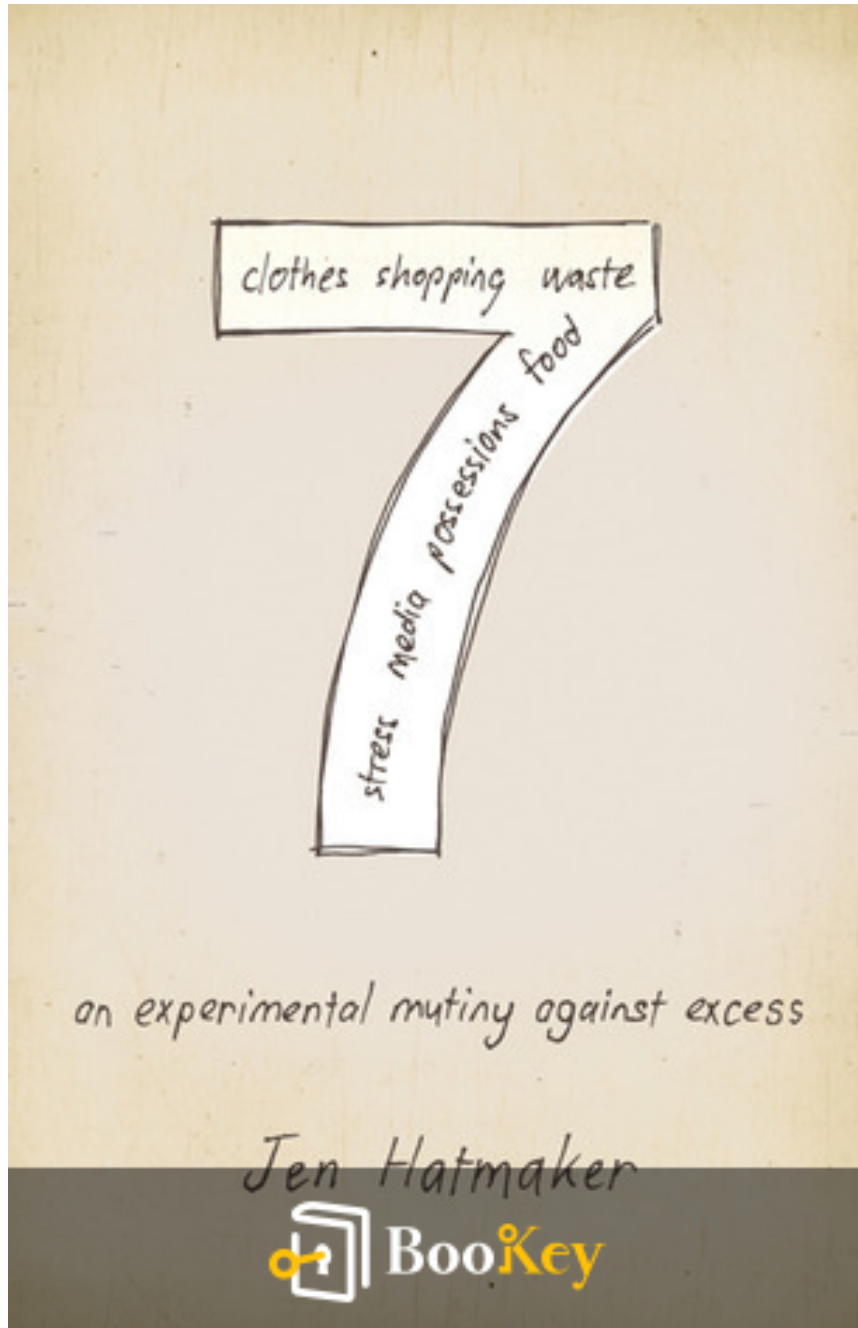


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Jen Hatmaker



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## 7 Summary

A Journey of Simplifying Life Through Seven Choices.

