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beijingkids

March 2019

Vegging Out
Meeting
members of
Beijing's vegan
community

Plus: Better
mental health
through play,
upcycling,
and Zou Yi
talks AQI with
MSB students

Sustainability Rising

Creating a waste-free future



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AJ Warner

Proud parent of two boys, AJ Warner has been helping Chinese families for the past 13 years in Beijing. He guides Chinese applicants through the complicated process of getting accepted to US boarding schools and top universities. He is also the former Beijing Chapter President of the Entrepreneurs Organization (EO). WeChat: ajwarner, Email: ajwarner@touchdown.education



Mike Signorelli

Mike Signorelli arrived in Beijing in 1994 as a student and has called China home ever since. He has held several senior management roles over the past 20+ years, including his last corporate job with NBA China. Mike is the founder of Signature Wine, China's first independent subscription wine club. Contact him at mike@sigwine.com.



Marianne Daquet

In Beijing for 12 years, Marianne Daquet has always been passionate about art and education. She founded Atelier Art School 6 years ago with the mission to pass on her strong belief that creativity can change the world. She and her French husband have two daughters. You can reach her at Marianne@atelier.cn.com.



Dominika Mejia

Dominika is career diplomat with a foothold in three continents. She shares a taste for food with a passion for books and travel. She is the author of the bilingual culinary blog D-constructed. While she is full of hope to master Chinese while writing her PhD, she's also the mother of a two-year-old daughter.



Caroline Nath

Caroline Nath moved to Beijing as a teenager after having grown up in the US, Canada, France, and India. She is a filmmaker, radio host, Parent Effectiveness Training teacher, founder of Bonne Nani Jams, and an organic food promoter. She has two multi-ethnic and multi-lingual children. Contact her at kulfidoll@gmail.com.



Elisabeth Koch

China's milliner, Elisabeth Koch, arrived in 2007 and hit the ground running with her hats. This TCK has three children who were born in Beijing. While her creations adorn famous heads on the covers of international glossies, Koch gives hat-making workshops in her studio and is kept busy by the kids. Find out more information at www.ElisabethKoch.net



Lise Floris

Lise Poulsen Floris is an EU official turned blogger. Since leaving her native Denmark in 1998, she has lived in Italy and Belgium before moving to China with her family. She writes about life in Beijing on her blog ninemillionbicycles.com, aiming to tell "the big story through the small story." Her work has been published in the *South China Morning Post*, *Global Times*, and *Point of View International*.



Juliet London

After seven years in Beijing, market researcher, branding consultant and writer, mother to two teenagers, Juliet 'Lady' London continues to be fascinated by this ever changing city. British by birth, she has also lived in Australia and Hong Kong. Her work primarily focuses on education research, leaving less time than she would like to take exercise, walk her dog, and snap up bargains at local markets.



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ON THE COVER:

Harry (Year 11), Sarah (Year 5), Mika (Year 6), Christopher (Year 3), and Saraine (Year 11), are the British School of Beijing (BSB), Shunyi students gracing the cover of our sustainability-themed issue. These young people are tasked with the important job of lowering the ecological footprint of their school through a student-run eco-committee. Keep up the great work!

Photos: Yifei Fang



NO TIME TO WASTE

As we enter into a very precarious time for our planet, where all of our past mistakes regarding the environment are coming home to roost, it's hard to remain complacent. Everything from extreme weather patterns to rising sea-levels are a constant fixture on many of our social media platforms, and it's quite frightening.

Like many other expats, nothing in my life has changed my views on this topic more than moving to China. Between my wonderful wife and mother-in-law, I've learned to become much more conscious about this wasteful behavior. Like many other countries, people here understand that everything has value. Whether it be for environmental reasons or not, all cardboard boxes and plastic bags are habitually saved for future use.

I'm not praising this lifestyle of hoarding objects that could potentially be used again. There's way too much useable space in my apartment that's being occupied by these items usually considered trash. But having to share my apartment with my garbage has forced me to come to terms with this problem.

While I know that we'll never be able to throw it all away in one fell swoop (sorry Marie Kondo), I can, however, squash this habit at the source by not allowing it in my home to begin with. Now we never leave the house without a canvas tote for groceries or a plastic box for leftovers.

I could go on about other ways we are making progress, but the point I'm trying to drive home is that you can start anywhere. For myself, I felt suffocated by the number of plastic bags and cardboard boxes we were accumulating.

Making your life in Beijing more sustainable doesn't need to be a chore, and there are plenty of examples of people in this issue putting forth the effort to do just that. We hope the ideas presented in this issue inspire you to also take action, whether it be through following our Sustainability Checklist (p56), attempting to maintain a more plant-based diet (p50), or even upcycling instead of buying new (p16).

The concepts presented here aren't about attacking your current way of life, but rather securing a better future for the people we love. That's something we can all agree is important!



Kipp Whittaker

Kipp Whittaker
Chief Content Manager



 北京耀中國際學校
YEW CHUNG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BEIJING

YCIS Beijing

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What's New



JISE 2019 the Place to Be for Forward-Thinking Parents and Professionals

Parents, kids, and education professionals gathered at the Kerry Centre on February 22-23 for this year's Jingkids International School Expo (JISE 2019), Beijing. Reflecting the rapidly-evolving world of learning and work, the theme was "Education Beyond School Choice". A competition for young entrepreneurs attracted 17 teams and was won by Dulwich College Beijing students for their creative approach to overcoming an AI future. At a series of packed forums the topics under debate included not only education but also parenting issues. With over 4,000 families attending, this year's event confirmed JISE as the essential place to be for all those who want the very best future for their children.

"Balance" is Better for International Women's Day 2019

March 8 is International Women's Day, with this year's theme being "Balance for Better", and most women in China being entitled to a half day's leave. Unfortunately an event intended to highlight the struggle for gender equality and women's rights across the globe has in some quarters become an occasion to buy your secretary or wife a bunch of flowers. However, keeping the true spirit of the day alive will be Rumble in the Jumble, whose March 9 fair will be a "Femme Festival". The fair takes place at Modernista from 12-6pm, and is free to enter (even for men...)



New Fair Highlights Career Opportunities in the Capital

Another sign of changing times in education can be found at Harrow Beijing on March 12. Traditionally students graduating from Beijing's international schools might be expected to study abroad for the degree before following careers all round the world. However the inaugural Harrow International School Careers Fair invites employers from the Greater Beijing area to meet up with senior pupils and talk about the career opportunities available in this constantly-changing city (as well as discovering the talent emerging from our international schools). The fair runs from 4.30 to 7pm, and is free for both students and companies, though the latter need to register.

"Frecklegate" Puts Focus on Standards of Beauty in China

Questions of gender were also at the forefront in the latest clash between Chinese netizens and a multinational company. The Weibo-sphere, like social media worldwide, is never slow to take offence, and an advertisement for Zara was criticized for featuring a Chinese model with freckles and "a face like a pie," as one commenter put it. A somewhat puzzled Zara spokesperson pointed out that the model, Li Jingwen from Guangzhou, is one of the world's top fashion models, and that the photograph was entirely natural and had not been retouched in any way. Therein, perhaps, lies the problem, as the use of apps to make women's faces in pictures conform to conventional ideas of beauty is now commonplace in China. The view of the government was made clear in a China Daily editorial which slapped down complainers and blamed the furore on "lack of cultural confidence". Meanwhile, police in Guangdong have apologized to a female bodybuilder after accusing her of sharing "obscene content" when she posted a picture of herself posing in a bikini on Weibo. True gender equality is still some way off, it appears.



PHOTOS: PHOTOPLUS.CN, WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, FLICKR

Harmony and Steve

By Jin Chan Yum Wai



The future of learning is at WAB!

Your influence here at WAB extends beyond these walls to international education all over the world. You are pioneers. Thank you for being courageous and making that step forward for us all and for children all over the globe.

- Comment from the joint IBO, NEASC, CIS and NCCT accreditation teams, Sept 2018

Western Academy of Beijing

NEASC Accredited

NCCT

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www.wab.edu

MARCH EVENTS



Promote your family-friendly event on the *beijingkids* website!

Submit your activity details before **March 12** to be considered for our April listings.



STREET DANCE CLASSES WITH SUNSHINE STUDIOS

Mar 6

All ages. Sunshine Studios is organizing two street dance classes and dance team courses for different levels of dance ability. For regular classes, you can choose from four sessions. Through joining the dance team courses, members can get four hours of expert training per week leading to a final performance. RMB 130 per hour, RMB 280 per week. 6:30 PM-8:30 PM. Western Academy of Beijing. (Enquiries@sunshine-studios.co.uk)



BABY BOOK CLUB

every Tuesday

Ages 0-2. The British School of Beijing (BSB), Sanlitun is delighted to announce Baby Book Club. Through this event you can introduce your young kids to the wonderful world of reading every Tuesday at the school's Li Building. All babies must be foreign passport holders and accompanied by his or parents, and not an ayi. Free. 10-10.30am. Sign up at receptions1tley@bsbsanlitun.com (10 seats only). The British School of Beijing (BSB), Sanlitun. (8532 5320)



NATIONAL THEATRE OF CHINA: BEIJING FAYUAN TEMPLE

Mar 6-10

All ages. The drama *Beijing Fayuan Temple* portrays a series of historical events from 1888 to 1927, from the end of the Qing Dynasty and the early years of the Republic. The performance integrates intricate elements like life and death, country and family, and emperor and courtiers. These brutal and cruel histories presented through the court, populace, and temple on the stage are a great opportunity to familiarize yourself with some of the major aspects of Chinese history and culture. RMB 280-1,080. 7.30-9.30pm. National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA). (6655 0000)



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BRUNCH

Mar 8

Adults. The International Women's Day Brunch is organized by Aust-Cham China and the Australian Embassy. This year, Fortescue Metals Group CEO Elizabeth Gaines will attend, and join a discussion with CGTN anchor Cheng Lei. Ms. Gaines is a highly experienced business leader across a range of industries and economies and will bring a broad international perspective and a unique insight into leadership, diversity, and business. RMB 450. Noon-2pm. China World Summit Wing, Beijing. (6505 2299)

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FEATURED EVENT ORGANIZERS

Culturally Connected

文行忠信
Empowering and
Inspiring through Challenge
and Compassion

“

At BCIS, we have many events that celebrate different cultures. These give me new understandings of what the world is like outside of my home and help me appreciate the culture I live in.

Mia E, Grade 10

”

The BCIS community is proudly made up of members from all over the world. As such, we strongly value the diversity our students, teachers, staff, and families bring to our inclusive school. Through events such as Mother Tongue Week, International Day, and the Lunar New Year, we embrace and celebrate our roots. We hope you will join us and experience these for yourself firsthand.





BE YOU BEIJING WOMEN'S RETREAT

Mar 9-10

Adults. Be You Women's Retreat organizes an overnight stay at EAST Hotel, with goodie bags, a class with Jindafit, brunch with free flow bubbly, hair and make-up, a photo booth, a Berry Thoughtful Workshop, and much more. RMB 2,400 (single room), RMB 1,900 (double room). EAST Beijing. (8426 0888)



GREEN SCHOOL FAMILY CAMP 2019

Mar 10 - 16

Ages 2-7. This family camp takes place at Green School in the jungles of Bali. Participants will gain experiences from various environmental activities, such as bamboo raft building and Balinese mud wrestling so that they can arouse thinking about the symbiotic relationship with nature. RMB 5,300 (kids), RMB 7,700 (adults). Ubud, Bali. (WeChat: 186 1034 6037)



DYLAN WERNER WORKSHOP AT PURE YOGA

Mar 8-10

Adults. Dylan Werner's workshop at Pure Yoga is a three-day course where you can learn about Master Vinyasa, Buddha Palms Yoga, fascial stretching, and conditioning. Dylan Werner, with 18-years of experience, brings the advanced concepts of yoga and movement to all levels of yoga ability. RMB 3,000, RMB 750 (single class drop-in). 6.30-9.30pm (March 8), 9am-5.30pm (March 9), 9am-6pm (March 10). Pure Yoga, WF Central.



2019 AVENIR BUSINESS COMPETITION AT BCIS

Mar 16 - 17

Ages 14-18. No experience is necessary to take part in this entrepreneur competition at Beijing City International School. An experienced entrepreneur will guide students on-site, and there will also be talks from local entrepreneurs to inspire students with their stories. The event will be conducted in English and is associated with Queensland University of Technology. Free. 12pm. Beijing City International School (BCIS).



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC: A NEW AGE OF EXPLORATION 2.0

March 23 - June 23

All ages. To celebrate its achievements over the past 131 years, National Geographic magazine is holding a special exhibition: Classic Image Feast 2.0, to explore the wonders of the world and discover the beauty of China. The exhibition will showcase classic images of China and include a new display called "China Memory", which allows visitors to rediscover the grand beauty and cultural heritage of China. RMB 70-100. 9am- 5pm. Beijing World Art Museum. (5980 2222)

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FEATURED EVENT ORGANIZERS



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The International School of Beijing is now accepting applications for all grade levels for the 2019-2020 school year.

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HARROW BEIJING CAREERS FAIR

Mar 12

All ages. The inaugural Harrow Beijing Careers Fair will present business activities, especially career prospects, to secondary school pupils in the Beijing area. Participants will gain first-hand knowledge of possible career paths as they plan their next educational steps. Free. 4-7pm. Harrow Beijing. (6444 8900)



PHOTOGRAPHY INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS

Feb 20 – Mar 20

Adults. Priscilla Baxter regularly organizes photography workshops for different levels of photographers every month. The March schedule has five different themed photography courses: travel and street, retouch on Adobe Lightroom, light and portrait, geometric and symmetry, as well as events, night and flash in different locations. RMB 750 per class. 10am-1pm. Priscilla Baxter. (WeChat ID: prissbaxter, 131 2470 7430)



FIRST AID TRAINING FOR PARENTS

Mar 24

Adults. At IMC's first aid training for parents, you will learn how to protect and help your child in a variety of situations. From small things, like teaching your children how to get to emergency services, to bigger things, like basic life support and how to deal with environmental emergencies, this course covers all the basics of first aid you need to know. RMB 300. 9am-noon. International Medical Center (IMC). (6465 1561)



MINDFULNESS COACHING

every second Tuesday

Adults. BMC founder and mindfulness coach Dalida Turkovic will hold monthly virtual coaching sessions on every second Tuesday. During this session, Dalida will answer questions and inquiries about the practice and offer to coach on any personal topic for the participants of the session. The classes are free for all level practitioners as well as for those who are curious about the practice but don't know how to start. Free. 5-6pm. Beijing Mindfulness Centre. (www.Beijingmindfulness.com)



PHOTOGRAPHY ART: GREETINGS FROM SOUTH KOREA

Jan 17 – Mar 10

All ages. Three Shadows Photography Art Centre presents the exhibition Greetings from South Korea, which shows multifaceted aspects of Korean photography across three different periods. This theme is divided into three parts: "Limb Eung-Sik: History Through the Lens", "Reinventing Our Time", and "Same Seasons, Different Memories". It will be the first tour of the exhibition after its appearance at the Jimei×Arles International Photo Festival in Xiamen in 2018. Free. 10am-6pm (closed every Monday). Three Shadows Photography Art Centre. (6432 2663)

SAY HELLO TO BEIJING'S SMALLEST

Share your new arrival and
scan this QR code!



