Fashion has a huge problem. You are asking why? In fact, the word itself gives you the answer. It is the latest trend. A fast growing machine that somehow cannot stop producing. And now it has come to the point where, well, it overproduced.

What should a person like you, the actual fashion creator, do in such situation? You cannot stop it, you probably do not even want to. It is your business. However, just by reaching for this booklet you have proven that you are interested in finding solutions. Solutions that might fall out of a traditional frame of sustainable strategies. Because yes, there are options, however, most of them concentrate on only improving the production side of fashion. And note that even conscious sustainable brands are only producing more things. So what if we turn towards the opposite direction? Instead of concentrating on producing, we look into using. We learn how to recognise emotional connections and behavioural tendencies of your customers towards their clothing. By showing you a few simple rules to follow, we hope you come to our long live, long wear side. Because really, in the current fashion environmental crisis, you do not have many other options.

And what’s in it for you? Well, first of all, a good feeling that you are doing the right thing. But also trust and loyalty from your customers. Because by creating emotionally durable clothing you show that you are not in it just for the money. You do not direct your customers, you serve them. And that’s above all the most honest business you can do.

above season, beyond fashion
Comfort always comes first. While developing a product be sure to bear in mind consumer’s senses when choosing a material and a shape of the garment.

Aim for harmony within your collection. The pieces should be adaptable to various occasions, easy to style, layer and combine.

Rather than making grand statements, aim to pull focus back onto clothing. Go back to the original idea of product categories to understand their initial function.

Define your brand values and stand by them. Know your customers. Create a brand uniform.

Teach your customer on how to preserve the clothing throughout its user-ship. Embrace the ageing material.

Do not to create a personality. Dress the personality. Give your customers the freedom to wear your clothes in their own way.

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02 Versatility
03 Function
04 Definition
05 Involvement
06 Interpretation
Comfort

To design emotional durable clothing consider that first and foremost your consumer should "feel good" in it. And although the definition of feel good varies from consumer to consumer, there are certain general preferences that you can follow.

Comfort always comes first. While developing the product be sure to bear in mind consumer's senses, the touch, the feel and the shape of the garment.

Material

Think about the last time you wore a polyester blouse for an important meeting. Cheap synthetic materials come with their own price. Discomfort has never been a way how to win a customer over. Consider a piece that you are creating to be an ultimate armour for its wearer. Convenient for any occasion or weather. Use materials that are pleasant for skin and touch.

Do your research and direct your attention towards materials that are suitable for both warmth and cold, resistant towards damage, easy to care for.

Invest in fabrics from responsible sources.

Silhouette

Think about comfort. Then think about that word again. Create clothing that is easy to wear. Covers what needs to be covered. Rather than slim fit, tight clothing design a space. Space to breathe in and experience. Create simple clean silhouettes in solid shapes.

Our favourite garments are most of the times pieces that we feel protected in and secure while wearing. For most of the consumers, a crop top is no such thing.

When you are creating the long lasting design, remember that bodies change and confidence comes and goes. From our research, oversized and covering pieces ended up being the ones to always count on.

I strive for everything in my closet to feel like home. These are pieces that I wore so much, I now know them from the inside out.
The essence of emotional durability is to create clothing that is used often and thus liked. Avoid occasion wear that will most likely only know the hanger of your consumer’s closet. The pieces should be adaptable to various occasions, easy to style, layer and combine. But how do you reach such versatility in your collection?

**Collection consistency**

Do not redefine the style of your customers each and every season. Be consistent with your designs. Stick to a limited colour palette that is occasionally refreshed with a new pattern or print, still easily combined with the rest of your collection. Your designs should be in harmony with your brand identity and your customers’ needs. Establish styles that keep on returning again and again.

**Season-less clothing**

As a fashion brand, it should be in your interest to create clothing that invites to play around the seasons and combine old with new. This is how you earn a solid base of returning customers. Imagine designing a uniform, something that is built over time. The pants from your last season should work with the jacket from the next one. Same goes for the dress from your spring/summer collection paired with a warm sweater. Create a season-less production flow.

It is reasonable that you create seasonal additions, however, make them more of a reward for your customers and avoid over-cramming their wardrobes.
You need clothes for certain purpose, and you don’t need more than one garment for one purpose.

One of the most essential aspects of emotional sustainability is the function of the clothing you as a brand design. Rather than making a grand statement, aim to pull focus back onto clothing. Go back to the original idea of product categories to understand their initial function. Each piece in an emotional durable wardrobe should earn its place on the shelf.

Function

Purpose

Be understated and direct. Create pants which serve the purpose of pants. Do not decide whether your customers wear them to the theatre or for a brunch. In fact, they should be able to do both.

