies, shown from various angles as if they are flying. The text is centered on the page.

Welcome to the waste issue

Cover explained:

“HOLDING THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD” is the work of an illustrator that creates under the name **Ilić**, who drew inspiration for it from mythology, specifically the myth about Atlas. This ‘chaotic, tangled’ mass represents our planet, that women and men carry on their shoulders because it is important to recognize that our world is carried on the shoulders of humanity entirely and in a way, we all carry the consequences. The yellow colour of the backdrop represents the sun and in that way the illustration strongly points out the issues of global warming and the catastrophic consequences that are the results of our actions.

WASTE.

I don't even know how to start writing about a topic that is already talked about so much. Plastic waste has certainly become a major problem and because we talk about it, things are changing. So we decided that the topic of this issue is waste, plastic or any other type of waste. The fact that there will soon be more plastic in the sea than fish is terrible, but because this is not happening on our coast and in our little drop of sea, we think that this problem does not touch us, does not concern us - but it is exactly the opposite. It is also a terrible fact that microscopic plastic particles have already been found in the human body because we consume them with water or food, which is a powerful reminder that we're running out of time to take action. Fortunately, the measures are already taking place, with European members of Parliament backing the ban of the use of disposable plastic products, which is why they should be discontinued from 2021, and from 2050 onwards all packaging that is not made from already recycled products. Starting in 2019, we also begin the complete abolishment of plastic bags in all shops. Which is awesome and at the same time terrible, because unfortunately, we must be forced to change - but now it will not be difficult for us to bring our own bag to the store.

It is important that we are aware that small differences are the ones that make changes happen in the long run and if we can motivate someone to avoid the use of plastic on a daily basis, we have already done something big .

So before the end of the year we present to you the 11th issue of the magazine, with which I hope that you will feel our desire for change and you will join us on the way. For all other and current things, click on our newedgemagazine.com website.

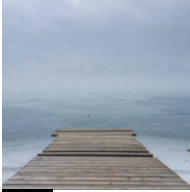
The New Edge team wishes you everything nice, heartfelt and happy in 2019!



Thank you for staying with us.

— Anja Korošec

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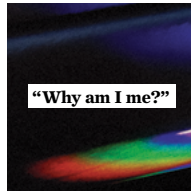
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Ilić

Jasna Rajnar Petrović

Waste of ...

Waste is a term that's very in. Not just when talking about the environment, it also applies to people and the relationships and communication between us very well. It snuggled itself into our daily vocabulary almost too cosily if you ask me. We don't think twice when declaring something, or even more importantly, someone, as a 'waste of money/energy/time/effort/space/any other word'. Doesn't it feel so deliciously righteous, putting things/people in that category? "Watching a TV series all the time is a waste of time." "Buying something when there's a cheaper version of it on the market is a waste of money." "Making a profile and spending time on dating apps is a waste of energy." "If you don't get anything out of something, it's a waste of effort." And my personal favourite: "You're a complete waste of space."

I guess it's true that we as a society wouldn't survive without labelling and putting things in boxes. We hear it so much we've almost become immune to it, we consider it more as an annoyance than a personal attack.

Just remember all the times somebody around you said a similar phrase as the one above about something you like to do, but is a waste in their opinion. You probably shrugged it off or rolled your eyes at it, didn't you? Maybe you told them off, but why would you? Saying something's a waste of whatever is harmless after all! Maybe you tried to convince them otherwise, but I don't think so – those kinds of quick and absolute judgements are usually as good as set in stone. I bet all of those little judgy arrows lodged themselves someplace in your subconscious, though. They joined the chorus of those inner voices who like to tell you, in one way or another, that you're not good enough. That something's wrong with who you are and how you go about living your life.

"But I don't have those kinds of inner voices", some of you will say. Trust me, if you're not a socio/psychopath, you have them, it's always just a matter of volume. In those of you with a bit more self-confidence, they are a distant

background noise, barely audible; you hear them only in times of great uncertainty about yourself. Those of us with little to no self-confidence and a lot of self-consciousness hear them a bit more clearly than the rest, as they chirp and nag a bit louder in our heads. Those of us who have met with mental illness in our lives, either in ourselves or people close to us, know that those kinds of inner voices can overpower everything else in the head of a mentally ill person. Be it bipolar, psychosis, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia or anything else in the diagnosis realm, there are inner voices telling you you're absolutely worthless, without possibility for redemption or salvation, an absolute waste of space.

