

ECOLOGY BEGINS



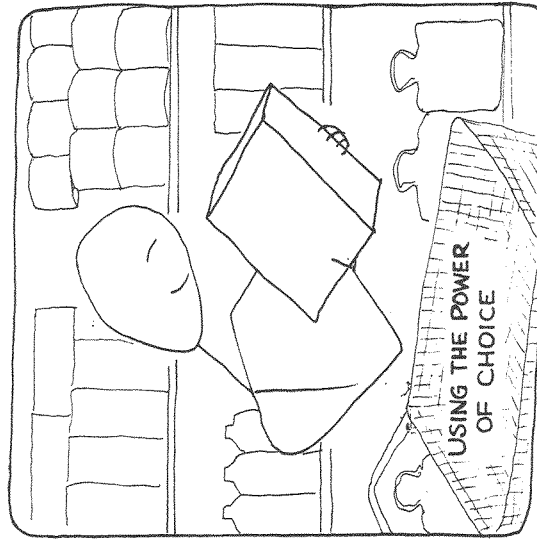
AT HOME

ARCHIE DUNCANSON

www.alternativ.nu/ecologybeginsathome

Ecology Begins at Home

USING THE POWER OF CHOICE



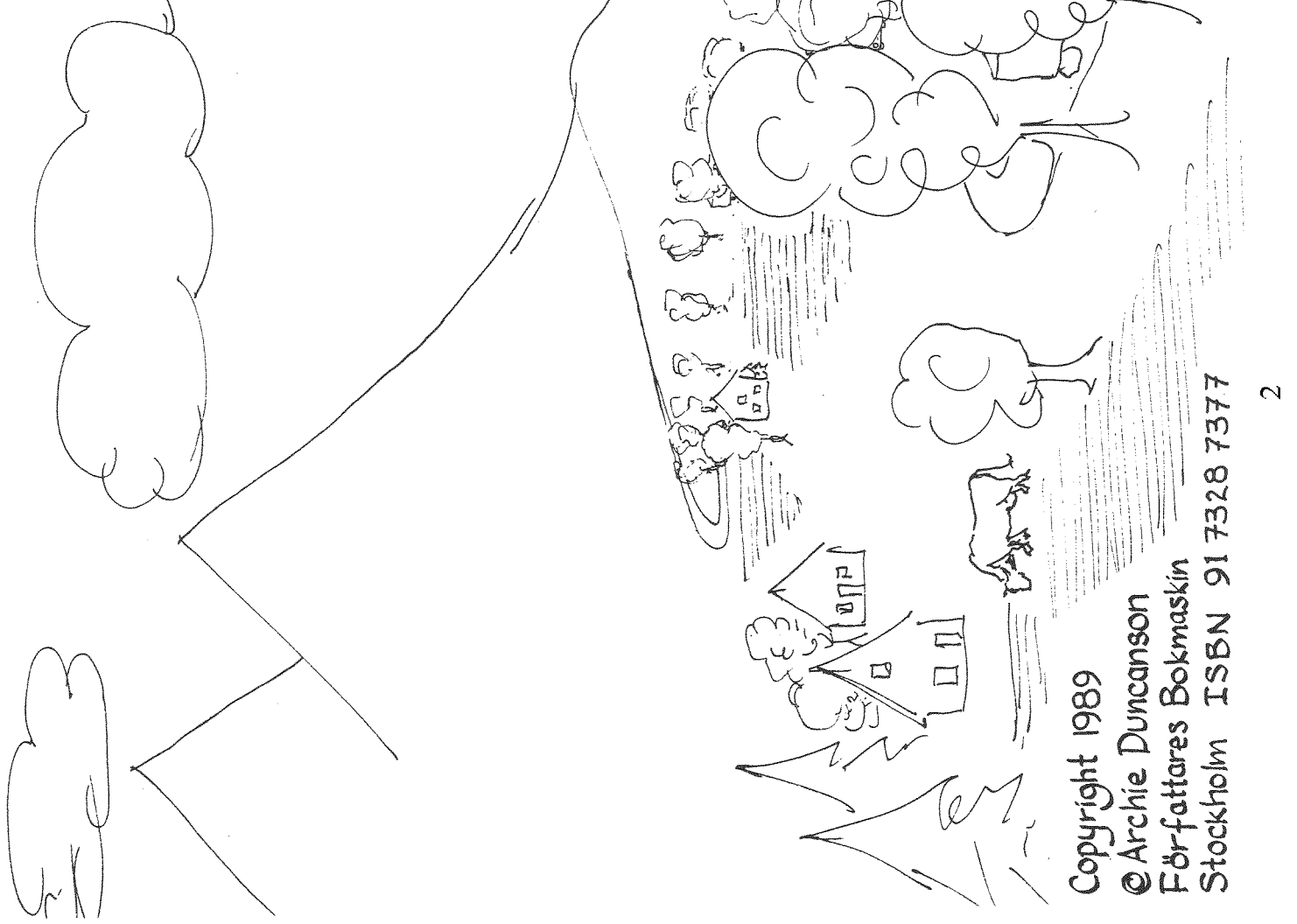
ARCHIE DUNCANSON

TAGLIATELLE* from ITALY !

Sounds good, doesn't it? But for those like me who live 2000 miles to the north in Stockholm, Sweden, this means a steady flow of trucks carrying bulky noodles between factory and us - trucks which take up space on the highways and give off unhealthy exhaust. Why do I pay for this long-haul trucking with all its pollution, when I could move my hand a few inches on the shelf and choose another brand made nearby?

This book is about that and similar choices . It tells how I set about to eliminate my share of the pollution in the world - my garbage, from my foods, laundry and hygienic chemicals, etc. It tells how I looked for and found practical solutions to most everything, things I could do today, in my own life, without waiting for governments or industry to act. It tells how I have succeeded, yet am not done. It tells how working with my garbage and other daily problems gave unexpected benefits - better health, less dependency, less cost of living, more time to enjoy life, peace of mind, and hope for the world.

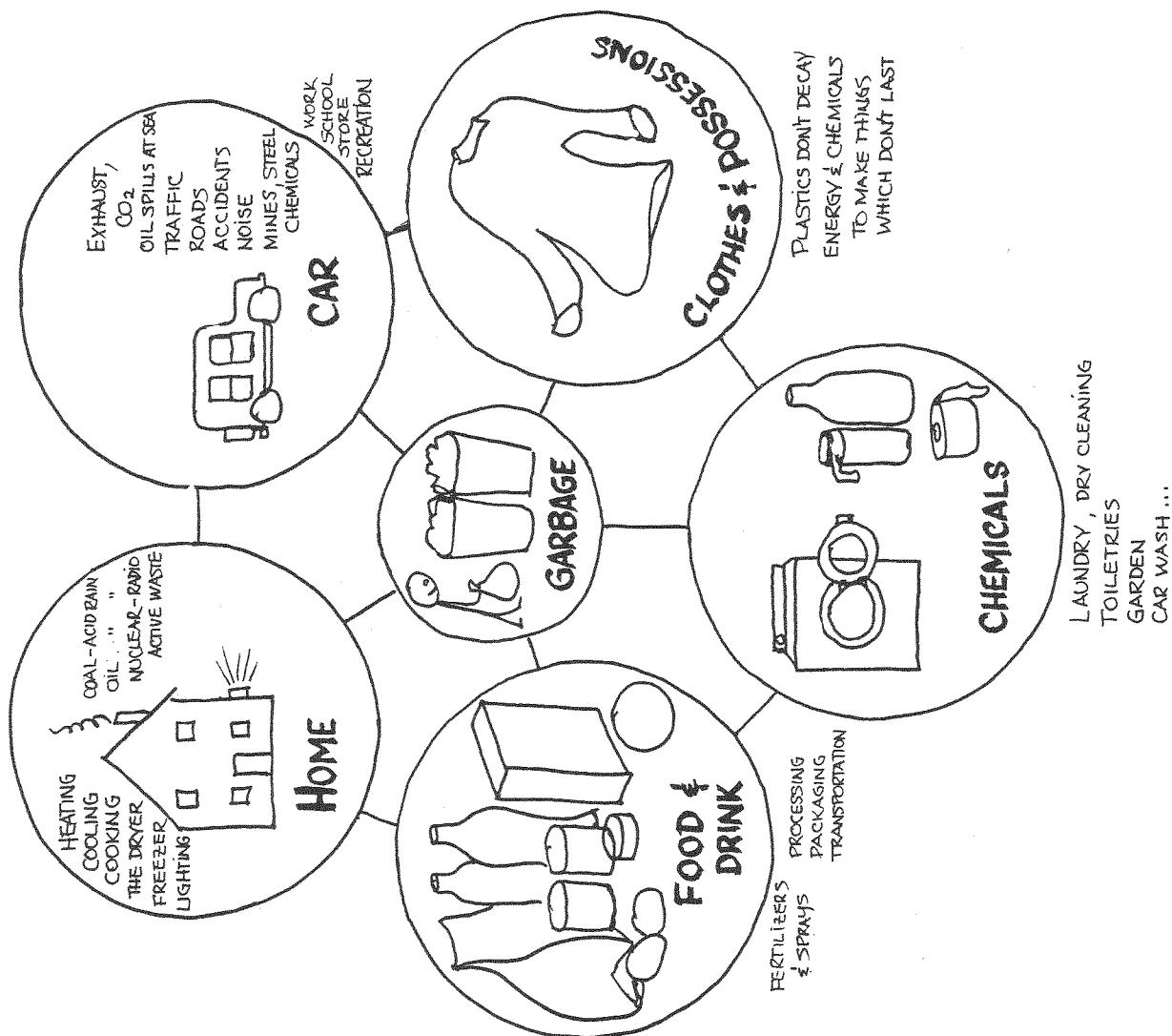
I hope it will get you active, too!



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* "Bird's nest" wide band noodles

THE MAJOR POLLUTIONS AT HOME



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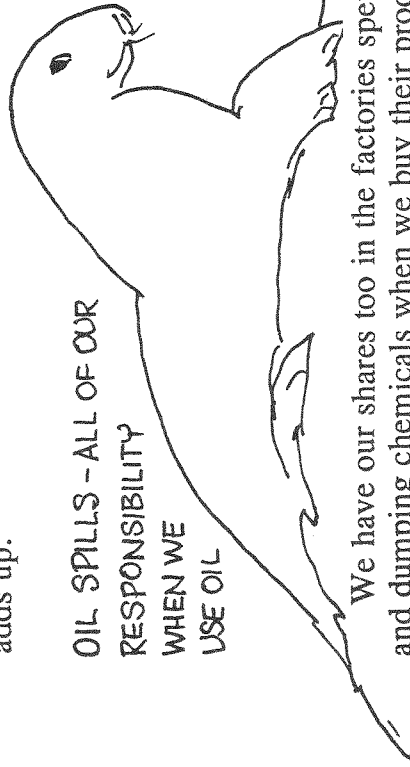
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THE MATHEMATICS OF ECOLOGY

All the pollution in the world is caused by people. It is made up of my part, your part, and each of our neighbor's parts added together in a thousand towns around the world. The gasoline pollution, for example, is the sum of many automobile trips to work, to the store, to school and to places of recreation by millions of us, each day, throughout the year. The coal, oil and nuclear power plants' pollution comes from meeting my needs, plus your needs, plus all the other people's needs for heat, light, cooking, refrigeration and machines.

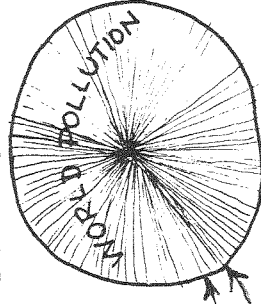
Consider the oil spill catastrophe along the shores of Alaska winter 1989. We blame the oil company, but is it not we who are paying them to engage in this dangerous work, to heat our homes and drive our cars? Each one of us can think, my part is so little, but it all adds up.

OIL SPILLS - ALL OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY WHEN WE USE OIL



We have our shares too in the factories spewing smoke and dumping chemicals when we buy their products. Their smoke is a little of mine, a little of yours, a little of all the other customers. For example, the frozen orange juice I buy comes from a factory using lots of energy and pollutes further as it is transported along the highway by diesel truck. A share of that factory's energy and that truck's smoke is mine

If we look at every item we buy or consume, we will see that behind most everything there is a factory, resources, energy and transportation required - all causing pollution in different ways. Without realizing it, we are all party to this enormous world problem by simply living the way we normally do.



$$\text{mine} + \text{yours} + \dots =$$

THE WHOLE IS EQUAL TO THE SUM OF THE PARTS

We can look at the enormity of the whole world's pollution problem, become discouraged thinking "what difference can I make?" - and do nothing.

Or we can look at our own share which we have control over, take responsibility, and say: "I am going to do something about it!"

I decided to do something about it, and I started with my garbage.

MY POLLUTION

"I am Doing Something about it!"



Other

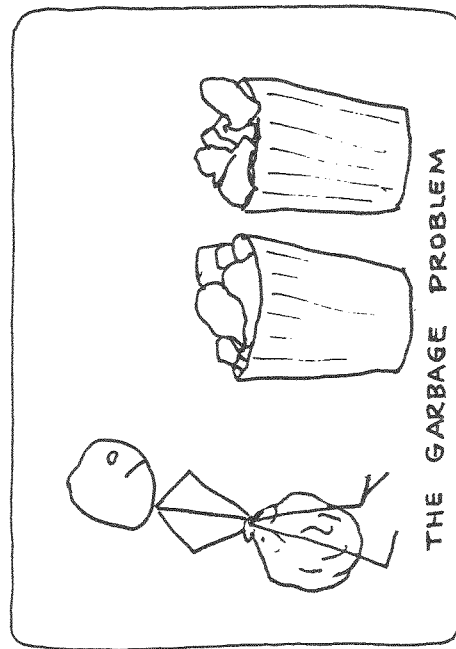
People's

Pollution

I STARTED WITH MY GARBAGE

Everybody knows the problems our daily garbage causes - where to put it, what to do with it. Some is buried, polluting the land, some is burned, polluting the air, some cast out to sea. All of it must be collected and transported elsewhere - so there is pollution not only from the garbage but from the trucks driving it around.

I asked myself: how can I reduce my garbage?

