

# Environmental Awareness:

*“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.” - Native American Proverb*

By Liggy Webb

**E**nvironmental awareness is about becoming more aware of the fragility of our environment and fully acknowledging the relationship between the environment and mankind and taking positive action to protect it. The way we treat our environment is becoming increasingly alarming.

Consumerism certainly plays a large hand in promoting a mentality of instant gratification whilst raping and wasting the earth's resources without any apparent remorse.

Whilst so many people in the world are starving, in western society we throw away a third of the food we buy, a shocking and vulgar statistic.

The suggestion would be that we all become a steward of the land and our natural resources. Collectively we each take or use only what we need to live, and survive. Communities adopt a conserve and preserve mentality, creating an environment that is able meet the needs of present and future generations.

How we live our lives impacts the Earth, both on a global and local level.

Taking personal responsibility for the way we treat our environment is key and, if everyone makes a sustainable commitment to do their bit, it could, by critical mass, make a huge impact.

The development of a sustainable environment is possible through long-term planning and vision. Sustainability is essential to our world's health. Long-term planning and vision means eco-friendly development in local communities, which can lead to positive growth in economies.

Our environment is complex and very fragile. It is made up of air, water, land, organic, non-organic matter and living organisms. When one small part of our eco system is contaminated, such as water, the contamination sends out ripples felt by all. Contaminated water for example affects plants, insects, fish and, eventually, our food chain.

## Climate Change

Climate change has long-since ceased to be a scientific curiosity, and is no longer just one of many environmental and regulatory concerns.

It is a growing crisis with economic, health, food production, security, and other dimensions.

Shifting weather patterns, for example, threaten food production through increased unpredictability of precipitation, rising sea levels contaminate coastal freshwater reserves and increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, and a warming atmosphere aids the pole-ward spread of pests and diseases once limited to the tropics.

The news to date is bad and getting worse. There is alarming evidence that important tipping points, leading to irreversible changes in major ecosystems and the planetary climate system, may already have been reached or passed.

*“Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realise we cannot eat money”.*

*Cree Indian Proverb*

**E**cosystems as diverse as the Amazon rainforest and the Arctic tundra, for example, may be approaching thresholds of dramatic change through warming and drying. Mountain glaciers are in alarming retreat and the downstream effects of reduced water supply in the driest months will have repercussions that transcend generations.

The potential for runaway greenhouse warming is real and has never been more present. The most dangerous climate changes may still be avoided if we transform our hydrocarbon-based energy systems and if we initiate rational and adequately-financed adaptation programmes to forestall disasters and migrations at unprecedented scales. The tools are available, but they must be applied immediately and aggressively.

Environmental awareness is essential to the sustainable health of our environment for current and future generations. Natural resources are part of everyone's daily life.

If natural resources continue to be depleted then every part of our lives will be detrimentally affected.

By taking responsibility and initiative ourselves, we can actively encourage others to be an active participant in taking better care of our planet and our environment.

There are many great initiatives that the UNEP (United Nations Environmental Programme) have set up and many other organisations have implemented campaigns and initiatives to support the environment. You don't have to be an eco-warrior to make a difference; you just need (in the words of Ghandi) to be the change that you would want the world to be.

#### **Environmental Awareness - Useful Tips**

- Don't buy too much food.
- Switch off lights and equipment.
- Unplug your chargers.
- Print responsibly.
- Recycle wherever possible.
- Walk rather than drive.
- Wrap up in the winter.
- Buy green electricity.
- Buy an eco car.
- Reduce your materialism.

**Life is what YOU make it!**

The above article is an extract from *The Happy Handbook* - A

*Compendium of Modern Life Skills* by Liggy Webb which is out now.



**Liggy Webb is widely respected as a leading expert in the field of *Modern Life Skills and Workplace Wellness*.**

As a presenter, consultant and author she is passionate about her work and improving the quality of people's lives. She is the founding director of The Learning Architect a consortium of niche industry experts. Liggy has developed a range of techniques to support individuals and organizations to cope more effectively with modern living and the demands and challenges of life in the twenty tens and beyond.

As a consultant with the United Nations she travels extensively and has recently returned from Afghanistan which she describes as biggest life education to date!

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