

Season 1 Episode 2 – Guilty Greenie

Let's Talk Dirty.

Cait Bagby: [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to Guilty Greenie. Live on fireside from the Climate Collab Auditorium. We are your imperfect hosts. I'm Cait Bagby,

Sarah Ferris: and I'm Sarah Ferris. And I don't know about you guys, but we are tired of perfectionism and trying to live more sustainably. So we're here today to chat about our own guilt, share our own journeys and just add a bit of levity in our attempts and fails, mainly fails in my case to be more eco friendly.

Cait Bagby: Give yourself some credit.

I know you had a great week of eco successes, which we will get to later.

Sarah Ferris: Thank you.

Cait Bagby: Today, or I guess every week, right? We share our own journeys, the good, the bad, the laughable. And today we are talking dirty, very dirty, dirty laundry.

Sarah Ferris: And that's about as sexy as it's going to get

Cait Bagby: yeah. Who said eco wasn't sexy?

Sarah Ferris: True. True.

Cait Bagby: Sarah, seeing as we're going to be speaking about laundry today, let's dig into your laundry basket a little bit. [00:01:00] On average, how often would you say you do a load of washing?

Sarah Ferris: Oh my God. This is going to be so embarrassing for me because our washing machine, it goes pretty much from the time I get up, so seven o'clock, and I'm probably doing three or four loads a day. Is that disgusting?

Cait Bagby: Well, it's not like you're doing three or four loads a day for yourself.

Sarah Ferris: Oh no, that's just mine. I make my kids do their own. I'm very clean. No, it's true. Well, how much do you do then?

Cait Bagby: Maybe about two loads a week.

Sarah Ferris: You dirty, dirty beast. Hold on. How many people are in your household?

Cait Bagby: Just myself and my husband.

Sarah Ferris: Okay. That's fair. That's fair. So I've got five and, you know, teenagers and sweaty exercising people we sort of ended up doubling up with exercise kit as well.

Cait Bagby: No, it makes sense. When we were chatting about this show and I was digging into some of the data I couldn't find any concrete statistics on how often, the [00:02:00] average British, uh, Brit, washes their clothing. I did find though

Sarah Ferris: Why Brit?, why does that matter?

Cait Bagby: Well, that's where you're living. I figured we'd do the American stat and then the British stat.

Sarah Ferris: Oh, I like that. Did you find an American stat then?

Cait Bagby: I did. Of course, because Americans excel at...

Sarah Ferris: Reporting on themselves.

Cait Bagby: Yes. Yeah. That's, that's a very polite way of putting

Sarah Ferris: I don't care about anyone else in the rest of the world so that I need to report on that. That's why we don't know what the British stat.

Cait Bagby: Well, actually, I did find one British stat, which is going to be mind blowing and is at the polar opposite of you. But the American stat is Americans wash about 50 pounds of laundry a week. And it's about 6,000 articles of clothing every year. I am not entirely sure how to convert that into like how many pounds your washing machine holds, because it depends on what you're actually washing.

Sarah Ferris: Yeah. And also pounds is... I'm in metrics so I'm just trying to think of pound of butter. So say again, what was the stat? I'm putting butter into my washing [00:03:00] machine to convert it.

Cait Bagby: I can just see you now stacking it up.

Sarah Ferris: I'm like these little rectangular blocks. I'd probably fit about 10 in there.

Cait Bagby: So 50 pounds of laundry. So what are we doing pounds to kilograms? Let's do a quick conversion here. 50 pounds is 22.6 kilograms.

Sarah Ferris: And how often is that? That's a week.

Cait Bagby: That's a week. And it's about 6,000 items a year.

Sarah Ferris: Hmm, that's interesting.

Cait Bagby: It actually seems low to me..

Sarah Ferris: Does it?. Well, I can tell you, I went into my laundry just before this show and opened up my triple laundry stacker and I reckon it's easily got 22 kilograms in there at the moment, but I've been a bit lazy. So maybe?

Cait Bagby: Here's the very, in my opinion, disturbing statistic that came out of the UK. Are you...

Sarah Ferris: Bring it. Bring it.

Cait Bagby: I'm not sure anybody's ready for this. There was a survey that found that one in three participants wash their beddings... we're talking their bedding sheets, their blankets, so on and [00:04:00] so forth, only once a year!

Sarah Ferris: Shut up. In the UK?

Cait Bagby: In the UK, one in three...

Sarah Ferris: No, hold on back that train right up. Are you talking about duvets and pillows or are we talking sheets? Like the essential? I'm thinking, maybe the duvet. They can't sleep on sheets for a year. They'd literally be crunchy. They'd just be literally like crackling when they get into bed with all the dirt and disgusting sweat.

