

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

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Soulful Simplicity by Courtney Carver

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Can minimalism be practical? Start your journey towards “less” with this memoir and guide to a simpler life.

QUOTE | p. XI - “I was reacting to everything thrown my way, and going through the motions simply to keep up with life’s demands, and to honor the vow I had made almost a decade before to always give my daughter more”.

QUOTE | p. XIV - “The more I worked, the more I made, and the more I spent . . . and I wanted even more.”

QUESTION | Have you ever felt like you were on the “hamster wheel” and couldn’t get off?

QUOTE | p. XVII - “One of the reasons we keep our lives so complicated is so we won’t have to listen to our inner voice telling us what we need to do to make our lives work better.”

QUESTION | Is listening to your inner voice easier or more difficult for you?

QUOTE | p. XIX - “Sometimes you have to get rid of the things that don’t matter to let the things that do rise to the surface.”

QUESTION | Can you think of a time in the past when this was true for you?

QUOTE | p. 4 - “Simplicity doesn’t change who you are, it brings you back to who you are.”

QUESTION | What is one way in which you would like to be more “you” than you are now?

QUOTE | p. 21 - “How many times have you thought “this isn’t working” or “something’s not right” or “things have to change”?—those thoughts and words are from your inner voice. It’s your wake-up call calling.”

QUESTION | Have you said this recently? What was it about?

QUOTE | p. 22 - “Once simplifying your life becomes a matter of the heart, you will connect with like-minded people and find the strength you need to let go of the clutter, the busyness, and all of the other things standing between you and what matters most.”

QUESTION | Where have you found the most support and encouragement for your journey?

QUOTE | p. 24 - “We don’t have to do it all. We can’t do it all. We are better for it when we don’t try to do it all.”

QUOTE | p. 26 - “We work so hard to make everyone happy, stay caught up, be everywhere, appear like we have it all figured out, and do it all with a smile.”

QUESTION | Are you currently trying to “do it all?”

QUOTE | p. 29 - “I find the joy once I get started doing things I don’t want to do.”

QUESTION | What are some of your favorite ways to get started doing something you don’t want to do?

QUOTE | p. 31 - "What I want more than anything is to feel good enough to fully engage in the best parts of life."

QUESTION | What does "feeling good" look like for you?

QUOTE | p. 32 - "We have to do things we don't want to do to be who we want to be and feel how we want to feel."

QUESTION | What is one thing you don't want to do?

QUOTE | p. 32 - "If you want to get out of your slump or if you feel stuck, try something you've never done before or something that you really don't want to do. You don't have to be inspired or motivated. Just start."

QUESTION | How can this apply to your scrapbooking right now?

QUOTE | p. 32 - "Make a list of ten things you don't want to do that you know will help you."

QUESTION | What is one thing that would be on your list?

QUOTE | p. 41 - "Let the monkey off the chain. Uncurl your toes. Unclench your jaw. Loosen your grip. Stop trying to control anything and everything."

QUESTION | What are you trying to control right now?

QUOTE | p. 49 - "We buy and hold on to things for many reasons, but usually it's because we want to be someone we are not, feel something we don't, or prove we are something we don't think we are to someone else."

QUESTION | What is one reason you are holding on to something in your memory keeping?

QUOTE | p. 55 - "Admitting that just in case means never allows us to stop procrastinating and invites us to let go and stop living in fear."

QUOTE | p. 61 - "Realizing I had paid enough changed everything for me. Now, I don't hold on to guilt or feel bad about my past purchase transgressions. I already paid."

QUOTE | p. 73 - "When you let go of anything in your life that doesn't add value, let the guilt flow with it."

QUESTION | What is one thing you will never use again?

QUOTE | p. 106 - "We finally realized that our home is not a container for our stuff. Instead, it is a place for love and connection."

QUESTION | What do you want your home to be for?

QUOTE | p. 113 - "Redefine success. Forget about what everyone told you, and even what you may have told yourself about what it means to be successful. Redefine success and rewrite your story."

