



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

Simple Life Together Episode 63: Five Steps to Simple Living at Your Own Pace

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.

Welcome back to Simple Life Together! On the last episode of the show we talked about ways that you can slow the accumulation of stuff and challenge your consumer tendencies.

On today’s show, we’re talking about a few steps you can take to help simplify your life without falling into the trap of following gurus and “experts”. We’ll also be sharing a

pretty big announcement regarding the show and how we'll be spending our time, as well.

Okay, so let's get started...

Thesis Statement

When it comes to making changes, there always seem to be plenty of experts around telling you what you should do, and how you should do it. Looking to get in shape? You can find an endless supply of “experts”...many of which will directly contradict each other...that are ready with their magic formula to help you. All you have to do is buy their equipment, take their magic pill, or follow their magic advice.

Major Takeaway (Introduced)

But what it all boils down to in the real world is kicking things into gear yourself, and sticking with a plan that is right for YOU. When it comes to simplifying your life, there are some things that have worked for us and that you can use to start making strides in areas of your life that you want to simplify. We're just going to offer 5 ways to help you simplify your life...at your own pace.

Here goes:

Okay, first... Take an objective look at where you are. Once you look at where you are now, you can figure out where you want to be and start working in that direction.

Number two...start with one area of your life. What's one area you want to fix? Is it your physical clutter, time commitments and obligations, finances, your professional life, personal life, health? What do you want to focus on? Pick one thing first, then edit what isn't working and try to streamline ways to keep it simple...and keep it going. Here's an example: a major area of frustration for me was our kitchen counter that became the clutter zone. The first thing I did was get rid of the junk, then Dan came up with the idea of making some cubbies in the columns next to where the clutter was collecting...and it worked great! That one change had such a huge impact on our physical space that it led to more and more opportunities to simplify. And that's what we're talking about for our third point...

Simple living will become addictive, and once you start that one area, you'll likely find you're ready to expand your efforts and carry that momentum into simplifying other areas of your life. So as we just mentioned regarding those cubbies...that worked so well that the idea spread to other areas of the home to control and

contain out clutter.

Focusing on our finances was another area that we wanted to simplify. So we focused on selling (editing) our land which set us up to tackle other financial goals we had, and buy our teardrop trailer outright.

Our Edit and Forget Challenge launched became a lifestyle and not just a one time event!

The same thing can happen in other areas of your life, too, like health and fitness. Sometimes we try to do everything but quickly get burned out. The best thing to do is to keep it simple and work on one thing at a time. So like for us, the idea of doing a 60 day juice fast sounded great, but it just wasn't realistic for us. Instead we chose to make it part of our weekly diet plan...slowly incorporating it at least 3-4 times/week. By doing that...it has become a regular part of our life...something we've been able to sustain for over two years. And we became addicted to how good it made us feel which led us to look into other way to improve or expand our healthy eating goals. Juicing led to eating more raw foods... and eating smaller portions...and now smoothies. Matter of fact, we'll have Farnoosh Brock back again on the next show to talk about that!

You see, when you start small or with one thing at a time, it's much easier to implement it, sustain it, and spread to other areas of your life. So have a rough plan...a punch list, if you will, of areas you want to simplify. That way, you can concentrate your efforts and capitalize on your efficiencies.

And the **fourth thing is that by doing this, you can Go At Your Own Pace.** You'll know what pace is right for you and when it's time to stretch a bit or ease up. Find people, books, podcasts or blogs that help guide and support. But don't fall for the "gurus or experts" who pretend to have some secret formula or easy solution. They sound great, but they don't know you. You know you. Follow what feels right to you. And as we mentioned before, be prepared for some friendly "critiquing" along the way from others who just don't get it...YET. We talk about that pretty in-depth in Episodes 13 about escaping cubicle life and in Episode 55, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Simplicity. (We've had listeners tell us stories about how their family members refer to them as "that one...the one that gets rid of stuff." Heck...we've been there too! Some of my family members don't understand what we're doing at all...they think we're weird...but oh well).

So for a quick recap, we had 1- Take an objective look at where you are, 2- Start With One Area of Your Life, 3- Know That Simple Living Will Become Addictive, and 4- Go At Your Own Pace.

Now, the 5th and final step is...

