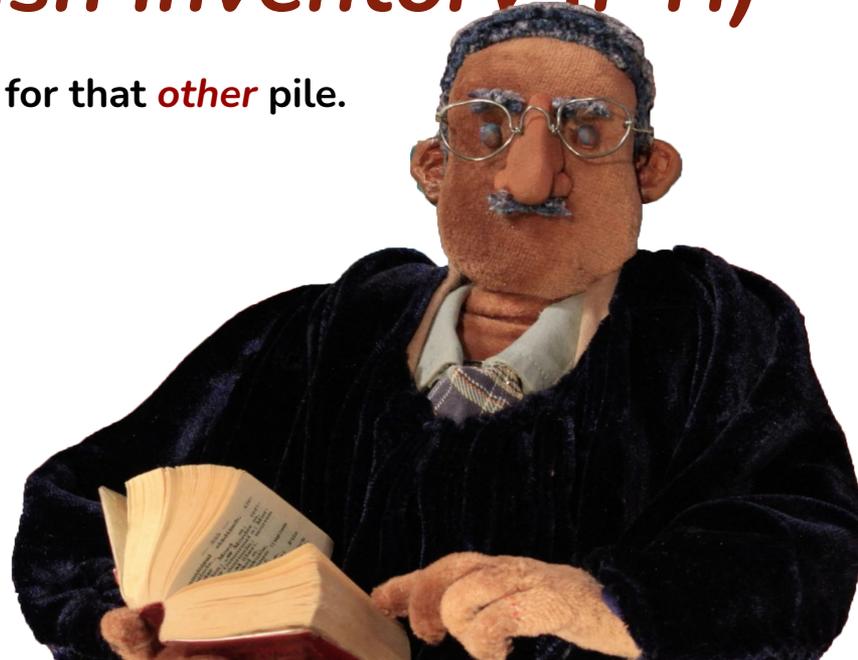


A personal,
professional &
educational approach to taking a
Personal Trash Inventory (PTI)

& finding a home for that *other* pile.



Everyone's R's look different.

Refuse



to purchase environmentally harmful products

Reduce



your consumption of these products

Reuse



items as much as possible & avoid single-use products

Repair



things that are broken, rather than throwing them out and buying new

Repurpose



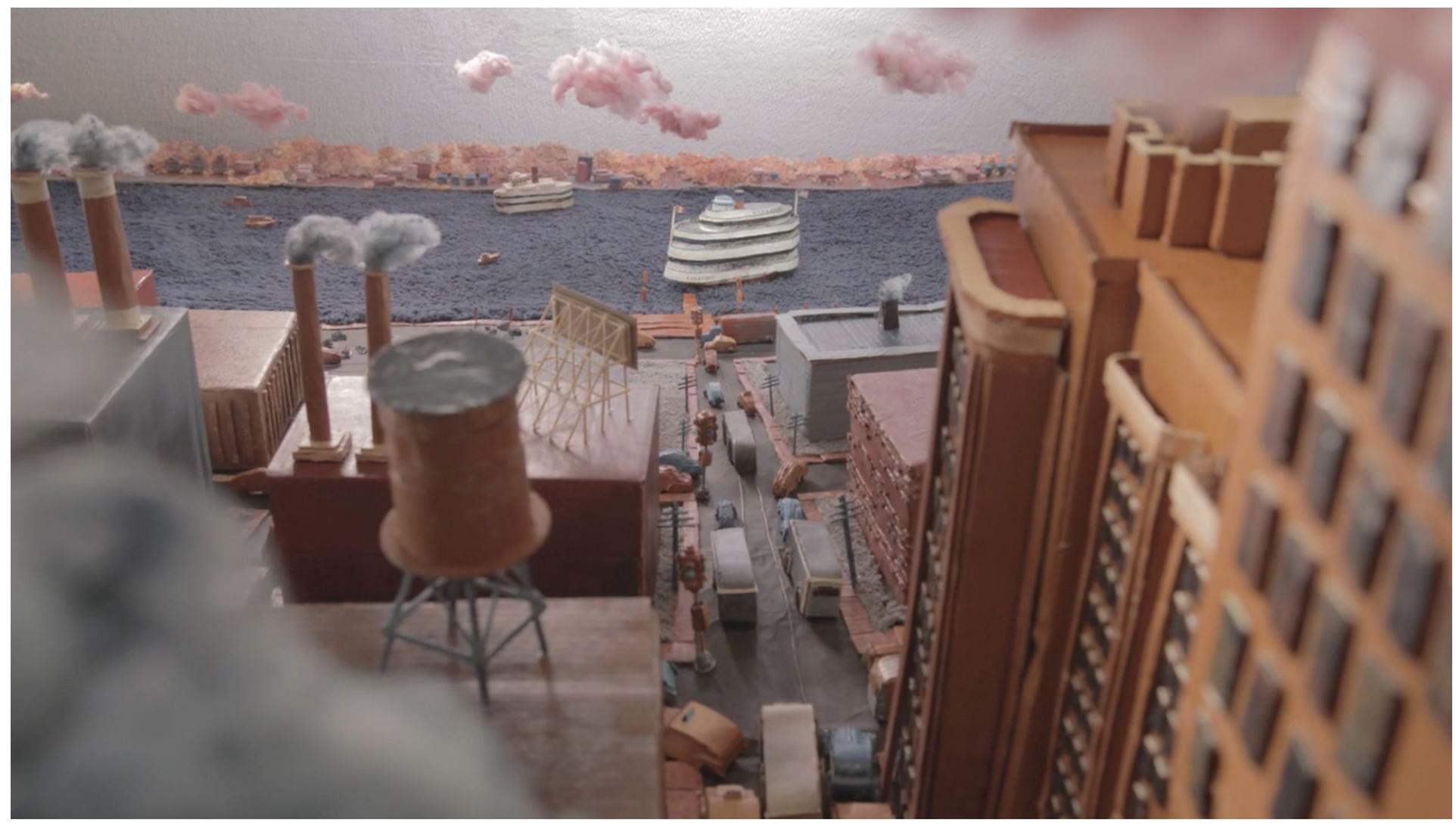
items that no longer serve their original purpose, but can have a second life serving a new function.