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## About the book

In "7: An Experimental Mutiny Against Excess," Jen Hatmaker invites readers on a transformative journey of radical simplicity, challenging us to confront the overwhelming consumption of modern life through a powerful experiment of limitation. With humor and heart, she undertakes a year-long challenge focused on seven key areas—food, clothing, spending, waste, media, possessions, and stress—demonstrating how stripping away excess can lead to a deeper connection with our values, our communities, and our Creator. Hatmaker's candid insights and relatable anecdotes inspire us to rethink what we truly need, urging us to embrace a lifestyle that celebrates gratitude over greed. Dive into this engaging narrative and discover how saying less can indeed lead to so much more.

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## About the author

Jen Hatmaker is a widely celebrated author, speaker, and social media personality known for her insightful and relatable perspectives on faith, family, and community. With a unique blend of humor and vulnerability, she writes compellingly about her experiences and challenges, resonating with a diverse audience. Best known for her impactful books, including "7: An Experimental Mutiny Against Excess," Jen encourages readers to examine their lives, embrace simplicity, and prioritize what truly matters. Her ability to foster connection and empathy shines through in her work, making her a beacon for those seeking to navigate the complexities of modern life with grace and authenticity.

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# Chapter 1 Summary: Month One: Food

In the first chapter of Jen Hatmaker's "7," the author embarks on a personal journey of simplicity by committing to consume only seven specific foods for a month. This experience stems from her deep love for food and the significant role it plays in her life as a source of joy and connection with family and friends. However, she recognizes the binding effects of excess and the need for a change, driven by the values of intentional living and spiritual clarity.

**1. Initial Food Selection:** Hatmaker humorously reflects on her initial indulgent choices, such as cheeseburgers and dark chocolate, before settling on a healthier selection of chicken, eggs, whole wheat bread, sweet potatoes, spinach, avocados, and apples. This decision is framed within a context of nutritious eating and ethical sourcing, emphasizing organic and humane food practices.

**2. A New Culinary Challenge:** With her chosen foods in mind, Hatmaker faces struggles during social outings and everyday meals. This leads to moments of temptation, frustration, and humor as she navigates her way through various food situations. Her honest reflections reveal an underlying conflict between her culinary passions and the rigid rules of her self-imposed diet.

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**3. Support System and Experimentation:** The experiment is supported by close friends, referred to as "The Council," who are also participating in different ways. They provide motivation and encouragement, even as some members choose to eat like the impoverished inhabitants of various nations for a limited time. This communal approach emphasizes the importance of solidarity, prayer, and education about global hunger issues.

**4. Awareness of Consumption and Waste:** As she adheres to her restricted diet, Hatmaker becomes increasingly aware of the enormity of consumer waste in her life, especially when witnessing her children discard perfectly good meals. This realization deepens her empathy towards those who suffer from food insecurity around the world, striking a chord with her desire to foster mindfulness about consumption.

**5. Spiritual Awakening:** Hatmaker's journey sparks spiritual reflections as she grapples with the discomfort of limitation. She recognizes fasting not only as a rejection of excess but also as an opportunity for deeper connection with God. The process urges her to confront her attachments to material and social norms and to acknowledge her spiritual hunger for more profound truths.

**6. Transformative Experience and Community Insights:** Throughout the month, she experiences physical changes as well, such as increased energy and improved wellbeing from eating whole foods. The reduction in choices

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leads to more meaningful meals with her family, fostering discussions about values and lifestyle. The participation from her friends reveals a shared journey towards finding clarity and simplicity in their lives amidst contemporary consumerism.

**7. Conclusion and Reflection:** Ultimately, Hatmaker emerges from her experience with a refreshed sense of purpose and understanding of what truly matters in her life—community, faith, and living in accordance with her beliefs. The chapter highlights her commitment to continuous growth and adaptation, preparing her for the months that follow as she endeavors to simplify various aspects of her life beyond just food.

Throughout the chapter, Hatmaker's love for food contrasts with her newfound understanding of its impacts on her health, lifestyle, and spiritual journey, making it a rich narrative of personal transformation within a broader social context.

