



SIMPLIFY EVERYTHING

COURSE WORKBOOK



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The Minimalists' first-ever decluttering course: *Simplify Everything.*

Why “*Simplify Everything*”? Because our material possessions are a physical manifestation of our internal lives. So if your home is filled with material clutter, you are likely burdened by emotional, psychological, and mental clutter that needs to be eradicated.

After helping people heal their relationship with stuff for more than a decade, we designed this course using the time-tested solutions we've discovered. This week we'll start with the stuff, and then we'll identify and eliminate the clutter throughout the rest of your life: digital clutter, calendar clutter, financial clutter, and relationship clutter.

Here's what to expect:

- ✔ 5 distinct weeks
- ✔ 17 video lessons
- ✔ 45 clutter problem areas
- ✔ 135 decluttering solutions
- ✔ 50 minimalism resources
- ✔ 30-page workbook
- ✔ Student forums

To prevent you from getting overwhelmed, we'll slowly drip time-tested solutions into your inbox every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; the video lesson in each email will focus on one obstacle that is cluttering your life.

Throughout the course, you'll also have **unlimited access to our student forums** at simplifyeverything.xyz/forums, where you'll be able to share best practices from fellow minimizers. These forums will be available during and after the course, so you can keep decluttering after you graduate.

Congratulations on taking this big next step to simplify your life. Five weeks from now your life will look appreciably different—less cluttered, less stressed, more peaceful.

Let's go! The best time to simplify was a decade ago; the second-best time is now.

PROBLEM AREA 1: JUNK DRAWERS

SOLUTION ONE

"No Junk" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

Junk-Drawer Challenge



SOLUTION THREE

"Out in the Open" Rule



PROBLEM AREA 2: CLOTHES

SOLUTION ONE

"Seasonality" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"Didn't Know" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

"Hate That Shirt"



PROBLEM AREA 3: PHOTOS AND PHYSICAL MEDIA

SOLUTION ONE

Photo-Scanning Party



SOLUTION TWO

Have I Used This in the Last Year?



SOLUTION THREE

Obsolete Electronics



RESOURCES

Read: [Project 333](#) / Watch: [Less Is Now](#) / Listen: [The Minimalist Checklist](#)Scanner: [Doxie Go SE scanner](#) / Photo Frame: [Anna Bella](#)

PROBLEM AREA 1: UNWANTED GIFTS

SOLUTION ONE

"Minimalist Gift Giving"
Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"Minimalist Gift Getting"
Rule



SOLUTION THREE

"Gift Preservation"
Rule



PROBLEM AREA 2: SHARED SPACES

SOLUTION ONE

"Setting the Stage" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"No Piles" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

"Once a Month" Rule



PROBLEM AREA 3: STUFF AS A STATUS SYMBOL

SOLUTION ONE

"Who Cares" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

Understanding the Tug
of Advertisements



SOLUTION THREE

Does It Even Work?



RESOURCES

Read: [Can We Have an Honest Conversation About Advertisements?](#)

Watch: [Four Tips on Receiving Gifts as a Minimalist](#)

Listen: [Minimalism Rules \(The Minimalists Podcast Ep. 297\)](#)

Meaningful Experiences You Can *Gift to Others.*

✓ **Concert tickets**

✓ **Breakfast in bed**

✓ **A sunset on a random Wednesday**

✓ **Dancing lessons**

✓ **Sledding**

✓ **A car trip to nowhere in particular**

PROBLEM AREA 1: JUST-IN-CASE ITEMS

SOLUTION ONE

"Just in Case" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"Duplicates" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

"Just for When" Rule



PROBLEM AREA 2: SENTIMENTAL ITEMS

SOLUTION ONE

"Spontaneous
Combustion" Rule

SOLUTION TWO

"Watered Down" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

Funeral for Things



PROBLEM AREA 3: OBSOLETE OBJECTS

SOLUTION ONE

"Expired Things" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"Let Go Anyway" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

When Did It Stop
Adding Value?