Recycle



but only as a last resort - and learn how to do so correctly to make the greatest impact.





Where am I and what do I get to throw away?

- **Every municipality** has their own guidelines
- It's **frustrating**, but **not impossible**: there are more resources (& apps!) than ever to guide you
 - Learn not only what can be trashed or recycled, but where and when to do so.
 - **Reduce** your headaches by **refusing** wasteful products



Collecting trash.

- For this PTI, you'll be collecting **different types** of trash and recycling.*
- Find containers that **work with your living space** and with your routines. The goal is for this to become something fluid with your daily rhythms & routines.
 - This **doesn't have to be a chore**, or an eyesore. Have some fun with it.
- **You already have a place for everything**: a pantry for snacks, a hamper (or corner of the room) for your laundry, a jar for loose change. If you don't like having so many compartments or containers, that's a perfect excuse to assess your consumer habits.







Rinse out food containers (bottles, jars, cartons) so they do not attract unwanted visitors, or generate undesirable odors.

Put these in another bin.

You can separate the glass/plastic/metal among them later on.

This is not just to reduce smells or flies; they can contaminate the rest of the recycling by including containers with food residue still in them.



Put compostable material in their own container,
being careful to follow the guidelines as to what is
and isn't compostable.

You can find them [here](#) on Sustainable Jersey City's site.



Make a point to celebrate, explore, and read up on every part of the produce you eat, - down to its seeds!



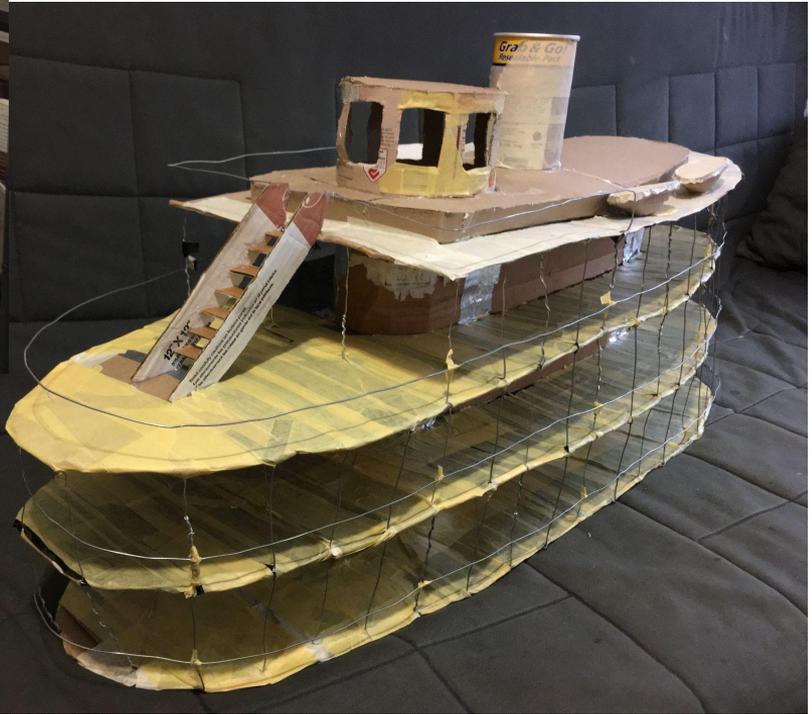
Collect paper, cardboard, envelopes, junk mail, etc into one container.

