

# **The little e-guide to Zero Waste living.**

By Kelly Jamieson

## Welcome to the little e-guide to Zero Waste living.

Here we will introduce you to some basic Zero Waste ideas and solutions, and offer simple guidelines to help make your Zero Waste journey effective, enjoyable, empowering, and successful!

### What is Zero Waste?

It's a journey of progression where you work to eventually phase out the wasteful aspects of your life.

*Kathryn Kellogg, author of 101 Ways To Go Zero Waste, states:*

*"The goal is to send nothing to a landfill. Reduce what we need, reuse as much as we can, send as little as possible to be recycled, and compost what's left over."*

Zero Waste takes time to adopt. It requires self-awareness, education, effort, patience, and grace.

Zero Waste can be expressed and attained through a simple equation...

Self-Awareness + Education + Planning and Effort = Positive Impact

# WHERE DO I START?

REMINDER: The goal is not perfection, it's about increasing your awareness so that you make better, less-wasteful choices in your daily routines.

## SELF-AWARENESS

**Step 1:** Take an honest look at a typical day in your life and **pay attention to the decisions you make on a regular basis.**

*Ask yourself: Is this decision wasteful? What might I do differently here? What alternatives are there?*

**Step 2: Conduct a waste audit on yourself,** in your home and/or school or workplace.

*Ask yourself: What do I consume on a regular basis? What of this waste is preventable or avoidable? How might I reduce what I discard? Are there alternatives to what I use or consume regularly?*

It's important to be gracious with yourself and not feel guilt or shame as you go through this process. This is about increasing your awareness!

## EDUCATION

**Step 3:** After gaining a better understanding of yourself through steps 1 and 2, **begin seeking out tools and resources** that will help you and your family make less-wasteful choices. (See the Resources section at the end of this e-guide.)

*Ask yourself: What products or habits might I incorporate into my daily routines that would reduce what I consume?*

**Step 4: Recycle more, and be a better recycler.** The British Columbia Recycling Council offers valuable resources through its website as well as a hotline to help individuals make accurate and informed recycling choices. Bookmark **www.BCRC.ca** and visit the **Recyclopedia** with any recycling questions that arise.

*Ask yourself: Do I know and abide by the recycling rules? How can I recycle more responsibly?*

Reviewing the rules on a regular basis can help you be certain that the recyclables you place in your blue-box end up where you intend.

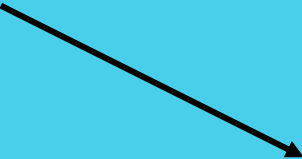
## PLANNING & EFFORT

**Step 5:** The most powerful thing you can do is be organized and prepared. **Spend some time thinking about how you're going to move through your day, and equip yourself with the tools you'll need to do that in the least wasteful way as possible.** This step takes effort because it requires forethought, organization, and changes in behaviour.

There are sustainable options that will meet your family's need.

*Ask yourself: "What do we need? What will help set my family and I up for success?"*

REMINDER: Zero Waste is about finding solutions that work FOR you and your family, that serve you well and make you feel good.



ZW TIP: Consider investing in quality products that you're excited to use, are convenient to pack with you, and easy to clean.

REMINDER: It's not about perfection, it's about making better choices!

## PLANNING & EFFORT

**Step 6: Establish realistic goals** for you and your family. Our linear economic system makes committing to a Zero Waste lifestyle extremely challenging. Set yourself up for success by establishing goals that are attainable, inspiring, and motivating. This might mean striving to just become a “low waste” household. Even if you cannot fully reduce or eliminate all of the waste you produce – it doesn’t have to be ALL or nothing.

**Every small effort can lead to substantial change.**

Following the "SMART" format for goal-setting can be helpful: *Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound*

→ *Our household will reduce our waste to fill only ONE bag of garbage per week, instead of two.*

→ *I will bring a water bottle (or coffee thermos) work with me FIVE days of the week.*

→ *I will keep reusable grocery bags in my car, or carry one with me whenever I leave the house. I will strive to bring ZERO new plastic bags into my home every day.*

**ZW TIP: TAKE IT SLOW. To make lasting changes, begin by making small, deliberate habit changes over time. Keep your goals simple!**

REMINDER: YOU can be  
the change you want  
to see in your world.

