

29 Minimalism as a leader

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SPEAKERS

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Today I wanted to talk about minimalism as a leader, and why I believe you should become a minimalist and why also I should become one. Today we live in a world of choice, whatever you want to buy or to do, you have so many choice, a world of opportunities have an abundance of triggers, we got triggered from everywhere from our telephone or computer at work, even on the streets, we also have a lot of choice when we want to do things. And the problem is that the more choices we have the more decision or stress that we might have, or this fear of missing out. And so today, I wanted to talk about minimalism as a leader, if you want to have more peace of mind, but also more impact. So tune in for this episode. I'm Murielle, CEO mum and educator, I used to work really hard and sacrifice the important things to me until I lost my motivation. Fast forwards passed many failed attempts and lessons learned. And I found a way to reach great results while working less. Today, I'm obsessed with helping other leaders build meaningful lives. So each week, I'll be sharing inspiration to change your life and organisation. This is rebel leader with a heart. Have you noticed that the more things you have, or the more things you do, the more stress you have. Just remember the life you had when you were a student or when you were younger, you didn't have a lot of money. And so you weren't afraid of losing it, you didn't have a fancy house with great furniture. And so you weren't afraid of losing that you probably didn't have a fancy holiday or cars, you didn't have a status. And so you lived in a world where you had a lot of opportunities. But you also didn't have a lot of problems, you you lived more carefree. And that was probably because you didn't have a lot of things. And the more you have, and the more work you have. For instance, when you have a house, you have maintenance in that house, when you have a car, you have also to take care of your car, when you have a garden, you have to work on it. Or you have to find somebody who does. When you have all these electronics, well, sometimes they don't work and you have to buy a new one or to go to the repair shop. When you buy a lot of clothes, you have a problem with your wardrobe, and you have to extend it or to do some choices to make some choices in your wardrobe. When you have a cleaning lady and she's sick, or she doesn't come anymore, you have to find a new one. And when you book your holidays there again, you also have some work, where do you want to go? What kind of holiday Do you want, where are you going to stay what will be the costs, then you will have to prepare your luggage, maybe go to the doctor for for some shots or arrange some administration for your visa. And so the more you have, the more work you have, and the more stress you have. But also, the less space you have to rest for creativity and for things to emerge. And also your head becomes a big to do list, I have to do this, and then this and then

that. And then that and you don't have any space anymore. And also, I believe when you're constantly busy, constantly running, even if it's for fun stuff, and you never take a moment to pause, you start not feeling things anymore. You don't notice anymore, what is happening in your body, what your emotions are. And you might even shut it down to simply continue. And that is also very dangerous, I believe because all these emotions and sensations that you have,

they are there for a reason. They give you signs that maybe it is time for you to stop that you cannot continue like this. But if you continue to fill up your life with a lot of stuff and never feel what needs to be felt that can be very dangerous and that can lead to burning out or even bigger health issues. And so I believe that's why minimalism becomes so important in this world of choice of triggers, of abundance of opportunities of things to do of activities of decisions to make that is why more More people go for minimalism as a way of life. And although I don't consider myself as a minimalist yet, in all the domains, I really love this trend. And I strive for minimalism in a lot of areas of my life. And so today I wanted to talk about why can minimalism be great for leaders? Or for you, at work, and at home? And how can you apply it? But first, I want you to look at your current life, do you have a lot of stuff? Do you do a lot of things? Do you have a lot of work? A lot of activities? How is your life today compared to a minimalist? And how much stress does it bring you or how much joy does it bring, you know, you can apply minimalism as a leader and I wanted to tell you a little story about a multinational I work with, and in that multinational, they just had a new CEO, and that new CEO, he really wants to do a great job, he has had a lot of success in the past. And he sees that there are a lot of opportunities. And so he has all these ideas. And he then transformed these ideas into dues for his teams. And we should do this. And we should do that. And we should jump on this opportunity. And I want you to make a plan for this and present that to me. But the people in his organisation were already exhausted, especially during the corona crisis, where suddenly they had a lot of more stuff to do, and a lot of problems to solve just for the current business to keep that current business running. And then he comes with a lot of new opportunities. And the problem is that people then get more and more well, they didn't have enough time to do their normal work. And so people get stressed get burnouts. And DNS, you don't get great results. Because everything is on half, you try to jump on every opportunity. Everyone is running in all directions, a lot of projects are started, but never finished. And I believe in the end, it will only lead to bad results. And now I wanted to give the example of when I started. And when I became the CEO, in my previous organisation where we had a lot of things to do, people were really, really busy. And we just had a year where our revenues declined, and our profits declined. And we had to prepare for the digital transformation, because otherwise our market was going to be disrupted. And so I knew that I couldn't simply hire more people for all these opportunities, because we were declining in profit. And that would mean that we would decline even more. And I also knew that I couldn't give more to the people because they were already working more than they should. So instead, what I did is I decided to stop 70% of our products of our brands of our projects. And I applied, in fact, the Pareto rule, the 8020 rule, because those 70% projects, brands that I stopped, only accounted for 9% of our revenues, and 7% of our profits. And so by stopping these, and what I mean is by stopping is that we wouldn't do any activities on them anymore, we would let these things die by themselves. by stopping that, we immediately freed like 70% of the time also of everyone in the organisation that we could then spend

on the product brands projects that had a higher added value or that we're bringing more revenues. And when you increase a great product with 1%, it's probably better for the revenues and for the profit,