24/7

It takes experience to claim something your favourite. Allow your customers to be able to experience as much as possible in your clothes. From morning to the night. Weekday to the weekend. Make them create their own memories. Because when they do, they just won’t let go that easily.

Make it last

To design a frequently worn garment you have to take into consideration its physical durability. Think lasting materials and quality of manufacture. It might project on the price, however, you are creating a universal, versatile piece that your customers see worth investing in.

Practical

What you might spend on materials or production is what you save on trims. When designing emotionally durable clothing, make sure that each button, zipper or rivet serves its purpose. Less is more! However if possible always include pockets. Big spacious ones. Based on our research among customers, pockets were a valued element of every favourite garment. Even on dresses. Because we are living in the 21st century and it is time for us to give the women the pockets they deserve.
Clear brand identity and knowledge of your target group is a key success to every working business, not only the emotional durable one. Define your brand values and stand by them. Know your customers. This way you avoid stepping into a wrong direction with creating collections that are neither you nor your customers. Do not risk your business and do not risk the environment.

Speciality
Try not to be everything. You might want to experiment between the seasons however if you have always been designing knitwear maybe the denim business is not for you. By specialising in something you allow yourself to refine your products over time, become strong in your own category and therefore gain trust in the quality you produce.

Solid foundation
Your collections should be based on a solid foundation of products that keep on repeating. Pieces that the customers can always find and return to. This way you gain loyalty within your target group.

Brand uniform
Built your own brand uniform. Communicate your values through each and every piece without trying to define how and for what the clothes should be worn. Become recognisable by small details that can be recognisable between consumers.

I kind of already have uniforms. These are the outfits where my friends go “oh that’s so you, just so typical”
The material once rough slowly gets softer and moulds to your body as it gets older and more worn. Every mark becomes personal.

There is a lot of decisions in the design process that affect the longevity of the clothing you have produced. By the time it leaves the store, it might seem that your items are out of your reach and their durability now only depends on the customers. However, whether it is by responsible sourcing of fabrics or just proper aftercare communication you are still able to involve your customers in the process of preserving their clothing throughout their user-ship.

After-care

"Wash on 30 degrees" on your care wash sign might have saved you from angry customers returning shrunk items, however, it might not maintain the quality of your clothing nor the environment. Communicate with your customers how to take proper care of your designs. Inform consumers on how regular washing adds to a fast decline of their garments’ quality. That washing jeans and sweaters every week is not necessary. Advise them on proper storage. Try to avoid using materials that can only be dry cleaned. Aftercare should be easy and accessible. Make sure that all the information comes with a purchase of the item.

Material ageing

When sourcing, consider materials that age well. Fabrics which appearance improves while wearing and if properly maintained give a lifetime of use. If you are already in denim business, good. Do still consider sustainable sourcing. If you are looking for other options, try canvas. This sturdy strong material can be used for a wide range of products from outwear through shirts or pants. It becomes softer with every wear turning all the marks and creases into a rich patina that develops over time.

By deciding on a material that tends to improve by the time you let your customer have his own impact on the design. The item eventually becomes a unique personalised piece that tends to stick around in their wardrobe longer.
You now know the needs and preferences of your customers. However, your role as a brand is not to create a personality. You dress the personality. Let it speak. It is important that within your design process you leave the room for interpretation. In the end, the way people wear your clothes is what brings authenticity to your brand.

Unpretentious design

Not only does a choice of limited colours and simple shapes positively affect design versatility, but it also never goes out of style. Think of your clothes as a canvas for self-expression and own interpretation. By choosing patterns and prints and experimental shapes we often decide for the customers on who should they be. The challenge here is that they might be something different every year and that is hard to follow. Both for the brands and for the environment. The clothes we feel the most comfortable in are not the outspoken ones. They are white t-shirts and black pants. Styled with a different hair colour or lipstick. Be pleasantly simple while designing the emotional durable clothing.

Uniform for the character

It almost seems we are trying to suggest here that everybody would wear the same. But that is not it. Everybody just wears clothes in their own individual way. And it is up to designers to leave the room for it. Create a uniform that is suitable for many characters. Styled differently by each one of them. Clothes should not derive people from their personalities. It should not outshine them. By showcasing the diversity of how your clothes are being worn, you can appeal to a large group of customers.
This booklet was based on conversations with consumers. It highlights, in words what they ask for in clothing. It catches their intangible feelings towards fashion and turns them into practice. We have researched consumers’ emotions and found out that rather than form, they seek purpose. Instead of the attention, they want comfort. Not to outshine, but to exist, day to day in clothes they love and can always count on. Therefore we do not offer you an exact scheme to follow. There might be many ways to create emotionally durable clothing, but we believe that you as a designer should know your best. Think beyond the frame. Get curious about your customer and his needs. Create home out of your designs. Make clothes that last and stay.
This is not a scheme, this is an emotion.
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