I can see how this text could be perceived as me wanting to classify the expression 'a waste of ...' as bad, or even, gosh-darnit-they're-taking-away-all-our-words, politically incorrect. Like I'm wagging my finger at you and declaring this as wrong - which is not at all what I'd like to achieve with it. I just wanted to present another perspective,

another perception. Maybe this made you think twice about this or other things we say without thinking, maybe you think this whole text is a waste of paper/a page/space, maybe you put yourself in somebody else's shoes, someone whose inner voices are a bit louder than yours.

Essentially, what I'm saying through this example is that we are a judgemental species, and more importantly, that we became quite elegant in disguising it. Saying "sitting around all day is a waste of time" instead of "you're lazy and don't do anything" nicely avoids the first person of the narrative and isn't a direct attack, but you know and feel the judgement anyways, don't you? It just looks more neutral. And I feel like we all collectively decided that declaring something as 'waste' is actually quite neutral. Much better than one of its meanings, excrement, or if we put it as plainly as can be - shit. Try substituting this with all the 'wastes' in this text or 'a waste of' with shitty and see what you get.

—

Photo: Jasna Rajnar Petrović

Agnes Momirski

SENSORY SANCTUARIES

ON THE POLLUTION OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL SPACE

City life means being surrounded by Wi-Fi signals, the IoT, mobile networks, high-tech, chemicals, public transport, cars, factories, cell phone towers, and electromagnetic radiation. The human body becomes a waste storage for toxins by enduring all the electro smog, noise pollution, indoor and outdoor air pollution. It's hard to recall what nature feels like, and what true relaxation really means. We experience muscle tenseness, shallow breathing, brain-fog, signs of psychosomatic diseases (showing symptoms with no actual physical cause). With the sensory pollutants affecting the body, perception, behavior and endocrinology, our minds become cluttered and unclear. Consequently it's harder to get in touch with the inner self, or feel empathy and compassion towards another living being. Humanity is becoming more desensitized and desensitized, and our daily ecosystems being full of noise, air and data pollution is just adding to the list of reasons why.

Humans are sensory beings and understand the world through their living bodies, which should be nurtured through pleasant sensory conditions. How to create environments where sensory conditions can't interfere with our multimodal perception, and where we can bridge the gap between humans and nature?

Urban planning initiatives aim to embed noise and

Wi-Fi free spots within the city fabric. These type of projects warn about the effects of noise and EM pollution on our mental and physical health (some claim that its effects are far worse than air pollution). Music and sound therapy prove to be very beneficial for the general human condition, while noise is deeply harming. By creating quiet urban spots, close to offices and homes, these could provide some rest for our bodies and mind, aiding to maintain the public mental health.

Home environments are just as polluted as the urban city ecosystem. There's cellphone radiation, dirty electricity coming from walls and badly isolated wires, personal technologies, Wi-Fi signals, and noise pollution leaking in from the city. Pollution seems unavoidable. In Germany and Sweden they now officially recognize a medical condition called electromagnetic hypersensitivity, which describes a set of health symptoms caused by electromagnetic radiation. The symptoms include insomnia,



Our experience of the world is a controlled hallucination, which happens with, through and because of our living bodies.

(Anil Seth, Professor of Cognitive and Computational Neuroscience, University of Sussex)



heart palpitations, headaches, and sometimes the patient is entirely disabled by the condition. These patients usually seek to live far away from city life, electricity and Wi-Fi signals. In USA, the only EM, Wi-Fi and radio wave free spot is called Green Bank in West Virginia, and has become an escape for people who claim to be electrosensitive. The area is highly monitored and controlled to keep out all electromagnetic radiation. But for those who are electrosensitive and who wish to stay in the city, there is a large market online offering products that shield from EMR, ranging from body suits, helmets, to special cages for routers, and large fabrics.