Note that we will only publish
photos of babies born
in the last 12 months



Alynah Nolte

South African. Born on February 19,
2018 to Mari Wabeke and Francois
Nolte at OASIS International Hospital.



Anais Maya Mascles

Australian French and Indian.
Born on January 27, 2018 to
Siana Braganza and Mathieu Mascles
at Beijing United Family Hospital.



Grace "Wu Yao" Mullin

Canadian/Chinese. Born on May 6,
2018 to Linlin Wu and Kyle Mullin
at Beijing Fuchan Hospital.



Jaz Anna Rose Moreno Hörters

Dutch. Born on April 27, 2018 to
Jensen Moreno and Martjin Hörters
at Oasis International Hospital.



Kisa Li Palmer

Chinese. Born on January 10, 2017 to
Qianya Ma and Robin Keith Palmer
at General Navy Hospital Beijing

RECYCLE & REUSE

Trending without spending with sustainable fashion

By Nicole Bonnah





Sustainability has long been on the lips of experts, activists, bloggers, vloggers, and even moms (and dads) wanting to encourage their families to develop eco-friendly habits and awareness of their global impact which small purchasing decisions can make. Eco-conscious trends are now taking the fashion industry by storm, as the drivers of consumer spending habits change. Savvy shoppers are more educated about fashion supply chains, from farms to factories to retail stores and our wardrobes, and what very real impact our consumption has on the planet – from climate change to fair trade practices.

In this month's sustainability-focused issue, we have indulged in going green. We all want to make better choices when we choose to shop and naturally we also want to feel transformed and beautiful through the purchases that we make. Sustainable choices for your wardrobe can easily be achieved using the simple but empowering choices we made to transform hardworking homemaker, Angela Im. Im is mom to 9-year-old Isla who she diligently home schools, while also encouraging eco-friendly behaviors in and outside the home. From attending local clothing auctions, where ladies buy previously-loved items for charity, to zero-waste efforts when it comes to cooking, Im is never far from a sustainable act!

Embracing the philosophy of living sustainably, where less is always more, we started with a haircut. Less hair and beautiful woody highlights framed Im's face beautifully, allowing attention to be drawn to her dancing eyes and infectious smile. Hairstylist, Ken of Catherine De France Salon in Sanlitun, once again brought our vision to life, first by softening Im's brunette tresses with a brighter brown and adding color with a few

highlights. Ken finished the styling with a blow-dry and curls for an elegant but fun look. Im doesn't often dress up or wear makeup, and remarked how little she frequents the hair salon or mall for some retail therapy, so we went all out with a simple but striking palette for her makeup; slightly smokey eyes with pink lips, and a little gloss for a touch of glamour.

To add a little 'Zen' to our eco-conscious photo shoot, we opted to dress Im in the yoga pants with matching tank top from eco-conscious active wear line, Teeki. The soft and durable yoga gear is made from 79 percent recycled plastic bottles. We love the idea of using a material that is increasingly polluting our oceans to create pieces that women use to move, meditate, and reflect in. Im is a bright and positive soul, and so we matched her contagious smile and energy with a little red number from my very own wardrobe for the second look.

To breath a little life and fun into the dress, we secured the eco-friendly services of designer Amili Ma, who is currently running a number of workshops, teaching people how to mend old clothing. Ma uses motifs, embroidery, and all kinds of embellishments to transform clothing that's been stuck in the back of the wardrobe or pieces that you just can't bear to let go of, but which are a little worse for wear. Using an assortment of red buttons, Ma created a heart motif on the dress, drawing attention to the little patch of skin at the back.



The simple but whimsical design showcased the dress while adding a new dimension. We accessorized with a beaded necklace I bought in Malaysia back in 2012 and a yellow statement piece from Chariots Jewellery, who donate one hundred percent of their proceeds to their partnered charities.

The colorful and minimalist backdrop was generously provided by M Woods art gallery, where Swedish artist Nicolas Party's first exhibition in China, *Arches*, celebrates nature and landscapes with hand-painted murals and a purposeful engagement with physical space and color. M Woods is currently running educational workshops for kids with specialized programs to help introduce the world of contemporary art to children and young adults. This imaginative and inspiring space perfectly partnered with our sustainable fashion shoot.

Be more sustainable with your fashion, buy less, spend less, and love what you already own using imaginative and creative tools. Have a rummage through your closet (or someone else's) and further cultivate an eco-conscious mind without the need to give up on style!

GET THE LOOK:

Catherine de France Salon

East Avenue Building G/F 10 Xin Dong Lu, Chaoyang District.
朝阳区新东路10号逸盛阁首层
www.catherinedefrance.com (8442 5120)

Chariots Jewellery

Wechat: TinaChariots

Amili Idea Embroideries

WeChat: aimili120100

Teeki Yoga Pants

www.teeki.com
WeChat: TheresaRe

M Woods

D-06, 798 Art Zone, No. 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District
www.mwoods.org (8312 3450)



KEEP CALM AND UPCYCLE

Repurpose, reuse, rejoice!

By Nicole Bonnah



It's amazing what beauty you can find in the old, abandoned, and forgotten. In a world where sustainable living is increasingly on the agenda, small but purposeful trash-to-treasure projects in the home can limit waste and provide a creative outlet for you and the whole family to enjoy.

The eco-friendly benefits of upcycling are vast. Aside from minimizing the volume of rejected and discarded materials being sent to the landfill every year, it also reduces the need for producing items using new or raw materials. This can help put an end to the repeated consuming and dumping cycle of many households.

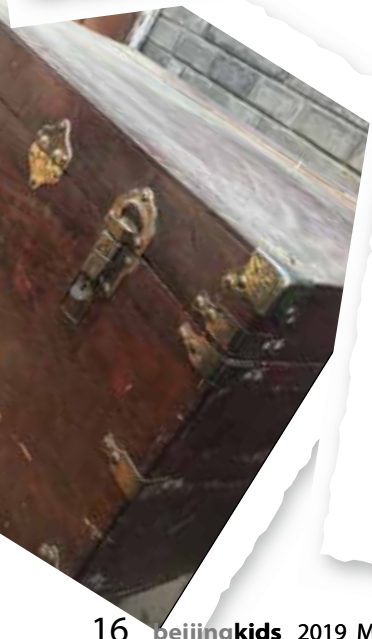
Upcycling and reusing objects and

materials can actually lead to a reduction in air pollution, water pollution (have you seen our oceans, rapidly transforming into seas of plastic?), greenhouse gas emissions, and can also support the conservation of global resources.

If all that eco-conscious talk isn't enough to get you repurposing your old hangers into kitchen towel hooks, then reflecting on all the fun that is to be had might help. Thinking outside the box can produce some seriously impressive transformations of everyday items you were just about to throw out, or happen to adopt and save from the waste heap. Taking someone's trash and making it your treasure not only happens to be a tried and tested way to be proactive in your eco-friendly endeavors, but is also the making of a fulfilling craft project.

I started my upcycle project with a walk and foraging expedition through the hutongs. You will be amazed what you can find lying around in these ancient residential alleyways and lanes. I wanted to find raw materials, like wood or stone that speaks to the beauty of the natural world around us, and use it in a repurposed fashion inside the home. With the help and company of my like-minded colleague, I put on some layers, braved the cold, and went on a hutong hunt.

Not even thirty minutes into our walk through the southern parts of Beijing's hutongs, we came across a lonely wooden trunk sitting outside a couple's home and place of business. The trunk was keeping a heavy potted plant sturdy and was covered in dust. My colleague kindly took



PHOTOS: NICOLE BONNAH

the lead and knocked on the door. A brief conversation in Chinese ensued, as the looks on the couple's faces transitioned from bemusement to unexpected curiosity, and finally excitement.

What could this foreigner possibly want with this old thing? I suspected was the first unspoken thought that came over their minds. The couple left behind what they were doing inside and joined us outside in the cold to talk money. They explained that the trunk was once used to store clothing and is made from real wood with brass latches. They then told us we could have it for RMB 50. Hiding my absolute elation at this complete and utter bargain, I agreed and a quick WeChat transfer followed.

I disdain stereotypes like any other, but we Brits do love a bargain, and the only thing we love more than a bargain has got to be walking away with freebies! A walk through the hutongs for upcycle projects, will not always lead to a monetary transaction. We came across a number of friendly locals who had heaps of discarded trash on their doorsteps ready to be transformed into treasure, and given away for free. Just before finding the trunk, I spotted a beautifully ornate vintage iron table with a stone top. If it were not for the conundrum of how I would get it home in one piece, this article would be about two upcycling projects instead of one!

Not only did I serendipitously come across the find of my dreams, allowing yourself to be open to new discoveries is the ultimate way to meet new people and gain insight to worlds other than your own.

Before we took my prize home to lovingly transform, a man approached us outside what we thought was a salvage-yard style storefront. He showed us some beautifully handcrafted jewelry pieces he said he had made, just before inviting us into his home for the best coffee I have tasted in this city. Mr Wei is an artist and in true 'star-aligning' fashion, spent the afternoon sharing with us how he takes raw materials, like stone and wood, and transforms them into pieces of art, jewelry, and everyday items. Unfortunately, Mr Wei had nothing that was for sale, as he too is a hutong forager, collecting materials and breathing new life into old things.

The task at hand when I got home was bigger than I had originally thought, but was worth every moment. After petitioning friends to help me sand down the wooden trunk, I roped in the beautiful Scott family to help with my upcycle project. Remember that friends and family can, and I would argue should, be a part of your upcycling journeys.

It took several days to sand down the trunk; remember to research what kind

of sandpaper you need, as they come in different grades; use wooden blocks where possible; and use something to protect your flooring. After the sanding was complete, I used a white grain filler, to fill the cracks and accentuate the natural grain pattern in the wood. Rather than add paint, varnish or wax, I chose a rub-in oil, which added a natural sheen and celebrated the wood and all its raw elements. Rub-in oils are easy to use and simple to apply. Just rub in! Use Tung oil or linseed oil; allow the oil to penetrate the wood, and then wipe off the excess. They naturally dry or cure on their own and leave a "natural" wood finish.

My wooden trunk is now a low-sitting coffee table. I dressed it using organic cotton and vintage tealight holders. I think it makes a wonderful addition to our living space, and can be used as an ornamental feature or more practically to pour and serve tea or play a board game. The trunk doubles up as a storage box, and is definitely a true trash-to-treasure piece.

Get upcycling, encourage friends to donate rather than chuck out items and materials, and actively look for pieces inside and outside the home that you could creatively transform. Partner your project with crafting family and friend days; share a bottle of wine; get the kids to muck in; and get repurposing, reusing, and rejoicing! Tea anyone?



SUSTAINABLE EATING

An angst driven teen
and the dangers of cow poop

By Melissa Rodriguez



Got a question?

Melissa Rodriguez is a naturopathic specialist and mother of two. To find out more, check out her website at

drmelissarodriguez.com

I recently watched a short video of Greta Thanburg, a 15 year old who spoke at the recent UN Climate Change Conference (COP24). She addressed the Secretary-General of the United Nations and gave a powerful, eloquent speech telling leaders that the time is short, and changes must be made if we are to have a future on this planet. It was so amazing to see such a young person standing up for something she believed so passionately about. She was an inspiration to me and my family, which prompted us to think about all the little things we can do to help the environment. Things like avoiding plastic bags and straws, carrying re-usable chopsticks and re-fillable water bottles, composting at home... Then we realized there's something else we can do, something that will have an even greater impact on the health of the planet, and even in our own personal health. The one most important thing we can do, is to eat more sustainably.

What exactly does that mean? Sustainability conveys images of environmental issues and development projects, but it applies to food production as well. It's a way of eating that protects our environment. It helps to

preserve our forests and biodiversity, decrease greenhouse emissions and actually costs less. Eating more plants and less meat is more sustainable, it means less human resources are used in the production of food, so there's a lower impact on the environment.

Eating sustainably involves eating locally and seasonally. By decreasing the need for extensive transportation there's greater likelihood that the produce is fresh and more nutrient dense, as it has probably been picked at maturity. It also means there are less carbon emissions released during transport.

Sustainable eating is also related to how we spend our money. Unfortunately many markets are driven by profits, and agriculture is no exception. In order to increase production and returns, livestock farms place animals in crowded conditions which are unsanitary and inhumane. It's hard to believe, but the excrement of livestock is one of the largest producers of the greenhouse gas methane. That's right, you read correctly, poop produced by cows specifically, creates huge amounts of greenhouse gases, including nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide.

A study published in the journal of science

in June of 2018, says that cutting down on meat is the most significant way we can help the environment. According to the study, meat and dairy provide 18% of calories and 37% of protein consumed by humans, it uses 83% of farmland and creates 60% of greenhouse emissions. That's not very efficient, with an example given that it's like getting energy from coal. And if we consider that 100g of beef produces 105kg of greenhouse gases compared to 100g of tofu which produces less than 3.5kg, then it makes a lot of sense to consume plant sources of protein if we care about the health of our planet. If everyone in the world ate 50% less meat that would decrease more emissions than if we halved the emissions of all cars, planes, trains and every other form of transportation combined. That's according to global emissions data by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

There's so much more to say about sustainable eating, but as a start think about eating more vegetable sources of protein. The health benefits of a plant based diet are well documented, and with our food choices we can help our planet get healthier too.



TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY?

Childhood education is more than just signing up to classes or taking kids to playgrounds. It's the mindset of the adults that matters the most

By Enoch Li



HAVE YOUR KIDS DONE THEIR HOMEWORK?

"Have you done your homework yet?!"

I was stunned. I heard this phrase so many times as I grew up in Hong Kong. I hear this phrase often these days from parents and their young kids on the way home in the subway and on the streets. But I did not expect to hear it here.

"Here" was in a classroom in the south of Beijing. I was a participant with 50 other adults. The teacher gave us some finger puppets to role play. I picked up a cheeky-looking one that resembled a child, and the other three people in the group picked up the remaining characters of the family. I enacted the child, and bounced around. Finger puppet Mama came on stage, and the first improvised line was: "Have you done your homework yet?"

