

Midway Simplicity

Mohamed Tohami

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To my family and the Midway Simplicity community...

Smile and Simplify

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And thanks to the wonderful community of MidwaySimplicity.com. You have been an integral part of the development of this ebook. It wasn't possible without your valuable suggestions and feedback.

PRAISE FOR MIDWAY SIMPLICITY

“You could go all over the internet to research simplicity. Or you can check out Tohami’s book which distills the best ideas from simplicity experts.”

– **Beth Dargis**, MySimplerLife.com

“This book is as simple as can be, and I mean that in the best possible way. It has insight, trial and error, ultimate success and little things that can help us all make a big impact. Tohami really took a simple idea – to explore simplicity – and leveraged the journey in exciting ways. By living his simplicity and sharing it with the world he has helped me strengthen my own voice and commitment to simplicity. I think it will happen for you too! There are some really good ideas here.”

– **Miriam Ortiz y Pino**,
MoreThanOrganized.net

“This book takes the spontaneous wisdom of people living simple, intentional lives and converts it into a measured source of motivation. Very concisely, Tohami structures Midway Simplicity to take you on a journey with everyone from aspiring minimalists to accomplished simplicity veterans. Whether you need to improve your relationship with money, time, or your friends, there’s more than enough to move beyond inspiration and into actual change.”

– **Joel Zaslofsky**, ValueOfSimple.com

“Midway Simplicity is a resource full of differing perspectives on simple living that remain independent, yet beautifully coincide to create the ultimate guide in simplifying your life. Tohami has taken his own viewpoints on simplicity, and then blown them wide open with the ideas of other simple living writers. This book will motivate, inspire and teach you how simple living can improve your health, finances, relationships and life!”

– **Jenny McCutcheon**, Exconsumer.com

“This book is an awesome guide that will inspire you to go small, be happy, and think big. It’s a must read.”

– **Tammy Strobel**, Bestselling author of
You Can Buy Happiness (and It’s Cheap)

1

INTRODUCTION

One of the most powerful practices you can develop and maintain to 'find' and to 'live' your passion and purpose is to SIMPLIFY your life. Here's why simple living is so important...

"The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak."

*- Hans Hofmann, Introduction to the Bootstrap,
1993*

When you eliminate chaos, clutter and complexity, you clear your mind and free up space, time and energy, so that the necessary (the voice of your heart) may speak.

Accordingly, following the tips in this book will help you create a simple lifestyle in which your core desires dominate and everything else falls off your way.

When you live simply, you'll not only live a passionate life, you'll also achieve financial freedom. Yes, simple living is a surefire, yet uncommon, way to achieving financial freedom...and hence to living with passion. Let me explain...

There are two ways to achieving financial freedom. The common way is to earn enough money. And, there is another uncommon way which is increasing the number of things you can live WITHOUT. In other words, financial freedom can happen when you have fewer needs. If you reconsider the things you think you absolutely need and can't live without in your everyday life (like TV & Facebook!), you will realize that you can eliminate lots of these 'extras'. When you simplify your life by consuming less, enjoying more and having fewer needs, you will achieve financial freedom. Money will not be a defining factor for your happiness.

Financial freedom is a surefire way to passionate living. When you're financially free, you'll be more capable to survive until you start making profits from doing what you love.

For example, imagine you got two job offers. The first job pays very well, but you don't like what you're going to do. While the second job pays much less, you really love what you're going to do, and this is what you've always been passionate about.

Now, let's be realistic. We all want to earn enough money to ensure a good living standard for ourselves and our beloved ones. And at the same time, you know that it takes time to master your field of passion and to figure out the best strategy to turning your passion into profits. Therefore, most people will probably accept jobs they hate, in order to earn what allows them to have a high standard of living. Accordingly, the majority of people end up living in pain and suffering from a meaningless, boring or stressful dead-end job just to get a fat paycheck at the end of every month. And you forget that working at a job you hate diminishes your ability to grow and excel. Moreover, your earnings will always have a ceiling - that's the value of your paycheck. Even if you manage to achieve any sort of materialistic success in your career, you will feel it's meaningless because you are doing something that doesn't resonate with your true self - your true calling. So, what's the solution?

The solution I am giving you here is somehow a path less traveled to achieving financial freedom and living with passion. It implies mastering the art of simple living by decreasing your needs and eliminating all the things you think you can't live without. This happens by turning your life into its minimal form. Only then, will you increase your capacity to survive with less until your passion grows and becomes highly profitable. Also, this way you can accept and enjoy a job you love, even if it pays less. And guess what? When you do what you love, you will excel and become extremely fulfilled. You will live a meaningful and remarkable life by following your heart. Moreover, when you act upon your calling, you will automatically attract success and money.

Yes, it might take time. But obviously, you will end up earning much more money than you could earn by working at a job you hate. And you will be enjoying every step of the process. The best thing is that you'll be leaving your mark through providing a meaningful and valuable service to others. On the other hand, if you work only for money, you'll soon become dissatisfied and dread going to work every day. And sadly, the worst moment of your day will be when the alarm

rings in the morning for you to wake up and go to work.

So, let's sum up. Mastering simple living will allow you to enjoy more with less. And having fewer needs is a powerful uncommon way to achieving financial freedom. You'll be able to live on a small income until your passion grows and becomes profitable. You won't accept jobs you hate just because the paycheck is big. When you achieve financial freedom, you increase your ability to survive and escape the paycheck slavery until your passion grows and takes on a life of its own. Therefore, I urge you to start today simplifying your way to financial freedom & passionate living. In order to gain the most out of this book, I recommend that you find a buddy. It is much easier and joyful to apply these easy tips with a friend or spouse.

Simple living will transform your life. It is one of those practices that lead to a lasting change in the way you think and act. Your life will be way BETTER! Inner peace and satisfaction will be part of your everyday life. Let's eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak. And let this simple question be the guiding principle for your simple living journey:

*“How many things are there which I do not want?”
– Socrates*

I promise this is going to be a transformational experience. Ready to start?

2

IF SIMPLE LIVING IS A GAME, THESE ARE THE RULES

In this book, you'll hear from 16 simplicity legends about their most practical tips to simplify your life. Their awesome insights will help you experience the true essence of simple living by applying very easy and quick tips. My purpose is to share with you more mainstream tips and ideas to help you simplify your life, so that you can find inner peace, joy and freedom.

For now let's start with the rules of the game. If simple living is a game, in this chapter

you'll discover the rules to win it. Look at this chapter as the guiding principle of this book – an Operating Manifesto of sorts. These principles make up the foundation of Midway Simplicity. They're the beliefs that guide our pursuit of simplicity and every tip you'll find here.

What Is Simplicity?

In order to simplify your life the right way, you first need to understand what simplicity means! The biggest origin of stress is not knowing where to start simply because you can't make any progress. Therefore, your attempt to simplify your life turns into a complicated process! That's why you need to define what simplicity means to you, so that you can understand what it is that you need to do in order to simplify your life. So, let's try to answer the question: "What Is Simplicity?"

You have heard of Aristotle, one of history's most influential thinkers. He is known as the Father of Science due to his extensive and careful observation of the physical world. He believed that every individual thing has four main features:

1. *An origin,*
2. *A purpose,*
3. *A matter*
4. *And defining characteristics.*

For example, a laptop's origin is the technology company that manufactured it; its purpose, let's say, is to process information; its matter is whatever it is made of (plastic, metal, aluminum, etc.); and its defining characteristics are things like memory capacity, processor speed, hard drives, graphics card, etc.

The significance of this way of thinking is that it gives you a simple logical approach to categorize and describe anything physical (i.e. known by senses). However, we can use Aristotle's method of describing things to define simplicity!

Here is how to define simplicity the Aristotle way:

1. The Origin of Simplicity

You'll be surprised if I told you that the origin of simplicity is chaos or complexity! As Werner Küstenmacher, author of *How To Simplify Your Life* says, "At the very pinnacle of complexity that the longing for simplicity

reaches its peak...Simplicity is conceivable only against the background of complexity.”

The rising need, desire or hunger for simplicity originated from people’s inability to cope with the fast paced, stressful, and chaotic nature of today’s world.

The rising complexity made people wish for the good old days where everything was simple and peaceful.

2. The Purpose of Simplicity

Here you and I can have different purposes according to our needs, desires and environment. I personally believe the purpose of simplicity is to enjoy more with less. That’s more inner peace, freedom and independence. And through this independence and freedom you can pursue your passion and purpose in life. Of course, you can have your own purpose for simplifying your life.

3. The Matter of Simplicity

What is simplicity made of? Simplicity is an intangible thing. So, how can we define its matter? I encourage you to give it some thought before you read any further. I believe that simplicity is an Outside-In journey! You’ll

find other simplicity schools say that it is an inside out process. Well, these are different schools and it is up to you to follow the one you feel more comfortable with.

I believe that simplifying your life should start by simplifying everything in the outside (your outer or physical environment) and when you succeed to eliminate the unnecessary, the necessary (voice of the inside) can speak. You'll easily and quickly experience the impact of your outward simplifying activities on your mental and emotional well-being. It might show up in the form of clarity of thought, enjoying the moment, inner peace, more freedom or independence. I believe that's the most practical mainstream approach to simplifying your life.

Simplicity is one of those activities that you thoroughly enjoy and get addicted to, because you can see its immediate impact on your inner world (thoughts and emotions). Just recall a time when you simplified a part of your home, decluttered your workspace or cleaned the work top of your kitchen. Do you remember the sense of relief and accomplishment that you had then? You know that when you tidy up, you'll feel much better. That's outside-in.

4. The Defining Characteristics of Simplicity

I believe simplicity is formed of three things:

1. Decluttering

It is the process of eliminating, letting go or getting rid of the non-essential. As Hans Hoffman says, "The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak".

2. Organizing

Organize what is left after the decluttering process, so that everything has its well defined place in your environment.

3. Maintaining

According to Murphy's Law: any disorder that could possibly occur will occur. That's why you need to regularly maintain the organized, decluttered environment and be highly selective for what comes in and what comes out. This phase is a preventive phase. It's been said that, "prevention is always better than the cure". If at any time, the inflow (what is coming into your life) is more than the outflow

(what you let go of or eliminate), then expect complexity and chaos to occur. That's why you need to be very careful, maintain balance and guard the achievement you have done in the first two steps. Make it a consistent habit to eliminate the unnecessary from your life and environment.

That's all! When you think of simplifying any aspect of your life, think of following this 3-step process: declutter, organize, and maintain.

"Order is not a natural phenomenon. Chaos is the norm and we have to fight it every day."

*- Werner Küstenmacher, author of
How To Simplify Your Life*

So to sum up this long philosophical talk, here is what simplicity is all about:

Simplicity originates from complexity and chaos. Its purpose is to help you enjoy more with less. It is a journey from the outside to the inside. It is formed of decluttering, organizing and maintaining.

I hope through this explanation, you can understand simplicity in a better way, and have an easy systematic approach and view of

how to simplify your life. It is not a big deal as you might have thought. Now, we need to answer the question about “where to start”.

Here are the top 5 areas you need to simplify in your life:

1. Simplify your **Time**: so that you don't say, “There is not enough time in the day.”
2. Simplify your **Health**: so that you don't say, “I feel old or I'm too stressed.”
3. Simplify your **Things**: so that you don't say, “I wish I had this and that.”
4. Simplify your **Finances**: so that you don't say, “I'm in debt.”
5. Simplify your **Relationships**: so that you don't say, “I don't have enough time to spend with people that matter in my life.”

Do you remember “How” you are going to simplify these areas?

Great!

You simply choose one area and start implementing the 3-step process we talked about earlier. Do it one small tiny action at a time. You don't have to complete the 3 steps all at once. Follow the pace that you find easy and

enjoyable for you. For example, let's take time. So, to simplify your time:

Declutter: eliminate all the unnecessary activities from your to do list. Don't work on more than 3 goals at a time.

Organize: Give yourself room to breathe in your daily schedule. Use a simple and easy organizer (digital or physical). Identify what is really important and must be done today, what could be done later and what could be delegated.

Maintain: Be selective and aware of the activities that occupy your time. Before you start any activity, always ask yourself, "Is this the best use of my time right now?" Don't allow trivial things to distract you, fill your schedule and end up your day with everything done except what really matters.

That's not an all inclusive list of tips of course. But, I hope you got the idea. Each of the following chapters will focus on one of these five areas to simplify your life. You'll find tips from the world's top simple living advocates that are easy to apply and not too harsh for your lifestyle.

There is something very interesting about simplicity which is: when you start

simplifying, the positive energy extends to other areas of your life and you get addicted to the process.

Always remember this golden principle of simplification: do small, immediate steps. Just start with the minimal task you can do. As the momentum is built, you'll find the process highly enjoyable and you will be able to complete big chunks of tasks at one time.

