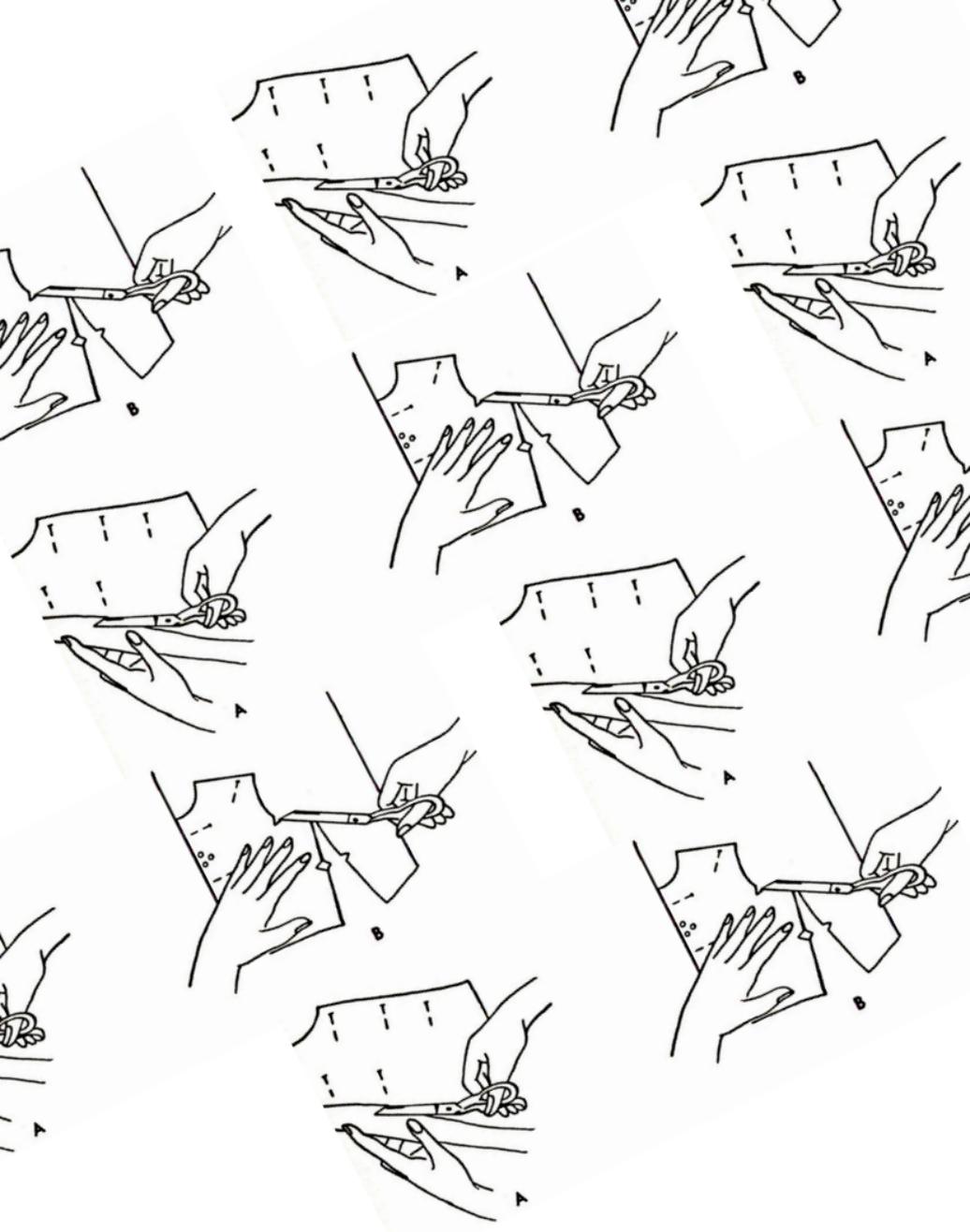


Practices
of
Every day
Ethics

VOLUME 1



YOGA BOLSTERS & DOG BEDS

INTRODUCTION

An everyday ethical challenge is keeping textiles out of the trash. Textile disposal is environmentally damaging and costly—so much so that the City of Vancouver has urged residents to take a “zero waste” approach to textiles. Unfortunately, that isn’t easy.

After **Reducing** consumption of new textiles, **Repairing** textiles for longer use, and finally **Repurposing** items that are torn or poorly fitting, textile waste still accumulates.

In every home, torn sheets, clothing, and stained rags pile up. If you are a home sewer/sewist, you know there are cut pieces and threads that add up during sewing projects. Yes, some thrift stores and a small number of donation bins will take these items, but this is not a very sustainable option. Once dropped off, the textile scraps need sorting and transport to processing facilities in the offshore rag industry. Transporting textiles and the processing of rags into new items are both costly and polluting.

This ‘zine offers one an option for repurposing rags and textile pieces after reuse and repair options have been exhausted. To kick off a series of ‘zines about practices of everyday ethics, making yoga bolsters or dog beds is presented here as a **system of managing textile waste**. Through this “practice”, you can put textile scraps into continual use and reuse. If you learned to use a blue bin, you can learn to make yoga bolsters and dog beds!