While some banish all tech to create their sensory home sanctuaries, some build intelligent environments with sensory technologies. Technology innovations are reaching into the field of human emotions and senses. New immersive experiences aim to impact us emotionally through touch, sight, smell and sound. They also aim to diminish side effects of acoustic noise, artificial light and chemical substances, and positively affect people and nature. There's a new empathic reality opening up in the field of virtual and augmented realities, creating new possibilities for bridging the mind-body separation. Sensory technology for therapeutic purposes employs elements of sound, music, light and touch therapies.

They offer to create healing sensory sanctuaries, often by recreating the conditions we experience in nature.

The world is experienced as a multi-sensory inner movie. To find new ways for empathic coexistence in our everyday human-tech playground, we need to find ways how to create (personal and collective) sensory sanctuaries for bridging the gap between humans and (inner) nature. We need to restore our mental health, damaged by sensory pollution. The resources on digital detox strategies and zen techniques are vast, advising on how to channel all excess toxic energy away from our mental, physical, emotional bodies. Meditate the effects of pollution away, by releasing all psychological waste that has been accumulating at the bottom of your psyche for years. Find a silent place within the city, where the effects of pollution are minimal, and retreat there often. There is a smartphone app called Hush City, that allows you to do just that. Your body and mind are more than waste bags for toxins. Sensualizing the humanity and creating empathic experiences, which happen through and because of our living bodies, is the radical step towards global healing. ■

Images: Metaverse Sanctuary (video, HD, Rotterdam, 2018)
The video was shot during the exhibition Digital dawn, Luminous voices at Roodkapje Rotterdam, April-May 2018.

ALTERNATIVE

Neja Činkole



ZERO WASTED LIVES

Photo: Neja Činkole

In the recent years a strong discourse has been present on how we should live our lives. Numerous well-designed self-care words of spiritual influencers are guiding us every time we swipe up to live in complete awareness while establishing a compassionate relationship with our inner-self and the world we live in. Yet over 56 billion farmed animals are still killed every year. While most people are trying to enjoy their fulfilled lives, animal lives have become nothing more than a side waste of the human (over)consumption.

The most obvious product of carnism is actually not the most harmful villain in this real-time story. World's top five meat as well as dairy corporations emit more greenhouse gas emissions than the largest oil companies. Besides playing the main role in the inevitable climate breakdown crisis, factory farming is inherently anti-female as it profits off female reproductive systems and separates baby animals from their mothers.

Creamy poached egg on a well-done steak aside, here is another piece to chew on: leather and fur are not simply a “leftover” from the animal produce industry that would instead go to waste. In fact, to keep up with high-end fashionable handbags and shoes or even label patches on jeans, the industry needs to slaughter over forty million animals primarily for their skins and to “keep us warm in the winter” another fifty million furry creatures. And this does not include other wild species that are still hunted down to become trophy garments.

Turning their bodies into marketable items is not only a sign of human supremacy over animals, but it takes a toll on the perception of animals' emotional and social abilities that are often even greater than humans'. Just like people like to have their best friends close, so do cows who are emotionally affected when separated from their besties in the herd. Chickens are not only capable of empathy, but also deductive reasoning, which humans typically develop not earlier than age seven.

On a brighter note, vegan movement has been on its explosive rise. Several studies, such as the one from the University of Oxford, have confirmed what a pioneer of ethical fashion Maude “Emarel” Freshel had been advocating

for over 100 years ago: “avoiding animal products is the single biggest way to reduce human impact on the planet”.

Slowly passionate efforts of animal welfare individuals and organizations are becoming fruitful. Following Annie Leonard's transformative social change, the world is rethinking consumerism every day along with reimagining sustainable and cruelty-free alternatives to redesign products without compromising on flavors and looks. Meat love will not break with “bleeding” plant-based Beyond Burger. Happy Cheeze has crafted feta, Camembert and recently 18-month-aged cheese wheel to the point where even the French could not tell the difference. Best brunch omelette will still be served as fluffy and filling with Just Egg. And after being sued by Swedish dairy industry a few years ago, Oatly is making café lattes even foamier with strong campaign message “it's like milk, but made for humans”.