## LOW IMPACT = POSITIVE IMPACT

**Step 7: Feel empowered to know that** when you make better decisions and take positive actions to reduce your waste, **your reduced consumption positively impacts the world.**

**Step 8: Inspire others with your Zero Waste actions and commitment.** Spread the word about sustainability and low impact living. Help those around you rise to the occasion and make better environmental decisions. Imagine if you inspired just one person in your life to reduce their waste - who then inspired just one person in their life to reduce their waste, and so on...

ZW TIP: Ask kids for ideas. Children are inherently creative problem solvers. Their commitment to important causes is often far stronger than that of adults. Offer a Zero Waste challenge to kids and enjoy the surge of inspiration and innovative solutions!

**Remember, we don't need 10 people practicing Zero Waste perfectly, we need 10,000 practicing it imperfectly.**

**REMINDER: The Zero Waste journey is a process that you have the freedom to refine over time. It's about finding sustainable alternatives that work WITH you and your lifestyle.**



## **Zero Waste living incorporates a combination of actions to take and products to use:**

### **Some Zero Waste actions include...**

- Buying second-hand versus new
- Composting at home
- Consuming less in general
- Donating or selling items you no longer need
- Joining a Zero Waste community (online or physically)
- Recycling smarter
- Using online grocery services (spud.ca)
- Visiting farmers markets and local produce stands instead of grocery stores
- Saying NO to products sold in wasteful packaging
- Shopping in bulk or larger quantities
- Starting a Zero Waste network in an area near you
- Switching to e-bills and online newspapers
- Walking, cycling, or using transit

### **Some Zero Waste products include...**

- Bamboo toothbrushes
- Beeswax wraps
- Bidet toilet attachments
- Cloth napkins, handkerchiefs
- Cloth or mesh produce bags
- Laundry strips
- Mason jars, reusable glass jars
- Refillable water bottles
- Reusable coffee mugs and lids
- Reusable food containers
- Reusable or compostable cutlery, real flatware
- Reusable shopping bags
- Shampoo and conditioner bars
- Silicone bakeware
- Stainless steel, silicone, or paper straws

Wasteful Product or Habits to Avoid	Zero Waste or Low Impact Alternative
Buying produce at grocery stores	Visit farmer's markets or produce stands
Discarding food scraps in trash	Composting
Disposable diapers	Cloth diapers or diaper service
Disposable high fashion clothes	Clothing swaps or buy second hand
Driving everywhere	Walk, cycle, use transit, or carshare
Holiday decorations	Invest in quality lasting decorations
Kleenex	Handkerchief
Paper napkins	Cloth napkins
Party favours	Skip them or give away reusable products
Plastic bags	Reusable Shopping Bags
Plastic bulk bags	Cloth bags
Plastic cutlery	Real flatware or compostable cutlery
Plastic dish brushes	Compostable dish brushes
Plastic produce bags	Mesh or cotton bags
Plastic saran wrap	Beeswax wraps or stretchy silicon lids
Plastic shampoo and conditioner bottles	Buy bulk or switch to shampoo bars
Plastic straws	Silicon, stainless steel or paper
Plastic toothbrushes	Bamboo toothbrushes
Plastic water bottles	Reusable beverage container
Printed paper bills and Newspapers	Switch to e-bills and online news
Printing anything	Print 2-sided on recycled paper
Purchasing anything new	Buy secondhand, FB marketplace, borrow
Single-use coffee cups and plastic lids	Reusable coffee cup and lid
Single-use coffee pods	Reusable coffee pods or French press
Take out containers	Collapsible silicone or Tupperware
Throwing out broken items	Repairing at repairshop or workshop
Throwing out old markers or pens	Take to Staples for recycling
Throwing out items you no longer need	Give to charity, give away online, sell
Toilet paper	Family cloths or toilet bidet attachment
Traditional maxi pads and tampons	Cloth pad, menstrual cup, period panties
Household cleaning products	Make or mix DIY products at home
Ziplock bags	Silicone ziptop bags or Tupperware

