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Featured Article

How to Simplify Your Life in 5 Steps

Dr. Tim Ong

The modern lifestyle is a stressful lifestyle. It is based on the belief that more is better – more things to do, more things accomplished, more gains, more activities, more sense stimulation. Thus the need to have more money and more possessions. However, such a life is not necessarily more fulfilling. In fact, it often leads to a more stressful life, more sickness and more frustrations.

Great rewards await those who can simplify their lives. A simple life can be more fulfilling, more peaceful and more beneficial to you. It can be more conducive to a happier and healthier life, and it can improve your relationships tremendously.

Here are 5 steps to simplify your life:

1. Prioritize

The first thing to do is to spend some time to decide what is truly important to you. Is it your health, time with loved ones or service to community? It might interest you to know that people in their death beds do not worry about how much money or properties they have accumulated. Rather, they are concern about the quality of the relationships they have, and they are particularly worried about any unfinished business or unresolved conflicts with their loved ones. Rather than repairing damaged relationships when we are dying, is it not wiser to cultivate quality relationships while we are still healthy and alive?

2. Slow Down

Do not measure your life by the number of tasks you do each day. Many people squeeze as many tasks as they can into their day, thinking that the more they do, the more they achieve. In doing so, they are able to accomplish more tasks but at the expense of truly living and enjoying the tasks they do. They sacrifice quality for the number. The way to truly live is to slow down and enjoy each moment and task that you do. Make each task meaningful. Be present in the moment instead of rushing through the task. When you have worked out your priorities (in #1), you will be able to know what is important and what is not, and you can then reduce the unnecessary tasks, leaving you with more time for the more important tasks.

3. Discard the Unnecessary

Take time to unclutter your life. Begin by uncluttering your possessions. Look at your table. Check out the storerooms. Are there anything there that you can discard? Are you hoarding too many things in your life? The habit of hoarding is a sign of insecurity, a manifestation of fear. The more things you need to feel safe indicates the more fear in you. Material possessiveness is just one sign of this insecurity. Look within your mind and you will probably see that there are many more sense of insecurity in your thoughts. Learn to let go of those fear too. The more you let go, the lighter you will feel, and paradoxically the less you fear. Remember that there are many people who have been able to live with far less than what you have. Note also that the more you feed this hoarding habit, the stronger it gets and the more insecure you will feel.

4. Reduce Information Overload

Our modern life is bombarded by information from all directions. We are reachable every minute with our mobile phones, and we are constantly connected to news via the internet, emails, social networks and the traditional newspapers, televisions and radios. If we want to find some peace of mind, we need to reduce all these bombardments. We need to be able to switch off our phones, computers, televisions and radios, and reward ourselves with some time free from all these intrusions. We need to spend some quiet and uninterrupted time with ourselves and our loved ones.

5. Learn Gratitude

Rather than cultivating a habit of feeding our wants and needs, which is like a bottomless black-hole that can never be filled, it is more fruitful to cultivate a habit of reducing our wants and needs. Learn instead to be grateful for whatever we have. We can be grateful for all the things that went right in our life, such as the party we planned for our child's birthday, a wonderful weekend trip with the family or simply spending a restful evening with our loved ones. We can also be grateful for the things that did not go wrong in our life. Many of the things we take for granted can go wrong. For example, our daily trip to work can be met with an accident or a flat tyre or unexpected natural disaster can take just about everything away from us. The fact that they did not go wrong is something to be grateful for. Finally, even if something did go wrong, we can still be grateful for the lesson it has taught us.

When we slow down our life, we get to listen to our heart. We learn to appreciate every moment and every interaction with others more deeply. Our senses can become more acute and sharp, and life is more likely to unfold beautifully before our eyes. Try it and you will find that it is easy to fall in love with the simple life.

