

## Circle Session 6: Practicing Simplicity

Reading from *Less is More*:

- p.157-162: **Wabi Sabi Time** by Robin Griggs Lawrence

Other:

- **Every Act a Ceremony**: <https://charleseisenstein.org/essays/ceremony/>
- **How Much is Enough?** Tedx talk by Kevin Cavanaugh: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFIYnL\\_SHQc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFIYnL_SHQc)

Useful links for practicing simplicity and responsible living:

- **The Better World Shopper** (<https://betterworldshopper.org>) a public research project for ethical consumers (based out of Davis, CA). The categories it rates products on include: Human Rights, The Environments, Animal Protection, Community Involvement, and Social Justice. You can look up companies and product types on this website; or get the app (see below).
- **Better World Shopper App** - Get it in the app store, here is info about it: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/better-world-shopper/id318369598>.
- Here are some sites that discuss other apps for sustainable living:
  - [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/5-apps-to-help-you-live-a\\_b\\_5849740](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/5-apps-to-help-you-live-a_b_5849740)
  - <https://www.eco-age.com/news/best-sustainability-apps>
  - <https://inhabitat.com/14-apps-to-help-you-live-a-more-eco-friendly-sustainable-lifestyle/>
  - <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/sustainable-food-apps-smartphone-menu>
- Sustainable Seafood Guides:
  - **Seafood Watch**: <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/> from the Monterey Bay Aquarium; you can use the website, or download a free app for you phone.
  - **Good Fish Guide**: <https://www.mcsuk.org/goodfishguide/search> from the Marine Conservation Society; you can use this website, or download a free app.
- Some ideas for things to use instead of plastic:
  - <http://www.sustainablebabysteps.com/alternatives-to-plastic.html>
  - <https://www.businessinsider.com/household-plastic-alternatives-eco-friendly-2018-8>
  - <https://livegreen.recyclebank.com/column/the-list/7-smart-replacements-for-single-use-plastics>
  - <https://slicedesign.co.uk/eco-friendly-packaging-alternatives-to-plastic/>
- Miscellaneous green living ideas:
  - Make Your Life Environmental-Friendly**: <https://www.greenamerica.org/media-mention/want-make-your-life-more-environmentally-friendly-heres-30-ways-usa-today>
  - Green Finance**: <https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2019-green-finance/>
  - More Green Finance**: <https://www.greenamerica.org/finance>

Materials:

- **Circle Session 5 Action Commitments** (from last session)
- **Reflection** form (small ¼ page with the reflection prompt and room to jot down notes)
- **Pens** to jot down notes for the reflection

## To be completed BEFORE session 6:

Read the essays (one from *Less is More* and one from the web site) and watch the 16-minute TED talk.

Look at least two of the 'useful links for practicing simplicity and responsible living' (or you could do your own search); be prepared to share.

- If an app, was it useful, easy to navigate, etc
- If an informational website, was the information useful, new or surprising

If you have extra time and the inclination look at more than two!

## Start of Session 6:

### Action Commitment Check In

Pull out last session's Action Commitments in case people need to be reminded.

- Were you able to follow through on your action commitments? (no judgments, it is okay if it didn't happen, people can share or not)

### Reflection Session Starter

As this is the last official circle session, have your circle take a moment to reflect on whether or not the circle was helpful and what further action you might do. Hand out the reflection form so that everyone has a moment to think about these questions individually before asking to share (*some people think more quickly on their feet, others need more time to gather their thoughts, so having people work individually first allows everyone to get their thoughts in order*). Allow 2 to 3 minutes or so for the individual reflection time. Then, ask if anyone would care to share their reflection answers.

#### Reflection

Did this circle help you simplify your life? Is there one idea, insight, or action that you will be holding onto?  
Where do you want to go from here?

Jot some notes down; be prepared to share as you feel comfortable.

### Aids for Practicing Simplicity

Hopefully most of your group took some time to look at the links for practicing simplicity and responsible living. Now is the time to share what was learned about the apps or websites that they looked at. Go around the circle and ask each person (if they are willing) to share what they learned from ONE of the urls listed, or any other that they found on their own:

- If an app, was it useful, easy to navigate, etc
- If an informational website, was the information useful, new, or surprising

If there is time, continue sharing around the circle until all of the sites visited are discussed.

## Further Discussion of Essays / Ted Talk

If your circle is large, then split it into groups of 3 or 4, ask them to spend 5 to 10 minutes to talk about this question:

### **Which of the readings (including the TED talk) most resonated with you and why?**

Bring the circle back together. Ask each group to share one thing that they talked about with the group. Here are a few guiding questions to deepen the discussion (or come up with some of your own):

- EVERY ACT A CEREMONY
  - Charles Eisenstein says “over time a ceremony becomes an anchor point for a shift in the reality that you inhabit.” Can you imagine a small ceremony that your could do at home, or that could be done at SFUU, perhaps even added to Sunday Services, that could be such an anchor point for environmental healing? What elements might be part of such a ceremony?
- WABI SABI TIME
  - What kinds of things could we do to make sure that we take the time and have the perspective to find beauty in things as they are?
- THE POWER OF ENOUGH

Kevin Cavanaugh (from the TEDx talk) applied the concept of **enough** to more than just his own personal home life, and he asked a series of questions, which started small and became bigger. Do you have any thoughts about his questions and what you (or we) could do with the power of enough? Here are his questions:

  - What will you do to change your life or your family with the power of the word “enough”?
  - How will you choose to change your block or your city with the power of the word “enough”?
  - How will you choose to change the world?

## **Time to Celebrate!**

Be sure to take the time to celebrate the time that you had together and where you go from here.