*"The secret of simplification: clear a path; you don't have to chop down the whole forest."
- Werner Küstenmacher*

The decluttering step is the most difficult one because we are not used to let go. We are more familiar with storing. That's why you need to be easy on yourself when you begin. You need to know that storage won't help your mental well-being. You will always hold in your subconscious mind the thought "I will have to get to that one day". Keep in mind that anything you store will occupy a space in your mind and your attention. It will increase the weight of your baggage.

*"Simplicity is making the journey of this life with just baggage enough."
- Charles Dudley Warner*

To wrap up, simplicity is an outside-in journey that starts with decluttering, then organizing and ends with maintaining. Embrace this definition and follow this simple process through the top 5 areas of your life: Time, Health, Things, Finances, and Relationships. As a result, you'll live your life with more joy, freedom, independence and inner peace. And you'll ENJOY MORE WITH LESS!

Before we start with the first area which is time, let me first introduce the awesome simple living advocates who are going to share their tips with you throughout this book.

3

THE STARS OF SIMPLE LIVING

In this chapter, I would like to give you a quick introduction to the experts who will be sharing their simplicity tips with you throughout the book. They all have been my guests on the Midway Simplicity Show that I run on my blog.

Let's start by...



Miriam Ortiz y Pino

“Simple living allows you to stay organized very easily”

This is how Miriam sees the value of simplicity in keeping your life organized. When you own less stuff, getting organized becomes much easier. Moreover, you can easily keep high quality just-what-you-need items.

Getting organized, as Miriam defines it, is putting like things together and putting a label on it. It's that simple! Miriam is a certified professional organizer and the founder of MoreThanOrganized.net.



Colleen Madsen

“It occurred to me on about the 3rd of January that I could turn a project I had already begun, which was to get rid of some unutilized items in my house, into a 365 day resolution to declutter every wardrobe, bench, shelf, under bed, pantry and garage space in my home by giving away, throwing away or selling one item everyday for the next twelve months.”

That’s how Colleen Madsen started her decluttering journey. This is the easiest decluttering approach I’ve ever seen. You declutter one item everyday for the next twelve months and at the end of the year, you’ll have 365 less things. Imagine what you can do with your gained space, time, energy and money.

Colleen is the founder of 365LessThings.com. On her blog, she shares awesome advice on clutter reduction.



Courtney Carver

“There is a great synergy between less and more”

This is how Courtney Carver sees the power of simplicity and how you can be more with less. I believe she is a simple living guru, but she believes that she is still an aspiring minimalist.

At her blog BeMoreWithLess.com, she writes about simplifying your life and really living. There, you can learn how to create a life with more savings and less or no debt, more health and less stress, more time and less stuff, and more joy with fewer obligations.



Beth Dargis

“Things probably feel like they are going too fast and you can’t stop to catch your breath.”

This is how Beth Dargis describes our insanely complicated lives. Beth is the founder of MySimplerLife.com where she helps the overwhelmed create a saner, simpler life. Her tips are short, sweet and right to the point. She says, “I deliver untamed possibility. Breathe easier simplicity. Hope on the wings of understanding and encouragement. Step by step breaking down from “no way!” to “why not?”



LJ Earnest

“As life gets more complicated, there is less time to do the things that you WANT to do”

This is why LJ Earnest created her simple productivity formula: Simpler = More Productive = More Time for MY Stuff.

LJ is the founder of The Simple Productivity blog where she shares new ways to be more productive and simplify your life.



Andrea Briggs

“Everything that we do is threaded inside something else”

Are you ready to find the beauty in every moment? Slow down, have a cup of tea, meditate on the love around you, simplify, sustain, breathe more than you ever have...you can do it all at the Inside Thread Studio.

Andrea Briggs, founder of InsideThread.org, is a creative yoga teacher, inspirer, writer, snail mail lover, traveler, and artist. At the InsideThread, she inspires creative ways to uncover the beautiful threads of life. She teaches how to live slowly, deliberately while flooding your life with meaningful experiences.



Robert Wall

“I think simplicity and minimalism really need to be made accessible to everybody”

That’s why Robert Wall started his UntitledMinimalism.com blog. Robert calls himself an Internet “jack-of-all-trades” who is on a journey to a life of minimalism, simplicity & frugality. His special freedom formula is: Simplicity + Minimalism + Frugality = Freedom.



Jenny McCutcheon

“Once I became more aware of all the influences that we’re exposed to and that shape our view points and our perspectives and our purchasing habits, I started to change my ways”

That’s how Jenny, the ex-consumer, and her husband began their journey to become consumer debt free and open up a world of freedom they didn’t know existed. Jenny is the founder of Exconsumer.com where she writes to inspire you to achieve more freedom in your life. Freedom with your time, money, and attention.



Nina Yau

“You don’t need more words, you need more truth”

That’s why Nina Yau began her journey of seeking truth. She has been writing since the age of five. She traveled alone to Taiwan at the age of six and left the 9-to-5 lifestyle to live a life that’s more suited to her spirit. On her blog, CastlesInTheAir.org, and as a Yoga teacher, Nina helps others discover the Truth within all of us.

She says, “Let us approach each new day with vigor, positivity and an attitude of abundance. Within you dwell a million beautiful possibilities.”



Annie Brewer

“Life is about more than stuff”

Annie is a prolific voice of simplicity. She wrote 11 e-books that you can find on Amazon Kindle Store. She was so kind to send me a copy of her bestselling book “The Shoestring Girl: How I Live On Practically Nothing and You Can Too”.

Annie combines minimalism with frugality to live the life of her dreams. And she shows people how they can do that too at her blog Annienygma.com.



Megyn Scott Hintz

“She is a mom fighting for less.”

Megyn Scott-Hintz is pursuing simple living using a dangerous combination! She is an analytical planner to the max with an overwhelmingly wild imagination. This is not only dangerous, it is very strange. Moreover, she is doing a very interesting thing on her blog MinimalistMommi.com. She calls it the “Home Tour Series”.

She is videoing her house as a method for you to get inspired and see how “real” minimalists live. She wanted to show anyone interested how this one innate minimalist mom lives and deals with the non-minimalists residing alongside her. Bottom line, she is REAL and HONEST with people.



Dave Bruno

“The 100 Thing Challenge”

It is the popular simple living movement initiated by Dave Bruno at GuyNamedDave.com to break free from the constraints of the American-style consumerism. He started it as a personal challenge in which he cut down his possessions to 100 things only and lived on it for a year. The challenge resonated with so many people and it attracted a huge worldwide following. It became a worldwide sensation, especially after Dave launched his book [The 100 Thing Challenge](#).



Joshua Becker

“Own Less. Live More.”

His 4-year old son, his garage, and his neighbor formed a huge transformational point in his life. Joshua Becker from BecomingMinimalist.com started a simple minimalist lifestyle after a strange and unexpected incident. Since then, he has been inspiring hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world to live more by owning less.

Joshua is a bestselling author of several books including, *Simplify*, *Inside-Out Simplicity*, and his latest book *Living With Less: An Unexpected Key to Happiness*.



Leo Babauta

“Simple living made a lot of things possible for me”

Leo Babauta of ZenHabits.net doesn't need an introduction. He is a living legend.

I believe Leo is THE GRANDMASTER OF SIMPLICITY. He started his blog, Zen Habits, while taking care of a family of eight! And despite of all the difficulties you can imagine, his blog happens to be one of the Top 25 blogs and Top 50 websites in the world.



Tammy Strobel

“You Can Buy Happiness (and It’s Cheap)”

That’s the title of Tammy Strobel’s new bestselling book. Tammy is a full-time writer, coffee addict and tiny house enthusiast! Her blog RowdyKittens.com is one of the most beautiful and inspiring simplicity blogs. In her new book she shares her story of how she radically simplified her life and how you can too.

Once, Tammy and her husband were living a normal mainstream lifestyle: driving two cars, commuting long distances, and living well beyond their means. Now they are living the simple life dream. They are living in a tiny mobile house!



Joel Zaslofsky

“No food ... No reading, No watching, No consumption ... ALL CREATION ... for 120 hours!”

That’s the challenge Joel Zaslofsky (pronounced Zass-lough-ski) started, which I believe is going to be the next big thing in the simplicity circles. (The kind of ‘The 100 Thing Challenge’ of Dave Bruno)

ValueOfSimple.com is also his home base for all his activities online, on which he covers topics like simplicity, getting and staying organized, personal finance, and understanding the motivations that drive everything we do. But he’s been known to get funky and branch off into other topics from time to time.

Now, after you've been introduced to the stars who are going to share their tips with you, let's begin with the first most important area to simplify in your life...TIME.

4

SIMPLIFY YOUR TIME

Miriam Ortiz y Pino's Tip

"Think of what needs to be done next"

I think a lot of people get very hung up on "must do all these things on my list and I must do them at this specific time". Then they feel constricted by their schedule because it's too structured. They miss one thing because they went five minutes over on something. They get all panicked and kind of give up for the rest of the day, which causes everything else on the list not to get done. Instead, look at time management as what needs to be done next

and being a little looser with the actual amount of time you spend on each thing. Definitely, I need a little bit of structure like I can spend an hour working on my emails today or I am going to spend an hour on this project. But don't get too hung up on "I didn't finish at exactly the right time". Think instead what needs to be done next.

Colleen Madsen's Tip

"Fill your time with something you enjoy"

I think with time, the key is it has to be filled with something, unlike closets that don't have to be full all the time. With time, you've got to be doing something in that space. It might as well be something you enjoy and something you get satisfaction out of. My journey to de-clutter has freed up a lot of my time to do just that.

I had a dead-end, awful job when I first started de-cluttering. I feel I was able to really give that up because I wasn't wasting money on things I didn't need and didn't particularly want anymore. So I just gave that away and spend my time blogging and helping other people and that's certainly very satisfying.

Courtney Carver's Tip

"Be okay saying NO"

I think that we really have to stop overextending ourselves and saying yes to everything. I think we live in this world of immediacy and everyone wants everything yesterday, and we want to make everyone happy. So we say yes, and then we either fall short or we don't do our best work. So, I think that we have to be okay saying no or saying 'no, not right now' and doing things at a slower pace.

If you think about it, there shouldn't be any guilt associated because when you say yes but you mean no, you're not doing the person that you said yes to any favors.

Beth Dargis's Tip

"Keep a calmer mindset"

I recently did a simplify your life time class and the most interesting thing we found out was it didn't matter how much people had to do. It was all in their mindset. When people are feeling time pressure, that's because of what they're saying – "I don't have enough time;

there's too much to do." When you get into that mindset, things just get worse because you go on to fight or flight mode from the stress and then your mind works even less well. If you keep a calmer mindset, things actually go smoother and you feel like you have more time.

In real life, you have to be aware when you start to feel the tension wherever you get it – in your head or in your stomach; you have to kind of talk back to yourself, "Is this true that I don't have enough time?" Maybe it's true that I have just enough time to get what I need done and the thoughts that are going through my mind aren't helping it.

LJ Earnest's Tip

"Do one thing at once"

The one thing that I always recommend is that people do one thing at once. If you single task, it may seem like you're spending more time because you're focused on one task, but you're actually spending less time overall. If you are trying to do two things at once, both of which that require your concentration and focus, your brain is actually slicing back and forth between the two, and it takes more time to do those

transitions than it does just to focus on what you're doing. Single tasking is probably the easiest way to get simplicity when it comes to time management.

Andrea Briggs's Tip

"Commit to less things"

One of the things to simplify your time is committing to less things. It sounds simple, but it helps simplifying how you do your work or social activities. I used to be on Facebook and Twitter a lot. People want to go out and do this and that. Basically, I just started to do what I need to do that was of value to me, and committing to less.

Do five things that you normally wouldn't do in a week. Turn off the computer once in a while. I even downsized my phone to a little tiny non-smart phone and this helped me spend less time with the phone! Just commit to a little less.

Robert Wall's Tip

"Have a list of things that you can do when you're not maximally productive"

Probably my favorite time simplification tip is not creditable to me. It's from a guy named David Allen. You've probably heard of the Getting Things Done methodology. One thing that I really like that I heard from him that I try to implement in my own life is that it's not necessarily bad if you're not maximally productive all the time. He said that one of the things that really helps is to have a list of things that you can do when you're not maximally productive so you make the most out of your time.

Time is actually very simple; time just moves forward. There's not a lot of complicated stuff you can do with it. You can only spend it. I think when most people think of simplifying time, they think of spending it efficiently. There are always little things you can do. If you know what they are, then you can do them. You have to think about it.

Jenny McCutcheon's Tip

"Stop multi-tasking"

The biggest tip for simplifying time that works for me is I have stopped multitasking. Multitasking is not an efficient way to get things done. It's a lie. If you are multitasking,

then you are not putting 100% into whatever you are working on. For me, if I work on one thing at a time, then I produce a higher quality product, and I also spend less time overall working on it because I'm not trying to spread myself too thin. When I'm working on something, I try to shut down other things that might be bidding for my attention whether that's my email dinging at me or social networks popping up saying that there are new messages. If I can't see it, then I'm not going to pay attention to it right then.