Take action! Get started and tweak things as you go! Try personal simplicity challenges, like our Edit & Forget It Challenge, Project 333, and others. Measure your progress against your own yardstick and try to stick to your objectives. Of course, it always helps to have a very well developed plan, but to paraphrase von Moltke, “No battle plan survives first contact with the enemy.” So, armed with your motivation to simplify and your rough plan from Step 2, get started and be prepared to tweak things along the way. That way you can always stay on the offensive and have the agility to change course along the way, but still work toward your objective. There’s lots of sayings in the military that follow this advice, such as “improvise, adapt and overcome,” and “Flexibility is the key to Airpower”. So, as you take action, remember it’s better to follow your overall objectives than it is to follow a rigid plan.

So there you go...5 Steps to Simple Living at Your Own Pace.

And we use these steps too, and we're making some major tweaks with our lives as well as the show. We'll talk about that in the Announcements segment in a few minutes.

Major Takeaway (Reinforced)

So the major takeaway here is this: Remember, no matter area of your life you're trying to improve, there is help out there. But don't fall for the "gurus or experts" who pretend to have some secret formula. They don't know you like you know you. Follow what feels right to you. Figure out where you are now, where you want to be, make a plan, take action and tweak along the way. That's it.

If that sounds vaguely familiar, that's because it's about the same thing as the OODA loop we talked about WAY BACK in Episode 16, *Making Decisions Like a Fighter Pilot*.

Question for the Listeners/Readers:

So, have you ever found yourself frustrated with the advice of so called gurus and experts? Or do you take

advice with a grain of salt and adapt a little here and there to fit your needs? Do you have any tips or advice on ways you've been able to reach your simplicity goals and stay on track? We'd love to know.

Be sure to leave a comment and share at SimpleLifeTogether.com/063.

Thing:

Dan: Evernote guide titled "How to Automate Evernote, Save Boat Loads of Time And Make Your Life Easier". It's a 76-page ebook on how to automate Evernote with some cool programs I've talked about before such as If This Then That, Gmail, and others. Kosio, the author, sent me a copy and it has some pretty interesting tactics that'll save you lots of time. You can find it at SimpleLifeTogether.com/automate. It goes great with Brett Kelly's Evernote Essentials, another terrific book to help you make the most of Evernote. You can get that at SimpleLifeTogether.com/essentials. So that's /automate to automate Evernote notes and /essentials to learn and master Evernote.

Qs and Comments: Where we get to answer or talk about what you write to us!

And we got a nice voicemail from Genevieve Parker Hill on our speakpipe app on the website...Dan, would you play that?

Announcements:

SimpleRev Tickets: Early Bird tickets are now available for SimpleRev! Only 50 tickets will be offered at the Early Bird pricing so make sure you lock yours in today. SimpleRev is being held on Oct 3-4 in beautiful downtown Minneapolis on the University of St Thomas campus. To get your tickets at the lowest price that will ever be offered, just go to SimpleRev.com/tickets.

I'll also put a link in the shownote to the SimpleRev podcast in iTunes, as well. Or just search iTunes for SimpleRev, all one word.

iTunes Reviews:

Candabar: The best simple living podcast out there!!! If you are looking for a way to cut down and live a more simple and meaningful life, look no further! This podcast is perfect for that and it has really helped me. Don't bother with any other simple

living podcast!!!

Mopjunkie: The two of you are a great inspiration. I found you recently on James Kinson's Cash Car Convert. I'm in!!! I had to come realization that I had too much stuff! We've already started the reduction phase and also just signed up for your edit and forget it. The two of you are entertaining yet informative! I listen during my 30 minute commute and your segments are just the right size, begin in the morning and finish in the afternoon. Look forward to the drive, yet know I will soon be caught up soon as I listen to a different session each day. Love your shedquarters!!! And keep up the good work!

James Sandercock (Canada): Real life, real hosts, real help. Vanessa and Dan bring well focused, good humoured, and encouraging words of advice into my home each time I listen (and re-listen) to their podcast. They are not syrupy sweet silver lining know it alls. Instead they are sweetly helpful, dig for the silver, know some...and share some type people. They follow a great structure with a lot of fun and loving banter between the two of them. I have subscribed and look forward to each episode.

Sincerely, a mum in the toy filled trenches with four manic munchkins!

Big Announcement

And that leads us to the next thing we want to talk about...we're simplifying and exploring new things, too.

If you've been listening for a while, you know our story, so I won't go completely into it. You know we started this show to document our own simple living journey. We were looking for a sweet spot for ourselves somewhere between the typical consumer and the orthodox minimalist. We feel pretty comfortable where we are in most cases and are still tweaking and growing in other areas.