Key Topics	Summary
Initial Food Selection	Hatmaker humorously reflects on her indulgent choices before settling on a healthier selection of seven specific foods, focusing on nutritious eating and ethical sourcing.
A New Culinary Challenge	She faces struggles with social outings and temptation, revealing her conflict between culinary passions and the rules of her self-imposed diet.
Support System	Hatmaker's experiment is supported by friends who provide

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Key Topics	Summary
and Experimentation	motivation; they explore different diets linked to global hunger, emphasizing solidarity and education.
Awareness of Consumption and Waste	Adhering to her diet heightens her awareness of consumer waste and deepens her empathy towards food insecurity, encouraging mindfulness in consumption.
Spiritual Awakening	Hatmaker's limitations spark spiritual reflections, leading her to confront attachments to materialism and seeking deeper truths through fasting.
Transformative Experience and Community Insights	The month brings physical and emotional improvements, meaningful family meals, and shared journeys among friends towards clarity amidst consumerism.
Conclusion and Reflection	Hatmaker concludes with a renewed sense of purpose, emphasizing community, faith, and continuous growth beyond food simplification.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Awareness of Consumption and Waste

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine the moment you pause, noticing how much food is tossed aside, remnants of meals unfinished, while others around the world go hungry. This stark reality could ignite a fire within you, prompting a shift in perspective as you begin to prioritize mindfulness over mindless consumption. As you reflect on your own habits, you might find yourself more intentional in every bite you take, cherishing not just the flavors but the significance of nourishment. Each meal becomes a moment of gratitude, an opportunity to forge connections with others, and a chance to stand in solidarity with those who lack the basics. This transformation encourages you to live with purpose, deeply engaging with your community and the global issues around food waste and insecurity, ultimately enriching your spiritual and personal growth.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: Month Two: Clothes

In Chapter 2 of "7" by Jen Hatmaker, the focus is on the theme of clothing, as she embarks on a journey to simplify her wardrobe and reflect on its broader implications. Jen begins by acknowledging her relaxed attitude towards clothing, recounting how she's allowed her children to wear whatever they choose, dismissing the societal pressure of fashionable appearances. However, upon examining her family's collective wardrobe, she is confronted with the reality of their excessive spending on clothes, particularly her own 327 clothing items. This revelation prompts her to radically reduce her wardrobe to just seven items for the month, a decision influenced by the desire to address overindulgence and extravagance.

**1. Budgeting Consciousness:** Jen recognizes that her casual stance on clothing masks a deeper issue—spending habits that don't align with her values, especially in contrast to global poverty. She calculates that her clothing expenses could support a family in Ethiopia for years, provoking guilt and a wish to rethink her consumer choices.

**2. The Challenge of Limitations:** Beginning Month Two, she's faced with the practicalities of her clothing restrictions, especially as she juggles different "fashion lives"—one casual and another for professional speaking engagements. Through humorous anecdotes, like wearing her children's clothes or improvising during unexpected cold weather, she highlights the



absurdity and challenges of adhering to her new limits.

**3. Community and Support:** Encouraged by a group referred to as The Council, Jen shares the experiences of friends who are also participating in their own versions of her clothing simplicity challenge. They explore various additional ideas, from swapping clothes with others to wearing handmade items, underscoring the importance of community in this journey.

**4. Authenticity Over Appearance:** Throughout her experience, Jen discovers that her fears about being judged for her simplicity are unfounded as she realizes that most people are focused on their own lives and not her wardrobe. This introspection leads her to recognize the freedom that comes with shedding material concerns and embracing a more authentic self.

**5. Social Responsibility:** As the month progresses, Jen reflects on the social implications of her consumer habits, grappling with the ethical considerations of fast fashion and its effects on global inequality. She urges readers to redefine what is necessary in their own lives, particularly when juxtaposed against the suffering of others.

**6. Personal Transformation:** By the end of the month, Jen feels liberated by the constraints she initially perceived as burdensome. She appreciates the simplicity and ease of her newfound wardrobe, and she becomes more aware of the superficial nature of societal expectations surrounding clothing and

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appearance. This improved self-awareness invites her to think critically about her life choices and their alignment with her values.

