

Waste Management: Recycling and Upcycling

*April Lai**

Green Glass Green has conducted various kinds of educational activities to raise glass recycling awareness. The activities are talks, street information/game booths, eco-brick factory visits (waste glass recycling factory), storytelling/upcycling workshops, glass collection exposure, glass spotting field trips etc.

Below are three methods used often to maximise glass recycling awareness.



A. STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

RECRUITMENT: via the advertisement board of the estate management.

VENUE: Club house of the estate.

PREPARATION: Participants were told to bring along recycled glass bottles. Green Glass Green (GGG) prepared decoration materials (recycled ribbons, colour images from magazine) were some materials used.

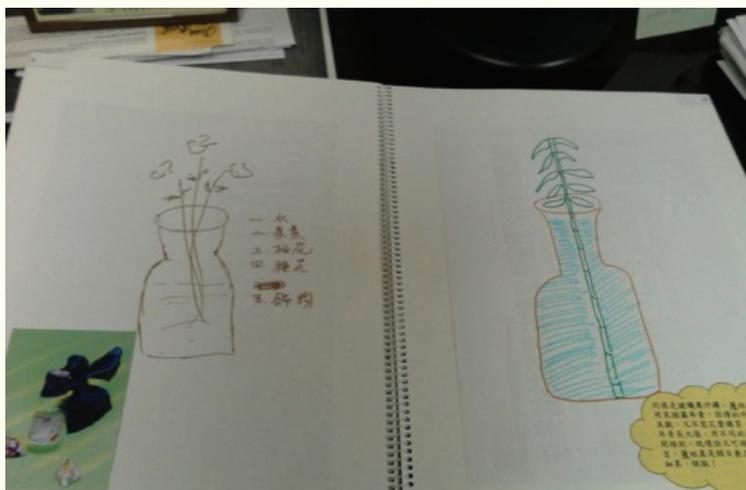
ATTENDEES: 20 (residents of the estate, middle aged majority, a few young people and children).

PROCESS:

1. Self-introduction of participants.
2. Participants are split into 3 groups to draw and decorate their bottles.
3. Drawing the glass image and reflect on what it has done to/for the participants.
4. Sharing stories on the glass bottles that were brought in by the participants such as when and how they got the bottle.
5. Decoration of glass bottles with GGG provided materials.
6. Sharing feelings and wishes of the new look of the glass bottles.
7. GGG gives input on the Hong Kong glass recycling situation and Q & A on how to promote glass recycling in the community.
8. Conclusion.

OBSERVATIONS:

There were personal stories relating to the glass and the participants; and the stories did resonate with the audience; such as the glass bottles were used to keep drinking water; for glass was a safe material. Everyone shares input, for a maximum of 4 minutes.



Participants then share how they expected the glass to be with them in the next journey of their life. The Facilitator/s then picks up the contents shared and relates it to the glass as the product of natural resources to be treasured. It is a way to conserve and respect the planet resources that is to be shared by mankind and other living creatures as well.

A storybook to record the drawings, glass decoration and stories was produced afterwards.

B. GLASS BOTTLE PLANTING

RECRUITMENT: via posters mounted at the estates of the target area, the facebook and the website of GGG.

VENUE: Community hall.

PREPARATION: Participants are told to bring along recycled glass bottles, GGG prepares other materials (soil, stones, glass sand, baby plants).

ATTENDEES: 48 (high and primary school students and residents in the area, majority young people)

PROCESS:

1. Highlight the participant's backgrounds particularly to school students
2. Highlight why glass is important to look at, i.e. it is a good material for food storage and other products, 100% recyclable but dumped as waste at the moment. Participants are able to see multiple usages of glass from this upcycling workshop.
3. Instructor demonstrates the planting process.
4. Attendees work out their own planting activity upon the instructor's guidance.
5. Sharing session: Participants share their feelings and reflections from the planting and workshop process.
6. Summing up the sharing in view of how one can promote glass-recycling practice at our own residences and workplaces.



OBSERVATIONS:

Participants were inspired by the final product about glass recyclability; and are likely to save or recycle glass bottles instead of directly throwing it away.

C. GLASS BOTTLE COLLECTION EXPOSURE AT BAR AREAS

RECRUITMENT: via GGG's facebook and website; and other media.

VENUE: Popular (Wanchai) Bar area.

PREPARATION: Participants are told to bring along a pair of gloves and be dressed in working clothes.

ATTENDEES: A mixed groups numbering 1 to 30 participants per group (majority students: university/high school, many took glass as a study subject).

PROCESS:

1. Occupational safety & health and collection process briefing.
2. Partnering with GGG collector for actual glass bottle collection from bars and restaurants.
3. Sharing and debriefing.





OBSERVATIONS:

Participants were all shocked at the massive number of waste glass bottles produced from the bars and restaurants and the enormous efforts needed to be put in particularly when businesses were not eco-conscious especially as there was no incentive or penalty imposed on them.

All responded positively to the need of separate recyclables from waste for the convenience of recycling.

Some were moved to lobby with friends and businesses for recycling glass bottles.

Consequently the exposure was the most powerful means to convey the importance of oneself in the process of waste management.

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An activist in labor, women rights and the green movement, She has worked with the Hongkong Confederation of Trade Unions as a union organizer and educator for transport workers, domestic workers and government contract out staff.

Green Glass Green is a pilot glass project to promote glass recycling practice and policy in the territories.

You can view her complete profile and the organisation she is associated with at: http://www.learn2change-network.org/?About_Us__Our_Network__Activists#anker_ApLa