I almost cried. I was sitting in a classroom with 50+ child and family therapists and counselors. It was a course on play therapy. And the first thing that the "mother" can think of is homework for the kid! To hear this from those who are meant to be the ones supporting the children in this country to play more, to work through traumas, and process challenges at school and in families, alarmed me to how deep-rooted mindsets are in this culture and society. It was as if work was distinct from play, or that if the kid was playing, homework was neglected – and it was only a finger puppet! I cannot even imagine what it would be like for the real children growing up, snowballed under homework, extra-curricular activities, extra classes and tuition, and constant nagging from parents to do this and that just so that one will not finish last in the race.

But, why does play even matter?

Because it is an inherent right of the child.

Because it is how one learns and stimulates creativity.

Because it is relaxing.

And because, play can save lives.

It saved mine.

GOING PLACES

Maybe it is not so difficult to imagine the life of a typical child growing up in middle-class China. I dare say I had a similar experience.

I grew up in the competitive city of Hong Kong. I went to some of the best schools, gleaned my awards, got recognition not only in academics but also in sports, debate, music, and community service. My "Tiger Mother" had my best intentions at heart. However, what she told me to do, and what she thought was good for me, was not what I wanted to do nor what I found meaningful. Nevertheless, I went to university, won scholarships, studied overseas, got a great corporate job and expatriate package, and started gallivanting around the globe in high heels and power suits. I felt like I was on top of the world.

We all have aspirations: maybe a promotion up the corporate ladder, maybe a fulfilling marriage, maybe a reputation. I had the luxury of having all those, at least to the outside. Then life throws a curve ball...

I was 28 years old and had a high-flying expatriate contract. I relished the glam life in an international bank, moving from London, to Paris, to Tokyo. I went to yoga classes, socialized, ate healthily, traveled, had a relationship, worked hard, and partied. I thought I was self-aware and had a balanced life. So I ignored the telltale signs, blaming the frequent colds on air-conditioning in the office.

Another promotion came my way in 2009, and I uprooted my life for Beijing. The first Friday here, I got another headache during the afternoon – maybe it was the summer heat. When I returned to the hotel, I took some Panadol and slept. At 2 am, I woke up like there was a jackhammer drilling down my head. The hotel guard accompanied me to a nearby hospital. Sitting in the bleak corridor with fluorescent lamps, I squirmed on the bench, cold, dizzy, and vomited over the floor, much to the dismay of the cleaning lady. The doctor brushed me off, blaming fatigue, and taught me the word for such excruciating pain: migraine.

I saw every medical specialist possible, but the migraines persisted over the next few months. Once a week. Once every few days. Every day. My GP suggested I see a counselor for stress issues. I smirked: "I am 28 years old. I am not stressed. I can deal with it!" trotting off for my weekly business trips, loaded with painkillers.

The migraines got worse. I had aura, dizziness, vomiting, and Herculean palpitations. I was so debilitated that as I was about to leave one day at 5am to catch the first flight to Shanghai, I collapsed on the bedroom floor. Because I could not move, my boyfriend called for the clinic to send a doctor, who said that the only other alternative was a morphine shot.

That did not sound good.

STUCK UNDER 50 FEET OF SNOW

I had to take extended sick leave as I could not go past a few hours without a migraine. I relented one afternoon, and asked to see a psychologist - I had visualized drowning myself in the bathtub. The psychologist saw me as an emergency case and pronounced: "Enoch, you have severe clinical depression." My matter-of-fact response was, "When do I go back to work?"

From then, I crashed into major clinical depression. All vigor left me. It was an unparalleled anguish, as if I was stuck under 50 feet of snow, freezing wet, dark, with no way out. I stopped eating, and lost about 15kgs. I slept all day and demanded the curtains closed. I cried, I screamed, I hit my head on the wall, I tried to overdose with my sleeping pills and antidepressants. I had illusions, thinking people would attack me on the streets. I felt utterly helpless. I quit my job and shut myself up at home.

I berated myself for being depressed. I had everything - youth, career, prospects, achievements... What was wrong with me?

Looking back, it would seem that this depression could be expected. The migraines were a warning signal I had ignored. The accumulated stress, the refusal to admit I needed help, and the disparity between who I was and what I wanted versus who I thought I should be or what might be accepted socially, resulted in depression. My mind and body collapsed.

Everyone has stress stemming from work. More pertinent were the pressures I was giving myself: that I had to get a certain promotion, that I needed to be accepted on a certain MBA programme - but was an MBA really what I wanted or just the trend for bankers? I assumed society's expectations of me, that as a female leader I had to be "strong", that I needed to prove myself incessantly. When I saw Facebook photos of how great a life my friends were having, I felt obliged to show off the latest gourmet meals - thank goodness there was no WeChat moments to keep up with 8 years ago! I felt obliged to be on top of the latest buzz and read every article possible. Such was my FOMO, on top of the constant fear of not being good enough.

But, what was "enough"? I was not sure. I only knew to achieve, because I was brought up to do so. One after the other. Only a shelf of achievements. There was no joy, no meaning, no playfulness.

WHAT IS PLAY?

When adults hear the word "play", they usually think "games", "toys", "for kids", or "a waste of time". I hear this a lot in the work I do now for companies. There are many definitions of play, and psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, educationalists, behaviorists all have various definitions. Most would agree that Johan Huizinga, anthropologist and author of *Homo Ludens*, sets the foundational definition: play is (1) fully absorbing; (2) intrinsically motivated; (3) includes elements of uncertainty, or surprise, and fun; and (4) involves a sense of illusion or exaggeration.

Simply put, anything that one enjoys for the sake of it, can be play... daydreaming, sports, reading, writing, art, toys, objects, dance, games with people... Play can be anything and everything in any way one would like it to be. Play is communication, thinking, language, imagination, creativity, and independent thinking.

Play is also an inherent right of the child, under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, one of the most highly ratified piece of international law in the world. China is party to the treaty.

Yet, like many others, I stopped playing after a while as I grew up. It was not seen as important, and my hours were filled with homework, examinations, and extra classes. Even the sports I played seem to be geared towards competitions. When I started working, I filled my weekends with studying for a Masters degree and the Chartered Financial Analyst examination - I thought going out for a drink, hanging out, and sitting outside for a picnic was a waste of time.

Little did I know the kind of catastrophe I was setting myself up for.



BEARY REAL EMOTIONS

I thank my depression. It taught me about me, it taught me about the parts of me I did not like, it taught me to not live in anyone else's shadows, it taught me to question assumptions, and it taught me a new way of being. Most of all, it taught me to feel my emotions again.

As I went through the emotional roller coaster of rage, self-pity, guilt, and hopelessness, my boyfriend Timmie managed to drag me out to a nearby shopping mall for a walk after a few weeks at home. Chance happened that I loitered around a toy shop while waiting for him to go to the bathroom. When he came out, he saw something he had not seen in months – I was smiling at a stuffed toy polar bear. He bought the bear immediately and asked me to give the bear a name. I blurted, "Floppie, he just flops around all day, watches TV, and does not do anything."

I found out the brand of the bear, that there were different sizes and colors, and started to collect them. I gave them names and personalities. As I got better, I took them travelling, taking photos of them, and amused myself with a photoblog by creating one-liner stories for each photo. The bears were the same design, but different colours or sizes. I gave each new arrival a name and a personality.

They gave me a reason to socialise again. When isolation kicked in as a depressive symptom, playing with bears became an antidote. It got me out of the apartment. In my indolent phase I started a photo blog for the bears to showcase their travels as I had once done. I made up short stories for them.

Psychotherapy and medication helped with the depression, but to find myself, the bears were key. Every bear was a different facet of me – bits of me I liked, and bits of me I did not like. It was hard to confront myself, especially the fears and shadows. Some of these bears were my "old self", or an image of myself that I had internalised. Take for instance Fuzzie the banker bear, who is very calculating and only helps people in return for favours. He reminded me of my corporate days, of the scepticism I held towards people, and how I may have treated others. It was difficult to see that I may have been insincere in some relationships, especially at the workplace. And yet it was also part of me that I needed to accept and embrace, because I am not a saint. By projecting this part of myself that I didn't like onto an unassuming, cute-looking, stuffed toy bear, looking at myself became more tolerable.

The bears created a safe space for me to project my fears onto them, to analyze myself, and to face myself. This was how I engaged my brain, my imagination, my fantasies, my thoughts, my emotions, and my reason. They instilled life in me once more.

I was playing again.

In the playing, I could rediscover my creativity and heal. I did it because it distracted me from ruminating, and from the negativity in my head. Timmie called this indulgence Bearapy – bear therapy. Through these bears, I started to identify how I felt about myself, to situations, and towards people. I started to realize that most of my emotional vocabulary was limited to "happy", "unhappy", and "okay" – which even isn't an emotion.

I was too used to putting up an image and needing to protrude the façade of being strong, happy, accomplished, positive, put together, and stoic. This was done at the cost of suppressing everything else – loneliness, disappointment, resentment, anger, shame, cynicism. No person can be happy and positive all the time.

Of course, there could be rainbows after a storm, but when it is thunder and lightning with torrential rain over my head right now, there is no reason not to address the stormy experience and admit it to oneself.



WHEN MY CHILDREN CRY

The lifesaving reflection through playing with my bears, was that I was wearing a mask for the 30 odd years prior to the depression. The assumption that I needed to be strong, or that crying meant I would be weak or a failure, meant I denied the unpleasant emotions of hurt, pain, loneliness, or disappointment for fear that others would judge me or reject me.

Denying our real emotions has severe health consequences, especially for sufferers of depression, as it is only after acknowledging we're NOT "fine" that we seek help and can recover. I was a prime example.

As a mother now, emotional awareness is our priority. We do not tell our children, "it's okay, don't cry" when they cry. Instead, we acknowledge they are crying for a reason. If they fell over and cried, to them it is real. Granted, our kids seem to see falling over as fun, whether they cry or not, we describe the facts to them: "You fell over". We do not dictate how they should feel about it, or whether it is "okay." If they cry, we say, "You are crying, maybe because it hurts after your fall?"

I printed a poster from the Internet of little girls' different facial expression. Since maybe the age of 1, we have been talking to our daughter about emotions, and giving her the vocabulary to name how she feels. Slowly, even before she could talk, when she was upset, she would run to the poster, and point to the little girl who was crying. Sometimes she pointed to the girl who was laughing when she was happy. We read them story books about emotions.

A lot of people I have come across tend to throw unpleasant emotions under the carpet, as if then they will not be affected by the unpleasantness. Usually, we hear "don't feel like that, it will be okay" or the likes. What this does is only to bottle up the emotions further, and trust me, one day, they will explode.

As young as 4 years and 15 months, my daughter and son will not understand the concept of mental health just yet. But I can do my part in helping them identify how they feel, and not belittling their feelings. We also do not label the emotions as "positive" or "negative" because emotions are, simply, emotions. One may find some unpleasant to experience, but it does not pigeon-hole a feeling as negative, as if it is wrong to feel so. As they grow emotionally aware, I hope they will also see that emotional wellness is tied in with mental wellness. And just as physical health sometimes breaks down, mental health does too, and there is no shame in the mood disorders such as anxiety, bipolar, depression, or other states of burnout and melancholy states.

We normalize ALL emotions. They are ALL real.

A MINDSET CHANGE

The pressure is real too. Public examinations are real. Competition is real. One cannot change the structure over night. But we as parents, can change ourselves, the way we think, the way we parent, and our states of being.

I've taken my kids to an indoor playground since they were young. I chose carefully because there is lots of supply, but not everyone understands childhood development. I liked the concept espoused at this place. The hardware is perfect – safe, clean, innovative, and child-centered, plus there were none of those squeaky toys that make lots of noise. The staff are warm and loving.

The culprits are the caregivers.

All the child wants, is to explore. He picks up a toy and tries to sit on it. The grandma snatches it from the child, and yells, "You cannot play with it that way." Why not?

Another child is waddling around, but all he takes are three small steps and he has no room to go further – his mother on one side, and helper on the other side, are shielding him from unlikely, invisible danger on a padded floor with no sharp objects.

There is no space for the children. Parents hovering for no apparent reason other than a defense against their own anxieties as parents. The tragic thing, is that the parents do not seem to be aware of this, and channel all their anxieties on to their unassuming, resilient children.

It is a challenge for me to be at the indoor playground, watching the adult-child interaction. There are so many things I wish I could tell the caregivers, and I also know that to educate and change the mindsets of all the mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers,

and aunts, seems like an insurmountable task. I see many parents going to "Effective Parenting" classes and the like, to learn how to communicate with their children – I wonder how effective those classes are if the adult cannot communicate with himself or herself and have some level of self-awareness first.

Likewise, there is a limitless supply of early childhood education centers, play centers, interest classes, and child-friendly restaurants with great play spaces. Yet, I wonder how many of them are really dedicated in their philosophies, helping to change the way the adults think and parent, or is it simply a business venture that looks brilliant and colorful from the outside?

We seem to look for solutions and advice externally, as if paying for enough parenting classes and early childhood playgroups would then make us superparents with superkids. It's not which playground or expensive club or the side of the street that will make our kids emotionally intelligent. It is the mindset – of the adults, not the children – that needs shifting.

First and foremost, let them play, in whatever way they can.

Playfulness is highly correlated to innovation, relaxation, and stress management. When we play, our brain excretes hormones and rewires neural pathways for learning, stimulating creativity, and catalyzing chemicals to maintain a happy state. This is the reason why playing with the bears helped me recover. This is the reason why playing is crucial to learning and development. And this is why playing is highly correlated with mental resilience and stress management. For those parents who are worried about examination results, research has also shown that playful teenagers score higher in exams. Adults who are playful are found to live ten years longer than average.

Give children a chance. Let them play, freely. If they want to sit on a toy, let them sit on a toy. There is no "supposed" way of playing.

NEW KINDERGARTEN Opens at Chaoyang!



- International Early Years Curriculum
- Project-based learning for creativity and confidence
- Full-time international lead teachers in each class
- Certified English language teachers
- Library, cooking studio, swimming pool, theatre
- Wide range of after-school and weekend activities

Xinglong Campus

Open Day:
March 14th, 9:30am-11:30am

Parents Workshop:
March 22nd, 9:30am-11:30am

RSVP: admissions@hokschools.com
400 650 7747 • www.hokschools.com

Chaoyang Park Campus: Victoria Gardens, 15 Chaoyang Park West Road, Beijing, 100025
Shunyi Campus: North gate of Quanfa compound, 18 Maquanying Road, Beijing, 100103
Xinglong Campus: Block A, Unit B, Xinglongzhuang, Chaoyang Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing, 100123

HOUSE OF KNOWLEDGE
好思之家学校及幼儿园



KIDS ARE NOT TROPHIES

My growing-up story seems to be repeated, day in and day out. I meet executives with whom I work, and they tell me their similar experience – some of them still live under the shadow of being their parents' trophies for comparisons between neighbors, and find no time to breathe.

