

OVERWHELM NO MORE - MODULE FIVE

Live like Grandma!

Living like Grandma – Bringing old school ways into mad modern days.

It's time to free up some long overdue bandwidth in your brain, slow down a little and simplify your life

Part 1

- Live Like Grandma concept
- The 'Information age' and creating a healthy information diet
- The throwback exercise
- 3 headspace essentials

Part 2

- Simple living manifesto! Less is more, no is more, more JOMO!
- Headspace habits, bandwidth breaks, upgraded routines, simpler check lists and new non-negotiable ideas

Live like Grandma

- We are absolutely 'generalising' here!
- But looking at how an average women lived in pre-war – 20/30s and post war – mid forties to seventies
- We are primarily wanting to think about day-to-day living, thinking, actions, info consumption, communication levels and habits
- To caveat, it was NOT easy for women at all in these times... Childbirth, subordination to men, little rights, restricted money, limited independence etc.
- But in the context of overwhelm, we are wanting to learn what was different and what we could do differently nowadays to balance out our modern way of living.
- You can also be reflective in terms of the generation of our mothers too in the 60/70/80/90s too

The concept "Live like Grandma" typically refers to the frugality that previous generations had:

- Buy less, buy better
- Looking after what you buy and repairing rather than replacing
- Shopping and cooking in season
- Cooking from scratch

- Being creative with basic ingredients and making food stretch out
- But equally less pressure in terms of variety and options.
- Fear of being caught out financially rather than fear of missing out
- Leading a simple life that brought joy without consumption

But it's more than that.

Alex Manos on my 3P Health program said the goal for our health today is to live more like our grandparents!

- Nutrition
- Sleep
- Activity
- Rest / relaxation
- Technology / EMFs
- Brain bandwidth
- Female circle / village
- Simpler life
- Less decisions
- Doing a lot less

"We are human beings not human doings"

Let's really step into Grandma's world....

Grandma's day / life (remember this is generalising!):

- Planning ahead, so in urgent mode a lot less
- Lots to do but *less thinking* to do
- Weekly patterns for food
- Weekly plans for domestic work
- Daily routine and structure to each day
- Naturally being where your feet are / time blocking
- Doing more ahead of things to make tomorrow easier
- Putting the house to bed, breakfast table laid out
- Saving up for purchases and earning / waiting for things
- Exercise was domestic activity – Jane of the gym V Jane of the jungle
- Walking so much more
- Very little restaurants / no coffee shops / little travel / little travel with children
- Kids entertained themselves with very little
- Kids extremely social and outdoors
- A safer world
- A simpler world
- A more local way of life
- No cars
- Most women didn't work / didn't work full time

- Husbands worked but work wasn't in the home
- No work at home / no work things at home
- Little communication outside the home / immediate area
- There was way less temptation
- Ignorance is bliss - you don't know what you don't know /
- Less SOS (Shiny Object Syndrome)
- Less choices – at shop only seasonal food, minimal options
- Less hobbies
- Less stuff – gadgets, toys, clothes, furniture, activity related things
- Less alcohol, coffee, stimulants
- More natural breaks in the day
- More conscious and mindfulness
- Daily food pattern! My Nan's was something like this; Sunday roast, Monday bubble & squeak, Tuesday Hot pot, Wednesday Casserole, Thursday Chicken and ham / veg pie, Friday fish, Saturday Cheesy mash and peas
- Home was where you spent most time
- More quiet time. i.e., after dinner washing dishes
- More boredom (or is that actually peace?)
- Evenings / lead up to bed was quiet or physically active, i.e., reading, sewing, talking, preparing, making
- Communication was minimal and restricted to people in family / local area
- Lived differently season to season
- Clear roles at home – Home maker / Mum, kids helped a lot (or kids away playing and out the way)

Need to consider:

- Time spent doing things
- Brain capacity used / what breaks to process / reflect / regather
- The impact on this – positive and negative

And think about what we can grab from Granny and gift to ourselves in our times!

Dr Sarah Nicholls, burnout specialist who runs an Overwhelmed to Organised program for health professionals talks about...

- Hair washed on certain days
- Certain clothes for certain days
- A super simple home with less stuff and tight procedures

...To make everything outside work easier

We can take the grandma concept into modern era by starting to build procedures into our packed days as well as stripping things right back!