Movement of creating great products that are more than just a kinder alternative has also reached the fashion industry. Biotechnology company Bolt Threads launched commercially available vegan leather Mylo made from mushrooms. Orange Fiber and Salvatore Ferragamo recognized the opportunity to turn citrus fruit scrapes from juice industry into silk. Actor and ethical investor Leonardo DiCaprio has recently joined forces with primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall to launch a vegan clothing line to support ape conservation, although we all know that Stella McCartney stays the loudest voice in the field of sustainable vegan fashion. Pointing out only a few of the game changers, it is indisputable that any animal life could easily be spared without any greater compromises on people's menu or clothing racks. Even though power is not only in individuals hands, everyone indeed plays an important role becoming consciously living citizens of this one Planet and demanding justice in redesigning social and cultural norms that will find animal exploitation intolerable. Consciously living individuals getting together and demanding justice as a collective movement will hold corporations and governments responsible and furthermore drive power of change towards ethical, ecological and “zero-wasted-lives” future. —

Ajda Gregorc

The
environment
isn't

See

“Mission accomplished” – Banner behind George Bush on May 1 2003, describing the status of the war in Iraq.

Do the words “Deep Water Horizon” or “2015 Indian heat wave” mean anything to you? Perhaps they jump-started some long-buried memory somewhere in the basement of your mind. I know I still needed to google them. Turns out, they were two of the major natural disasters in the last decade, both receiving major media coverage at their times. So why don’t we remember them?

To answer this question, let’s take a look at two recent environmental accomplishments that received widespread attention and support in the last year – the ban of plastic straws and the phasing out of plastic bags in various stores, cities and countries.

While certainly a step in the right direction, they show part of the larger picture of why we seem to forget massive events so easily – and why the environment today is in trouble. These issues were at the forefront of this battle not because of their effectiveness in combating pollution, but because of their (social) media sexiness, a rare feat for environmental topics. For such campaigns to be successful, they need:

- a clearly defined problem and solution
- to be easy to support
- to be relatable
- a clear “good guys” vs. “bad guys” split

See the problem? When it comes to systematic change, it meets none of these criteria!

The 2 degrees Celsius goal and the emission cap of the Paris Agreement are too abstract to garner widespread media support and pressure, because it is hard for us laymen

to understand the scope of the problems we need to address. In the end, the political drama around the agreement received more attention than its content.

Moreover, while these goals might not be sexy, they are much better thought out, representing the work of leading global experts and policy-makers after tough negotiations.

Let us now turn our attention back to plastic straws and bags. In social media, once the hype over a certain subject has died down, it is almost impossible to ignite it again. It is therefore futile to try to do a follow-up discussion on past events. So let us cite some of the caveats here. While the supply of straws and bags has taken a hit, the demand is still high. Alternatives therefore sprung up, most, however, also posing concerns about their impact on the environment (including cotton and paper bags and even paper straws). Those resources still need to come from somewhere, using up valuable water and tree reserves while producing large amounts of CO₂. According to a study done by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, an organic cotton bag needs to be used 149 times to counter its negative climate impact. However, while the matter is still disputed, it is over and done in our collective minds. The perception of cotton and paper = good, plastic = bad has taken a firm hold.

As with Deepwater Horizon and the Indian Heat wave, these plastic bans will prove to be passing media fads, quickly buried and forgotten under a large pile of newer and more exciting stories. The only way to prevent this is by encouraging widespread, multinational legislation and agreements.



Contaminated minds

Concept & production pH15

Ana Jazbec,
Katja Grcman,
Marusa Kranjc,
Nika Batista,

Vasja Vasilij Brilj.

Photo: Sara Rman

All featured pieces created by group pH15













Mom, I am a ...