There is nothing inherently wrong with extracurricular classes. What is worth some self-reflection on the part of the parents is why they put the children through them. Is it to keep up with the Wangs? Is it because the parents fear they will miss out on something? Is it because the grandparents said so? Or is it because the advertising is done too well?

There are thousands of theories out there: RIE, Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf, Forest schools, traditional educational structure, or the Finnish system that does not require children to start writing till they are 6 or 7 years old. Collect your own data, do your own reading, explore a cross-section of information – and then make up your OWN mind.

Choose the kindergarten, playgroups, and social groups with care. Find the teachers who respect children's innate abilities to play. I have distanced myself from some other parents because of how they reacted to "conflict" between my children and theirs. There are lots of different people, and even if you are not a leading educational expert, you can choose who to follow. Plus, not every expert's ideas are a right fit for your family, your child, or

your style of living.

Many parents and aiyis I meet at the indoor playground seem amazed that my children can put their shoes on and off themselves, throw rubbish into the bin, drink from a normal cup, and put toys back to their shelves. I smile, nod, and thank them. Inside, I am thinking, "Well, did you ever give them a chance to try on their own, or did grandma hold your child while the ayi takes their shoes off, and then grandpa cleans up after them?" Is it really that the child is not "independent", or just that we deprived them of the capacities?

There is also something else to be recognized other than achievements. One time, when I was so happy bringing home my mathematics test because my score improved from 70 to 85 out of 100, my mother took a brief glance and then asked me, "Why still not 100/100?" I could only imagine how dismayed I felt. My effort was not valued – only the outcome. My Australian husband once told me that when he was at school, there were always two scores, one for the content, and one for effort, and his parents only cared about the effort score and whether he tried his best. Today, he is not as defined by outcome as I am. He can enjoy his journeys.

Congratulate your child for trying his or her best, and guide their persistence. Otherwise, they end up like me, focused only on achievements and goal, and knowing nothing other than achieving one goal after the next one.



BEARAPY – ADULTS NEED TO PLAY TOO!

Depression is not weak. It is like a cold, but one of the mind. Sometimes one has a small cold with light sniffles, managing to go to work and daily activities. Sometimes one has a nasty cold with fever and aches and is bedridden. Some have used the metaphor of a black dog following you around. Many people in the world live day to day with mild depression, and go about their day, take care of children, and go to work. More severe cases are debilitating.

The World Health Organization classifies depression a global disease burden, responsible for more deaths than heart diseases or cancer. 350+ million people suffer from it every day. Companies worldwide lose more than USD 1 trillion annually to absenteeism, medical insurance, and low productivity from employees with depression. And yet many are in denial because we think depression makes us lose face, or is simply seeking for attention.

It is very real. We are taught from a young age not to cry, or not to lament. Subconsciously, we are taught to hide the unpleasant emotions, to the extent we don't even feel them. My depression did not happen overnight. It happened with an accumulation of denial of emotions. I also could not ask for help because I simply could not articulate how I was feeling.

Seeing these issues, I decided to combine my personal experience with my knowledge and corporate experience. I ventured to study organizational behaviour, researching the psychology of playfulness and its links to everyday creativity and corporate culture. Then I established my company, Bearapy, with the mission to reduce workplace burnout and raise mental health awareness through the psychology of play. I conduct PLAYshops and mental health training for companies, executives, and the public.

I would like adults to be in touch with themselves, to stop following blindly, to realize the importance of mental health, and to find their inner playfulness once again.

I would like organizations to think about their executives' mental wellbeing – not just piecemeal yoga and meditation classes, but to transcend corporate culture in support structure, hiring, and even interior design and workspace personalization.

And, I would like parents to stop overemphasizing the focus on their innocent children, who only need to be given physical and mental space to try things on their own, but instead to recognize that the real point of contention are the parents themselves.

STRESS IN THE CITY

I get it. Life is not always a smooth ride. After my major depressive episode years ago, depression and anxiety came to visit again every now and then – when I felt lost for my career, after having my first child, when writing my newly-published book, "Stress In the City: Playing My Way Out of Depression", after having my second child, when building a business becomes a struggle... Sometimes, I feel I burn myself out again, overwhelming myself with self-imposed pressures.

The difference is, I now recognize the signs. I know when that happens, and I can find the support I need to feel whole again.

I do not reject depression – in fact, I am most creative in my writing in that state. Rather, I take depression as a message: what is going on in my life right now that needs changing? Am I stuck in old ways again? Or do I just need to spend some more time playing?

Don't let your kids end up the way I did. The very first step is increasing our own self-awareness in a no-nonsense way.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Based in Beijing, Enoch is a social entrepreneur and founded BEARAPY. The mission is to reduce burnout and mental health issues in the community and workplace through helping adults access their inner playfulness. She works with companies to build mental wellness into their company culture and to strengthen executives' mental resilience. Prior, she had corporate and management experience in the banking and finance sector. Her work is widely recognized; she was awarded the Social Contributor of the Year 2018 Award by the International Professional Women's Society in China.

Enoch is also a published writer and author, and her newest book, "Stress In the City: Playing My Way Out of Depression", launched in the UK and US last summer.

She holds a Masters in Law (Hons) from University of London, an Executive Masters in Coaching and Consulting for Change (Distinction) from INSEAD, and has completed Level I of Play Therapy Certificate by the Canadian Association for Play Therapy. Enoch is certified in multiple Advanced Small Group Trainings in the Tavistock Style from A.K. Rice Institute for the Study of Social Systems.

Book

Available at: Amazon, DangDang, JD, Duokan, Baidu, and other online websites.

Websites

Blog: NochNoch.com
Website: Bearapy.me
WeChat Official account



Glow with Glo

Health is the new wealth for you and the family

By Nicole Bonnah



Glo Kitchen and Fitness is all about cultivating healthy living by making it easier for the whole family to make nourishing choices, not just for the day or a week, but for life. Their ethos is centered around clean eating and fitness, and their warm and inviting family-friendly restaurant is the perfect way to introduce healthy but yummy plates and bowls to the little (and not so little) ones in your lives. Go hard or go home if you want to Glo from within, and enjoy meals that are lovingly and thoughtfully made using fresh and natural ingredients.

One family who abandoned their usually meat-laden dinner dishes for something a little more wholemeal for the evening was Economics teacher, Rajeev Singh, his homemaker wife, Zong Bin (Rose), and their rambunctious and

insanely cute three-year-old twins, Aryn and Arnav. The family of four likes to enjoy traditionally cooked meaty curries and rice when at home, in addition to Chinese fare. Raj, who is originally from India, likes to spice it up with cuisine native to the land of spice and all things nice, while also making room to enjoy weekend staples like pizza with the family.

The twin boys were unusually open to new foods due to their diverse Chinese and Indian background. At home they love chomping away on home-cooked meals such as Chinese stir-frys, Indian bread (chapatti), and meat curries, so it was interesting to see how much they enjoyed foods with more subtle but just as yummy flavors.

Glo rolled out the red carpet and showed the family around their fitness and health domain. A family spread consisting of the Black Bean Quinoa Burger (RMB 42) and Multi-grain Chia Burger (RMB 42) (in both regular and mini sizes for the boys); Salmon Energy Bowls (RMB 68); Vegan Lasagna (RMB 58); Tex-Mex Breakfast Bowl (RMB 42); and if that wasn't enough, their signature Cauliflower Rice Sushi Bowl (RMB 48), was laid out for the family to dig in and sample.

The twins in true trooper-style polished off the Salmon Bowls, delighting their proud father, the Veg Lasagna was a hit with mom, and the Sushi Bowl a winner for dad. Both parents were impressed with the presenta-

tion of the burgers, and thought the space was intimate and cozy. Raj remarked that Glo was the perfect dining spot for people who are looking to embrace a healthier lifestyle and make healthier food choices. For a family that's used to having meat in their burgers the vegan alternatives impressed, evidenced when Raj noted that they "taste almost like meat!"

At Glo Kitchen, they believe that taste should never be compromised when eating healthy food. They cater to a variety of dietary needs, and the Singh family thought there was something for everyone. Why not opt for a healthier lunch or dinner for you and the family, and choose from a range of options, that include keto, gluten-free, vegan, Paleo, and vegetarian selections. Each packaged dish displays its nutritional value, and their menu strictly avoids sugar, MSG, and processed meats, without abandoning the land of taste buds. While you're at it, check out Cross-Fit Slash in the basement, and get you and the kids moving!

Glo Kitchen and Fitness, CBD

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Hatching Something Healthy

Cashew nut butter and spinach salad

By Nicole Bonnah

Unashamedly, eating peanut butter straight from the jar has to be one of my favorite pastimes. If I fancy being a little more proper, I might dunk a slice of fruit into the jar rather than a spoon (or finger) and enjoy every bit of sticky yumminess that clings to the roof of my mouth. Any kind of nut is a good nut to whip and blend into spreadable gorgeousness, and no one knows that better than the dynamic duo behind Naked Nut Butters. They've taken Beijing by storm and shown us just how nut butters can be partnered with almost anything!

In this issue's Food For Thought we teamed up with Head Chef Simone of business incubator and restaurant The Hatchery, to show us how we can transform a mundane salad into an epic one using Cashew Nut Butter, from the Naked Nut Butter range.

Sweet and sticky nut butters have long been used to level up savory dishes, from the spicy but sweet Thai dish Satay Chicken to the West African delicacy Spicy Peanut Soup. In keeping with this classic mix of savory with sweet, we saw that it was only fit to go naked nut butter crazy with a Chinese staple: choy sum.

Vegetables have a reputation for being the boring addition to a plate of food, usually overcooked and left sullenly on the side to remind us to consume our 'five-a-day'. With China's seemingly endless variations of fruit and vegetables, learning how to transform them using simple and tasty ingredients will serve you well. Vegetables when cooked and dressed the right way are fresh and flavorful, and that's why Chef Simone is really giving us some food for thought with this humble but appetizing recipe.

Ingredients

Dressing

- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar (or use cider or rice vinegar)
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp cashew butter
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 clove of garlic

Garnish/Salad

- 1/2 onion
- 1/4 cup cashew nuts
- sea salt
- 2 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1 cup choy sum

Instructions

1. For the dressing, combine the soy sauce, sesame oil, white wine vinegar, salt, sugar, and cashew nut butter. Set aside.
2. Toast the sesame seeds in a small pan over a medium heat until slightly brown
3. Thinly slice and fry the onion until caramelized and set aside
4. In a dry pan lightly toast the cashew nuts
5. Blanch the choy sum for 10 minutes until al dente or to your liking
6. Drain and place the choy sum on a dish and drizzle over the dressing
7. Finally, garnish the choy sum with the fried onion, cashew nuts, and a sprinkle of sea salt



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HOME-GROWN GARDEN

Learn how to compost at home

By Huang ChenKuang; Daniel Lim



PHOTOS: UNI YOU

Food scraps and yard waste are ideal organic materials for compost which offers a natural alternative to chemical fertilizers. So instead of throwing them away, we should use them for composting, which helps fuel plant growth and make your garden thrive.

There are many different ways to make a compost pile. If you don't have space for an outdoor compost pile, you can compost materials indoors using a special type of bin, such as recycled takeout containers.

We invited Daniel Lim from Homegrown School, which promotes food sustainability education, and Gabby Wilson, a Year 5 student from British School of Beijing, Sanlitun, to show how to make an indoor compost pile using takeout containers. Follow Dan and Gabby along with our instructions, and learn how to grow an indoor vegetable garden. It's free, easy to make, and good for the environment!



Instructions

Make holes all along the bottom of the two containers and around the top of their walls. The bottom holes should be large enough for the worms to travel up and down through them. The ones around the walls are for ventilation and can be smaller.

Put the stones into the container without holes and stack one of the containers with holes on top of it. It should sit nicely with a gap between them.

Soak paper materials in water from another container, and loosely scrunch them up into a ball so that they are damp but not dripping. Fill the bottom of the worm farm with the scrunched up paper balls. Grab a handful of the expanded coco coir, soak it in the water and cover the paper balls. Add a scoop of dirt and coffee grounds to the top, and mix everything up with the plastic utensils to make the bedding light and fluffy.

Put the worms in together with the vermicompost it came in and gently mix the vermicompost into the bedding. Cover the top of the container to keep it moist.

After setting it up, keep the worm farm at room temperature, and leave it for a few days to let the worms settle in. You may want to leave the container top off and shine some light to encourage the worms to burrow in. When the material at the bottom is dark and rich in color, your compost is ready to use.

Some useful tips:

Regular mixing or turning of the compost will help maintain the compost.

The secret to a healthy compost pile is to maintain a balanced ratio of carbon and nitrogen. If the worm farm starts to smell bad, mix in high carbon bedding materials to balance the nitrogen.

If your worm farm is too wet, add dry bedding materials to soak up excess moisture. If it's compacted, use the fork to break it up.

For how to use the worm farm, please contact Daniel (WeChat ID: dadan8) for tips. He is also offering online courses on growing indoor vegetable gardens and how to start a food-waste-to-compost production line.

What You'll Need

- Composting worms
- Three takeout containers
- A soldering iron or a sharp instrument to puncture holes
- A face mask to protect yourself from fumes released by soldering iron on plastic
- Reused plastic forks and spoons for picking up worms and scooping
- Bedding materials that are soft and moist: coco coir, black and white newsprint, recycled paper napkins
- Water
- 3-4 same-sized stones and a scoop of dirt (can be garden soil, playground sand or even aquarium sand)
- Spent coffee grounds (alternatives: pulp from juicing except citrus fruits, tea leaves)



Healing Power of Art

Students from Dulwich College Beijing help comfort child hospital patients with their inspiring art

By Huang Chenkuang

Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) has been cooperating with Beijing Smile Angel Hospital since May 2018, to provide comfort, inspiration, and encouragement to child patients through art.

The second installation of their art creations is themed around fundamental shared values between Chinese and Western cultures. GCSE Art students from DCB spent six months researching, observing and interviewing to get a better understanding of what roles their art could play to help and heal. Also taking inspiration from Aesop's Fables, Hans Christian Andersen and traditional Chinese folk tales, they created a collection of artworks, which are currently on display on the hospital walls.

Throughout the project, students never lost the perspective that the purpose of what they were creating was more important than just a GCSE qualification; it was to provide reassurance and alleviate anxiety for the child patients, parents and medical staff of the hospital. For this engagement, DCB was shortlisted for an International School Award in the Community Initiative category.

The collection here are selected from 27 illustrations from Year 11 students at DCB.



