

Mabel M., Alameda

May the 4Rs Be With You Contest 2020

Research, Rethink, Repurpose & Reinvent



time to Reinvent our consumer values

My 4Rs Reflection

The 4rs I chose are Research, Rethink, Repurpose, and Reinvent. I chose these words and this image because the people around me have always taught me to save whenever I can, the biggest way I do this is through thrift shopping.

Thrifting and reselling clothes and other items is a huge solution and green thing to do. America as a whole throws away 10.5 million tons of clothing every year. The fashion industry comes out

with new clothes every week and people just consume consume consume. Over the decades the average person has kept clothing for less and less time because of the way our fashion industry shapes its customers. Giving our business to thrift shop helps in many ways. For instance if you buy clothing at a thrift shop, not only is it a fraction of the normal price but it doesn't help big industrial companies churning out clothes and waste. Making new clothes takes water, a lot of water, hundreds of gallons to create a single garment.

There is a lot of energy in clothes and all that energy goes down the drain if you toss that article of clothing into the landfill, instead pass it along through a thrift shop. Producing clothing also pollutes the waters with toxic dye that gets dumped, and it pollutes the earth with toxic chemicals and pesticides used to grow cotton. 90% of cotton grown for textiles is genetically modified and 60% or all clothes are made of synthetic materials. The polyester and the plastic fabric get thrown into the landfill and rot there for thousands of years.

Consumerism in our country is a huge problem, the solution is to start changing the mindset of the people, we need to start teaching that you are not defined by stuff, and to spend money on experiences instead of items. We need to learn to repurpose items we already own, instead of buying new things. Whenever I want to buy something, I always try to rethink whether or not I actually need it, what the impact is, and how much joy would it actually bring me. That is why I chose the word rethink, I try to do it and I think we all need to as well.

We also need to do more research, we need to know what we are buying, research the company, and think about whether or not we actually want to support it. That is why I chose to research, we all need to be more educated and aware. Not only do we as individuals have to be aware but we need to bring awareness to the pollution of the big industries, we need to force them to reinvent the way we produce. We need to reinvent the whole system of production and consumption and it starts with being aware, researching, rethinking our decisions, and finding ways to repurpose the things we already have.

Description of photo: This photo is a design of the earth made up of all clothes I have purchased at a thrift shop. It is a symbol that we can help the earth by stopping consumerism and buying second-hand clothes. It is a representation of one of the ways I am part of the regeneration, being aware of which companies I am supporting and repurposing the items I already own.