About the Author:

Dr. Tim Ong is a medical doctor with keen interests in self improvement, mind science and spirituality. He is the author of “The Book of Personal Transformation” and “From Fear to Love: A Spiritual Journey”. You can find more articles on self improvement at his websites at <http://theselfimprovementsite.com> and <http://mindscience101.com>

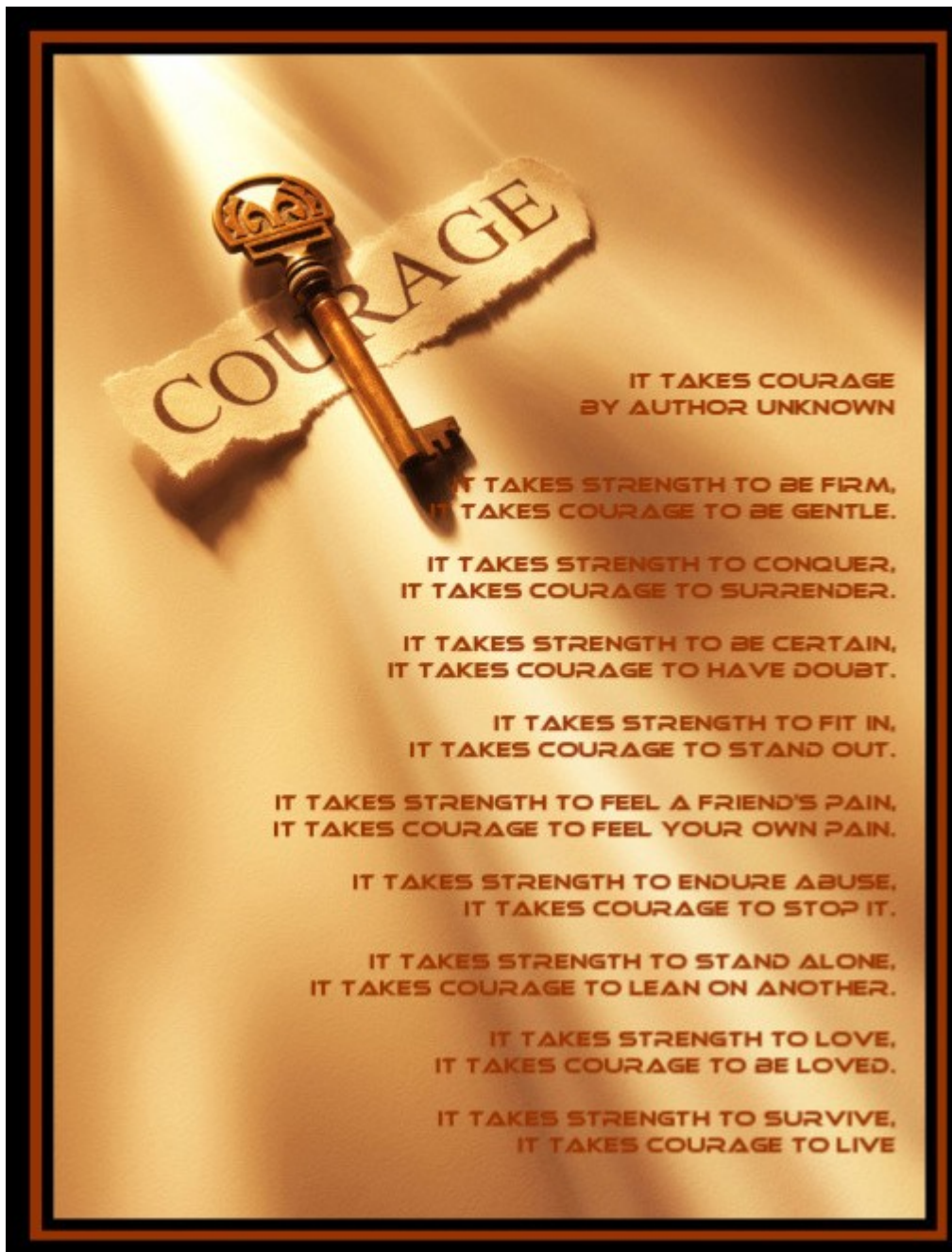
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IT TAKES COURAGE
BY AUTHOR UNKNOWN

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO BE FIRM,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO BE GENTLE.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO CONQUER,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO SURRENDER.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO BE CERTAIN,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO HAVE DOUBT.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO FIT IN,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO STAND OUT.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO FEEL A FRIEND'S PAIN,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO FEEL YOUR OWN PAIN.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO ENDURE ABUSE,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO STOP IT.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO STAND ALONE,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO LEAN ON ANOTHER.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO LOVE,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO BE LOVED.

IT TAKES STRENGTH TO SURVIVE,
IT TAKES COURAGE TO LIVE