

Sustainable Minimalism on *Sunday Snacks with Sam and Ellie*

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nOsXavf2Gns>

SAM: Good morning, and welcome to ***Sunday Snacks with Ellie and Sam***. Today, we're going to talk about something that is awkward for a mom of two – a person that feels like her life is every day clutter and a hot disaster, Marie Kondo and the concept of minimalism and sustainability – and is it a reality?

Ellie: Are they compatible?

Sam: I say realistically, they are - maybe not. But I, I don't know because my house is a disaster. So, I feel like the concepts that Marie Kondo puts out about 'sparking joy', not going to fly in my world because my kids, they love all the Legos, it sparks joy for them.

I hate them and want to melt them all into a ball. So, realistically, when we think about sustainability and minimalism, do you think that they're compatible, Ellie?

Ellie: I do.

Sam: How so? ... Well then ... Question.

Ellie: Okay. Well, because I think sustainability is what we need to live our life well and healthy and safely. And I think minimalism in whatever degree, which I think varies with different personalities and different family structures and stuff, but minimalism helps us to have space for the things that sustain us and time to enjoy them

Sam: True.

Ellie: And each other.

Sam: Yeah, because I guess when you think about it in my little world, I do have a lot of stuff, but what I focus on and what brings me joy is my garden and gardening. And there it's very minimalist. I do square foot gardening. Yes. There's a lot of compacted, fruits and vegetables, but it's very simple.

I've got rows and boxes and it's very easy to maintain.

I'm a small person, I'm only five foot tall. So, for me, like I made them so that I could reach in at any point and my kids could reach in at any point into the garden bed and weed and do all the things.

But inside my house, as I've already mentioned, I'm not going to say I feel like I can Marie Kondo my world and say, if it sparks me joy, I can keep it. And if it doesn't, I can trash it because I do have three other people I'm living with ... where trash ... I love my family.

Don't take that out of context, but you can live alone, and I see you as having a very sustainable minimalist lifestyle, but you're also somebody who has a 30-day supply of food on hand.

But if I look at, I don't know, things like *Apartment Therapy*, and I know I keep going back to Marie Kondo, but she's like the big name in minimalism that I know of, but like simplifying, *Simplify Magazine* and things like that.

I don't see my life fitting into that mold. I see your life fitting into that mold, but yet even you are outside of that mold because you have, like I said, a 30-day supply of food on hand. How do you see those concepts working together in an American economy? Because literally we are a consumer-based economy, you know, that's why we see things for, in the prepping community, about like all the Patriot foods ... and I got another one valley... valley something foods, a green packaging, you know, they're always trying to sell you the next tool, preppy thing, package, package kind of concept.

Ellie: It's still marketing.

Sam: Yeah. But how does that work in sustainability in your mind? Because for me, it just makes me feel like I'm a consumer and a hot disaster, but you've explained it in such a way that it makes more sense.

Ellie: Well, and I also think when you say hot disaster, first of all, there are four people in your household. So, you can't plan your household with only what makes you happy. You have three other people who have things that make them happy that are not necessarily the same as you. We have to, you know, to be sustainable, to keep that family relationship, then you have to make room for their things too.

Sam: I mean, I can't get rid of the switch.

Ellie: No. Well the switch?

Sam: That's the video game. (ah yes – our generational differences – LOL)

Ellie: Oh, I thought you meant a stick.
And I said, I don't know that ...

Sam: The video game controller. Yeah.

Ellie: Yeah. It's, you know, let's not mix up educating our children and teaching them versus minimalism because there's two different issues here. But yeah. you can't get rid of things that other people in your family group like, you have to come to compromises.

It might be where they place them, how much time they spend, what requirements you have. But just because I don't like, it doesn't mean somebody else should have to give it up. So, in that case, I think minimalism works. If we go back to last week's where we talk about sustainable relationships. Then minimalism works when you also make room for the other members in your household.

For me, it's, it's kind of funny because so many of you think I have this minimal lifestyle, but if I were to pack it up in a truck, I think you'd be surprised how much is in this house, this little 400 square foot apartment has a lot of stuff in it. And I don't even have a lot of closets. I guess I can put it real simply for me, how I make it work is, you know how they see the ads and somebody will put a picture of a big fancy billionaire's yacht and say, "oh, I only wish or whatever."

And my thought is, "yeah, I would like that yacht. If there's a, Hey Stan, will you get my picnic lunch ready for me?" I'm going to ask Joe to have my boat ready at two. And I'm just going to get on the boat and enjoy it and come back and John's going to put the boat away and Stan's going to put the food away. So, you have a whole crew, you know. If I'm going to have luxury, it has to come with the worker bees that are going to take care of it. Otherwise, thank you anyway, but I didn't really need it.