RICH MAN

Cher

Photography: Lucija Rosc

MUA: Nina Potočnik

Styling & direction: Maja Podojsteršek

Models: Nika Sretenović, Marta Popel, Lucija Rosc





Nika wears tracksuit by Žan Flogie, glasses stylist's own



Marta wears pants and blazer by Anja Medle



photography Nika Sretenović



Nika wears jumpsuit by Jurij Fidel



Marta wears blue shirt by Jurij Fidel, white shirt and jeans model's own





Marta wears pants and blazer by Anja Medle, shirt model's own



Lucija wears coat by Anja Medle, photography Nika Sretenović



Sleeping beauty
by Landscape

Dajana Jurman-Osip & Surya Djalil
all clothes Draž



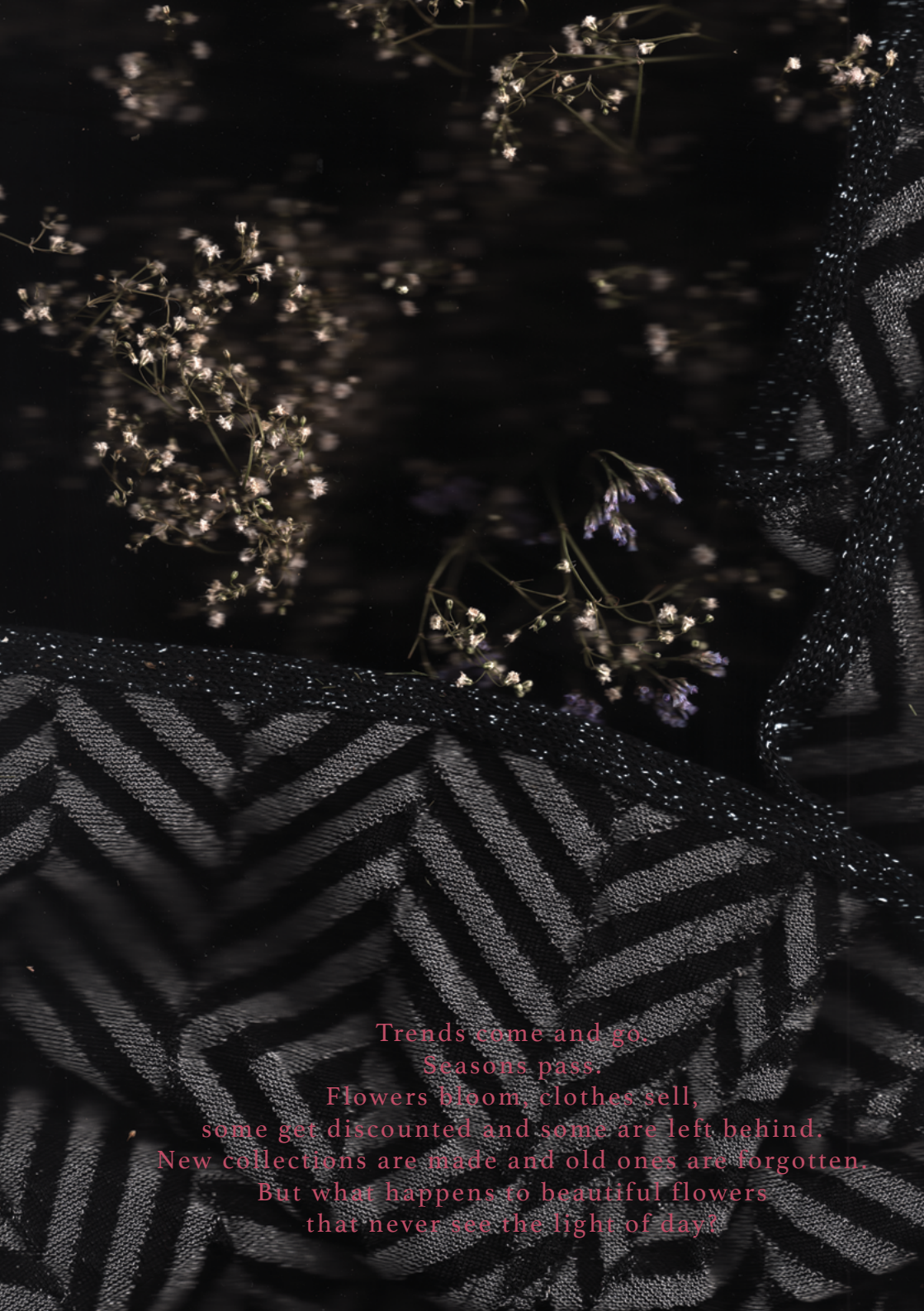










A dark, moody photograph featuring a black fabric with a prominent chevron or zigzag pattern. The fabric is the central focus, with its texture clearly visible. Scattered across the fabric and in the background are several dried, pressed flowers, including clusters of small white flowers and a few purple ones. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the fabric's texture and the delicate structure of the dried blooms against a deep black background.