Cait Bagby: I don't want to go any further than that, but that's,

That's great imagery... So bedsheets, I double-checked... And there's quite a few, publications that put this out. They're sheets.

Sarah Ferris: Oh, my God. I'm booking a plane trip home to New Zealand, as soon as I can. I'm getting out of this country, this filthy, filthy country. Disgusting!

Cait Bagby: It was 2000 participants: 30% said they wash their bedding 12 months or less. There's eco-friendly and then in my opinion, there's just, you're going to catch an [00:05:00] infection like that's...

Sarah Ferris: It's a whole different category isn't it is?

Cait Bagby: Hopefully that's the bad for today. Like I'm hoping that's worst it gets today.

Sarah Ferris: Yeah, me too. Me too. All right. So tell me laundry: what do I need to know? These are the hacks that I have tried. Can I start with those?

Cait Bagby: Yeah.

Sarah Ferris: All right. I went from buying little containers of laundry, liquid to big kind of like five liter ones so that I was not having to use plastic, but I know that I'm not doing the best because I think I need to get rid of the water or something. Is it better to use powder? Help me out? What should I be doing?

Cait Bagby: That's a really great place to start because that's where most people start when they're on their own sustainability journey, they look first towards what they're using and what's easily swappable or replaceable. And you're actually Sarah you're like step one, already done switched from small containers to big containers. Especially if it comes in plastic, the less plastic you can use, even if that just means [00:06:00] using a larger quantity or buying a larger quantity at a time, is a great first step. You mentioned to me that near you, I think we talked about this in last week's show, you have now a refill station, right? Or a zero waste store?

Sarah Ferris: Yes, we do.

Cait Bagby: Do you know if they offer laundry detergent?

Sarah Ferris: I think they do. In fact, I did used to do this, but it was more expensive to fill up the maybe 500 mil bottle than it was to actually just buy the bulk one, the big five liter. It worked out better economically, really. And it was a good workout lift in it every time

Cait Bagby: I'm going to give you a couple trade-offs when it comes to price. So yes, data does show us that generally speaking, eco-friendly, what you buy in the shops can be a little pricier and it's going to vary by whether you're doing laundry, like liquid refill or whether you're buying tablets or sheets. Those are the three there's technically [00:07:00] four. What we consider eco-friendly laundry solutions. The first is refill, liquid. Or finding liquid in an aluminum or glass bottle, something that's easily recyclable. The second are tablets. They look like little cakes, I guess. I don't know a tablet, large tablet you put in your washing machine. Then there's also laundry detergent sheets, which break down in the washing machine. And the third one is you can actually make your own laundry detergent. That's not something I've ever gotten into. There are a ton of different recipes. Can you call it a recipe? Formulas?

Sarah Ferris: You know, I think it isn't well, formula is probably the right word. Isn't it?

Cait Bagby: I don't know. It's something - concoction the laundry detergent concoction. There are a lot of different formulas online. That includes natural bleaches things like that. Cause bleaches, it's a no-go it's not very healthy for the environment. So if anybody wants to make their own. Um, you can find tons of formulas online. [00:08:00] Those are the four eco solutions, but as you said, going from just a smaller bottle to a bigger bottle is one of the first things you can do. So I think that's great.

Sarah Ferris: Okay. But can I ask you about the tablets? Right. So the reason that I didn't go to the tablets, which actually can come and like a cardboard container, so that was like, that's a win, but then there was like wrapped in plastic. So is that...

Cait Bagby: Oh no, that's bad.

Sarah Ferris: Exactly.

Cait Bagby: Yeah, no, no.

Sarah Ferris: What's the point of being in the cardboard container. If you're just going to wrap me in plastic?

Cait Bagby: We call that greenwashing. And there's a lot of companies out there that do that. Here's a laughable moment. It's not laundry detergent, but I bought shampoo and it comes in a cardboard container and I thought, oh, this is going to be great. It's a liquid shampoo. And once you used it, they say take the cardboard apart. Now it does have a plastic pump on the top, but still on a whole you're cutting down or you think you're cutting down on all your plastic. You open up the cardboard and inside is a plastic container!

Sarah Ferris: Shut up. That is so [00:09:00] pointless. What do you mean? Like an actual, like it's hiding its own shampoo bottle in there?

Cait Bagby: Yeah, exactly. It was just a little dressing on the outside. That's greenwashing and it's at its finest. There are tablet companies out there though where they don't come wrapped in plastic. It'll come in the cardboard packaging and no plastic on the outside of them.

Sarah Ferris: Okay. So the next one I really want to know about, cause I've been looking at these in the past, is the sheets, they look like the old sort of breath mint things that you could just put on your tongue and they dissolve.

Cait Bagby: To me, they look like dryer sheets. Do you guys use those?

