

# A Rich Life with Less Stuff



## 1. Watch the Ted Talks Video about Minimalism and fill the gaps in the following statements.

- Imagine a life with less. Less stuff, less clutter. Less stress and debt and **discontent**. A life with fewer **distractions**.

- Now imagine a life with more. More time, more meaningful relationships. More growth and contribution. A life of passion **unencumbered by the trappings** of the chaotic world around you. Well, what you're imagining is an **intentional** life.

- Well, whatever rich was, I knew that once I got there, I would finally be happy. So as I made more money I spent more money all **in the pursuit of** the *American Dream*. All **in the pursuit of** happiness.

- Everyone around me said I was successful, but I was only **ostensibly** successful. You see I also had a bunch of things that were hard to see from the outside. Even though I earned a lot of money, I had **heaps** of debt. But chasing the American Dream, it cost me a lot more than money.

- And I got to a point in my life where I didn't know what was important anymore, but one thing was clear, there was this **gaping void** in my life. So I tried to **fill that void** the same way many people do, with stuff, lots of stuff.

- Oh, and when I didn't have enough cash in the bank I paid for expensive meals, rounds of drinks, and **frivolous vacations** with credit cards.

- This went on for years, a terrible cycle. Lather, **rinse**, repeat. By my late 20's my life on the outside looked great, but on the inside I was a **wreck**. I was several years divorced, I was unhealthy. I was stuck. I drank, a lot. I did drugs a lot. I used as many **pacifiers** as I could. And I continued to work 60, 70, sometimes 80 hours a week and I **forsook** some of the most important aspects of my life.

- I barely ever thought about my health, my relationships, my passions, and worst of all I felt **stagnant**. I certainly wasn't contributing to others and I wasn't growing. My life lacked meaning, purpose, passion. If you would have asked me what I was passionate about I would have looked at you like **a deer in headlights**. "*What am I passionate about?*" I had no idea. I was **living paycheck to paycheck**.

- We worked side by side at the same corporation throughout our 20's, both **climbing the ranks**, and he had been just as miserable as me. Something had to have changed. **To boot**, he had just gone through two of the most difficult events of his life.

- He spent the next 20 minutes telling me about something called *minimalism*. He talked about how he spent the last few months **simplifying** his life, getting the clutter out of the way, to **make room for** what was truly important.

- First, they were living **deliberate**, meaningful lives. They were passionate and **purpose driven**. They seemed richer than any of the so-called rich guys I worked with in the corporate world. And second, they **attributed** their meaningful lives **to** this thing called *minimalism*.

- So me being the problem solving guy that I am, I decided to become a minimalist right there **on the spot**. I looked up at Josh, I excitedly declared “*All right man, I’m going to do it, I’m in, I’m going to be a minimalist! Now what?*” You see I didn’t want to spend months **paring down** items like he had, that was great for him, but I wanted faster results.

- So Ryan and I did I guess what anyone would do. We started a blog. We called it *The Minimalists*. That was three years ago. Then something amazing happened. 52 people visited our website in the first month. 52! I realize that might sound unremarkable at first, but that meant that our story **was resonating with** dozens of people. And then other amazing things started happening. 52 readers turned into 500. 500 became 5,000. Now, more than 2 million people a year read our words.

- It turns out that when you **add value to** people’s lives, they’re pretty eager to share the message with their friends and their family to **add value to** their lives.

- We discovered so many people who were willing to **contribute beyond themselves** and that’s what makes a real community. **Contribution**.

- Now it’s not that we think that there’s anything inherently wrong with material possessions or working a 9 to 5. There’s not — we all need some stuff. We all have to pay the bills, right? It’s just that when we put those things first we tend to **lose sight of** our real priorities. We **lose sight of** life’s purpose. So maybe getting some of the excess stuff out of the way, clearing the clutter from our lives can help us all focus on everything that remains. Things like health, relationships, growth, contribution, community. Thank you.