

## **SIMPLICITY - The richness of simplicity and the poverty of “busy-ness”**

Picture a gift box overflowing with excess tinsel, bows, ribbons and paper used for filling up the box – to the extent it looks more like an overstuffed barrage of “stuff” that someone has to sift through to appreciate the real gift that is lying within the packaging. What extraneous “stuff” surrounds the gift of the real you? Simplicity allows you to showcase the gift of you to the world.

### **Are you in the business of “busy-ness” or in the business of simplicity? How rich are you?**

Why is it that we have the same number of hours in a day, week, month and year, yet some people are more caught up in the business of “busy-ness” and complexity than others? How do some people achieve loads whilst not appearing particularly busy, yet others scurry around but not get anything done or achieved? How many people crowd their day with less than urgent tasks, but the priorities get ignored or neglected? Or do you know someone whose lack of motivation and lethargy can easily “busy” their day?

Why is that some people seem to “have it all” but experience poverty of time, energy or fulfilment, yet others may appear to have little in their lives or seem to lead “the simple life”, yet feel so rich – perhaps time-rich, relationship-rich, creatively wealthy or rich in passion and enjoyment of life?

### **Poverty of “busy-ness” - Fillers or excess packaging hide the real wealth of who you are**

Many people create dramas that take over their lives. Others continue to fill their lives with problems, rather than simplifying with easily found solutions. Others cram their lives with activities that fill up their diaries, but not necessarily their souls. And there are others whose “busy-ness” has been their identity for so long, that they don’t know themselves as anything else.

Poverty signs and symptoms of “busy-ness” include:

- Physically feeling worn out, exhausted, stressed, poor health, DIS-EASE
- Body symptoms – aches, pains, niggles
- Depression, anxiety, struggling to cope, overwhelm, mind-overload
- Emotional irritability, resentment, frustration, sadness
- Financially - busy-ness might indeed cost you
- Sexually – little enjoyment or passion or no time for it
- Socially – little time to meet up with those you care about
- Spiritually – your soul dies from not living life passionately
- Life becomes a series of dramas and complications
- People miss out on seeing the real wealth of who you are
- What else?

What are your personal poverty of “busy-ness” signs and symptoms – understanding too that effective and efficient “busy-ness” that also links into your joy and passion can indeed create positive signs and symptoms!

So why do people continue to live lives that are based on climbing the ladder, getting more accolades, filling in time and keeping busy...? Here are some reasons.

- Beliefs - about themselves, productivity, laziness, money, career...
- Family expectations and/or pressures
- Society’s expectations
- Personal identity eg superhero, victim, achiever...

- Drama, chaos and problems – get people’s attention
- Self esteem – validation, kudos, compliments, pat on the back
- Habit / Addiction / Adrenaline buzz
- Denial – things don’t really need to change
- Don’t really know what they want in life
- Lack information or awareness of other options
- Don’t like change or don’t know how
- Don’t have the skills at present
- Lack of support
- Money – feel they don’t have enough, materialism, consumerism
- Conformity – think you have to do it like everyone else
- Present roles and responsibilities
- Resistance from someone else
- Personality factors
- Fear
- Busy-ness acts as a distraction from having to “feel”
- Lack of trust that things will be OK
- What else?

### **The richness of simplicity**

Duane Elgin, one of the key players in the Voluntary Simplicity movement describes simplicity being “an outwardly simple, yet inwardly rich life.” \*

Yes, simplicity is about decluttering, sifting, sorting, organising, prioritising, time management, task simplification, saying no and other shifts in thinking and acting, and the process of simplicity is also about moving beyond the above reasons for why people engage in busy-ness.

However such strategies I believe are “external” strategies that MUST be driven by your more internal simplicity values.

### **Inward simplicity values include:**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| • SOUL            | discovering what lights you up and feeds your soul                    |
| • VALUES          | aligning with your personal values more so than society’s values      |
| • PASSION         | passion(s) and enthusiasm for life – and passing “I” on               |
| • ASPIRATIONS     | relentlessly going after your dreams no matter what the odds are      |
| • PURPOSE         | aligning with your purpose for being alive                            |
| • CHOICE          | leading your life on purpose – choosing deliberately and consciously  |
| • MINDFULNESS     | noticing, observing, being aware , living mindfully not mindlessly    |
| • PRESENCE        | being present with “what is” – not trying to run from it              |
| • ABUNDANCE       | inwardly rich, glass half full, not dependent on money                |
| • QUALITY OF LIFE | not about how inexpensively you can live, but how well you can live   |
| • UNBURDENING     | living more lightly and with fewer distractions, de-cluttering        |
| • AUTHENTICITY    | wearing no masks to have to appear a certain way                      |
| • COURAGE         | courage to be yourself– undeterred by being seen as “different”       |
| • ZAGGING         | thinking outside of the square, willing to do things against the norm |
| • PERSONAL        | simplicity varies from one person to another, highly individual       |
| • SELF LOVE       | the gift to yourself of a “full” life that affirms you                |
| • ATTENTION       | focussed attention on what really matters                             |

- ATTITUDE                    you can experience simplicity and stillness amidst “chaos”
- SENSUAL                    appreciating life using all of your senses
- EVER-CHANGING            discarding the old, developing and renewing process
- ENERGY                    valuing life energy and non-material rewards
- INNER PEACE                through fulfilment of being (more than doing)
- INNER STRENGTH            self empowered, rather than external power and status
- CONNECTION                deep level of connection with self and Spirit
- COMMUNITY                 values community
- TRUST                        that life unfolds perfectly for your inward growth
- POTENTIAL                  powerfully reaching your potential
- PLAYFUL                     creating fun, being playful, enjoyment
- ????

**Explore and discover these “value”-able gifts within you, that will lead you to a more fulfilling, simpler and rich life – not to mention a healthier BODY, MIND and SOUL.**

\*Elgin, Duane (1993) Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of life that is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich. Quill. New York

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