Nina Yau's Tip

"Don't do what you think you're supposed to do"

This concept of simplifying time probably will weave through the rest of the other tips as well, for the other topics. It's a fundamental concept that I derived for any ideas or nuances about simplicity or minimalism or just doing what matters or being present.

It's the fact that when we bombard our own schedule and our lives with things that we don't really care about, but that we think that we're supposed to do, that's when we are not utilizing our time to its fullest to what feeds our spirit the best.

It happens everyday – going to a job that is not healthy for yourself. Sure, it can pay the bills but at the end of the day when you come back, you're depressed and you wonder why. I know that career transitions are definitely hard, but that's a major time investment obviously for most of us. Other than that, basically it's doing what you care about, doing what matters to you the most in your life and leaving the rest behind.

Annie Brewer's Tip

"Start saying no"

One of the biggest and simplest things I have found to simplify time is to just start saying no. Everywhere we turn, we've got people saying, "Oh, well, I need you to do this; help me with this project; just come hang out with me for a while." If you can just start saying no and free up that time, that will give you an opportunity to do, if anything, just rest because we are such an exhausted society.

Megyn Scott Hintz's Tip

"Do what you like in your day"

For me, I tend to find that if you do what you like in your day instead of making things harder, you'll have the time to do everything you want. For example, some of those things people in the green movement want you to do take up a lot of time. For me, it would mean taking my son to school. To drive would take me ten minutes each way. I could take the bus which would take me over an hour each way.

Even though being green is something I'm passionate about, I also want to make sure I get the most of my day and I'm not spending it sitting in the sun taking a bus. I've decided that for now, our best option is the car. That's the way we simplified our time – we get a couple extra hours in our day because we're not using our really horrible public transit system here. If it became better, that would be great. But for now, that's one of our options and we just had to decide what's the most important for us.

Dave Bruno's Tip

"Purge the things that are excessive in your life."

I think one of the things that is most important to think about with relationship to stuff is the amount of stuff that we have, even the stuff we

put in storage somewhere. It takes time away from us, it takes mental energy, and sometimes it takes physical time to take care of. When we get rid of the excess in our lives, just by default, by the very act of downsizing a little bit, we pick up more time; we get more time as a result of that.

My main tip for how to simplify time is to go through and do a good purge of the things that are excessive in your life, the physical things. You won't spend as much time with upkeep or wishing as it takes emotional energy and time to think, "I wish I was camping," or "I wish I was playing my guitar more." Well, get rid of your guitar if you never play it and then you don't have to take up that time in wishing that you were a guitarist. That takes up a lot of our time and our energy.

Joshua Becker's Tip

"Get rid of unimportant stuff to free up time for the most important stuff"

I do believe that our possessions take far more time out of our schedule than we realize and far more of our mental capacity than we realize. We did find a lot more time in our day just getting rid of the things that we no longer

needed. But as we did that, we began clarifying what things were most important to us: kids and my career not for the money's sake but because I invest into other people. These things became very important to us. They began being elevated in our pursuits. When they had time to rise to the top, it was much easier to fit the important things into our schedule.

We know when the kids will be home from school, so we're spending time with them and just planning out blocks of the day and week to center our time on the things that we value the most as opposed to having a whole bunch of other commitments that aren't adding. Not only are they not bringing joy to our lives but they aren't contributing to anybody else as well.

Leo Babauta's Tip

"If you limit that container, then what happens is you now have to make choices."

One of things that is really important to me is setting limits. What I do is I will set a limit to the number of things that I do in any area of my life. One is, let's say, online time. Online time could eat up your entire day if you're like me and you can be on doing social networking

and email and reading blogs, news sites, Wikipeda, and other good stuff and on and on and sometimes watching not so good stuff such as Youtube and things like that. But the point is that this can expand to whatever container you are allowing it to fill. If you limit that container, then what happens is you have to make choices. You have to say, "I'm only going to be online for four hours a day." If you are only online for four hours as opposed to eight hours or ten hours, as some people might do, you then have to decide, "What am I going to do with that time? What's important to me and what's not?" And so, you have to make choices.

That's what I've been doing lately - limiting my computer time and then forcing myself to make those choices. You can do that with the things you do on your to-do list instead of having a to-do list that goes from the ceiling down to the floor. Have one that can only fit four or five things on it. Then what are you going to do with that list? You could choose the important things. My one tip then is to set limits and make those choices within that limit.

Tammy Strobel's Tip

"Track your time for a week or two"

The first thing I did to simplify my time is I tracked my time for a few weeks. Basically, I printed out a calendar and I filled in everything I did throughout the day and throughout that week. I was able to see gaps where I could, for example, work on writing instead of watch TV. Or maybe I could go out and exercise or spend time with friends or family.

I would encourage people to start tracking their time for a week or two and they'll get a better idea of what they're actually doing versus what they think they are doing. I thought that I was only watching the TV a few hours a week but I was watching five or six hours a week. That was a lot of time that I could have used for other stuff. It's not because TV is bad. I still watch TV and movies but just not as much as I used to.

Joel Zaslofsky's Tip

"Sleep is just about the best thing that you can do with your time!"

My primary tip for time is a lot of people that I see and interact with talk about a whole bunch of hacks or tricks to squeeze more time out of their day. Some of those are appropriate depending on who you are and what the context is. But some people need to realize, myself included at times, that none of us can fit ten pounds into a five-pound sack. By that, I mean there's twenty-four hours in a day or 168 hours in a week and you don't get more than that. But a lot of people try to squeeze so much into the time that they are allotted.

I can't tell anybody don't bother trying. It's not my point or it's not my position in life to tell somebody 'do this or don't do that'. But I will say this: sleep is just about the best thing that you can do with your time. There really isn't anything such as too much sleep. People think that they can do just fine from month or years on three to four hours of sleep. I believe that when that happens we create this massive sleep deficit that we can't really overcome and ultimately it's going to affect your health, your relationship, your finances and every other aspect of your life.

Except in very rare circumstances, nothing is as important as getting sleep. Although you're not actually doing anything

during that time when you're sleeping, it's just about the best time well spent..

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SIMPLIFY YOUR HEALTH

Miriam Ortiz y Pino's Tip

“Apply simple tricks that add to your overall well-being”

There are a couple of points here. First, I think that health and organizing are interrelated. The stress relief of actually being organized, knowing what you have, where it is, and how to get to it when you need it, saves so much worry for people. If you spend a few minutes every day hunting for your keys in the morning, you start the day off frazzled and stressed. That's not good for your health.

Because of that, you're more likely to go get some fast food, or run to the store and get snack items instead of caring for your health. That snowballs into having the leftover chips in the pantry, so you eat the leftover chips and you don't have room for healthy food in the pantry, even if you wanted to go to the store. Every time I do someone's kitchen and pantry, I throw away hundreds of dollars worth of snack foods that are expired or open and stale. It's ridiculous. Have fewer unhealthy items, so if you need a snack, or want a snack, you have to really think about, "Do I want to spend the time to go all the way to the store to get that snack?" And, if I am, maybe I could walk. So, at least I'll sweat the ice cream I'm about to go buy. Simple little changes like that. For that matter, park farther away when you do drive, so you have to walk into the store. It's another simple trick that adds to overall health and wellness.

Colleen Madsen's Tip

"Decrease the things you're doing wrong"

I think when it comes to health, the easiest way to improve is to give up the things that are just not good for you – smoking cigarettes,

drinking alcohol, overeating and all those things. They're not hard to give up. Like my approach to de-cluttering, you don't have to go cold turkey. You can give them up slowly. Just decrease the things you are doing wrong a little at a time. That makes it a little more doable, I think. Giving up over several months has to be better than not giving up at all.

Courtney Carver's Tip

"Sleep enough"

If I had to choose one thing to start with to improve health, it would be to sleep enough. For me, the optimum number of hours to sleep is eight or nine hours a night; other people can get by with a little less or a little more. When you're well-rested, you can make better decisions about the rest of your health. You wake up clear-headed, and it also benefits your body and your brain. When you're sleep deprived, you're just not in a good place. I've been that way before and I'm sure you have been, too.

Having quality sleep is different for everybody. For me, I need darkness. I need the windows open; there's air coming in, but the shades are shut, so it's really dark. I like a little

bit of ambient noise, so I sleep with a sound machine – whether it's a little bit of a thunderstorm or something going on in the background it really seems to help.

Of course, everybody has those evenings where something is on your mind, and you wake up. I think in that case, instead of trying to suffer yourself back to sleep and work to forget about it, you just need to get up and either write a few notes or do whatever it takes so that you're a little bit calmer and can go back to sleep.

Beth Dargis's Tip

"Keep things fresh"

I don't like to do the same exercises everyday; I get bored. So, what I've done is to have an accordion folder. In the accordion folder I have exercise routines from online or magazines that I've ripped out. I have an aerial for cardio or upper body or abs or yoga. I can pick one out of there in the daytime. It just keeps things fresh for me.

LJ Earnest's Tip

"Stop eating junk"

What I find is that in the U.S. there's a lot of junk that could be eaten – there's a lot of fast food; there's a lot of sweet, high fat, high salt. When I eat junk, I feel like junk and I don't get anything done. So, the simplest way to get simpler and to be more productive is to eat more fruits and vegetables and drink more water.

People tend to ignore this fact because it's easier. Fruits and vegetables are less glamorous than a prepared meal. Water is less glamorous than soda or coffee.

Andrea Briggs's Tip

"Eat real food"

I'm really committed to being healthful and resourceful when we eat. Basically, one of my biggest things is to eat less processed foods. Eat real food that you can make yourself. There are a lot of things I've learned to make using simple ingredients, really quick, really fast things. I have an Italian background; and I owe a lot of my flavor and tastes to three ingredients: olive oil, garlic and salt. With those three ingredients you can make a lot of really tasty things.

Your taste buds change if you're used to eating a lot of processed foods, things that are packaged and boxed. Our taste buds become dull, and we don't feel or sense the taste of real food. Just having an orange or tasting different vegetables seasoned lightly, your taste buds will come alive again after a while. They really do and you'll start to savor the food the way it is, the way it was grown, the way it was nurtured from the earth.

I did experiment and now I have six or seven recipes that I absolutely love to make. They are so flavorful, and they take 30 minutes or less and are made from basic foods.

Robert Wall's Tip

"Plan things out"

I think a lot of people are thinking more of losing weight, exercising, staying healthy, and all that sort of thing. I think the biggest key to simplifying is planning and just getting your head around what needs to be done. I've said this a few different times: if you don't know what you're going to have for dinner by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, odds are good you're going out to eat junk! Take a little bit of time earlier on in the day to plan things out. A lot of

times the healthy stuff is the frugal stuff. A little bit of planning can make that more accessible to the average person.

Jenny McCutcheon's Tip

"Eat local foods that are in season"

I think there's a huge connection between consuming unhealthy processed foods and our health overall. You don't see a lot of healthy foods promoted because they typically don't have the advertising budget that the processed food companies have. I guess my biggest advice is to try to eat local and organic foods that are in season whenever possible, and shop the perimeter of the grocery store, if you do shop at a grocery store, so that you can avoid a lot of that processed garbage in the middle of the store.

If the food is fresh and it's in season, then it tastes so much more delicious than processed food, I think. The problem is when you're trying to buy food that's out of season. That usually means that it's either been frozen or it's shipped a long way. It wasn't picked during the peak time that it's supposed to be harvested so it lacks a lot of flavor. If you have Farmers Markets, those are usually really good

sources of fresh, in season food, and the flavor is going to be so much better than anything you can get if you are shopping for out of season food at the grocery store. Of course, the processed foods usually have additives which are very unhealthy that are giving them this wonderful flavor, but it's usually things like MSG and sodium and sugar.

Nina Yau's Tip

"Find ways to utilize your body"

Try to be as active as possible everyday no matter what you're doing. Find ways of utilizing your body. You don't need to go to a gym in order to get fit. Use your own body for physical resistance, doing push-ups, sit ups, squats, walking, running. You don't really need a lot of equipment. It's just getting up and being active as much as possible every day.

Annie Brewer's Tip

"Switch to water"

The biggest tip in simplifying health is to drink water. If you just switch from soft drinks or coffee or whatever, to water, you can lose

weight, gain more energy and improve your health.

Before I switched to water, I weighed close to 200 pounds, and now I'm down to about 135. And I have more energy. That was the only major change I really made. That was the only thing I could figure out that I did differently – I just started drinking more water. It got to the point to where at first I was saving the soft drinks for the kids and then I realized, “Hey, this is working here.” I did some research and realized there are significant health benefits to drinking water. The rest is history. The friends I have managed to persuade to just increase their water intake have chronicled health benefits to me. It's a simple tip. If you go to a restaurant, order water.

