

C A R M E N S H E N K

dreaming **BIG?**

7 little-known ways to simplify your life
and make your dreams a reality.

DREAMING BIG?

It wasn't until we went tiny in the fall of 2014 that we stumbled into a dramatically different way to live. And quite honestly, for the first few years I thought I was just experiencing the benefits of living in a tiny house. I was traveling the country and speaking about tiny houses, but then I had a realization:

**It wasn't the tiny house that changed our lives.
Houses don't have that kind of power.**

The *Simplicity*

we embraced in order to fit comfortably
in our tiny house changed everything!

The more we simplified things
and saturated our lives in gratitude
the more we enjoyed great

contentment

in our tiny haven-home.

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DREAMING BIG?

the paradox of living simply is that it *makes space*

Webster says simplicity is “the quality or condition of being easy to understand or do”. However, we live lives of constant complexity. No single item is a big deal, but all of it together can require us to become good jugglers... but juggling is the enemy of focus. So how do you make mental space for something that is really important to you? Create the condition of a life that is easy to understand and do... sometimes without even thinking. The result is more space and time for things that matter.



**The only way to stop
juggling
so many
bowling pins
is to own fewer
bowling pins.**

You have already asked yourself those all-important questions like “what makes me angry?” “What breaks my heart?” “What problem am I called to solve?” and you are already discovering what matters most to you. I first heard those questions from Jeff Johns in the 1990's at a little country church in the Shenandoah Valley. Those questions rocked my world back then, and they struck home again when I heard them recently from marketing guru Mike Kim. Socrates said “an unexamined life is not worth living.” When we wrestle with these questions and draw our own conclusions, that is often the birth of a dream.



minimize:

- 1 debt
- 2 shelter
- 3 transportation
- 4 clothing

1 Minimize Debt. Your life is not your own as long as you owe someone something. Get your life back. It's simple to say, but sometimes it's a long haul to get there. Dedicate yourself to this goal. Set yourself free. This is not punishment for financial sins, real or imagined! This is simply freeing ourselves from what culture has told us was ideal... that wasn't so ideal. You deserve to be free.

Minimize Shelter. Yep. Take a look at your home and think seriously about your debt free options. Burn your “have to have” list since it is based on a lot of great marketing. Here is your chance to make a great new normal. It isn't always easy to fit your current normal into a new normal, but I know from experience that it can be done, and that it is absolutely liberating.

2

DREAMING BIG?

Simplicity makes space

Minimize Transportation. Turn in the big expensive car for whatever you can drive debt free. We went for vintage vehicles that we drive on “antique car” license plates which means no inspection, dramatically cheaper repairs, cheaper insurance and no warranty or recall notices to deal with. Plus – you'll never lose your car in the parking lot because it's not an ubiquitous modern car.

3

Savvy marketing teaches us that the only reliable car is a new one, but that means you're paying a fortune for interest and repairs. The greenest automobile is one that runs for 30, 40, or even 50 years and shows no sign of stopping. We own a number of autos like that. Clearly owning vintage cars isn't for everyone, but it's a choice that brings us a lot of joy. And as we grant ourselves permission to live outside of conventional systems, we discover freedom that we didn't even know we were missing.



**What you
"need"
is based on
what you're
used to.
Change what
you're used to
and it will change
what you need.**

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Minimize Clothing by wearing a uniform. Pick a high quality outfit that matches you, then reproduce it a few times. There's your wardrobe. Choose quality. Never buy something without trying it on first. Save your favorite dressy clothing and get rid of everything that still has the tags on it or that doesn't fit you properly. Remove everything from your closet that doesn't fit you today. No shame clothing, no weight loss goals, no malignant items in your closet. No torn or worn out items, nothing that needs repairs or alterations. If it has an ugly memory connected to it – out it goes!

4

*If you don't sacrifice for your dream,
then you are sacrificing your dream.*

If you decide not to go for what you really want,
then you lose the right to complain about not having it.

what not to do

5

We went tiny in the fall of 2014, and naturally our Steinway Concert Grand wouldn't fit into our tiny house. So we put it in climate-controlled storage. And because there was space around our pianos and the rest of our musical instrument collection... we tucked in a lot of other stuff. Five years and thousands of dollars later I had to dig out the pianos and slowly but surely get rid of the rest of the schnitzel. No, I don't for a moment regret keeping the Steinway, but there was a lot in my storage unit that wasn't piano. I had to work my way through all of this again because I chickened out back then. Please don't make my mistake. Do the work so that you don't have to revisit it later. Do the work for the money it will save you and the peace of mind you'll gain.

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"The only thing we really own is our time."

