

Seven Ideas for Simple Living

We strive to create balance in our families. We strive to live each day in the knowledge that our family is a gracious gift; a gift to be treasured and celebrated in the every day. We strive to create a sense of peace and joy. We strive to live out our values by simplifying our lives. But the competing demands of a family can be anything but simple. Sometimes simplifying means, quite simply, asking ourselves what is truly important in our lives, and then renewing our focus to encompass more of that on a daily basis. Here are seven ways you can refocus on the needs of your family and create lasting memories for your kids, all while remaining attentive to your own needs as a parent. Each of the activities below is designed to take 15 minutes or less. These activities were created, not with the expectation that you will do each activity on its designated day, but, rather, to remind you that, every day, you have 15 very special minutes to fill. These are fifteen minutes expressly to nurture your children, your spouse, and yourself in a special way.

Day One: This evening, just before the sun goes down, gather your family to watch the sunset. The only rule: no one speaks until the sun has completely nestled into the horizon. Use the quiet time to meditate and reflect on the importance of slowing down.

Day Two: Write a note to your oldest relative. Ask the kids to draw pictures, copy some home videos or tape record the kids singing and laughing. Pack it up and mail it.

Day Three: Order takout from your favorite restaurant and enjoy it on the front porch if the weather allows (or on the living room floor, picnic style) with your kids.

Day Four: Encourage your children to snuggle into bed with you for a few moments and read their favorite comics to you. If your child is too young to read, ask them to tell the story that the comic depicts. This is a fun Sunday morning tradition.

Day Five: Write three pages in your journal regarding any challenge your family is currently facing. Write as quickly as you can without picking up your pen or crossing anything out. See if you can gain some new insights.

Day Six: As you go about your day with your family, be on the lookout for ten positive, beautiful things about each of them, your home, or your home life that you have not noticed before. Write them down and challenge yourself to maintain this heightened awareness of the "Gratitudes" in your life.

Day Seven: Take out your calendar and schedule at least five of your own simple family activities that will nurture your spirit while helping you reconnect with your family. A meaningful and fulfilled life can be surprising simple. Start with a few moments each day specially devoted to renewing your spirit and emphasizing the gifts in your life.

About the Author

Susie Cortright is the founder of Momscape.com - <http://www.momscape.com> and Susies-Coupons.com, <http://www.susies-coupons.com> where she handpicks only the very best online coupons and products each day, including online coupons for children's clothing: <http://www.susies-coupons.com/children.htm>

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