Megyn Scott Hintz's Tip

“Realize the connection between your mental health and physical health”

I think the simplest way people can manage their health is also realizing the relationship between your mental health and your physical health. I know a lot of people just work on their physical health – get their weight down

or eat really well. But a lot of that is also dealing with the mental clutter we have. If we can figure out how our thoughts and our feelings affect our physical self, then we can actually affect our health in the long term for the better.

I think it's just being very cognizant to how you're feeling and thinking. For me, I deal with a lot of anxiety, and I noticed my stomach gets tense or my heart rate will go up. So, it's just being really aware. If you're feeling very anxious, look at what your body is doing and then you can realize how you can change those thoughts, change what's going on with your body, and hopefully improve some of the health issues you are having in the long run.

Dave Bruno's Tip

"Prioritize doing before getting"

I think that's another thing with regards to consumerism, specifically talking about stuff and simplicity. Often we think, "I want to get healthy. What I'm going to do is buy a treadmill, and then I'll get healthy." But the treadmill collects dust when we start putting boxes on top of it instead of using it to run. I think, again, we can prioritize actually doing

before getting. That goes a long way to improving our health.

As an example, I moved over to walking, hiking and running and just doing calisthenics and pushups. I'm not a health expert by any means, but my health was a lot better than it was when I had a bunch of equipment that I never used and felt guilty about never using it. So, again, I think that's where simplicity can get you focused on actually doing what you need to do to be healthy.

Joshua Becker's Tip

"Choose healthy foods and find different ways to prepare them"

For me, interestingly enough, my health changed considerably after becoming minimalist. I began focusing on the foods that I was eating a lot more. I certainly started exercising more as well. But for me, the biggest change just came with thinking through the food that I was eating and taking time to choose healthy foods as opposed to the processed food that you get at the grocery store or the fast food restaurants. Just concentrating on what food was going into our bodies was probably the biggest health change that we

have made. Really, it's one of the easiest changes to make.

I found that I particularly liked healthy foods. I have a nine-year old and a six-year old, and just yesterday we were going through the different vegetables that we like and they had two – corn and potatoes. I said, “You know what, I like carrots and I like broccoli and I like...” just going down this list of all the fruits and vegetables that I like. I didn't know that I like them until I started eating them. But take our kids for example, who don't particularly enjoy vegetables. We give them new ones or experiment with different ways to make them, different ways to prepare different foods, and to find different ones that they'll like. But also, we focus on the ones that they do like and be sure to serve the vegetables that they like. We key in on some of the foods that we already do like, which also prove to be healthy, as opposed to thinking I have to recreate everything. Play into the foods that you already like to eat.

Leo Babauta's Tip

“Eat lots of plant foods and don't eat too much!”

To me, health doesn't have to be complicated. Obviously, there's an overwhelming amount of information and contrasting information out there. For me, it's a matter of eating simply, eating whole foods, eating lots of plant foods, and not eating too much. Michael Pollan, a New York Times writer, wrote that quote, "Eat real food. Not too much. Mostly plants." That summarized the philosophy that I have been working on, and I said, "Well, that's perfect." In just a few words he said what I believe in. Mostly plants means a lot of vegetables, nuts, whole grains, beans, seeds, things like that, green vegetables in abundance. Then don't eat too much; just don't overeat.

I think if you follow that - and a lot of the healthiest people in the world follow that: the Okinawans, the Mediterraneans, the Japanese - if you can do that, then you'll be pretty healthy. Then, of course, do some kind of activity every day; get out and sweat once a day. That seems to work for me.

To make this kind of food tastier, a little bit of salt and a little bit of fat go a long way. Most people think foods that are tasty are fats, salts, and sugar. If you have a little bit of one of those, it will be fairly tasty. However, what I found is that you can gradually adjust your taste buds. People might want a lot of fat and a

lot of salt, a lot of fried foods, a lot of sugar, but that overwhelms your taste. Gradually, as we eat cleaner foods and stuff that's less fried and less processed, you can start to appreciate the flavor of vegetables with just a little bit of salt or a little bit of olive oil on it as opposed to having to fry everything and have lots of salt and sugar on everything.

As you start to adjust your taste buds, you can start to appreciate those things and eat cleaner, fresher foods with not as much of the added stuff on top of it. I found that it's a gradual thing. You don't need to change overnight and just eat bland foods. Eventually those foods will be less bland to you. You can start eating some vegetables, and it will be tasty to you as long as that's not the only thing that you eat. You might want to add some nuts to it and things like that. I used to have to eat nuts that are roasted with salt on them, but now I can eat raw nuts without any salt and it still tastes delicious to me. But again, it's been a gradual change in my taste buds.

Tammy Strobel's Tip

"Be active all the time"

We don't have cars so that means I bike everywhere which is great. I go to the gym, but I use the gym to sit in the sauna. I don't work out there; I just sit in their sauna. Basically, I'm active all the time. Instead of driving, I bike. It doesn't have to be complex. You don't have to pay \$100 a month for a gym membership. You could go for a walk instead.

Joel Zaslofsky's Tip

"Adopt the Paleo mindset and philosophy"

I'll tell people what works for me. Part of my personal renaissance and re-evaluating every aspect of my life was re-evaluating food and exercise and nutrition. I'm part of a community called Paleo or Primal. Some people may have heard of the caveman diet. Basically, you view things through the lens of evolutionary biology and try to figure out if our ancestors 20,000 years ago were healthy and they had success by living a certain way, getting a certain amount of sleep, exposing themselves to sunlight for certain periods of time, eating certain types of foods, maybe that's a good thing. Maybe I should try that, too.

From my personal perspective, Paleo is a lifestyle. It's not just exercise, it's not just eating. But by adopting that, I've really been able to simplify things to an incredible extent. Before, it was going through a pantry and trying to figure out for food. Which of these 200 ingredients should I combine together and turn into a meal? Now that I've intentionally restricted the types of food that I eat, it's a lot easier for me to determine what kind of food I should eat and still have really tasty stuff. I've eliminated the potential for doing a lot of different types of exercise which I don't feel are right for me and my body. It's a matter of just picking between a simple set of pushups or pull ups or squats.

Viewing things through this lens, through this Paleo lens of how we as humans have evolved, really helped me tremendously. Although other people get to find their own way so they can benefit from a healthy lifestyle, adopting this Paleo mindset and philosophy has helped my health tremendously and really allowed me to practice this simple lifestyle that I believe in.

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SIMPLIFY YOUR THINGS

Miriam Ortiz y Pino's Tip

"Eliminate the single use items"

I like to think of it in terms of looking at what you need to do, and what you are trying to do first. If you are cooking dinner, you might need the ingredients, a pan, and a spoon. You may not need a garlic press. You may or may not need a food processor. There are things you need, and things you do not need. By starting with your needs for what you want to do, you can begin eliminating a lot of the excess things you have, especially single use items, like

something that only works for this on Tuesdays at two o'clock when the moon is full. In America, we have a lot of single use items.

Colleen Madsen's Tip

"Make it easy"

I think the easiest thing, the thing that for some reason came to me out of the blue, is don't make it difficult on yourself. You don't have to do it in a month. You don't have to do it in a week. You don't have to do it in a year. Just do it as you feel comfortable. My plan to begin with was just to make it easy. It wasn't until I started moving further into reading about minimalism and that sort of thing that I realized I had moved into a whole new area of growth where I let go of more and more things.

I think if you use the slow, simple approach, you'll learn a lot more from it, and you'll get a lot more out of it. You won't just find out you're back to square one in six month's time.

There are always things in your house that stand out which you don't want anymore - things you just haven't got around to removing. Start on the easy things you can part with, not the sentimental things, not the tasks

that do take more time. Start on the easy stuff. Then the further down the track you go, the more ruthless you get, and the more you're prepared to part with.

Courtney Carver's Tip

"Declare a clutter-free zone"

It's for sure not about organizing. I know I have spent my whole life trying to get organized, and it never happened. So, for me, it was just owning less and having less. The first step, the most important place to start, is to declare a clutter-free zone whether that is a countertop, an office, an entire room, or a corner of a room that is your clutter-free 'sanctuary'. Even when other parts of your home get chaotic, you can go back to that place and say, "This is how I want my house to be, how I want my life to be," and work towards that. I think that's better than just trying to do it all because then it becomes overwhelming and, we go back to our old ways.

Beth Dargis's Tip

"Everything has to have a limit"

The biggest thing is to have limits. I'm doing my De-clutter Club right now, and they find that if things are spread all over the house, it's hard to limit them. You have to containerize and have it together. Books need to be in the bookshelf, and when they don't fit in the bookshelf, then you know you have too many, and it's time to get rid of them. It's the same with clothes in the closet; when they no longer fit in the closet, then it's time to get rid of them. You can have a set amount of magazines or set amount of books you're reading. Everything has to have a limit. Otherwise, it can just overtake us.

LJ Earnest's Tip

"Get rid of everything that isn't really useful"

I am a big advocate of getting rid of stuff that doesn't either make you happy or serve some sort of real purpose. People hang on to things which have bad memories, and all that does is just bring up bad energy. I believe you should get rid of everything that isn't really useful. Clutter accumulates as soon as you turn your back. It doesn't matter how vigilant you are. I've been de-cluttering for years. I was reading a book the other day and turned around and

looked at my living room with fresh eyes and thought, “Wow, where did all this stuff come from?” I just think that it’s really important to get rid of everything that you don’t necessarily love or use regularly.

Andrea Briggs’s Tip

“Buy quality things over quantity”

My biggest thing is buying quality things over quantity. When you start buying better quality things, you just don’t have as much stuff. It’s so easy to go to a store and buy a cheap shirt or a cheap bag. Then we start getting more and more, and we’re actually spending more and accumulating more. If we just took our time and saved and bought something that we know is going to last for a long time, then we start to appreciate the quality and craftsmanship of our possession, and it takes on a different persona. Things become more valuable and more meaningful.

It took a long time for me to do that in some ways because we have to go through our own process of sorting what’s important and what things do or don’t attract us. But, I definitely think it’s just buying quality things and handmade things.

Robert Wall's Tip

"Fewer but better"

My best tip on this falls into a category called 'fewer but better'. For instance, I used to have a lot of pens. I had this huge cup full of pens on my desk. They weren't working, or they weren't particularly good quality. Then, I had a realization that dawned on me. I looked down at my arms, and at the end of my arms were my hands which are required to use pens and I only had two of them. If I were writing with both hands, I couldn't possibly use a whole cup full of pens. Obviously there are specialized things for artists and drafting and that sort of thing. But rather than having a whole bunch of garbage pens that never work, why not get one that's nice to write with, one that's comfortable to write with that you'll actually enjoy using and then get rid of all the other stuff? Have less of things, but make the things you own things that you really enjoy using.

Jenny McCutcheon's Tip

"Start in one small place"

I think when you're starting out, decluttering can be really overwhelming. The biggest tip that I have for that is to start small. Just pick one small area that really bothers you. For me, that was a little counter in the middle of our kitchen. It was the junk collector. Every single time that I would walk in to that kitchen, I felt really stressed out and overwhelmed because of this pile of mail, schoolwork, my purse. I would just lay it on this counter. So, the first thing I did was try to just keep that space clear. That in itself was such a huge success. It made me feel so much better that I started looking at other areas. I started saying, "Well, if this feels so great, what about this cupboard with all these things I never use in it? What if I take some of those out?"

I just eventually moved around to every area. I still have more to do after spending an entire year clearing things out. By just starting in one small space and then moving around into other small spaces, all of a sudden I had this open, clear space that feels so much better.

Nina Yau's Tip

"Evaluate why you have it"

Look around you and identify what means the most to you and why you have it. If you can't find a reason for it, a good solid reason for keeping that thing around, find a way to donate it, give it away or sell it. That's what I do with things. It's easier said than done, obviously, because there's an emotional attachment to certain possessions, and there are a lot of memories associated with them. I'm not saying in one day, in one fell swoop that you are going to just get rid of everything because that can be very traumatic on a person. Do it at your own pace, but evaluate why you have it.

Annie Brewer's Tip

"Give every possession its own place"

One of the things I have found is to try to give every possession its own place. If you own an item and it doesn't have a place, that's a symbol that you have too much. If you can't find a place for it, look to eliminate something that has less of a priority in order to keep a balance of the items that you actually own. You can't go and tell people, "Oh, get rid of everything. Throw it all into a dumpster." Let's be honest; not all of us are there yet.

Megyn Scott Hintz's Tip

"Is it worth the time and effort that I put forward maintaining and cleaning it?"

