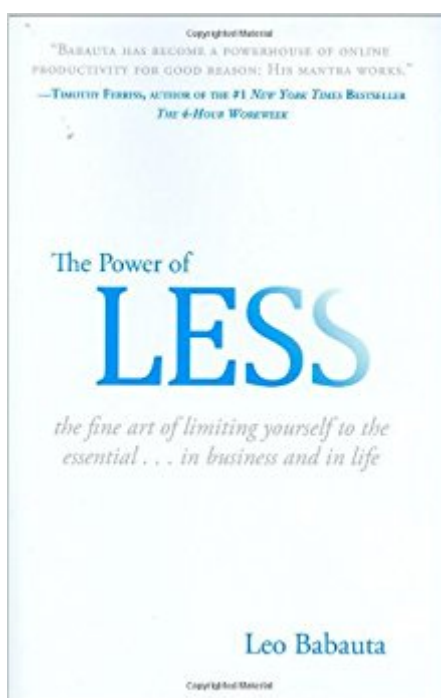


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# The Power Of Less: The Fine Art Of Limiting Yourself To The Essential...in Business And In Life



## Synopsis

With the countless distractions that come from every corner of a modern life, it's amazing that we're ever able to accomplish anything. *The Power of Less* demonstrates how to streamline your life by identifying the essential and eliminating the unnecessary, freeing you from everyday clutter and allowing you to focus on accomplishing the goals that can change your life for the better. *The Power of Less* will show you how to:

- Break any goal down into manageable tasks
- Focus on only a few tasks at a time
- Create new and productive habits
- Hone your focus
- Increase your efficiency

By setting limits for yourself and making the most of the resources you already have, you'll finally be able to work less, work smarter, and focus on living the life that you deserve.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

According to Babauta (*Zen to Done*), employing the power of less will propel readers from chaos to blissful and productive minimalism. Learning to set limitations, such as penning a three-item Most Important Task list every day and restricting e-mails to five lines, is a cornerstone for the authors' plan for increased simplicity and satisfaction. With new boundaries in place, readers can discover flow, become wholly absorbed in tasks and live the paradox of doing less and achieving more.

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Leo Babauta has been a reporter, editor, speechwriter, and freelance writer for the last 17 years. He founded ZenHabits.net with no funding in January 2007, and one year later it is a top 50 blog with

about a million unique visitors per month. Using the methods he shares in THE POWER OF LESS over the last two years, he's trained and successfully completed a marathon, he's doubled his income, he's eliminated his debt, he's quit smoking, and he's written a novel.

I have tried many organizing systems, but my focus has always been on finding ways to get more things done at once within an inhumanly unforgiving time frame. I'd always start out strong due to enthusiasm and novelty and always end up burning out at some point. I never thought of the simple, yet totally logical, idea of getting more done by pursuing less goals at once. I combined this system with David Allen's Getting Things Done and it's been a very thorough, sustainable method. I use Getting Things Done to put all my aims out of my head and onto paper, but use Power of Less to make sure I only chase no more than three goals at a time. Everything else I put on my Someday/Maybe list.

The book was a quick read. It has some similarities to the book Essentialism, but is more "how to". The contents of the book is common sense, putting this into action is much more difficult. The author stress small steps; setting small goals. It will be hard not to set obtaining goals much larger and quicker. Good overall book with similarities of GTD. For me, there were not too many concepts that were totally new.

I suffered a brain aneurysm rupture about 18 months ago, and since then, I become easily overwhelmed, both at home and work. I got this book before the rupture, but it is more helpful to me now than before. It helps me simplify my days, which is the healthy thing for me to do these days. I don't like to think of it negatively, but as a more effective and manageable way to live. A lot of this is good common sense, but still good reminders and a good guide.

My copy of Leo Babauta's new book, *Power of Less, The: The Fine Art of Limiting Yourself to the Essential...in Business and in Life*, arrived Friday evening, and by late Friday I'd read it cover to cover. Now, on Sunday, I'm starting it again. It may be about "less", but it contains more than my brain could take in with a single read. Leo, the owner of the wildly popular ZenHabits blog, has written one of those classics that apply to both our business and personal lives. In brief, *The Power of Less* is a treatise on the small steps (see my blog post on the Kaizen way) we can take to simplify our lives and in the doing find far more joy and success than all of our manic behavior could produce. The book begins with Leo's own story of being in debt, overweight, smoking, workaholic

who rarely saw his family. His life was chaotic and he never had time for the things and people he loves. (Sound familiar?) Then, he made the choice to simplify his life in small continuous ways; first he quit smoking by focusing all of his energy on that one goal. Then, he attacked other goals, one at a time, like becoming a runner, eating healthier, starting a successful blog, and getting out of debt. One by one the goals were met (and exceeded). Leo has run two marathons, has doubled his income, became a vegetarian, decluttered his home, lost 45 pounds, and spends quality time with his family. Today, Leo's blog is one of the top 50 blogs in the world, with more than two million readers a month. If that doesn't make you want to adopt his principles, nothing will!