then when you increase a very small projects with 50%. And it's an it requires a lot less effort. And so by doing this by stopping 70% of those activities, we had more time to focus on really the big things. And we freed some times to prepare for the digital transformation. But also because of that we immediately saw an effect on our profit, that in year one increased already because those activities weren't really contributing a lot to the profits. And that is also what Steve Jobs did. When he came back to Apple. He stopped a lot Have the products that were there. And he focused. And we really focused on only a couple of things. And that is the key to the success today. If you want to jump on every opportunity out there, you will drawn, you will sink in all these opportunities. You have to learn to make choices, and say no to all the rest. Also, Warren Buffett, he's a very successful businessman. He says, highly successful people say no, to almost everything. And it's the same for Bill Gates one day, Bill Gates that invited Warren Buffett and Bill Gates and he asked them both one question, what is the one thing that contributed to both your successes, and they both had written down the same words, and that word was focus. So in a world where you have so many triggers, so much choice, so many opportunities, the winners will be the ones who focus and who say no to almost everything. And so that is why I believe we should apply minimalism at work, as well. But I also applied minimalism as a leader in my recurring costs, I'm really talking about my private costs. When I became a CO, I didn't upgrade my car. I didn't upgrade my house. I didn't subscribe to an expensive club. And I did that because I wanted to have minimalism in my recurring costs, so that I could be free to say no, because if you as a leader, you have a lot of costs, you have the big house, the big car, the club, and then you are afraid of saying no, because you want to apply minimalism at your work, you are afraid of saying no, because you could then get fired. And if you get fired, you won't be able to pay for all these things anymore, then you are not free. And so I bought my freedom by saying no, also, two big things that wouldn't really contribute to me being happier. So I didn't increase my recurring costs. Okay, I increased my holidays, I did some nicer stuff. But these things I could stop whenever I wanted. If I would get fired, and I had to look for another job. So becoming a minimalism at work might require from you to become a minimalism at home as well. minimalism will give you access to more freedom, and also less problems. And not only that, at a certain point at home, I was overwhelmed. I remember my children were very small. I was driving one day to work. And we had a lot of activities, all our weekends were fully packed. The children had a lot of activities, I had, of course, a lot of to dues at work. And I was there driving to work. And at a certain point, I don't know what happened to me, it was a Monday morning, I had to stop to pull over. And I started crying because it was all too much. I realised that I couldn't I couldn't continue like this, it was all too much. I had too much in my head I had and I didn't have any space anymore. And so

I drove back to my house, I stayed in my house for three days because I really needed to get my energy back. But I cancelled all the activities of my children, I cancelled a lot of things that I had in the weekends. And I changed my life because I realised I couldn't continue like this anymore. And you know what, I felt a little bit guilty because I cancelled a lot of activities for my children. And later, of course, more activities came back. But for instance, we decided that our eldest son would do some sports, but he wouldn't go to music school because it was all too much. But at that moment, I figured that it was more important for them and for the family, to have a mother that was happy and had energy, but no activities than to have an exhausted mother that would snap at everything, and would not be really present for my children. And so my eldest son who had a talent for music, and who wasn't going to any musical activity as a as a child, well, he found his way back to music by himself. When he

was 15 or 16, he started playing the piano at a friend's place. And we started buying one, he learned a piano with an iPad by himself. And now he also plays in a band, he sings, he plays the guitar. And so his passion came back to him at the end. But I believe what contributed to that is the fact that I'm happy, I'm present, we have a nice atmosphere in the house. And it's better I believe, than having parents that have at all, a lot of stuff, a lot of activities, but that also bring their stress at home. And that's not ideal for your children to develop themselves and to be happy, and to grow. So I believe that you should apply minimalism as a leader minimalism in your activities at home. And then there is, of course, also this trend of applying minimalism and unstuff in your life. And I love doing that as well. cleaning up your garage, looking at everything you have in your house and starting, giving things away or throwing things away. Because you want some space in your room as well. You want some space in your house, in your bedroom, in your office on your desk. So that's again, you have more space in your head. I believe that the more space you have around you, the more space you have in your head, for spontaneity for finding your energy, for looking at things to emerge for creativity, but also for analysing things. There are a lot of people No, they weren't, they weren't, they weren't. They weren't, they weren't. And they have no time to think no time to breathe, no time to be present for their loved ones. And that's why I believe you should apply minimalism, it will give you freedom, it will give you focus, it will give you impact. And it will also give you more happiness. So now how do you apply minimalism? Well just look at your life? What are what are all the things you do that you could stop? What are all the stuff you have that you can start giving away? And do that for your work for your home for your activities for your children's activities? Just look at everything. Look at what you really want from your life? And do you really need all that stuff? What I noticed is that when I was under high stress, I often compensated by buying stuff, you know, I went to the mall, and I bought some clothes.

And then for a little moment, I felt some relief, probably some dopamine that got released in my brain. But that was only for a little moment. Today, I'm happier. And what I noticed is that when you are happier, you need less stuff. But also the other way around. When you have less stuff, you are happier. Just look at your childhood. You didn't have all the things that you have today. But you probably were happy. Also because life was simpler. And you also have more freedom when you have less stuff around you. Because you have less work, less maintenance, less fear of losing all these things. So make a list for yourself of all the things you plan to stop and try to go from FOMO the fear of missing out to Jomo the joy of missing out on things. So I hope you enjoyed this episode. Just you can go to the show notes. If you want to read more. You can also leave me a review subscribe if you want more. But also subscribe if you want to build a meaningful life and a meaningful organisation. Yeah, you finished another episode of rebel leader with a hearts if you want more, go to rebelleaderwithaheart.com for show notes and past episodes. If you love the show, subscribe, leave a review and share it with a friend The more the merrier. Thanks for tuning in and have a great week you rebel leader with a heart