My tip is for things that I own in my house. I look at them and ask, "What do I actually want to clean and maintain?" We don't have a lot of furniture because I hate dusting, and that's really all it comes down to. I don't want to spend my life cleaning all of this, maintaining it, and keeping it up to a level that I like. When I think of bringing things in, especially clothes, I ask, "Do I really want to do more laundry? Do I want to put more things away?" That's how I look at it. As the mom and the housekeeper, I'm the one doing the laundry; I'm the one doing the majority of the chores. I don't want to have to do any more than that. It's not something I'm very passionate about. I choose to have less because I don't want to do the cleaning or the laundry.

When you look at things, ask yourself: "Is it worth the time and effort that I put forward maintaining and cleaning it? Is it worth that time?" That will give you an answer of "not really". It doesn't serve as much of a purpose as you thought it would.

Dave Bruno's Tip

"Start with your clothes"

I think the biggest thing is just the amount of stuff that you have and I really struggled with this one. I know some people who are amazing people, but they are just 'clutter' people. Even if they didn't have a lot of stuff, they would find ways to clutter up that little bit of stuff. They are just kind of messy people. But they are amazing – they are really smart, they are kind and compassionate. So, I want to be cautious with this. There definitely are people who just lose their keys and are messy, and that's just who they are. But having said that, even people like that and average people like me who tend to be a little bit more organized can all benefit from having less stuff.

When people are looking at starting the 100 Thing Challenge or simplifying, I like to recommend that they start with their clothes because almost all of us have too many clothes. Go into your closet and pick out a different outfit that you are going to wear every single day for two weeks – 14 different outfits. Everybody's going to have more clothes than that. Pack all that other stuff away and live like that for a month or two months. Just use those

same outfits. You are going to wear the same things over and over again.

Most people aren't going to notice at all. You're going to feel just fine. And all of a sudden you have this little victory. "Wait a second, I didn't need those hundreds of other clothing items, and my life went just fine – work's going good, my relationships are good." I think that's the easiest way to begin to simplify and prove to yourself that you can do it. I really encourage people to do that.

After that, you can start tackling some of the bigger things like, "Am I holding on to something because I wish that I was such and such?" or "I wish that I was a rock climber, so I have lots and rock climbing adventure gear," or "I wish I was a cyclist, so I've got a fancy bicycle." Those can be a little harder to get rid of.

Joshua Becker's Tip

"Find a limiting factor"

The most helpful advice that I think people find is in setting limitations. When you set a limitation, you are forced to define what is most important out of the things that you have, and this pertains to everything. I get into this a

lot when people ask me about kids and what do I do about my kids' toys and all their stuff. I say, "Find a limiting factor, whether it's two shelves in the closet or one toy box or one cardboard box full of their art things they bring home from school."

As you set the limitation, you begin asking yourself some difficult questions that you wouldn't normally ask yourself if no limitations existed. This can go for anything – clothes are a perfect example. We have closets that fit 200 articles of clothing, so we keep 250 articles of clothing in our closets when we'd probably be content with 75 or 50. Courtney does the 33 items. You decide you are going to own 75 pieces of clothing; pick out your favorite 75 and get rid of the rest. That pertains to anything that you want to do, physically speaking. I think people find a lot of value in that. They get down to 75 things, and if they feel like they need 80, well, that's okay. 80 is still better than 250. That's what I tell people.

When you do that, you begin to realize how much time and energy were going into things that you own rather than pursuing the things you love the most.

Leo Babauta's Tip

"Set limits and force yourself to choose."

If I would simply give one tip, it would be the same thing which is set limitations. I undertook a challenge called the 100 Thing Challenge - you might know about it. I only have a hundred personal things. In my house, I have more than a hundred things because I have a family and we share a lot of stuff. So I said just my things are going to be counted. I said, "Okay, I'm just going to count my things." Then I asked, "Well, do I count all my books as one thing or as individual things?" You have to make up your own rules.

But the idea is set a limit. The number doesn't really matter. If it's 100 or 150 or 200 or 50, it doesn't matter that much. The thing is to set a line, and against that line you have decide, "Does this thing that I own go on this side of the line or that side of the line? Do I want to keep it or not?" You can start with 200 things or 300 things. Maybe after that and it feels good to get rid of a bunch of things, lower the number and see how that goes. I did that during the 100 Thing Challenge, and I enjoyed it. I said, "Let's see if I can get it down to 50." And I did. I don't know what the number is

now, but to me the number is not that important. The important thing is the process - having the limit and then figuring it out where your things are in relation to that limit. So, that's my tip.

When I first started Zen Habits, early on I came across an idea. I enjoy the poetry form Haiku which is basically three lines and 17 syllables. The idea is there is a limit and the poet has to figure out how to convey the image he's trying to give to the reader within that limit which is very constricting. But it also forces him to choose, and it becomes more powerful as a result. I liked that idea so I applied it to simplifying my life. I took that idea - what if you could only have this many things? What if you only send out this many emails a day? Within the email, what if you only have a few sentences?

I saw that other people were having similar ideas in different areas. The Five Sentences is a website that encourages you to limit your emails to five sentences or four or three. Dave Bruno did the 100 Things Challenge, and I said, "That's exactly what I'm trying to do in my life." He had his version of it, and I thought that was great. To me, it's amazing to see how different people come up

with similar ideas which I think is really just setting a limit and forcing yourself to choose.

Tammy Strobel's Tip

"Start with one small section at a time"

When I looked at all my stuff in my big apartment, I got really overwhelmed. So I started with one small section of my house at a time. For example, one of the first things I tackled was my closet. I had a huge walk-in closet that was packed with clothes. I probably wore 20% of those clothes. So, over the course of a few weeks I unloaded lots of clothes and I donated them to Goodwill.

But it wasn't a one day thing. It took time. So, I would encourage people to take small steps and look at their stuff and what they really need. I think that's a less overwhelming way to get started by just focusing on one small area of your house.

Joel Zaslofsky's Tip

"Beware of the chaotic tipping point"

Honestly, I don't really have a problem with things. I think that a lot of people can

successfully have a bunch of physical, digital, mental, emotional, or spiritual things they want to have in their life. We can have that and we can have a rich life with a whole bunch of things. But it's trying to figure out when does that tip into a form of chaos – when does that become disruptive to our life? How do we keep a level of things or even try to add to them and see if or when the addition of something physical or digital or the addition of a spiritual ritual or practice into our life creates a tipping point where we start to head down a chaotic route?

I will mention this – a lot of people focus on de-cluttering, and I know that's a big buzzword, the act of removing all these non-essential or useless parts of your life. That's really important. But having all these things is fine as long as it's not creating chaos. You can identify it yourself if it is, or other people can point it out for you. The worst thing you can do is maintain the same number of things that you have in all these different facets – mental, emotional, psychological, spiritual, physical, and digital, and not have them actually do anything good for you. This is where self-awareness comes in and having the courage to ask other people, "Do you think I have too many things?" and if so, "How can I remove

some of them to add value to my life instead of taking away?"

This takes many different forms, not just "Is it on my desk?" or "Is it my kid's toy over here?" It is "How and to whom is this adding value?" If those things aren't, remove them, and see how your life is. If it improves, great! If you need that back, do it.

7

SIMPLIFY YOUR FINANCES

Miriam Ortiz y Pino's Tip

"Pick what day you pay your bills"

Everybody reacts to their money and their financial situations so differently. I think my best tip is to know that you can pick what day you pay your bills. You can arrange it with all your different companies to have that all on the same day. You could actually sit down for one session and get your bills paid. That will cover all the ones that you can't pay automatically.

I sometimes have mixed feelings about automatic payments. As an entrepreneur the

cash flow varies, so you need an extra day or an extra 24 hours. Sometimes you have the money early and you'd like to just go and get it taken care of. But, I think having everything due on approximately the same day gives you the flexibility, whether it's automatic payments or not, to just be prepared and to write the checks or do the input into the computer done all in one session. It saves time and worry all month long about, "Oh, do I have to pay bills today? Do I need to take care of this?"

At the same time, you should definitely know how much money you have and what you're spending it on, everyday. But the actual time consuming part of it can be done in one session a month.

Colleen Madsen's Tip

"Only use credit cards in case of emergency"

The simplest thing I think you can do when it comes to finances is not use credit. If you can avoid credit cards especially for things you don't need, don't use them. When we were first married, we didn't have a lot of money. We had a credit card, but we only ever used it in case of emergency – if the car broke down or that sort of thing.

Don't buying things you don't need unless you can afford to pay cash for them. Like I said, just save credit cards for emergencies. If you're paying interest, then you're using it more than what you should. A credit card, to me, is something that I use so that I can pay bills online or use for emergencies, but not to be used willy-nilly buying a pretty dress and a pair of nice shoes. That's where the problem starts. Suddenly, you need some cash and you have maxed that credit card, and then you're paying big interests. The problem just snowballs.

Also, if you can fix things yourself, don't pay someone to do that for you. Take some classes, even in learning to sew or whatever, so that you can do stuff yourself. The less money you're throwing away, the more you have to spend on the things you enjoy in the long run.

Courtney Carver's Tip

"Start an emergency fund"

The best way to simplify your finances is to start an emergency fund regardless of where you are in your financial planning. Even if you are head over heels in debt, wherever it is that you are, I think that savings, that emergency

fund of \$1000, for instance, or whatever that number is important so if small things come up they don't completely derail your efforts. For me, I found that once I started that emergency fund, those emergencies came up less and less. In terms of peace of mind, and a little bit of financial stability, I think a small emergency fund is the best way to get started.

If you are in the process of paying off debt, you aren't really in a position to save six months or nine months of living expense. Just focus on that \$1000 or \$500 instead of saying, "I can never put the money away, so I'm just not going to do it." Instead, start small and put \$500 or \$1000 aside. Then you can really stay focused on your financial goals even when an emergency comes up.

Beth Dargis's Tip

"Make your savings automatic"

The main thing I tell everyone is to make your savings automatic so that your bank can put money from your checking to your savings automatically every week or every month, however you want to set it up, so you don't have to think about it. When the money is not in the account, it doesn't cross your mind to

spend it. But when you say, "I'm going to save my 5% or 10% this week," sometimes it doesn't happen. Actually, a lot of times it doesn't happen because things pop up, "Oh, maybe I want to do that or maybe I want to do this."

If you don't have that automatic payment, then you need to set in your calendar that day you either go to your bank or to do this online, preferably the day you get paid. Once the weekend comes or something pops up, the money often disappears.

LJ Earnest's Tip

"What am I going to get rid of to make room for the new?"

I'm a big believer in when you bring something into your house you need to take something else out. That simplifies my finances because when I'm shopping and I see some things that I don't necessarily need but I want, the first thing I think of is, "Well, what am I going to get rid of to make room for them?" And if I don't want to give anything up, that means I don't need to buy. If I don't buy, I don't spend, and I have more money.

Andrea Briggs's Tip

"Have one credit card"

I have one credit card and that's it. For me, that simplifies my finances a lot because for some reason I'm not tempted to use them. Now I use my one credit card only when I know I can pay it off that month. In this way, I know everything's set. I feel sometimes we put too much out there. We have too many directions we go to. With just one thing, it simplifies so much. It's so nice when I look into my wallet, and I have one credit card. For me, that simplifies my finances for some reason.

Also, everything that we talked about threads into each other - you'll save money when you simplify your time; you'll save money when you eat more real food, have less things. All these things are linked together.

Robert Wall's Tip

"Know what the heck is going on"

One of the biggest things with trying to get your money under control is knowing what the heck is going on. When you get to the beginning of the month, a lot of people hear

budget and they think that budget is a four letter word, so to speak, and they don't like having one. But even if you just have a spreadsheet that lets you know, "Hey, look. This is the stuff that always comes out every month, and this is whether or not it's been paid this month." That way you can look at that, and know if you're on top of things. One of the biggest money sucks out there is just late fees and overdraft fees, all the miscellaneous fees when your money isn't at the right place at the right time.

This is assuming that you actually do have the money. If you don't, that's a whole separate issue. But assuming that you actually do have the money, bringing a little bit of attention to it and just having a place where you have all that stuff listed out is really, really helpful.

Jenny McCutcheon's Tip

"Debt is not something that you need to carry"

For us, the biggest thing was eliminating debt and preventing any new debts from incurring and just getting our heads around the idea that debt is not something that you need to carry. Before I started on this path, I would have

never dreamt of purchasing a car without going and getting a car loan. If I needed new furniture, I would have just financed it. I didn't really think about spending future income for what I wanted today.

Now, we would never purchase anything unless we have the money for it up front. Not having any debt means we don't need as much income every month, and we are able to take on jobs that we like. I just recently left a full time job to pursue freelance work because now it doesn't matter if I have less income one month than I do another month.

Advertising crushes our financial stability because it convinces us that everybody lives a type of lifestyle that they aren't really living. The people who are on TV are living an inflated lifestyle that is not realistic for the average person. When we're constantly bombarded with images of lifestyle inflation and we're receiving all these messages which are convincing us to desire products, we start to believe it even though we might not realize that we're buying into it. But we do because when you're exposed to something so much, it does affect your psyche and how you perceive the world.

