



10. How can I take the first step?



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First

Question my consumption in everyday life, on vacation and in my free time.

In addition to my basic daily needs, only consume what gives me real added value.

Ask me the highly topical question: To Have or to Be?

In his book 'To Have or to Be' [1976], Erich Fromm describes the prerequisites for a fundamental change in the economy, politics and society in order to overcome the present crisis and to move from an orientation towards having to one towards being.

Second

Align my lifestyle with a good balance between quality and quantity.



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The consumption-oriented lifestyle in the rich countries is pursued from many people worldwide, but it is probably not an attractive option for our children and grandchildren:

- first, because we are thereby causing large and sometimes irreversible damage to nature and it mostly affects many people in other regions of the world.
- second, because the price we pay in our lives is *disproportionately high* compared to the benefits gained, this being increasingly felt by the suffering of so many wealthy people in industrialised countries.

» The question arises: What philosophy of life is behind the *insatiability* of us who live so stubbornly and so dispassionately and morosely at the expense of others and the environment?

Translated from: Gabriela Simon: Mehr Genuss! Mehr Faulheit! Mehr Schlendrian! Die Zeit Nr. 42/1992

Third

Pay more attention to the environment.



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For example with

- **Tips in Everyday Life**
[Umweltbundesamt Germany](#)
- **Tips for a cleaner environment**
[WWF](#)
- **Tips for a sustainable lifestyle**
[Global Stewards](#)

Fourth

Experience the richness of nature.

Real closeness to nature is probably the best prerequisite to take care of the environment.



Melinda in Firiteaz, Romania 2018

It is far from enough to watch good nature films on TV, to drive through beautiful landscapes by car, or to inform myself about ecology.

The reports of environmental disasters anywhere in the world, as we read or hear them daily, barely affect us.

However, being *affected* is essential to us humans so that we can change our lives.

All of us need *very personal experiences* outdoors in the «richness» of nature. Because we humans only protect what we appreciate and we only appreciate what we really know.

Fifth

Living sustainably - my threefold benefit.

1. I can better adjust my life to my needs.

2. I will burden our environment less.
3. I will save money and gain time to live.



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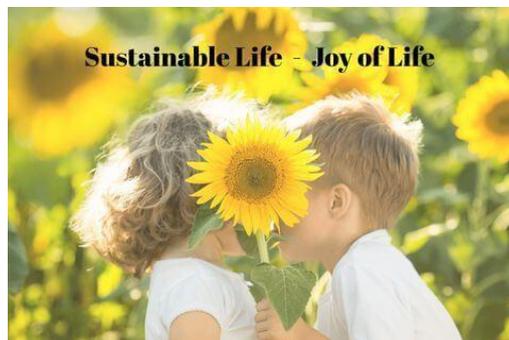
In general

Sustainable living is a *learning process* that demands all our creativity and opens up new opportunities for us.

» If all parents [in the rich countries] always strive for their children to have it better and confuse that with *having more and more*, then at some point all children will be - worse off.

Translated from: Maja Göpel. 2020. Unsere Welt neu denken - Eine Einladung.

Our children and grandchildren will be grateful if we leave them an intact world so that they, too, can live their lives independently and freely.



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And finally

[and intended tongue in cheek]

**Presumably only when
the last tree has been cleared,
the last river poisoned,
the last fish trapped,
will we realise that we cannot eat money.**

Source: Unknown

First and last

**You must be the change
you want to see
in the world**

Mahatma Gandhi

The question is not *how*?

The question is, *when* do we start to live sustainably?