## Feeling inspired? Think globally – act locally.

Kathryn Kellogg suggests several of the following actions you can take to help increase momentum and inspire others to join the Zero Waste movement:

- Host an area clean-up.
- Teach a Zero Waste workshop in your neighbourhood.
- Give a talk at your local library or at a neighbourhood school.
- Write to your local organizations/restaurants/coffee shops/businesses and ask them to offer more sustainable options for their customers.
- Bring people on a Zero Waste shopping trip.
- Lobby for change in your workplace or school: Start a new recycling program or host a Zero Waste challenge or contest in your office or class.
- Apply for a Neighbourhood Small Grant (NSG) and help raise awareness by hosting a Zero Waste event in your community.

**ZW TIP: If you recognize or identify wasteful practices or processes occurring within your systems, consider lobbying for change in your communities, schools or workplaces. Consider taking an active, organizing role to push for change in those places that matter to you.**

## What about you and your spheres of influence?

Consider where you can make a difference in your corner of the world.

Start small...

With you

With your friends and family

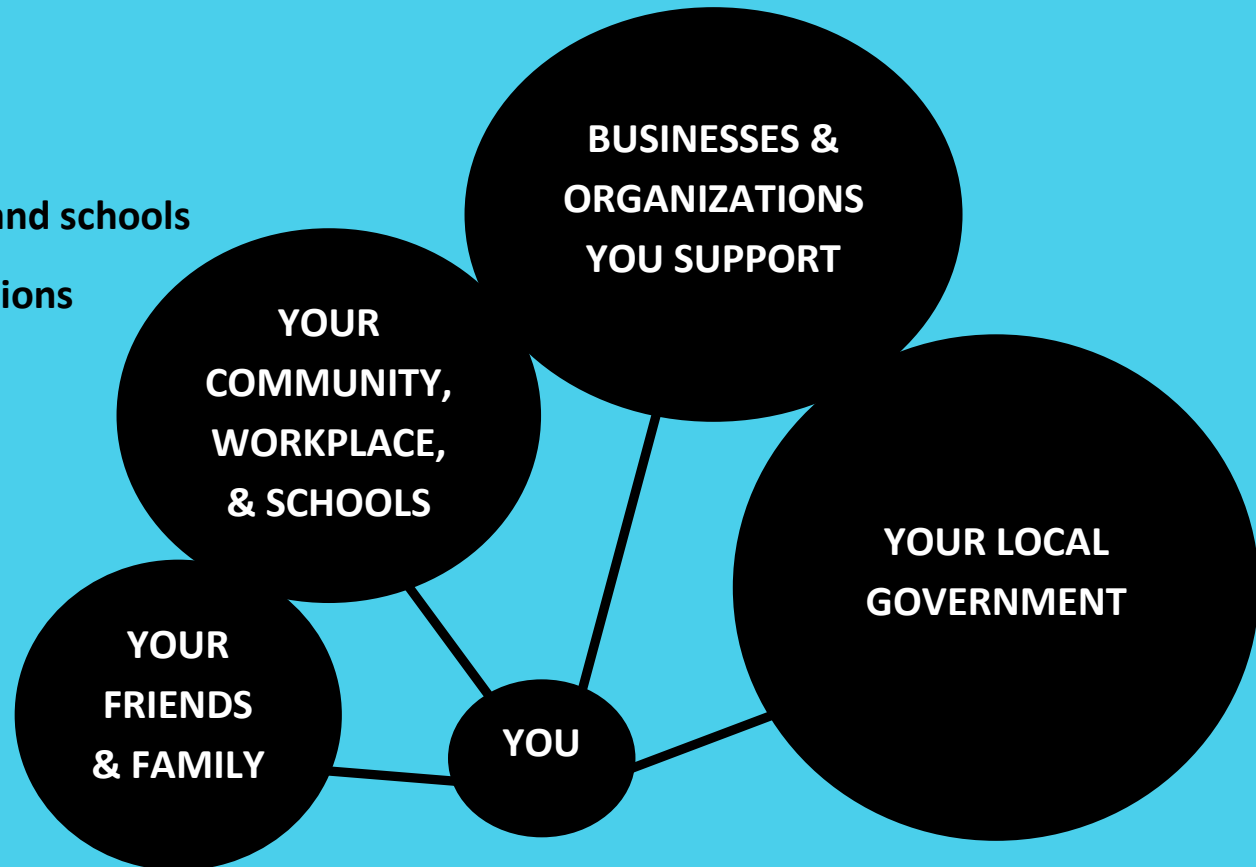
With your community, your workplace, and schools