Once we start forgetting that it's not the right way to live by purchasing with our future

income and purchasing things that we don't need that we think are going to make us feel a certain way and then end up not making us feel the way that we hope they would, we end up trapped. We end up underwater, we're in debt, we have to stay in jobs we don't like, and we're working long hours to pay for stuff we have already bought that we might not even want anymore. It really is a vicious cycle that keeps us stuck and trapped.

Nina Yau's Tip

"Spend on what will give you freedom"

It's the same principle as the other topics. Spend money on what you need to spend money on and what you want to spend money on that will essentially allow you that freedom to continue doing what you want to do. If it's a moment of joy or a fun night out, that's fine. You don't have to be very strict and stringent on your finances, but you ought to know and have an idea of what your financial situation allows you to do. Whatever you don't need to spend money on, don't.

You don't need to say yes to everything. If it's a wedding or a birthday party and you honestly cannot afford to buy a gift or go to,

just let the person know. Choose what you can and cannot spend money on. Obviously you need to spend money on your rent or housing, and food, but on your third computer, maybe not. Be cognizant and be aware of what you're choosing to put money into.

Annie Brewer's Tip

"Eliminate one recurring expense"

I became a bit of a hardcore on finances because that way I could afford to stay at home and take care of my daughter. I've managed to become a single stay-at-home mom which is kind of rare.

One way to simplify finances is just try to eliminate one recurring expense. This can be as simple as just one less coffee a week or as complicated as paying off your credit card or a mortgage - just one thing. Then, once you have one less bill coming, repeat when you're ready. If you get your recurring financial outlay down, the less you have going out, the more freedom you have to do the things you love because you don't need that much. If your income goes down or you want to deliberately reduce your income in order to do something you love, you're better able to do that. But you

cannot do that as long as you have all those bills that you have to pay every month.

Another tip to simplify your finance is to double check whether or not you actually need to purchase something. So many people go to the store and say, “Oh, I need this,” and impulse purchases or just go crazy – you go to the store and you go for one item and you don’t leave without a shopping cart full. Analyze your purchases before you get to the checkout line. If you don’t absolutely need it, put it back.

Megyn Scott Hintz’s Tip

“Is it worth that many hours of work?”

For us, we just keep our bills small. Like everything else, we ask ourselves, “Is this an important thing to spend money on? Is it worth this many hours of my day?” That’s how we look at it. It takes us this many hours to make this much money. Is it worth that many hours of work? When you look at it that way, you’ll think, “Oh, this meal would cost me five hours of work. Is it really worth working five hours for this one meal at a restaurant?” That helps cut out a lot of our extra spending on meals, clothes or movies. We don’t want to

have to work that much extra so we can afford that little bit of gratification.

Dave Bruno's Tip

"Prioritize not going into debt for your material possessions"

I think the most valuable experience from the 100 Thing Challenge with regards to finances was that we prioritize not going into debt for our material possessions. In some sense, I wish that we'd done this earlier because we have a house, and we have a mortgage and a debt with regards to our house. Earlier in my life, I oftentimes waded into debt for the possessions that I have.

Sometimes you actually have debt that you keep paying on after that thing is already out of your life. So you'd think, "This car is going to bring me a ton of satisfaction," and in reality it doesn't. You pay for it and then after the car is already gone, you still have that car payment rolled into your mortgage or credit. I think simplicity can really help in debt management. It helps you to become disciplined so that you don't pursue things without money that you don't actually have.

Joshua Becker's Tip

“Avoid the three areas where people get into trouble the most, financially speaking”

I generally tell people that there are three areas where people get into the most trouble financially speaking.

First, they buy too big of a house with a mortgage. The bank tells them they can spend this much on a house, so they go spend as much as they can, and they get stuck under these mortgage payments with no flexibility to do anything else in life. They buy too big of a house.

Second, they exchange their cars too often. They have a car, and they want a new one in four or five years. They trade it in, and they get a new one. They pick up a little car loan to offset the cost as opposed to just driving a car for ten years, being content with it, and then choosing another one.

The third thing that people do, going back to health, is they eat out too often. They also spend not just on food but a lot on alcohol. Those types of things that ring up that bill at the restaurant a couple of times a week saddles them with payments and credit card debts that they can't get out of.

Generally, when I'm talking to someone not in the simplicity field, but outside of it, about their struggles with money, I usually tell them it was probably one of those three things or all three of those three things that resulted in their not being able to get ahead financially.

Leo Babauta's Tip

"Learn how to enjoy the simple things in life."

This is an area where I made a lot of changes. I was deeply in debt. I was a compulsive shopper. If I wanted something, I would go out and buy it even if I didn't have the money, so the debt just kept getting worse and worse. I was living paycheck to paycheck and always broke. Trying to make the payments on bills and all that stuff was a big stress in my life. So, I made a lot of changes in my life, and over the course of a year or two, three years maybe, I finally got out of debt and was debt free. I remain debt free to this day. To me, getting out of debt was one of the biggest accomplishments and one of the best things that I did when I was simplifying my life.

You asked me for just one tip. One of the things that really made a big difference was learning how to focus, learning how to enjoy

the simplest things in life, not taking my kids to a shopping mall where we would definitely spend a lot of money, or going to the movies where we not only spend a lot of money for the movies but we buy snacks and drinks and popcorn. All of those things cost money, but they're not necessary. What I learned was you can live a very happy life doing very simple things.

That's what I started doing with my kids. We go outside and play games, play sports, play soccer, kick ball, football, any kind of outdoor activity. Then we would go indoors and play charades or board games. We would go exploring in our neighborhood or outdoors nearby. All of that stuff was free or nearly free, but it was fun, and we were bonding. We would enjoy nature, and we would be active and using our minds. But it was simple and free and beautiful.

That's what I would say. Focus on that as you're trying to get out of debt and not so much on the sacrifice – "Oh, I can't buy this," or "Oh, I can't do this." That stuff doesn't really matter as much. You can still be happy doing that free stuff while you're not doing those other things and are paying off your debt. Save with a small emergency fund so that when things come up, you don't need to cancel

your debt payments and then get ahead. That's basically the path that I took. That's more than one tip but enjoy the simple things.

Tammy Strobel's Tip

"Stay out of the mall"

I think the biggest thing is to stay out of the mall. I know it's kind of like a simple advice but I used to go to the mall all the time when I was in the investment management industry where there was an outlet mall near our office. I would go there all the time with my girlfriends and shop. I would think, "I'll just go and I won't buy anything," but I always bought stuff. One way to kick that habit is to just not go, and you'll save money automatically. That was something that worked for me in the beginning.

Joel Zaslofsky's Tip

"Don't pay in cash!"

"Pay in cash, pay in cash, pay in cash". First of all, that works. What I would tell people, at least those who are somewhat technologically savvy, do not pay in cash. You don't have to

pay everything with a credit card especially if you have debt issues which I know a lot of people do. But spending your money digitally or electronically, if possible, makes it a hundred times easier to track your spending, to find bad patterns in your financial habits.

For people who are responsible with their money and their personal finances, by not paying cash, but using credit cards, there are a lot of rewards you can get from them, both in terms of the convenience and the little rewards, whether it's cash back or airline miles. There's a tremendous amount of benefit beyond any rewards that you physically get from using electronic forms of payment. So I will tell folks if you don't have debt issues, if you're confident in the method of tracking of tracking your spending using electronic and track that activity, look for those patterns. Look for those bad habits and the excess in your spending that don't need to be there, that are not adding value and not adding richness or depth to your life. By doing things that way, you can have a greater awareness and you can figure out "Where are my blind spots?" "How are my spending patterns changing over time?"

8

SIMPLIFY YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

Miriam Ortiz y Pino's Tip

"Set good boundaries"

I think the healthiest thing in terms of relationships and simplifying them is to set good boundaries. I am so surprised how many people are always doing something for someone else, at the expense of their own situation, sometimes to the detriment of their own health, or other relationships in their lives. If you spend all your time at the beck and call of one person, every other relationship you have diminishes. So get better at setting

boundaries, and learn to say no. This is not to completely isolate yourself, or to always say no, but so that when you do spend time with people, and you do say yes, they're getting the best of you, not the frazzled, obligatory, "I can't believe I have to do this" thing for this person or situation. Just this morning, my mother called to see if I could go to breakfast. I told her, "Mom, it's Friday. It's a workday for me. No, I can't go to breakfast right now." She replied, "Oh, OK. Maybe another day."

Colleen Madsen's Tip

"Avoid people you don't like"

I must admit I don't have a lot of problems with relationships. I seem to attract people to me who are good to be around, for some unknown reason. But maybe that's because I unconsciously keep it simple. If I don't like people, I just avoid them.

Of course, you cannot avoid everyone in your life, but it doesn't mean you've got to waste your time socializing with them. They are there for a reason; stick to that reason and don't let anything they say get you down.

Courtney Carver's Tip

"What could I do today to make their life a little better?"

Relationships are the most important part of our entire life. It's the people who support us and share our lives and our experiences that make this whole journey really worth living. I think we have to treat relationships with that much importance. Instead of trying to fix things when they go bad or waiting until things are bad before you try to make them better, try to make them better proactively and think every day for the people who are closest to you, "What could I do today to make their lives a little better?" It may be a tiny little thing like a phone call or an email or perhaps a chore that you know they have to do that you could do. That may be for a relationship within a marriage or for your children or a great friend; maybe it's somebody who doesn't have many great relationships in her life – how can you make her life better?

That really does two things: First, it takes the focus off of yourself - we're far too self-absorbed. We think about our lives, our health, our money and our selves all day long. When we can turn that focus to someone else, I

think it makes us better people. Second, we get a chance to really connect by just saying, “What can I do for that person today?” If you think about that every day for at least one person, I think that you’ll find a dramatic improvement in all of your relationships.

Beth Dargis’s Tip

“Be honest and authentic”

I have two tips for this. One is to dedicate time, or have a fixed date, for your friends or your husband. For example, I get together to walk with a friend every other week. With another, we have lunch every month. Then you don’t have to be figuring out days to remember to call and get together. At the end of that date you simply make a plan for the next one.

The second is to be honest and authentic. Things get so complicated when you’re trying to have this mask. You’re trying to be someone who you are not, or you’re trying to get them to like you. If you are more honest and more authentic, things are so much simpler.

LJ Earnest's Tip

"Be present"

I believe in single tasking when it comes to relationships as well. By giving 100% attention to the person I'm with and single tasking on that, it's more meaningful. I have a fairly young daughter and when she comes home for school, she wants to talk and share her day and she's all excited. But if I'm busy doing something, she realizes the attention is not there and the interaction isn't as strong as if I would just sit down with her and listen to her. I think that really being present with the person that you're with is a good way to build relationships.

Andrea Briggs's Tip

"Help others in their life purpose"

One of my favorite things that I've read so far is from a book from Dr. Wayne Dyer. It's a book he wrote in the '80s called *Real Magic*. He has a quote in there about relationships that sums it up for me and simplifies relationships completely. The quote says, "You are together

not to understand each other but to aid each other in living a life of purpose.”

So, you’re not there just to be together, but you’re aiding each other in each other’s life purpose. I think when you are in a relationship and you have that mantra in your mind, you can relate to that person differently. “I’m here to serve, I’m here to give; what can I do to help you in your life purpose?”

When you take that and let go of everything else for a moment and you just concentrate on giving that person what they need to live their life purpose, all the other things come together - the affection, the endearment of being in a relationship. It all comes together.

Robert Wall’s Tip

“You don’t have to impress”

First of all, the type of people you want to know are the type of people that you don’t have to impress by throwing huge parties. A year or two ago, for Christmas, I wrote a couple of blog posts about simplifying Christmas dinner, and I actually wrote a few posts on my blog and a couple guest posts on a couple of other people’s blogs on the topic. The

big thing with stuff like that, even if you are the sort of person who thinks that you have to entertain, you don't have to go berserk to entertain these people.

We've come over to my mom's for Christmas, and there will be six of us total, and she will have enough food laid out for 20 people or more. There will be six types of desserts and two main courses, all that sort of stuff. When it comes to entertaining and wanting to have people over and serve them dinner and that sort of thing, my philosophy is that people are going to remember the interaction more than they are going to remember the meal.

The meal needs to provide a couple of basic functions – it needs to taste okay, it needs to not make anyone sick, and it needs to meet whatever the dietary requirements are of the people present. Obviously, if you're inviting vegans you might want to have some options in addition to the steak. But other than that, you don't have to go crazy.

Just a quick little aside, I'm not saying it is wrong but a lot of that attitude comes from the desire to appear that you're affluent, that you're wealthy, that your family isn't lacking or wanting. Let go of the need to prove that.