-Mike Kim

6 **Letting Go**

Spending time trying to get money out of our old possessions is a waste of currency. Let it go. Donate. And when it doubt – donate some more. Recycle everything that can be recycled, then throw the rest away. As much as I hate the whole landfill fiasco in this country, sometimes the right thing to do is simply to throw things away.

Liberate yourself.

Liberate your time.

Liberate your space.



**"Time is the currency of our lives
- not money." -Graham Cooke**

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Give yourself a really long

runway

We add square footage to that runway every time we simplify mundane things like debt, shelter, transportation, and clothing

7 *maximize:* *intentional self care and eating well*

Starting a new venture in the margins of life can be exhausting, and busy lives can often fall victim to convenience foods and self neglect. Don't let that happen. Choosing better fresher food and non-toxic wellness and self care products is important fuel for body, soul, and spirit. You deserve to be well.

Shop the rim of the market for great produce and quality proteins. Purchase fresh fruit and vegetables instead of junk food and keep hearty fruits and vegetables in a bowl on the kitchen counter. Eat fresh raw food often, and drink plenty of water.

Even people doing meaningful work that we love can over-do it at times. If we find that we've neglected eating well and taking good care of ourselves, it is a reminder to step back and take care of the dreamer first. Then go back to taking care of the dream.

If you are too busy to prepare
and enjoy a great meal,
then you are – quite simply - too busy.

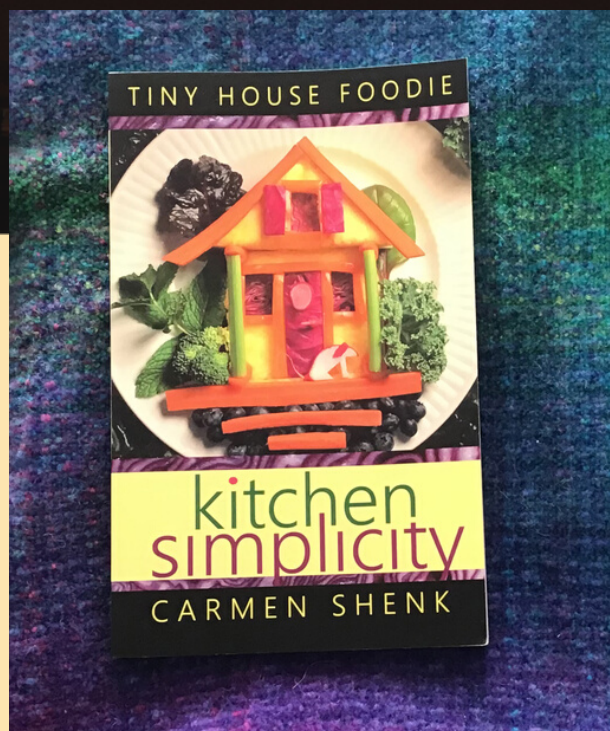
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Embracing

simplicity

*gave us a long runway to
get our dream life off the ground.*

**My first book
"Kitchen Simplicity"
will help you navigate
the transition to a
simpler life in a smaller
space.**



Instagram @carmenroseshenk
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More great resources: CarmenShenk.com

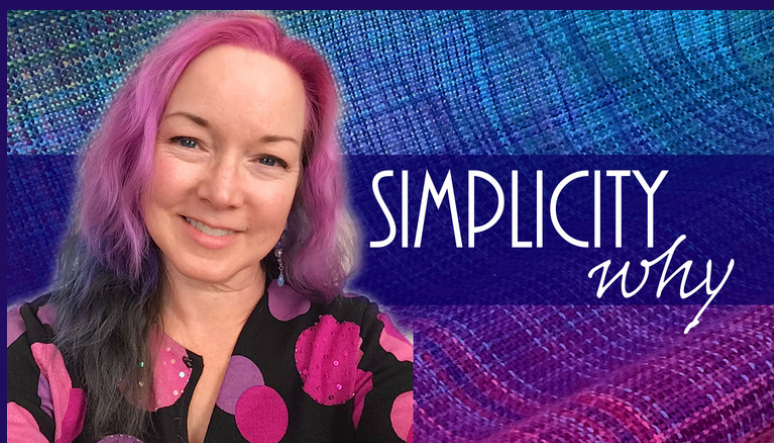




I will help you up your own capsule wardrobe that suits you perfectly. Next, simplify your kitchen knowing you won't get rid of something you need... then the bathroom - all with helpful checklists.

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Connect with the powerful mindset motivators that help you stay on track with your work, help you keep the ground you've gained, and keep you focused on the life you want.



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Find your "NOW purpose", then stock your life to meet that purpose. Then it becomes much easier to simply let the rest go. Plus lean in to five of the Simplicity Mindsets.

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