



Disclaimer: These are rough notes we use to prep for the show. Please excuse typos, etc.

Simple Life Together Episode 55: 7 Habits for Highly Effective Simplicity!

“Hi and welcome to Simple Life Together, a podcast dedicated to leading a simpler life in the modern world”

I’m Dan Hayes.

And I’m Vanessa Hayes.

Hi and welcome back to Simple Life Together! On the last episode of the show we talked about how establishing limits can be a great way to help shape your lifestyle. Today, we want to share 7 habits that you can develop to help make your life simpler.

So Dan, why don’t you start out...

Thesis Statement

Now there are tons of things you can do to simplify, but

we wanted to hit what we think are the top 7 things that have worked for us, and we want share them with you!

Major Takeaway (Introduced)

We want you to be able to take just these 7 habits...7 things you can start doing today, to have a better tomorrow, a better year, and a much better chance of achieving the lifestyle that you want for yourself and your family.

So here goes...

Begin with the End in Mind: This one comes straight from our military planning background and also Steven Covey's 2nd habit in his book The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

- We call it "Desired End State" which we developed through our Life Plan process
- Establish Priorities...we call them our Pillars (F⁵)
- Once we have Priorities, we can begin working toward our goals
- Now, Vanessa, you really hit on working toward your goals pretty hard back in the "Tips for Successful Resolutions" in Episode 008.
- Right...and that was where I shared some tips about how you can accomplish your goals no matter

if they are new year's resolutions, personal goals or professional goals.

- So, in my convoluted mind, I think of this just like I would marksmanship (go figure...wink)
 - The target is your desired endstate, or the end in mind
 - My rear sight is my priority or my pillar
 - But the front sight is what i need to have in focus.
 - When you fire a weapon, you have to keep four fundamentals in mind: sight picture, sight alignment, breath control and trigger squeeze.
 - Let's focus on just SA and SP
 - Sight Alignment is Front & Rear Sights
 - Rear sight = Priority
 - Front Sight = Goal
 - Sight picture is Front/Rear Sights and Target
 - Target = End State
 - Front & Rear sights aligned with each other
 - Front & Rear sights aligned with your target
 - For instance, we may have an end state in mind, and we may have a priority, but if the actions we take aren't aligned as

we pursue our goals, we'll never hit the target. It's the same thing I talked before about back in Episode 32...it's All About the Choices We Make

Which kind of leads us into our next Habit #2: Strive to Simplify versus Organize.

- Now, Dan, we were talking about this the other day...how did you put it?
- Clutter is the disease
- Organizing steps are the cure
- Simplicity is the Prevention!
- Right...Simplicity is preventative...and Organizing is...well...kind of reactive.
- And we saw this when we gave our presentation at Organize and Energize a little over a week ago...and how different our message was from the different organizers who presented. Much of the talk was about how to “maximize your space” to fit more in your cabinets and closets...where we were talking about “editing your space” to give yourself some room and margin.
- Now that being said...organizing is still very near and dear to my heart and is a wonderful tool to help maintain simplicity in your life. I just think it's very eye-opening when you clarify the difference between

the two and I would advocate decluttering and simplifying your life first then organizing what's left.

- Funny...I'm starting to think of myself more and more as a "Simplifier" than a "professional organizer"....hmmmm.

So, talking about decluttering and simplifying, that moves us into Habit #3....Embrace the idea of "less is more."

- Sounds so cliché, but the more you simplify, the more this is reinforced
- One of our earliest episodes....Episode 004 titled "Benefits of Organizing and Having Less" addressed this very idea. I talk in generalities about the benefits, but heck, we along with hundreds of others have and still are experiencing this very concept with our Edit and Forget It Challenge.
- Now Dan...you also talk about less is more with your concept of Reductivity vs Productivity
- Reductivity versus productivity...
- What it all boils down to, is that by embracing this idea, you will in turn become more mindful of the what you allow into your life (and being mindful is also a preventative measure like we just talked about with simplicity) and it will allow you to be more

content and grateful for what you have and learn to appreciate living in the moment.

