

*It's never too late to dream*

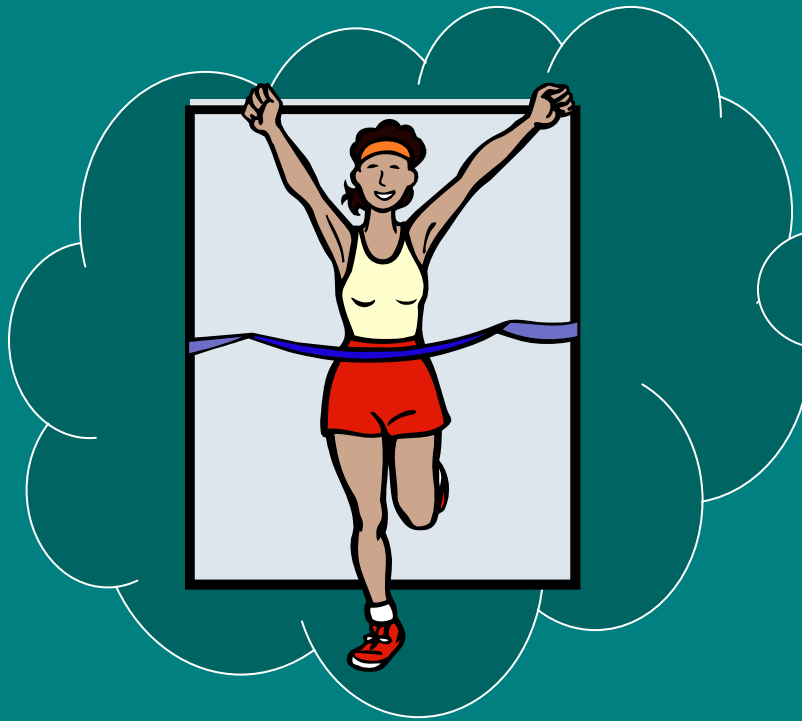
Green



*Once  
Upon  
a Time*



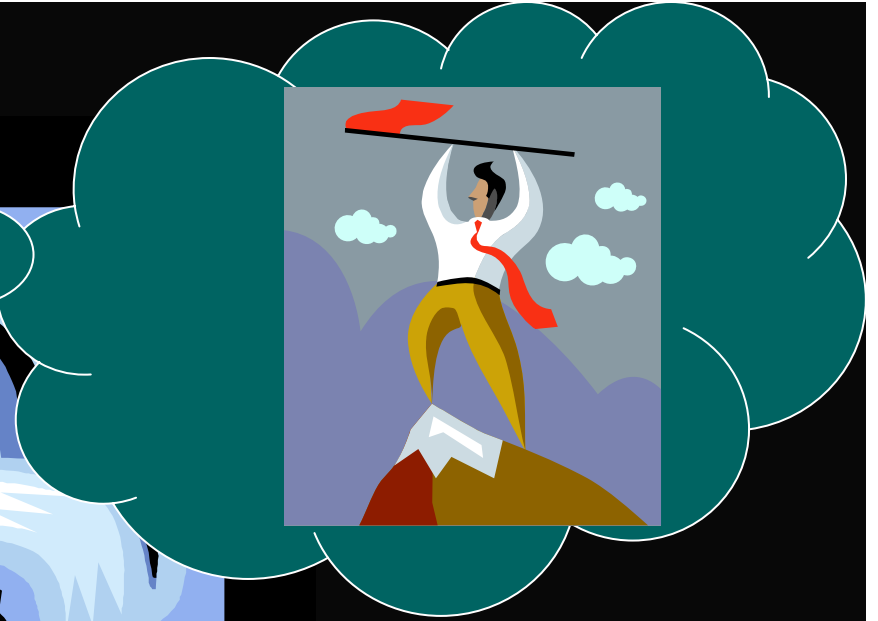
On an Island not so far away, there lived a woman



Who fancied  
herself a runner ...

And worked as a  
wellness consultant

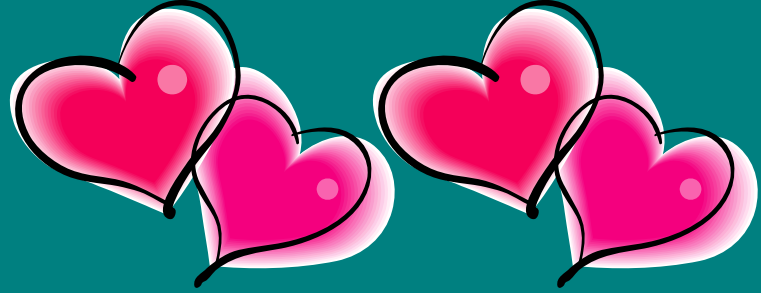
And a man . . .



who fancied himself an outdoorsman,

But worked as a drycleaner





The man and the woman met ...

