



Tips for Living Simply

What do you think about when you hear the words "Living Simply?" Does it conjure up communal living, or a rich tycoon that lives in the poor house because he is so frugal?

Let me assure you this is not what we are talking about, so keep reading. The intention of "Tips for Living Simply" is to learn from others what they are doing to live a simpler life.

By living simply, they find themselves enjoying a Fuller Life! What a bonus! Below you will find tips from clients, friends, family, and myself.

Possibilities for Multiple Streams of Income:

- ✿ **Make a list of all your skills.** How can you turn those skills into a side business? Think creatively, maybe you are good at clerical work. Who do you know that is super busy and may need an "on call assistant?" Ask them! Are you great at scrap booking? How many people have you heard say they want one but don't have the time or energy to create it themselves? Have you built something that is beautiful and functional? Who do you know that might want to buy one or three or a hundred.
- ✿ **Pet sitting:** People that travel and do not like to put their pets in a kennel.
- ✿ **Photography:** Take family photos. Many times Real Estate agents who are listing a property want good photos to put in MLS or Blogs on line. You need a good wide-angle lens for this. Take photo inventories for homeowners. Every room, every wall, every drawer, every closet everything. Put this on a CD and they can store it in their safety deposit box for insurance or theft proof.
- ✿ **House sitting** - People do not like to leave their houses unattended.
- ✿ **Organization:** If you are good at organizing, help people in their offices or in their homes.
- ✿ **If you drive** your kids to school make money offering to take other kids in your area who need a ride.

Saving Money:

- **Use coupons** when shopping it saves a great deal.
- **Plan your errands** wisely to save gas. Instead of going out several days organize the errands and manage the time to do it maybe one day a week.
- **Think through your budget.** When you need to find extra money ask yourself, "Is cable a need? What could we do to replace it?" How about playing games, read books, ride bikes... Your family will begin to enjoy it once they get over the technology withdraws. The health benefits are great bonus!
- **Review your cell phone plan,** are there things you really do not need?
- **Pay attention to frequent store and gas stops.** A coke here, a candy bar there adds up quickly. Buy a whole liter of pop or a pack of candy bars in a grocery store. It's cheaper and it may cut calories.
- **Turn your heat down or air conditioning up.** Observe your household habits. Are there TVs, radios or lights on and no one in the room? Begin a new habit with the family and reward them when the bill is lower. Whatever happened to candlelight dinners? It is fun and saves electricity, who knows it may even spark some old flames.
- **Weigh your options.** Are paper plates less expensive than water or dishwashers?

Back to Basics:

- **Play board games** with your family. (buy them at garage sales or thrift stores)
- **Play outdoors** - parks are free and there is something for everyone: picnics, hiking, pools, and playgrounds.
- **Take walks after dinner.** Its healthy and a great time to communicate with each other.
- **Cook together** and make dinner preparations a family event. It's less stress when everyone works together and accomplishes a task (I.E. You cook the veggie, spouse grills the meat, and kids set the table). Gather all spices and fridge items for the recipe and put on the counter. When done, put all the items in their respective places promptly.
- **Take turns** and divide the chores in the home to allow more free time for everyone to relax at the end of the day.
- **Make the effort** to look through the mail and put it where it belongs right away so it doesn't pile up.

- ✿ **When folding laundry** put it away immediately so it doesn't stack up and get overwhelming.
- ✿ **Grow a garden.** Don't feel stuck if you are in an apartment or rental. Make a box garden or grow your plants in pots. Grow enough veggies to freeze or can to last throughout the year. I have also done this with fruit trees/vines. Get your kids involved. It's a chance to spend time with them and you are teaching a lost art to a future generation. If you don't have the know how or space to grow a garden, ask for help or share a space with someone.
- ✿ **Instead of buying new,** re-use your furniture for a different purpose. By doing this you have something original that not everyone else has. My sister-in-law is amazing at this. She had an old beat up piano, ripped the top off and turned it into a beautiful shelving unit to hold her antique plates.
- ✿ **Mend your clothes** instead of throwing them away just because of small hole. If you don't know how ask someone who does and teach your kids while your at it.

Relax and Get Centered:

- ✿ **If you wake** up in the middle of the night, try going through the alphabet and name things you are grateful for. You'll be asleep again in no time...with a positive heart attitude!
- ✿ **Try journaling** in the same way you would meditate. It sometimes helps to have an active way - such as writing - to help center your thoughts and draw close to God.
- ✿ **Find the gifts** that are in every situation/circumstance. Write them in your journal.
- ✿ **Meditate:** Try spending up to 20 minutes each day letting go of thoughts and focusing on a single word that makes you feel peaceful and grateful. Don't forget to breathe!
- ✿ **Divert your energy** and attention from money fears to something that will contribute to the world. Volunteer, do something for a neighbor or stranger at the store, go on a mission trip, write a book, or start a business that will help others.