Sarah Ferris: No, what's a dryer sheet?

Cait Bagby: I haven't used them in a decade, so I'm going to have a hard time explaining it.

Sarah Ferris: What's the point of it?

Cait Bagby: You put it in the dryer it's to help a static, uh, generally they're scented and I think they also help with drying, I think, but generally it's just static and they're scented so that's pretty much it, but that's what they look like. The detergent ones they completely break down and I actually just [00:10:00] bought my first ones yesterday. I've never used them, so I'm really excited to try them out this week.

Sarah Ferris: Wow. Maybe you'll have to let us know. You give us a report back. Do you have to use them with like hot water or anything to break it down or does it, you can use it in cold?

Cait Bagby: You can use it in cold and actually should we get into the water discussion?

Sarah Ferris: Yes, we should. Can I just say I've got this vision of those sheets that you put into the laundry, that they'll just come out like a tissue that's been left in the pocket of a, that's, that's what I'm imagining is going to happen.

Cait Bagby: No, no, no. They do break down just like any other, I don't know the science magic behind it, but just like a tablet would break down or a powder would break down and I forgot to mention powders and other option. Those will all break down.

Sarah Ferris: Okay, so before we move on to the water, I want to know out of those, what's the best one? What's the best solution? What should I be actually using?

Cait Bagby: It depends on how you like to do your laundry, to be quite honest.

Sarah Ferris: Clean. I like it clean.

Cait Bagby: That's the [00:11:00] brilliant thing is there's something for everybody, right? So if you like using a liquid or a powder, you can find that. A sheet you can use that. One of the, I think, unfortunate aspects and people try to live a bit more sustainably is they get really frustrated because they try something and maybe it doesn't work first go for them but think of it like any other product you buy. The first time you ever bought laundry detergent maybe you liked it and that was great and things worked out but maybe, you didn't like the scent or it wasn't cleaning well enough and so you switched to a different brand and then maybe you tried a different brand. I think sometimes we put an unrealistic expectation on sustainable products that we don't on

quote, unquote, conventional products.

Sarah Ferris: Yeah, that's true. You expect it to be able to do everything straightaway. I get what you're saying, but we should maybe test out, work out what works for us.

Cait Bagby: Yeah.

Sarah Ferris: Like it Like it. Right, tell me about the water.

Cait Bagby: All right: water. About 90% of the energy used to wash clothing comes from the heating of the water.

Sarah Ferris: That's a [00:12:00] lot.

Cait Bagby: This is where, remember I said you can make a swamp, cause you were saying biodegradable, organic detergents, cleaner detergents are a little bit pricier.

Sarah Ferris: Yeah.

Cait Bagby: If you simply turn down your water from 40 degrees Celsius to 30 degrees Celsius, you're using 40% less electricity.

Sarah Ferris: Wow. That is a lot.

Cait Bagby: Yeah, you're saving a lot of money. 40 to 30 degrees Celsius or 106 to 86 degrees Fahrenheit. We use about 40% less electricity, assuming we're using newer washing machines.

Sarah Ferris: Right. Okay. Well, that's good. Cause I normally do 30, but also the benefit of that is that don't come out like the size of a newborn babies clothes.

Cait Bagby: Oh, I've done that too many times. I've done that too many times.

Sarah Ferris: Everything needs to be just able to go in a washing machine and not shrink. That should be day one of washing. Um, what about just totally cold washes? It's gotta be the best, right?

Cait Bagby: Cold water would be the best. Anything you can do to not heat up the water as much you're going to be saving a lot of money there [00:13:00] from your electric and then the other general money saving tip is investing in energy efficient machines. Oh, did you do it, Sarah? I did all of this in gallons. Should we do gallons to liters?

Sarah Ferris: So now I'm trying to think of like gallons of juice that I have to put in my machine.

Cait Bagby: I'll do liters for you. Hold on. Hold on. Let me bring up... a

Sarah Ferris: Probably won't help me anyway. How can we have so many differences and just two countries that both speak English? Every time we do a show, there's something new that I have to convert. It's ridiculous. Get on the same page.

Cait Bagby: It's only for the Americans. Listen, we know that it's not working for us either.

Sarah Ferris: It is working for you. It's just not working for me.

Cait Bagby: Well, it doesn't work when we're trying to speak to anybody who's not an American.

Sarah Ferris: That's true. That's very true. So what does a gallon is what?

Cait Bagby: So 40 gallons is 151 liters, 151.4 liters. So one gallon let's see, one gallon is [00:14:00] 3.7 liters.

Sarah Ferris: Okay. Got yeah.

Cait Bagby: Older models of washing machines can use up to 40 or more gallons. And what do we say? That was 140...

Sarah Ferris: I'm just going to stop your here Cait. This has turned into a maths show and I'm not sure I can cope.

