



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

## Simple Life Together Episode 52: Make It Your Year in 5 Simple Steps!...(music)

“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.

Well, welcome back and Happy New Year! On the last episode of the show we challenged you to jumpstart your simplicity journey with our Simplicity Quick Start Guide.

Hopefully you had a chance to listen in to that one and maybe got caught up on episodes since we took the entire month of December off from the show and the website. But it's 2014 and we are back!

## **Thesis Statement**

Yep and if you're like most people you probably have intentions to make some serious changes to your life this year, right? Well, we want to help make 2014 YOUR year to simplify! And even if you're not listening to this at the beginning of the year, or heck, it might not even be 2014 anymore when some of you listen to this, the fundamentals are timeless and perpetual.

## **Major Takeaway (Introduced)**

So, if you've fallen short of your goals in the past, like probably all of us have at some point, we have 5 steps to help you build a more solid plan, and hopefully set you on the road to success.

So let's get started!

### **Step 1: Take some time to do a review of the past year.**

- Figure out what's working for you and what's not.(Van: yeah like some things that aren't quite working are our new schedule...not buying anything new (although I must say we cut down quite a bit... but we still need to work)...and we met some business goals but need to focus on others. As far as what's working, we were successful in a few things...like getting certified...and meeting some

financial goals (paid off two cars, sold land, etc.)...we were able to focus more on family...also maintained the healthy work-life balance between hands on organizing and online work...we were able to meet some of our charity goals...and of course, some simplicity goals as well (E&F, Project 333, simple Christmas, etc).

- Any “repeat offenders?”...yeah, me too!
- I talked about doing one of my personal reviews back in August in Episode 37. You can find that at SimpleLifeTogether.com/037 and even during my end of year review I found I was still making some of the same mistakes. Why is that? Well, that leads us to Step 2...

**Step 2:** Make a conscious effort to prioritize, then change or eliminate THINGS that clutter your life...and establish new goals.

- Get help if you need it! Maybe it takes an outside set of eyes or ears to help you see things better.
- Maybe some coaching or mentoring could get you on path quicker than just doing things yourself.
- Use SMART goals (vanessa review SMART, give an example or two.) Eat healthier could equate to:
  - Specific=Juice daily, eat more raw foods ( $\frac{1}{2}$  small meals are raw fruits, veggies and nuts), cut

down on sugar and processed foods (keep count of number of grams/day), cut down on alcohol (only 1 glass of wine per day)

- Measurable = if losing weight maybe a goal of losing 2 lbs/month; or for your health, maybe measure your blood levels for cholesterol, blood pressure, etc.; body fat percentage vs. weight, etc.
- Attainable =
- Results-focused = lose x amount of weight, make X amount more money, save x amount of money, give away x number of items...etc.
- Time-bound = daily, weekly, monthly or annual goal
- Partner up with someone or make your intentions public. Sometimes an accountability buddy or expectations from someone else is just what we need to give us that added positive peer pressure to stay on target.
- Track your progress...it really helps!

Ex: For us, the Edit & Forget It Challenge was a great SMART goal. It really felt pretty amazing to see the numbers add up and watch our numbers goal get closer and closer. Even though it wasn't truly about the numbers for us, it still gave us a quantitative guage that we were on

the right track. (It was a **specific** goal of editing 2013 items, it was **measurable** since it was a quantitative amount, **attainable** in that it wasn't an unreasonable goal, **results oriented** in that we not only could see the results in terms of space we cleared up, but mentally we felt a weight lifted; and **time-bound** in that we had weekly, monthly and an overall annual goal.)

- I've committed to walking 10K steps a day, which for me turns out to be about 4.5 miles. My one present this year was a Fitbit Force (I love it!). I got the idea from my friend Cliff Ravenscraft. I'm not a jewelry guy, but I don't even know this thing is on. While I wasn't thrilled about buying another gadget, it really does help to accurately track my progress. I just kept losing count of my steps beforehand...

### Step 3: Take control of your time.

- Define your responsibilities, joys and dreams
- Align your **commitments** with your responsibilities, joys and dreams!
- To the extent possible, change or eliminate commitments that don't align with your responsibilities, joys and dreams! (volunteer groups that I was part of that I determined caused me more stress than rewards, business functions that cost me time but with little ROI)

- Accept that you won't get it all done! Remember, there are only 24 hours in the day, 168 hours in the week. Make yours count.

Ex: What we planned to do during the month of December:

- Focus on some writing projects
  - Working on a book, and
  - Creating all new Edit and Forget It guide for this year!
- What we actually got done:
  - We wrote, but not nearly enough on the book
  - But we did work on our new ebook, which we don't have our final title for but we're working on.
  - We also just spent some time reflecting and there will be some changes to the show that we'll talk about later in the Thing segment.
  - Even still, we allowed ourselves to get distracted a bit through the holidays. So, we completely understand that post-holiday feeling of "Wow...I feel way behind, but it's time for me to get started."

