Essential for Happiness

Just simplify things.

June 3, 2019 By Kate Ferguson

After experiencing two months of nonstop stress, I took a few days to reflect on the complications in my life. The problem was clear: Too much was happening all at once. My life felt out of control. I needed to recover my equilibrium, live more simply and attend to my mental and physical health.

The first thing I did was very easy. After taking inventory, I threw out or gave away a whole lot of stuff I didn't use, want or need. Eventually, my home lost that cluttered, claustrophobic feeling that contributes to a sense of being crowded in. As my living space emptied, my spirits soared. I felt light and airy.

Next, I took stock of my relationships. Toxic people in my life were draining and exhausting me. One big problem was that I tended to stay too long in partnerships. These were unions that I would invest in heavily—in terms of time, emotion and money. I always found it difficult to exit situations without feeling as if I'd failed.

But no longer. My breaking point came in the form of a betrayal I couldn't ignore or forgive. I had to remember a promise I'd made to myself years ago to put myself first and take care of me.

At one point, my problem felt unsolvable. I recoiled from the thought of the emotional upheaval and disruptions to come before I could return to a simpler life. Each day became more difficult to manage. A deep unhappiness overwhelmed me. Dark thoughts cast black shadows on possible solutions.

Then, a single moment of clarity helped to change my outlook. I'd made every effort to make my relationship work and given it my all. Why was I hesitating? After thinking hard about everything that had happened, I was satisfied with myself and my actions. In a nutshell, it was time to move on. I needed to heal.

Several months have passed, and my life is slowly getting back to normal. I come and go as I please and don't have to worry about coming home to a wall of negative energy.

I've reclaimed my freedom and have new hope for the future.

In addition, I've proved that I love myself enough to reject making someone else feel good by

making myself miserable. Although this is a small victory, I am achieving many more each day.

Now I know even more about myself because spending time alone has allowed me to consider who I am and what I want from life. I’m living modestly and taking time to enjoy each and every day I’m alive. I also spend much more time reflecting on my spirituality.

This allows me to stay true to the values I respect and focus on life’s simple pleasures. I’ve worked hard to reclaim my serenity and look forward to just living life with purpose, peace and joy.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/essential-happiness-kate-ferguson