Lois Klassen
2022

STEP 1: Sew the Form and Cover

The **Form** can be sewn from stained or damaged fabric because it will not be seen. This could be the parts of a torn sheet that are still strong (like the edges of a fitted sheet that is only worn in the centre) or old curtains.

The **Cover** can be sewn from newer home décor fabric such as heavier curtain fabric or light upholstery. You might find something suitable in the household section of a thrift store or—better—from a supplier of “dead stock”. *

Dead Stock* is surplus fabric sourced from local textile manufacturers. The small pieces (“off cuts” or “ends”) that are left over from industrial projects are often high quality and versatile. Using dead stock significantly reduces carbon emissions by decreasing transport of these textiles to either offshore recycling or out of province incinerators or landfill sites. Check out Vancouver-based dead stock suppliers, **FabCycle and **Our Social Fabric**, listed at the end of this ‘zine. **Take advantage of their one-time discount codes!**

IMPORTANT: Do not forget to pre-wash and machine dry new fabric before cutting and sewing.

SEWING THE YOGA BOLSTER

The yoga bolster **Form** is made from 3 pieces:

- 1 - bolster body
- 2 - bolster ends

The yoga bolster **Cover** is made from 5 pieces:

- 1 - bolster body

- 2 - bolster ends
- 2 - bolster handles (one for each end)

You can make the bolster any size or shape, depending on how you want to use it, but here are two shapes with the required sizes of pieces:

	Rectangular Yoga Bolster (25 x 12 x 7" approx. finished size)	Round Yoga Bolster (29 x 10" approx. finished size)
Form - bolster body (cut 1)	25 x 36"	30 x 34"
Form - bolster ends (cut 2)	12 x 7"	10" diameter circle
Cover - bolster body (cut 1)	26 x 37"	30.5 x 34.5"
Cover - bolster ends (cut 2)	13 x 8"	10.5" diameter circle
Cover - bolster handles (cut 2)	13 x 4"	10.5 x 4"

Sew the body of the Form into a tube by bringing the short edges together. Use a double or "French seam" for strength. Attach one of the ends to one end of the body (again use a double seam or French seam). Attach the other end only partially so that it is like an open lid. It will get hand sewn shut once the tube is filled.

Make the handles for the Cover by sewing the short sides together (right sides inside) and inverting, and ironing flat (with the seam in the centre). Attach the handles to the right side of each end piece using only ¼" seam allowance.

Sew the body of the Cover into a tube by bringing the short edges together. Use a regular seam (sight sides together), iron seam open, and then topstitch the seam allowance open.

Attach one of the ends to one end of the body (double seam is useful here for strength). Attach the other end only partially so that it is like an open lid. It will get hand sewn shut once the tube is filled.

Put the Form inside the Cover.

SEWING THE DOG BED

The bog bed Form is made from 1 or 2 pieces:

- 1 - dog bed body piece (48 x 36") that is folded, or
- 2 - dog bed body pieces (24 x 36")

The dog bed Cover is made from 1, 2 or 3 pieces:

- 1 - dog bed body piece (49 x 37") that is folded, or
- 2 - dog bed body pieces (25 x 37"), or
- 3 - dog bed body pieces (1 - 25 x 37; 2 - 25 x 25") that are sewn to make envelope-style opening**

**The envelope-style opening that is common for covers of cushions intended for humans but might not withstand your pet's curiosity and need to burrow, so consider their behaviour in your decision.

Sew the Form into a cushion shape. Use a double or French seam for strength. Leave a portion of one side open.

Sew the Cover together in the same way. For the envelope opening, make a generous 2" hem on a one side of each of the smaller pieces. Overlap them and line them up with the larger piece (right sides together) and sew the outside edge.

Put the Form inside the Cover of the regular Cover. If you are using the envelope opening, set the Cover aside until the Form is filled.

STEP 2: Fill

Gather a pile of textile discards and scraps. Make sure they are free of strong odors, oils, or anything that will break down, mold, or rot. Use scissors or a rotary cutter to cut the textiles into small pieces -smaller is better. Clean, fiber-filled pillows that have lost shape can be opened and added. Yarns and worn sweaters work well. Cut, shred, or rip all the fabric into small pieces, and use them to fill the Form. Prop up the Form and use it like a recycling container that you add to as textile waste accumulates. As it fills, shake, or pummel the Form into a usable shape. Eventually it will be full, and that will be the time to hand sew the open end closed. Sew up the Form first and then the Cover. If you have chosen the envelope closure, sew the Form closed and then put it into the Cover.

STEP 3: Use & Re-Use

Enjoy your new yoga bolster or dog bed, or give them away. If you use the practice of making Yoga Bolsters and Dog Beds as a system of textile re-use in your home, you will eventually make

more than you can use. Give them away. Users of a neighbourhood "Buy Nothing" group might appreciate them.