Jenny McCutcheon's Tip

"Quality over quantity"

I see relationships as I do every other part of my life. I value quality over quantity. I prefer to keep a closer group of friends and relationships who are closer and more intimate rather than a lot of shallow relationships which are hard to keep track of. For me, that's important - having some close people I can really count on and I really connect with.

Nina Yau's Tip

"Talk about what is important to you"

I actually don't have a lot of close friends. Sure, I have a lot of acquaintances or people that I knew along my travels throughout the world who can be considered friends. But intimate relationships we have fewer of, or at least I do. The way I maintain those relationships, especially because those are the ones that are more important to me personally, is just to be as honest and open as possible. That doesn't mean you have to say everything that's on your mind at once to the other person. But it's to have that open dialogue, to be able to talk

about any sort of topic without fear of that person ridiculing you or judging you.

When we are able to talk about what is most important to us, I find that relationships can grow deeper because you are not afraid anymore to be yourself. If the other person can't handle it, then that's the other person, that's not you. You just do your best to be as open and transparent as possible.

Annie Brewer's Tip

"Be yourself from the first moment"

The biggest way to simplify relationships is just be yourself. So many people, in order to impress their potential mate, will actually remake themselves into something to impress that other person. "Oh wow, this one is gorgeous," or "Oh, I'm just so in love." When the real you surfaces, well, that potential mate is not interested in the real you but interested in the fake you that you were presenting. So, you've just got heartache. If you are yourself from the first moment, then yes, you may have less potential mates, but you're going to have genuine people who are interested in you and not this fake persona you're putting out.

Megyn Scott Hintz's Tip

"Use direct and assertive communication with others"

I think the best thing I found is using direct and assertive communication with others, especially with a spouse or even your children. It helps you get past all the drama, all of the underlying things that are going on. When you just get straight to the point, you tell people how you feel, you don't hide things or lie, and you can just get all of it out. Sometimes it hard to hear what people have to say in a direct and honest manner but at the end of the day it helps people so much more.

Dave Bruno's Tip

"Don't layer stuff on top of it"

The way I put it is this: the really important things in our lives like relationships, being in love with a spouse, having a really close friendship, are the cores of who we are, our minds, our hearts, and our souls. We have a tendency to layer stuff on top of that. So we say, "I love her so much." But I know that I'm not the nicest guy all the time so I'll buy her

some nice fancy purse and some jewels, a nice outfit. Then the next time I'm a jerk, she won't mind so much because she has a bunch of things.

When we remove those layers that we pile on top of our relationships, our relationships are a little riskier because now she has to continue to like me even though I'm a chump sometimes. She has to say, "Okay, I've decided I'm going to love him and keep loving him." It's a little riskier but is considerably more authentic. The relationships are deeper, and you walk through both the joys of life and the griefs of life together. You're not always trying to bandage. When there's some sadness in your relationship, you're not trying to pile some purchase on top of it to make it better. You're dealing with it together.

I'm not saying you should never give a gift to somebody you love or receive a gift. That's obviously not the case at all. But simplicity will help us prioritize the important parts of our relationships, the actual relationship part of our relationships, instead of always trying to patch things over and make sure that things are fine.

Joshua Becker's Tip

"Live a life that invites others to live with less as opposed to forcing them"

I would say that my wife and I were both on board for minimalism. She wanted to go in maybe 60% of the way and I wanted to go in 80% of the way. We were fine until we got to 61% and I had another 20% of things I wanted to get rid of, but she was happy with where we were. For a little while, it became a little bit of strife between us in trying to sort out what we were going to do. Ultimately, it just comes down to compromise. In any relationship, including my wife and me, rarely do you agree on everything all across the board. There are always a few things that you disagree on a little bit even if it's just degree or level of disagreement. Then you compromise. You stay committed to one another, and you love one another. You show grace and patience to one another, and you find common ground in there moving forward.

The same is true with a non-spouse, a friend who doesn't like your journey or you see them go down the road of accumulating possessions and you've begun getting rid of yours. You think, "Man, there's a better way to

be doing life." You love them and you show patience. The light bulb doesn't click for everybody but even the light bulb that does flip on, always flips on at different times in our lives. I was 33 when finally it made sense to me. There's Joshua Millburn who talks about when he was 30 and it made sense to him. There are other people writing who are in their twenties and it makes sense to them. It always flips at different times and I think that we just live lives that invite others to live with less as opposed to forcing them which we can never do anyway.

Leo Babauta's Tip

"Allocate time and relate with compassion."

I found that there are probably a couple of things that really matter. One is if someone is important in your life, allocate time. When you're there, spend that time with them fully and be present with them. I do that with my kids, with my friends, and with my wife. I make regular dates where we go out, just the two of us, spend time, and just try to really be there and not have any devices, not be distracted by other things. We are just really present with each other. I found that to be one

of the most important things. When you do that, people know that they're important to you.

If you allow me one more, it would be simply to relate to each person who's important to you in your life with compassion in every dealing with them. It's not that you expect them to do stuff for you or expect them to be a certain way. But instead, you're compassionate to them and want them to be happy, want to end their suffering and try to put yourself in their shoes. I don't always do that. I often fail. But when I do succeed, I find that my relationships are better.

I think one of the most important things that people neglect when they think about relationship is being compassionate to themselves. Often we try to please everybody else which is great. You should definitely live to serve others. But you should also be compassionate to yourself. We're too harsh on ourselves. We blame ourselves for failures, we have guilt, we think we're not good enough, we try to improve ourselves because we're not good enough. What I would recommend is to be compassionate not only to others but to yourself. Try and end your own suffering. Try and love yourself. Try and be happy with yourself.

If you can do that, the simple living stuff will all follow. You will be happy so you won't need to buy stuff and be in debt. You won't need to buy a lot of things to make yourself happy and be surrounded by stuff. You won't be mean to others because you're happy yourself. You will treat yourself with compassion so you will be healthier. All of that follows from the one thing.

Tammy Strobel's Tip

"Be creative"

When we started this downsizing process, my mom thought we were crazy and she was concerned. I would probably be concerned, too, if I were a parent, wondering, "What is my kid doing?" But she's really happy for us now because we're happy. She sees that we're healthy, we're debt-free, and we're doing what we love. In our tiny house, we have a little pull-out single bed. If we have visitors, they can sleep there, or we put people up in a really nice little hotel in downtown Portland. When the weather is nice, we can have barbecues outside. During the winter, we have a maximum in terms of who can actually fit in the house for a dinner party. The most we have

had during the winter was eight people in the tiny house, and it was really fun. It's doable. You just have to be creative.

Also, I think you can make the time to really be present with people. For example, if you're at a party, really talk to the person. Don't check your smart phone; put it away. I see that a lot. People scroll through their texts, and I do it, too. It's a habit I'm trying to break. Just be present with people when you're spending time with them; I think that's really important.

I will say, too, that my dad was really sick earlier this year and passed away. It sucks, but it's how life goes. However, the thing that's great is that I had the time to really be with him and help take care of him. I'm really grateful that I had that opportunity. If I were still in the investment management industry, it would have been impossible for me to really be there to help him and my mom. So, I think going back to that time tracking thing and figuring out where you can incorporate more time for other people in your life is really a key thing.

Joel Zaslofsky's Tip

“Remove the relationships that don't benefit anyone especially yourself”

From a relationship perspective, as I went through my personal renaissance and I simplified my relationships, I realized that I have a lot more time and energy for my existing relationships and for my new relationships. I've heard other people – Courtney Carver of Be More with Less – talk about being fully engaged. Give somebody your full attention both physically if you're in a room with them or mentally. The ability to commit fully to a relationship by all of these things that I've done to simplify my life, has allowed me to generate a lot of additional time and energy where I can explore new relationships, and I can add them without the other ones having to suffer as a result of it.

I've intentionally freed myself from a lot of those relationships that held me back. It was painful. There were friends who I'd no longer interact with because there was a level of toxicity in the relationship, or it really wasn't helping them, or it wasn't helping me. I guess what I'd tell people is the more you simplify, the more that you're honest with yourself and

with the other people and remove the relationships that don't benefit anyone, especially yourself, the more energy and additional time you'll have to spend with the people who you currently love, those who you currently care about.

And the bonus is, you have the ability to generate fun, wonderful, new relationships with a whole bunch of cool people who are doing things online, in your local community, whoever that may happen to be. Really focus and fully engage with the relationships that you have. If you question whether you can do that or whether you should do that with this specific person or a certain group of people, maybe that's a sign that you should tweak that relationship and try to generate the value somewhere else.

9

27 MORE TIPS

One of the most important success lessons that I learned in my life is:

“The easiest way to become successful is to find someone who is already successful at what you want to do and follow his/her footsteps”

That’s why when I decided to start the Midway Simplicity blog, I reached out to the top simple living advocates with the following key question:

“Could you please share with us one of your most practical simple living tips/ideas?”

I was looking for more mainstream ideas that are not too harsh for the lifestyle of an ordinary person who just wants to find peace and enjoy more with less, without becoming an extreme minimalist (i.e. the Midway).

I received awesome replies from 27 humble, wonderful and inspiring simplicity advocates (or as I prefer to call them: Legends). Most of them became my guests on the Midway Simplicity show. A few I didn't have the chance of interviewing them yet.

In this chapter, you are going to find 27 more tips from inspiring icons who are making our lives more peaceful and joyful.

1. Leo Babauta - Zen Habits

Place limits on everything you do. Limits force us to choose the important and eliminate the rest, so that the limits make what we do more powerful. For example, only do email for ten minutes, twice a day, and only send out five sentence emails. Only own 100 things, or do three important tasks each morning. Only travel with ten things, work for six hours a day, or go to a restaurant once a week. Those are

only examples, of course — you'll have to find limits that work for you.

2. Courtney Carver - Be More With Less

My best tip to start living more simply is to stop checking email first thing in the morning. Instead, do your most important work first. That could be a yoga class, writing, or another work project. When you check email first, you do everyone's important work besides your own. You react to messages and shift your schedule based on email. Instead, do what means the most to you first, and check email a few hours later.

3. Francine Jay - Miss Minimalist

When you're decluttering, start with a clean slate: completely empty the room, closet, or drawer you're working on. Then put back only those things you truly need or love. It's much easier (and more fun!) to single out things to treasure, than to single out things to toss.

4. Joshua Becker - Becoming Minimalist

Schedule solitude into your life. Simplicity is a counter-cultural lifestyle. Advertisements

bombard us from every possible direction calling us to earn more, buy more, and possess more. Their messages and imagery are powerful – far more persuasive than we realize. Simplicity requires turning off that noise, centering our hearts on what’s most important, and crafting a new life... often without completely disengaging from the existing one. Meditation and solitude provide that opportunity. The basic steps of simplicity will always look similar (slow down, live with less, focus on what’s most important), but they will only come into sharper focus when we set aside time to separate our attention from everything else competing for it.

5. Lorie Marrero - Clutter Diet

Think prevention. Most people focus on reducing what they have already accumulated—like cleaning out a closet—but they forget to look at the habits that made the closet crowded in the first place. Be very mindful of what you are bringing into your home. Don’t pick up things just because they are free, or because someone is giving them to you, or because they are “perfectly good”. We have printable “Clutter Prevention Wallet Reminder Sleeves” on our free tips page (www.clutterdiet.com/

freetips) which are used for holding your favorite credit card in your wallet. They have printed on them the five questions you should ask before buying anything.

6. Allan Douglas - Simple Life Prattle

It's OK to say NO. One of the greatest stress producers we have in modern life is the pressure put upon us to participate in social organizations, to be involved in activities, to "be there" for everyone who asks. These are worthwhile things, but *you* need to choose which ones to devote your time and energies to; don't succumb to the notion that if you decline an invitation you're a heel.

Of course if you decline all invitations so you can sit on front of the television, that's another matter. Spend your time in worthwhile pursuits, but don't hand control of your time to others. Make your own choices, don't over-extend, then do your very best in those activities. Reserve sufficient time to spend together with your family, as a family. Investing your time and attention in your children will pay large dividends as they grow up.

7. LJ Earnest - Simple Productivity

To me, the easiest way to simplify your life is to stop multitasking. By focusing on a single thing at one time, you get more done, and you lose the craziness of trying to maintain multiple tasks in your brain at once. It gives a feeling of space and peace that allows you to simplify other areas.

8. Erin Rooney Doland - Unclutterer

A simple change to make is to put a hook or bowl for your keys near your preferred entrance to the house, and then deposit your keys there every time you come home. It's an easy habit to form, and in addition to saving you time so you never have to hunt for your keys, it might also help you in an emergency. If you're ever in the position of having to leave your home quickly, you know exactly where to find your keys. If you live in a high crime area, be sure to store your keys in a place that isn't immediately obvious to an intruder, like on a hook on the back of your coat closet door.

