

behind

CONSCIOUS COLLECTIVE

Our family
 ly driving somewhere
 We had nice things, but nev-
 we received occasional gifts out-
 weren't spoiled. I think my parents
 job modeling simple living and tak-
 things you have.

But something happened between then and my early 30s. I got caught up in the culture that encourages selfishness, excess, and instant gratification. I got caught up in a society that is rushing to gain more, do more, and glorify busy-ness. I bought into the lies of great marketing and branding from companies that sacrifice people, planet, authenticity, and creativity for profit. During those years, I would be bothered by some of it, but didn't really know how to get off the hamster wheel.

In 2015, I said, "This is enough!" I want-
 life. Little did I know that I knew so
 starting to open to a world
 being exploited and

ed a more simplified
 little. My eyes were
 where people were
 it was more real to me. I
 made a plan to live with
 more freedom as well as
 more consciously and mindfully.

Growing up, I had a
 pretty great childhood.
 vacations were typical-
 to see extended family.
 er name-brand stuff;
 side of holidays, but
 did a pretty great
 ing good care of the

In some shape or form, I have been planning and journaling for years. Without thinking about it at the time, I would just get it all down—write out my daily schedule, complain, praise, dream, pray, etc. I was also scrapbooking before it was cool. These days, I find myself sketching, painting, doodling. When I flip through these books now, I remember so well my feelings from the words, the pictures—but I also have this sense of coming full-circle and understanding what I didn't then. I see patterns. I see God's hand in my life. These books remind me of failures, successes, growth, answered prayers, and visions God has given me. They retrace memories I want to hold onto forever, and even some I want to forget. Either way, these books of mine represent part of the legacy I will leave for my future generations.

Something I have learned from my husband, Marcus, is the importance of





leaving a legacy. He has very little family left on this earth, and has held onto many heirlooms. Being minimalists, we have often gone through these items to consider letting go of them, but we just can't part with old journals and photographs. Why? The feel of these things in my hands, the smells, the life, the typography, the handwriting, the personal touches, the emotions, the history—I could go on and on. I think about what these items and their owners can teach me through their experiences. I think about the impact these people made, about my own legacy.

Maybe you're thinking now about your own situation. Why does it matter what you do with your time and your life? Simple. Because you have a purpose! I want to help you tap into your potential, especially in your lifestyle, so that you have the freedom that I have and so you have time to think about other things—higher things. "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25)

This shift to living intentionally looks different for each and every one of us, but I guarantee you this: it does not go unnoticed, nor is your time and effort wasted. What we do with our life shows up in our mind, body, spirit, family, home, neighborhood, community, and beyond. You, my friend, were created to live an intentional life, and I'm here, along with the women in this community, to help!

Janie Edwards