The information age

In 1900, communicating was simple. You could talk to somebody. You could write a letter. You could read ink, printed on paper. That was it, really. If you owned a telephone, you were the 1%. In 1950, four in ten households owned a telephone or radio. Otherwise, the instruments of making and consuming information hadn't much changed. Talking to people and reading pages made up almost all of the rest of the typical family's communications diet. If you owned a television, you were the 9%.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/07/the-social-century-100-years-of-talking-watching-reading-and-writing-in-america/260372/>

- We're now exposed to as much data in a single day than someone in the 15th century would be in their entire lifetime (back in 2011)
- We take in more data in a month now than people would in their entire lifetime at the turn of the 19th century (2020)
- In 125 years, such a huge difference in how we (especially women) live and what we take in
- But in the last 25 years information consumption has just catapulted!
- Most people do not have a healthy information diet*
- An unhealthy information diet means forgetfulness, lack of productivity, low mental energy (which in turn impacts emotional volatility, likely to have more negative habits, feel more stress, find motivation and focus hard
- Now if WE are feeling it, what about these poor kids / teens

*"People with a healthy information diet give themselves the time they need to truly absorb what they consume. After reading an article, they can reflect on what they've learned, connect the details to other things they know, and commit the information to long-term memory. Down the road, they can pull out that knowledge when needed and build their expertise in a particular subject. But when you're continually cramming more and more information into your brain, there's no time for the reflection part. Without the time consuming process needed to remember important information, much of what you've consumed will be immediately dumped from your working memory, as new information piles in. As well, as you overload your brain with more and more data, you reduce your ability to actually recall or use it. This overload leads to rereading passages multiple times, forgetting important data points, and finding it more difficult to synthesize or explain data, even in the short term" <https://heyday.xyz/blog/information-overload/>

Reading is 150% faster than speaking. And scrolling is even faster than reading!

Questions to consider:

- How healthy is your information diet?
- What is the most important information and communication?
- Where do we need to put in boundaries to take in LESS and free ourselves up MORE?

When on your phone, remember you are consuming, creating or multi-tasking.

Throwback exercise!

This is in the workbook as one of the exercises and is SO useful to do.

What WE were doing / not doing:

- In the morning, lunchbreak, evening, weekends?
- Holidays / hobby time?
- Who were we in touch with / what were we taking in?
- Morning routines / evening routines?
- What were work boundaries like?
- 25 years ago
- 20 years ago
- 15 years ago
- 10 years ago
- 5 years ago

I'm 47 (born in 1977).

- 2001 - When I set my business up at 24/25, I had to unplug the landline to use my computer, most communication was done by text / phone call / email / laptop was minimal
- 2007 iPhone launched
- 2008 - At 31, when I had my twins in 2008, I didn't have a smart phone, had laptop, digital camera, some social media on my laptop, Netflix just coming into mainstream
- 2014 - At 37, 10 years ago, smart phone, FB groups, social media on phones became mainstream
- 2016 – EU referendum – cultural info explosion
- 2019 - At 42, 5 years ago, social media was a LOT simpler, business was a lot easier, but it has still become quite overwhelming / info overload
- 2020 - At 43 COVID hit – Information explosion and change of living on another level
- 2022/23/24 – Russia, Cost of living, WW3 uncertainty - so much information that we can take in from so many different angles

Headspace – where can we claw some back?

Consider:

- Information / communication
- Complication of world and life we lead
- Boundaries / breaks in our lives

But we need to consider:

The circle of control:

- What is in my control
- What is within my influence
- What is out of my control

Yes / no choices:

- When I say yes to something what am I saying no to
- Whatever you don't change you are choosing!
- Where are you wasting time and energy (because we only have so much!)?

Solutions and adjustments:

- There are SO many things we can do differently and better, so many!
- Just because you *can* do something, just because *others* are doing something, does NOT mean you have to!
- What are the domino effect goals or high impact changes to get going with?

3 headspace essentials!

- Headspace in terms of lowering information that fills our brains
- Headspace in terms of having regular quiet time (micro headspace & massive headspace)
- Headspace in terms of creating a simpler life

Part 2

Simple living manifesto!

"Simplicity is the peak of civilization." – Jessie Sampter

- The very basic things we need to do, is Identify what's important to you - and then eliminate everything else!
- Then making a declaration that "less is more, no is more, simple is more" and that you're going to make some changes
- Getting right behind it with enthusiasm, light heartedness and can-do attitude (or whatever energy is best for you!)

A manifesto is:

"A written statement declaring publicly the intentions, motives, or views of its issuer" or "A public declaration of policy, aims and pledges"

- Sets the intention
- Gives clarity on objectives

- Is something you refer to as decisions are made and actions need to be taken
- Usually takes time to cultivate (care V do)
- Overcome bumps, be patient, be consistent

Getting to simplicity is not a simple process!

We are on an Overwhelm No More course, so we need to make sure that we don't make it overwhelming!

