

4-26-19 Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Restore, Recolor

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and in that order, if possible. We hear a lot about recycling but imagine, for a moment, if that was not even necessary. When we reduce our use, we have reduced the need for reusing or recycling. When we reuse, we might keep reusing or at least delayed the need for recycling. When there are no other options, we use recycling.

Reusing includes upcycling, which is really cool. Look on Etsy, Houzz, and Ikea Hacks for ideas on using things for and in different ways. A door becomes a headboard. A headboard becomes the back of a bench. It turns out there a million uses for wooden pallets!

It is truly rewarding to accomplish something of beauty that is also useful, knowing it resulted from used parts someone else might have thrown away.

Don't have the knack for upcycling? Consider donating, so that others can benefit from what you don't need. I recently visited Restore, the second hand business in connection with Habitat for Humanity. I did not need anything but stopped in for a look-see. I found solid wood doors at reasonable prices, in a variety of sizes. I am hoping to buy some and switch them out for the hollow doors in my home. My doors are in good condition and would look great in a contemporary setting. They are not "me" though. I would prefer to look at solid wood doors with panels.

While there, I also saw some wedding signs my daughter might be interested in for her September backyard wedding. I sent photos by text and she said Yes!, (both to her fiancé and the signs).

The reason I stopped in at Restore in the first place last Saturday was because I had just left Recolor, where I donated a bunch of paint. I knew that Restore sold their paint and that Habitat for Humanity was a great cause. So, I was curious to see the connection. As it turned out, the "Re" in their names was a coincidence, in connection with recycling. Restore does sell their paint because they like the concept and the product. Recolor is a separate business and they sell to anyone who is interested in their re-mixed latex paint.

From their website:

“Environmental Integrity

Recolor Paints began as a small, women owned, retail store in Scituate, Massachusetts. With a heartfelt concern for the environment, owners Katharine Brown and Tania Keeble are driven by the overwhelming amount of paint wasted in the United States. Currently, their high quality, recycled content paint is found in retail stores up and down the East Coast. Their company, Recolor Paints prides itself in not only offering a high level of customer service but also in its mission to continually reduce its own environmental footprint and help you as well.”

And they are on the state contract list!

“If you are a Massachusetts local or state government entity, consider partnering with us to reduce the amount of paint either wasted, incinerated or added to our landfills. There are two ways to do this. Recycle your leftover latex paint with us or purchase recolor® recycled content paint for your next project. Ask about our special “closed loop” pricing and our existing Statewide Contracts. Did we mention we are also a Massachusetts Women Business Enterprise (WBE).”

Do you know how difficult it is to find a Women Business Enterprise? When applying for grants we are required to at least try to find and consider those businesses. Usually we cannot find one.

Please help pass the word along. The next time your school or town hall has leftover latex paint or is getting ready to paint, please consider Recolor!

As I drove there, I pictured this wonderful business as a small business. I visualized driving up to a small place and dropping off my paint where someone mixed my paint with other paint, until satisfied with a color. Then that person would give it an intriguing name, such as “sharkskin”, “morning sage”, or “sea glass”.

I was blown away when I saw the huge warehouse filled with paint! This is not the small operation I had imagined! The women were busy with a very large order at the time, but they were kind and appreciative of the donation. They do ask questions, such as, “Have these always been stored indoors?” “Have they ever been frozen?”

There is a price to donate. They ask for two dollars per gallon and require less for the quarts. They are willing to “round off” and make a deal. While it is the first time I have ever paid to donate, it made sense to me. I was still helping a good cause. And what were the alternatives? I had moved from a very large house to a small one and would not in a lifetime need the paint I had. So, I donated them so they could be recycled. They were being given a new life! Talk about Recolor!

On my way home, I passed by Good Deeds. A story for another time but what a great business concept. (Dirty Deeds cleans out and Good Deeds sells and donates) I Resisted going in. I was focused on Reducing.

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