Trends come and go.
Seasons pass.
Flowers bloom, clothes sell,
some get discounted and some are left behind.
New collections are made and old ones are forgotten.
But what happens to beautiful flowers
that never see the light of day?

ALTERNATIVE

Go slow,
think
long
term.

Ines Šercelj

It's the talk of the town. It's all over the news and the world wide web. One of the most coveted themes of the past few years entitled "living a less wasteful life". The impact of this discussion can be seen by simply visiting a local grocery shop. Or any chain store for that matter. Some of them banned plastic bags entirely while others charge you an additional few cents for a recycled one. And while I agree that this is definitely the way to go, I can't help but think about the bought goods that go into those bags. Our minds are put at ease knowing that we did the world some good by stuffing our things into a cotton tote. But perhaps the answer to consumerism lies more in how we buy. Are our totes really that enlightened if we stuff them with cheap crap that we don't really need?

Being waste conscious immediately puts you a few ranks higher on the scale of worth compared to other less conscious peasants. It's similar to being vegan. Somehow you gain a title of being the next Jesus Christ and you lose your sense of understanding for those that have yet to step on this journey. Through the years of being vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian and waste conscious I realized it's not about aggressively protesting every little thing, but about being a good example. People mostly change not because

someone tells them to but because they are inspired by something. My belief is that the essence of being waste conscious lies more in essentialism itself (the 2018 version, not Plato so much) and not in complete abstention from consumerism. Again let's rather strive towards a way of life where the things we choose to surround ourselves with are carefully picked as opposed to being aggressively anti-consumerism. It's like applying a coat of Zen Buddhism over your existing way of life. Buy one table but let it be of good quality, a simple yet timeless design that will last you for years. Let the mentality of "I don't have enough money to buy cheap" really sink in.

The philosophy of essential living can be applied to anything in life really. Take it as an opportunity to reevaluate what's really important to you. May it be the inside of your closet or the relationships you're cultivating. But don't just jump head first and hope for the best. It's the same as with diets that we all know don't work. And you ask why? Turning your life upside down will result in frustration and that inevitably leads to failure. Go slow. Think long term. Change your way of thinking and start with yourself. Others will follow.

—

Mia Janežič

WASTING ENERGY



If you know me, you are probably aware that I am an over-thinker, over-planner, over-complicator and over-the-top everything that could result in my mind spiralling into a deep dark hole of worries and potentially ruin a good portion of the day for me, just because I make myself do it. And that's where, as I've realised just recently, a lot of my energy goes to waste.

I've been worrying about things that have happened in the past or things that might happen in the future, but most importantly, things I have no control over. And the trick is, as I said, that I make myself do it. I mean, I could just focus on the day and the present moment, letting it be what it is and enjoying it, but instead of doing that perfectly rational thing, that in my mind I know would be best for me, I spend far too many hours and sleepless nights worrying about it. Why? I have no idea. But I've made progress. I've managed to realise in the past few months that it is exactly what everyone else has been trying to tell me all these years - pointless.

Does it make me feel better? No. As a matter of fact, it makes me feel worse. Yes, it does "prepare" me for some things, but I could just rationally think about possible results, make a note of

them and then let them pass by and be what they are. If my worrying makes no significant difference in what the end result is going to be, except for making me feel extremely anxious, is that really worth it? And as I've slowly but surely realised, it is not. Rational evaluation and being prepared is something completely different to being overwhelmed with worries of potential things potentially going wrong.

I know it sounds daunting and maybe emotionally difficult to read, but my point with this is that it does get lighter. It's a journey, and one that possibly doesn't have a direct connection to the final destination. Maybe it doesn't even get to the point of being worry-free, because that's not something I think is in my nature and actually something that I'd want to be in my nature. But I hope during these stops and de-tours and mountains and valleys that lie in-between, that I'll get to learn to let things go, be what they are and accept the ones I cannot change.

I've just had a conversation about this type of thing with my best friend, and she said; "You're definitely not a realist. You're either completely swamped in negativity and worries, or you're

getting your hopes up about something quite irrational."

