

Living on WELL Street Blog: **“LIVE GREEN FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD”**  
By Michael White, Worksite Wellness Technical Assistant, We Choose Health

**“Don’t blow it – good planets are hard to find.”** – Quoted in Time Magazine

The 40th anniversary of Earth Day was celebrated recently. Then came a new U.S. Climate Report that warned of the serious consequences of climate change. It prompted memories of the very first Earth Day, celebrated in 1970. Me, and a group of 7th grade buddies, scoured our small hometown for any litter that we could find. We felt like we were contributing to not only a cleaner environment, but a better world. One of my friends had recently suffered the loss of an older brother in Viet Nam. The Beatles had just released “Let It Be” and Simon and Garfunkel’s “Bridge Over Troubled Water” was the #1 song on the radio. The memories and consequences of 1968’s assassinations and riots were fresh on the minds of impressionable 13-year olds. The mood of the country was melancholy. The world seemed to be in need of healing and Earth Day provided a proactive solution. It was as if cleaning up our external environment would help clean up all the internal problems that people and society were suffering from.

Jump forward 40 years and Earth Day seems to have lost some of its personal engagement appeal. How does the average person address global climate change? The magnitude of the problem is almost self-defeating. It’s easier to surrender to the busyness of our lives, and the mindless distractions provided by smart phones, social media, and entertainment 24/7. But, what if you want to make a difference? What can you do? I recently heard health expert Dr. Dean Ornish speak. He suggested that we can take a stand for both our health and our environment by reducing our consumption of red meat. Dr. Ornish cited data that indicated that the world’s 1.5 billion cattle contribute more greenhouse gas than all cars combined. If that is asking too much, how about these ideas for improving your health and wellbeing while contributing to a better environment at the same time:

- Celebrate “Meatless Mondays”.
- Reduce personal energy consumption – drive less and ride a bike or walk more.
- Forget the electronic devices in the gym – hit the bricks!
- Share things with others, rather than buying new.
- Substitute soy or almond milk for cow milk.
- Use a water filter to purify tap water instead of buying bottled water, and drink more of it!
- Buy locally grown food.
- Take a stand and get others involved in efforts that improve the local environment.

13-year olds can once again be engaged in making the earth a better place to live for future generations. However, the approach has to be different than it was 40 years ago. It’s still about cleaning up our world (more than ever!), but it’s also about being mindful of how we live our lives every day. Taking good care of ourselves can lead us on an inward journey that results in a greater sense of responsibility for the world outside.

Live Green, Inside and Out!

Michael

**LIVE GREEN FOR A HEALTHIER WORLD** is a health promotion activity that encourages people to be environmentally responsible. A complete description can be found on the We Choose Health 365 website at:

<http://wechoosehealth365.com/asp/public/Page.aspx?pid=15548>.

*Michael White is a “culture of health curator”, and someone who seeks to live as happy and healthy as possible - for as long as possible! He loves to talk and write about these topics, and is happy to assist people and organizations in making it happen. Please contact him at: [michaelwhite@wellstreetpartners.com](mailto:michaelwhite@wellstreetpartners.com).*