

# SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

## SIMPLIFY YOURSELF

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*How we spend our days is,  
of course, how we spend our lives.*  
- Anne Dillard



Despite our modern world belief systems, we simply do not have enough time and energy to do *all the things*. Simplifying your life opens up space so you can take a deep look at yourself and what you most want to do with your precious life. A great place to start is looking at your fantasy selves. A popular phrase coined by minimalist, author, and blogger Francine Jay, *fantasy selves* represent all the versions of ourselves that we think we want to be. For most of my life and into my mid-thirties I thought I wanted to do it all, and I kept convincing myself I could do it all. I could work full time; be a mama, partner, friend, sister, daughter, student of life; organize myself, my son, my life, and my home; travel; spend time with loved ones; practice self-care; practice yoga; camp; hike; bike; read; take workshops; learn to cook; do laundry and clean my home, just to name a few.

Sometime in 2017-ish, while reading Francine's post, *Declutter Your Fantasy Self*, I felt immediate resonance and relief. Oh, hell's bells... I thought. Of course! How incredible would it feel to let go of all those fantasy versions of myself? {deep breath} As I wrote a list of my unrealized selves, and all the clutter in tow, I was able to feel how much of my life force had been blocked by things that did not provide value or joy in my life. I became willing to release them and make room for what was really true for me. As I said goodbye to these fantasy selves and the clutter connected to them, I opened up to a new way of living and being.

*All too often, we hold on to stuff because it represents who we think we should be, rather than who we are. Sometimes our fantasy selves are meant to impress others; sometimes they're relics of our past; sometimes they're fantasies about our future. Whatever the case, it's important to remember: acquiring stuff for your fantasy self doesn't make it a reality. Most of the time, it only leads to a lot of nice clutter you never actually use.*

- Francine Jay

What fantasy selves are you holding onto that don't match your current life? What material stuff is crowding your space, external and internal? I invite you to write a list of your own fantasy selves and all of the stuff connected to them.

### Examples of fantasy selves and their potential clutter...

- Outdoors fanatic – bicycling, hiking, camping, and ski gear; beach gear and toys, yard toys, and hammocks.
- Crafty Betty – sewing machine, notions, lots of material; paper, paints, scissors; knitting needles and yarn.
- Book Worm – a library full of books you have read, books you hope to read, and books from schooling.
- Music Lover – shelves of CD's or records, technology old and new, and instruments you might play someday.
- Photographer – cameras, tripods, cords of every shape and size, boxes of photos, and digital photos galore.
- World Traveler – Suitcases and travel accessories in all different types and sizes, maps, and books on travel.
- Chef extraordinaire – pots, pans, mixing bowls, cooking utensils, and ingredients a plenty.

Wouldn't it feel great to get clarity about how you most desire to live your life, to make conscious choices about how you spend your days, and cultivate a life that brings you joy and deep satisfaction? - Kate Fehr

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