With such objective observations of my behaviour I've slowly started recognising the toxic patterns that I fall into. I don't want to dwell on the past or be daydreaming about the future, because with either of those I'm wasting the moment right now. By worrying and anticipating what people think of me, how and why they don't like me and how I can please them I am doing exactly that. And I'm not focusing on myself in the process, to be the best version of me for me, but for them.

There's a lot of potential I'm wasting here, you see. And if you are a worrier yourself I'd like to ask you to step away from your worrisome characteristics and try to look at the big picture, objectively. And if you find activities that you could be doing instead, and that those make you get closer to your goals and make you happier, you are possibly throwing away precious moments of being dedicated to those, because you are too busy over-analysing something in your head that you have no control over.

And you know what I'm going to (try) and say to that? I'm over-it. —

ALTERNATIVE

Tajda Hlačar

Secretly occupying
my thoughts...

“Why am I me?”

If you are a loyal reader of my columns, reading this one you might be in for a surprise. This one is going to leave behind all current and important topics concerning the fashion world. It is going to be more personal. Being part of the 'social science world', first by studying sociology and philosophy, and now redirecting my path to the field of fashion theory, has been more challenging than I'd thought at the beginning. As a little girl I was asking myself questions that were a bit different, not really usual for a child. I can still remember my most common question: 'Why am I me?' Trying to find the unfindable answer was secretly occupying my thoughts. My high school years expanded my thoughts and interest. After more than five years from closing the high school door, I was still able to hear the words from our meeting with the head teacher in my head: 'Why would you want to study for example cultural anthropology? What can you in reality do with it?' I was shocked by the thoughts and the way of thinking from the people I expected to be open minded. At that point I had no idea that this was just the beginning; the beginning of years and years of listening that being interested in or, even worse, studying sociology and philosophy, was a waste of my time. This was the advice from my head teacher, my next door neighbour, a random guy in a copy shop and even a pensioner waiting with me on a bus. Fortunately, I did not listen to their 'well-intended' advice.

Let me mention one question, which can also be classified as 'well-intended' advice with a hint of existential concern; 'How is it with finding a job?' I think that anyone who encounters this reaction is familiar with a feeling encompassing anger, powerlessness and to some extent also a melancholy, which rips away our strength for giving an answer. From the beginning of my studies to the present day, the answer has become easier. With lighting speed, the need to understand our society and having the power to foresee the future is becoming crucial for corporations and companies who

intend to thrive in the business world and survive the next economic crisis. Marketing, understanding of online communities, developing a strategy and after all staying ahead of endless competition is crucial. The melting pot of ideas including ours, from sociologists, philosophers and others, is even more important at the time of artificial intelligence and in a word of cybernetics.

However, being interested in fashion theory, I am given a hostile look from sociologists and philosophers. For the great majority of them, fashion is only the capitalist sphere and usually trivial. Why is fashion understood as trivial? Due to being seen as a domain of women or as a sphere of commodity fetishism? Are these not sufficient reasons for our re-thinking? A world without social science; is this really a world we want to live in? In a world without critique? When you open your eyes and leave behind prejudices concerning fashion as not being significant enough, you will be able to recognise its inseparable closeness with the society and consequently with all social science spheres. This will help you to better understand the relevance of the Gucci Cyborg represented in May by Alessandro Michele as an expression of the development and impact of technologies on our society and Alexander McQueen's, John Galliano's, Yohji Yamamoto's 90's fashion shows, which shocked the fashion world by dealing with marginal topics of ours society.

While writing the previous words these questions are constantly occupying my thoughts; What is the purpose of this column? What is my goal? Maybe I am trying to warn the teachers about their impact on us as their students or maybe I just hope to receive one question or comment less when meeting random people or perhaps all this time I have just been trying to get something off my chest. All I can say for the conclusion is, I just hope that reading this column has not been the waste of your time. For me, I have found my way into 'me being me'. —

ALTERNATIVE

Vanja Žižić

Such

sweet
nothing

Why is it so hard for us to admit that in our free time we haven't moved an inch and damn well enjoyed it? In history, man has searched and found new, easier solutions that made him better, his life easier, more comfortable, which all in all had a positive effect on his health and well-being. Today, the easier, more comfortable way is often equated with laziness, with stagnation – and a lot of times only has a negative connotation.

