
OPEN FORUM / ROBERT LUHN

How to Cure 'Eco Neurosis'

FOR THE AVERAGE Joe and Josephine, the most wrenching issue of our time is Eco Correctness or EC. Car or car pool? Black Flag or a billion ants in your sink? Paper plates or earthenware?

In our politically correct-mad era, EC is top (neurotic) dog. I finally reached the edge when I couldn't decide whether to wipe off a breakfast fork with a paper towel (uses up trees) to scoop out some cat food (uses up horses) or merely grab a new fork out of the drawer (uses up water). I stood there between the towels and the drawer, muttering.

Now after months of intensive therapy I can finally come clean. If you're a right-thinking, recycling kind of person, pull up a futon because there's hope. Here are steps you can take to break the cycle of despondency without decimating the ozone layer or evicting the spotted owl.

■ Go for an imaginary drive. Roll the windows down, honk the horn, leave your seat belt off. Go wild! Then, viciously recycle. Flatten a cardboard box with

your Honda. Smash aluminum cans against your forehead. Jump up and down on the newspapers in your recycling drum. You'll feel better, and you'll get some aerobics in without knowing it.

■ Brazenly buy a can of Raid and announce loudly, "I got some damn big ants to kill and I'm not gonna mess around!" Then weed your garden and imagine you're Paul Bunyan yanking giant redwoods out of the ground.

■ Flaunt the ozone hole. Go outside without sun block on, just once. Soak up the UV and be at one with the electromagnetic spectrum. Then refuse to recycle on Mondays. Why should you have to worry about the environment when no one cares how rough a day you've had? Then buy one of those dolphin-shaped letter openers from the Greenpeace gift catalog and use it to make tuna sandwiches.

And when you're finally feeling good, sit down and chug a six-pack. Then recycle the cans.

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