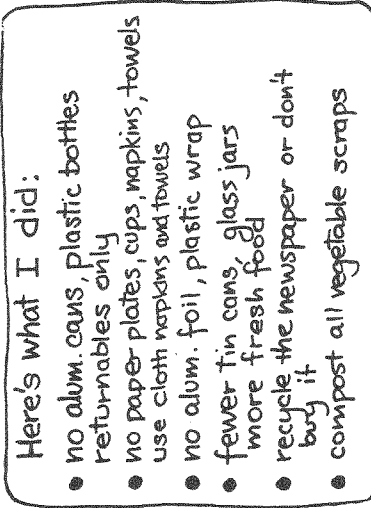


When you ask such a question, you get many ideas and answers. I began with the throwaway plastic drink bottles and aluminum cans - going over to returnable bottles. This made a big dent. Then, seeing tin cans and glass jars in my garbage, I gradually stopped buying preserved foods. Instead I bought more fresh, dried and frozen foods, which have little or no packaging. For example, instead of canned soup I made my own with fresh vegetables, noodles, and a bouillon cube. Next came wet garbage. Acting on an idea from Ann Wigmore in her book "Be Your Own Doctor", I started a compost in my cellar. It

didn't work very well the first time but after a few experiments I got it going, now on my balcony. All vegetable peels, egg shells, coffee grounds, tea leaves, etc. now go under my sink for a week to begin fermenting, then into the compost box on my apartment balcony. Here it turns into earth again, which I use in my flower boxes and vegetable garden.

The garbage was really getting smaller now. I began to look at every single thing I threw away and ask if I couldn't avoid it. Newspapers at first went to recycling, but after noticing how little of the paper I read, I decided to buy it only on Sundays - listening to the news on the radio more often instead.

All of these steps took several years of gradual change. I tackled one problem at a time and, solving it, went on to the next. The garbage got smaller and smaller. Today my weekly garbage is down to a single little bag weighing less than half a pound¹, composed mostly of paper and plastic bags. The paper doesn't bother me (it will decompose easily) but I am still looking for ways to eliminate those plastic bags! The goal: zero garbage.



HOW CAN I MAKE IT SMALLER?



MY WEEKLY GARBAGE

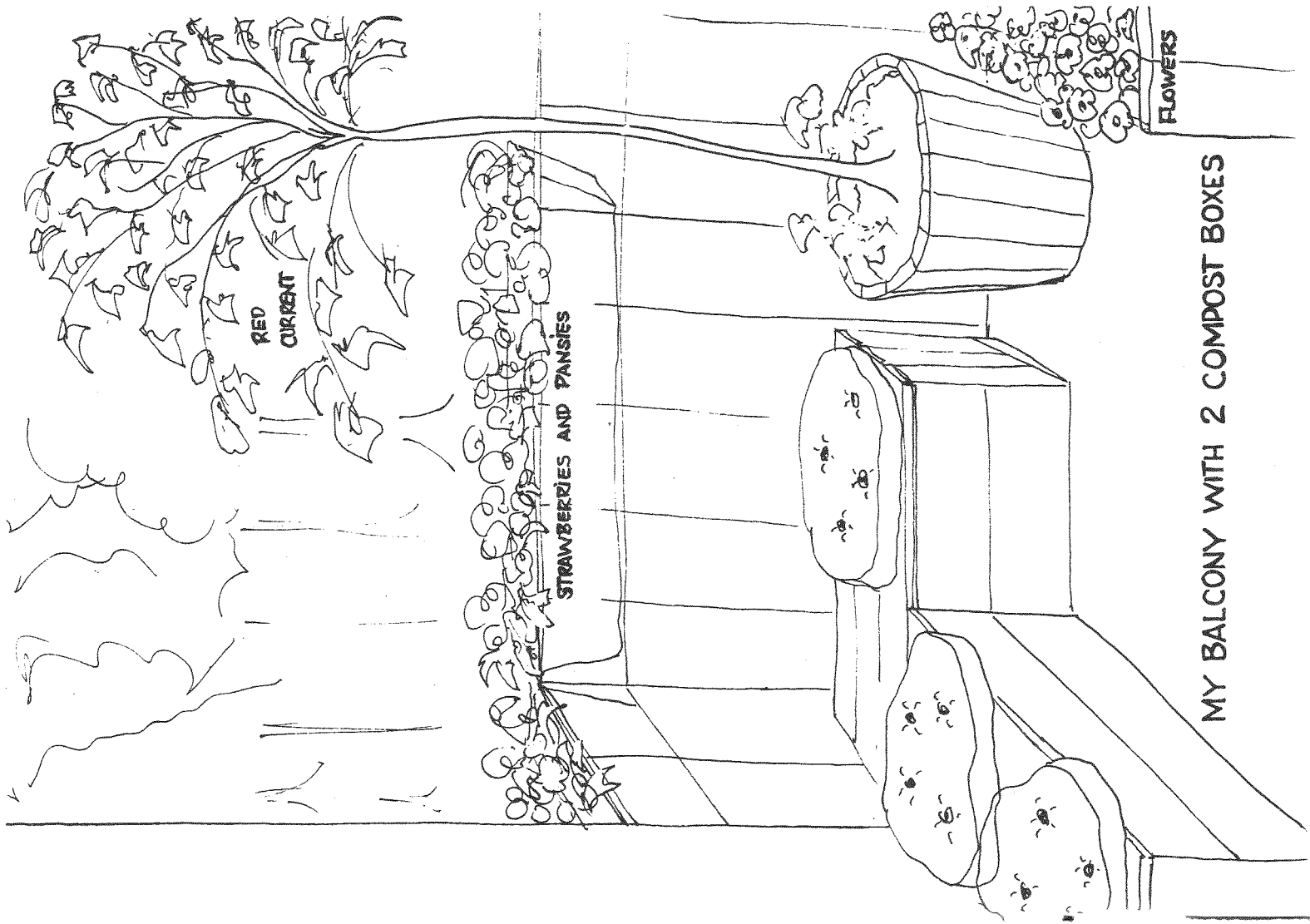
¹A single person household.

A HOME COMPOST

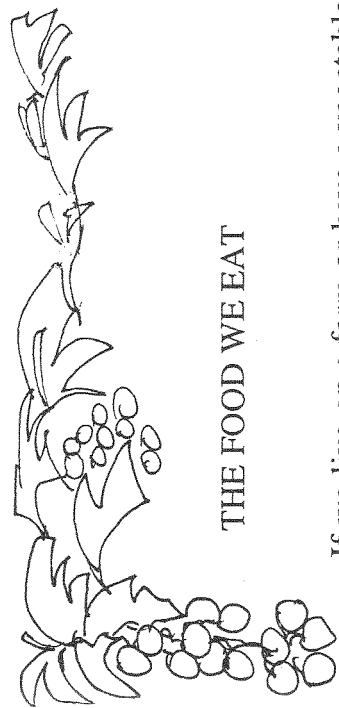
1. ON YOUR BALCONY OR IN YOUR GARDEN
2. IT DRIES UP AND SINKS DOWN TO NOTHING
3. NEEDS ONLY AIR & MOISTURE, WORMS
OPTIONAL
4. EVERYTHING EXCEPT MEAT & FISH
5. NO SMELL EXCEPT WHEN TOO WET, NEEDS AIR
~ STIR IT UP THEN
6. OPTIONAL PRE-COMPOST A WEEK UNDER YOUR SINK
7. USE IN YOUR GARDEN OR BALCONY BOXES
AND POTTED PLANTS INDOORS
8. WINTER GARBAGE READY IN THE SUMMER
AUTUMN GARBAGE IN THE SPRING - OR SOONER!

SIMPLE TO MAKE!

- A PILE DIRECTLY ON THE GROUND IN THE GARDEN
OPTIONAL WOOD OR WIRE SIDES
- ON THE BALCONY A BOX WITH A LID, AIRY
EVEN INDOORS, PLASTIC FLOWER BOXES UNDER THE SINK!



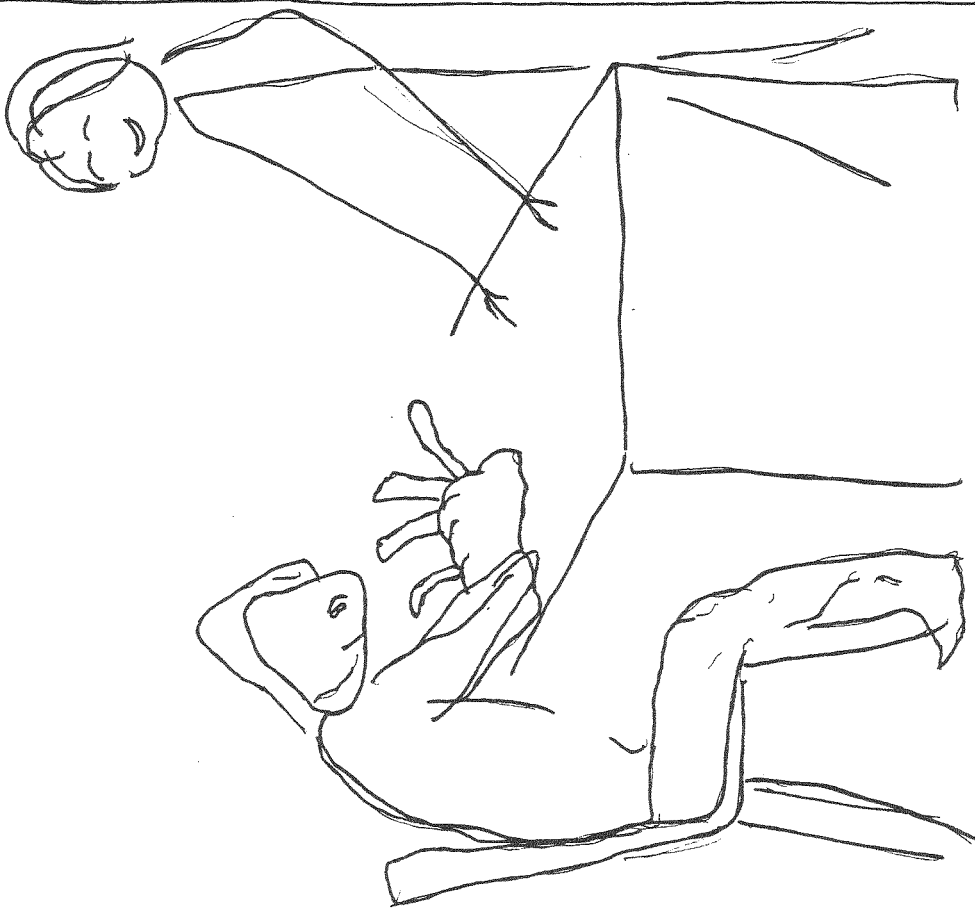
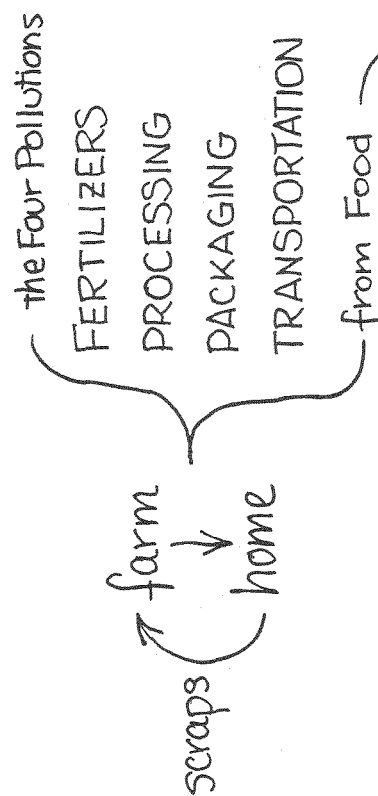
MY BALCONY WITH 2 COMPOST BOXES



THE FOOD WE EAT

If we live on a farm or have a vegetable garden, we can go out and dig up fresh vegetables to cook and eat. No fertilizers or sprays are necessary and the peelings go on the compost. We eat what the earth gives us and return the scraps to become new earth again, year after year in an endless cycle.

In our modern society things are not so simple. Almost all food is grown with chemicals, processed in factories, packaged in throwaway containers and transported long distances by truck. These four pollutions are ruining the earth because there is so much of it - most of what we eat, day after day. Let us examine them briefly in turn, then look to see what we can do to eliminate them.



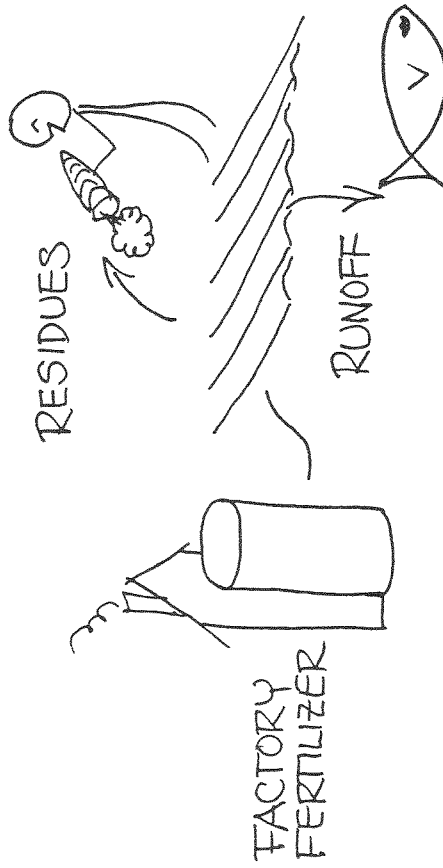
WHAT'S THIS, MOM ?

OH, IT'S ONE OF THOSE NEW IMPORTED
FRUITS FROM VENUS

1. Fertilizers and sprays

Chemicals in farming mean many things, but I think especially about these three:

- factories and raw materials are needed to produce the fertilizers - this means smoke, energy, and chemical waste, e.g. heavy metals
- the fertilizers run off into the waters where they grow too much algae and kill the fish
- the pesticides and weed killers are not good for our health, either as residues on the food or as runoff in the ground water we drink



2. Processing

Processing means a factory with energy, smoke and waste. The food is cooked and cooled down or dried, requiring much energy. All this energy is extra energy because the food must be heated again at home to be eaten.

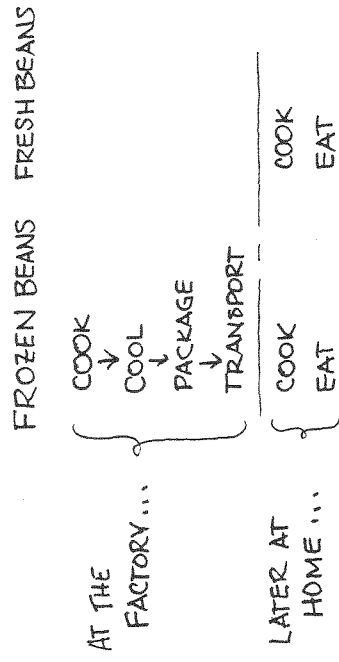
SOME EXAMPLES:

- PARBOILED OR MINUTE RICE: COOK, DRY WITH HOT AIR, PACKAGE
- MASHED POTATOES: COOK, MASH, DRY BY HEATING
- CORNFLAKES: COOK, MASH, ROLL OUT, DRY
- CANNED SOUP: COOK, COOL, CAN
- INSTANT COFFEE: BOIL WATER, MAKE COFFEE, DRY BY FREEZING
- DRIED SOUPS: " MAKE SOUP "
- FROZEN PEAS: BOIL, FREEZE, PACKAGE

Even simple frozen vegetables are boiled at the factory before being frozen - then they will be boiled again when we bring them home! So a factory processed food requires 2 extra energy steps (boiling and freezing), 3 in all, compared to just 1 when we cook something fresh at home.