So...how do you live in the moment? Well, we do that by learning to value “margin” which is habit #4

- We say Margin is Uncommitted Time and Space.
- For this habit, we're going to focus on the “Time” aspect of margin.
- We talked about limits in last week's show, Episode 54
- In that we mentioned that boundaries allow you to respect your time and for others to respect your time too.
- Learning to say NO (Episode 009 The Power of Saying No). “No” allows you to have margin to breathe, relax, contemplate or be spontaneous.
- It allows you to say “no” to unproductive and unmeaningful obligations...and “yes” to valuable and more meaningful experiences?
- Even back in Episode 36 I talked about how it seems like “Busy is the New “I'm Fine”...

Naturally, this takes us into Habit #5...Value Experiences over Things

- Example of camper, bikes, etc...alone they aren't meaningful...but when used in line with your life

goals and priorities (like our love of the outdoors and being with family) then they can help create those experiences

- This is the one time we agree with advertisers about how something will make you happier...but you **MUST** be absolutely sure you are *intentional* about your purchase and not getting sucked into gateway gadgets like Dan talked about back in Episode 14.
- We're also talking about being in the moment when we talk about valuing experiences.
- How many of you are guilty for feeling like you have to take a picture of every single place you visit or fun and memorable event? And as you're fumbling for your camera phone your kids are getting irritated with having to stop the fun activity they're doing and getting cramped cheeks from holding their oh-so-natural smiles...just so you can get a not-so-spontaneous and posed picture? And all for the sake of...I don't know...proving that you had fun and feeling the need to have to share it on Facebook? I know I'm totally guilty of this!!! So I'm really trying to experience being in the moment...building memories and friendships.... and not feeling like I have to use FB or a printed photo to prove how wonderful my life is.

And speaking of experiences...it often helps to

Establish Habits, Routines and Rituals which is Habit #6

- We've talked about this many times and at length in Episode 30 "Buying Time" (which focused on habits routines and rituals) as well as Episodes 02 and 15: "How Routines Can Simplify Your Life" and "Creating Your Morning Routine"
- So...we won't footstomp that so hard here.
- Just know that if you take a hard look at the things that DO work for you in life right now, then it's probably because it's a habit, a routine, or it's become a ritual. Just model that behavior.

Our last Habit #7 is...Understand that You are Different and that's OK.

- In Episode 13 I talked about the Crabs in a Bucket story and Frogs in pot of Boiling Water adage... you may want to go back and listen to those. But just know, that there are lots of forces in your life that will try to keep you from changing...to keep things the way they are. It's going to take some effort to fight that gravity. And that gravity may be in the form of family or friends.

Major Takeaway (Reinforced)

So there you go...7 habits you can start developing today, to help you have a better tomorrow, a better year, and a much better chance of achieving the lifestyle that you want for yourself and your family. A life more...simple!

Question for the Listeners/Readers:

So, we know these aren't the only habits you can use...so tell us what we missed! What are some habits you've developed or are working on to simplify your life? Let us know! Be sure to leave a comment and share at SimpleLifeTogether.com/055.

THING Segment:

Dan: Tenkara traditional Japanese fly fishing. I fell in love the the simplicity/minimalist-based aspect of Tenkara vs western-style fly fishing and how it's congruent with our simplicity journey in so many ways. It's experience vs gear based and completely in line with being intentional and mindful about our purchases.