Cait Bagby: It's not what you signed up for?

Sarah Ferris: No, you don't know, but I can not do maths like on the spot, my brain shuts down. So I'll just let you do that little calculation and get back to me with a result, please.

Cait Bagby: Sarah, I still count on my fingers. So if these calculations are off don't look to Sarah or myself for accuracy.

Sarah Ferris: It'd be so funny if you were like giving out the recipe for the laundry detergent and you're just completely screwing up the changing over and people were doing it at home. That would make a great show. Let's just do that.

Cait Bagby: Oh yeah. I could see how that could go off the rails very quickly. So let's say today, energy efficient machines use 12.5 gallons [00:15:00] for front loaders 19-20 gallons for top loaders. Okay. So just keep in mind, 12 and 20. We won't have to convert anything. I promise. Older models that are not energy efficient, use 40 or more gallons, so more than double.

Sarah Ferris: Right. Okay.

Cait Bagby: Simply investing in more energy efficient machines helps save money, helps save water.

Sarah Ferris: Amazing. Okay. That's good. Cause my machine broke down recently, so I had to replace it. And also they don't last that long after doing as many loads as I do.

Cait Bagby: Your manufacturer, did they offer like a buy-back or anything like that or recycling?

Sarah Ferris: I think, yeah, you can, you can give a recycle, you can get them to take it away and then they re do it and give it to a charity. I think actually, which is quite nice.

Cait Bagby: Mm. I'm seeing more and more companies offer the buyback programs or the recycling programs which I think is so important because otherwise people end up taking their machines just down to their local dump. And a lot of times you have to pay, right, to

have it quote, unquote recycled, but [00:16:00] here in the United States, we don't often have the facilities to do that so it gets shipped overseas where then they're stripped for parts and that's a very, very toxic process.

Sarah Ferris: There's another whole topic for us.

Cait Bagby: Absolutely, but one of the more energy efficient things, environmentally friendly things that we can do is air drying. In Italy, I did not have a dryers so for three years, didn't matter the temperature or the weather outside, we had to figure out a way to dry our clothes inside. We got really creative at times, putting them on heaters and stringing up lines in the middle of winter. But I also found it's a practice that stuck with me. And part of that is because I actually love how my clothes smell when they've been hanging out in the sun for the day, they just smell so fresh and clean. We get so used to artificial smells that we think that's what clean smells like. And it also goes with something else, which is most of us actually wash our clothing too much. We really should not be washing our clothing unless there are visible stains or, noticeable odors.

Beyond that most clothing, especially if you're buying [00:17:00] natural fibers, like wool is self-cleaning. I have sweaters that I've owned for four years now, five years now; I've never washed them. I've never washed them. I've maybe spot touch them, but wool is naturally cleaning, naturally anti bacterial, microbial, bacterial.

There is something in wool in the fiber itself that actually helps to break down anything that comes from your skin, like the oils from your skin. And denim, true denim, you really should not wash it more than every six months.

Sarah Ferris: That's mind blowing, really?

Cait Bagby: Yeah, it can actually destroy the fibers.

Sarah Ferris: Right. That's just halved my load.

Cait Bagby: Raw denim though. There's a bit of a difference because most denim we buy is a mixture of different fibers, but raw denim you really do not want to be washing them any more than you absolutely have to be.

Sarah Ferris: My 16 year old son agrees with you on the self cleaning product. He went for a whole year and we were like, Josh, why does your... cause he rows so they wear these like [00:18:00] unitard things to row in and competing and training them sort of five times a week. I said, you don't have not seen that come through the wash and he goes, no, no, no: that's self cleans and I'm like, I don't know that THAT does, does it? I think that's pushing it, right?

Cait Bagby: It depends on the fiber for sure. There's a difference between not wanting to wash

Sarah Ferris: your clothing. Sarah, I realize, I say pants don't I, and you're probably sitting there along with the rest of the UK audience going, that's not what she means.

No. What do you mean? I think we mean the same things. You say underwear.

Cait Bagby: I say underwear. I know you say, well, do you say pants?

Sarah Ferris: Uh, yeah, I guess do I say pants or knickers or yeah, probably pants. The thing with New Zealanders is we kind of just accept that we don't get to make our own rules and we just learned that we have to learn from what the US says and what the UK says and just go along with it.

Cait Bagby: I hope that never happens on the environmental front. Please do not, do not, go along with what we're doing.[00:19:00]

Sarah Ferris: True. But back to the laundry room. So we've got, keep it at 30 degrees, choose a eco powder. And what about packaging?