And before long ...

They fell in love



But there was a problem



**The man was in the WRONG business**

The man hated using  
toxic chemicals that  
hurt the natural  
world they both  
loved

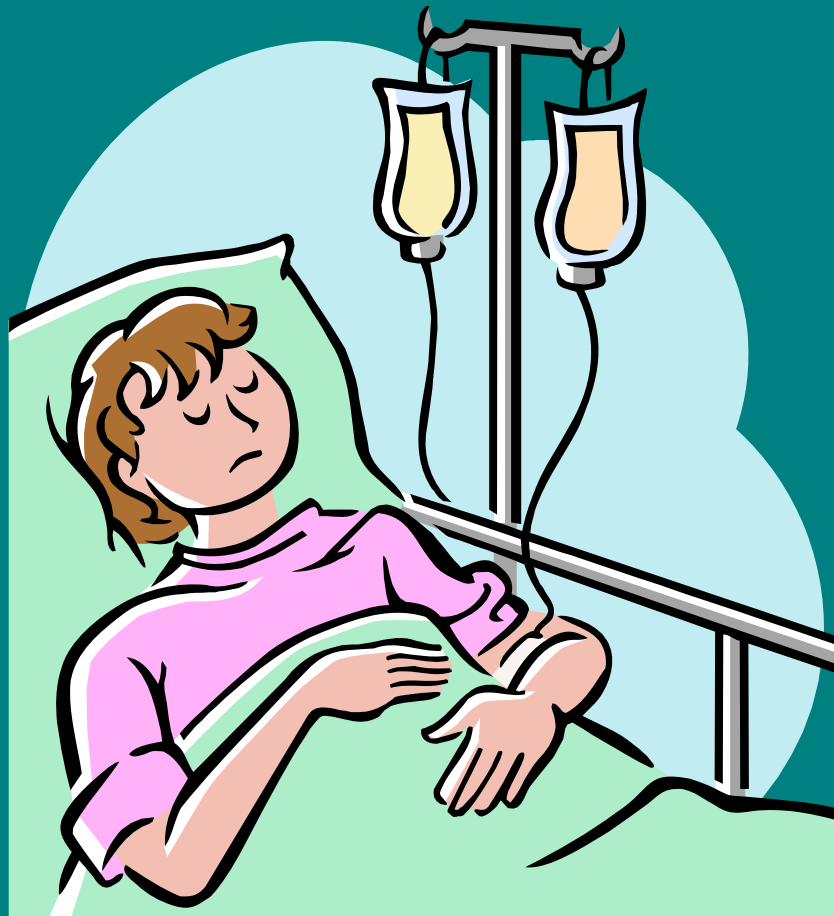


So the man and woman decided to  
change their business



To help clean up the earth

But another problem arose . . .



Even though she looked and felt healthy, the woman was very, very sick.

Her doctors told her she was a goner . . .



No thanks . . .  
I won't be  
needing this  
harp just yet!



Good thing she  
didn't believe  
them!

Now this was a family who loved a project ~ the bigger, the better!

So the happy couple decided to

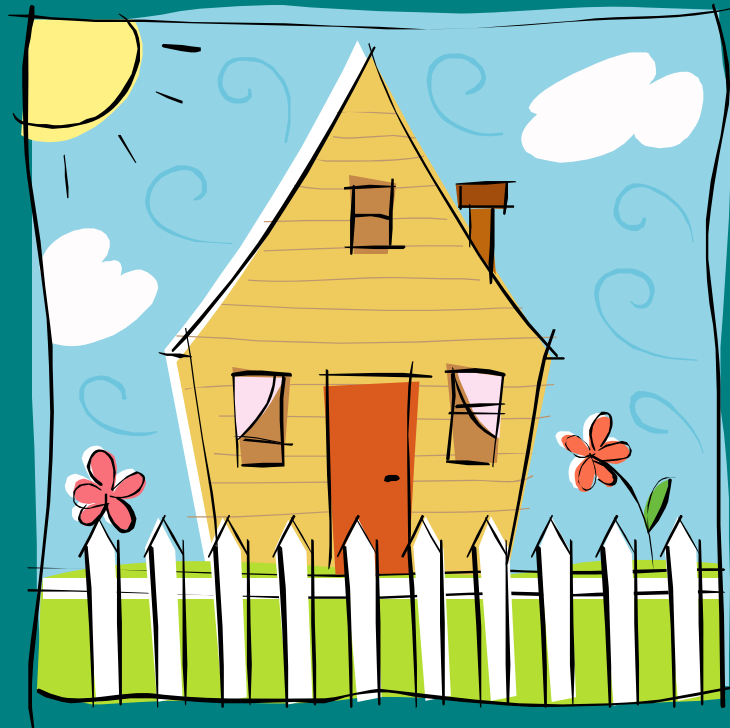
change

the

world

by changing their little piece of it.