**7. Tying it All Together.** Jen concludes with a broader theological perspective, relating her journey of reduction in clothing to the life of Jesus, who embraced humility and authenticity over material wealth. She emphasizes the importance of living for others and paying attention to social justice, rather than succumbing to societal pressures of appearance.

Throughout Chapter 2, Jen Hatmaker crafts a narrative filled with humor and insight as she navigates her clothing experiment, drawing connections to larger themes of consumerism, authenticity, and the responsibility one holds towards others in a global context. Her experiences encourage readers to mindfully assess their own lifestyles and choices in the pursuit of a life anchored in deeper values.

Theme	Description
Budgeting Consciousness	Jen realizes her casual approach to clothing conceals deeper spending issues; reflects on how her clothing expenses could help people in poverty.
The Challenge of Limitations	Confronts logistical challenges of a simplified wardrobe; shares humorous anecdotes about adapting to new limitations.
Community and Support	Inspired by friends participating in similar challenges, explores clothing swaps and handmade items, emphasizing community importance.

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Theme	Description
Authenticity Over Appearance	Realizes fears of judgment are unfounded; gains freedom from material concerns, leading to greater self-authenticity.
Social Responsibility	Reflects on ethical implications of fast fashion; urges readers to redefine necessities against global suffering.
Personal Transformation	Finds liberation in wardrobe constraints, increases awareness of societal expectations and their superficial nature.
Tying it All Together	Concludes with a theological perspective, linking clothing reduction to Jesus' humility, calling for focus on social justice.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The Challenge of Limitations

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine yourself standing before an overflowing closet, a mix of colors and styles vying for your attention. As you reflect on your own clothing choices, consider the liberating challenge of paring down your wardrobe. What if, like Jen, you took the leap to limit your options to just a handful of items? Embracing such limitations could free you from the constant pressure to keep up with fashion trends and societal expectations. Instead of feeling constrained, you might discover a new sense of creativity in how you mix and match your outfits, finding joy in simplicity. Picture how this mindful approach can not only declutter your space but also your mind, letting you focus on what truly matters—authenticity, comfort, and even the joy that comes from giving back to those in need. Through this lens, the challenge of limitations can transform from a burdensome task into an empowering journey of self-discovery and social awareness.

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## Chapter 3: Month Three: Possessions

In the third month of her journey, Jen Hatmaker confronts the overwhelming clutter that has accumulated in her life. She details her home, filled with numerous closets, cabinets, and storage solutions, all bursting with possessions. The realization dawns on her that she is a participant in this cycle of excessive consumerism, consistently purchasing more than she truly needs. Hatmaker vows to change her relationship with material goods, setting the ambitious goal of giving away seven items each day for a month, amounting to 210 possessions. This initiative is part of what she refers to as “Simple & Free,” a movement to restore balance and purpose in her life and the lives of others.

1. **Acknowledgment of Excess:** Hatmaker describes her home as a cavernous space, filled to the brim with possessions, leading to feelings of frustration and a hint of shame. She realizes that her stress and discontent stem from her own choices and compulsive shopping habits rather than external pressures.

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## Chapter 4 Summary: Month Four: Media

In this chapter on media, Jen Hatmaker recounts her family's experiment with drastically reducing their media consumption over the course of a month. The observation begins with a light-hearted conversation among her children, revealing their misunderstandings about celebrities and the culture of modern media. Hatmaker reflects on how the amount of screen time in households has exploded, leading to a sense of addiction and disconnection within her family dynamics. At the heart of this self-imposed media fast is a desire to reclaim space for human interaction, creativity, and genuine living.

**1. The Media Overload:** Hatmaker discusses the overwhelming presence of media in modern life, from countless TV channels and gaming consoles to social media and the internet. She notes how these screens have come to dominate their daily routines, eroding the quality of family time and limiting real-life interactions. Despite recognizing this issue, the shift to a screen-dependent lifestyle happened gradually, leading to feelings of regret and a call for change.