This will probably include many boxes from delivered packages; of these, set aside the ones you may be able to reuse for mailing or storage. **Find out whether you can recycle:**



- Magazines, glossy papers - staples, perfume samples & all **(you can!)**
- Envelopes with windows **(you can!)**
- Boxes & packages with tape or stickers **(you can!)**
- Any sort of bubble wrap/plastic filling or lining **(nope.)**
- Packing peanuts **(nope,** but you can **take them your local UPS/mail store to be reused!)**
- Wrapping paper & tissue paper **(you can!)**
- Foil or plastic wrapping paper and bows **(nope.)**





This 4-foot-long ferry boat was built for the animated, historical sequences in a feature-length documentary. From recycled cardboard to chopsticks, I built it using almost entirely recycled and repurposed material.

The only exception was the glue :)



Did something break that you were about to throw away?

Are there things you're just looking to **get rid off**? Pens and markers that have **run dry**?
Old gym equipment or kitchen appliances?

Put these into a pile, too.

You'd be surprised how many resources are out there for recycling them!

Visit SJC's site for numerous helpful links

& if you're ever unsure, it often pays to do a quick Google search.



Apps!

SJC did the homework to find you some free, user-friendly apps that make it easy to stay on top of your journey toward a more sustainable lifestyle. Keep it up!

Recycle Coach

Helps you drastically reduce contamination & become a force for good in the fight against climate change.

Plant Jammer

A virtual cooking assistant that offers custom recipes based on the leftover ingredients in your fridge.

Food Rescue Us

Connecting fresh, usable, excess food free of charge with hunger relief organizations.

Litterati

Empowering individuals to make a significant, measurable impact on the environment.

Seasonal Food Guide

A free seasonal food almanac, right at your fingertips!

Toycycle

Connect locally to swap free, used toys and declutter your home while helping to reduce plastic waste.

Tap

Invites smartphone users to find nearby free public drinking fountains and water refill stations.

Gebni

Helps restaurants increase orders, reaching previously priced-out customers & efficiently moving inventory.

Seafood Watch

Helps you choose ocean-friendly seafood at your favorite restaurants and stores.

Paper Karma

Take back control and stop unwanted paper mail!

My students were thrilled to create their custom NYC pigeons from socks, buttons and cardboard for their big performance. Each one was so full of personality.







All else goes in the trash bin. When possible, do not include food wrappers in the trash stream yet. Wash them thoroughly and put them with the recyclables.

Later you can examine how much of this material ends up in a landfill. Some things - i.e. blood soaked pad under packaged meat - will just have to be trashed, after all.



A little something for everyone:

Never a better time.



In the wake of our current quarantine, many have been investigating new interests and activities to explore from home. Most of us, for better or worse, are spending more hours at home than we're used to. That means more time to **assess our lifestyles, daily routines and consumer choices**. Looking at you, grown ups.

Accessible among all.



A **treasure/scavenger hunt** among household items could make for a fun and productive shelter-in-place activity for families of any size and children of any age. Follow up with an **online hunt for eco-friendly alternatives** to replace your more troublesome products.

Extra credit.



As new semesters approach and school reopenings remain murky, designing projects based on HHW & NPS pollutant streams makes for a **great extracurricular activity** to share virtually. Concepts can easily be modified for elementary & middle school projects, while high school & college students can **develop more involved initiatives**.

Bit of friendly competition.



Gamify your findings - and double your efforts - by looping in friends, family, classmates/students and tracking your progress: how many products/practices identified, how many replaced, who's up for taking on the more ambitious projects & **going the extra mile**.

So, what's the damage?

Quantifying, tracking and minimizing our personal household wastes.



Bulk by the bag:

For those with scales - measuring the waste their household is producing is a great way to track progress.

For those without access - an easy way to keep track of how much waste you are accumulating is to go by trash bag size & number.

Common grocery bags (paper or plastic) are an easily measurable amount to keep track of. *How many did you fill this week, this month?*

If four, can you get it down to three?

That wasn't so hard.

Down to one?