They sold  
their home



And moved into  
a travel trailer

# They consulted their financial planner

No! You  
can't be  
serious!  
That's a bad,  
b-a-a-a-a-d  
idea!



# They consulted the oncologist



You  
MUST AVOID  
STRESS!! It's  
a b-a-a-a-a-d  
idea.

# They consulted their family

Don't do it!!  
Travel!  
Relax!  
Enjoy your  
time  
together!



But they had to follow their hearts



Save the  
planet!

Create a  
legacy you'll  
be proud of!

They created



# What is Dry Cleaning?



Clothes are washed in a toxic solvent called perchloroethylene

# A "Perc" Primer

## What perc does well:

- Causes minimal change in size or shape of clothes because solvent doesn't penetrate textile fibers
- Cleans oil, grease and other solvent-soluble stains - attracted to fats

## What "Perc" does NOT do well:

- Clean deeply - can't penetrate textile fibre
- Remove odours (pets, urine, perfume, body odour)
- Clean light colours - turns whites a greyish tinge
- Clean garments with delicate ornamentation (Can melt beads and sequins)

# "Perc" has other effects:

- Neurotoxin - affects central nervous system
- Carcinogen - implicated in several types of cancer
- Bio-accumulative - stored in body fat - the greater the exposure, the more is stored
- Highly vaporous - exposure through inhalation of fumes on clothing and in air
- Pollutes ground water, soil, and especially air quality

How toxic is “perc”?



An Olympic swimming pool filled  
with clean, clear mountain water



would be completely contaminated by  
one half teaspoon of "perc"

More than **30,000,000**  
pounds are “lost” annually in  
North America in the dry  
cleaning Industry.

# What are the Alternatives?

- Hydrocarbon - a petroleum product - also known as DF 2000
- GreenEarth™ - a silicone product
- Carbon Dioxide - itself a greenhouse gas
- What Elite chose to use . . .

# Nature's Perfect Cleaning Solvent



Pure, clean . . .

**Water**

# Water has great advantages:

- No smell
- No environmental harm
- No health risks
- Penetrates fibers, so cleans deeply and thoroughly
- Better at removing odours than any other solvent





No more toxic waste

# There were 4 BIG Challenges

1. Financial - capital costs, production costs
2. Physical - electrical, plumbing, piping, plant lay-out
3. Systems - *everything* changed
4. Learning - retrain staff, educate public, learn new methods, innovate constantly

# Financial Challenges

- High capital expenditures - had to buy all new equipment and do complete plant renovation - cost overruns + +
- High cost of educating the public - spent way too much \$\$ on advertising