**2. Going Radio Silent:** To combat this, the family decides to go "radio silent," disconnecting from various forms of media for a month. This includes a complete break from TV, gaming, social media, and texting, with only essential internet use allowed. The rules for texting are nuanced, permitting it only when it's constructive rather than frivolous. The initial

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reactions from family members range from resistance and disbelief to curiosity.

**3. Initial Challenges:** The start of the media fast is met with complaints, especially from Hatmaker's husband, Brandon, who relies on media for his sports news and entertainment. However, as the days pass, the family starts to adapt, engaging in more physical activities, cooking together, and participating in crafts, rediscovering joy in simple tasks that had been overshadowed by screens.

**4. Navigating Tension:** As the family faces inevitable tensions and conflicts in the absence of media distractions, Hatmaker emphasizes the importance of addressing relational issues rather than avoiding them. She refuses to resort to screens as a means to pacify disputes, fostering more profound interactions among her kids. This shift allows them to develop conflict resolution skills and learn to communicate better.

**5. Reclaiming Time:** Hatmaker identifies specific times in her daily routine that were previously occupied by media, reflecting on how those habits influenced her productivity and focus. With media consumption reduced, she finds herself with more time to reflect, connect with God, and be present in her children's lives.

**6. Spiritual Awareness:** The chapter highlights a personal spiritual

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journey that emerges during the fast. Hatmaker awakens to the possibility of deepened communion with God, outside of structured Bible study. The absence of media allows her to connect with her faith in a more relaxed and personal manner, cultivating a daily relationship rather than ritualistic practices.

**7. New Perspectives:** As the month progresses, Hatmaker recognizes the clarity that comes from disengaging from media. The family's sense of normalcy shifts from the chaos of constant notifications to a calmer environment where creativity thrives. They engage in new activities like cooking, crafting, and spending time outdoors, all of which enhance their familial bonds and create lasting memories.

**8. Lessons Learned:** At the conclusion of the month, Hatmaker reflects on how the experience reshaped her understanding of time, productivity, and relationships. The media fast prompts significant lessons about boundaries with technology and the deep-seated habits tied to media consumption. She advocates for finding a balance in engaging with the digital world while prioritizing genuine human connections.

**9. Cautionary Reflection:** Hatmaker cautions against the continuing allure of media in today's society, acknowledging that while media can enrich life, excessive consumption can become detrimental. She emphasizes that within their fast, they found not just freedom from screens, but also a

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clearer sense of what enriches their lives—personal interaction, creativity, and spiritual reflection.

Through this exploration, Hatmaker challenges readers to evaluate their media consumption and consider how disconnecting from screens might enhance their own lives and relationships, paving the way for a more intentional and connected family life.

Section	Summary
The Media Overload	Hatmaker describes the overwhelming presence of media in daily life, noting its impact on family interactions and the gradual shift to a screen-dependent lifestyle, leading to regrets and a call for change.
Going Radio Silent	The family decides to disconnect from media for a month, allowing only essential internet use, which meets with mixed reactions among family members ranging from resistance to curiosity.
Initial Challenges	The media fast begins with complaints, particularly from Hatmaker's husband. However, as it progresses, the family engages in physical activities and reconnects through cooking and crafts.
Navigating Tension	Hatmaker emphasizes addressing relational issues without media distractions, fostering better communication and conflict resolution skills among family members.
Reclaiming Time	With reduced media consumption, Hatmaker finds more time for reflection, connection with God, and being present in her children's lives.
Spiritual Awareness	The fast promotes a personal spiritual journey, allowing Hatmaker to connect with her faith more deeply, prioritizing relationship over ritual.
New Perspectives	The absence of media leads to a calmer environment and renewed creativity, enhancing family bonds through new activities like cooking

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Section	Summary
	and outdoor time.
Lessons Learned	Hatmaker reflects on lessons about time, productivity, and the need for boundaries with technology while promoting genuine human connections.
Cautionary Reflection	Hatmaker warns against media's allure, recognizing its potential detriment and emphasizing the benefits of personal interaction and creativity discovered during the fast.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** The Media Overload

