

Fashion Fictions Material Mindfulness reflections

Welcome! This is a space to share reflections following the Material Mindfulness challenge.

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Guidance

We're using this Padlet as a space to capture your reflections on the Material Mindfulness challenge.

To add a response to a question, click the + in the relevant column and write your response in the box that appears, then click 'publish'.

You can answer individually or collectively as a breakout room, whichever you prefer. You can edit or delete a post that you have added by clicking the three dots at the top right hand corner of the post. You can also comment on and like others' responses.

We'll be using your responses to think about the impacts of the challenge and explore ideas for the future!

What have you learnt from this challenge? What happened when you took time to look closely?

That I tend to select from the 'front of my wardrobe' and think in a uniform, pragmatic way.

The challenge encouraged me to think and dress more creatively about what I wear and why I bought a piece in the first place.

I realised how much of my wardrobe is already handmade (I'd been thinking about it in terms of "I'd like to make my own wardrobe someday"), and almost all the rest is secondhand. I do now think very carefully about any items I need to buy new. – ANONYMOUS

It helped me reconnect with the reason that I post on Instagram - to be more connected with my clothes and wear my wardrobe. It made me think about variety and different combinations

Whilst it was easy to think of clothing with an emotional, tactile, nostalgic connection, it was challenging to think of clothing in

the sense of spiritual.

the meaning of 'spiritual'

We found clothes we loved and the stories behind them but some of us struggled with the 'spiritual' element - what does it mean for everyone? Is it the same as meaningful, or emotional?

We associated some clothing with places and really remembered that. Connected to memories and other people.

Some clothes have been kept as a reminder of the past or past experiences - holidays, life before disability, special occasions. If it was something we made, we remembered the making process. "From a sensory point of view, that's beautiful."

that all the prompts could've been applied to just one object

to value more 'everyday' clothes

One of our group was on holiday and so didn't have access to the full wardrobe - she felt this taught her more appreciation for her limited collection, to value the more 'functional' than fashionable clothes that might have been found at home.

I've learnt that I don't want to buy from the shops any more, no more fast fashion.

Making and customising is something I'm much more interested in than something that's brand new – ANONYMOUS

I learnt that I had a deep connection with many of my pieces of clothing. I also learnt that I have more than enough items of clothing that will last me. I want to change my behaviours.

I learnt that I actually didn't spend a lot of time thinking about my clothes in the morning. But, I did learn I have my whole wardrobe.

Sad Nostalgia

I miss the oblivious love of the fashion industry and clothes shopping that I used to have.....

The combination of the picture, the wearing and the writing about the garment definitely made me think more about every aspect of the garment - its origins, why I wear it, what it makes me feel like to wear it, its materiality and the detail of its materiality. I hadn't thought that deeply previously about the dungaree pocket I posted - a pocket from an old pair of jeans removed and stitched onto a much newer pair of dungarees. I realised that I really loved the contrast of something old being added to something new and that process really 'enriching' the dungarees. It also made me think that, in this instance the old thing (the pocket) wasn't from a particularly meaningful or precious garment, but if it had been, what difference would that have made to the new garment.....

This challenge showed me that I usually select the clothes I wear based on incredibly pragmatic choices - what the weather is like, what I'm up to that day. It's very function based. But I found that quite a few of the prompts meant I couldn't always reach for the practical option, so I had to get creative with what I wore to meet the needs I still had.

Looking closely each day helped me feel a greater connection to my clothes. And with each day I began to reach more and more for me-made clothes (or things I've mended/altered), as these have deeper meaning, or more stories within them.

The Challenge gave me a reaffirmation that all the time I am investing on my conscious clothing is worth the effort.. it reminded me of things I knew but forgot about..

How I think about clothes very differently to my younger self and that the pieces I included in response to the FF MM hashtags are generally #preloved with a history that I would like to know more about.

time to reflect

doing the fashion fictions material mindfulness challenge prompted me to reflect on my attitudes to fashion and clothing, some of which were reinforced - others which I'd like to improve. In terms of having a bricolage attitude to fashion communication that's something I've always maintained and hope to continue. the process prompted me to get round to mending a precious yellow children's rucksack that otherwise might have become worn out or gone on my mum's to do list (pretty lengthy). I'd like to practice repairing treasured items in good time

That I don't usually think about the detail in my garments when I get dressed in the morning. Looking at those details reminded me why I chose them or made them in the first place.