So, when I make choices, I'm not really a minimalist as much *as I am lazy*. And I honor my laziness by saying, "does this require care and feeding and nurturing and all that kind of stuff - dusting and cleaning?" I'll carry it around the store for a while. And then I'll say, "maybe I didn't want that after all."

So, it's again, like, there are people who like things, and I don't know that that's a bad thing. So when I say people like things I think when we talk about what brings us joy or what's organized, or what Marie Kondo thinks, or what minimalists think, I think bottom line is asking yourself, is there room for this in my life?

If my life is made up of, I can't do things that matter to me because I'm cleaning or I'm, you know, I have these chores, then I need to weigh the things in my life.

So, I think it's a simple statement to say, you know, you weigh it and say "it doesn't bring me joy."

I actually think a better word would be *purpose*. Does it, does it fill purpose? Do I use it? You know, I, I've gotten rid of a lot of kitchen things that I pull out once a year ... maybe.

And most of the time, so many of the things we have in our consumerism lifestyle are things that can be done another way. And for the few times we need it, we can even borrow it. I think when we do sustainable and minimalism, the reason they fit together is when we look at them with our own personal sense of purpose about our things.

And I, I don't think all the things we read and see about minimalism ... it's like *Architectural Digest*. They take a pretty picture. They don't show the person sitting in the chair with three or four books they're reading because that doesn't look good, but that person may very well be in that picture when the photographer leaves, you know what I'm saying?

So again, we get misled sometimes by those dynamics of the pretty pictures and the great slogans and, just like winning the lottery, people have died from being happy, because they haven't known how to deal with it.

Stress in your body doesn't know the difference between too many parties or too much sorrow. It's all stress to the body and then we have to deal with it.

Well, I think, I think when we talk a minimalism, it's very similar. We have to, we have to decide what works for us and, if I can get what I need, reach for it easily, are the things that I don't use regularly put in a space that makes it easy to get to them when I want them.

You know, I think I very much agree with the thing, like, you know, mark it and see if I use it within a year.

Sam: That's a huge hack that I love that our friend, well, my, our friend Mary gave me that hack, I don't know when you found that hack, but our friend Mary Ratzesberger gave me that. (find her at <https://www.yourbeststuffforward.com> or <https://www.facebook.com/yourbeststuff.forward>)

Ellie: Yeah. And, and in all fairness, my organization (skills) came from moving like an average of every three years, my entire life until I moved here in my fifties.

So, you know, anything that could be packed in a milk crate, didn't go. So, so, so you had size frameworks, you know,

Sam: That's crazy.

Ellie: Well, it made sense. You had a decision-making process and it made it easy, you know?

So, I think it's that same thing. Sustainability and minimalism definitely go hand in hand. You know, if we're talking about space, if you're a minimalist, you would have the space because you get very good at using nooks and crannies and places.

If it's just about purpose, I think it's more than how many things you have, you know, does it fit my purpose?

Sam: Okay. That makes me feel a lot better about my life and, and minimalism and sustainability. Because when I hear, and I see things like *Apartment Therapy*, I used to love that before I had kids.

Well, actually it was right when I first had kids and I found *Apartment Therapy* and I went, "oh, my life could look that simple." And then I realized I had kids.

Ellie: And keep in mind that I worked for the Luce's who years later their home was in *Architectural Digest*. And I was like, yeah, because they have people like me who cleaned it, so they could go and take pretty pictures. They don't see the dirty kitchen that you're cleaning up after the party. Why we believe those things. I don't know, but we do, and we get planted these dreams and ideas.

And I think people can be a minimalist and be very unhappy because it's not - it doesn't fit them. So, it's kind of like diet, there is no one size that fits all. Looking at those things and feeling less than is no different than what we do with girls and body image or any of those things that we put up, this beautiful façade/ Half of social media, you know, and, and it's not that.

I think minimalism, sustainability, sustainable relationships - all work. If they fit with our sense of purpose, of why we're doing what we're doing.

Sam: Yeah. So, for those of you out there, we appreciate all of you following us. Please hit that like button and follow us for more interesting facts.

But really our biggest thing for you is to recognize that if you're into minimalism, good for you. You can be truly sustainable and have a 30-day supply of food on hand and whatever necessities on hand and still be sustainable and minimalist, you just have to make it work for you, your space and your family.

However that works, it's awesome. It may not look the same as my four-bedroom house on a third of an acre versus her 400 square foot, one-bedroom apartment ... on a postage stamp. Whatever that is for you - keep rocking it. And we look forward to having you come back next time. All right.

See you guys.

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