Mark W (Hong Kong)
"The Fox and the Crow"



Takanori F (Japan)
"The Dragon and the Cock"



Andrea V (Mexico)
"The Magic Paintbrush"



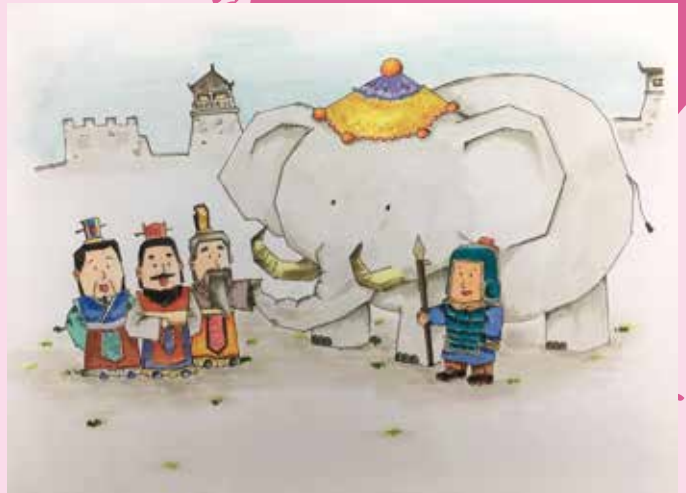
Rownie Z (China)
"The Rabbit and the Carrot"



Henry K (Korea)
"The Princess and the Pea"



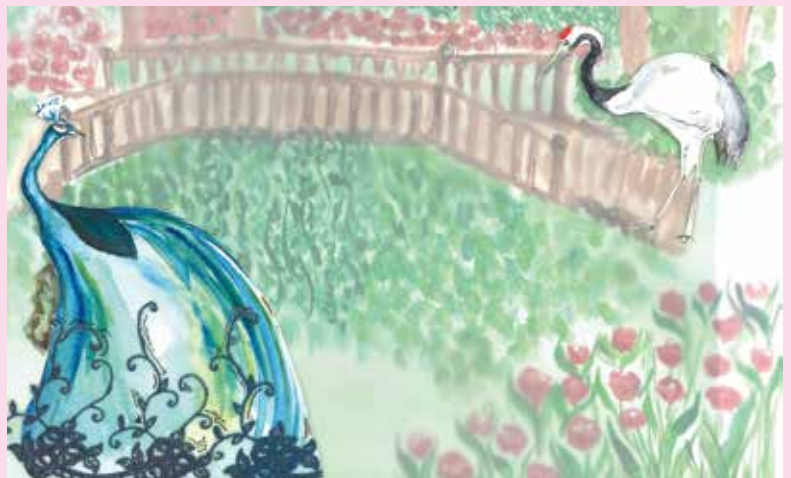
Ashley L (Canada)
"The Flower Fairies"



Jason L (Malaysia)
"Cao Chong Weighs an Elephant"



Max G (USA)
"The Ugly Duckling"



Lia C (Germany)
"The Peacock and the Crane"

BLUE-SKY THINKING

Engineer Zou Yi shows the progress
in Beijing's air quality to MSB pupils

By Andy Penafuerte III





BeijingAirNow is Zou Yi's independent project where he captures the progress in Beijing's air quality, as shown in this collage.



It's notable that we consider a blue sky a rare occurrence in Beijing. They were even rarer in the first few years of this decade, when the capital was shrouded in a cocktail of toxic gray fumes belched by hundreds of factories from the developing zones in China.

And that was exactly what engineer Zou Yi saw on a winter day in January

2013. The tower opposite his apartment in Dawanglu, just east of CBD, became almost invisible, and he took a photo to document the strange occurrence. He photographed the same view every day for the next two months, and pieced the photographs together in a collage. "It's very shocking that we breathed in that air for two months," Zou said.

From that episode, Zou found his new calling: to appeal to the public to participate in the management of air pollution, in line with

the government's anti-pollution plan which encourages everyone at the community level to get involved in monitoring. His independent research project and non-profit group, BeijingAirNow or 一目了然 (yīmùliǎorán, "At a Glance") was born shortly afterwards.

Zou has taken more than 2,200 photographs of the same view since he started documenting pollution in 2013. The progression is so strikingly visible that the published collage became a hot topic on Chinese social media and featured on various media channels, including state networks and publications.

For Zou, addressing the problem of air pollution goes beyond the boundaries of governments and even generations. In March 2019, he has been invited to present his photographs and research work at the United Nations Environment Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya. But before anyone from that worldwide conference heard about his outstanding project, he visited the International Montessori School of Beijing (MSB) and answered the questions of Grade 6 students about environmental protection and pollution management.



Shiraz, 12:

As a child, did you know that you wanted to become an environmentalist? When did you find your passion for studying air pollution?

Zou: I never thought I would be an environmentalist. I'm a structural engineer by profession and I do high-rise buildings, including the tallest one in Beijing. In January 2013, Beijing suffered bad air days so that I couldn't open the window because it was very smoggy. Instead, I took a picture. The following day, it was the same scene so I took another picture again. I did this every day for two months and put 64 photos together, and it was a big shock for me. I couldn't believe that those were the days that we had just passed. So that gave me a goal to continue it for a year to know what a year's worth of photos of Beijing's air would look like. And I've been doing that up to this present day.



Hector, 11:

What is the deadliest source of pollution, and why?

Zou: China is now a big factory, and we understand that several industries that use chemicals and generators discharge too many waste products. And there are too many vehicles on the road too, and all of these are the main causes of pollution. So what can we do to reduce air pollution? We should ride cars less and instead take the subway or use bicycles when we go out.



Isabella, 12:

You're an engineer, so why did you choose to record Beijing's air pollution?

Zou: I quit my work last year to focus on air pollution. I have a son and I don't want him and this generation to suffer. So we must do something. We must stop air pollution for the future of this generation. In March 2019, I will go to Nairobi, Kenya and attend the United Nations Environment Assembly. I will talk about air quality, and they want me to tell the world my story about taking those photos and to encourage people that they can do something to save the Earth.



Matthew, 11:

Does PM 2.5 stay in your lungs forever?

Zou: I was told by other experts that it is possible. PM 2.5 is a very fine and harmful particle that reaches the lungs through the bloodstream so you cannot just cough it out. And according to the World Health Organization, at least 6 million people die of pollution and half of those come from Asia. That's why we need to protect ourselves and always wear a mask when it's a polluted day.



Aishling, 11:

Why does a lot of pollution come suddenly and then goes away the following day?

Zou: That's because of the wind, which blows away pollution particles. But Beijing's geography makes it difficult for polluted air to dissipate completely. We have mountains in the north and we need a strong wind to blow the pollution away.



Marshall, 12:

What is the best form of transportation that doesn't make too much pollution?

Zou: When I found that many forms of transportation increase pollution, I stopped driving my car about 5 years ago. Each day when I go to office, I take the subway. Compared to cars, the subway is a much cleaner form of transportation.



Abril, 12:

What is the most polluted city in the world, and why is it so polluted?

Zou: The most air-polluted country is India. Out of the ten most polluted cities in the world, eight of them are in India and two in China. And that pollution comes from people, because we strive for a higher quality of life. But we need to be concerned about the other things that would affect the environment.



Oscar, 11:

How long do you think you will keep on taking photos of Beijing?

Zou: I will dedicate the rest of my life to work on getting better air quality. But for taking photos of Beijing's air, I will take at least three more years to document the progress.



Emily, 11:

In 2017, the government shut down many factories and it turned out to be one of the best years in terms of air quality. If the government decides to do it again, will we be able to have another good year?

Zou: Yes, I believe the factories that use coal for energy need to be shut down. But there are factories that are moving towards becoming more sustainable. So if we can do that, we have the confidence that we will have much better days within three to five years.



STUDENT SUSTAIN-ABILITIES

How Beijing's schools are working to clean up the curriculum

By Patrick Flanary

Reduce, reuse, recycle. We've been chanting these three words for so many decades that the well-meaning slogan is long overdue for an overhaul. That's because, as it turns out, such a huge part of our effort to recycle ends up in the garbage dump – and that's true whether we're talking about Beijing or Boston.

For years our chucking of all that paper, plastic, and metal into the same bin – and a systemic failure by companies to sort and separate it at the source – has bred contamination among recyclable items, and ultimately rendered so much of that material to landfills. Yet perhaps the most bruising moment for recycling came abruptly last year. On the first day of 2018, China banned a practice it had been carrying out for decades: importing most

of the world's waste. Britain alone was shipping enough overseas every year to fill 10,000 swimming pools, and that's just a fraction of what China was accepting. Today Britain joins so many other countries now scrambling to find somewhere else to send the waste they're incapable of managing themselves.

Indeed, China's policy reversal has served as a wake-up call globally, though it has also indirectly reignited a long dormant conversation around sustainability. Sustainability is a clunky word that's easy to trip over when said aloud, and nowhere near as slogan-ready as are the Three R's. But understanding sustainability begins with reevaluating what we think we know about waste, and reassessing how we should manage every item we use before throwing it out. Broadly, sustainability means

consuming less energy, and using fewer things in order to achieve and maintain a certain level of environmental harmony. More to the point, and perhaps most urgently: sustainability means reducing waste by not creating it in the first place.

There's new hope to match the scale of such ambition, and examples could be found this school year in Beijing. Student-led groups from at least two international schools are working to scale small ideas and projects into worthwhile, tangible causes with the larger community in mind. So how do a handful of students even begin to steer classroom conversation toward real-world action and engagement, and ensure that they're pursuing an impact that lives on well beyond graduation?



ISB students sorting through recyclables

"Developing sustainability into our teaching curriculum is the aim," says Lucy Thompson, the deputy head of science at the British School of Beijing, Shunyi (BSB Shunyi) and a co-leader of its student Eco-Committee, which meets weekly after school. "It's more than just a club or an extracurricular activity; it's integrating it into everything you do as a school."

At BSB Shunyi, that goal began with conducting what the primary and secondary school students refer to as an eco-review. Think of it as a report card, but with the students grading their school on the tracking and handling of waste. In a sense, this undertaking involved boots-on-the-ground reporting: Students spent time calculating the amount of energy the school's computers typically consume in a day, and even hand-counted the number of paper and plastic plates students toss into the trash at lunchtime.

"We used a big bag to collect paper from all the classrooms," remembers Year 3 student Christopher Kicker. "The amount of paper that we use in the world is astonishing," adds Mika Brodel, who assisted with BSB Shunyi's eco-review. "We use way too much paper in a day. I now reuse a piece of paper until it actually has no space left. Like plastic, it goes into the ocean and disintegrates and becomes even more dangerous."

As the students found out, it wasn't enough to simply talk about the crisis confronting our oceans, which are invaded by 8 million tonnes of plastic each year. So, to illustrate their findings, the Eco-Committee dived right in, so to speak. They filled a swimming pool with plastic waste.

"We thought we definitely had to give it a

try," says primary school teacher Anna Warman, who adds that the experiment demonstrated how sea life is dying fast – and how it often passes on all that ingested plastic directly to our dinner plates.

Nearby, at the International School of Beijing (ISB), 20 high schoolers worked through a waste audit of their own. Known as Net Impact ISB, the club investigates how to recycle sustainably and improve campus energy efficiency. Among their questions: how do we encourage the community to separate correctly when they recycle? More importantly, how do we make sure those items stay separated during the journey to the facility?

Three students from the group took this project a step further. As they observed more and more waste was being generated by restaurants when ordering food delivery, the group members began to investigate alternatives. They're now well on their way to partnering with businesses, hoping to encourage the use of environmentally friendly packaging. If you've ordered a single sandwich and a coffee for delivery from any Starbucks in Beijing lately, you already know the amount of big waste that small delivery entails: two paper bags with straps, a box, an inner container to hold the coffee, the plastic lid, the cardboard cup sleeve, that unnecessary set of plastic utensils...

Perhaps Net Impact's most ambitious goal yet, however, is to convert their school's 52 buses into a fully electric fleet. When three members of the club became aware of another school's electric-powered buses, they asked, "Why not here at ISB?" After all, bus rides are noisy, they travel long distances, and they

pollute. After making a compelling argument, the group was given the green light to get to work on studying the viability of electric vehicle battery technology. Their effort has already translated into success; the students have overseen the conversion of two buses so far, with the goal of going 100 percent electric within a few years.

"We think of the end result rather than the problem itself," says Matthew Yamatin, a former civil engineer from the US who directs ISB's new sustainability program. "A school can be a living laboratory. I believe it is super-important for the students to see the impact of what they're doing; it can become a lifelong passion."

It already appears to be working. Yamatin, who spent many years advising Fortune 500 companies on corporate sustainability, points to Net Impact's bus project as just one example of how empowering much younger minds can transform a one-off project into a sustainable impact. One student was so taken with what he learned about electric vehicles that he's now exploring how more nations can subsidize the technology. "This is now his thing," Yamatin says. "This could be his career."

Long before ISB hosted its first sustainability program, the international school had been serving as a model for progressive, eco-friendly projects. The school is known as the site of Beijing's first air dome, which encloses a playground and uses high-scale filtering to create a safe haven for students and teachers, especially on those high-AQI days. Today, student-led projects at ISB are advancing air dome use by studying whether heating and



cooling them is using energy in the most effective way. The latest student undertaking involves the dome's transition to LED lighting, another bold step toward the elimination of wasted energy for many school years to come.

As part of his role, behind the scenes, Yamatin has helped bring together more than two dozen outside representatives to help advise on and bring to life the big ideas Net Impact students are generating and developing. Among those environmental stakeholders are a Chinese solar panel maker, as well as the US Green Building Council, which works to ensure that buildings are designed and operated in environmentally responsible ways. (It is the parent organization of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, the industry standard rating system for green buildings.)

Thus far, other successful team projects at ISB have included studying how best to compost food, organizing a campus-wide campaign known as Bike Week, and hosting competitions to create a recycling logo for new classroom bins designated for paper, plastic, and aluminum.

Another way to look at sustainability is to consider the computer you're reading this on, or to feel the physical magazine you might be holding. What is the story behind the things we buy, the items we use every day? Where do all the materials, big and small, come from? Who are the people who labored over those materials, and in what sort of working condi-

tions? These questions span the spectrum of sustainability itself: climate change, human rights, and waste. But the answers are not quite as easy or transparent, not even to the best trained civil engineer. That's why teachers recognize just how critical it is for the youngest minds to step up and bring fresh energy to the most dire circumstances facing the planet.

"Things can fizzle and die off if you don't have people leading," says Thompson. "And the only way you can get that continuity is to integrate it into the school's development and vision."

So, how to prioritize community-level sustainability in the classroom, and translate it into measurable progress? During this very active first school year for studying sustainability, ISB and BSB Shunyi are already well on their way toward applying what they're learning, by testing their work at school and then promoting those findings to family at home and beyond.

"Most children know the problems that are happening in the world," says Rosalyn Thomas, who teaches English as an additional language at BSB Shunyi. "But success is getting everyone talking about it, and thinking about their actions."