## **Step 4: Give yourself credit for your accomplishments**

- Too often we don't celebrate our own accomplishments
- We can be our own worst critic and pretty hard on ourselves.
- You don't have to succumb to guilty rewards or pleasures, but be sure to recognize your efforts. (I'm really bad at this...)

## **Step 5: Commit to a personal review schedule that works for you.**

- Some do a daily review, but do a 20-30 minute weekly as a minimum. Set a reminder.
- Recording your thoughts helps track your progress. Use a journal, calendar event notes, Evernote, even a voice note if it's easier, etc.
- Sets you up for your annual review.

### **Major Takeaway (Reinforced)**

So, there you have it! 5 Simple Steps to make this YOUR year! and those were: 1. Review and reflect on the past year, 2. Prioritize and make new SMART goals, 3. Take control of your time, 4. Give credit to your accomplishments, and 5. Create and commit to a personal review. Sure, you could just hop on the resolution bandwagon, make yourself some empty promises and

avoid all the real effort. Or you really could take charge of your decisions, your actions, and your life. I'd be willing to bet if you really spend some time on Step 1, the other 4 steps will fall into place for you. Give it a shot. You deserve this year!

### **Question for the Listeners/Readers:**

So, what are some of your goals for this year? How are you going to simplify? We'd love to know. Be sure to leave a comment and share at [SimpleLifeTogether.com/052](http://SimpleLifeTogether.com/052).

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### **THING Segment**

Well, our thing this week has to do with some of our reflection time. Remember, the Thing segment started out as something that happened, someone or some “thing” that made our lives a little simpler during the previous week since the last show.

Well, we took about 4 hours to plan one day just before the middle of December and just spent some time reflecting and bouncing ideas off of one another. Here is some of what we talked about with regard to the show:

- What we want our life together to look and feel like with regard to the show. Candidly, we're a year into

SLT and we thought it was time to think about what's working, what's not working, etc. Just like a personal review.

- We talked about:
  - The format of the show
  - Did a full page of our "Pain Points"...things that held up production of the show, caused friction, etc
  - Decided to make a few changes
    - Not do the Thing segment weekly, but as a target of opportunity
    - Shorten our posts a bit but keep the full, unedited shownotes as a downloadable attachment
    - Really work on getting better so we didn't have to edit so much
- Together, these changes will help make producing the show a lot simpler for us. We're not pros at the whole "production thing". Putting the show out there every week still takes us about 16 hours combined, and that just isn't sustainable for us. So, we have to make it simpler because doing the show is important to us, and hopefully to you, too.

## Announcements:

So as we mentioned earlier, we are working on two big writing projects. The first will be a book for Amazon that will be a guide to help people through the editing process with steps, some checklists, and more. Plus it will go right along with the Edit & Forget It Challenge. The second project is another book, as well. We're not sure if we'll self-publish that as well or seek out a traditional publisher. So, more to follow on that down the road...

Thanks to all of you who waited patiently throughout the month of December as we took a break. We missed you and we're really, really excited to be back!

Oh, and we have to say Project 333 is going great for us! We had no problems over the break and are going strong with Courtney Carver's Dress With Less microcourse. You can learn more about that at [SimpleLifeTogether.com/dress](http://SimpleLifeTogether.com/dress).

Finally, the Edit & Forget It Challenge is back for 2014! So if you're already on our [EandF email list](#), that's great. If not, you can sign up at [SimpleLifeTogether.com](http://SimpleLifeTogether.com). Just click on the E.&F banner over in the right column.

**CONTACT INFO:** Remember...if you have questions or

comments you can always reach us at [Dan@SimpleLifeTogether.com](mailto:Dan@SimpleLifeTogether.com) & [@DanielHayes](https://twitter.com/DanielHayes) on Twitter, or [Vanessa@SimpleLifeTogether.com](mailto:Vanessa@SimpleLifeTogether.com) & [@GetSimplifized](https://twitter.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 52 of Simple Life Together. Remember, 2014 is going to be YOUR year to simplify! We're here to help so just let us know what you need from us, ok?

Our combined Thing is some changes coming down the road for the show, and if you missed those, as usual, you can find all the links and info from today's show at [SimpleLifeTogether.com/050](http://SimpleLifeTogether.com/050).

So let us know what you think of the show and how you're simplifying your life, too! Send us a note or write us a review in iTunes at [SimpleLifeTogether.com/itunes](http://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](#)