Have you done anything differently as a result of the challenge? Do you plan to do anything differently in the future?

make more clothes

More checking in with my clothes, using my hands to select, repair or think about repairing my clothes - spending time with them.

I will wear more of what I have and buy even less.

I think I will wear more of my wardrobe - it has made me think more creative. I think I will be more likely to plan what I wear in advance

think about the sensory experience of wearing our clothes

I managed to get rid of my floordrobe, put things away, and actually take a look at what's in my closet, how it's organised, what I do & don't need.

To take care of my clothes more

I 'shopped' my wardrobe and put together some great new combinations that I wouldn't have worn before. I took the time to think about what I was wearing. It has helped me to think about what I will/not buy in the future.

It's made me want to look more at my wardrobe and keep it tidy! Even get the iron out and iron things. That never happened before.

I folded up my garment very carefully after wearing

Look a bit more carefully into the depths of my wardrobe rather than reaching for the same clothes all the time without really thinking.

Put a bit more time into thinking about the connections to garments as I plan what to wear and tune into how they are affecting how I feel.

During the challenge I definitely felt like I was thinking about my clothing more carefully and giving my wardrobe my full attention for longer than I normally would each day. But to be honest, since the challenge I've gone back to normal, grabbing the clothing I need in the morning.

I enjoyed the prompts as a method for selection and I wonder about creating some sort of random word generator (that could include things like emotions or memories, actions etc) that could help disrupt my regular selection process, and help me continue to see my clothing in new ways and select pieces I often overlook

I am spending a little more time thinking and exploring my wardrobe before I pull out something to wear.. the little details seem more beautiful!!

A project to make five hats this month became a fun and challenging experience in thinking about the details and the fictional world my hats were suggesting. The hats started telling a story I was not expecting to hear. The project became more because of #MaterialMindfulness and #FashionFictions.

Keep going with the way I find new pieces and celebrate the fact that what I like now is changing.

make do and mend

I've long understood hypothetically and intellectually the wisdom for pocket and planet of repairing and repurposing before stuff goes out to be recycled or worse landfill. I have taken small steps and made an intention towards this ideal, obviously its a process and needs further effort. also just wanting to look after things well, and to resist whims bought from Wish for example when I

know well the charity shop is more ethical and better quality if you're discerning

It reminded me to repair and alter a few items that had been out of circulation. And I plan to do more of that and even reconfigure and upcycle a few pieces.

Thinking on a bigger scale, has this challenge given you any ideas for action to create a better fashion system?

I used to be part of the fashion system but don't want to be any more. I would be interested if it was more communal, based on sharing and repairing and storytelling, like this challenge has been.

I loved the communal aspect! makes you feel you're not alone in your interests, ethics, goals – ANONYMOUS

education!

we need to learn to make, mend, alter, tailor - we wouldn't have the same kind of throwaway culture if we had the education our parents and grandparents had in these skills

If people were better skilled in the care and maintenance of clothing it would change relationships to clothing and wardrobes.

To move the focus away from the process of acquiring towards the process of use

Clothing rationing

Let's lobby government s to introduce clothing rationing!

I love this idea, and I think we're in a very small minority who'd appreciate it! ...But what about doing a group challenge/project to follow rationing rules for a certain amount of time? It might at least bring some awareness for people who hadn't considered it.

– ANONYMOUS

To incorporate ideas of exploring fashion and fast fashion in my teaching. To get back in touch with the local stitch it don't ditch it crew.

I've been thinking a lot in recent months/years about aspects of care and attention in relation to what we value, and what we choose to have in our lives. Objects that we care about, things that we are personally connected to/with, are more likely to be

things that we look after, repair and repurpose rather than throw away and replace.

Finding ways for people to be reminded of their connections to their clothes, to acknowledge them and pay attention - these have got to be helpful steps on the way to being satisfied with what we already have (and help reduce consumption).

