

The 30 Day Challenge

#30DaysofSustainability: 13 Sep – 12 Oct 2017

“If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change.
As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world change towards him...
We need not wait to see what others do.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

What would sustainable societies look like? This course is about trying to answer this question – or, even better, trying to create *new* answers to this wicked question, collectively and creatively. But everything can start small, and a sustainable society can start from yourself. *How do you want to live? What is a ‘sustainable’ life for you? Is a ‘good’ life and a ‘sustainable’ life conflicting for you, or do both go hand in hand? Can life be fulfilling and rich, if it is not in harmony with nature, other people and your surrounding environment?* Push yourself to think about these questions. It is easy to criticize others. *But what about yourself?* Do you think your lifestyle is ‘sustainable’? It is challenging to reflect on yourself, and to *change* something in your daily-routine life.

The Assignment

Choose something you will *change* in your daily life that contributes to a ‘sustainable’ lifestyle or society, according to you. Do it for 30 days (“[Try it for 30 days](#)”, TED Talk by Matt Cutts). Try to push yourself out of your comfort zone. At the end of the 30 days, we will have a seminar to share our experiences in a creative way.

You could do things together with your course-mates or (even better) friends or family outside the course, if you think your challenge would work better that way. Doing a challenge together can be a great way to connect with another person. You will several times during the course also have the chance to meet up in your group to share your progress in the challenge with each other. However, the final submission remains individual.

The 30DC will start on **September 13th**, the day after our third course session, and it will end on **October 12th**, for you to be able to present your work during Workshop 1 on October 17th. *Feel free to post about your experiences on social media using the hashtag #30DaysofSustainability!*

Inspiration for 30 Day Challenges

This assignment is focused on a *personal behavioral change*, so *try to challenge yourself in your everyday life*. You can teach yourself a new habit or break an old habit through this challenge. The purpose of the assignment is to challenge yourself to act, not just to think – reading or researching something about sustainability everyday is not a suitable challenge.

We want you to include something in your personal challenge that includes interaction with other people. We cannot change sustainability alone and in order to create sustainable futures, we need to interact with others.

To get your creative juices flowing, we've put our heads together and come up with a couple of examples that would fall within the boundaries set by this assignment:

- Change your diet and talk about it with the people around you. Even if you are a carnivore, herbivore or omnivore, what you eat has a huge impact on our lives and on our environment, as well as economic and social impacts.
- Write a tweet to a local, regional or national politician, who doesn't engage enough with sustainability issues. Engage people around you to do the same.
- Write a blog about an inspiring sustainability initiative/NGO/group and share it with people you think might be interested.
- Talk to a stranger on the street about climate change.
- Challenge gender roles: If you are (perceived as) a woman, 'manspread' in public (See BuzzFeed video in Course Reader). If you are (perceived as) a man, wear lipstick.
- Create no waste (See *Zero Waste Home* in Course Reader) and post about it in social media every day.
- Engage in a conversation about migration with someone who is not from Sweden.
- Spend an hour in the forest. Talk to people about it and take people around you with you.
- Avoid the use of certain materials, such as plastic or palm oil. Force yourself to read and understand all the labels of all products, food, clothes, cosmetics, etc. and see how this will challenge you. Tell people around you.
- Talk to people who are significantly older or younger than you about sustainable futures.
- Reduce your water usage. Check with one of the online monitors (see below) how big your water footprint is. Set a specific goal for yourself to reduce your water footprint and see which changes you need to implement.
- ...

'Q&A a day' and monitoring tools

The **Q&A a day** has been designed for you to think about your own everyday life and to measure some of your behaviors to be able to track your changes and its impact. We hope it helps you to find a challenge!

We included a few of these monitoring tools in the **Q&A a day**, but here you find links to other tools, if you would like to find out more:

- Ecological footprint calculators:
 - <http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator>
 - http://wwf.panda.org/how_you_can_help/live_green/footprint_calculator/
 - Sweden: <http://www.wwf.se/vart-arbete/ekologiska-fotavtryck/1127697-ekologiska-fotavtryck>
- Water footprint calculator: <http://waterfootprint.org/en/water-footprint/>
- Made in a Free World's slavery calculator: <http://slaveryfootprint.org/>
- Carbon Footprint calculator: <http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>

Submissions requirements

1. Submit the **Q&A a day** on Studentportalen by **Monday, the 4th of September at 17:00h.** Answer a question every day starting from the course start on Tuesday, 29th of August in order for you to get inspiration what you could do during your challenge.
2. Submit a brief **Project Proposal** (no more than 300 words) on Studentportalen by **Monday, the 4th of September at 17:00h.**

Include what your 30 Day Challenge is:

- What will you do for your 30 Day Challenge?
- How is your challenge connected to sustainability?
- Why do you think this would be challenging for you (or not)?
- How do you want to interact with other people about your challenge?
- How do you plan to document your progress?

Sachiko and Thomas will read your project proposal and approve it via e-mail before 13th of September.

3. Submit your **Creative outcome** on Studentportalen by **Monday, the 16th of October at 17.00h,** include a short explanation (max. 200 words) and pictures, if it's a physical object. Bring it to **Workshop 1** (on Tuesday, the 17th of October) to present it during the class.

Your submission must be a creative contribution (e.g. video, poster, photolog, slideshow, sculpture, an art piece, etc.), which reflects upon your challenge and behavioral change. Things you could think about are for example why you did the challenge, how you felt during the challenge, how you as an individual can contribute to sustainable futures, what in society hindered you in your challenge, how people around you reacted and felt about your challenge.

If you want to make a video: University computers have the video editing software Premiere, which you could use. [VideoPad](#) is another software that is for free.

4. Submit your **Blog post about the #30DaysofSustainability** (around 500 words) on Studentportalen. Hand it in latest by **Monday, the 16th of October at 17:00h.** We would like to publish your blog posts on the course website in the weeks after the challenge.

Your blog post is a personal reflection about your experience with your 30 day challenge and the relation to sustainability. Make sure that people who stumble upon your entry online enjoy reading the entry – it should be fun, engaging, inspiring, critical and interesting. You can add pictures, short videos, links – and please use a **minimum of 2 general references** from the Course Reader in your blog post. Use the [Harvard Anglia Reference System](#) for your references.

Your blog post should include:

- an introduction to what your challenge was
- how it changed your habits, if you will keep on with your new habit or not
- how other people reacted to your challenge
- what in society hindered you in your challenges
- how your challenge could be done on a larger scale in a 'sustainable future' - and if that is actually desirable

Good luck with the challenge ahead of you!

Sachiko & Thomas