9. Robert Wall - Untitled Minimalism

If I could sum simple living up in one word, it would be “intention”. Every time you start a sentence with “I have to...” stop for a minute. Put that sentence under the microscope and ask, “Why?” Is it because somebody else would do it? If so, you’re living somebody else’s life. Is it because somebody else expects you to? If so, then you’re chasing somebody else’s dream.

You’ll never be happy unless you’re living your life and chasing your dreams. Figure out what those dreams are, and do your best to intentionally order your life around achieving them. That’s the core of simplicity.

10. Trent Hamm - The Simple Dollar

Build a relationship with your neighbors. If you have a good relationship with the people around you, they’re a constant resource for borrowing things, helping out in a pinch, keeping an eye on your place while you’re away, and often for friendship without having to go out. One of the first things I do when I move into a place is meet and build a relationship with the people around me.

11. Colin Wright - Exile Lifestyle

Focus on what's important to you, and let that guide your decisions in life, your purchases, and your activities. Aim to reduce from your life the things you don't enjoy at the same time. After a while of doing both of these things consciously, you'll be in a much better spot with less of what you don't want or need and more of what you do.

12. Joshua Millburn & Ryan Nicodemus - The Minimalists

Keep it simple, don't live outside your means, and be true to yourself no matter what.

13. Tammy Strobel - Rowdy Kittens

When I walk in the door, I immediately put my stuff away. For example, shoes aren't allowed in the tiny house, so they either stay on the porch or sit by the heater to dry off. The same goes for my wet rain coat. I hang up my coat above the heater to dry and then it goes into the closet.

In addition, each of my belongings has a designated home. I have a spot for my computer, power cords, clothing, and books.

Putting stuff away saves me time because I don't spend 15 minutes looking for my keys or iPod every morning.

If I don't follow these simple steps, I can't seem to find what I need, and it's frustrating to constantly look for the same belongings over and over again. The trick is forming a ritual of picking stuff up and putting it away.

14. Colleen Madsen - 365 Less Things

When it comes to this journey of living with less all you need is a little determination and a lot of resistance, the determination to reduce what you own and resistance to the temptation to replace it with something new. The first thing I did was to stem the tide of stuff coming in. Then slowly but surely I have reduced the clutter that already existed. As time wears on, I find I am prepared to release more and more things. Every day I reach a new level of satisfaction and one day, I know not when, I will reach my final destination. Right now I am happy to be somewhere midway.

15. Andrea Briggs - Inside Thread Studio

Love what you have. One of the most helpful & motivating techniques I have used

personally in my own life to simplify my habits and slim down my personal clutter & possessions is to truly love what I have. I asked myself these questions over and over again...

- ❖ How much of what I own do I truly love?
- ❖ How much that I buy do I end up keeping? Or even really use?
- ❖ How much of what surrounds me is really necessary and used in my day to day life?
- ❖ How much of my stuff is secretly sucking my energy?

Over and over, I asked myself these questions and applied them to the stuff surrounding me through this slow and easeful practice, I ultimately re-shaped how I purchased, used, and kept my personally belongings.

I realized I should never underestimate the positive or negative energy my things created. When stuff is shoved and piled around the living space, it can truly effect daily energy and over all emotions. Simplifying can be easy, especially when you re-examine the attachment to your personal belongings and what all your things mean to you! Ask yourself those questions each day and see what happens!

16. Beth Dargis - My Simpler Life

My most practical tip is about the To Do list. Go over the lists of the past weeks. How many tasks did you accomplish each day? Now average it for the week. How many did you average for a day?

When you make your to do list for tomorrow – check to see what the average number of tasks accomplished was. If it was 10 a day, don't have a to do list of 20. You will just feel badly when they don't get done. If it was three a day, have the three most important things to do on your list. Everything else you do will be a bonus. The more realistic you are about how much you get done on an average day, the better planning you will do.

17. Andrea Dekker - Simple Organized Living

Do 15 minutes a day - every day. Turn off the phone, shut down the computer, give the kids a snack, and spend 15 minutes totally focused on cleaning and organizing. Don't get distracted by anything. Instead, race against the clock to see how much you can accomplish in that short amount of time. We all have 15 minutes a day — and by doing 15 minutes

every day, we can accumulate 90 hours of cleaning/organizing a year!

18. Tina Su - Think Simple Now

Set a date with yourself every day — for 30 minutes to an hour or longer — where you turn off the TV, the phone, the computer. Take this time to read, to journal, or close your eyes and relax.

Simple living is a reflection from your inner state of mind into your external. It all starts from within. Doing this will help center us and re-group our souls from the noise that clutters our inner space.

19. Nina Yau - Castles In The Air

Examine closely what is in your life that you actually need in order to be happy, healthy and at peace. Genuine abundance is everywhere, most especially within yourself. After you've removed the extraneous, the unnecessary, you are left with the extraordinary.

I find questions are the best inner compass since everyone's journey will be unique. What do you use, consume and wear on a daily basis? Make a record of this for the next thirty days. Now of these things, what

made you happy? What did you enjoy doing, wearing, using? What made you unhappy? Are you able to let these things go?

20. Neil Pasricha - 1000 Awesome Things

Embrace the 3 A's of awesome!

Attitude: Chose to move forward when times are tough.

Awareness: Take the time to appreciate the small wonders found in the world around you.

Authenticity: Stay true to yourself.

Watch this video for more insights from Neil:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajKMkIXN1eg>

21. Gary Foreman - The Dollar Stretcher

Many people are familiar with the concept of 'zero based budgeting'. That's a budget where you don't start with last year's expenses as a baseline, but rather start at zero. Every dollar must be justified. A similar tool can be applied to our lifestyles, sort of a 'zero based lifestyle budget'. Just because we did something last year doesn't mean that we need to do it again. Adapt to changing times, changing needs and

a changing personality. Take a look at everything you do and decide whether it adds value to your life.

22. Matt Madeiro - Three New Leaves

Make a swap. Each day of the week, take one thing you normally do (watch TV, surf Facebook) and shorten it by 30 minutes or an hour. Spend that time on something with an impact: read a book, take a long walk, go to bed earlier. These small changes alone can make a huge difference in your week. So imagine what would happen if you did them for a year.

23. Wanda Urbanska - Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska

In our busy lives, there is no better gift you can give yourself (and others) than building a cushion of time into your schedule. If you have an appointment and you calculate it'll take you 30 minutes to get there, leave 45 minutes early. That way, if you're delayed by traffic or other reasons, you won't have to stress. When you arrive, you can compose yourself, drink some water and get ready for whatever is at hand. This simple step can make a big difference.

24. Miriam Ortiz y Pino - More Than Organized

The easiest way to keep things simple is to learn to ask yourself a couple of questions before you buy something. The first is "Do I already own something that would do the same thing?" The second is "Do I want to take care of this new thing for its lifetime?" These questions work for everything from snack food to new cars. There is no right or wrong answer, just what will work for you.

25. Pea Syne - Simple Humble

Every day we are bombarded with choices and things that are supposed to improve our lifestyles and bring us more happiness. However, improved lives and contented, at ease people are the last thing I see on television, online or in public. In fact, when you do meet these calm, spiritual souls, they really stop you in your tracks, because they **STAND OUT**.

Their strength of quiet resolve, trust in their own instinct and refusal to mingle in the affray of shallowness and the absurdity of the world can really take your breath away...just for a minute.

We all have this ability and innate self wisdom, but most of us allow it to die from misuse. We ask others for truths about us that we really already know. We follow trends instead of what is right and pure for us. We don't listen to our gut feeling when someone points us in the wrong direction masquerading as a potential partner, friend or financial advisor.

To opt for simple living in today's world you have to re-tune your mind-set, and to do that my simple advice is to run from the crowd for at least half an hour a week.

Turn off the noise, AKA the 'news', the demands, the worry, the grasping advertisers and desperate celebrities doing all kinds of PR stunts just for a slither of your attention.

Return the attention to yourself and ask yourself if you are where you need to be. Ask yourself if you are truly happy and find the answer to that question - don't leave it hanging. If you're not, what are you doing to change it? Ask yourself if you are still interested in being exceptional and brilliant, or sit there and explain to your disappointed soul why you have given that up. Ask yourself if you have picked the absolute best people to spend the remaining irretrievable years of your life with, or should some of them hit the road.

That's my simple advice. It isn't about minimizing ownership of quantities of products. It's far more important than that. It's about maximizing time with yourself. If you are not happy with your answers at first, regular quality, quiet time will eventually reveal to you the best way to get the answers you wish for. It will also heighten the desire and understanding of minimizing for less quantity, more quality.

26. Tiffany Washko - Nature Moms

Revolving credit may be great for the economy, but it ties you down to payments for things that you probably didn't actually need or even want but rather felt that you had to have. Paying off your credit cards is an important step on the road to living a minimalist lifestyle. The freedom that comes from not being tied to a financial obligation for your stuff is worth it in the long run. It will also likely help you avoid buying things you don't actually need.

27. Leslie Cao - Radical Turtle

When you go shopping, purchase clothes only made out of natural fabrics such as cotton, silk, wool, bamboo, and hemp, not polyester, rayon,

or acrylic. Depending on the shop, it will probably eliminate at least half of your clothing choices. So, in the end, you purchase less and longer-lasting, better quality clothes, while reducing your environmental impact. These fabrics are able to biodegrade since they are not made from oil-derived plastic.

Next, a final thought...

10

FINAL THOUGHT: SIMPLE PLEASURES

When you start simplifying your life and eliminating the unnecessary, you'll begin to discover what really makes you happier. You will begin to savor the simple pleasures of life that we lost when we took them for granted.

"There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle, or you can live as if everything is a miracle." –Albert Einstein

Today, I invite you to look with a fresh eye at everything around you. Enjoy the beauty of the sunrise, the smile of a baby, a good friendship. Act as if you're experiencing everything for the

first time. You will find more joy in life if you just shift your focus to the simple pleasures around you. You will feel rich and abundant because you will be one of the very few people who really use and enjoy the simple things available to all of us. You will feel that you own wonderful simple pleasures that even rich people are deprived from due to the hectic work they are immersed in.

Matt Madeiro of ThreeNewLeaves.com says, “Sometimes, I think, we need to step back — to take stock of how far we’ve come, and to widen our eyes a bit to every little piece of happiness that is otherwise so easy to ignore.” I recommend reading [“The Book of Awesome”](#) by Neil Pasricha to get introduced to 1000 awesome things that most people ignore or take for granted. Also, the blog of [1000 awesome things](#) is a great blog to follow to stay in touch with the simple pleasures of life.

Here are 55 of life’s simple pleasures I found:

1. Sun rise
2. Morning breeze
3. Hot shower
4. Fresh-ground coffee
5. Your clothes
6. Family time

7. Your baby
8. Your wife
9. Your car
10. Your home
11. A good haircut!
12. Your health
13. Weekends
14. Cooking
15. The blue sky
16. A good movie
17. Food
18. Colors
19. A good book
20. A sunny day
21. Cooling breeze in a hot day
22. Birds sound
23. The cotton candy clouds
24. The smell of rain
25. The rainbow
26. The flowers
27. Nature
28. Watching children playing
29. Sunset
30. Taste
31. Breathing through nostrils (do you feel bad when you've a cold?)
32. Comfortable chair
33. Internet
34. Technology

35. Toilet paper (inspired by Ken Wert of MeantToBeHappy.com)
36. Toothpaste
37. Perfume
38. Paper
39. Pillows
40. Clean water to drink
41. Paint
42. A full moon
43. Batteries
44. Air conditioners
45. The gift of voice
46. Warm slippers
47. Chocolate
48. Ice cream
49. Camera / Photos
50. Videos
51. Memories
52. Hugs
53. A Notebook (specially the Moleskine notebook ... back to the beautiful past)
54. Money in your pocket
55. Getting up without an alarm

Your task for today is to start enjoying a few simple pleasures intentionally with a fresh/beginner's eye. And I promise you of a wonderful day ahead.

Start your journey to simplify your life today
and you'll soon begin to ENJOY MORE with
less.

To Your Simpler Life,
Mohamed Tohami

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Over the past 9 years, Mohamed Tohami, bestselling author and Egypt's #1 motivation expert, has been helping thousands of people restore their passion for life and work. He is on a mission to help individuals & organizations grow exponentially by unleashing the ultimate power of passion-driven work. He believes that simplicity is the cornerstone of a passionate life.

Tohami is known for his series of interviews with ultra-successful people about their secrets of success, having recorded over 150 interviews with the world's leading success and business gurus like Jim Cathcart, Tony Alessandra, Michael Gerber, Mark

Sanborn, and many more.

On May 19, 2009, his first book, *The Pharaohs' Code*, was Amazon's #1 best-selling motivational book. This book is your personal Rosetta Stone for unlocking the true meaning of your life. His second internationally highly acclaimed book is called *StoryNetworking: A Proven 4-Step System To Connect With Successful People*.

Tohami lives in the land of the Pharaohs, Egypt, with his wife and little girl.

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