This small-scale success is unfolding as China is in the midst of its most significant

environmental reforms, marked by the country's drastic reduction of pollution levels from even one year ago. And the very recent move to ban the importing of most of the world's recyclables also signaled China's newfound commitment to the responsible management of waste globally.

Further reform arrived earlier this year, when China's environment ministry announced yet another stride toward that sustainable end: piloting what it calls "waste-free cities" to help reduce the amount of physical things that factories are producing. Remember: we recycle as a means of dealing with the waste we create. Going "zero waste," as some organizations around the world are aggressively pushing for, would entail reusing items more often than we recycle them, and moving toward eliminating landfills altogether.

"I believe there's always more than one solution to a problem," says Year 11 BSB, Shunyi student Harry Szeto, who is studying coding and computer programming. "From what I've learned, I now can think outside of the problem. It's about raising awareness, but it's also about changing habits, and being more responsible to the community around you."

His fellow student Saraine Chan agrees: "I think just influencing the people around me is the change I can make."



BSB Shunyi students building a greenhouse with recycled materials

RETHINKING THE CO-OP

The ultimate membership in the co-op for a greener world

By Ember Swift



About the Writer

Ember Swift is a Canadian musician and writer who has been living in Beijing since late 2008. She has a daughter called Echo (国如一) and a son called Topaz or "Paz" (国世龙).

Back in Toronto, I used to be a member of a local grocery co-op. It was a cute little shop hidden in the "hutongs" of the Annex district, mostly known through word-of-mouth. I loved this little treasure. Shopping there made me feel part of a movement for environmentalism, community and sustainability.

Then I moved to China, the land where recycling isn't even built into the municipal infrastructure in a way that makes the consumer responsible (or liable) for their own waste. Watching the elderly dig through the garbage bins for sellable items, I often think wistfully of the "blue boxes" of my home city.

But China brought changes to my life far beyond the reaches of environmental practices: marriage, kids, expanded career, and divorce. My kids are now seven and five. The older they get the more the "days before kids" get a mythological, dream-like quality in my mind and this makes me a bit misty about that Toronto co-op—the days of an iron-hard conviction that conscious consumerism was the only way to make a statement. Money talks; stop buying wastefully and companies will no longer profit from unsustainable practices, right?

Now I understand that it isn't just the companies' fault; it's the public's own general apathy. Most people just don't want to consider something as mundane as waste or how individual contributions towards a greener world make any kind of difference. I've heard this called willful ambivalence.

And, in a way, I feel guilty of this. Formerly rigid convictions became more malleable since kids. Like, I couldn't keep them in reusable cloth diapers for long flights; I've winced but still purchased toys in packaging more dense than the toy itself; and, just recently, I mistakenly bought a large amount of pecans off Taobao that showed up as a big bag filled with dozens of little portion-packaged bags inside—a colossal waste of plastic.

It's a sad truth that becoming a parent has sometimes meant living less sustainably rather than the other way around. They're the future! They should make me all the more rigid, no? But fellow parents reading this will understand how difficult perfect adherence to all convictions can be when kids come along. In response, I've learned to appreciate what I can do rather than blaming myself for my failures.

So what's the current focus? Teaching my kids these vital values so we can implement them as a team. We buy our fresh veggies from a family who sells at our compound entrance but has a farm on the edge of Beijing; that's buying local. We grow herbs indoors; that's homegrown organic farming. We keep an old egg carton that holds 18 eggs and buy loose eggs (in reused plastic bags); that's waste reduction. We save our washing machine water for flushing the toilet; that's water conservation. These may seem like little things, but they'll remember.

Maybe I'm not always conscious of what's happening in the forests of Tasmania anymore, but the inner community dynamics of my compound's courtyard is clear. And despite being expats, we're just as much a part of this intimate community as anyone else is. For me, raising little people in a way that makes the world a better place—even the small world of one Beijing apartment compound—has replaced conscious consumerism in my mind as the most powerful statement. I'm going to go on to say that parenting through the lens of sustainable living is probably the ultimate definition of "co-op." And, happily, in this one, I'll forever be a member.



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TRASH TALKING!

Parents from different cultural backgrounds
talk about involving their children
in sustainable living and waste reduction

By Andrew Killeen and Jolie Wu



Stacy Andell and Kade Mascarella came to Beijing 11 years ago to work as teachers at international schools. She's now the Principal of Ganeinu International School, and he's a kindergarten teacher at Beijing International Bilingual Academy (BIBA). Both their children were born here. Peregrine is 8 and Taliesin 6, and they attend the Lycee Francaise Internationale du Pekin (LFIP).

At what age did you start talking to your child about environmental issues? What sort of conversations did you have?

Both of our children were born in Beijing, and the air pollution here makes the environment one of the first concerns. We've been discussing why we do things to protect the environment from a young age. Last year we went to an Earth Day event together. We learned that manufacturing one new t-shirt requires

the same amount of water as growing nine kilograms of apples. I find myself repeating that every time we look at clothes. We don't buy many clothes, and when we do, we go to Roundabout to buy things secondhand.

Does your child's class at school discuss environmental issues? What form do those discussions take?

A couple of years ago, my daughters' school planted a garden. When they did, they added compost bins. We don't do the full composting at home. We just gather our scraps and put them in the school compost bins.

When and how did you become aware of the importance of waste reduction?

I think a big part of modern child-rearing is based around conspicuous consumption. Everything is convenience packaged, with layers and layers of waste. It just piles up.

What steps do you take at home to reduce, reuse, and recycle? How do you involve your child?

I think our most consistent steps are to reduce and reuse. We just don't buy a lot of things. When we need something specific, the first thing we do is look around what we have for a solution. We generally figure things out together, and our kids are pretty good about coming up with solutions that work. We don't shop recreationally, so our kids are not in the habit of buying things. When we go grocery shopping we examine all the packaging closely to decide what has less waste. A few months ago, a friend told us about a local market where we could buy peanut butter in a jar that we could bring back and refill. I think it's really important for kids to see you making these kinds of decisions and seeing how others in the community have the same priorities. It goes the same for recycling. In my neighbor-

hood, whenever I take something out to put in the recycling bin, I will inevitably see one of my neighbors taking it away to add to their own recycling piles. Sometimes when we take things down, we just hand things to them directly. My kids and I always laugh about how our neighbors are such amazing recyclers, much better than us! I really like that. As an expat family, it can be difficult to feel like you are part of the community. For me, protecting the environment is about building community, and I am always looking at ways to show my kids that they are connected to everything and everyone around them and that we have so much to learn from the experience of others.

What activities have you and your child taken part in to reduce waste in your community?

We have attended some events about the environment. There are also a lot of non-environmentally specific activities too. Last week we went to an event at BIBA. It was all-you-can-eat ice cream, but you had to bring your own bowl and spoon. It wasn't promoted as pro-environment. Things like that help to normalize waste reduction in our everyday lives.

What more could we all do as a society to reduce waste?

I think the most important step is to not buy. We are bombarded every day with messages to buy, buy, buy. Even on the zero waste groups, the majority of messages are about what to buy and where to buy it. I think we have gotten too used to seeing ourselves as consumers rather than experiencers. We need to change our mindset.

What message would you like the Chinese government to hear about waste reduction?

I don't think it's my place to send a message to the Chinese government. They should listen to the messages of Chinese people, many of whom express all the same concerns. My messages would be better directed at my own home country's government, which has a pretty abysmal record of its own.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF STACY ANDELL / COURTESY OF XU SHANSHAN

Xu Shanshan is married to Russian Dmitri Sokolov. Both work in education, Xu in early childhood education and Sokolov as a primary school teacher. They have two daughters, Ella (5) and Sophia (3), and describe themselves as "a family full of positive energy and efforts."



At what age did you start talking to your child about environmental issues? What sort of conversations did you have?

Last summer, I took my older daughter Ella to a lecture given by the Antarctic expedition team for the first time. Ella was sad to see the icebergs melt and the penguins' living environment changed. Now, since the children are very small, we don't talk about negative environmental issues very much. In daily life, we remind children to cherish the environment, cherish flowers and plants, and we try to guide them based on what they can understand.

Does your child's class at school discuss environmental issues? What form do those discussions take?

Our family's daycare will talk to kids about recycling and teach them to sort things by different materials. For example, the cookie box is made of plastic and the box is made of metal. Then she asks the children what else they can do with the item once it's been used. Kids will come up with ideas -- plastic handles that can be used as rulers, cookie boxes that can be used as flower pots.

When and how did you become aware of the importance of waste reduction?

This awareness has been around for a long time, especially when it comes to takeout food and unpacking. A bag of food becomes a bag of garbage after dinner. The polyfoam used when delivering fragile items means looking at a big box of garbage which makes us feel guilty. From the moment of packing, such a huge amount of garbage has been generated. And these are just for a meal, a package for our very little family. Convenience solves many

families' urgent problems, but comes at the cost of non-biodegradable white pollution.

What steps do you take at home to reduce, reuse, and recycle? How do you involve your child?

We try to cook for ourselves. When running out of daily necessities, we try to buy supplementary packs instead of a new one. When we buy vegetables, we try not to use plastic bags. If one bag is enough, the children will try to put everything together and then share the load.

What activities have you and your child taken part in to reduce waste in your community?

I initiated the Joy International Children's Market, which was designed to "reduce waste" and advocate the reuse of children's unused items. For example, from the birth of a baby, people begin to use a variety of supplies, such as toys, books, a small rocking chair, a bed bell, baby's down jacket, and so on, which the child does not use for very long before it is not needed anymore. But the items are still very new, and can be re-used. Dozens of families met to set up stalls for items that could still be used. Since everyone's prices were very low, they can clear the cupboards in their utility room, reduce the cost of childcare, and make the best use of the goods by finding a new owner. It extends the life of the item itself and reduces waste. Over the past three

years, nearly 7,000 families have responded by participating in the Joy International Children's Fair. In addition to giving children a chance to form an understanding of economic concepts, what's more important is that only 10% of the unused items in nearly 7,000 households have been turned into garbage in three years. Other toys and books are still in circulation, which greatly reduces the waste of toys, books and other items.

What more could we all do as a society to reduce waste?

I think, less takeout! Those beautiful packaging boxes turn into gorgeous garbage after just one use. Very wasteful!

What message would you like the Chinese government to hear about waste reduction?

Here are my suggestions:

1. Gradually improve the garbage disposal capacity and garbage classification, as well as the recycling and reuse processes. It is hoped that every garbage station will have the ability to classify garbage.
2. Repair and broaden the sewers, and popularize household kitchen waste grinding equipment.
3. Part of unwanted empty space should be opened to be a sharing platform for public unused items. Promote the reuse of large and low-value items such as furniture and electrical appliances.





REDUCE, REUSE, REFUSE

LIVING SUSTAINABLY IN BEIJING

How two families are doing their best to minimize waste

By Siana Braganza

One of the major challenges we face in our world today is sustainability. The current ways in which we live have a detrimental impact on future generations and it's time to step up and face this issue head on.

But what does sustainable living even mean?

Although there may be different interpretations of these words, it essentially means living in a way that meets our basic needs for food, water, shelter, and resources without compromising or harming the environment or people around us.

Living in Beijing poses its own challenges for living sustainably. One of the biggest ones is the convenience and ease of having everything delivered to your doorstep, which makes things a little harder from a sustainability point of view. So how do we get around these issues and find a way to reduce our impact on the environment?

To get some ideas and insights on the matter, I interviewed two expat families who are putting in the hard yards and leading the way.

How do you communicate with your family about this?

As the primary caregiver in the family, I have a lot of influence over how we manage our lifestyle. For example, with my kids, I explain to them that before we get something new, we must give something away. They get to choose what to let go of, and this becomes a habit.

My husband has always been very conscious about living minimally and managing our waste, and it helps to have conversations regularly about better ways to do this as a family.

I try to get the family to keep one another accountable and get everyone involved one way or another. We even make a game out of it. For example, if I ask my son to do a daily count of how much waste we get rid of in the bin, with the goal being keeping the quantity low, he keeps everyone in check in regards to what really needs to go in the bin and what can be recycled or reused.

THE NICOLIER FAMILY

Singaporean mom Junice recently moved to Beijing in November 2018 with her Swiss husband Vincent and two little boys, Kai En and Li En. Junice has worked as a sustainability consultant for around a decade and likes to maintain at home some basic principles she has learned through her work.

When did your family's journey towards sustainability begin?

Sustainability has been at the top of our minds now for many years as I work in the field, but after having children it became even more important for my husband and me to impart our kids with values that were reflective of living sustainably.

We are all so aware of what's going on in the world through the media, what we hear and see around us, it's hard to ignore the facts. Our kids are privy to this information on a much greater scale than we used to be, and it's important for them to understand what's going on and how we can make a more positive impact.

Over the past five years, as our little family has grown, we've built a bit of momentum in our sustainability endeavor by following some basic principles such as these:

- **Reduce** our consumption- Every time we need to buy something, we ask ourselves "do I really need this?" We also minimize food takeaways by cooking at home as much as possible.
- **Refuse**- Don't accept plastic containers wherever possible. Take our own bags and containers when shopping.
- **Reuse**- Find ways to re-purpose items instead of throwing them out. Get creative! We use our son's drawings on paper as gift wrapping. It's both personal for the gift recipient and a way to cut down on buying useless wrapping paper.

If we're all able to manage the waste within our households better and more effectively, that's a great step ahead for sustainability from the inside out.

What would you say is a good starting point for families on their paths towards becoming more sustainable?

- **Start Small**- Start with cooking more, reducing and reusing plastics at home, and refusing to buy the things you don't need.
- **Get your family on board**- Your kids will genuinely want to help and keep you in check if you explain to them what you are trying to do.
- **Do your best wherever you can**- With consistency you will build momentum and you will take the next step automatically when it's time.
- **Don't get caught up in trends**- It's good to use them as a starting point to change a habit, but focus more on the big picture of maintaining that habit rather than doing it for the sake of hype.
- **Be mindful of what you buy from where.**



What does a sustainable family look like to you?

To me a family that is aware and in control of what they consume and how they manage their waste within their household and community is a sustainable family. Another big part of sustainability I'd like to talk about out "Social Impact". By this I mean, how do we care for and treat the people that serve us? For example, many of us have helpers like ayis and drivers, we've got kuaidi workers bringing us goods, taxi drivers, all those people that make our lives easier. How do we enable them to have better and sustainable livelihoods too?

We can start by paying them fairly, treating them with kindness and respect and appreciating them daily for all they do for us.

What daily challenges do you face? How do you try to overcome them?

One of the biggest challenges is not following the path of least resistance and succumbing to buying and throwing when you get caught up in everyday tasks, so setting some ground rules and structures in place really helps. Apart from controlling our purchases, we track our expenses to see how much goes towards "stuff" that could be avoided. Saving money can be a great incentive towards a minimal lifestyle.



