

Simple Things



The suns on my face and the forest green lace the river throws up its embrace
And the joy that flourished from those rivers I fished is something I'll always miss
And the summers out back near the old Miller's flat, the river a dangerous blue
My Mother got sick I never noticed one bit cause fishing was all that I knew

*I love these simple things, simple things
All of these simple things, these simple things now (Rpt)*

I walk through the forest on that green leafy carpet, stand in the midst of the calm
And I think to myself all the money I have, is not worth this moment in time
And the sun it breaks in to my kitchen in spring, yellow drug from the sky
And I'm sitting on back and just soaking it in, simple joy makes me so high

Chorus

I know this for sure that if I lose it all, and find myself without a home
The sun will still rise and my friends still surprise and joy have
more space than before
It's ironic I know but when we let go and face it all with a grin
Somehow we can find such great peace of mind that worry no longer gets in

Chorus

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How to play? Simple!
C, G, Am, F

Backstory

Simplicity is a good thing, uncluttering our minds and homes, allowing us space to experience the world around us

While we do need some stuff in our lives, more stuff does not mean more happiness

The research on this is very clear; just adding stuff to our lives will not increase our happiness. Buying stuff can be fun, and pleasurable, but that is because our brains produce a pulse of pleasure when we anticipate some new purchase! Yay!!

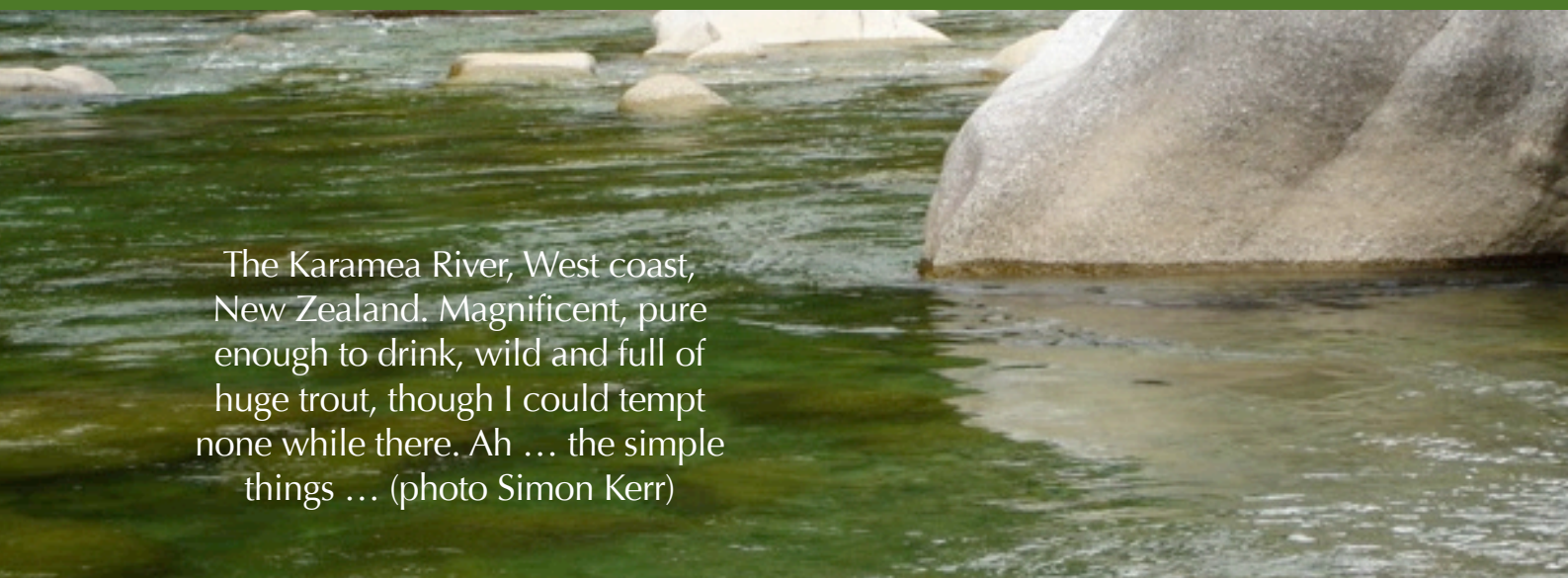
Its a cool evolutionary trick that was quite helpful in our development as a species, but ... it can also be mistaken for happiness itself. Yet that pleasure impulse is always impermanent and is not the source of happiness and wellbeing (see Stefan Klein, 2006, *The Science of Happiness*)

Many of us, including myself, have busy lives. Simple living is not shunning the challenges of modern life. But it is about staying grounded and connected to ourselves in the midst of action, what is often called mindfulness

We often talk of taking time to smell the roses on life's journey, but smelling roses is an art. Good art is developed through practice

Take joy in the simple things ... and what joy is to be found ...

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The Karamea River, West coast, New Zealand. Magnificent, pure enough to drink, wild and full of huge trout, though I could tempt none while there. Ah ... the simple things ... (photo Simon Kerr)

"The old Miller's flat" is a reference to a small settlement on the banks of the Clutha river, in Central Otago, New Zealand, settled in 1849 by Walter Miller, and hence the name. My uncle owned the camping ground and we spent several magnificent summers there

"The river a dangerous blue" refers to New Zealand's largest river, the Clutha, which because of the upstream dams, was always a menacing aqua colour as it raced at a blistering pace towards the next gorge. I fished its edges as a 12 year old and had nightmares about slipping into the torrent and disappearing

"I know this for sure that if I lose it all..." It apparently doesn't pay to say such things; that line is truer than I would have wished for But so is the next: *"The sun will still rise and my friends still surprise and joy has more space than before"*. I have discovered, over time, that happiness is usually only temporarily affected by things that go wrong. Cultivating positive response to life's challenges is never easy, but it does allow us to more quickly recover the joy in life that we lost

We did record drums for this track, twice, but in the end I felt the song deserved the simplicity of just a shaker and the rhythmic joy of the words

My beautiful singing group I attend, *Soulsong*, is a fun community of enthusiastic music lovers. We tried to record the group singing the chorus of this song. While proving too difficult technically, their love and joy of life is nevertheless reflected in the song. Aroha to Jenny, Mich, Sally, Richard, Mary, Marita, Linda, Katia ... and all the beautiful souls