# More Fiscal Challenges

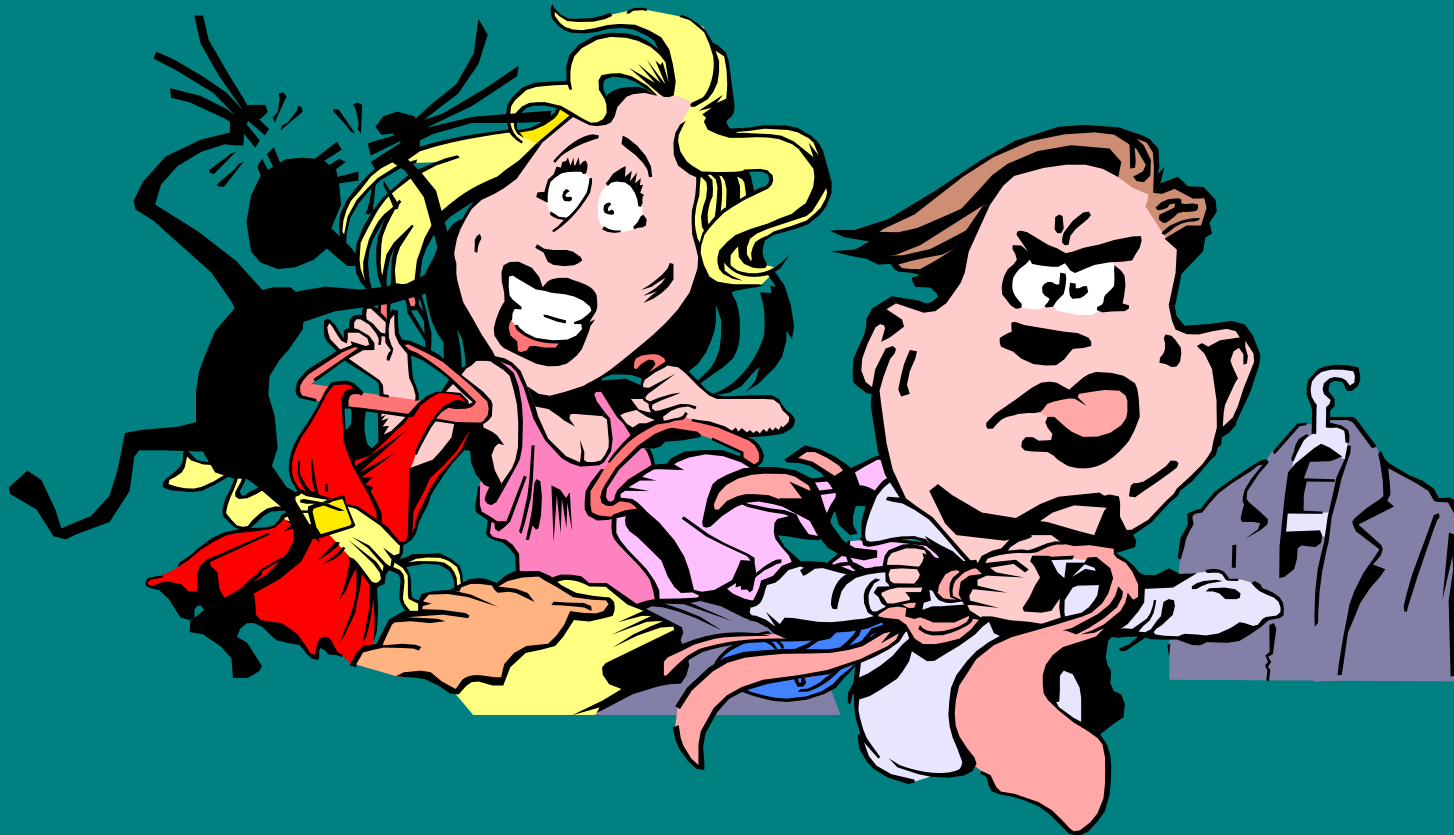
- High cost of training
- High cost of production - labour intensive processes and high detergent costs
- Loss of established clientele - attracted new, more ecologically sensitive (not price sensitive) clients
- Equipment servicing not available locally - more steep learning!