Cait Bagby: Packaging, same thing, stay away from plastics. If you're using tablets, if you're using the sheets, you can always find something in cardboard recyclable packaging. If you're using a liquid or powder, try to find something that is either in glass or aluminum or a refill so even if it's a plastic bottle you can go to a refill station and reuse it. But aluminum is actually one of the most recyclable materials on the earth essentially you can just keep using it over and over and over again, and recycling it, which is great.

Sarah Ferris: Right. Aluminum, which we would call aluminum ...

Cait Bagby: Tomato, tomato.

Sarah Ferris: I know what it is. That's interesting.

Cait Bagby: Let's talk about detergent a little bit more. You can buy sustainable detergent... Eco-friendly environmentally friendly detergent that has minimal packaging or [00:20:00] environmentally friendly packaging, but the other thing we need to keep in mind is traditional laundry detergent can actually be incredibly toxic for you and the environment. In the United States and I couldn't find a very helpful answer for this in the UK, but I suspect it's the same thing based on the research and the direction the research was pointing me in. In the United States, it is not mandatory to list all of the ingredients used in laundry detergents or household cleaners.

Sarah Ferris: Really?

Cait Bagby: Yep. So even if we're reading the back of the bottle it doesn't mean that we're seeing all the ingredients.

Sarah Ferris: What do you do?

Cait Bagby: You don't use traditional laundry detergent.

Sarah Ferris: What's traditional?

Cait Bagby: Think of when you go to your grocery store all the brands that we pretty much grew up with. I'm just going to say that conventional, large corporation, laundry detergents. Within laundry detergent, there's actually a few carcinogens.

Sarah Ferris: Brilliant.

Cait Bagby: And this is as defined by the EPA: the Environmental [00:21:00] Protection Agency. One of them is 1,4-Dioxane, and Dioxane has been known to cause vertigo, drowsiness, headaches, irritation of the eyes, lungs, nose. And this is in humans. In studies with rats they found that it actually can lead to cancer.

Sarah Ferris: Right

Cait Bagby: This is in our laundry detergent. Do you want the list of the other harmful chemicals?

Sarah Ferris: Well yeah. Now you're scaring the bejesus out of me.

Cait Bagby: This is going to test my pronunciation too. It's going to be real fun.

Sarah Ferris: The periodic tables coming into play.

Cait Bagby: There's SLS, that's what people commonly know it as it's sodium lauryl sulfate, there is ammonia...

Sarah Ferris: I know that one.

Cait Bagby: Nonylphenol I'm saying that so wrong - Ethoxylate, um, phenols and phosphates. Phosphates the WWF World Wildlife Foundation was actually trying to make it a law in the UK to ban phosphates because phosphates were leading to really harmful algae blooms [00:22:00] because the wastewater running off from laundry through water treatment facilities, was going into the river systems, the oceans, and it was causing really, really harmful algae blooms. It can also disrupt the endocrine and reproductive systems in fish and other Marine life. So yeah, traditional laundry detergent is... not great.

Sarah Ferris: Well, I've got a question. Did they actually manage to ban the phosphates in the UK?

Cait Bagby: I believe it depended on the product. So whether it was a cleaning product or a household laundry detergent, I believe that it had to be a significantly reduced, but not in an outright ban.

Sarah Ferris: Great. My daughter is actually swimming in the river right now. Just picking up some phosphates.

Cait Bagby: She's swimming in the Thames?

Sarah Ferris: Yeah. She is literally swimming in the Thames. So, um, coming back that it'll algal bloom probably between her toes or something. Disgusting.

Cait Bagby: No, they would know. Here In the United States, we see it during the summers. They'll actually shut down lakes and ponds and rivers because water is generally [00:23:00] tested. Any water that the public is swimming in is generally tested in the United States. I would imagine it's the same in the UK. And it's very common throughout the summers to hear that certain places have been closed off because of toxic algae blooms.

Sarah Ferris: Mm it's a sad state. Isn't it?

Cait Bagby: She comes back with an extra eye or something, let us know.

Sarah Ferris: She's just bought some sunglasses. That'll be annoying. She'll have to buy some new bespoke specs.

Cait Bagby: Those are going to be custom made that's for sure.. All in all, if you can just switch to cleaner laundry detergent.

Sarah Ferris: Yep. I'm going to try the strips. I've excited to try the strips actually because I've seen them, they come up on my like Facebook feed and I feel like I'm just going to be the perfect consumer because it's like, oh, it's come up on my Facebook or Instagram. It's going to be a scam and I'll push on it and buy it and it will never arrive.

Cait Bagby: But I would say, just do your research. Make sure it's actually coming from a company that is sustainable.

Sarah Ferris: Hmm. I will. [00:24:00] Good job. I feel like my laundry is cleaned up.