Van: We're always mentioning our 5 pillars of: Faith Family Fitness Finances and Freedom. Well, we don't often talk specifically about our faith on the show because that's very personal and different for everyone. But I feel

compelled to share with you an amazing podcast that Leh and Stephanie Meriwether introduced me too (they are from the Healthy Married Life show). The podcast is called *Your Move with Andy Stanley*. Now, it is a faith based podcast but I have to tell you...it is NOT heavy on the spiritual content. It's much, much more! To me it's more of a motivational, thought-provoking, leadership-driven, and inspirational podcast. And it's funny! Now...specifically, he has a series called ***Recovery Road*** that is soooooo in line with everything that we talk about here on Simple Life Together. Matter of fact, I thought he stole some of our content! He talked about things like limits and margin in regards to time and money....how there is a difference between standard of living and quality of life...how we can become slaves to money...how to be honest with yourself and asking why you do what you do and purchase the things you purchase...and how affluence and independence has "smothered" our sense of gratitude and giving back to others...and how it's always better to say "I want" than "I owe." Seriously...I started this series just days after Dan and I gave a talk together where we mentioned a lot of the same things he was talking about. Anyway...like I said, I wanted to share this podcast with you and I really think it's well worth a listen. Again, the podcast is *Your Move with Andy Stanley* and the series is called *Recovery Road*.

Announcements:

We wanted to give a big shout out to James Kinson from the Cash Car Convert podcast at cashcarconvert.com. He had us on his show this week and it was a pleasure to talk with him. For many of us, our car is our biggest ticket item next to our home, and James is a thought leader who advocates buying your cars without buying into debt. What a nice guy he is, too. We met James in Vegas but it was nice to be able to have a full conversation with him the other day for the interview. So, check out James' show, and listen in as he interviews us at cashcarconvert.com/008. BTW, James' show is pretty new, so he could use some help by giving him a review in iTunes too...so if you can, head over to iTunes and help him out.

So Dan is working with our friend Joel Zaslofsky of Value of Simple on a "simplicity summit" of sorts, called SimpleRev, short for simple revolution. SimpleRev will be 200+ passionate simple-living advocates. Joshua Becker of Becoming Minimalist will be there, and even others like Brooke McAlary of Slow Your Home and Mohamed Tohami of Midway Simplicity will be supporting from afar.

To learn more, just go to SimpleRev.com or SimpleLifeTogether.com/rev

Special thanks to all of you who've left reviews for us on iTunes. It really does help people find the show. So here's a shout out to....

Nicki425 from here in the US wrote: Just the kick I needed! *Dan and Vanessa have a great podcast. They complement each other very well, and inspire me to simplify my life. I appreciate that their message isn't "get rid of everything". I feel like I can relate to them.*

Thank you so much for taking the time to share your heart-felt comments. We really, really appreciate it so much.

We've been getting asked all the time about Courtney Carver's Project 333 and her little Dress With Less course. So, if you have any questions or just want to learn more just go to SimpleLifeTogether.com/dress.

CONTACT INFO: Remember...if you have questions or comments you can always reach us at Dan@SimpleLifeTogether.com & [@DanielHayes](https://twitter.com/DanielHayes) on

Twitter, or Vanessa@SimpleLifeTogether.com & [@GetSimplifized](#) on Twitter and there are links to our Google Plus profiles on the website.

Wrap Up:

OK, so that's it for Episode 55 of Simple Life Together. Remember, just 7 simple habit changes can go a long way to help you simplify your life. So give ours a shot! And if you haven't already, be sure to sign up for Edit & Forget. Just go to SimpleLifeTogether.com/edit and interact with you on the Facebook Page.

Vanessa's Thing was Andy Stanley's Your Move series, and my thing was my decision to convert to Tenkara fly fishing.

As usual, you can find all the links and info from today's show at SimpleLifeTogether.com/055.

So let us know what you think of the show and how you're simplifying your life, too! Send us a note and let us know how we're doing. Oh, and it would help out a lot if you could write us a review in iTunes at SimpleLifeTogether.com/itunes. Either way, we'd

absolutely love to hear from you.

So, until next time, we hope you enjoy your...

SIMPLE LIFE TOGETHER

Resources and Links:

[Dress With Less](#)