

Top of the Sock

By Mitchell Scott

STRAWS ARE A REAL PISS OFF. They're useless pieces of tubular junk that suck up a whack of energy in production. Manufactured trash you could call it. Sure, they're small and relatively benign, and you can suck stuff out of them. But ask yourself this question: how many straws have been plopped into gin and tonics or vodka sodas in the bars and restaurants of the world? Billions. And where are they all now?

It's hard not to get overwhelmed by the apparent plight of planet earth. As people we have a real-time affinity for the natural world, so it's no surprise that the mindless harm we inflict upon our earthly home affects our self-esteem. Sometimes you feel bad—about the whole human race, to be sure—but also about yourself. But still, who says, “Two double Jack and Cokes, please, and hold the straws”?

But it doesn't stop there. Even throwing a giant Tide plastic bottle in the recycling bin seems oddly barbaric. That this incredibly durable and erosion-resistant marvel of liquid containment only gets one kick at the can before it goes through some ungodly process of cleaning and liquefaction, only to get one undoubtedly lesser kick at the can—perhaps as floss or party cups—causes one to wonder what makes sense anymore. When we fill up at the gas station, it takes a complete rationalization tactic for us to avoid those deep pangs of guilt that tear our fragile psyche apart. That voice says, “How much longer can this oversubsidized convenience actually be so convenient?”

Being truly, wholly, environmentally responsible in 2011 seems virtually impossible. I say, start with the little things. Begin with a

ritual of daily habits that might only have microscopic effects on the planet's state but instituted over time might have a cumulative positive effect. Do it, if only for the mental state of the maligned world-wrecking modern human. First off, say no to straws.

It shouldn't stop there. Take the napkin, for example. Some wondrous tree gets cut down so it might donate a fragment of itself to wipe your face after a saucy burger. Personally, I choose to forgo the napkin for a piece of personal fabric I know gets washed with each use. The top of the sock. Revealed when you sit, the sock is then magically hidden when you stand up, and it's much softer and absorbent too. Pretend to itch your lower leg after inserting a moist, delicious chicken wing into your mouth and voila! Nature is saved the expenditure of one napkin.

The possibility of these micro enviro acts exists everywhere around us. You're a guy and you pee in the toilet? Seriously! Outside friends, whenever possible. Pee doesn't need a litre of water and state-of-the-art sewage treatment facilities to make it good for the ground. It assimilates, no problem. Four million years of evolution can do wonders for substance interface—pee actually acts as a natural fertilizer. Other ideas include triple-folding the TP for a number two, refusing to buy plastic, not owning a dog unless you live in the woods and are constantly being attacked by bears and wolves, and, my favourite, working at home. Actually, that's my second favourite. The Top of the Sock stills rules the roost. Classic, elegant, world-saving brilliance. Not to mention, the residue left by a nice lemon-glazed beer-butt chicken hides the gasp of smelly feet.