WINTER WELLNESS AND NATURE CONNECTION

Winter depression is no joke. Part of building a more just and sustainable world is also taking better care of ourselves as individuals so that we can be good community members.

Don't neglect self-care and ignore our essential need as humans to get outside, even though it's freezing cold! Connecting deeply with nature is one of the most important parts of our connection to sustainability, and it can motivate us to keep our efforts going.

GETTING COZY SUSTAINABLY

By making small switches to your daily routine, you can create the ultimate cozy and environmentally-friendly winter haven. How about enjoying a holiday movie marathon while being mindful of energy usage?

When you seek opportunities to enhance your routine holiday festivities, you may be surprised how many chances there are to make sustainable choices.

Mindful Movie Night

- Opt for LED or energy-efficient bulbs.
- Unplug devices not in use.
- Cuddle up with blankets to keep the thermostat a bit lower.
- Opt for blankets made from organic cotton or recycled fibers.
- Watch documentaries to learn something new about the world around us.

Cozy Bookworm

- Grab a secondhand book or borrow books from a library.
- Burn sustainably sourced wood or fuel in the fireplace.
- Sip some fair-trade hot cocoa or herbal tea in a reusable mug.
- Donate or swap old books to give them a new life.
- E-books and audiobooks can reduce the need for paper, printing, and shipment.

Vegan Holiday Meal

- Learn a new vegan or vegetarian recipe of an old holiday favorite and make it for your family to try.

- Include local or seasonal produce in the meal.
- Plan your menus thoughtfully to minimize any food waste.
- Pack away leftovers in reusable containers for the family to take home.

EMBRACING OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Winter's chill offers a chance to embrace winter sports like skiing, snowshoeing, and ice skating. These activities allow us to appreciate the stunning beauty of nature while getting outside and active. It's important to stay connected to the great outdoors, and spending time in beautiful snowy landscapes is a great way to do it.

This winter, be sure to get outside as much as possible! Leaving no trace and respecting wildlife habitats ensures that we preserve nature's wonders while having fun, too.

MINDFUL CONSUMPTION OF SEASONAL FOODS

By opting for locally sourced, seasonal foods during the winter months, you can actively contribute to reducing carbon emissions associated with food transportation. Embracing the goodness of winter vegetables and fruits in your meals not only nourishes your body with fresh, nutrient-rich produce but also supports local farmers and regional agriculture.

Consider engaging with a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program to access a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables. Seasonal eating supports the local economy and reduces your carbon footprint. By choosing locally grown produce, you can help foster a more sustainable food system.

TIPS TO TAKE INTO SPRING

Energy efficiency and sustainable fabrics aren't unique to the wintertime. They're equally as important once the snow starts to melt and the flowers begin to bloom! Consider adopting these habits and building sustainable foundations now, carrying them with you into the spring.

ENERGY-EFFICIENT HEATING SOLUTIONS

Winter's freezing cold temperatures always drive up energy consumption, primarily through heating. To combat this, homeowners can practice energy-efficient heating solutions to stop excessive electricity use.

Installing programmable thermostats allows homeowners to have precise control over indoor temperatures. This way, you can optimize your energy usage by adjusting settings appropriately. Insulation methods, like incorporating insulated curtains and draft

stoppers that minimize heat loss, ensure that warmth stays indoors. Any eco-insulation efforts are great, because they reduce the need for constant heating by preventing energy leaks.

Sick and tired of high winter energy bills? Try using space heaters in your home more selectively, and layering clothing indoors. These can provide added warmth, while decreasing your dependency on expensive central heating systems. Don't let yourself freeze, of course. Just try wearing fuzzy socks around the house for a change! Reducing your reliance on central heating will lower your energy bills and reduce your carbon footprint.

SUSTAINABLE WINTER FASHION

Stay warm sustainably by choosing clothing made from organic, natural fibers like wool, hemp, or organic cotton. There are so many small, sustainable brands that create ethically sourced and manufactured garments to keep you warm this winter.

Try supporting only ethical and eco-conscious brands that prioritize fair labor practices and use eco-friendly dyes and materials. This is one of the best ways to make the overconsumption normally associated with the winter season better for the environment.

MINDFUL TRAVEL

Winter is often a time we travel to visit family and friends. This creates an opportunity to embrace eco-conscious travel methods and practices. It's best to limit unnecessary car journeys and optimize travel plans to reduce fuel usage. First, determine if the trip you're making is the most logical or necessary. Especially during the hazardous road conditions that winter can bring, put your safety first and evaluate any travel choices.

Next, consider if there is any form of public transit you could use to get from point A to point B. Perhaps a form of transportation that reduces your emissions, such as a train ride? Plane trips tend to be the worst for the environment when it comes to travel. Can you carpool with other family members to a holiday dinner? When it comes to travel, you can get creative to find a more sustainable way that reduces your carbon footprint.

Sustainable travel is a habit you can carry with you beyond the holiday season. When planning future trips and get-togethers, pick the most central location. Consider who can drive together. And always pick the most eco-friendly transit options you have at your disposal! A cozy train ride through the countryside may be just what you need this winter.