When the Cover is soiled and the filling seems shapeless, carefully remove the hand stitching of the Cover and take out the Form. The Form can be aired, vacuumed, and pummeled back into shape. You may want to sew a new Form if the original has worn out. You can reuse the same filling and mix in more. The Cover can be washed and reapplied.

If the contents get soiled or can't be cleaned for reuse, this item will need to be discarded in a landfill or incinerated. This is because most textiles are mixed-materials (i.e. natural fibers fused with synthetic fibers). Mixed fibers are impossible to separate into decomposable and recyclable states, and therefore, cannot be composted.

If you know how to accurately distinguish natural fibers from synthetic, consider making an all-natural Form for decomposable fibers. When the life of an all-natural yoga bolster or dog bed is over, it can be opened and deposited into an industrial composting receptacle. From there, its new life cycle as soil will begin!

For the yoga bolsters or dog beds containing the ever-present mixed fibers, may their presence in your everyday life serve as a reminder to choose biodegradable fibers whenever you need to bring new textiles into your home!

The 'zine series,
Practices of Everyday Ethics

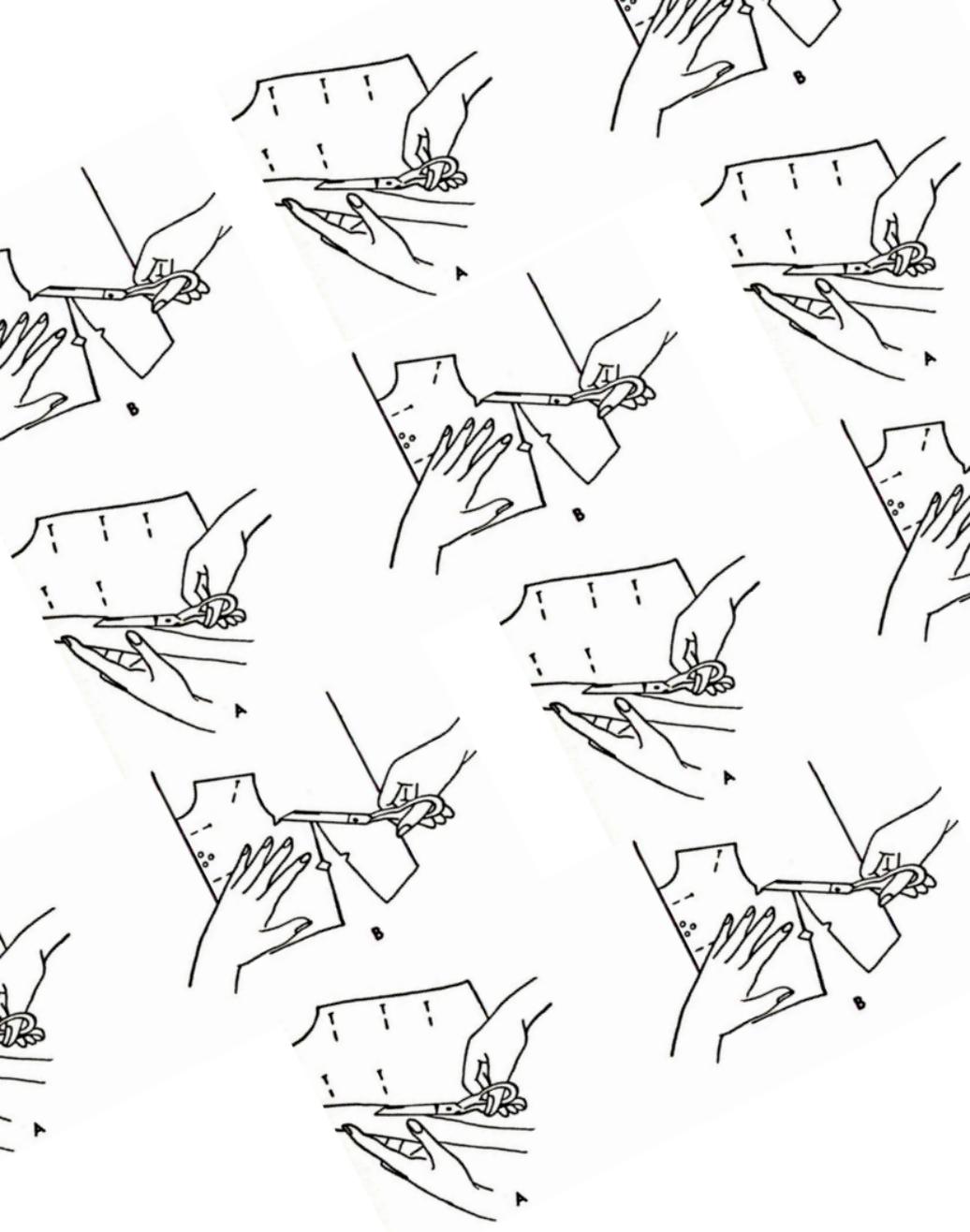
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