

**“The biggest change comes from a series of small,
individual actions rather than from big international declarations –**

A realization that brings change within the reach of us all”

-Kate Fletcher and Lynda Grose – Fashion and sustainability (Design for change)

Sometimes, I wonder, what would it be like, to enter a world where people meet each other physically, yet their meet ups are somehow virtual. A world where we could teleport from the hot and sandy Sahara Desert to the beautiful and roaring Niagara Falls within the blink of the eye. A world where people are connected to each other while they learn anything and everything they want. How amazing it would be to live in a world full of endless possibilities, a world full of freedom, a world where we breathe physically yet live virtually.

Living in a world where people are not judged for their actions, a world where people can do anything and everything with a few clicks makes me feel powerful. Be it attending the therapy sessions virtually or meditating for a better lifestyle virtually, the idea of being able to do all of the things sitting at one place is exciting and mind-shattering.

Living in the virtual world would be extremely helpful for the nature. It would be a world where people would imagine the importance of nature. It would be a world where people would not be pretending to care for the climate change, but will be, in all essence, helping to make a difference to the climate by attending classes virtually and decreasing the energy consumption. It would be a world where people would realize the harmful effects of carbon emission in all its true sense and would make the utmost genuine of efforts to curtail it.

It is 2021, and the world has seen a pandemic. In the past few years, every country was taking steps to grow digitally, but with the onset of Covid-19, those steps seemed to have turned into leaps. We have been living in an era of WEB 2.0 where people are on social media, using multiple internet services in lightning fast speed. Every new gadget in the market is 5G and research is being conducted for 6th and 7th generation for new generation technologies. Gone are the days when living “virtually” was a “luxury”, Covid-19, very effectively made it a “necessity.” It took us time, but soon everyone adapted the “new normal” and has now become extremely dependent on the technology.

Like humans, technology has also evolved over time. Gone are the days when we would think of a specific time, place a movie to be downloaded and then wait for hours to view it without the element of buffering. Today, we have stepped into a world where we can, at any point of time, take out our device, open one of the streaming apps and watch whatever we want to, with no irritating advertisements and a high quality visual.

If you see the world from the prism of fashion, you shall realise how fashion in today's time has become a form of self-expression. Deep down, everyone is imagining a world where people fashion is more sustainable, gender-neutral and flexible. We have evolved. We want to live in a world where colours are not associated with genders let alone the fact that some specific clothes are associated with gender.

Hence, I would very happily like to live in a world where fashion is free. A world where technology helps me to style my avatar, make it wear anything and everything that I want. Living in a virtual world would help people express themselves through their fashion. A virtual world would be more accepting, and it would be a safe place where people will be using their fashion as a reflection of their mood, their opinions, their choices and their preferences. It would, in all its essence, be a free world.

The fact that all of us are currently living in a society where passive buying has taken a toll over the environment is extremely harmful for the environment. The amount of waste generated with fashion even though we are adopting to a more sustainable fashion is shocking. When we step into a virtual world, we will be curtailing all the waste produced by fashion and be living a free life. *Louis Vuitton's partnership with Riot games, Marc Jacobs and Valentino outfits have turned up in animal crossing.* It is a high-time that we step into a world where every brand goes digital and decreases the production which leads to carbon emission.

Have you ever experienced the virtual concert? A place where you sit at one place and enter the virtual world to attend the live concert. *Fortnite virtual concert happened last year when everyone of us quarantined. More than 12 million players logged in for Fortnite's concert featuring Travis Scott and other popular music artist.* That is what the new normal is.

The amount of help we can take form technology to reduce carbon emission from industries by establishing a more frequent collaboration between science and fashion and Textile Industry is extreme. *IPCC (The intergovernmental panel on climate change) report 2021 tells us that between 2011 and 2020, annual artic sea ice reached its lowest level since 1850. By 2050, the best-case scenario predicts artic seas to be ice free come summertime.* We now, for a fact know, that living in a world of virtual if the reel need of the hour.

I would like to step into a more woke world. A world where people are transparent and are aware of anything and everything that happens around them. Currently, there is very less transparency in fashion industry, where people don't even know about animal abuse and unhealthy working condition in fashion industry. A piece of denim travels thousands of miles before reaching to the customer. We are living in a world where consumers are not even aware about the supply chain and the consequences. In every step of a supply chain there is an exploitation of at least one worker and lots of transportation materials which is also responsible for carbon emission.

The fact that all of this is possible is something that is relieving, In the past, we have observed genuine efforts by the brands to make the world a more sustainable place. *Initiatives like*

Modiface which uses the technology of augmented reality to create the realistic AR- try on for beauty products and hair colour. Converse also worked on AR-try on for sneakers that let consumers to make right decision before consuming the products. Collaborations like Balenciaga x Fortnite where Adam Sussman, president of Epic games said in an interview with The Verge that Fortnite(game) has unveiled the collection, includes 4 skins declined in different styles and a selection of accessories, including a sneaker inspired by speed 3.0

As we all are going digital, the gaming industry is also rising, almost 40 % of the population are playing video games. While ago Mark Zuckerberg revealed the new name of the Facebook mother company, Metaverse a hybrid ecosystem-digital and physical where people can teleport.

We have the tools; we have the concept. What we need today is a faster way to implement our thoughts. It is high time we stop ignoring the most important steps that are required to be taken. It is high time that we step into a world where we are citizens first and consumers second. We need to step into a more accepting world in terms of fashion too. It is time we protect the environment from the waste produced by fashion too. It is time we become woke people. It is time we shift to virtual fashion.