With your local businesses and organizations

With your local government

REMINDER: The greatest leverage you have in any system is the ability to change yourself and how you behave in the system and the world.

THINK GLOBALLY - ACT LOCALLY.



**Remember, we don't need 10 people practicing Zero Waste perfectly, we need 10,000 practicing it imperfectly.**

Thank you for taking the time to visit the little e-guide to Zero Waste living! We hope you found it to be useful and inspiring as you consider embarking on a Zero Waste journey. Remember, all your small daily efforts can lead to substantial positive results and large scale sustainable impact on our planet.

Be empowered to know that you CAN make a difference in the world.

We are grateful for you and any person who considers and acts upon this important and amazing possibility.

Sincerely,

Kelly

# LOW-IMPACT LIVING CHECKLIST

template illustrated by @moodoodles



PLANT HERBS & VEGGIES



CLOTH PADS / MENSTRUAL CUP



CLOTHES SWAPPING



OWN CUTLERIES



DIY & UPCYCLING



WATER TUMBLER



BULK SHOPPING  
♥ PACKAGING-FREE!



SHAMPOO BAR



REUSABLE SHOPPING BAG



FOOD CONTAINER



METAL / BAMBOO STRAW



OWN TOILETRIES WHEN TRAVELING



BUY SECONDHAND



BAMBOO TOOTHBRUSH

REDUCE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT!



GREENS ONLY



HANDKERCHIEF



DONATED FABRICS  
EG. KLOTHCARES!



COMPOSTING



MAKEUP COTTON PAD



RENT / GIFT / BORROW



ATTENDED A ZERO WASTE TALK / EVENT



RECYCLE AT HOME



PICKUP INSTEAD OF POSTAGE



REUSABLE CUP



<https://ecowarriorprincess.net/2019/02/how-i-save-money-by-going-zero-waste-2/>

## ZERO WASTE LINKS & RESOURCES

<https://zerowastecanada.ca>

<https://zerowastecanada.ca/resources/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/517262708441499/> (Zero Waste Vancouver FB page)

<https://www.goingzerowaste.com/blog/my-favorite-zero-waste-resources>

<http://rcbc.ca>

<http://rcbc.ca/recyclepedia/search>

<https://www.rcbc.ca/resources/articles>

<https://zerowastehome.com>

<https://www.zerologywaste.com/zero-waste-resources>

<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/creative-zero-waste-family>

<https://www.todayparent.com/family/activities/how-we-became-a-zero-waste-family/>

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-24636/a-year-of-my-familys-trash-fits-into-one-jar-heres-how.html>

<https://earth911.com/home-garden/zero-waste-johnson-family/>

<http://www.zwc.ca/>

<http://neighbourhoodsmallgrants.ca>

[https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=Zero+Waste+products&ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss\\_2](https://www.amazon.ca/s?k=Zero+Waste+products&ref=nb_sb_noss_2)



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**Is there something missing that should be or could be included in this e-guide?**

**Let me know: [Kelly.d.jamieson@gmail.com](mailto:Kelly.d.jamieson@gmail.com)**

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