

The Power-Full Life, Part 1: Downsize to Maximize

How can you experience the transforming power of a generous life?

Generosity is a testimony of God's grace in your life. It affirms your faith and it is how God desires to work around the world. You are declaring your faith again and again every time you give. When you then give extravagantly, you are truly participating at a high level in the advancement of the gospel mission. You perceive in an increasing way, what is important to God, how He works in the world, and desires to partner with you.

But where do you start in developing a generous life?

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [The More of Less](#), by Joshua Becker

Most of us know we own too much stuff. We feel the weight and burden of our clutter, and we tire of cleaning and managing and organizing.

While excess consumption leads to bigger houses, faster cars, fancier technology, and cluttered homes, it never brings happiness. Rather, it results in a desire for more. It redirects our greatest passions to things that can never fulfill. And it distracts us from the very life we wish we were living.

In *The More of Less*, Joshua Becker, helps you....

recognize the life-giving benefits of owning less
realize how all the stuff you own is keeping you from pursuing your dreams
craft a personal, practical approach to decluttering your home and life
experience the joys of generosity
learn why the best part of minimalism isn't a clean house, it's a full life

The beauty of minimalism isn't in what it takes away. It's in what it gives.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

Contentment is a lifelong pursuit. It truly is hard to be content. As a matter of fact, you have to learn how to be content. Here are two words that can help: process and perspective. Contentment is not an event or experience, it is a trained discipline of the soul. Perspective is the active ingredient that enables contentment in many different trying situations.

Once we let go of the things that don't matter, we are free to pursue all the things that really do matter.

There is more joy to be found in owning less than can ever be found in pursuing more. In a world that constantly tells us to buy more and more, we often lose sight of that. But consider the life-giving benefits. You can expect a payoff in every one of the following

areas if you practice the principles of minimalism taught in *The More of Less*.

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More time and energy – the fewer things we have, the more of our time and energy we'll have left to devote to other pursuits that matter more to us.

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More money – by buying fewer things, we spend less money.

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More generosity – there are countless opportunities worth vastly more than material accumulation.

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More freedom – every time we remove an unnecessary item, we gain back a little freedom.

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Less stress – every added possession increases the worry in our lives.

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Less distraction – everything around us competes for our attention.

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Less environmental impact – overconsumption accelerates the destruction of natural resources.

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Higher-quality belongings – owning more stuff is not better; owning better stuff is better.

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A better example for our kids – give your children a framework to counteract the out-of-control lifestyle marketed to them.

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Less comparison – purposefully owning less begins to take us out of the unwinnable game of comparison.

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More contentment – material possessions will never fully satisfy the desires of our hearts.

Joshua Becker, [The More of Less](#)

A NEXT STEP

If we were to be honest with ourselves, many of us could identify with a five-year old when it comes to buying and owning things. We're captivated by the glamour of **things** – and we want them now!

Which over time means we end up with a home full of clutter.

So where do you actually start trying to clear out all that stuff you own?

You've probably heard of the 80/20 principle. It's a generality, but it has proven true in many areas of life. How about trying it in the area of your possessions?

It means that you use 20 percent of your stuff 80 percent of the time, and you use the other 80 percent of your stuff only 20 percent of the time. Within that 80 percent of your stuff that mostly just lies around, there should be plenty of choices to start trimming down clutter.

Start with the areas of your home that you use frequently. Living rooms, bedrooms, and bathrooms are a great place to start because you will quickly see the benefits of getting rid of stuff.

As you move from room to room, just put things in a box for later sorting. The idea is to start simplifying your life so you will see the benefits. Now it's time for the fun.

Have a personal garage sale and give your profit back to the church or specific missionary.

Alternately, you could donate to a local organization that can resell for ministry funds. Bottom line, keep the big-picture in mind.

Now step back and take a look at the results, and start the peace that comes from living in a home that has enough – but not too much. And the joy of leveraging your excess for Kingdom access.

Even if the benefits in the list above and the short exercise above were the only reasons for practicing contentment and minimalism, they would be enough. But there's more. There's also the personalized benefit each of us can get from minimalism. Getting rid of what you don't need is the first step toward crafting the life you want.

Giving joyfully then regretting painfully is no fun. Giving should be 100% rewarding all the time. How can we discover this? Can we move to an incredible lifestyle of consistency, dependability, and the rewarding life of generosity? A place where the front side and back side of giving are equally meaningful?

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*This is part of a weekly series posting content from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** Book Summaries for church leaders.*

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