RESOURCES

Read: [The Minimalist Home](#) (book)Watch: [Axel Vervoordt Uncovers What Is Timeless and Universal through His Collection of Art](#) (YouTube)Listen: [The Minimalist Rulebook](#) (Audiobook)

PROBLEM AREA 1: TEXTS

SOLUTION ONE

Turn off Notifications



SOLUTION TWO

"24 Hour" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

Opt out of Group Texts



PROBLEM AREA 2: EMAILS

SOLUTION ONE

Unsubscribe from Everything



SOLUTION TWO

Don't Keep Chain Going



SOLUTION THREE

Remove Email from Your Phone



PROBLEM AREA 3: PHONE CALLS

SOLUTION ONE

Silence the Phone



SOLUTION TWO

Spam Blocking Apps



SOLUTION THREE

Schedule Calls



RESOURCES

Read: [A World Without Email](#)

Watch: Youtube: [Turn Off Notifications | Digital Minimalism](#)

Spam Filtering Apps

✓ RoboKiller

✓ True Caller

✓ Check your cellular carrier to see what other options they offer

PROBLEM AREA 1: DOOM SCROLLING

SOLUTION ONE

Avoid Comparison



SOLUTION TWO

Unfollow/Mute



SOLUTION THREE

Create/Curate Lists



PROBLEM AREA 2: INFINITE SCROLLING

SOLUTION ONE

Casino Technique



SOLUTION TWO

Block Access to Social Media



SOLUTION THREE

Delete Social Media Apps



PROBLEM AREA 3: FEAR OF IRRELEVANCE

SOLUTION ONE

Screenless Saturdays



SOLUTION TWO

Designated Day for Check-Ins



SOLUTION THREE

Unfollow Everyone



RESOURCES

Read: [Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now](#) (book)Watch: [The Social Dilemma](#) (Netflix documentary)Listen: [Decluttering Facebook Friends](#) (The Minimalists Podcast Ep. 359)

PROBLEM AREA 1: TELEVISION

SOLUTION ONE

Setting Schedule
Boundaries



SOLUTION TWO

Avoiding Binge-
Watching



SOLUTION THREE

Remove the
Televisions



PROBLEM AREA 2: DIGITAL PHOTOS, VIDEOS, & OTHER MEDIA

SOLUTION ONE

"Use It and Lose It" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"No Duplicate Photos"
Rule



SOLUTION THREE

Delete 1,000 Photos
in 11 Days



PROBLEM AREA 3: SMARTPHONES, TABLETS, LAPTOPS, SMART WATCHES

SOLUTION ONE

"Entryway" Rule



SOLUTION TWO

"Don't Upgrade" Rule



SOLUTION THREE

Identify the Benefits
of Going Without



RESOURCES

Read: [Technopoly](#)

Listen: [A Digital Minimalist Intervention](#) | Cal Newport & Jamie Kilstein

Internet Blockers

✓ **Screen Time (built in to iPhone)**

✓ **Moment**

✓ **Space**

✓ **Freedom**

PROBLEM AREA 1: NONNEGOTIABLE OBLIGATIONS

SOLUTION ONE

Everything Is
Negotiable



SOLUTION TWO

How to Map out
Tradeoffs



SOLUTION THREE

Question Assumed
Responsibilities



PROBLEM AREA 2: DOUBLE-BOOKING

SOLUTION ONE

The Joy of Missing Out



SOLUTION TWO

“Wait for It” Rule



SOLUTION THREE

Don’t Say Yes
Without Permission



PROBLEM AREA 3: DON’T KNOW HOW TO SAY “NO”

SOLUTION ONE

How to Give a
Conditional “Yes”



SOLUTION TWO

Decision Deferral



SOLUTION THREE

Saying “Yes” to
Something Else



RESOURCES

Read: *Nonviolent Communication* (book)

Calendar and Scheduling Apps

✓ **Calend.ly**

✓ **BusyCal**

✓ **Schedule Once**

PROBLEM AREA 1: MULTITASKING

SOLUTION ONE

100 Days with No Goals



SOLUTION TWO

Become Less Productive



SOLUTION THREE

Today/Someday Lists



PROBLEM AREA 2: AMBIGUOUS GOALS

SOLUTION ONE

Measurable Goals



SOLUTION TWO

Meaningful Goals



SOLUTION THREE

Outcome-Driven Goals



PROBLEM AREA 3: TOO MANY GOALS

SOLUTION ONE

Priorities List



SOLUTION TWO

Hell Yeah to Only One Goal



SOLUTION THREE

Review Outdated Goals



RESOURCES

Read: *Building a Second Brain* (book)



VALUES WORKSHEET

There are two reasons people don't understand their values:

First, we don't stop to question what our values are, and so they are shaped by our culture, the media, and the influence of others.

Second, we don't understand that some values are more important than others, and many values are, in fact, not values at all, which means they get in the way of what's truly important.

The Minimalists believe the best way to live a meaningful life is to align your short-term actions with your long-term values; that is, to make your future self proud of your present self. That's why we created this worksheet—because when you better understand your values, you will better understand the direction in which you must travel. For a thorough explanation of each type of value, visit minimalists.com/v.