You know I used to do a lot of tech segments when we first started a year ago. Well, I don't do too many anymore because I've found a comfort zone with my tech tools. I'm working on mastering them and not allowing myself to be tempted with this new app or that. Sure, I'm open to new things...but I'm not actively seeking them out. If something comes along that really impresses me, I'll be sure to pass it on.

And you know we've changed the format of the show

along the way, too. We used to do completely separate main topics, and separate Thing segments, too. Now, for the most part, we've combined those. It streamlines the show and makes it a bit more comprehensive and digestible.

Our next big step is going to bi-weekly shows, starting immediately. It still takes us a crazy amount of time to try to put out a decent show, and the last thing we want to do is put out something stale. Getting back to why we started the show to begin with...we wanted to share our journey and build some community, we didn't set out to build our simple life around a weekly podcast. So, to keep things fresh all the way around, we think bi-weekly shows will help out a lot.

Plus, we want to pursue even more things, too.

You've heard us talk about our teardrop trailer. Now, we know **most** people don't get that either. Since you're into simplicity like we are, you probably understand why we like the simplicity of that, whether you're into camping or not. Well, we have wanted to do a podcast about our teardrop camping adventures but haven't been able to find the time. We also want to do some more writing, short-form videos, etc. Taking SLT from weekly to

bi-weekly will help us free up time for that. Plus...

- Dan is considering taking some classes, too, so that will take a time commitment.

- And we have lots of travel planned for the summer.

Exciting stuff!

And...just to keep you on your toes...we're going to switch back to Thursdays for our typical podcast release days, too! Talk about flexibility, huh???

So...fear not, we'll still be around quite a bit. Matter of fact, we'll be producing more content than ever...just spread more evenly across how we live our simple life together.

Just to give you a little more insight into our plan, instead of doing a completely separate website for our new Teardrop Talk podcast and videos, we're going to start out by just doing a separate tab right on SimpleLifeTogether.com. We may have to switch that down the road.

We'll let you know when that goes live and, of course, we'd love to have you follow along there, too. We're hoping that we'll be able to bring some of our Teardrop Talk listeners over to the simplicity side, and lead some of

our simplicity lovers over to teardropping, too! So we'll see how that goes.

The next big announcement is our new Facebook page and forum. Now, admittedly, we're not the biggest fans of Facebook, but it seems to be where most people are. We've had the private Edit and Forget It page on Facebook for over a year and it's become a wealth of information and a great resource for everyone there. We're hoping the open Facebook page for Simple Life Together will grow to be the same. We've installed a forum app there too so we can categorize things by topic. That should help a lot! We haven't started seeding topics there yet but it is an open page and open forum so feel free to start setting up topics too!

So, we look forward to seeing you on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SimpleLifeTogether>. We're building the new Simple Life Together page on Vanessa's previous GetSimplifized page. So, while the URL has already changed to <Facebook.com/SimpleLifeTogether>, it's not changed in the Facebook search yet. It still shows up as GetSimplifized. Facebook told me they have a 14-day waiting period for page name changes, so it should change on the 21st of April. So, fingers crossed that it'll be updated soon! In the mean time, we'll see you

there!

CONTACT INFO: Remember...if you have questions or comments you can find all our contact info at SimpleLifeTogether.com/vanessa or SimpleLifeTogether.com/dan.

Wrap Up:

OK, so that's it for Episode 63 of Simple Life Together. Remember, no matter area of your life you're trying to improve, there is help out there. But don't fall for the "gurus or experts" who pretend to have some secret formula. They don't know you like **You** know you. Follow what feels right to you.

Pick up a copy of ***Supermom vs Super Mom: Simplicity Tips for Busy Moms***. It's a Simple Life Guide to Getting Organized, Finding Margin, and Embracing Simplicity for Moms. Just go to SimpleLifeTogether.com/supermom to get your copy today!

As usual, you can find all the links and info from today's show at SimpleLifeTogether.com/063. If you keep up with

our shows as they're released, look for our next show to be out on Thursday, April 17th 2014. If you're listening to us after that, well...lucky you...you don't have to wait! And if you're an Evernote fan, get the Evernote advantage at SimpleLifeTogether.com/automate **and** SimpleLifeTogether.com/essentials.

So let us know what you think of the show and how you're simplifying your life, too! We'd absolutely love to hear from you.

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

SIMPLE LIFE TOGETHER

Resources and Links:

[Evernote Essentials](#)

[Automate Evernote](#)

[SimpleRev Tickets](#)

[Supermom vs Super Mom](#)