



# LIVING BETTER ON LESS

## 1. WHAT IS LIVING BETTER ON LESS?

### TIM'S STORY

*"I arrived at this community program wondering how it could help me. A friend had participated in this series of workshops and was very enthusiastic. Was this really important to me? What is important? For my self I was in a perpetual state of running to various activities and meetings. Work was OK, but I was pondering my priorities, values and meaning in my life. The first session opened my mind and the following topics created a new way of thinking."*

### OBJECTIVE

■ This series will provide support to you to make informed choices about LIVING BETTER ON LESS, reducing your impact on the earth while maintaining your health, and saving money.

### PURPOSE OF LIVING BETTER ON LESS

This book encourages and supports you to live well on less while maintaining your dignity, self-worth, and good health. Many people are choosing to question the fast-paced, expensive lives of a Western capitalist consumption society. Could less be more? Are you spending too much? Is stuff stressing you out? Are you concerned with how your daily life impacts the environment? Do you want to simplify? These are the questions that need to be addressed.

### VIDEO VIEWING

Studies indicate that material wealth does not equate with happiness. The following video explores how in our quest for money and objects we have forgotten about the things that REALLY make us happy.

The High Price of Materialism — 5:30 min.,  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGab38pKscw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGab38pKscw)

OR

SORRY — 6.02 min,

[www.upworthy.com/he-starts-with-an-apology-for-ruining-the-earth-but-then-watch-him-take-it-back?c=hpstream](http://www.upworthy.com/he-starts-with-an-apology-for-ruining-the-earth-but-then-watch-him-take-it-back?c=hpstream)

## VALUES EXERCISE

We each have our own values and beliefs. They are those things that we think are so important that we will act on them and make sure our families learn: such as honesty, respect, and caring for others. What are the most important things you value and believe and that your child, your family, or your friend needs to know about you? For example, appreciation of one another, space for self, or forgiveness of mistakes.

### Values Exercise: THE ELF STORY

This exercise allows you to explore your own values and beliefs. Sit in a comfortable and relaxed position and slowly read and experience the following story:

*'I am walking on a path in the country, the sky is blue, and the sun is shining. The path takes me into the woods where I hear the birds chirping and see the squirrels running. I wander along and come to a stream. As the path turns I find a bench to sit on. I ponder nature's sounds when an elf jumps up on the bench next to me. The elf offers me three gifts for a person or people I love.' Pause and take time to think of the gifts you would like to give. When you have thought of your gifts the elf has gone. Write the list of your gifts on a piece of paper. Reflect on the gifts.*



These gifts are what you value at this time but will shift from time to time. Part of this program is to get us thinking about how to shift from material based happiness to one where other forms of wealth are equally and in fact more important, such as health, peace, and friendships.



*Before you start your Financial Plan track all your expenses for a week by keeping your receipts of everything you purchase during the week. If you Internet shop be sure to write all purchases down. Add up the purchases in categories. This knowledge will help you with your financial plan. Tracking is always useful. You may wish to continue to track.*