Cait Bagby: I'm excited. That's still not your challenge for the week though. Don't think you can get out of it that easy. All right, we talked about washing... The other important thing to know about washing too... Textiles produce up to 35% of microplastic pollution. How that data is broken down in terms of like home washing versus, you know, in the fashion industry, 70% of damage comes from what's considered upstream not consumer facing, but the actual process of creating the textiles, whether that's growing the fibers, washing, dyeing, so on and so forth so 70% of damage in the fashion industry is upstream. But 35% of ocean plastic micro pollution is attributed to the textile industry.

Sarah Ferris: That is unbelievable.

Cait Bagby: A lot of it does actually come from our homes, which is kind of sad.

Sarah Ferris: It is sad. How do we stop?

Cait Bagby: You mentioned Sarah, you do a lot of washing of like [00:25:00] sports clothing, right?

Sarah Ferris: Yep.

Cait Bagby: So sports clothing has spandex in it and every single time you wash the clothing, it sheds a little bit of the clothing fibers. I mean, every piece of clothing you wash will shed. The question is what is it shedding? And in the case of sportswear in particular those microparticles plastic particles are shedding into the water systems.

Sarah Ferris: That's horrifying. Okay, we need to do a show on alternate sportswear because I can tell you, I'm not going to get my husband doing... he's like training for an iron man. He's not going to be doing that in a pair of like recycled, baggy, whatever.

Cait Bagby: You're right. That deserves its own show, but there are phenomenal textile alternatives out there too polyesters and acrylics. So yeah, absolutely. . I feel like I just depressed to everybody, but there is a little bit of a fix. Don't go throw out your clothing, like if it fits and you're still using it wear it don't get rid of it just because it might have a polyester in it. [00:26:00] There's a couple of different companies out there. One is liners for your washing machine, like filters for your washing machine so it'll actually capture those microfibers, the microplastics, and then you can just dispose of them appropriately in the trash so it doesn't get into the waterways. Or, they make like laundry bags. You can put your clothing in the bag and the bag will actually capture the same thing as the filter would for your washing machine.

Sarah Ferris: But how does that work? Then you pull the bag out and then you've just got like your clothes, but then like a whole load of crap in it as well?

Cait Bagby: Think of it, like cleaning out the lint trap on your dryer.

Sarah Ferris: Okay. That makes sense.

Cait Bagby: Same thing. Either way, it's not a great solution because it's still plastic then going into the dumps.

Sarah Ferris: I guess every little bit helps, right? Please tell me it does.

Cait Bagby: Yes! A hundred percent. Absolutely. And then two other tips. One is pretty obvious, which is just when you do laundry, make sure it's always a full load. Don't do half loads, things like that, because then you're just using more. Sarah...

Sarah Ferris: [00:27:00] Don't you worry If anything it's too full.

Cait Bagby: The other thing dryer sheets and you don't use those? Right?

Sarah Ferris: No.

Cait Bagby: Now I'm curious, they're pretty popular in the US. You can find they're called dryer balls. They've actually been around for a long, long time.

Sarah Ferris: Oh no. We've got those balls that you stick in there. Like the little spiky balls that you stick in the dryer

Cait Bagby: Yes. Americans on a whole use dryer sheets, but in the last two years, there's been a movement to move to the dryer balls and there's a couple different kinds. One, you pointed out there's the plastic one with the spikes on it. There is rubber and then there's the wool. Wool is the most eco-friendly option out of all of those. But again, if you're already using something and it works, don't throw it out, just keep using it for its life. It helps prevent your clothing from clumping together in the dryer. It kind of fluffs them, which actually reduces drying time so then you're saving even more energy and money.

Sarah Ferris: Amazing. I never used them. I only ever put them in when I've got like a puffer jacket or something that I need [00:28:00] to like fluff back up cause it goes all flat and deflated when it goes and all the feathers like pop out or whatever it is inside it. That's the only time we use them so use them all the time now.

Cait Bagby: Yeah.

Sarah Ferris: On it.

Cait Bagby: Still not your challenge for the week. Before we do that, I want to know how did last week's challenge of not buying wrapping paper go?

Sarah Ferris: Okay. So for those who didn't join us last week, Cait's challenge to me for the last week was that I had to wrap my 13 year old's birthday presents with zero waste and I had to get creative with it. There was definitely some wins and some fails, but I actually recorded my daughter Aviana's reaction so that you can hear, well, I'll let you decide if it was a success or not.

Cait Bagby: So curious to see how this went. Let's hear it

Sarah's Family: It's wrapping with a scarf. I love it. Do you know why they're wrapped like that? I don't know why that. What do you rank them out of 10? [00:29:00] Eleven. It would be a lot easier to open. Do you recognize that paper? I do. It's from my birthday party. So sustainable. Exactly! The sustainability challenge for the week. So in terms of my sustainability effort? 10 out of 10. Okay, good. It looks amazing. Which one's the worst? What's the favorite?