Becoming conscious of how many bags you're filling will also make you more aware of the **types of things you're throwing away**: from products that use excessive or non-recyclable packaging, to dodgy items you're not sure how to properly dispose of.





Remember that we all live downstream.

Prompts for further mindfulness and incentives for managing our waste streams:

Consider impacts of household & landscaping waste on our water systems.

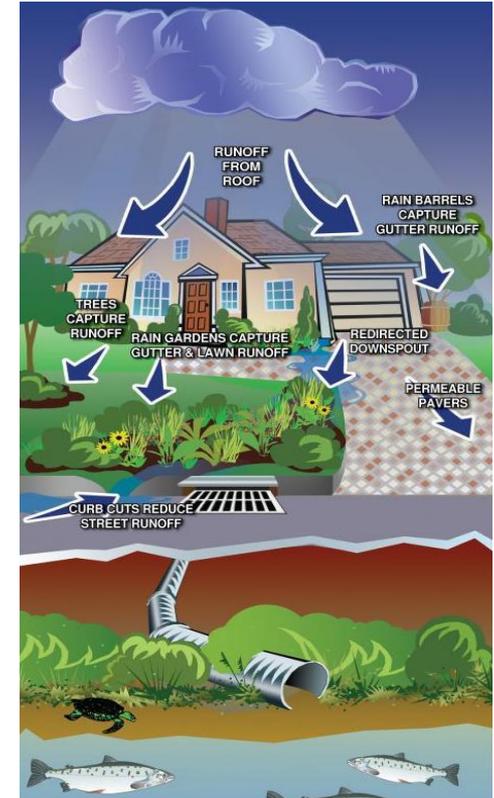
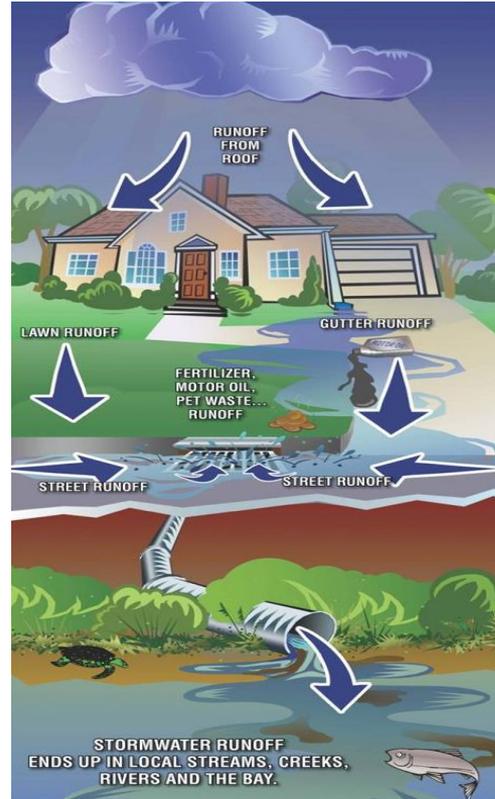
Take a second look at popular products: comb through ingredients, trace their chemical & nutrient fates in our systems.

Consider effects on both health & ecology.

Learn about environmental- & climate justice, and how our everyday habits and consumption trickles down to affect frontline communities.

Document & illustrate in visuals, writing or social media the journey of your newly adapted lifestyle.

Encourage those who have similar lifestyles and preferences as yours to collaborate & brainstorm together.



Alright! Now that we have your attention -

Once you've got a handle on all this trash business, why not take the next step?
Getting started was the hardest part, and doing more will come naturally.

SJC has done the homework for you, with both [links](#) to share & ways to [get involved](#).
No need to go it alone: [come and join the effort as part of your community!](#)

[Complete Personal Trash Inventory \(PTI\) Step-by-Step Document](#)

Document your experience, from collecting to sorting and stories along the way!
[You can share photos and videos here.](#)

When you've successfully completed your PTI, please share your results and feedback
[by taking this survey.](#)

Here's an app that might help you along the way: [Recycle Coach](#)

And here's the [Privacy Policy](#) associated with all SJC surveys.

Resources!

Here are some sites, apps and other favorite resources of ours you may want to check out.

[SJC Suggested Apps!](#)

Visit this link or see the following slide for a breakdown.

[Resource Recovery for Plastics](#) (info)

“How a materials recovery facility will sort flexible plastics.”

[SJC Composting Project](#) & [SJC Eco-Ambassador Program](#)

“Become champions of waste *prevention, recycling, and diversion.*”

[SJC Plastics & Materials Waste Recycling Project](#)

“A good place to start is to say NO to single use plastic materials!”



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