# Physical Challenges



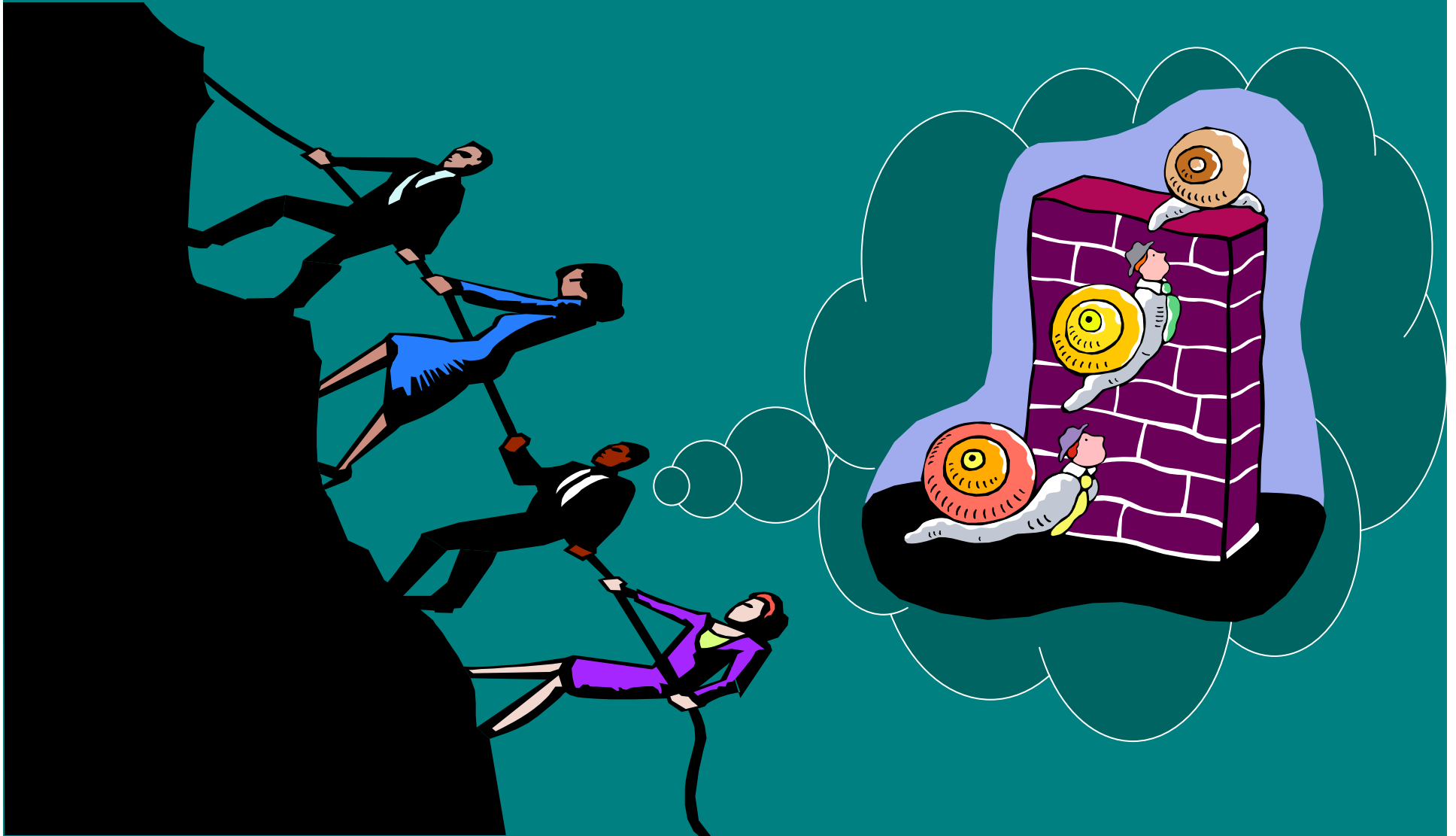
It took a crane and a window crew to remove the perc machine - we had to cut through 14" of cement to change our plumbing

# Systems changed



Their knowledge base was completely shaken

# Steep Learning Curve



# A Few Disasters



# A need to educate the public



Ummmm,  
drycleaning  
has  
something  
to do with  
steam.

Some didn't want to know the truth



"Are you SURE my cleaner uses solvents?"

# Public education strategies:

- Advertising (too expensive)
- Media releases – very effective
- Public presentations – universities, health shows, business associations
- Created didactic website and brochures
- Huge banner across store awning:  
“Victoria’s only *solvent-free* drycleaner”

# An “Aha!”



Our business could be a vehicle for community service, social justice and environmental activism— that would be **FUN!**

# Community Giving strategies

- Sponsor U-Vic Social Justice Film Festival
- Support “Wear 2 Start”, a program for disadvantaged women
- Initiated “Winter Warmth for the Homeless” – collected and cleaned over 2 tons of jackets, blankets and clothing for homeless and women’s shelters
- Support The Land Conservancy – dedicated 10% of gross sales each April to TLC
- Support community initiatives aimed at social justice, health and the environment

One day their ship came in



(Sort of !)

They started to get noticed



Environmental  
Excellence  
2005



Sustainability 2005

# They got help from friends



"Strategic Alliances 'R' Us!"

They met others that shared their dream



**VALUES-BASED  
BUSINESS  
NETWORK**

*where sustainability and business meet*

They worked long and hard . . .



Now and then the medical monster  
reared its ugly head



Chemo still  
beats the  
alternative

Reminding them why a clean, healthy world is  
so important.

Another reason to keep our water pure!



A grandchild - born May 19<sup>th</sup> - Baby Ava



It was all worth it!

And they lived happily ever after . . .



Five years and counting!

# Enticing other cleaners to Convert

- Currently financial disincentives exist
- Tax-shift to increase taxes paid by high polluters to better reflect the true costs of future cleanup.
- Create a fund to assist with capital expenditures – grants and incentives.
- Tax relief for several years
- Extend the capital loans guarantee programs to allow financing over ten years rather than five.
- Bold legislation to raise public awareness and create incentive for change.