

## Family, friends, community

—These are the sources of the greatest love and joy we experience as humans. We visit family members, keep in touch with favorite teachers, share and exchange pleasantries with friends. We undertake difficult projects to help others, save frogs or protect a wilderness, and in the process discover extreme satisfaction. We find spiritual fulfillment in nature or by helping others. None of these pleasures require us to consume things from the Earth, yet each is deeply fulfilling. These are the simple pleasures, and they bring us much closer to real happiness than a bottle of soda or a new car.



There are more than 6 billion people now living on Earth. This is not including all the other species who live and consume resources.

We now must be conscious of how we can each consume less and live more sustainably for ourselves and for the children of all the beautiful beings on Earth.

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## What can I do?

- ◆ Give mindfully.
- ◆ Let family and friends know you do not need material goods to know you are loved and good.
- ◆ Use handkerchiefs, newspaper, cloth bags, or closed eyes to wrap gifts.
- ◆ Read Alan Hunt Badiner's *Mindfulness in the Marketplace* and other resources to increase your understanding of the impact of consumerism.
- ◆ Be willing to look honestly at yourself and how many resources it takes to sustain your choice of lifestyle.
- ◆ Talk with your friends about how you can work together to support each other in living more sustainably.

**Live mindfully.  
You do make a difference.**

**Contentment is the greatest wealth.**  
—Buddha

Leaflet designed by Annie Galloway  
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## Simplicity as Spiritual Exercise series

## Mindful Living



## Mindful Giving

*“COMPASSIONATE CONSUMPTION is not about sacrificing or giving up what we need. It is about reawakening to the sacred within and around us and celebrating this awareness in every action—and in every transaction. Our conscious choices change the world.”*

—Julia Butterfly Hill

**Quaker Earthcare Witness**

# Mindful Living ... Mindful Giving

WITH every bite, every press of the accelerator, every swipe of the credit card, we leave a large ecological footprint on the face of the world.



We live in a world where all living systems are bound together in one interdependent community. There can be no economic security without ecological sustainability.

Can we expect governments and corporations to take the lead in moving our economics toward sustainability? Or is it better that we, as individuals, cultivate a deep awareness of the consequences of consumerism, and learn to vote collectively with our pocketbooks? The consumer choices we make have an immediate impact and our example as the potential to lead our society to a better quality of life for all beings.

*There is enough for everybody's need,  
but not enough for anybody's greed.*

—Gandhi

A never-ending stream of advertising messages reinforces people's delusion that the accumulation of material goods is the royal road to happiness, the very purpose of our lives.



The hunger for the material comes from a neurotic pursuit of pleasure, comfort, and security. We try to shield ourselves from daily pain through accentuating pleasurable moments.

**Generosity is the virtue  
that produces peace.**

Generosity is a practice that can overcome our self-absorption and our desire to possess. Generosity benefits others.



MAY we be generous to the world through mindful living and mindful giving. May this be the legacy that we leave to our children and grandchildren.

## Mindful gift ideas for family and friends

- ◆ Give a Certificate of Time or Service.
- ◆ Make a favorite meal for a friend.
- ◆ Take a walk with a friend.
- ◆ Give a gift of a membership or donation to a non-profit organization.
- ◆ Volunteer.
- ◆ Make a gift.
- ◆ Give something that is precious to you.
- ◆ Give "Fair Trade" items.
- ◆ Share a favorite book, movie, or poem.
- ◆ Go dancing together or hiking, sledding, or singing.
- ◆ Give a massage.
- ◆ Sing a song.
- ◆ Listen.
- ◆ Give necessary clothing or food.
- ◆ Care for children.
- ◆ Share cars.
- ◆ Tell a story & much more....

Text is taken from the book *Mindfulness in the Marketplace—Compassionate Responses to Consumerism*, edited by Allan Hunt Badiner, a collection of essays by Thich Nhat Hanh, Joanna Macy, the Dalai Lama, Fritjof Capra, and other inspired people who make a difference, like you!