Instant coffee, freeze dried soups, etc. require enormous energy to evaporate all the water - just like drying clothes in the dryer at home.

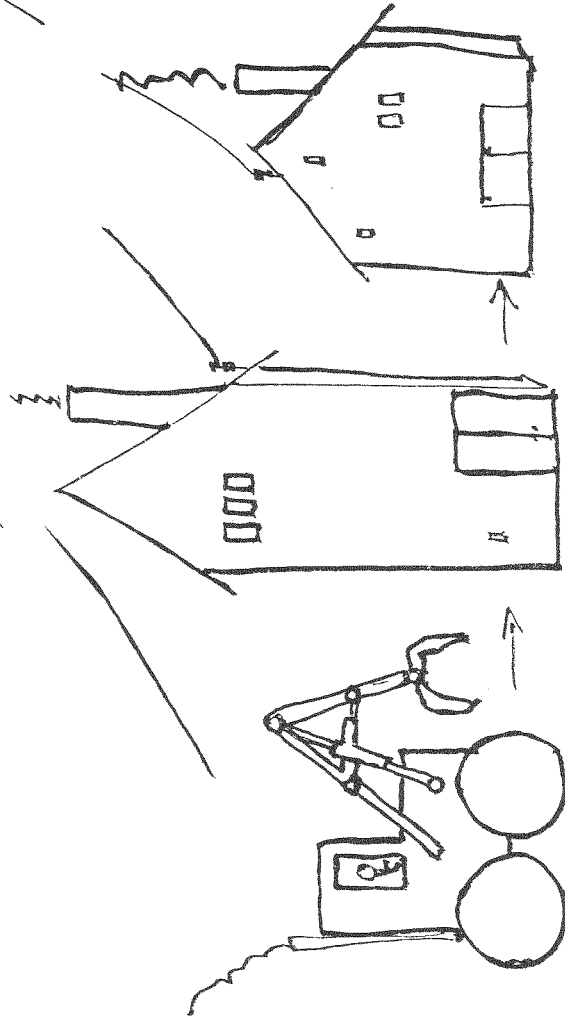
A little extra cooking and freezing probably would be no problem. What is killing us, I believe, is that most of our food is processed. We consume more food than anything else - cars, clothes, books, music - several pounds per day per person. If most of this requires 3 times the energy, no wonder we are having problems.



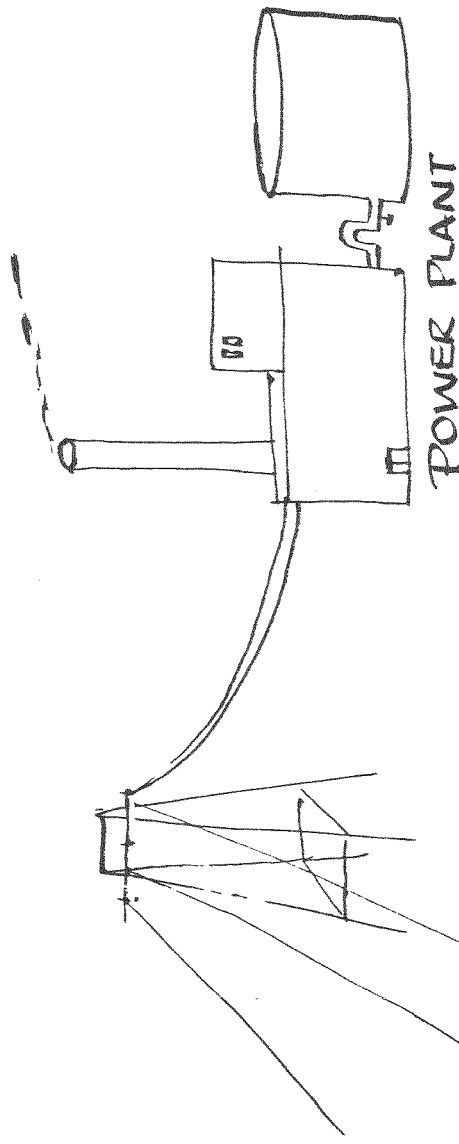
3. Packaging

A package begins with getting the raw materials: a mine for metal cans, a sand quarry for glass, an oil well for plastics, and trees for paper. Do you know how a mine pollutes? Personally, I do not, but I have read how a mine near the coast of Chile destroyed the town drinking water and the fishing in the sea with the daily runoff of chemicals used in the extraction process. Mining is a dirty business - it ought not be wasted on food.

Package making also requires energy to melt the steel, the aluminum, the glass, the oil for plastics, the wood pulp for paper. Making aluminum requires the most - enormous quantities. Our aluminum drink cans are therefore the worst packaging (even with recycling a new can must still be made).

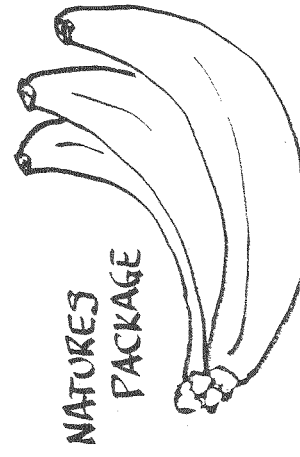


IRON MINE STEEL FACTORY CAN FACTORY



How does energy pollute? Coal and oil power plants give acids in the air which harm the lakes and the forests (and I would suppose we people, too). And like all burning, they give off the carbon dioxide which is causing a greenhouse effect. Nuclear plants heat huge areas of river, lake, or sea water, killing the fish. They leave quantities of radioactive clothes, tools, pipes and building materials, plus the fuel rods, as they are continuously operated and repaired - all of which must be stored underground for many years. And of course, they have accidents, truly dangerous accidents.

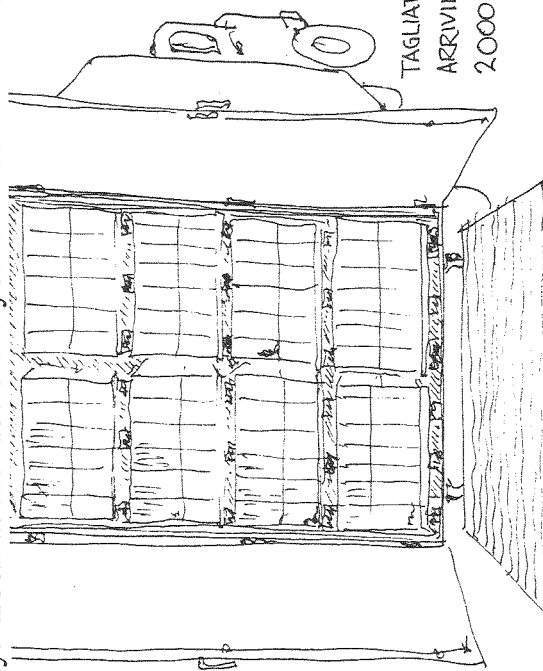
Packaging thus means mines, chemicals, energy and garbage.



NO MINE, NO CHEMICALS
NO ENERGY

4. Transportation

Long-distance transportation of food means trucks crisscrossing our cities and highways filled with all that we eat. Very few foods come from the area in which we live, let's say within 30 miles. Most foods come from more like 300 miles away, and many foods come from 3000 miles away. Look at the labels and you will see what I mean!

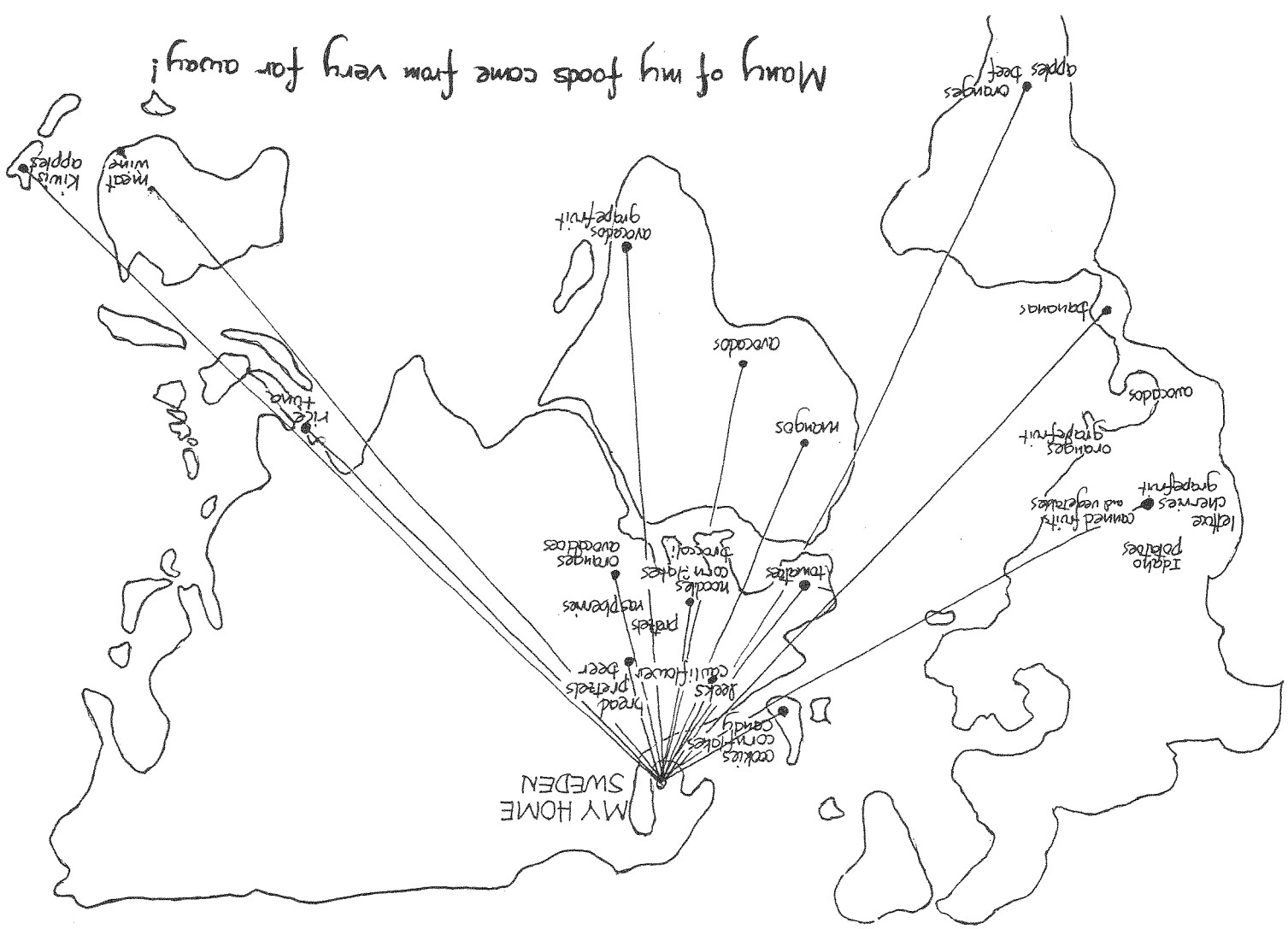


TAGLIATELLE from ITALY
ARRIVING in SWEDEN
2000 miles away

It just doesn't make sense shipping a box of tagliatelle ("birds nest" spaghetti noodles) 2000 miles or a bag of potato chips 200 miles - but I realized that is what I do when I purchase these items, without thinking. I pay for their shipping - and for the pollution from the trucks.

Worst are bulky items such as bread, macaroni, cornflakes, cookies, potato chips. They take up lots of space in a truck. The box contains mostly air.

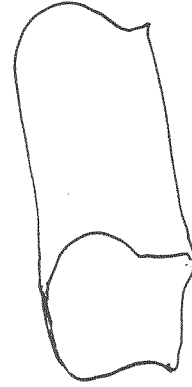
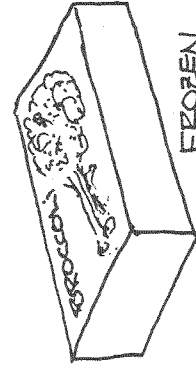
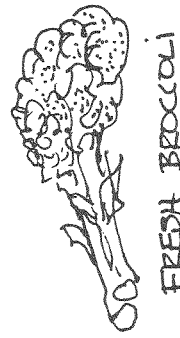
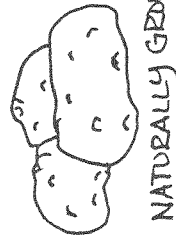
A bag of rice is another matter - it takes up little space and many meals can be prepared from it. Dried beans, nuts, seeds, straight spaghetti are also compact.



GETTING OUR FOODS WITHOUT POLLUTION

Seeing more and more what lay behind our daily food, I began looking for better alternatives. Not theoretical or future solutions for how food could better be produced - but practical ways that I could get my foods without these pollutions today.

Just as with my garbage, I looked at one item at a time. I kept asking, how can I get this without the transportation, without the processing, without the package, without the fertilizers? Usually I couldn't solve all 4 pollution problems at once - it didn't matter, every step was a step in the right direction and I found new solutions all the time. Here are some of the things I did. Keep in mind I live in Stockholm in the north of Europe with a cold winter climate. Your geography, your climate, your tastes and food problems will of course be different.

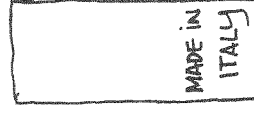
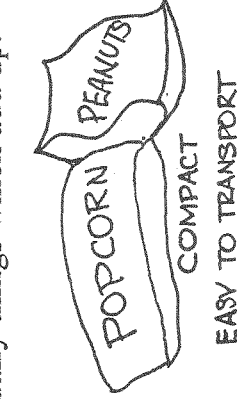


1. Food Near to Home

When I became aware of the transportation problems, I began reading the labels and looking for alternatives near to home. Sometimes I didn't find any, so ate something else instead, or made my own.

- I stopped buying lettuce from Spain in the winter and grew sprouts instead. I ate cabbage salads.
- I stopped buying kiwi fruit from New Zealand and apples from Chile. I ate what was in season. I bought dried fruit in the winter (dried fruit is compact)
- My cornflakes came from Italy, 2000 miles away. I looked around in other stores and found a brand made 20 miles away. I never found tagliatelle produced nearby so I use straight spaghetti made in Sweden instead.
- Potato chips came from far away so I bought peanuts instead, more compact, and made popcorn at home
- I looked and found out which breads were baked in my city and bought them instead of the long distance brands
- I cut down on imports of cookies from France and treated myself instead to *fresh* cookies from a local bakery

Simple choices in the store soon cut the transportation distances (or bulk) of my food to 1/10th, 1/20th, or even 1/100th of what they were before. I was no fanatic, however -- sometimes I bought my potato chips or favorite German bread - but as special treats, not regularly. It is the daily things which add up.