QUESTION | What do you want your story to look like in 10 years?

QUOTE | p. 122 - "Before I checked e-mail, made my daughter breakfast, or had to answer to anyone else, I fed myself first."

QUESTION | What is one thing you are doing or could do to "feed" yourself first?

QUOTE | p. 146 - "Once I began to identify what mattered to me and was doing what was necessary to protect it, I moved from frantic victim of busyness to gentle warrior."

QUESTION | What is one small step you could take to become more of a gentle warrior?

QUOTE | p. 151 - "FOMO—fear of missing out—signals a lack of engagement. If you are worried about what you are missing, you aren't connecting with the most meaningful parts of what's happening right now."

QUESTION | Have you experienced FOMO recently? What was it about? How did you deal with that feeling?

QUOTE | p. 152 - "I'll create space to nurture creative work knowing that I can't schedule a good idea, plan when words will flow, or orchestrate the magic of everything coming together just the way it was always meant to."

QUESTION | How can we better create space to nurture our scrapbooking?

QUOTE | p. 156 - "If you are heavily connected to your digital devices, start with an hour a day of being completely unplugged."

QUESTION | Does this sound fun or scary?

QUOTE | p. 159 - “You have so much to offer the world by sharing who you are, what you’ve experienced, and what it all means to you. Let’s keep sharing meaningful stories.”

QUESTION | How do you currently share your stories?

QUOTE | p. 162 - “Saying no is one of the most practical things we can do to create more time to engage in what matters most.”

QUESTION | What is one thing you could say no to?

QUOTE | p. 168 - “Passions and interests are buried somewhere on page 3 of our to-do lists.”

QUESTION | Do you find it hard to make time to scrap?

QUOTE | p. 174 - “Don’t worry about technique or any sort of perfection, just make something with your hands and your heart.”

QUESTION | What was the last thing you made?

QUOTE | p. 175 - “Give yourself the time and permission to linger over creativity.”

QUOTE | p. 179 - “A soulful simplicity helps you create time and space, but also more attention for the moment you are in, or at least the ability to recognize how meaningful it is to stay in the moment.”

QUESTION | How do you feel when you have completed a page or project?

QUOTE | p. 191 - “For decades, I carefully stored and carted around my memory boxes from home to home and state to state, even though most of the artifacts of my life offered no connection to anything real to me. These pieces of history that represented the high highs and low lows of my life failed to trigger the memories I had hoped to preserve.”

QUESTION | Has this experience ever happened to you?

QUOTE | p. 191 - “All that time, I saved my past to fill my future, but really I was only compromising my present and my presence.”

QUESTION | How do you feel about this statement?

QUOTE | p. 192 - “My soul wanted to make art and have time to be creative. I had to honor that, and the only way was to let go and make more space and time to nourish my soul.”

QUESTION | What does your soul want?

QUOTE | p. 194 - “When you are fully engaged in your present moments, in your relationships, and in your life, you’ll remember things that meant something to you, and you will continue to accumulate beautiful memories.”

QUOTE | p. 194 - The memories will surface without a shrine of stuff built in their honor. You can’t keep your relationships and memories in storage.

QUESTION | What is one way you can better honor an important memory?

QUOTE | p. 196 - “I don’t want my legacy to be storage containers of stuff.”

QUOTE | p. 196 - “The stuff won’t matter, but the stories will. I have my stories, and I’ll tell them to people who care.”

QUESTION | What is one thing you want to change about your storytelling or memory keeping?

QUOTE | p. 204 - “I said good-bye to my report cards, school projects, and yearbooks but turned my favorite photo of my grandparents into a bookmark so I can honor my memories of them when I read.”

QUESTION | What is one small project that would allow you to get go?

QUOTE | p. 217 - “We don’t remove the clutter, reduce the stress, and boycott busyness to have a simple life. We do it to have a life.”

QUESTION | What is your next step?

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