THE YANG FAMILY

We spoke to 16-year Beijing veteran Hortense Yang, a French mom of two little girls named Amandine and Maxine, and her Beijinger husband Shaopeng. She also works in sustainability for an environmental NGO, and walks the talk wherever she can.

How do you communicate with your family about living more sustainably?

My husband and I are both aligned with the kind of eco-conscious family we want to create. We are fortunate in Beijing to have some great resources to help like the Zero Waste Family WeChat Group and The Bulk House.

As for our kids, they learn when you lead by example and it's amazing when they come up with sustainable ideas on their own. My older daughter Amandine for example, came to me one day saying that she wasn't very happy to use paper towels in her school. She thought it was wasteful and would prefer to use a cloth towel. That was so amazing for me to listen to. It reassured me that she got it!

What does a sustainable family look like to you?

A family that produces zero waste and is well aware and following through on segregating, composting, and using resources such as water, electricity, paper, plastic, and gas carefully.

Ideally, I'd love our family to be living in the countryside on land that we ourselves cultivate to bring us food, so we know exactly what we eat and where it comes from. That way we can be more connected to our food, the waste we generate, and our environmental impact.

What would you say is a good starting point for families on their paths towards becoming more sustainable?

- Start with what's easiest for you to do then build momentum and keep going.
- Refuse things you don't need - whether it is plastic bags, straws, or paper cups.
- Reduce water, electricity, buying online, food deliveries and takeaways, and online deliveries.

Take it one step at a time and before you know it, you're on to way towards becoming a sustainable family.

When did your family's journey towards sustainability begin? What do you currently do?

My journey with sustainability started about ten years ago when I was working on a 'green' project for an organization that encourages young people to lead and influence by doing various kinds of social impact projects. While working there I stumbled upon a brochure written by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) that had extensive information about how our environment was suffering. That was an "aha" moment for me, and I knew then that I had to join the green movement and get serious about sustainability. I found a job in an environmental NGO and never looked back.

When I got pregnant with my first child, we became even more conscious about maintaining a sustainable lifestyle at home. We started to carefully monitor the air we were breathing, the food we were eating, and how we could manage all our waste in an attempt to be as "zero waste" as possible.

As we laid some basic structures for our first child, it became easier to follow through when our second came along. Now, our habits are quite ingrained in the way we live.

Here are some of the things we do and use around the home:

- Beeswax food wraps instead of cling wrap for storing food
- Reusable food pouches for the kids
- Reusable nappies and menstrual cup
- Natural products like soap nuts for laundry
- Homemade cleaning products made with orange peels, vinegar, bicarbonate, and water
- Bamboo toothbrushes and toothpaste powder to minimize plastic waste
- Soap and shampoo bars instead of liquid gels
- For our kids' birthday parties, we request our friends to gift second-hand toys, or even get their kids to make a drawing or a present from materials at home
- We use small basins around the bathroom to save water, and use them for flushing the toilet wherever possible
- We reuse containers and jars in many different ways, like drinking glasses, storing toiletries, etc.
- I love to use cloth wraps as gift paper, and collect discarded pieces of fabric in many shapes and sizes for this purpose.

CONCLUSION

Whilst both families humbly mentioned that they were only just getting started with their sustainable journeys compared to many others that may be way ahead in the game, here's something we can learn from them:

1. They faced the sustainability challenge head-on and continue to do so slowly and persistently. They speak up and talk about it with others, lead by example, and find creative ways of doing things differently.
2. They find ways to embrace the resources that are available to them for leading a sustainable lifestyle.
3. They give us a sense of reassurance that no matter where you are in the sustainable living spectrum, you can start small, learn along the way, and see how far it takes you.

When all is said and done, the biggest lesson of all was that sustainable living becomes incredibly real and hard to ignore when our own little ones come into the picture. What will the consequences of our actions be for their future on our planet?

vegan

VEGGING OUT

We meet members of Beijing's vegan community, challenging stereotypes about a meat- and dairy-free lifestyle

By Andrew Killeen

Veganism has never enjoyed a higher profile than it does today. Alongside the traditional concerns about animal welfare and healthy eating, there is a new motivation for avoiding meat and dairy in your diet. A global study in 2018 confirmed previous research into the devastating environmental impact of our addiction to cheeseburgers.

"A vegan diet is probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth, not just greenhouse gases, but global acidification, eutrophication, land use, and water use," according to Joseph Poore from Oxford University, who led the project.

The study found that meat and dairy used 83 percent of farmland, while producing just 18 percent of calories and 37 percent of protein. With an area of rainforest the size of a football pitch cut down every day to clear land for farming, it's not surprising that veganism has moved from the fringes to the mainstream. A quarter of a million people took part in this year's "Veganuary," giving up animal products for a month, and vegan products have been introduced by companies as diverse as Ben & Jerry's and Ikea. In 2018, Guinness announced that they would no longer use fish bladders in producing their globally popular beer, after 260 years of brewing.

However, this higher profile has been accompanied by a backlash. While

vegetarianism is now unexceptional, veganism still provokes strong feelings. The widely shared documentary *Cowspiracy* was criticized by scientists for its dubious use of statistics, and legitimate concerns have been raised about whether a vegan diet supplies essential minerals and vitamins.

There's a disturbingly personal and aggressive tone to many attacks on veganism though, with vegans stereotyped as smug and preachy, or superficial: "a 19-year-old food blogger with pink hair who posts pictures of Amaranth grain with the caption 'Nom nom nom' is not a dietician," as the *Irish Times* sneeringly put it. The introduction of vegan sausage rolls by UK baker Greggs triggered a storm of protest, despite the fact that the pork version was still available for those who wanted it. And a customer calling a British bank about a loan recently was astonished to be told "all vegans should be punched in the face."

So what is the reality? What sort of people decide to adopt a vegan lifestyle, and why? What challenges do they face, and does living in China make those challenges easier or harder? We spoke to members of Beijing's vegan community to find out.

Christine Jensen is not only a veteran veggie, having given up meat and fish at the age of 10, but also an old China hand that has raised her three children meat-free in

Beijing. As she told us though, this was less tricky than her own experience during her childhood in Europe.

"I find being a vegan quite easy in China," she told us. "I became a vegetarian, not eating any meat or fish, when I was 10 years old in France. That was difficult. All I could eat when I was out was a green salad and an omelet. I have hated omelets ever since!"

In part, she explained, this is because China's religious history means there is a tradition of eating a meat-free diet, even if the understanding of what constitutes meat might not always be the same.

"There is always a way to find a Buddhist restaurant. My first trip in China was in 1991, and I traveled with three children under 5, all strict vegetarians. We managed to find restaurants and explain 'no meat, no fish, no chicken'. For some reason people always assumed we would eat chicken!"

She now finds modern technology as helpful as ancient traditions.

"When traveling, I have relied since 2000 on Happy Cow [a vegan restaurant-finder app]. Wherever we were going, it always had restaurant recommendations. Now with smart phones it is easy to type you are vegetarian, but then you have to be careful. It has happened that I sent food back after seeing ham or pieces of meat in it."

We wondered whether her children had



Christine Jensen and her family (pictured second from left)

ever rebelled, perhaps demanding McDonalds or KFC.

"No, never," Jensen said. "I was told when they were teenagers, I would not be able to control them. It was not about control though, but explaining why we made the choice. Meat is a killed animal, and this is something I do not think is right; and that's what I explained to my kids. They have been put to the test in their schools, with teachers telling them to try [meat], but they never did. They are now 33, 30, and 28, and still going on strong!"

"I think when we explained why we do things and which choices we make as a family – though let me add Dad is an omnivore and loves chicken – they were fine."

Musician and artist Raei2 is nearer in age to Jensen's children, and perhaps closer to the cliché idea of a vegan: a creative Millennial, of strong principles, and striking appearance. But in conversation she is approachable and humorous, far from the self-righteous stereotype. She too has found dining in restaurants requires care at times.

"Eating out has required a lot of research beforehand. I've had to look at what exists in certain areas and work around that," she said. "At 'normal' restaurants I've learnt to always ask whether a dish has any animal products before ordering, as I have had my fair share of 'vegetarian' meals infested with tiny bits of meat that you don't notice in the pictures.

"It's easy to explain my dietary needs, even when using a translator, but after they've understood I've often been told 'we don't have anything for you' or 'we can't make anything for you,' even at western restaurants. However, I have had pleasant experiences where they'll try make something for me or even get the chef to come speak to me."

Learning Mandarin was a big step forward for her.

"Before I could read Chinese, all I had really was Google Maps, which can be quite limited. Being able to speak Chinese, but more especially read it, has helped drastically as it gave me the ability to read apps like Dianping and Eleme, which opens an endless amount of doors. Only then did I realize that being a 'pure vegetarian' here isn't such a nightmare. Another thing that helped was the Vegans of Beijing group - it truly is a lifesaving group."

There's more to the vegan community than just WeChat groups, Raei2 told us.

"Meet-ups are definitely a large part of veganism. Even in South Africa, where I'm from, meet-ups are held even though being vegan there is no struggle at all. I feel like they help, especially when it comes to exchanging ideas about food and the range of possibilities. The meet-ups here are often focused on going to different restaurants, as a way to reach out and show the restaurants that the market is large enough to cater for. The

community makes navigating so easy as it's very welcoming; even when having heated debates everyone remains respectful."

For Jensen too the rapidly developing community is important.

"Now I do not find I am the only strange person with a weird diet! So I can't complain. As the number of vegetarians and vegans is growing, life is so much easier."

Some may be deterred from joining this movement as they think it means foregoing treats like cake and dessert. Russian Irina



Raei2



Irina Tcygankova

Tcygankova, 11 years a Beijinger, is on a mission to prove otherwise. Though as she told us, her delicious sweets can be enjoyed by everybody.

"I promote them as 'healthy desserts, healthy cakes,'" she said. "They are not only for vegans, but for all. I have made many, many birthday cakes!"

For Tcygankova, health and fitness are fundamental to her dietary choices.

"I've never been a 'meat eater', I liked sport and a healthy lifestyle. Many people said if I do a lot of sports, I should eat a lot of animal protein to stay healthy and strong. I wouldn't agree with that. I tried not to eat meat, eggs, milk, fish... And I felt much better, with more energy and bright skin."

Her mission includes not only making egg- and milk-free desserts, but teaching others how to make them.

"I like to inspire people to become vegans," she said. "I do workshops called 'Raw Vegan Cakes'. Many different people come along to the workshops! Vegans, non-vegans, Russians, Chinese, Americans, Canadians... girls, guys..."

We asked Raei2 what advice she would give to anyone thinking of trying out a vegan diet.

"Don't hesitate!" she said. "Find vegan versions of your favorite meals, so that you aren't suddenly lost once you make the transition. If you are concerned about nutrients, just do a little research beforehand to find good sources of these, and find recipes using these ingredients."

Her final words demonstrated the difference between the absolutist vegans of myth, and the friendly, positive people we talked to.

"Stay open-minded to new tastes, and experiment," she said. "And don't feel bad if you make mistakes and eat the wrong thing."

DINING OUT, VEGAN STYLE

Beijing is fabulously supplied with places to eat, and if you're meat- and dairy-free there's no reason to miss out. Here are some of the best places for vegan food – bear in mind though that businesses come and go quickly in this city, so we advise you check with the restaurant before heading out! The Happy Cow app is also an excellent source of up-to-date information.

Beijing Vegan Hut

Not only completely free of animal products, but mostly cooked without oil too, for Chinese fusion food that's healthy as well as cruelty-free. And did we mention delicious?

Stall 0912, 2/F, Bldg 9, Jianwai Soho, 39 Dongsanhuan Zhonglu, Chaoyang District (5869 9856)

Bencao Yushan

Extensive buffet lunch and a la carte dinner. City Mall Shopping Centre, 1 Xinyuan S Rd, SanYuan Qiao, Chaoyang District (137 0103 7471)

Lao Qi Yansu

Yunnan food made with fake meat and plant milks.

17 Guangshun N St, Wangjing, Chaoyang District (8416 1933)

SuZhi Pure Vegan Tea & Restaurant

An upscale restaurant with a downtown location. One to impress your vegan date.

Nanxincang Business Building 1F, Dongsishitao, Dongcheng District (5218 5148)

Veggie Table

The name says it all. Fast food faves like burgers, meat-free.

Ze Tao Xuan Shu Ma Kuai Yin, Dongcheng District (6446 2073)

Wutai Yun Vegan & Organic Restaurant

The vegetables used here come from the owners' organic farm, and the food is cooked without onions or garlic.

54 Jiaoda E Rd, Haidian District (5423 2059)



THE GREEN PAGES

Sustainable Lifestyle News in the Capital

By Rebecca Archer

Education for a Greener Future

This month we speak to Roots & Shoots' Lucy Liu, who is the International Programme Coordinator, about the organization's work in Beijing.

bjk: What is Roots & Shoots?

LL: World-renowned primatologist and conservationist Dr. Jane Goodall founded the Roots & Shoots Programme (R&S) along with local students in Tanzania in 1991. It is an international hands-on environmental education program that is operating in more than 80 countries. The program launched in Beijing in 1994, and there are currently more than 1,000 active R&S school groups throughout China. Through R&S, we encourage youths, enterprises and individuals to address pressing "green issues" of today, with a focus on environmental conservation, animal welfare and community building.

bjk: Can you tell us a bit more about the work that you are doing locally in Beijing?

LL: We work with the various local Roots & Shoots school groups through service learning, but we also work with corporates and local communities to raise awareness and effect change. Some of the projects we will focus on in 2019 include promoting sustainable living, tackling climate change, reducing plastic pollution and protecting reserves and wildlife in China. We will also be unveiling a new summer camp in Kenya for students and their families to experience conservation and protection of wildlife in Africa. Campers will visit Dr. Goodall's Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary at the Ol Pejeta Conservancy, learn how to survive in the wild, patrol with rangers and understand the impact of wildlife poaching and trafficking.

bjk: Can you tell us about some of the projects and initiatives that are happening in Beijing schools?

LL: All of our Roots & Shoots groups work very hard to make an impact and we are very proud of them all. The winner of our 2018 Roots & Shoots Achievement Award went to the International School of Beijing (ISB) Roots & Shoots group. The group consists of almost 50 members and is supervised by 4 teachers. Together, they organized environmental actions including an Innovation Expo and Upcycling Carnival; raised funds and food for shelter animals through their Holiday Hounds project and Animal Awareness Week; and brought together the community through selling food, bubble teas, roses and even luggage tags to raise funds for their sister school in Sri Lanka as well as migrant children in China.

Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) has also done spectacularly in our Zero Ivory Competition to protect elephants from poaching by calling on people to pledge not to consume ivory. The students collected approximately 4,000 pledges.