2. More Fresh Foods

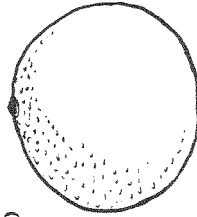
When I understood the true costs of processed food in energy, packaging, and pollution, I began leaving it on the shelf and buying fresh foods instead. I read the labels to see what was in things, then went home and made them myself.

- I made my own soups: onion soup, tomato soup, noodle soup, cheese soup, celery soup
- I boiled my own dried beans: mung beans, garbanzos, pintos, black beans, kidney beans
- I made applesauce at home. I froze and dried rhubarb from my garden
- I stopped buying icecream and ate frozen banana instead - on a stick, as a sundae or milkshake
- I learned to make a simple pie bottom of flour and butter. Then I could make vegetable pies. I used the same pie bottom to make fruit pies for dessert
- I dared to be creative and cook without a cookbook, I trusted my own taste and smell
- I simplified every recipe so that it was easy to cook
- I put food on to simmer, like over a campfire, then let time do the work while I did other things
- I ate less fried food and more baked and stewed
- I ate fresh steamed vegetables with butter
- I ate hearty salads of every kind
- I ate rice or baked potato
- I ate radishes, and hot peppers



BAKED POTATO

~ SIMPLE TO MAKE
AND COOKED ONLY ONCE



FRESH ORANGE

NO PROCESSING
NO PACKAGE



When I understood the true costs of processed food in energy, packaging, and pollution, I began leaving it on the shelf and buying fresh foods instead. I read the labels to see what was in things, then went home and made them myself.

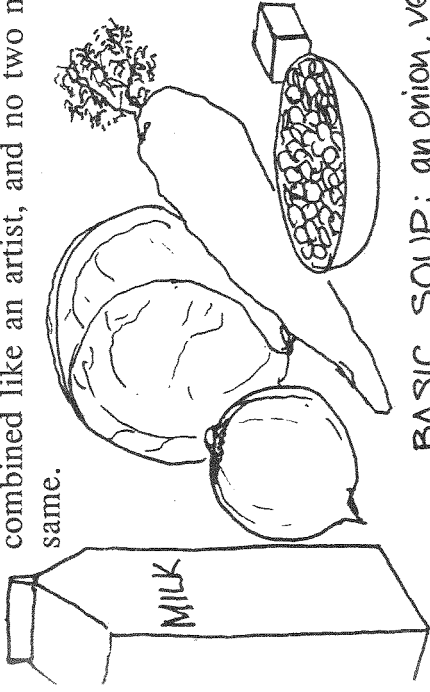
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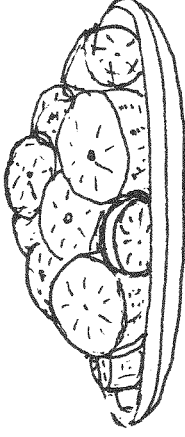
BAKED POTATO

~ SIMPLE TO MAKE
AND COOKED ONLY ONCE

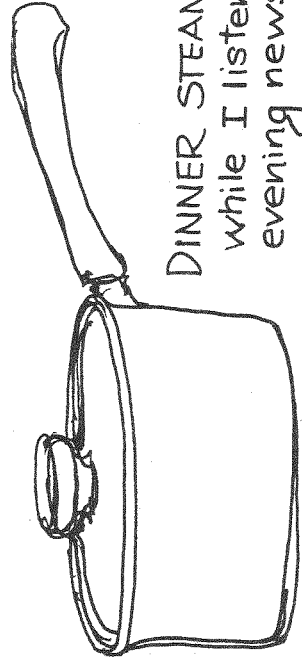
With every step I ate more wholesomely, more tastily and with less effort. I did things simply, I let the food be itself, I let time do the work. I used what I had, I combined like an artist, and no two meals were ever the same.



BASIC SOUP: an onion, vegetables, lentils...



FRESH FRUIT OR FROZEN BANANA
better than over-processed "ice-cream"



DINNER STEAMS PEACEFULLY
while I listen to the evening news

WHILE ORGANIC BREAD
FIBERS DO NOT HAVE TO BE
ADDED, NOR VITAMINS

3. Naturally Grown Foods

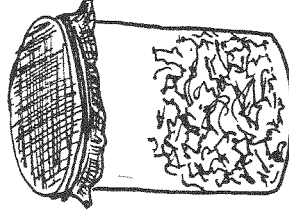
I started looking for naturally grown foods at the health food store, trying vegetables, potatoes, fruits, cereals; breads - everything they had. I learned what was available in the regular markets - more and more nowadays. Some organically grown vegetables come from very far away, so I didn't buy them - everything is a tradeoff. Most things cost more but I came to accept that for the quality I got. Other things I did were:

- I grew sprouts on my kitchen counter
- later I started a small vegetable garden
- I bought apples from a neighbor and cherries from a friend
- I bought naturally grown wheat flour to bake with and sometimes bread
- I paid a little more for naturally grown rice and oatmeal. I could afford it with all the money I saved on processed foods
- I looked for eggs from outdoor hens
- I ate less meat and chicken, because I questioned:
 - the health of a high meat diet
 - how the animals are raised in boxes, with hormones, soybeans and fishmeal
 - the enormous land area needed to raise beef

vegetables need a little garden, cows need a pasture

Today I get more than half of my foods without chemicals, by shopping around and growing some of my own. I am still working on it. I support the organic farmers by buying their products whenever I can. This way I give myself and the earth the best I can, for good health.

No Fertilizers & Sprays



SPROUTS

SOAK OVERNIGHT,
THEN RINSE TWICE
DAILY UNTIL DONE

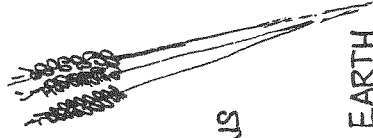


ORGANICALLY GROWN

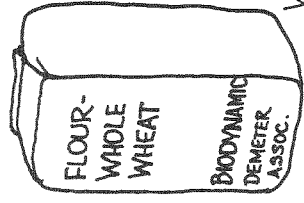
WHENEVER I CAN FIND THEM



EGGS FROM OUTDOOR CHICKENS



EARTH



AIR SUN

WATER

NOTHING MORE



RED CURRANTS
ON MY BALCONY



POTATOES FROM THE
ORGANIC FARMER

DOING THE LAUNDRY

NOTHING SMELLS SO GOOD
AS LAUNDRY DRIED IN THE SUN

One day I saw incredible suds coming out of the washing machine and understood all of a sudden why biologists were alarmed about phosphates in detergents - here were large quantities going down the drain from a single wash. I had always used somewhat less than the recommended dosage, to be economical, but now I became suspicious. For the first time it occurred to me to find out for myself how much I needed rather than rely on the manufacturer's recommendation.

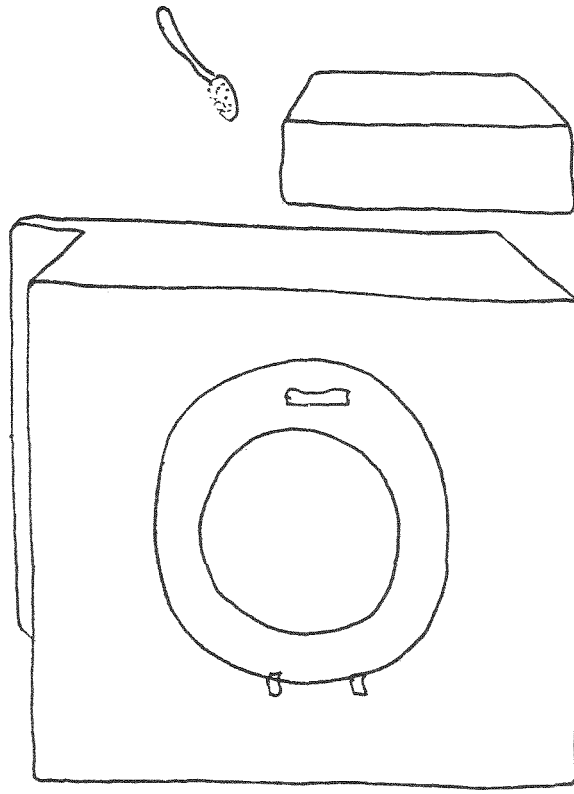
I experimented by cutting the dosage in half. The laundry got clean. I cut it in half again - the water still felt "slippery" and the laundry got clean. I continued in this way and found that a single tablespoon, or even less, was enough for my laundry. I also discovered that cuffs and collars don't get *really* clean no matter how much detergent you use - they had to be scrubbed by hand. Using only one spoonful of detergent I needed only one rinse cycle, not the four rinses we have on our machines here in Sweden. So I used less water and was done in half the time. A big box of detergent will now last me 4 years (I often write the purchase date on packages to see how long they last)!

This is one of many experiences teaching me to find out things for myself by trial and experiment rather than relying on authorities. More and more I rely on my five senses and my common sense. I know when my laundry is clean, by feel and smell, even though I only use 1/12th the recommended dosage.

So here a desire to save the environment has ended up saving me time and money as well!

There are many people experimenting all around us. We only have to listen to our friends and neighbors and read the papers to get ideas to try. We can experiment, adapt, add a new twist, be creative and find our own novel way of doing something.

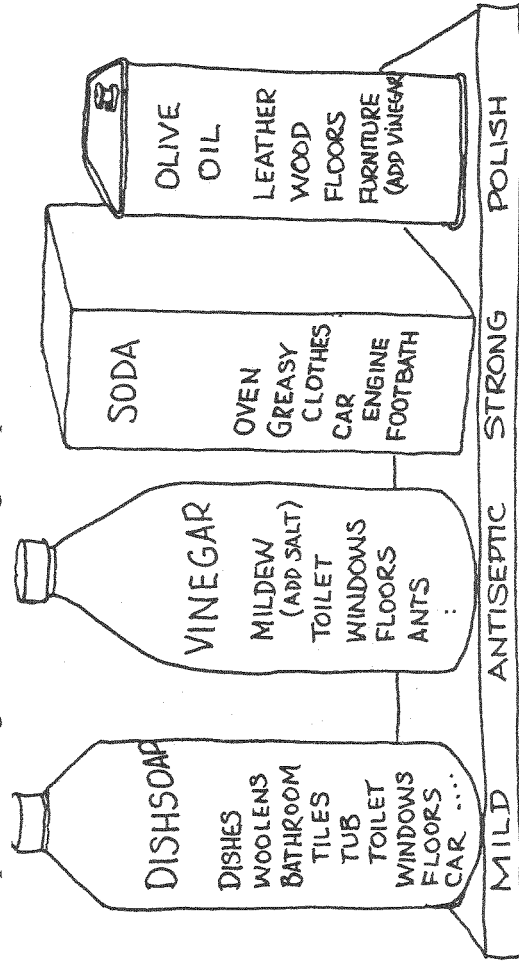
We can experiment reducing the amount all over the home. For example, I found that a paint brush can be cleaned in a spoonful of thinner, just enough to wet it, then washing it in dishsoap. I found that dishes require less soap if you use much less water so I bought a plastic bowl to wash up in, like when camping - 1 quart of dishsoap now lasts me a year! By treating all chemicals as valuable resources we find ways to use less.



I EXPERIMENTED USING LESS DETERGENT
ONE SPOONFUL WAS ENOUGH!

We can also look for harmless substances which break down quickly again in nature. Today there are biodegradable soaps with no phosphates at all. So I can use 1/12th as much detergent, and even the spoonful I do use will now be safe. I stopped using chlorine entirely, hanging my clothes to bleach in the sun when I can.

My all purpose cleaner for the whole house has become **liquid dish soap**. I use it everywhere, including the bathroom and the car. Some people use **vinegar**, a purely natural substance, to kill bacteria or keep ants away by smell. For really bad grease, like in the oven, a little common **soda**. For polishing wood counters and furniture and keeping leather soft, I use **olive oil**. These are now my basic household "chemicals" - all come across by experimenting with something simple I had around.

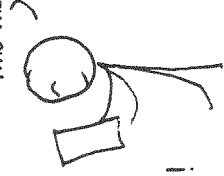


Look in the market, shelf after shelf of detergents, soaps, special cleaners, sprays and abrasives - most of them harmful to our world! Do we really need them? Experiment and you, like me, will find simpler, safer ways to keep your home, car and clothes clean - with only a fraction of what you buy today.

SIMPLE, SAFE HOME CLEANERS

(Experiment and find your own!)

WONDER IF
THIS WILL WORK



BLEACH - strong camomile tea, smells good!

- hang clothes to dry in the sun, when you can

WOOLENS - dish soap

DRY CLEANING

wash by hand instead or

Nature's dryclean - hang clothes in the cool night air

SILVER - soda + alum. foil **COPPER** - ketchup **BRASS** - lemon juice (let sit)

BURNT PAN - let soak (sometimes soda or baking soda helps)

PAINT BRUSH - a spoonful of thinner, then soap

CAR - dish soap; (engine - soda)

DRAINS - try a coat hanger wire,

or unscrew it underneath the sink and clean out

WATERPROOFING SHOES, etc.:

vaseline, olive oil, beeswax, candle

FLEAS: try fennel, rosemary or rue in the pet food

CLOSET: lavender, cedar chips, juniper

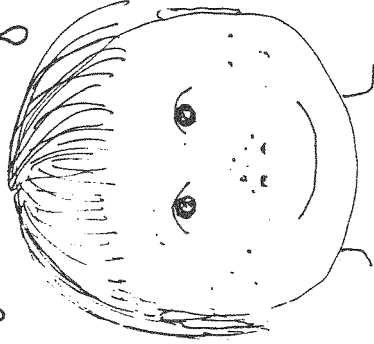
BATHROOM SCENT: broken pine needles, fresh flowers, cut fruit, fresh mint or other herbs

LIME DEPOSITS, BATHTUB RUST:

vinegar, lemon juice

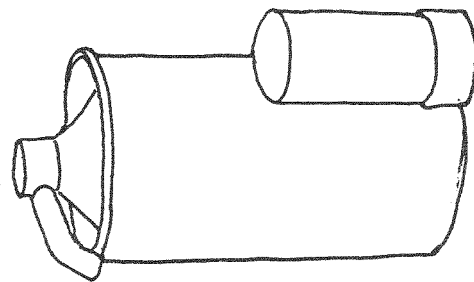
BEING CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL

AREN'T I BEAUTIFUL,
DADDY ?