As a society, we should strive for progress, not just wait for the world to come to us, they say. We should work hard and push ourselves to move forward. But what is progress? Are we happy, healthy and satisfied only when we're active? I noticed there's a general social reluctance to idleness, for which we often create an impossible life and don't give ourselves the opportunity to make it easier, since so many things need to be done in such a short amount of time. We don't want to show that sometimes we need to enjoy being lazy. That we want to relax, to do and think of absolutely nothing. Too many times we equate our need for being lazy with a personality trait. We fear we will miss this

ongoing, fast moving train, full of ambitious people who are able to power themselves with constant movement. Often, we create this feeling of being overwhelmed ourselves by not being honest with each other. By constantly competing and not allowing ourselves and others to rest. Constant fear creates a tension, which takes away our time to reflect, to be less tired and be more productive with our work.

Daydreaming and being lazy therefore doesn't mean wasting our time. If we admit it or not, people need duality. To preserve a healthy body and spirit, we sometimes need to sink into the opposite, into idleness, into this royal laziness. We must regain our ability to just sit and do nothing, to look inward. But the question is, whether, by refusing this neglected human activity, we still know how to be lazy. To daydream, to wander with our mind and just do nothing. You know, the thing we used to know how to do, when we were kids, when they asked us: "Hey, what are you doing?" and without hesitation, we replied: "oh, nothing." Such sweet nothing.

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PARALYZED BY APATHY

During my very first backpacking experience I stayed at a sustainable eco lodge, expecting I would manage to run away from busy Moroccan streets where you cannot walk without stepping on something plastic. I was looking forward to the first sunrise spent on that magical remote place, however after a short idyllic walk to the beach among stubborn bushes, hoping to spot a wild camel somewhere, I was aghast at the sight of supposedly untouched place that was anything but pure. Each time the waves hit my feet they brought a piece of packaging from some faraway land floating along. And there were thousands of similar plastic pieces covering the otherwise pristine sandy shore. I could tell it had been a while since this debris clothed newly purchased products and it hurt knowing that even though there was absolutely no human presence nearby, I felt surrounded by humans.

Ever since, I have felt like doing my part in saving the planet is my vocation. If you'd asked me how I felt about climate change before that, I'd say "indifferent". Just as most people my age presumably. The slow decay of planet Earth's health, like death of a loved one, is a taboo. Unfortunately a fatal one - denial of the problem is essentially choosing not to think about your own death.

It is an area we feel we cannot possibly control, let alone have the power to help, cure and reverse what has been done. It is a special type of grief we try our best to cover up with blankets of nihilism and pessimism. It is the materialistic mentality and capitalistic society that cut the cord between us and nature. As if we were beyond it - untouchable and self-contained. We are driven by lack while simultaneously consumed by scarcity. It's only when natural catastrophes hit our



Photo: Masha Mazi

homes when we bow our heads and admit all of it went too far.

Recognising our part in climate change is daunting, traumatizing even. However, genuine dispassion for environmental issues is extremely rare, usually our indifference is simply a form of a defense mechanism. The actual problem in people's mentality is a disconnect between the size of the problem and their own role in addressing it. And I get it - it is immensely difficult not to feel helpless or powerless.

Another problem is not taking it seriously enough: Floods, hurricanes, disease outbreaks and uncontrollable fires feel like distant problems when they don't hit us directly. It doesn't matter how many scientific articles about microplastics in humans we come across - we remain detached. However,

climate change is a problem with the scope and urgency of WWII, and although it will unfold more slowly than the war, it demands an active response on the same scale. Like the war, environmental crisis threatens with violence, outrages, deprivation, rise in mental health issues and deaths of millions.

Thinking all of this it hit me: pollution is not a problem. People are. Everything else is just a byproduct. What I believe people need is a tiny little moment of immense courage to step off their high horses. To swallow our pride and acknowledge that not only are we the problem - we can be the solution as well. The news of environmental decay is never empowering. But our response can be.

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until next time ...

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PLASTIC