01. Foundational Values

My Unshakable Principles

03. Surface Values

My Minor Values That Make Life Better

[illegible]

02. Structural Values

My Personal Values

[illegible]

04. Imaginary Values

The Obstacles in My Way

[illegible]

Once you've completed this worksheet, review it with someone you trust. And if that person is willing, review their worksheet with them. You'll soon discover that once you better understand your values—and the values of those closest to you—you'll understand how to better interact with them, which will improve the relationship and help you both grow in exciting, unexpected ways.

Goal: _____ 

Why I have this goal: _____

Goal: _____ 

Why I have this goal: _____

Goal: _____ 

Why I have this goal: _____



PROBLEM AREA 1: FAMILY COMMITMENTS

SOLUTION ONE

Know Your Enough
Point



SOLUTION TWO

Communicate Known
Limitations in Advance



SOLUTION THREE

Partialize Commitment



PROBLEM AREA 2: OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS

SOLUTION ONE

Know Your Standards



SOLUTION TWO

You Are Not
Responsible for Their
Expectations



SOLUTION THREE

Clarify Your
Expectations



PROBLEM AREA 3: PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

SOLUTION ONE

Confront the Fear of
Loss



SOLUTION TWO

Find Unspoken
Flexibility



SOLUTION THREE

Identify the Benefits



PROBLEM AREA 1: CREDIT CARDS

SOLUTION ONE

Cut up Credit Cards



SOLUTION TWO

Debt Snowball for Credit Cards



SOLUTION THREE

Don't Be Stupid



PROBLEM AREA 2: STUDENT LOANS

SOLUTION ONE

Debt-Free Degree



SOLUTION TWO

Debt Snowball for Student Loans



SOLUTION THREE

Finding College Alternatives



PROBLEM AREA 3: AUTO LOANS

SOLUTION ONE

Sell Any Car that Isn't Paid Off



SOLUTION TWO

Debt Snowball for Auto Loans



SOLUTION THREE

The 7 Baby Steps



RESOURCES

Read: [Total Money Makeover, Debt-Free Degree](#)

Watch: [Borrowed Future](#)

Listen: [The Ramsey Show](#)

My Debts: _____ 

Where to Find College Scholarships and Grants: _____ 

PROBLEM AREA 1: NOT ENOUGH INCOME

SOLUTION ONE

Creating Multiple
Revenue Streams



SOLUTION TWO

Don't Follow Your
Passion



SOLUTION THREE

Selling Deadline Rule



PROBLEM AREA 2: NO ADVANCEMENT POTENTIAL

SOLUTION ONE

Make a Left Turn to Go
Up



SOLUTION TWO

Developing Useful
Skills



SOLUTION THREE

Creating the Path to
Promotion



PROBLEM AREA 3: GOLDEN HANDCUFFS

SOLUTION ONE

Get Uncomfortable to
Grow



SOLUTION TWO

Pad the Emergency
Fund



SOLUTION THREE

F-You Minimalism



RESOURCES

Read: [*The \\$100 Startup*](#)

Watch: [*Ken Coleman's Career Assessment Tool*](#)

My Interests/Passions: _____



PROBLEM AREA 1: LACK OF BUDGET

SOLUTION ONE

Budgeting Apps



SOLUTION TWO

Essential,
Nonessential, and Junk
Expenses



SOLUTION THREE

Minimizing Budgeting
Stereotypes



PROBLEM AREA 2: TOO MANY EXPENSES

SOLUTION ONE

Eliminate Perceived
Obligations



SOLUTION TWO

Find Free or
Inexpensive
Alternatives



SOLUTION THREE

Eliminate Junk
Purchases



PROBLEM AREA 3: IMPULSE PURCHASES

SOLUTION ONE

Remove the Impulse
Through Budgeting



SOLUTION TWO

Replace Material
Purchases with Free
Experiences



SOLUTION THREE

"30/30" Rule



RESOURCES

Read: [I Will Teach You to Be Rich](#)

Watch: [Don't Buy Stuff \(SNL skit\)](#)

Budgeting Apps

✓ **EveryDollar**

✓ **Mint**

✓ **You Need a Budget**

✓ **Honeydue**

Essentials



Non-Essentials



Junk



Free Media Apps

✓ **Libby**

✓ **Kanopy**

✓ **Hoopla**

PROBLEM AREA 1: TOXIC FAMILY

SOLUTION ONE

Set Boundaries for Family



SOLUTION TWO

Repair the Relationship



SOLUTION THREE

Love Them from a Distance



PROBLEM AREA 2: TOXIC FRIENDS

SOLUTION ONE

Set Boundaries for Friends



SOLUTION TWO

Conditional "Yes"



