

WEAR YOUR VALUES: **SUSTAINABLE FASHION IS A WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT STYLE STATEMENT**

A Remake Workshop

re/**make**

Remake is a social justice organization dedicated to making fashion a force for good. Our stories make the invisible women in fashion's supply chain visible.

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

This workshop serves as an introduction to sustainable fashion. What does the term actually mean and why should you care? Using a rich mix of multimedia and hands on exercises, participants will walk away armed with facts and stories of how the industry is affecting both people (especially women) and the planet and understand the connection between the women's empowerment movement and sustainable fashion. This workshop will end by proposing concrete ways in which participants can be a part of the solution and transform fashion into a force for good.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To arm participants with fast fashion facts and the true cost of cheap, disposable clothes on people and the planet
- To debunk any myths about how our clothes are made, and offer the realities of the clothing production process, from start to finish
- To introduce participants to the stories of the women who make our clothes, so that they can feel connected to the hundreds of human hands behind our fashion

- To define sustainable fashion and help participants understand all of the categories that make fashion truly ethical
- To ensure that participants walk away with concrete ways to become sustainable fashion warriors, both as advocates and shoppers

ROOM SET UP & MATERIALS

- Choose a room that has a projector/screen/audio capability so you can show the accompanying films and slides within the toolkit
- If possible, set up your chairs in a round circle shape so that participants will face each other. This setup promotes an intimate and welcoming environment for exchange
- White board (or paper easel) and markers to jot down any big ideas
- Post-its
- Pens
- Prints of these illustrated facts for Fact Gallery activity (optional)
- Please have an e-mail sign-up sheet handy so participants can sign-in before and after workshop
- Also have name tags handy if possible

INTRODUCTION (5-7 MINS MAX)

Begin by giving a warm welcome to participants and sharing the workshop guidelines. Ask everyone to greet the person next to them by name. Then, warm up the room by introducing the icebreaker below.

ICEBREAKER: WHAT WE STAND FOR (10 MINS)

This activity will invite participants to get a glimpse of one another through the values they stand for, by doing the (literal) physical movement of 'standing' and then reflecting among each other. Preface participants and let them know that

you will read statements out loud. If they agree with the statement, they should stand. After each statement is read, invite participants to look around the room for a few seconds and acknowledge each other by a wave, a nod, or a smile.

STATEMENTS (TO BE READ ALOUD):

**Note: Works best when choosing 5 -6 statements to read aloud. If standing doesn't work, you can also ask participants to raise their hands, clap, or demonstrate another physical movement.*

- I have dreams and goals, and I aspire to create a bright future for myself.
- I want to live my best life, and reach for my highest potential.
- I believe #girlbosses around the world should have the freedom to follow their dreams.
- I believe in shattering the glass ceiling.
- I believe in gender equality.
- I believe in equal pay.
- I believe I should be paid fairly according to the time I put in, and the value I bring.
- I believe that all women should be free of sexual harassment and gender violence.
- I believe that working in a safe environment is an absolute right, not a privilege.
- I went to/and or support the Women's March.
- I sometimes feel empowered when I wear a great outfit (like a power suit for an interview, or a dress that accentuates my figure).
- I love bargain shopping! The cheaper the better!
- I am guilty of having way too many clothes that I don't even wear anymore.
- I take good care of my clothes.
- I sometimes wonder how my clothes are made.
- I think about the human hands that made my clothes.

MEET THE MAKERS

(15 MINS)

ACTIVITY

Writing assumptions on post-its + watch Remake's Meet the Maker film shorts.

Thank everyone for participating in the ice breaker. Spend some time on the last statement: "I think about the human hands that made my clothes", and ask participants to use the post-its and write down 2-3 assumptions they have about garment makers. Here's a sample script you can use to help participants understand the reality of clothing production:

SAMPLE SCRIPT

If you haven't really thought about who made your clothes, it's not your fault. The fashion industry is centered on glamour and good at covering up their not-so-pretty truths. Our clothes are made by actual human hands, not robots or machines. To begin, I invite everyone to write down 2-3 assumptions you might have about the lives of the women making our clothes. Think about how they live, what they are like, what their working life is like. When you're done, stick them on the wall.

Read a few of the responses. When done, introduce the videos using the sample script below:

Did you know that at least 100 pairs of human hands touch our clothes before they are made available in stores or online? How could they all be paid fairly if the shirts we buy cost less than a cup of coffee? Most importantly, 80% of the people making our clothes are women, ages 18-34. How often do we think about the fact the clothes we buy originate from the work of real people, many of them women the same age as us? Today, we are going to "meet" some of the women who make our clothes- they too, stand for the same things we do.

**SHOW THIS REMAKE FILM,
"MADE IN CAMBODIA":**

<https://remake.world/films/made-in-cambodia/>

REFLECT + CONNECT THE DOTS (10 MINS)

DISCUSSION QUESTION

How do the stories of the women who make our clothes relate to our own?

Invite participants to discuss the question above. Did they find a bit of themselves in the stories of the women makers? If so, what part of their story did they relate with the most? Did the makers' stories shatter some of the assumptions they initially had? Share.

**One thing to point out is that many people assume that these women are 'victims' of the system, but Remake films show them as resilient women fighting for their rights. It is important to share their stories with dignity.*

LOOKING AT THE FACTS (15 MINS)

ACTIVITY: FACT GALLERY

Print out accompanying facts/statistics. You can find images [here](#).