### The Six Principles of Simple Productivity

The Power of Less is divided into two sections; the first walks readers through the six principles of simple productivity: 1. Set limitations 2. Choose the essential 3. Simplify 4. Focus 5. Create habits 6. Start small

Part II details practical tips for implementing the six principles in key areas including e-mail, health, time management, filing, Internet, and decluttering your work space.

### Simple Doesn't Mean Easy

While the principles are simple, it doesn't necessarily mean they're easy to implement. Anyone who has started a new habit (like a diet) knows that for sure. However, with small continuous improvement, the principles are achievable. For example, Leo has weaned himself off e-mail to checking only twice a day. I probably check e-mail 100 times a day - - and just as a nutritionist wouldn't ask us to cut out every unhealthy food in one day, they would encourage us to cut-back. For me, that would mean (first) KNOWING how many times a day I check e-mail, and then (second) cutting back a little, then a little more, and then a little more. Until I reach a point that e-mail doesn't rule my existence.

### The Principle of Choosing the Essential

While all of the principles serve as stepping stones to a life of more, the one that hangs me up the most is the principle of choosing the essential. And it's a bugaboo that's been with me life-long. As Leo says, once you know the essentials you'll be in a position to eliminate the chaos of incoming information, commitments, and clutter. Thankfully, the section on choosing the essential has a series of questions to help define what's essential - and this is the section I'm currently re-reading - because it's the most difficult for me. I know absolutely that once I have those essentials defined, the remaining principles will be far easier to integrate. The reason this principle is so important to me is that in knowing the essentials, I'll know which projects or tasks have the highest priority - because they're the ones that will have the biggest impact on the essentials. For me, this is the key to having the life of what truly IS more.

### Putting the Principles Into Action

As a life-long "clean desk" advocate, I was ahead of the game on the decluttering principle, but way behind on e-mail, Internet, commitments, and health. Fortunately, simplifying these areas are a matter of making small continuous changes (the Kaizen way), instead of radical ones. For instance, one of the life issues

discussed is making time for what we love. As a self-employed person, I get so caught in the flow of work that I forget what I really love. However, once prompted by *The Power of Less*, I really thought about what I love - then I made a list, and one-by-one will begin implementing them in my life. (and being a true Kaizen-ista) will NOT try to take on all of them at once!) By the way, my list includes learning to kayak, to play the harmonica, and hiking. A Perfect Time for a Perfect Book As I wander the Internet, I hear over and over the desire for simplification. The entrepreneurs I know have all hit the wall at the same time - - they're on information overload, have massive (and unattainable) to-do lists, poor health, wretched time management, cluttered desks and minds, and no fun. If ever there was a time for *The Power of Less*, it's now.

I read this book back in 2009, again in 2011, and 2014. I also never read this book in order, I never do everything it tells me to do, and I never read it from cover to cover. If you purchase this book, I would suggest you go to your local bookstore and flip through it to see if this seems like something you'd like to try. After purchasing it, finish it in your own way while taking notice to how simplify your life on a day to day basis. This book is not a complete solution but more of a reference to how Leo has simplified his life and recommending various way you can try and see what works for you. That being said, the book is a great reference and for the individual looking to simplify his/her life can benefit from this book. I have and I will continue to through my life. Enjoy!

Simplify your life, live a healthier life, and eliminate most material possessions. This book has saved me so much money. Helped me with the daily, monthly and annual planning. Realizing how I can limit my spending and suppress my desire for material things.

Since there are many other (excellent) reviews for this book, I won't repeat what has already been said more than this: this is a great book that explains how effective and powerful minimalism can be in your life. What I have not seen said, however, is the main point of this book: **\*\*Living with less will make you a happier person.\*\*** While Leo goes into great details about how to live with less, why it is good, how it can help, etc., the main point is that you will be happier. Not only by living with less things, but by adjusting your life and your mindset to desire less. By clearing your life, body, mind, and spirit of all clutter, you can focus on things important to you, and take the time to enjoy your life. This book is not intended to be a `quick fix` for life, instead it should be read as a lifestyle guide. The principles outlined in the book are best applied slowly, one at a time, over long periods of time, in order to build long lasting habits and practices. This book has profoundly changed my life, and I can

do nothing but recommend it. If you're looking for an excellent eye-opening book on minimalism, read this one!

This book is terrific. It combines GTD, mini-habits and some great ideas for formulation NH a program of improvement and goal setting. Highly recommend this.

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