SOLUTION THREE

Environment Constraint



PROBLEM AREA 3: TOXIC COWORKERS

SOLUTION ONE

Set Boundaries for Coworkers



SOLUTION TWO

Solicit Allies



SOLUTION THREE

Know Your Rights



RESOURCES

Read: *Drama Free* (book)

My Boundaries: _____



PROBLEM AREA 1: NEIGHBORS

SOLUTION ONE

Accept the
Unchangeable Things



SOLUTION TWO

Avoid Blame



SOLUTION THREE

Take Ownership of the
Problems



PROBLEM AREA 2: FRIENDS FROM THE PAST

SOLUTION ONE

Minimize
Codependencies



SOLUTION TWO

Remove Habitual
Triggers



SOLUTION THREE

See Who Follows



PROBLEM AREA 3: COWORKERS AND PEERS

SOLUTION ONE

Create Distance or Let
Go



SOLUTION TWO

Network Better



SOLUTION THREE

The Past Does Not
Equal the Future



RESOURCES

Read: *Codependent No More* (book)

My Habitual Triggers: _____



Relationships to Let Go: _____



PROBLEM AREA 1: FAMILY

SOLUTION ONE

Don't Use Truth as a Weapon



SOLUTION TWO

How to Say "No" More Often



SOLUTION THREE

Understand That Everything Is Optional



PROBLEM AREA 2: FORMER CLASSMATES

SOLUTION ONE

Create Distance Without Eliminating the Relationship



SOLUTION TWO

Loyalty Is Not a Good Reason to Stay



SOLUTION THREE

Tell Yourself a Different Story



PROBLEM AREA 3: COLLEAGUES

SOLUTION ONE

Understand Your Role



SOLUTION TWO

Identify Your Limitations



SOLUTION THREE

Communicate Your Limitations



RESOURCES

Read: *Boundaries* – Henry Cloud (book)

My Stressors and Exceeded Limitations: _____



CONGRATULATIONS

One day at a time, one step at a time, one small act of simplification at a time, you've completed the course.

How will you choose to commemorate this moment?

As we mentioned in the course, it's much easier (and healthier) to say goodbye to something after you've taken the time to reflect on what it means to you.

When you first signed up for this course, what's one area you were hoping it would help you simplify?

How have you taken a step towards progress in that area?

Please share your "simplicity victory" in the forum, where we can share in your joy. We'd love the opportunity to celebrate that achievement with you.

No act of self-care, self-improvement, self-respect, or self-healing is too small.

Whether you share some part of your story on the forum or not, congratulations. Through the dips, difficulties, and doubts, you found a way to do the hardest thing after investing in a course: You finished!

Finishing, however, is a paradoxical concept.

On the other side of every act of completion lies a new adventure.

Simplifying your life is simply a means to an end.

The end is joy. And the practice of joy is an endless adventure.

As we discussed in the course, some items that are useful at one point in your journey become obsolete when your needs and desires change. That means the process of simplifying your life is a continual one. In the future, you'll need to add some things that you simply don't have room for right now. And you'll also need to let go of some things that are currently useful.

This course isn't like a race that you've completed. It's more like a foundation that you've built. With the tools now at your disposal, you'll not only be able to MAKE your life simple, but you'll be able to KEEP it simple.

When we were children studying for school, many of us learned how to solve problems long enough to pass the test. After our exams were over, we dumped the information out of our brains in order to make room for the things we really cared about.

The tools you learned in this course aren't like those math problems we learned to solve.

These tools are going to help you hold space for all the things you really care about.

Space.

It's all around us. It's above us and below us. It's within us, and we are within it. And yet we become so disconnected from its life-giving vitality because of the various forms of clutter that cause us to overlook its breathtaking simplicity.

Space for play. Space for peace. Space for joy. Space for love. Space for healing. Space for hope. Space for reflection. Space for relaxation. Space to feel. Space to flow. Space to simply be.

Because of the work you have done...

Because of the investment you've made in yourself...

Because of the courage you've exercised...

Because of the decision you made to show up for the possibilities of your life...

More of that space is available to you now.

And perhaps...in that space...before moving on to the consideration of what's next...you can allow a little room to celebrate yourself.

Welcome to the simple life.

Joshua Fields Millburn

Ryan Nicodemus

TR Coleman