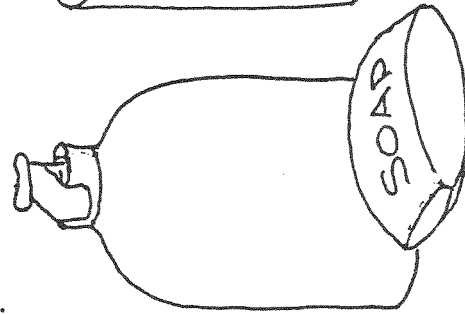
I also began looking at my toiletries and simplifying what I use to keep myself beautiful and clean. I stopped buying aerosol cans because of the freon and switched to unbleached toilet paper, to save a factory dumping chlorine in the water on my account. Knowing that everything I use means factories, packaging, transportation, garbage and chemical waste, I choose more carefully and use things sparingly.

For example, I found that a bar of soap lasts two or three times as long as liquid hand soap - you always get too much of the liquid on your hand - and it leaves no plastic bottle to throw away. A shaving stick lasts many times longer than a tube or can of shaving cream, and it is packaged in paper. Examining things in this way I cut down the worst pollutants and perhaps reduced my usage to 1/3rd of what was.



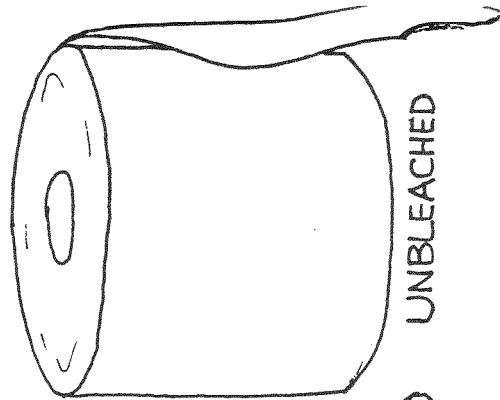
SHAVING STICK

NO FREON, NO CAN



BAR SOAP

NO PACKAGE AND ALWAYS
THE RIGHT AMOUNT



UNBLEACHED

CLEAN WITHOUT CONSUMING

- CLOTH BABY DIAPERS
- CLOTH HANDKERCHIEFS
- CLOTH GUEST TOWELS
- CLOTH TABLE NAPKINS
- LONG-SLEEVE SHIRT & HAT
- INSTEAD OF SUNSCREEN
- ...
- ...

But I went further. I began asking myself, do I need this item, *at all*? I thought of our ancestors and wondered how I could solve this particular need with *no* consumable resources, or virtually none. For example, cloth baby diapers instead of paper? Or a cloth handkerchief instead of paper kleenex? Do I really need sunscreen lotion? Would a long-sleeved shirt and hat do just as well? Questions like this always gave me ideas - then it was only a matter of daring to try them out.



FOR WOMEN, TRY THESE SUGGESTIONS ON NATURAL BEAUTY
FROM ANN WIGMORE IN HER BOOK "BE YOUR OWN DOCTOR"

HAIR RINSE - LEMON JUICE

DANDRUFF - COCONUT OIL + STEAMING HOT TOWEL

FACE CLEANER- LEMON JUICE

FACE PACKS - EGG YOLK (LET DRY ON FACE)

- HONEY, UNHEATED

- MASHED RIPE BANANA + SUNFLOWER OIL

AFTERWARDS, FACE RUB WITH

- OLIVE OR VEG. OIL OR } DRY SKIN

- MASHED AVOCADO

- LEMON OR } OILY SKIN

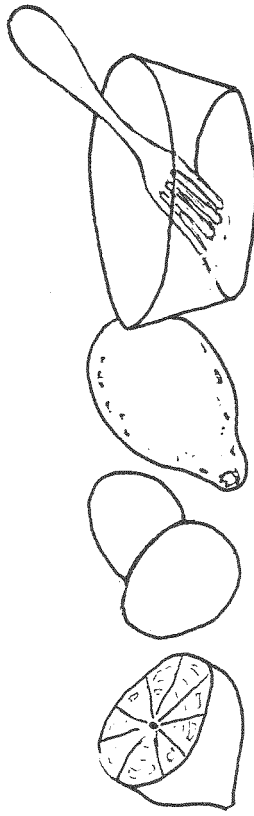
- FRESH CUT POTATO

NIGHT CREAM:

1 EGG, 1/2 CUP SUNFLOWER OIL,

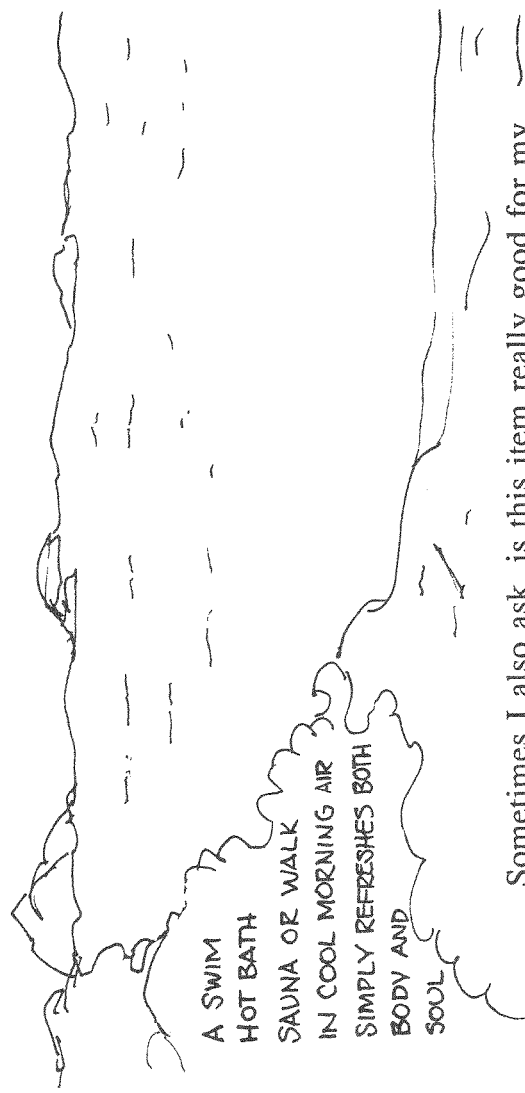
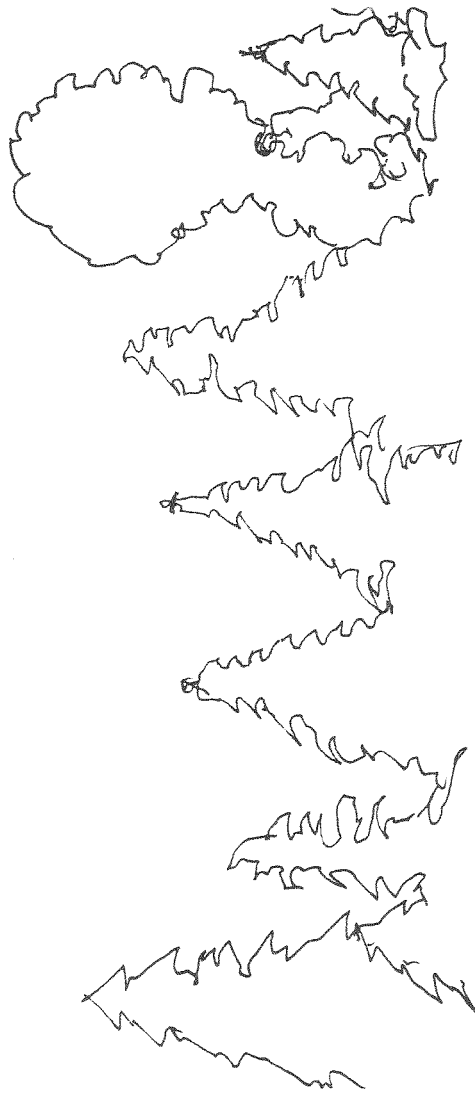
2 TBSP LEMON JUICE, 1/2 TSP KELP.

MIX IN BLENDER, REFRIGERATE.



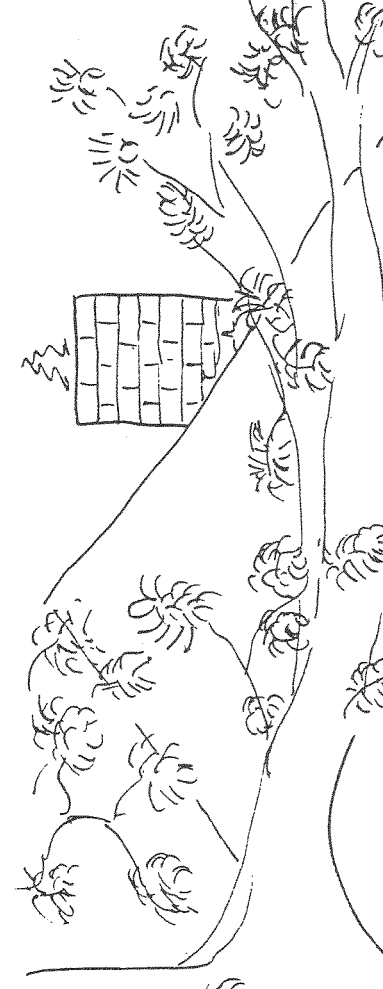
LEMON EGG AVOCADO

NATURAL BEAUTY AT HOME



A SWIM
HOT BATH
SAUNA OR WALK
IN COOL MORNING AIR
SIMPLY REFRESHES BOTH
BODY AND
SOUL

Sometimes I also ask, is this item really good for my health? A few years ago I cut down on soap when I read how it takes the natural oils off the skin. The oil produces vitamin-D and keeps our skin from drying out - why wash off our own oil, then rub lotions back on? I found that most of the time a daily shower with a scrubbrush got me clean and was enough - now I only use soap or shampoo when I truly need it, my senses tell me when.



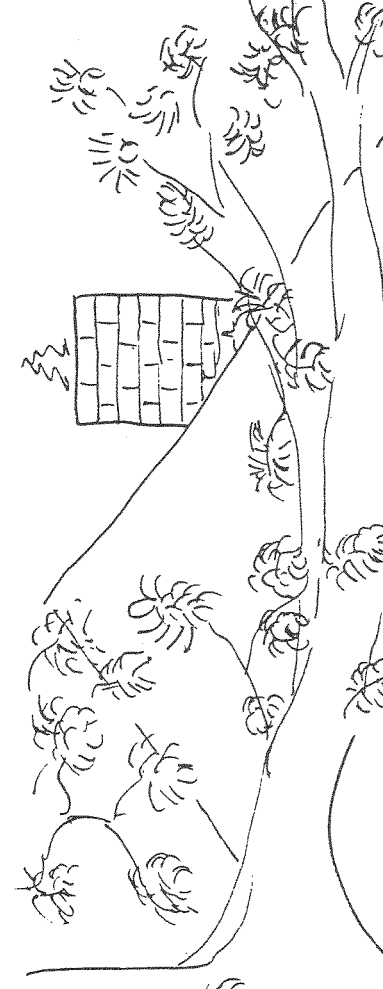
HEAT, COOLING & HOME ENERGY

When it comes to home energy, I wonder if we can cut it to one-tenth or less like the other pollutions. It seems impossible, doesn't it? At least for the individual, acting today, without rebuilding a superinsulated house. You know, when you don't believe something is possible you don't even try. But I couldn't help thinking about it anyway...

I grew up in an old Spanish house in Los Angeles. It had thick walls and lots of shrubbery and trees to shade the house and garden. My Father taught us to keep the house shut on hot summer days - windows closed and curtains drawn - to retain the cool air from the night. In late afternoon when the sun went behind the hill we opened up for the night, shutting again in the morning. I don't know how much energy this saved but we never had an air conditioner.



TREES AND VINES GAVE SHADE TO THE HOUSE. WE SHUT THE WINDOWS TO RETAIN THE COOL NIGHT AIR



A professor at the Chalmers Institute of Technology here in Sweden has been studying the effects of trees and bushes near buildings on their heating requirements. The general result seems to be that in slowing down the wind, considerable thermal energy is saved, even from bushes and trees 30 feet away. Ivy and other vines growing up the sides of buildings, I believe, provide a similiar thermal blanket, in both summer and winter. Each little leaf provides shade from the sun, and slows down the wind like the fur on an animal.

I like to look at traditional architecture in areas where people live, many generations before us have solved the problems of heating and cooling in quite different ways, requiring little energy and no machines. On Iceland they built their homes into the ground, backed against a hill, for protection from the wind. They lived on the upper floor, above the farm animals, whose body heat kept the house warm. Ancient Arabian architects built passive cooling into homes and public buildings using thick walls, domed roofs, shaded courtyards and air channels passing through the cool cellar.

These old solutions have simplicity, elegance, economy in thought and form. They show man living at peace in his environment, using natural elements and natural laws. Rather than struggling against it with brute force, energy and machines.

TREES FRAME THE HOUSE AND PROTECT IT FROM WINTER WIND

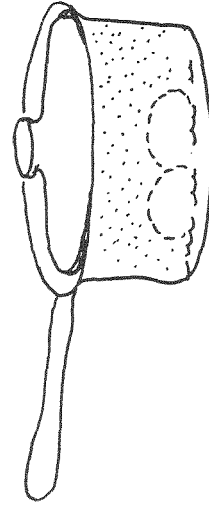
KITCHEN ENERGY COOK SLOWLY WITH LESS WATER

The Swiss government recently encouraged the use of natural laws, asking their citizens to boil the family breakfast eggs in steam, to save energy. I tried it, and it works, taking just a little longer than in water. Heating up 1/10th the amount of water requires 1/10th the amount of heat, so the savings are major. I tried it with potatoes too and it works just as well! So today I steam all my vegetables. Steaming holds the vitamins better, too.

From backpacking I learned to cook on one burner, and to turn the burner off as soon as the food was boiling, letting it finish cooking and soak up the water in its own heat - slowly. Some things like brown rice and beans need to be boiled up a second time, a while before serving. Even so, I rarely have the burner on for more than 5 minutes at a time, and in this time one can boil up two dishes, such as rice and vegetables, one after the other. The secret is in letting time do the work. Nature soaks up heat and water at its own speed, without much energy, if we let it.

Finally, combining steaming with slow cooking, I found that spaghetti or any noodles do not need a huge pot of boiling water, they cook very nicely in exactly enough water, if covered, boiled up, then let to sit ten or fifteen minutes (longer doesn't hurt) - just as we usually cook rice.

I am also getting in the habit of turning off the coffee water before it boils, on my electric stove, and the oven a little before the cake is done.



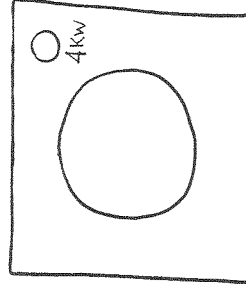
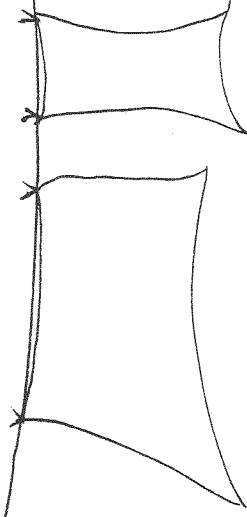
EGGS OR POTATOES
COOK VERY NICELY IN STEAM

36

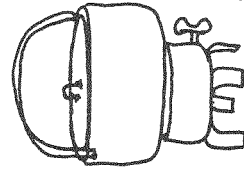
"LET TIME DO THE WORK"

Perhaps the refrigerator, the freezer and the lighting will be next - can they be cut to a small fraction? New challenges to work with!