Maybe there's scope for developing daily rituals of attention and care for our clothing, whether that's personal or communal.

Care, maintenance and appreciate of fabric should be promoted more.. i would love to be part of a community that thinks like me..

Sure, or maybe just reinforced the feeling I've had for several years now that I'm done with buying new clothes. I have more than enough. I'm trying harder to give away what doesn't work and reuse what can be reused.

Make Do and Mend!

I bought a booklet with this title in the local charity bookstore and on reading it (published 1943) so many of the suggestions included are what we are trying to achieve now. We lost our way.... I was a needlework teacher in my past and when we stopped teaching the basics it all started to go wrong!

talking

i think opening dialogues that are dialogues where people can dialectically perhaps explore fashion consumption and make more conscious choices.

This is something I think about all the time, however it gave me a new perspective, It made me consider reusing all the garments I have that are jammed into the back of my closet and refashion them into something new.

Would you like to take part in the challenge again? If so, do you have any ideas for one-word prompts, or feedback on the format?

It'd be great to also articulate a "bail-out" option. Just post something about what you are wearing today :) - if you are overthinking the prompt - from the group.

I like the prompts, they helped me think – ANONYMOUS

How about emotions as prompts? Wendy's suggestion
– ANONYMOUS

10 days as opposed to 15.

Prompts

Sheer
Horizontal
Vertical
Fringe
Asymmetric
Layers
Drape

Prompts continued...

Stiff
Fluid
Fuzzy
Contrast
Minimal
Complex
Fasten

I'm wondering if I would have posted more if they weren't consecutive days. More like the mushroom challenge: 1 a week?

Yes definitely. I liked the format - would have liked to have seen the outfits that people wore when they wore the item featured.

Yes. I found the length of the challenge to be just enough. I can't ever think about doing something each day for a month, but a bit longer than a fortnight, yup. I also like the once a week for a 6-wk period idea.

Could be interesting in a different season e.g. high summer, and see how it compares to this time.

The emotion one could also be a way of 'exorcising' negative associations that some clothes might have.....maybe could lead to unworn clothes being rehabilitated back into regular wear.

I would happily take part again. At first I thought the 15 days would be too long but as I was ill for a week in the middle it meant I could still pick it up and finish with everyone. I would be hesitant to do longer than 2 weeks, though.

As for format, I appreciated that it was quite open-ended in terms of how much we were expected to share. I loved seeing other people's posts and hearing their stories but I am a reluctant sharer on instagram and although each day held a lot of stories/thoughts for me, I preferred to only share a photograph. However, I think I'd feel happier to share more the next time, now I know what to expect.

Looking at other responses - I think prompts that are quite broad eg emotions/feelings, textures etc would be good. Especially for exploring the spiritual aspect of world 45

Yes!! Something like repeat? Dull? Vibrant? You?

I'd love to, thank you for your thoughtfulness and creativity in doing this. The fiction aspect caught my attention most, I'd love to do more with that.

Yes... keen to be involved!

I liked the pace, not sure I would be so thorough if it was weekly as life tends to step in.... im interested in natural fibres so that

would be my suggestion

#wool
#cotton
#silk
#linen

Thank you Amy.....

again again?

If I had my time again I would do it again as it was valuable, but whether I want to in a sense retread that ground again, I'm not sure. It would have to be more than just different prompts for me, as enjoyable as it was it took a degree of time and energy, partly because i did enjoy it so much and found myself expounding at length over each post. if i were to suggest a prompt it would be "slogan" because id be interested to hear what people make of the words emblazoned on much clothing. I suspect the more reflective go with "those in the know don't show" but i also find brands interesting to play with, for example, I bought a kappa top second hand on ebay that Id wanted for a while because of Mogwai's appropriation of it as well as a kind of playful upending of expectations regarding artists/writers fashion choices

yes, perhaps some prompts that describe the hand feel, like silky, soft, scratchy etc.

I really appreciated the close-up aspect of the prompts - I liked not being pressured to put together a whole outfit, photograph myself wearing it, and be concerned about the messy house in the background. Having to show just a small detail of a meaningful object was a big help in sticking with the challenge every day.
