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**Simple Living**

**By Arleen M. Kaptur**

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When we say "Simple Living" we mean enjoying and relishing the pleasures and wonder of all that nature has to offer, whether you live in a rustic setting, in a bustling city, or high on a mountaintop overlooking the hills and valleys of a remote destination. Simple Living is the way you feel, not exactly where you live or the location you call home.

When you decide to enjoy the wonders of a simple living lifestyle, you see the wonders of a garden, with its bountiful and breathtaking beauty, not to mention the great fruits, vegetables, and herbs, as well as flowers, shrubs and assorted foliage. It is letting the brightness of a sunny day warm your face, and also letting the stars, moon, and planets whet your imagination of far off life and possibilities. Wildlife, whether it be animals, birds, insects, fish, etc. bring their own "special" appeal, but also a responsibility. It is allowing the land to be used safely by both humans and animal life. Thinking twice about harmful chemicals, or pollution, using the benefit of the environment, but replacing it with care and concern, becomes habit and a way of life.

Simple Living is seeing the best in people and those you love. Sincere compliments abound but criticism is carefully weighed. It is overlooking imperfections and mistakes in judgment and chalking it up as a part of being human. The realization that we all have our "quirks" is a free-breathing feeling that sets toleration exactly where it belongs—allowing others to live in the style and mindset they prefer, even if we disagree. It does not, however, quietly accept injustice or brutality in any shape or form. The respect for all living creatures is also the demand for competent government and accountability. It is speaking up when the need arises to protest inequality and protect freedom.

Simple living – simple pleasures – using what we have and re-using, if possible. Not being fooled by fancy packaging and glitzy advertising—but being able to appreciate value and usefulness. Imagination and creativity are gifts to be used, less they wither and die. It is the realization that two hands can produce needed items that make life easier and more enjoyable. Our minds are untapped resources of great abilities and possibilities. Simple living is trying to develop and strengthen talents and opportunities.

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To treasure each day and all it brings, as well as utilizing our god-given gifts and uniqueness is a high priority on our to-do lists. Using our time and money wisely so that what inspires, and brings enjoyment can be achieved. Being frugal in daily life only brings abundance in the important areas of who we are and what we are all about.

Education is paramount to both children and adults. There is never a ceiling over learning and new ways and innovations are always possible. It is taking the time – slowing down instead of rushing through – really seeing and hearing, tasting and touching. Stopping to "smell the roses" and being grateful for the immense beauty and intricate patterns of life and our surroundings. There is beauty found in both the sunrise and sunset. There is an intriguing perfection to the seasons, as well as a higher power sustaining and providing for nature. Thunderstorms and sunlit days have their purpose, as do the rhythm and ages of life.

Simple living – encompassing all that is life and a whole lot more. To open the door wide to opportunities to learn and grow, and sharing knowledge and expertise with others to assist them in reaching their goals and dreams. It is these goals and dreams that hold life together and give it the strength to endure and overcome.

Simple – yes, but painted with hard work and ever-ending exploration of all we now have, but protecting it so it will be there in the future. It is taking advantage of life instead of letting life get the better of you. It is living the lifestyle you choose, without envying what others have chosen. It is being where you want to be, placing your priorities exactly where you want them, and being respectful of the choices of others. Simple living is living – so ENJOY!

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Arleen M. Kaptur has written numerous articles, books, and e-zines. To subscribe:<http://www.Arleens-RusticLiving.com> <http://www.arleenssite.com>  
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### **What's Simple?**

**By Angie Dixon**

If you walk up to a stranger in the grocery store and ask them to define "simple," as in "simple life," they'll probably say something like "having less stuff." Or they might hit you with a frozen turkey. But probably they'll associate simple with stuff.

The thing is that simple is not about how much or how little you have. You can have all the stuff you want and have a simple life. That's the key, though—the stuff you want. Simple is about having more of what you want and less of the things that get in your way and trip you up.

If you continue questioning the guy with the turkey, he may hit you with it again, or he may spit out some more associations with the word "simple." Those words might include "nature," "inexpensive,"

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"boring," "organized," "miserly." Those are words we think of when we think of simple living, but none of them has to be associated with simplicity—certainly not boring and miserly. Sure, if you want to live your simple life with nature, you can. If you want to get rid of most of your life and live on a shoestring, you can.

The key to simple living is to have, as much as possible, only what you want. Naturally you have to have things in your life that you don't want, like traffic and Monday mornings. But your goal in reaching simplicity is to have more of the things you do want, like good books and doughnuts on Sunday morning, and maybe a good CD to listen to in the car while you're in traffic on Monday morning.

Simple is really simple. It's what you want, not what you don't.

Angie Dixon helps small business owners get their acts together. She is a personal development coach specializing in helping people integrate their home and work lives so they feel less stretched and more balanced. Get her FREE EBOOK on balance at

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