Recording (Multiple Voices): This scarf is my favorite. What about the worst one? This is the least creative. That's the one, she's pointing to the one, with the recycled paper. It does look like something shocking.

Cait Bagby: Sarah, stop it. That is the sweetest response. I don't even know what the gift was, but honestly, I think she was happier with the scarf.

Sarah Ferris: I know it was funny. And I was thinking, I'm going to try and keep it up and do this, but then I'm thinking, I don't think I've got enough scarves to cope with Christmas, so I'm going to there. But it was so cool. So what I did [00:30:00] is we've got a street WhatsApp in my neighborhood and it's been great over lockdown. I put on the WhatsApp, I said, "oh God, I've got this challenge. Does anyone have any ideas?" And out of that, I got so many cool ideas. And one of them was the scarf one. Somebody else showed me how to tie a box with an actual long sleeve shirt, which was cool and then I also managed to get a recycled lovely hotel chocolate sparkling box, and even had a little secret drawer on the bottom and I stuffed it with some exercise clothing, uh, that, um, fitted in. So she was really excited. The funny thing was that she used the word sustainability without me even mentioning it. I think the generation is just so much more on board than we ever were.

Cait Bagby: She sounded so impressed by just that small little detail. It was heartwarming

Sarah Ferris: The fact that I had to recycle that paper at the end and not rip it with the sellotape already was, I was just like, oh God. And I was like, trying to tie it together without it all popping out without using sellotape so I used that [00:31:00] ribbon and that broke, and it was just a bit of a shit show, but, you know.

Cait Bagby: She didn't even say - I think the question was like, which one's your least favorite or something along those lines. She didn't say because it looks, like it got dropped 20 times down the stairs. She said, because it was the least creative, that was it.

Sarah Ferris: You're right.

Cait Bagby: They're beautiful. I loved them and that reaction. Oh my gosh.

Sarah Ferris: 13 could have gone either way.

Cait Bagby: To be fair. I was not expecting that response. I was expecting a "eww mom. What are you doing?"

Sarah Ferris: So was I, to be fair? I was like, she's going to be like "wow, you've just ruined the birthday."

Cait Bagby: Hey, thanks for this. Um. Now, you and I have decided we are going to put everything out on the line, the laundry line as it was this week and talk about our greenie wins and greenie losses for the week and my loss this week, I have to come clean is that I went to the grocery store and I forgot my reusable bags

Sarah Ferris: shame, shame, shame on [00:32:00] you. Young lady. I did the same thing.

Cait Bagby: It sounds so simple. And it's just like, oh, get over it. Whatever you forgot them. But I think too often, we've had this conversation where we internalize this kind of guilt, which is why we're calling it the guilty greenie, because we internalize that if we're not doing everything perfectly, then we've failed. And I actually had that moment for myself this week where I was like, oh, this is not great, but, grace. We're all guilty. We're all bumbling around trying to figure.

Sarah Ferris: That is true. I did something similar because I went to the supermarket and realized you could buy reusable bags to put your mangoes or whatever you're getting. And you had to put them in plastic bags at the supermarket. It was really annoying me. So I thought, oh, I'll get these. They were like some reusable bags that I'll be able to use next time. But because I hadn't purchased them yet, I couldn't use them because I didn't want to think that I was stealing them. So I was like, oh God, I mean, really, come on, give me a break. I tried.

Cait Bagby: That's what they call being between a rock and a hard place. It's like, I'm trying to make [00:33:00] the right decision, but you're not making this easy for me what-so-ever.

Sarah Ferris: Exactly, up shit creek without a paddle is probably what I would say, not as eloquent as you.

Cait Bagby: What was your win of the week then?

Sarah Ferris: Okay, so my win of the week, I've got two, I'm going to cheat. I had to order some badges for a promotional podcast thing that I'm doing. What I did was I Googled eco badges and I found a company that makes them out of like a really stiff cardboard, recycled. It's yeah. Sorry, just wacked my microphone there; so excited about my badges, I am. Yeah, made out of recycled...

Cait Bagby: Calm down a little bit,

Sarah Ferris: So exciting Cait, I can't tell you. They haven't arrived yet, so I don't know if it's a win or if it's going to be like a soggy paper loss, we'll find out. That was one win. And then my second win was today, I didn't have a shower. That's not a one for anyone else in the house, but, uh, it's a win for me because I got woken up very early by my eldest daughter go, I [00:34:00] forgot my alarm didn't go off and I've got to get to work. So I had to race out of the house and then I thought ahh I just saved the world an extra shower.

Cait Bagby: I feel like you're setting us up for success right now because that is going to be our subject for next week.

Sarah Ferris: Oh, what, me being stinky? My challenge bit to not be that I'm not allowed to shower for a week.