Only if we understand can we care.

Only if we care will we help.

Only if we help shall all be saved.

– Dr. Jane Goodall.

bjk: What changes do you see in the international schools in terms of their environmental awareness and commitment to environmental issues?

LL: I have seen students grow from strength to strength in their years of being a “young shoot”, to taking on difficult leadership roles and tackling challenging environmental issues within their school and community. Some of our Roots & Shoots group members continue their enthusiasm by studying environmental science at university or working in the environmental sector. When you see youth striving towards something they are passionate about; when their eyes light up after a brilliant idea pops into mind; when they’ve successfully planned, launched and executed a conservation project, that’s when you know what you are doing is worth something.

I have seen teachers work just as hard as the students in promoting environmental awareness in their schools, providing the students with strong leadership and guidance. Without the teachers’ dedication and support, the international schools’ service learning programs will not be where they are today.

bjk: In what ways can individuals or communities become more involved in what you are doing here in Beijing?

LL: People can start their own Roots & Shoots group in schools, offices, clubs, et cetera, and can also support our work by donating to Roots & Shoots. We always welcome more volunteers to help us carry out Dr. Goodall’s mission in China.

bjk: What are your hopes for humanity and our relationship with the planet?

LL: In Dr. Goodall’s words, “the greatest danger to our future is apathy,” and apathy is so prevalent in our society today. We must wake up from our state of emotional numbness and emerge from feeling too small to have impact. We have achieved more in the last century than our ancestors can imagine. Surely, we have the capacity to also right our wrongs? The hardest step is admitting that we have wronged our planet Earth. That’s why the awareness-raising work of our Roots & Shoots groups is so important. It plants seeds of compassion in people’s hearts. Today, they are aware. Tomorrow, they will care. I hope that we will soon find it in our hearts to care for the only home we have.



Lucy Liu (left) and the Roots & Shoots team

ACTION STEPS:

Those who should get in touch:

- Students and teachers who would like to start their own R&S group in their school
- Families who wish to learn more about our conservation camp in Kenya
- Corporates for sponsorship and CSR
- Individuals who wish to volunteer or apply for internship

Email lucy@goodall.cn for more information.



Lucy Liu (pictured right) at BCIS

SIMPLE SWAPS SHOW YOU CARE

Reducing your plastic consumption can be simple just by making a few easy switches.

EATING OUT

Plastic Straw – Metal Straw
Disposable Chopsticks – Metal Cutlery

BUYING FOOD

Plastic Bag – Tote Bag
Plastic Produce Bags – Reusable Produce Bags
Supermarket – Local Wet Market

CAFFEINE FIX

Coffee Cup – Thermos

STAY HYDRATED

Water Bottle – Reusable Bottle

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Disposable Razor – Steel Razor
Tampons & Pads – Moon Cup
Liquid Soap – Bar Soap

SUSTAINABILITY AND THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

“Sustainable” is a buzz word at the moment, along with “green”, “eco-conscious” and “environmentally friendly” – and although these terms have been around for decades, sustainability until recently has been the domain of environmentalists and so-called “tree-huggers”. Now that the reality of climate change is here and the environmental and ecological damage is so evident, this movement has now reached the mainstream.

Governments and corporations are throwing the terms around in their vision statements, and there is an huge emerging market for products that carry the “green” label from the consumer market who are awakening to the impact that humans are having on our planet. But at the moment, living sustainably takes a lot of dedication and effort, and when it’s you versus the other 7 billion people on this planet, our individual action seems pointless. Yet, the sustainable movement is growing, and the individual action of many is making a difference as more and more people choose to make small changes to their habits.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

– The UN World Commission on Environment and Development.

Sustainability is a complex term, but refers to the models that are necessary for the survival of humanity and planet Earth. There are three pillars of sustainability – social (healthy communities), economic (vitality and growth), and environmental. While all of these are interdependent, many say that environmental sustainability is the crucial foundational aspect which we need to focus on immediately, as the future of our existence depends on it. It is no secret that economic growth has come at the cost of environmental degradation, which is why the prevention of pollution and protecting the remaining environments have so much attention right now.

Environmental sustainability looks at the way we use our resources to make sure we don’t run out, and that we don’t pollute the natural environment more than its ability to compensate for or replace the changes we’ve made to it. Environmental sustainability is putting systems and policies in place that create a cycle of resource use and pollution that can be continued indefinitely with no damage to the environment.

AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

1

Water

Water is life, and climate change, growing populations, economic growth, and associated use and pollution is putting more pressure on water resources. The world’s largest water tables are being overpumped and many large rivers are drying up. In Beijing alone, the demand for water resulting in excessive overpumping of ground water is causing Beijing to literally sink up to 100mm a year, which experts say a severe hazard for the population and infrastructure.

2

Soil and Groundwater Pollution

The impact of the manufacturing products and food that we use is felt heavily on the environment, when the toxic byproducts are disposed of. Soil and groundwater pollution render land toxic and unusable causing dire health consequences for communities, and plant and animal extinction.

3

Air Pollution and Climate Change

Air pollution caused by manufacturing, burning fossil fuels, and chemicals is a contributing factor towards global warming, heating up our Earth’s temperature at such a rate that we are heading towards a crisis which has knock-on effects for humanity – severe heatwaves, drought, animal and plant extinction, poor agricultural yield, water shortages, more flooding, stronger storms, rising sea levels, and the associated health impacts.

4

Waste Management

Humans produce a lot of waste which leads to pollution. This area of sustainability looks at how we can minimize the waste we produce (consume less and choose products that don’t create waste), and how we can deal with the remaining waste in such a way that we minimize the impact on the environment. This is where the philosophy of Zero Waste comes from – it is the redesign of resource life cycles so that all products are reused, and nothing is sent to landfill or incinerator.

5

Energy and Resources

Electricity, heat and fuel are essential for economic growth, efficient food production, and a higher standard of living. However, currently, the most common energy resources we use are non-renewable natural resources because they are cheap and reliable. Unfortunately, as they are non-renewable and also have a high carbon footprint, we need to move towards a more sustainable model, such as energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy production.

While all of these areas of environmental sustainability will be largely driven by government and corporate responsibility and regulations, we can never underestimate the power of individual action – since it is the manufacturing of “things” for all of us which is causing the exploitation of natural resources and the associated pollution and damage. While the problems may seem huge, we can all make a difference through reducing our own energy and resource consumption, making alternative choices and simple switches in our daily lives, and buying fewer things.

PERSONAL SUSTAINABILITY GOALS CHECKLIST



Tear out and stick to your fridge to help you live more sustainably.



SAVE WATER & CONSERVE ENERGY

DOING IT
ALREADY

START
NOW

3
MONTHS

6
MONTHS

Turn off lights, phone chargers, and electronic equipment at the wall when not in use.

Dress for the weather (hot or cold) in your home and change your thermostat $-1/+1^{\circ}\text{C}$ so it doesn't have to work as hard.

Wash clothes in cold water (it uses one tenth the energy of washing in hot water) and dry them on a clothes drying rack.

Limit your showers to 5 minutes and shower with a friend ;)

Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth.

Run only full loads of laundry and dishes.

Change 5 light bulbs to energy efficient LED bulbs.



HEALTHY LIVING

DOING IT
ALREADY

START
NOW

3
MONTHS

6
MONTHS

Go car-free! Walk, cycle or take public transport.

Eat less meat, it's better for your body, and 1kg of beef uses more than 15,000L of water to produce so it also uses less resources.

Use eco-friendly cleaning products, or vinegar and baking soda, to keep your home and our waterways chemical free.



REDUCE WASTE

DOING IT
ALREADY

START
NOW

3
MONTHS

6
MONTHS

Donate your unwanted items to charity, buy items second-hand.

Clean your recyclables and put in a separate box next to the bin for collection by local trash collectors.

Reduce single-use plastics by using a reusable water bottle.

Carry and use your own reusable coffee mug when ordering coffee, or ask for a ceramic mug in a café.

Take your own reusable shopping bags and produce bags to the market.

Reduce the number of times you order delivery food weekly or monthly.

SCHOOL NEWS



HoK Welcomes Ms. Anna Williams as Principal

House of Knowledge (HoK) proudly welcomes Ms. Anna Williams as the new Principal of their Xinglong Campus. Originally from New Zealand, Anna Williams is well experienced in global pedagogy at all levels of education, from Early Years through to tertiary. She has many years of experience both as a teacher and as a principal in different countries. She has overseen and lead multiple projects such as school inaugurations and accreditations at many campuses. Ms. Williams oversees all teacher training as well as the academic and daily management of Xinglong Campus.



Learning Spaces of the Future at Western Academy of Beijing

Western Academy of Beijing has announced a partnership with design studio, Rosan Bosch, as part of the school's efforts to reimagine learning spaces to support the Future of Learning.



Harrow Beijing Announces New Director of Admissions and Development

Harrow Beijing has appointed Ian Steele as its new Director of Admissions and Development. Mr. Steel will oversee the enrolment process for prospective Harrow families, cultivate close relationships with the Harrovian Alumni, and maintain strong links with parents and Beijing community partners.



DCB Winner of Prestigious International School Award

Dulwich College Beijing's SE21/STEAM initiative has won the International School Award 2019 for Creativity in Learning. It also recognized DCB's continuing "Art in Smile Angel Hospital" project, which was shortlisted for the category of Community Initiative. The awards were held in January in London, with 12 winners selected from over 200 submissions around the world.

The Circuit is a chance to check out what's happening in the Beijing community. Want to see your event on these pages?



Jingkids International School Expo (JISE) 2019, Beijing

On February 23-24, we had 4,000 families descend on Kerry Hotel Beijing for our annual school expo. Along with 100 of Beijing's top international schools in attendance, we hosted a range of education and parenting forums, fun activities for families, and even a student entrepreneurship competition. All in all, the weekend was a great success! Thank you all for your continued support!



House of Knowledge Chinese New Year Celebration

This year, House of Knowledge (HoK) students were delighted to host a special stage performance to celebrate Chinese New Year. Following the performance all parents and children went to a Temple Fair to enjoy a range of fun activities and a Dragon Dance.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HOK, 3E, BWYA, WAB, DOB, HARROW BEIJING, CISB, YCS, BSB SHUNYI, BCIS, ISB

Send an email with the date of your event, a brief description, and high-resolution photos (at least 1MB each) to webeditor@beijing-kids.com by **March 12**



BWYA Winter Talent Show

On February 1, Beijing World Youth Academy (BWYA) held their annual talent show at the Beijing Theatre. With rock bands, ballet dancers, a cappella performances, and more, the talents on display were enjoyed by all. The stage management was also run by the students, so everyone contributed in giving a good talent show.



Ice Skating Fun on Duck Lake with WAB

The Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) community enjoyed some extra winter fun this season. For the first time in the school's history, WAB opened an ice rink on their campus pond, Duck Lake.





Top Theatre, Jazz, Dance Professionals Work with DCB Students

International performing artists recently gave workshops at Dulwich College Beijing (DCB). Students breathed new life into Shakespeare's stories with a practitioner from a theatre company in London. Music students also honed their improvisation and composition skills with the Roy McGrath Quartet from Chicago, while Junior School students also studied and performed a routine with the University of Auckland Dance Group.



Spring Festival Celebrations at 3e

3e International School welcomed the Chinese New Year with the annual Dragon Parade and Temple Fair celebrations on January 31. Students collaborated in class to produce colorful paper dragons for their dragon parades which they showcased for parents. Following the parade, families engaged in a Temple Fair of traditional Chinese arts, crafts, and snacks, followed by a lion dance.





Harrow Beijing Chinese New Year Celebrations

On January 24-28, Harrow Beijing celebrated the Year of the Pig with wonderful music, a series of exciting performances as well as games and food. The festivities featured a traditional Dragon Dance, a Temple Fair and special cultural activities involving students, teachers, parents, and friends from both campuses.



Chinese Family Fun Night at CISB

The Canadian International School of Beijing (CISB) annual Chinese New Year Family Fun Night was held on January 31. Students, parents, and staff all joined together as a big family to celebrate Chinese New Year. The event helped bring everyone together in the CISB community.





YCIS Beijing Celebrates the Year of the Pig

Families and staff gathered together to see the "Beautiful China" performances at YCIS Beijing. The stage came to life with Chinese dances, music, and costumes. Meanwhile, the annual Temple Fair brought together the whole school community for traditional Chinese activities, musical performances, and delicious festival snacks.



BSB, Shunyi Celebrates the Spring Festival

Students, parents, and teachers celebrated the Spring Festival at The British School of Beijing (BSB), Shunyi's Temple Fair. All in attendance enjoyed the student performances, the traditional arts and crafts activities, and delicious snacks.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HOK, BEIJING NO.55 HIGH SCHOOL, 3E, BWYA, WAB, DCB, HARROW BEIJING, CSB, YCIS, BSB SHUNYI, BCS, JSB



Fourth Annual Chinese Calligraphy Competition at BCIS

Beijing City International School (BCIS) recently held its fourth annual, student-led Chinese Calligraphy competition in their gymnasium. After a short opening ceremony, the students and staff members set off around the numerous tables according to their house color to create their very own works of calligraphy.



ISB Goes Single Use Plastic Free

Students at International School of Beijing (ISB) requested the school to remove single use plastics from their cafeteria, after learning about the harm plastic waste causes on land and in oceans. In response, ISB converted its cafeteria to a single use plastic-free zone.



No. 1 house rule:
No outside clothes on the bed!

When dad's home, he usually...
Chills on the couch if not pestered to play

Your shopping haven in Beijing is...
Taobao. We do a lot of online shopping but if we must go to a mall, our frequent haunts are Indigo Mall or The Place

During the weekends, we...
Relax at home or have lunch dates/playdates with Julian's friends

Mom's favorite Chinese dish:
Guo qiao mi xian (Yunnan 'cross over bridge' noodles)

Karaoke tune that dad always belts out:
"My Way" by Frank Sinatra

House chore that Julian enjoys:
Hanging laundry

Our funniest experience in the neighborhood is...
We've adopted the local habit of joining the crowd to watch a street drama (for instance, random people arguing on street)

My advice to new families in Beijing:
This city can be hectic.
Just relax and don't take things personally

We love Beijing because:
It's vibrant, exciting, frustrating, and at times mind-boggling all rolled into one. There's no city quite like it

Hitting the High Note with the Dees

Justin and Ruyi Dee are from Malaysia. In 2007, Justin was offered an advertising job in Beijing. "Our initial plan was to live and work in China for two years before heading home..." Justin says, but 12 years later, they find themselves here with their 4-year-old son, Julian, a second baby on the way, and their pug Qiaokeli. While the Dees still have plans to settle in Malaysia one day, they're now just taking life as it comes and enjoying it along the way, like singing their heart out on karaoke weekends!

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