Hang each fact on the wall and spread them around the room, as if in a gallery. Ask participants to stand up and walk around the room to read each one. Ask participants to take 5 minutes to reflect on the facts on the wall and stop in front of the one that surprises/impacts them the most. Once everyone has chosen their 'most surprising/impactful' fact, invite them to discuss their reflection to it as a collective.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Many of women makers work at factories that supply fast fashion companies. Fast fashion are brands like H&M, Zara, and Forever 21. Think of them as the equivalent to fast food. They are affordable clothes that are made cheap, fast and in enormous volumes. They are designed to fall apart easily and be

discarded. Because of that, it has made the fashion industry one of the largest polluters. Cheap disposable clothes threaten women's rights, human rights, and environmental preservation. There are many facts about the industry that the industry does not want us to know. To get to know those facts, I invite you to get out of your seats, and explore the facts on the wall. We will have 5 minutes to walk around and reflect. Once you have found a fact that surprises or impacts you the most, stop in front of it.

If the link above to our fact images aren't working, you can make your own. Here are a few facts to use:

- "Fast Fashion isn't free. Somewhere, someone is paying." -Lucy Siegle
- 80% of the people making our clothes are women, ages 18-24. **Source: Labour Behind the Label**
- Issues in factories include underage workers entering the industry as young as 14 to work long hard hours (an avg. of 14 hrs per day in sweatshops) for low wages, while dealing with sexual harassment and gender violence. **Source: NDTV**
- On April 24th, 2013, the Rana Factory in Bangladesh collapsed, killing 1,138 people and injured many more. The unsafe working conditions of the factory is the cause of the disaster, and the tragedy is considered as one of the 'watershed' moments of the fast fashion industry.
- Fast fashion is cheaply designed to be replaced quickly, not so much by desire, but by need. Clothing literally falls apart, meaning that it must be thrown away, rather than donated or sold to consignment shops. **Source: NPR**
- As a result, 12.8 million tons of clothing are sent to landfills in the US every year. This is a football field filled 14 ft deep with clothes. **Source: EPA**
- We consume about 80 billion new pieces of clothing per year- this is up 400% from two decades ago. Source: **True Cost, SMART**

OR, to save time, they can watch this "True Cost, True Change" video instead of doing the 'Fact Gallery' exercise:

<http://remake.world/films/video-fashrev-can-ethical-fashion/>

IT'S NOT ALL DOOM & GLOOM: SUSTAINABLE FASHION AS A SOLUTION (12 MINS)

Playfully address the depressing statistics and remind the audience that this is normally the part that isn't so fun.

Here's a sample script below, to help give you an idea on how to lead the conversation.

SAMPLE SCRIPT

Who feels depressed now? (Laugh) Who feels guilty for wearing the clothes they are wearing? Well, don't worry! We aren't here to be depressed. The only way to be truly sustainable would be to run around naked! The second is us walking away with concrete ways to make fashion a force for good.

(This is a good time to break down the definitions for ethical + sustainable fashion. [See Remake's glossary here](#))

Our money is what makes the fashion world go' round. By disrupting the status quo and saying no to overconsumption, we as consumers have the power to change things.

If fast fashion is like fast food, then sustainable fashion is like 'soul food': the slower consumption of well-made, meaningful clothes that are made to last. Sustainable fashion is about making socially responsible shopping decisions that help to remake the fashion industry into an uplifting force for good.

Here are the many ways you can be a sustainable fashionista:

POWERPOINT SLIDES: HOW TO BE A SUSTAINABLE FASHIONISTA (INCLUDE MASTER SLIDES AS AN APPENDIX)

- Choose quality versus quantity. Buy less, choose well, and invest in pieces that last for a long time, instead of clothes that are disposable and worn only once. A rule of thumb: the 30 wear rule. If you can't commit to wearing you impulsively want to buy at least 30 times, it's

probably not worth the purchase. Second, if it costs less than a cup of coffee, you should probably walk away. **Resource link here.**

- Buy secondhand or vintage items to recycle clothes and give them another life.
- Arrange clothing swaps on campus or with your friends! Save some money and shop each other's closets instead. You know what they say: one woman's trash is another woman's treasure! **Resource link here.**
- You are supporting items that are ethically and sustainably made—brands that respect people and the planet. Go on Remake's site for suggestions: **remake.world/shop-better** and keep **Remake's wallet guide** in your purse as a handy reminder of the best and worst brands out there.
- Try Rentals: Use sites like Rent the Runway to rent clothes that you know you will only wear once (like gowns and party dresses for special events) **Resource link here.**

CONCLUSION: CALL TO ACTION & CLOSING (15 MINS)

SAMPLE SCRIPT

If you aspire to wear your values, here are some concrete next steps to take:

Call to Action: (slide included in accompanying Powerpoint in appendix)

- Check out the **Remake Wallet Guide** for sustainable fashion ideas, and head to Remake's site for a **brand directory guide** (Pass out wallet guides).
- **Sign up for the Remake newsletter** (e-mail sign-in sheet should be made available as participants enter and leave workshop)
- **Write for Remake** to discover more ways to be involved (ambassador@remake.world)
- **Donate**

CLOSING ACTIVITY:

Have everyone write down the commitment/action step they are willing to make on a post-it. When they are done, have them stick it on the wall. Read some, or all of them, out loud to close out the space. If possible take pictures and share on [Instagram](#) with #wearyourvalues and #remakeourworld

Thank you so much for coming, and for spending time with us to learn how we can remake our world.

And there you have it;
you've just facilitated your
Remake workshop.
Congratulations and bravo!