

Choosing Simplicity

Western culture offers so many choices that we can spend hours online trying to pick the shoes we want from the hundreds of options available to us. Yet we know whatever we decide will dissatisfy us as too many choices confuse us. Western culture frames the seemingly infinite array of what we can consume as the freedom of choice.

Western consumerism threatens the survival of life on Earth. On the sacred path, we choose to live simply to allow all others the opportunity to simply live. This simple equation challenges those raised in Western culture. However, the path of equitable sharing of the Earth Interbeing teaches us to remove how we harm others, life, the Earth, and ourselves by reducing our consumption of Earth and life. As we persistently reduce our consumption, we learn how to live simply, not as an aesthetic but as a humble sage.

Our longing to have more covers and defiles our longing for unity with the sacred. Western culture has equated happiness with material possession. We always look outside of ourselves for the solutions to our problems and for what we want. Through consumption of Earth-stuff, we seek relief from our dissatisfaction and blame ourselves for always choosing the wrong option. Like addicts at the slot machines, we never give up hope that we will find the perfect thing to make us happy and prove to others our perfection.

All life longs for union with the sacred, to fully experience sacred love. The sacred path transforms us into sacred beings of love, caring, and knowing what to do. We are already the sacred beings we seek. We have what we want. The path merely helps us to uncover ourselves. As we deepen our sacred being, our sacred nature becomes more brilliant.

We learn on the path to want what we have. Instead of buying more shoes, we first discern whether we already have shoes that we could wear. They may not look new, but if they fit, what holds us back from wearing them? For someone just beginning the path to further life on Earth, the decision not to buy what we don't need feels like an unwelcome choice. At some point on this path, the longing for life on Earth to continue transforms us. We discover we want what we have. We walk the talk.

Resolving to further life on Earth requires us to live in ways aligned to the valued ways.¹ Westerners on the path may feel conflicted when tempted to buy new. At some point, we understand that the temptation masks a weakness of our resolve to distance ourselves from the omniscidal ways of Western culture. Aware of the conflict, we simply pause and reconsider what to do. Doing that alone will strengthen our resolve to avoid furthering Western omniscide.

We understand the need to reduce our consumption of Earth and life and to distance ourselves from the Western culture's imperative to consume more. Living more simply within Western culture will require us to go our own way. Others may not appreciate our growing simplicity, but we know we have no other choice but to further life on Earth.

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¹**Sacred ways and values furthering life on Earth (work in progress):** awakening and maturing our loving sacred being, living humbly, joyful surrender to sacred wisdom to know what to do, compassionate action, harmonious interactions, equitable sharing and caring for the Earth, responding to change in ways that further life on Earth, and preserving our inner balance with the sacred, life, and Earth. By living these ways, we deepen our loving awareness of the sacred and reverence for the sacredness of life and Earth.