Planting a tree today will therefore save our children's and their children's energy requirements, and make the world beautiful as well. Still, shutting the windows on hot days and putting on a sweater when it is cool are my favorite kinds of solution because they can be done immediately, without further ado. As with letting the food cook slowly in its own heat and hanging clothes up on the line to dry, instead of using the dryer, energy is saved by simply not using it, letting nature do the work instead.



MY DRYER (4 kW)
LIKE TURNING ON 40
100-WATT BULBS!



I TURN OFF THE HEAT
WHEN FOOD COMES TO A BOIL

ELECTRIC KETTLE - MOST EFFICIENT FOR WATER
MICROWAVE - ABOUT THE SAME AS A STOVE BURNER ON HIGH
PRESSURE COOKER - FASTER THAN SLOW COOKING, BUT HECTIC!

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CLOTHES OF COTTON, LINEN, WOOL

Archaeologists turn up leather shoes and wooden bowls from 400 years ago, bronze tools from 4000 years back but of our forefathers and mothers a million years ago nothing remains except a few of their bones. Everything has gone in a complete circle back to the earth, their clothes, their possessions, their homes.

What will happen to our earthly things? It is a strange thought that so many of our clothes are made of plastic, the nylons, rayons, dacrons, etc - and even some shoes - our jogging shoes, for example. Plastics do not decompose, the bacteria and worms cannot eat them. Will they be dug up by archeologists a thousand years from now every time they build a home? Or must they be burned to get rid of them, polluting the air instead? I do not know, but these are important things to think about, are they not, when we buy things of synthetic material?

If I choose natural materials, I know there is no problem, the earth will take them back. Clothes of cotton, linen, wool - they feel good, look good, some people even say they are good for our skin and health. Glass and porcelain kitchenware the same: function, beauty, ecology all combined in one. Natural building materials: wood, stone, brick, earth, metal, glass - long lasting, beautiful, and no problems when their time has come. Furniture of solid wood lasts for years - think of antiques - so we are really doing ourselves a service as well as coming generations when we pay for quality natural materials.

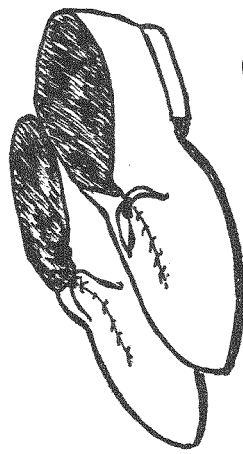
And what about our jogging shoes? I don't know, but there are always many answers to a problem, if we think. Maybe you have one.



WE CAN CHOOSE QUALITY in OUR POSSESSIONS

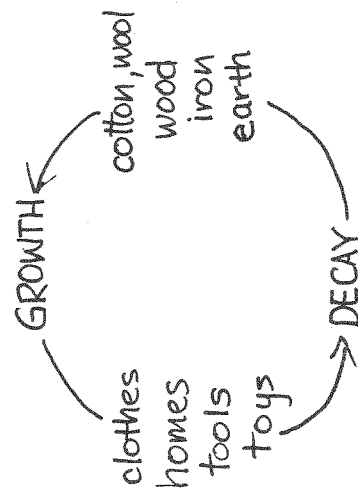
- clothes which will last, serve, and make us feel beautiful for many years
- wood toys which go from generation to generation (and with no need for batteries)
- furniture which can be repaired (solid wood, good fabrics)
- tools which do their job well, can be sharpened and never wear out

Then there is no need to be dissatisfied and replace things over and over again.



A GOOD PAIR OF LEATHER SHOES

BETTER THAN 4 INEXPENSIVE AND 1/4 TH THE POLLUTION



THE CYCLE OF LIFE

MY GARDENS

I have four gardens, all of which I try to care for simply, naturally, without any chemicals.

First, I have my balcony, made more and more into a little garden, where the birds come to visit all year long. It is mostly flowers, but I have strawberries too and a red current "bush" on a stem, as a little tree - lots of berries in July! The earth comes from my own vegetable scraps, so I need buy nothing except flowers in the spring.

Next, my vegetable garden. I tried growing radishes and carrots in the garden below my apartment, but the earth was not good, and the neighbors didn't like it very much either. So I rented a garden plot from the city, 5 miles away. It is 10 by 10 yards and I grow healthy vegetables, potatoes, fruits and flowers, plus have picnic lunches there. I garden without chemicals and cover the ground with straw and grass to keep the moisture in and the weeds down. By composting I never need to buy anything except seeds in the spring - I pick up a little horse manure from the footpaths now and then.

Our apartment complex now composts all the grass and flower clippings, only the big branches are sent away (these I would saw up and let break down naturally too, but some people think it would be unsightly). We are doing more and more of the work ourselves with a garden day spring and autumn where all come out to help dig and trim. We buy peat moss but never any chemicals, we simply do not need them.

Indoors I grow potted plants, some from my own grapefruit seeds. I use compost earth as fertilizer and dishwater sometimes to water. I put them under the shower if they get too many bugs, or spray them with dishsoap!



BIRTH - DEATH - DECAY - GROWTH

**LIFE WITH ALL ITS MYSTERY AND MANY
FORMS , DEEP WITHIN THE GARDEN**

MY CAR

When it came to the car, I had problems - I was addicted! I blamed it on my upbringing in Los Angeles and kept on with my habit. I tried various times to take the bus to work, but it never lasted more than a day. It was as bad as quitting smoking.

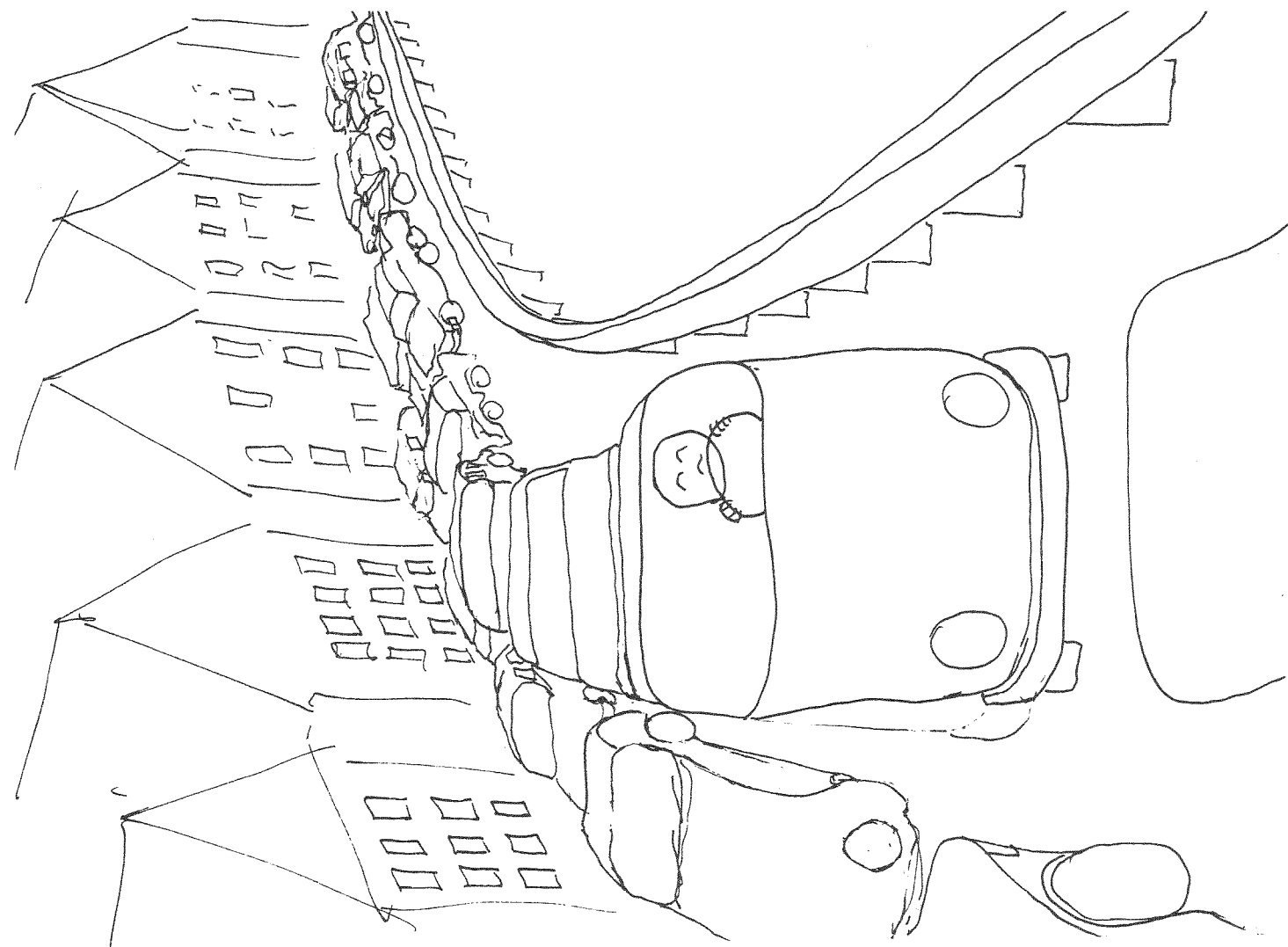
What finally got me off the habit was the example of a friend, a friend who rode the bus to work and her bike to the local stores. She had a car but hardly ever drove, out of concern for the environment and for her own exercise.

I began following her example and found many unexpected benefits. First, I saved lots of money. Second, my conscience felt much better - now I was doing what I felt was right instead of just talking about it. Third, repairs were much easier, I could do many myself since the daily pressure to have the car was off. Fourth, instead of sitting in traffic and swearing at all the other drivers for being out on the roads, I got time to read the paper or a book, to prepare for the day's work and just to ponder life. It took longer, but my mornings were very peaceful.

I began biking too, to the store, to my garden plot, to go swimming, everywhere. This too gave me peaceful time to relax, as well as daily exercise and stimulation. I used to envy people who had dogs to take out for walks. Now I go out for a bike ride or a walk with myself, often a walk to the store.

I have found that many of my most creative thoughts - lots of the ideas in this book - come to me while I am in motion - walking, biking, running. I also get ideas while riding the bus or train and looking out the window, so I

CAR	POLLUTION	1	MC	$\frac{1}{4}$	BUS	$\frac{1}{16}$
- WITH 2 PEOPLE		$\frac{1}{2}$	MOPED	$\frac{1}{8}$	TRAIN	$\frac{1}{32}$



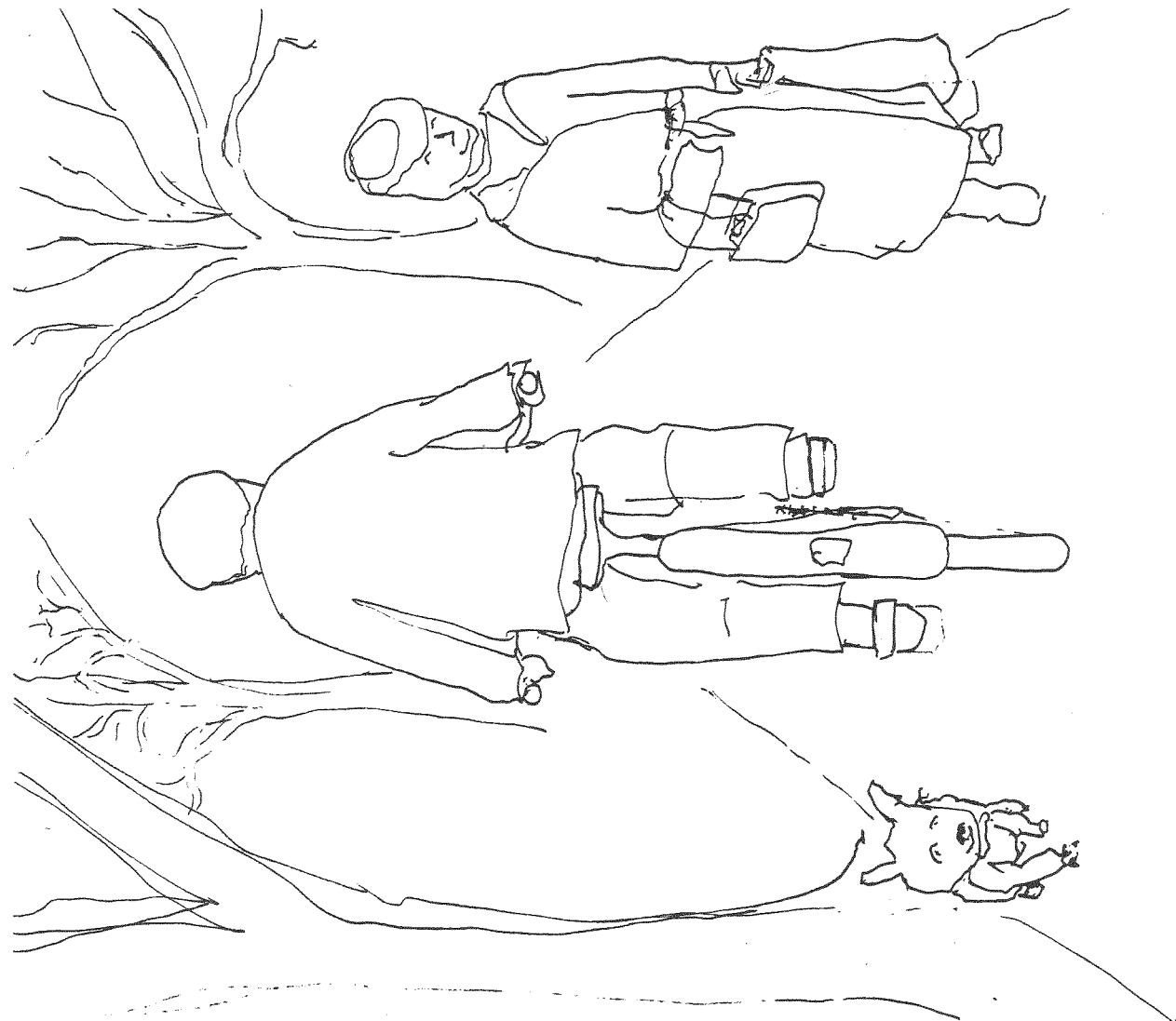
always carry a little notebook to jot them down. These are times of peacefulness, like riding a boat, when the mind is free to relax and ponder while the world takes care of itself.

