

2015 level 2 third text

This young person was doing a course in environmental studies at Madrid university in Spain and she believed she was a full ecologist. “But in the last year of university I had a professor who insisted that we live according to our own values” she remembers.

“It was then that I realised that my rubbish bin full to the brim with plastic was a complete contradiction.” And from there began a process towards a life without waste. “Today I have been 2 years without generating rubbish” she claims. Laura began to substitute plastic containers for those of glass, reusable and to buy food in bulk. As regards clothes, she decided to go to second hand and of course, no car. “Since I live in Madrid, I go walking to lots of areas and when I have to go far away, I take public transport.”

But what happens with the waste that you can't avoid generating, such as toilet paper, fruit skin or clothes that are too old? “Organic rubbish, including toilet paper, I take it once a week to a place where they transform it into compost and when my clothes, sheets or cloths are really worn out I take them to a place where they recycle them” she explains. “ The most complicated wasn't to avoid certain products but rather look for organic alternatives to everything that we use every day” she signals.

In her search, she realised that the alternative in lots of cases was to produce it herself. “Today I have recipes for everything, toothpaste, skin lotion, or detergent for the washing machine” and she admits, “It took a bit of work (*it costed me*) to investigate and perfect them”.

“It takes an effort but it's totally possible to develop towards a life without waste”, she claims. And didn't her decision affect her social life? Doesn't she feel isolated in a city like Madrid? “On the contrary!” she exclaims. “ I think that I am a more sociable person. A community has formed around the topic and lots of people contact me to ask me advice, share ideas and suggest alternatives to me”, she says. “You have the possibility to live without generating rubbish. It's your choice”.