

## WHAT IS BUY NOTHING DAY AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Consumers in the US spend an average of almost \$900 per person on Christmas gifts.

42% of European consumers feel forced to spend at Christmas.

You would think that with that amount of (unwanted) spending, the rest of the year people wouldn't feel the need to shop.

But not in today's society.

The ever growing hunger for consumption has led to the phenomenon Black Friday and his companion Cyber Monday.

Two "holidays" where "the best deals" are congesting your inbox, where shoppers are camping outside stores hours before opening time and where you – at least last year when there was no pandemic – are able to shoot this type of footage of insane shopping frenzies in probably 80% of the shopping malls in Western countries.

What is wrong with Black Friday and Cyber Monday?

First, let me start by saying that I am not against a good deal. I mean, if you have the option to save a few euros, dollars, pesos or yen, do it. However....

I am against "good" deals on *CRAP YOU DON'T NEED*.

Why?

Because for all this worthless stuff that will just end up gathering dust in a box stored in the barn or the attic, or that is tossed out without even being used, precious resources were taken from the Earth.

Harmful greenhouse gases are emitted into the air to produce all this stuff, putting even more pressure on our suffering planet Earth. We are already taking so much from the Earth that our "*Earth Overshoot Day*" fell on August 22nd this year (in spite of the pandemic). That means that we are currently living "in debt" with the planet. Producing and buying even more is NOT going to help pushing that date back.

A battle against more-more-more: Buy Nothing Day

As a protest against consumerism, Buy Nothing Day originated in Canada in 1992. It's the brainchild of Vancouver based artist Ted Dave.

Buy Nothing Day is "a day for society to examine the issue of over-consumption."

In the past years, the day spread out across other nations and is currently "celebrated" in over 65 nations. Although the day has received critical feedback that it just delays the shopping, rather than changing the underlying habits, I still think it is a great initiative that should be supported.

I hope there comes a time where "Buy Nothing Day" is no longer necessary and every day is shifted to "Buy Within the Boundaries of the Planet Day", but until then, count me in!

When is it Buy Nothing Day in 2020?

It depends on the country you are from. Here in The Netherlands, Buy Nothing Day is on Saturday, November 28th, just like in Belgium. In countries such as the U.S. and the U.K., it's Friday, November 27th.

What else can I do on Buy Nothing Day – besides not shopping?

Over the years, several traditions other than not purchasing products, were born around Buy Nothing Day. Depending on where you are located – and with local restrictions in mind due to the coronavirus – you might spot or participate in:

Cut up your credit card

we don't have a big "credit card culture" in Holland, but cutting up your credit card (or the one of others) is one of the easiest protest activities on Buy Nothing Day. At least in terms of time – the psychological load might be a bit heavier.

#### Zombie Walk

Participants of Buy Nothing Day have been spotted walking around as zombies through shopping malls. While these "zombies" don't bother shoppers, they do give them a blank stare as they push their empty zombie shopping carts through the store or mall.

#### Whirly Mart

This action involves Buy Nothing Day-ers pushing their shopping carts around the malls or stores in long conga-like lines, obviously all the while they are not putting a single thing into their carts.

#### Buy Nothing Hike

This is my favorite. Just ignore all the stores and instead head out to nature to enjoy the a long walk on the beach, in the forest, a park, or next to the river.

If you are ready to take a stand against consumerism, Buy Nothing Day is a great start. So mark your calendar, pick your Buy Nothing Day activity and enjoy the best deal of all: save 100% by not spending anything!

*written by Nati 02/11/2020*