

Modern Simplicity - It's Complicated

By Molly Hegman

By definition simplicity is the state of being simple, uncomplicated or uncompounded. It also means the lack of subtlety, innocence or naiveté. A third definition reads that it is freedom from pretense or guile. There are other ways of expressing it: clarity or directness of expression, also, austerity or restraint in ornamentation.

In thinking about simplicity I immediately let my imagination wander to a time when life was thought to be simple. I conjured up a small house on a small farm inhabited by a family with a mother, a father and children. I pictured the father getting up early to light a fire and then going out to milk the cow. Meanwhile the mother would be collecting eggs and then making breakfast. They don't go to the store very often but use mainly what they garner from their land and the animals. After breakfast the children would walk to the one room school house. The parents would be working in the house or in the gardens or cleaning out the barn. They were always busy. After school the children had chores as well. Supper was eaten early with all of the family present. It was a time to discuss the day and what was happening the rest of the week. Sometimes after supper the family would sit on the porch and enjoy the evening sky. Bedtime came early as their day began at sunrise.

Today, it's different. Today we get up and either go to the refrigerator or to the cupboard and choose our breakfast. Or, we drive by a carry-out on the way to work and eat on the go. Today most children either ride a bus or they are driven by their parents rather than walking to a school which has many classrooms. One or both of the parents work while the children are at school. The house is left in the care of their pets. The children frequently have sports practices, music, vocal or dance lessons after school. They get home around the same time as the parents or the parents pick them up at After School Care. If both parents work, one of them often purchases readymade food for dinner. After dinner if homework has been completed and there are no games or practices, entertainment devices are on hand to while away the time between dinner and bedtime. Families are lucky if they have two or three meals together during the week.

Is your head spinning yet? Mine is. I want to scream out ... slow down! Life is passing you by. Take a walk, read a good book, have a discussion, go star gazing, make room for some form of simplicity in your life. Does simplicity still exist? Yes! Finding it just gets complicated!