



Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program

Simplify in 2017

“Any fool can make it complicated. It takes a genius to make it simple.” ~ Woody Guthrie

As Americans, our lives are busy and hectic. As a law student, the stakes are higher, and life can be busier and even more hectic. There are endless commitments and demands placed on you personally, academically, and even professionally. If you don't take the time to notice what is going on, the chaos can become overwhelming and lead to unhealthy lifestyle choices. One way to help structure your life so that it doesn't become overwhelming is to simplify your thoughts, your focus, your time, and your environment. In her article "Simplifying Our Lives," Thubten Chodron points out:

“Simplicity involves letting go of life's complications and learning to appreciate what is in front of us at any particular moment. Instead of longing for what we don't have or craving for what think we should have, we turn our attention to what is here at the moment. Simplicity brings less worry... more security...more freedom...less complication...[and] more time and energy...”

There are many ways to simplify our lives. Here are 15 ideas. Get started on 1 or 2 today:

1. **Move and exercise at least three times a week:** walking, hiking, jogging/running, biking, swimming, yoga, team sports (soccer, tennis, basketball, etc.), ice skating, lifting weights/resistance bands, exercise using body weight (sit ups, push-ups, dips, etc.), heavy yard work (shoveling snow, digging, landscaping), rock climbing, skiing, snowboarding, etc.
2. **Create a family/workplace/individual calendar.** Use different color pens to signify different types of appointments or the different schedules for more than one person. Make it simple and easy to access.
3. **Only go to the grocery store once a week.** When you get home, plan all of your meals and snacks for the week. Prepare or cook everything that same day.
4. **De-clutter your environment:** office, home, garage, car, etc.
5. **Financial planning:** create the will you have been talking about, change to automating your bills every month, commit to setting aside a certain dollar amount every month (even if it's just a few dollars) or, if you have children, help them start a savings account. Create financial routines for stability.
6. **Focus on positive relationships and limit the negative ones.**
7. **Rather than doing all your errands on the weekends, do one a day on your way to or home from work.**

8. **SLOW DOWN.** Everything. Slow down your thoughts, your speed on the highway, your speech, etc.
9. **Make simple to-do lists** that compartmentalize your day.
10. **Wake up a few minutes early** to plan the day, visualize your schedule and get yourself mentally set for your day. Relax with a cup of tea or coffee without any distractions a few minutes before you have to start getting ready.
11. **Spend less time on-line**, reading social media, watching TV, and on your phone.
12. **Say “yes” less and “no” more.**
13. **Complain less.**
14. **Pay in cash.**
15. **Talk less and listen more.**

You may be surprised at how easy it truly is to simplify your life! For more ideas on how to simplify your life, click on the links below:

<http://zenhabits.net/simple-living-manifesto-72-ideas-to-simplify-your-life/>

<http://bemorewithless.com/50-more-ways-to-leave-your-clutter/>

<http://www.missminimalist.com/2011/11/twenty-questions-to-clear-your-clutter/>

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