When wanting to reach goals I believe we need:

- Inspiration before action
- Prep phase for consideration and planning
- Own intention-action gaps (and intention – reality gaps)
- Get your thinking and energy in the right place
- Small and steady is as powerful as big and bold
- COMPOUND EFFECT! (Great book by Darren Hardy, well worth a read)

Here's some ideas to help you consider what might need to change / what might be in your Simple Living Manifesto

- Make a list of your core priorities
- Evaluate what you're doing and how you spend your time
- If they don't align, start trimming the fat
- Or look at whether you can delegate
- Start saying no more
- Challenge ALL choices and habits
- Limit communication, media, entertainment and data consumption
- Become an editor of your home (analogy is only so many word counts to fit in each article, only so much in each room and cupboard!)
- Same for wardrobe, phone, laptop
- Question the reasons you have things / why you're doing things / do you need to do things
- Put in spending interventions!
- Time AND money spending interventions!
- Don't waste time or energy on complicated / time-wasting things, complaining or energy vampires
- Slow down! (Great book called In Praise of Slow by Carl Honore)
- Solitude time each day – total it and build it if not enough
- Update 'just because' systems in your home, work and life
- Unsubscribe emails every day and in a month, you'll have got rid of most
- Minimal, minimal, minimal, *what is your new 'enough'?*
- Strip back before sorting out
- Place for everything, time for everything, process for everything
- Be more intentional with your thinking, time and life

- Prioritise your headspace time
- Fill your day with micro joys and simple pleasures (this can really take away the 'need' for more!)
- Leave space in between things
- Write your manifesto!

And then each day ask.... "Is what I'm about to do taking me towards or away from a simplified / less overwhelmed life?"

Headspace habits, bandwidth breaks, upgraded routines, easy check lists and new non-negotiables

Headspace habits / bandwidth breaks:

"Give time intention"

- Better bookends to your days and weeks
- Regular non-tech / non-information time each day
- Starting and ending the day quietly / calmly / quality time with loved one
- Micro breaks
- Coffee / tea breaks
- Lunch breaks
- Transition breaks
- Create regular ON your life slots through the week (small and/or large)
- Meditation / breathing
- Or just be where your feet are breaks
- Sitting on a bench listening to the birds
- Potter rather than push – taking out my morning coffee and being 'slow'
- Time block headspace
- Create timetables in your day and week

"Give your brain a break"

If it helps write a list of the IMPACT of these things so you tap into the VALUE gained rather than being pulled into the time 'lost'.

Upgraded routines:

Definition "A sequence of actions regularly followed".

The human brain LOVES routines, has to work less. We want our brains to be on autopilot doing the good stuff!

This falls into some of the breaking the habit loop,

- "WHEN... THEN..."

- “WHEN I WOULD USUALLY DO... INSTEAD I WILL...”
- “BEFORE / AFTER... I WILL...”

WHEN... THEN...

- I get it from work, THEN I will...
- I wake up...THEN I will...
- My kids get home from school, THEN I will
My partner comes home from work, THEN I will
- I find myself... THEN I will

WHEN I would usually... INSTEAD

- Reply to messages straight away, INSTEAD I will...
- Watch TV until the minute I go to bed... INSTEAD I will...
- Rush putting on the dishwasher so I can go on my phone... INSTEAD I will...

AFTER... I WILL...

- AFTER I've dropped the kids off to school, I will...
- AFTER I'm off my work zoom meeting, I will...
- AFTER dinner, I will...

BEFORE... I WILL

- BEFORE I go to bed, I WILL...
- BEFORE I switch on my phone... I WILL
- BEFORE I say yes to... I WILL...

This is all about retraining yourself and creating helpful interventions!

Check lists / non negotiables:

Great for most valued action AND what order to do them in – giving you a simple sequence to follow

This morning my most valued actions are:

- Making my herbalist tea / pottering around for 20/30 mins
- Emptying dishwasher / Taking food out the freeze for dinner / Putting washing on
- Exercise
- Shower / hair wash
- 5 mins journal / Making bed
- Clear up / kitchen disco
- 15-minute tech check in
- Breakfast

Evening example:

- Dinner cleared up & dishwasher on
- Fitness gear out
- 20-minute walk
- 2 hours tech free time with family
- 15-minute tech check in, then tech away
- Bath
- Read / journal

Mindset:

- Getting to simplicity is not a simple process!
- Stripping stuff back takes time
- We can all learn
- Growth mindset – “I can learn as I go”, and setbacks are just part of learning and crafting a new way of being
- Compound effect - bite size chunks will help you!
- Lowering mental load –behind procrastination and mostly created by the 6Cs oof unhelpful thinking
- We overestimate what we can do in a week and month but completely underestimate what we can do in a year
- Practice, patience, perseverance
- Choose your energetics! Enthusiasm, excitement, calm, light, clever, fun, curious; whatever you need!

Workbook:

- Throwback exercise
- Go spend a day in the life of your grandma / a grandma or go talk to one!
- Put together your simple living manifesto – declaration / visualisation, most important actions / choices / changes to make (you can add mindset mottos if you like)
- Brainstorm any new headspace habits, routines, check lists, interventions you could create!