Cait Bagby: There it is. You started off a day early. Didn't even know it.

Sarah Ferris: Oh my God. Lucky. It's not like a scratch and sniff podcast. It would be horrendous by next week. I couldn't be doing that.

Cait Bagby: Oh, we could always do video. See how the hair is holding up after a week.

Sarah Ferris: Slicked down to my head it would be. So shower next week?

Cait Bagby: Yeah. Shower next week and I think we'll probably expand that because I don't know if we can talk for an entire hour on showering, but we'll expand that to maybe some shower products or, best practices, bathroom, best practices.

Sarah Ferris: Oh yes. And I can tell you the story about my adventure making soap.

Cait Bagby: Sorry. I'm trying not to laugh because I feel like I know where this is. [00:35:00]

Sarah Ferris: One trick pony. Let me just tell you that much. But we'll, save it for next week.

Cait Bagby: I'm excited. I'm going to learn something from you because I've mentioned now several times. I'm just not someone who likes to make things I don't like to sew. It's just not my forte and that's, I'm going to tell myself that's okay.

Sarah Ferris: I think it's good that you accept that you can't, because what I have done is not accept that I can't and so I still tried.

Cait Bagby: Okay, so we've teased as long enough, this week's challenge drum roll, please...

Sarah Ferris: Oh God. What's it going to be?

Cait Bagby: I'm going to challenge you...very professional sounding.

Sarah Ferris: I was a drum roll in my last life.

Cait Bagby: I am going to challenge you to hang dry your clothes for the week.

Sarah Ferris: Sorry, you're breaking up on me, you breaking up on me.

Cait Bagby: Oh, is my audio going out again? Oh, convenient excuse.

Sarah Ferris: Oh my God. Are you serious? For several reasons, this is going to be a mountain of a challenge. Okay. Let me just start with number one. [00:36:00] Number one, I live in the UK it's summer. It's raining today, right? Number two, start school next week so they're going to be going to school with damp uniforms on their back, which is going to be lovely. They're going to be those kids.

Cait Bagby: And they're listening right now. Just rolling their eyes going. Nope. We can stop at the present wrapping.

Sarah Ferris: Yeah. They'll be like sneaking up in the middle of the night and putting the dryer on. Um, okay. But I'm up for it. I'm up for it. I think I can do that. I'm not promising I won't fail.

Cait Bagby: Fair enough. I feel like if you're going from zero to a hundred, that's a lot so even 50% of the time.

Sarah Ferris: No, don't worry. I shouldn't tell you this cause then you would have accepted mine, but I already, use a, do you call them a clothes horse?

Cait Bagby: I know a clothes horse is something else, but I know what you're referring to.

Sarah Ferris: I don't have a really skinny model sitting out in the backyard that I just hang clothes off. That's not what I mean by a clothes horse. It's an air drying situation that we put outside with our washing that we don't like to put through the dryer. There'd be no way I would put through sports gear because it [00:37:00] just would one end up getting a little bitty bits on it and two ruins that kind of fabric. I do have a headstart on that, but things like towels and underwear and socks and all that stuff straight in the dryer. That's a good couple of loads that will be saved by next week. I promise.

Cait Bagby: Very curious to see how your experience goes to this. Sometimes when we do things, we don't know how we're going to feel the outcome. And sometimes, we set off with best intentions and we're just like over it and beyond frustrated after a week, and then other times we find it, like Aviana is response, actually really pleasant so I'm curious to see how this turns out.

Sarah Ferris: I think that's an interesting point. What you've added to my week, a full working week, is just an additional amount of labor so I can't imagine going to your, a lovely heartwarming little reminiscent audio from me by the end of next week.

Cait Bagby: You never know there could be new family routines. You could all make it into a game. I'm curious to see where you take this. To answer your question, you didn't ask, but I'm going to tell you anyways, [00:38:00] a clothes horse: I've always known it as someone who is concerned with wearing very fashionable clothing. Or a lot of clothing.

Sarah Ferris: I get that reference, but yeah, we definitely call the clothes hangers: clothes horses. Even when we were at university, we used to have one that had the little clips for the underwear on it and we called it Chomper. Chomper, the clothes horse. We went way too deep with that. Moving on.

Cait Bagby: You already know what you're doing when it comes to hanging your clothes. You've given it a nickname. There's a routine. You have your favorites. This is going to go well, I know it.

Sarah Ferris: There you go.

Cait Bagby: With that, join us next week to find out. Thank you all for joining us today on a guilty greenie: the good, the bad and the laughable as we tackle our own sustainability journeys. Hope you all have a great morning, afternoon, evening, and welcome to the guilty greenie

Sarah Ferris: Thanks everybody. Bye bye.