

## **What can I do without?**

My goal for the month of February was to reduce the household plastic that we recycle. After looking in our recycle bin, I was surprised at the contents. While we don't purchase cases of single serve beverages, nor single serve, we still made two weekly trips to the alley with our recyclables. Being a "Foodie" and a Mother who cooks 2 meals daily, the amount of glass & plastic bottles from condiments, oils, olives, dried herbs,...was disturbing.

While it is still environmentally helpful that consumers recycle, the long term impact on the global climate change is not clear to me. Nonetheless, I've decided I'm going to live with less stuff and get more satisfaction from my life.

Statistics show that a typical American family consumes 182 gallons of soda, 29 gallons of juice, 104 gallons of milk, and 26 gallons of bottled water a year. That's a lot of containers that can all be recycled!. And there's a lot my family and I can live without.

I'm the main purchaser for my household. I will limit my family's use of plastic bottles. I'll go further and also stop using single serve plastic bottles and stop buying food containers like 6oz yogurt cups (and 6oz apple sauce cups, 6oz smoothie bottles. The list seems endless).

My reducing the volume of our recycled containers forces me to either buy those items in bulk, or stop buying them at all. I often ask myself "what would my grandmother have purchased?" She would have purchased whole foods that were healthy first for our bodies and then the environment, and not purchased based on personal comfort and accessibility.

Can you step into my shoes for a moment, and ask yourself: How can you decrease your household plastic? Where can you start?

I say: Pick one item and go from there. Make it simple for yourself. Just look inside your recycle bin. Start there, and decide what you can live without. You will slowly gain momentum and support from your family. Share your success with friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Many times just hearing a success story is enough to encourage us to create our own.

I challenge you right now. Go look inside your recyclable container and make a decision. Will it be glass or plastic? Or both:)

peace and blessings.

lmk

resources:

[http://www.environment-green.com/More\\_Recycling\\_Facts\\_and\\_Statistics.html](http://www.environment-green.com/More_Recycling_Facts_and_Statistics.html)

<http://www.homesandvillages.com/homes/recycling>

<http://www.homesandvillages.com/homes/green-lifestyles-building-family-community-resilience>