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RESEARCH ARTICLE

MINIMALISM: A STEP TOWARDS PEACEFUL LIVING

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ABSTRACT

Majority of us master a lifestyle that starts with unscheduled plans and moves forward with a flow that has become inevitable including simple routine of waking up, freshening, eating, working and sleeping. Then why is it that we still feel as though everything surrounding us is a big picture of clustered events that being our possessions and values, indirectly affecting our conscious state of mind in negative ways. The world is moving forward at a pace never imagined and with ultimate plans. One such plan is adopting minimalistic lifestyle and attitude. Minimalism puts forward the notion that owning less values and possessions is the secret to a peaceful and meaningful life. This study focuses on ways to lead a minimalistic lifestyle with examples of great minimalists of modern era, analyzing their way of approach to minimalism and figuring out how it can be practiced. What is the meaning of life when you're not at peace of mind and happy within yourself? Thus it becomes crucial for us to build a lifestyle that incorporates positive -psychology, well-being, voluntary simplicity, sustainability, good mental space and self - awareness.

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INTRODUCTION

Minimalism is about owning fewer possessions and believing less is more. According to a great minimalist Joshua Becker minimalism is "the intentional promotion of the things we most value by removing anything that distracts us from it." [1] Standing before haystacks of products in a store ask yourself this - "Does this stuff add values to your life or is it another one of your desires that is going to sit in a corner after a few meaningful uses?". Dan Harris, author of '10 % happier' states "people are out on a hunt to buy , to own things then ending wrapped up and miserable just for materialist possessions ."[2] It's like every person has a gaping void inside them that they want to fulfil by giving in their needs and buying stuff instead, it leaves them with desire to buy more and still not be content of what they owned earlier. In a documentary by Kino Lorber (Directed by : Matt D'Avella) called *Minimalism : A documentary about important things* , Rick Hanson (PhD , neurologist) asserts that people living in the west live their best life so why do they long for more ? This is called Delusional craving that creates a disconnect between one's own self and happiness. Jesse Jacobs an Entrepreneur gives us example of 'Lottery winners 'where

they continue feeding their selfish needs and are left tired, dissatisfied and restless . The advertisement industry is a trap, it lures us in to purchase stuff which according to them are important for a better living, but when we look at it clearly it's just another add on to our previously bought collection. The social media is all about what 'the perfect life' should look like. It's this delusion that we need to have everything perfect in turn it leads us farther away from our path to happiness. Medical science has proven that mental health is adversely affected by ones physical being, removing all the things that are unnecessary could be a great step toward peaceful lifestyle. Jimmy carter in his speech once said "*Humanity is no longer defined by what one does, but what one owns.*" [3] Thus it becomes a dire need for us to look for a way of living that promotes human values more than toxic values.

Tiny house: A movement: Architect Frank Mascia argues "We are living life in a space we have already got rather than creating a space to fit our lives. Humans must have the responsibility of living in the smallest space they possibly can." [4] People live in enormous homes but we don't really use every room. According to study done on heat map of normal homes only 40% of the space is used on daily basis. This clearly implies that we don't need big enough instead limited and significant enough. "Tiny house movement is an architectural and social movement that encourages living a

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simple life in smaller spaces.'[5] It helps us to understand the importance of sustainability, mental health and decluttering necessity. TOW (tiny house on wheels) is a concept where tiny house are made easy to transport by adding wheels to them, this way one can travel and also have a shelter.

Project 333: Messy closet filled with useless clothing items we no longer use has been a great issue to all of us. Project 333 allows us to understand our boundaries when shopping for clothing or accessories. Implying less is more, project 333 is a huge step towards minimalist lifestyle. The idea behind project 333 is simple: 'Wear only 33 articles of clothing for the next 3 months. All clothing, accessories, jewelry, outerwear, and shoes count towards your number.

Exceptions include wedding rings, underwear, sleepwear, in-home loungewear, and workout clothing.'[6] Not only it helps us to be more fashion sensible but also reduces the humungous amount of apparel garbage produced every year.

Meditation: Meditation in India has been practiced for thousands of years. It helps us release stress and achieve inner peace. Practicing meditation on a regular schedule makes you more compassionate, understand values, assess things properly, calms your mind and much more than that it connects our soul with the ultimate divinity making us feel safe, at peace and loved.

Findings and gaps in research: Minimalism is a conscious choice where one needs to make continuous decisions and

stick to what was planned. At first it may seem a bit difficult to reschedule your entire lifestyle but it's worth it. You can't be a minimalist if you don't start practicing it, as one only understands a situation when he / she goes through it. There are people trying to incorporate minimalism in their lifestyle but after practicing for a few months or week they eventually give up, only those who are determined achieve their goals. A large population of this world still believe in buying more to satisfy their needs, people are not aware of demerits of materialist obsessions and this abstains them from achieving complete happiness.

Implications of the study: Current pandemic situation has let us understand that it's not necessary how much we own but it's necessary how significant we own. People need to understand the importance of small space living as sustainability is in question.

Adapting minimalistic values would not only make us healthy but also it would leave a positive impact on our environment. We can't control natural happenings but what we can control is our approach to nature's wellbeing. Spreading awareness about different ways of living can be a create a great deal for sustainable living. Awareness and understanding is crucial to achieve victory here.

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