I still have my car for the sense of freedom it gives but I treat gasoline like other valuable household chemicals. When I think of taking the car I always ask myself, "How many quarts of gas will I burn up for this trip?", and picture that many milk cartons filled with gas, burning with black smoke in the air.

Today I ride the bus to work, bike to the store and save my car for Sundays (by which I mean special occasions). I save money, get exercise and drive only 1/5th of what I used to do. My goal: clean, quiet, friendly streets like I grew up on, for all to enjoy.

If a Los Angeles boy can kick the habit, maybe there is hope for you too!

P.S. Catalytic converters will cut exhaust pollutants to 1/3 or so which sounds good, but a factory and a platinum mine are required to make the catalyst, so the problem is shifted to elsewhere in the world. Besides, carbon dioxide (the greenhouse effect), traffic, noise, accidents, roads, parking lots, oil spills at sea and all the other car pollutions will remain the same. The electric car similarly - the electricity being produced by burning oil somewhere else.



RECREATION WITHOUT POLLUTING

A few years ago it was my car that bothered me. For example, to go cross-country skiing I drove 5 or 10 miles to a trail. Or to go camping I drove 50 or 100 miles south of town for the weekend. Nowadays I ski right out my front door and over to the nearest trail. I camp on this side of town, or paddle to a nearby island for a picnic, without using the car at all.

I used to photograph a lot but kept thinking about all the chemicals and the photos in my closet, unused. Today I keep a diary and instead record my impressions in words - a few little notes bring a whole scene back to mind. I illustrate with postcards, cutouts from tourist brochures, photographs and sometimes letters from friends. These books tell my life story in a very special way and I enjoy reading them later on.

I used to always fly when my son and I went backpacking every year in the north of Sweden. One year we took the train instead and never flew again. It took a little longer but we got to see all of Sweden pass by, slowly, at a pace we could take in: forest, farms, rivers, churches, old milking cottages, animals and the distant barren mountain tops. The clickety clacks relaxed, the chairs were comfortable and while I read Robert explored the train. In the restaurant car every table had a view, where you could eat or just sit and have a cup of coffee. Sleeping on the train is always an adventure, especially for kids - where will we wake up in the morning?

Taking the train, like the boat, bicycle, or your own two feet, gets you somewhere at the same time as you enjoy yourself. There is a simple efficiency here, doing two things at once.

TRAIN TRAVEL = RECREATION
+ TRANSPORT

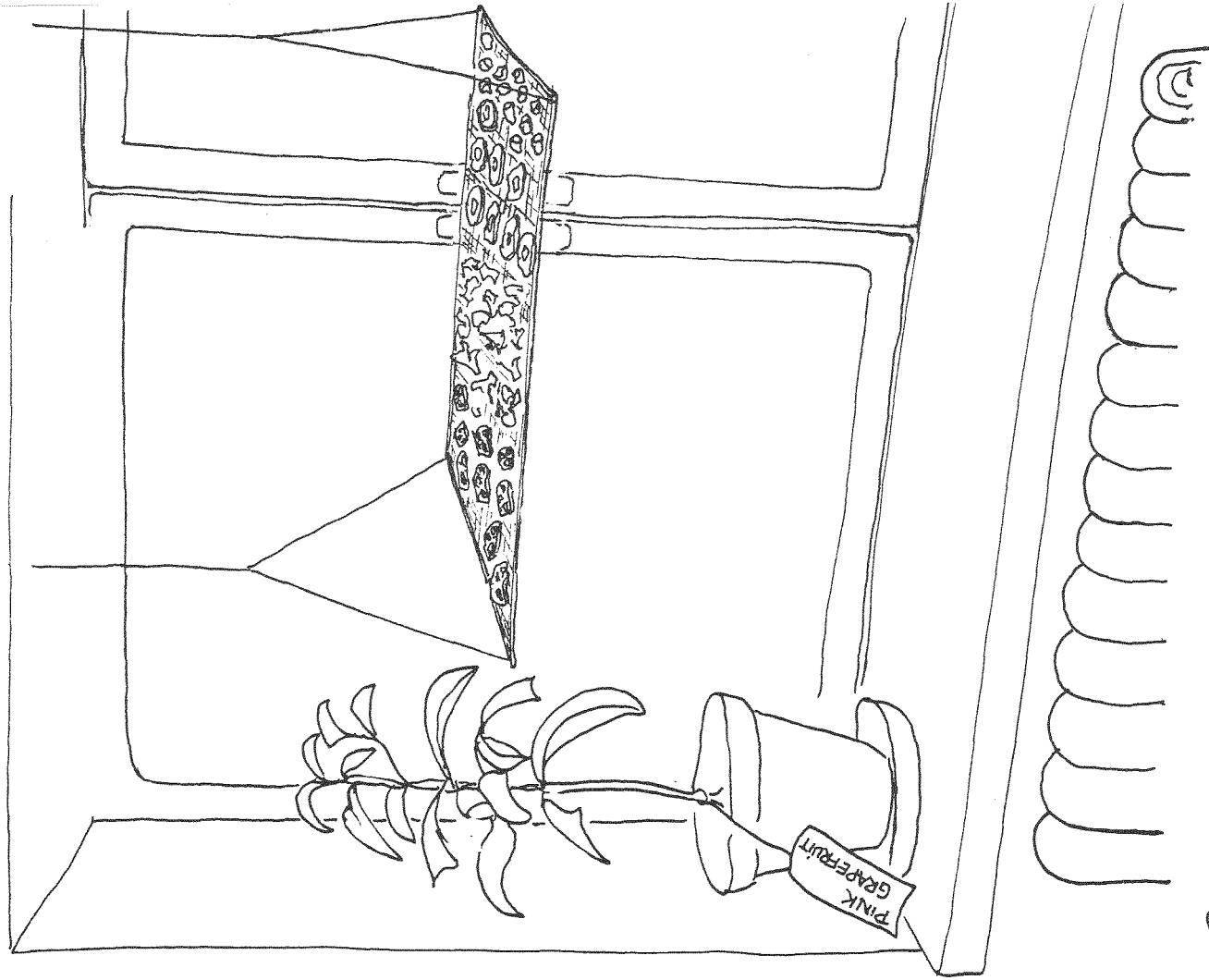
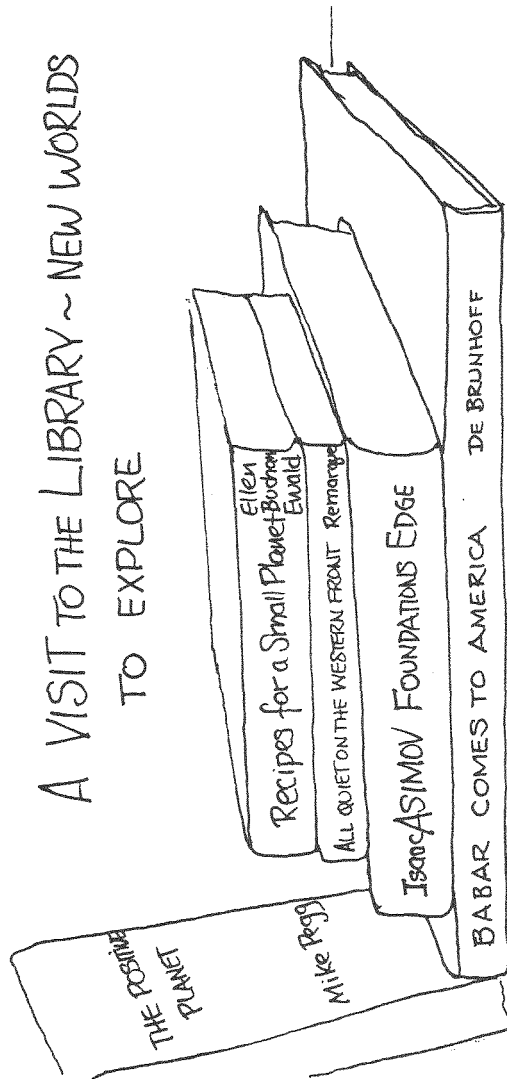
Similarly, working in my vegetable garden has become an enjoyable pastime as well as producing food.

Some people, I have noticed, are specialists at this, taking every opportunity for enjoying the small things in life and making little celebrations out of everything. This too is a kind of efficiency which goes far beyond large-scale industry and costs nothing of the earth. These people are teaching us something of great value here, if we will watch and find out what they do.

Today I learned something new. Visiting friends, I brought them a bottle of a new all-natural dishsoap, and a brochure on how it is made. They liked this very much, better than the traditional chocolates or bottle of wine - it had more meaning. It was both a gift and a concrete way for us to do something positive to change the world.

The more we look the more we can find our own ways to live, have fun, stay healthy, and add to the good of the earth - all at the same time. This is the art of living.

A VISIT TO THE LIBRARY ~ NEW WORLDS TO EXPLORE



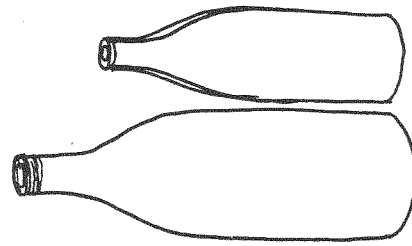
PARSLEY, TOMATOES, AND STRAWBERRIES DRYING
IN THE SUN FOR BACKPACKING ~ MORE FUN THAN
HIGHLY PROCESSED FREEZE-DRIED MEALS

BETTER THAN RECYCLING

Recycling means that raw materials are used again. Rather than digging up new iron or aluminum, or sawing down trees, we collect the cans and paper and send them back to the factory. When we collect an aluminum can, one less shovelful of ore need be dug up, one less shovelful refined with electricity and chemicals. Good in itself. We have saved the first step of the process.

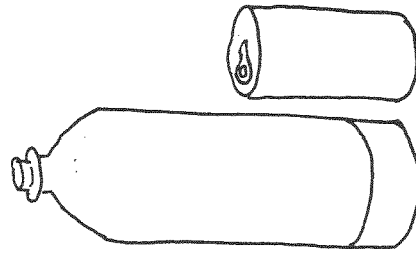
But we can go further. The aluminum can must be melted down to make a new can at the can factory, and labels painted on. Melting metal requires lots of energy, painting means chemicals. Why make a new can every time we take a drink? Instead of a returnable bottle which gets used again and again, with only a washing in between?

Returnables are far better than recycling. We save both the mining and the making of the can.



RETURNABLES

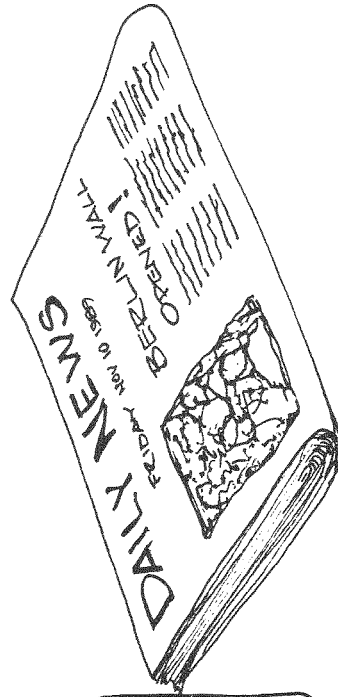
- ONLY A WASHING



ENERGY AND CHEMICALS

EVEN WHEN RECYCLED

Best of all, however, is when we can eliminate the need for something altogether, for example, living near work, one needs no car. When I recycle the newspaper I save the tree. When I listen to the news on the radio, I save the whole newspaper process from beginning to end: the tree, the paper factory, the printing press and inks, the trucks to take the papers out. I do not need any part of the newspaper, recycled or not. (You may not want to go this far, on this particular item, but it illustrates the principle of elimination which can be applied all over).



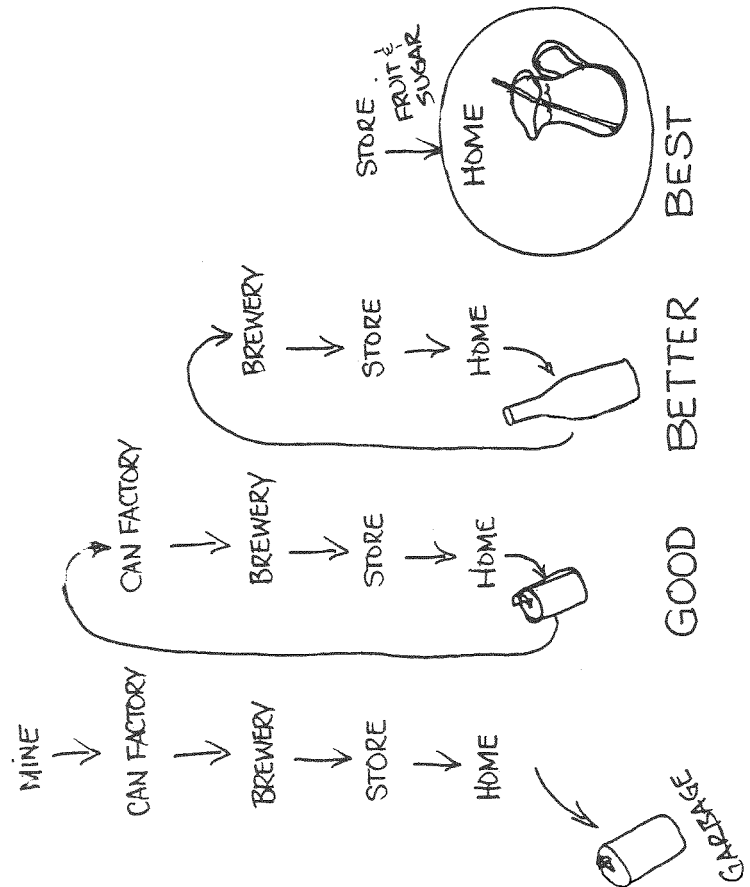
THE RADIO SAVES A POUND OF PAPER A DAY !

In the case of drinks, when we make them at home, we save a brewery, bottles, and all the transportation. You know, bottled drinks are heavy, bulky items. If you had all your drinks for a year in bottles, imagine how much that would make. A truckload, perhaps? Now consider if you drank nothing but tea, as much of the world does, how much would you need for a year? Perhaps a small box - almost nothing to transport from far away to your door -- because the water does not have to be transported, only the flavoring!

Every time we drink tea, iced-tea, lemonade, plain water, or any home-made drink, we are saving a mine, a bottle factory, a brewery and trucking liquid across town or further - the entire canned drink process. We are being truly effective - the water flows to us in a pipe with no packaging, we add a little sugar and flavoring (simple things to transport), and it is done.

I really like carbonated drinks, so I invented a way to make them at home, as our ancestors did with their beer and cider. You can try my recipe on the next page, or invent your own.

THROWAWAY RECYCLE RETURNABLE HOME-MADE



HOME MADE REFRESHMENTS

OLD TIME FAVORITES

ICED TEA, LEMONADE
LEMON-WATER
(SLICE OF LEMON)
CHOCOLATE MILK
:
:

ROBERT'S SPORT DRINK POWDER

1 TEASPOON CITRIC ACID
1/2 " ASCORBIC ACID
1/3 CUP SUGAR
4 CUPS WATER

HEALTH FANATIC SPECIALS!

TOMATO JUICE & FRESH
VEGETABLES + SALT
+ PEPPER IN THE
BLENDER

FROZEN BANANA SHAKE
IN THE BLENDER
COCOA = CHOC. SHAKE

ORANGE JUICE, RAW
EGG, MILK, VANILLA
IN THE BLENDER

REJUVENAC (ANN WIGMORE)
LET WHOLE WHEAT KERNELS
SOAK OVERNIGHT
IN WATER. DRINK

SWEDISH FRUIT SIRUP CONCENTRATE

BOIL FRUIT & A LITTLE WATER
UNTIL JUICY (MASH)
STRAIN WITH A CLOTH
BOIL AGAIN ADDING
1-2 CUPS SUGAR / 4 CUPS
JUICE
BOTTLE. KEEPS A YEAR
DILUTE TO DRINK

NATURALLY BUBBLY SOFT DRINKS

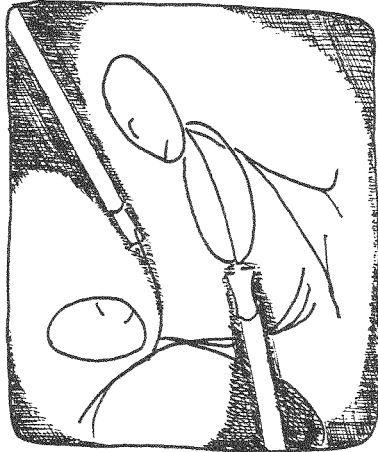
CHOP A GRAPEFRUIT
POUR BOILING WATER OVER
WHEN COOL, STRAIN & ADD SUGAR
TO TASTE & A PINCH OF YEAST
BOTTLE WITH TIGHT CAPS
BUBBLY IN 4-5 DAYS

GRAPEFRUIT ~ TONIC
APPLES ~ CIDER
RASPBERRIES ~ SODA
LEMON ~ FIZZ, ETC.

APPLE SOAK

CHOP APPLES - SEEDS, PEEL
& ALL
POUR BOILING WATER OVER
LET STAND 2 DAYS
STRAIN, ADD SUGAR TO TASTE
BOTTLE, KEEPS WEEKS

WE MUST CHOOSE A SIDE IN LIFE



GOOD EVIL

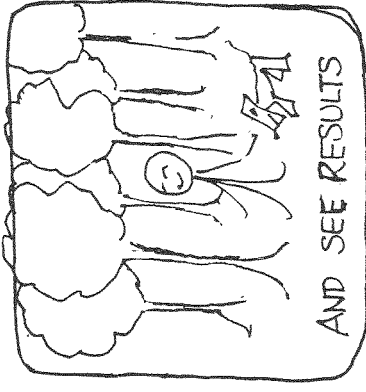
HELPING TEENAGERS HAVE HOPE

Teenagers are very concerned about the environment and they can do as much as anybody to clean it up, using their own thinking and ingenuity. Many teenagers, however, and we adults as well, see the problems which others are causing and which they can do nothing about, and this gives a feeling of helplessness. It is better to look at the problems you can do something about in your own life. Teenagers do not have to try to change their parents, their teachers, or even their pals, it is enough if they work on their own daily habits of living, at first. A few examples:

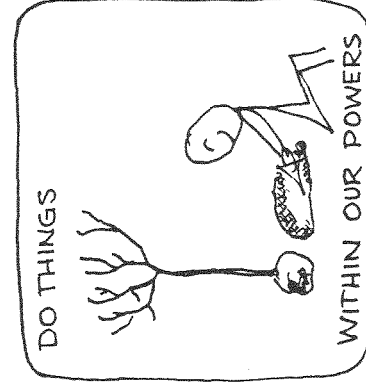
Teenagers consume large quantities of soft drinks, potato chips and fast-food hamburgers. Anyone can look at his or her own consumption, see what is polluting and find alternatives. If the soft drinks were mine, I would make them at home and avoid cans when out - but the young person does not need ready-made solutions, they only need to see the problem clearly and to be encouraged in their efforts to solve it. If they know that an aluminum can means a power plant, that potato chips mean diesel trucks and that hamburgers mean rain forest - that is enough, they can ask questions, look around and find solutions.



WE MUST ACT



AND SEE RESULTS



DO THINGS

WITHIN OUR POWERS

Similarly, if they know what clothes cost in terms of factories, dyes and chemicals, and also long days at sewing machines for the seamstresses, then they can think about their part in this and what to do about it, in ways which fit their life and needs.

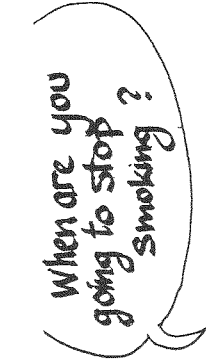
Youth, like all of us, grows up accepting the world as it is, taking their habits from home and from those they love. We are innocent as children, the world is a fairytale land where anything is possible and nothing we do is wrong. But later when we see the negative consequences of some of our habits, then if we are to retain our innocence and self-respect, we must act.

Rather than blame our parents or someone else for our habits, we must change them. If we act and see results, for example that our clothes money lasts much longer because we are buying better quality, resewing things and trading with our friends - then we will have hope. If we try and sometimes fail, with a little encouragement we can go on and look for other ways.

Young people are impatient to see results. The more they can achieve right now in their own daily lives at home, at school, while having fun, the more they will have hope for themselves and for the world. Giving money to save the rain forest is good, but far away. Eating tomato and cheese pizza is direct - the young person sees the change she has made in her own life today.

IMMEDIATE SOLUTIONS

When are you going to stop smoking?

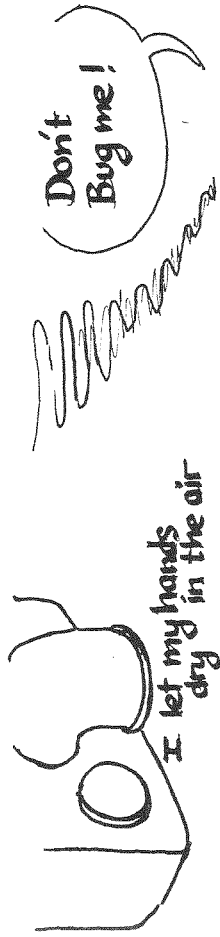


I have long been a procrastinator. One day in self-disgust I made myself solve a problem now, today, this minute - instead of putting it off until a better time, until I figured out the best way to do it, until I felt like it, until I had the right tools, until I could get help, and so on. Much to my surprise, I figured out a way to take care of the problem with what I had on hand, with no help and in very little time. It might not have been the best solution I could think of, but it was done - and it was done now.

I have since learned that for every problem there exists an immediate solution. It is just a matter of finding it.

An example: Last winter I was thinking about the heating costs for the apartment complex where I live, feeling discouraged because in order to do anything I would have to go to the management committee and get involved. And any action such as improved insulation would take years to implement. "This is a problem which the individual can do nothing about", I thought to myself. But as soon as I said that, I realized that no one was stopping me from turning down the thermostat in my apartment, so I did and put on a sweater and it was done in two minutes - immediate action!

Another time I was teaching school and saw paper towels in the restroom and thought: "they should use cloth hand towels, like they do at South Angby School". I dried my hands while complaining to myself, then it occurred to me - no one is forcing me to use these paper towels. I could carry a handkerchief for the purpose, if I were really serious and didn't just want to complain. Or I could let my hands dry in the air, or pat them lightly on my trousers, as my Father used to sometimes do. Since then I quite simply



I let my hands dry in the air

ignore the hot air blow dryers in public restrooms and feel good, rather than complaining to myself and feeling bad every time I see one. I have found a solution which works for me.

Immediate solutions is what you need when it is dinner time and you don't know what to cook. Instead of going out grudgingly, I decide to figure something out with what I have at home. I almost always end up eating well and this is when I am most inventive and free in my cooking.

Our main highway into Stockholm had been getting more and more congested in morning rush hour, so that the buses were often standing still. The problem worsened for two years or more - the people who rode the buses were furious, but no one could figure out what to do. Investment funds to build more roads didn't exist, campaigns to get motorists to ride public transit were known to be hopeless, etcetera. Then one day it was solved over night, at no cost, the buses were simply given permission to drive on the shoulders of the road during rush hour, passing by all the standing cars and giving public transit riders, at least, a quick ride into town.

On a grander scale, we know that war could be stopped overnight - it always is, when an armistice is signed. In December 1986 the Pope called together a meeting of the leaders of all the world's great religions for a conference on peace. He asked all the fighting nations and guerilla organizations around the world to hold cease fire that day. You know, they did, without exception, so for one day at least, in the history of man, the whole world was at peace. And this is important, because now we know it can be done.

GOING FOR IT !

Sometimes I think, do we want token changes or do we want to change the world?

Reducing pollution by 10% is not enough - we want to be rid of it altogether -- and soon !

How? In order to make big changes we must dare to think big changes. We can dare to try to cut our pollution to a third, a fourth, a fifth - a fraction of what it is today. When we have succeeded we can cut it again to a third, a fourth - another big reduction. Then we have left only a small fraction of what we started with and the world, our part of it at least, is almost clean.

$$\frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{3} = \frac{1}{9} \quad \text{NOT MUCH LEFT!}$$

Setting our goals high makes us think of things we never would have thought of if we were only looking for small reductions. If we ask how we can reduce car pollution 10%, we might think of driving slower, or getting a tune-up. This doesn't change the world very much and without results we may soon give up. If we ask instead, how can I cut my car pollution to 1/10th?, we see immediately it is a difficult problem, we must think up something new, something clever. Our minds will go to work with fantasy, logic, imagination - everything we have - and give us many ideas to try out. We may not achieve our goal at first, perhaps we only get down to 1/3rd, but that is good enough, we have made a major reduction. We are in a much better position than if we had only aimed for small reductions. Later we can go for another major step and achieve our original goal.

MY POLLUTION INVENTORY

FRACTION LEFT

GARBAGE: A LITTLE BAG EACH WEEK

$\frac{1}{20}$

FOOD: NOT MANY CANS AND JARS, LOTS OF ORGANICALLY GROWN AND MOSTLY FROM WITHIN THE REGION

$\frac{1}{10}$

LAUNDRY, BEAUTY AND

$\frac{1}{12}$

HOME CHEMICALS: A FEW BOTTLES PER YEAR

HOME ENERGY:

HEATING DOWN 25%
COOKING TO $\frac{1}{10}$ TH, THE DRYER TO ZERO
LIGHTING NEXT!

$\frac{1}{2}$

CLOTHES & FURNITURE:

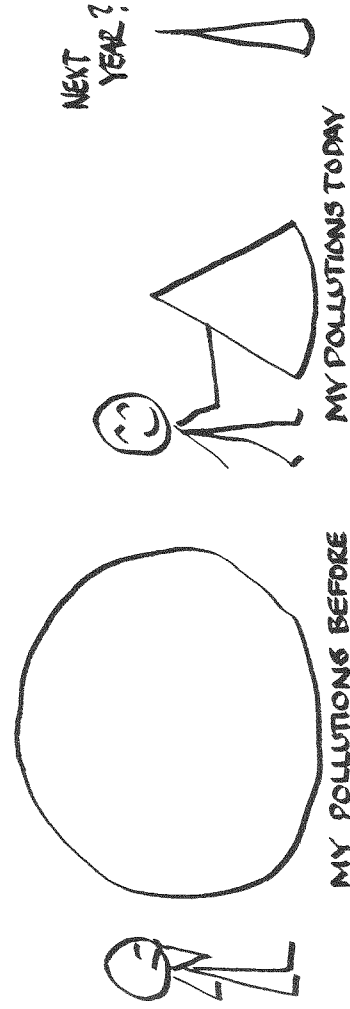
BUYING GOOD QUALITY, KEEPING THINGS
I LIKE LONGER AND REPAIRING THEM,
GOING TO NATURAL MATERIALS

$\frac{1}{4}$

CAR AND RECREATION: BUS TO WORK,

$\frac{1}{5}$

BIKE TO THE STORE, TRAIN FOR VACATIONS
AND SAVE MY CAR FOR SUNDAYS



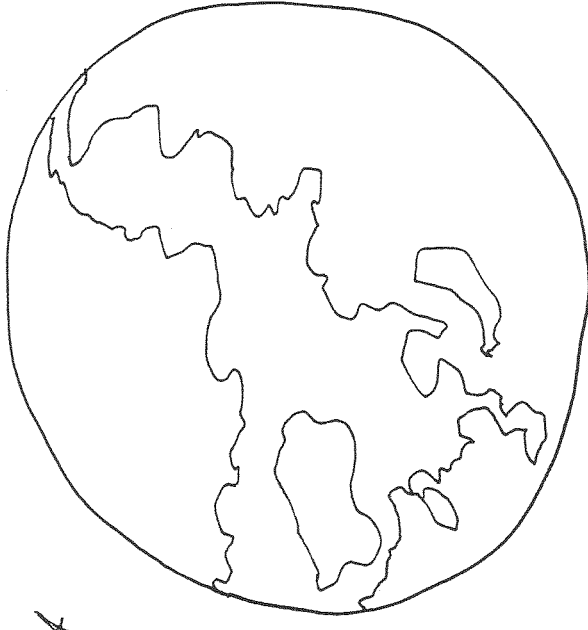
THE CHOICE IS OURS

Governments, industry, farmers, scientists, ordinary people like you and I - all caught in self-interest, complexity, confusion, blame. All talk - no action. Helplessness. The house is burning down and we argue about who should pay the fireman or who should put it out. Dear friend, do not get caught in all this blaming, confusing talk! It is better to act, before the house burns down.

World pollution problems begin in our homes, we can solve them here too. It is here we have the power to act, it is here each one of us can make a difference, it is here we can change things today.

We have our power of choice, each and every one of us - and all our intelligence, common sense, creativity, courage and will. We have our passion for beauty, our sense of right and wrong, our belief in a meaningful life and our perseverance. Let us use them now! We have a problem, we can do something about it! We can use our power of choice to work for the clean beautiful world we want. We can take one thing at a time in our own lives and improve upon it. We can eliminate pollutions step by step in our own homes, see results, feel satisfied, and help others. We can find our own solutions, we can rely on our common sense. We can clean up our share of world pollution and make the world beautiful again. We can start today.

One day I looked at the world's pollution, thought about my share, and decided to do something about it. I started with my garbage and it has changed my life. Where do you want to start? The choice is yours. Good luck!



Isn't it
Beautiful?
Yeah