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine looking around your home and realizing how screens dominate your daily life. Jen Hatmaker's experience peeling back the layers of media is an invitation for you to examine your own routines. By joining her in this critical reflection, you may find the courage to step away from the noise and reconnect with what truly matters—your family and your creativity. Picture the transformation as you embark on a 'media fast,' reclaiming precious moments that are all too often consumed by notifications and scrolling. In that sacred space, you can rediscover laughter shared over board games, deep conversations at the dinner table, or simply the joy of being present in your life. Embrace this opportunity to cultivate a deeper connection, not only with those you love, but also within yourself, fostering an environment where relationships can thrive free from the shadows of screens.

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## Chapter 5 Summary: Month Five: Waste

In the fifth month of a transformative journey titled "Waste," Jen Hatmaker reflects on her evolving relationship with the environment and her personal consumption habits within the vibrant city of Austin, known for its eccentricities and dedication to sustainability.

Hatmaker starts by sharing her initial apathy toward environmental issues and consumerism, realizing that her beliefs were significantly influenced by mainstream evangelical culture which often overlooks the spiritual responsibility of caring for the earth. This month, she embarks on a commitment to adopt seven green habits that promise to reshape her understanding of consumption and stewardship of the planet. Her journey begins with gardening, composting, conserving resources, recycling diligently, and supporting local businesses which are all essential components toward nurturing the earth for future generations.

1. **Gardening:** Hatmaker demonstrates a novice yet earnest attempt at gardening, acknowledging her previous ignorance of plant care. Inspired by a community initiative called the KarpophoreM Project formerly homeless by enabling them to cultivate gardens, she plants a variety of vegetables, all while grappling with her self-doubt in her gardening abilities. This partnership leads to the creation of not just a garden, but a community where relationships blossom alongside vegetables.

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2. **Composting:** Attempting to create an efficient composting system, Hatmaker encounters challenges that expose her inexperience. Despite the difficulties, she embraces the learning process, emphasizing the importance of repurposing organic waste to benefit the garden she has committed to.

3. **Conserving Resources:** Dedicated to conserving energy and water, Hatmaker evaluates her family's reliance on two vehicles and decides to limit themselves to one car. Initially faced with logistical challenges, particularly during busy summer months, she grapples with balancing her needs and those of her children. This experiment pushes her to reconsider how to harmonize her daily activities with environmental consciousness.

4. **Recycling:** By actively engaging in recycling more than ever before, Hatmaker finds that her family's garbage output has dramatically decreased. Her new obsession with recycling leads to a newfound awareness of waste production on a national scale and the importance of reducing consumption. She learns that genuine sustainability goes beyond recycling—emphasizing the need to avoid waste at the source.

5. **Shopping Thrift and Secondhand:** Experiencing the world of thrift shopping, Hatmaker discovers a way to buy necessities without contributing to new waste and enthusiastically shares her finds. Her initial dread of thrifting transforms into an enjoyable exploration, promoting the idea of

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reusing items rather than always purchasing new.

**6. Buying Local:** As a food lover in culinary-rich Austin, Hatmaker relishes the opportunity to support local farmers and businesses. The experience of shopping at farmers' markets not only enhances her culinary experiences but fuels her commitment to driving less and consuming products that are produced in her own community.

Through this four-week endeavor, Hatmaker finds herself constantly reevaluating her prior consumption habits. As she navigates her thoughts about food, clothing, and essential purchases, she engages with competing internal dialogues that prioritize either convenience or sustainability.

Finally, Hatmaker firmly believes that the act of caring for the earth is a reflection of faith and stewardship. By connecting the environmental mission with her theological beliefs, she recognizes that God's creation warrants respect and care. The pursuit of living sustainably is framed as both a personal and collective responsibility for future generations, urging readers to reflect on their roles as caretakers of the planet.

By the conclusion of Month Five, Hatmaker models a lifestyle transition that promotes environmental awareness as integral rather than optional in her faith journey. Her recommitment to “doing the right thing” encapsulates the essence of creating a legacy of stewardship that showcases care not just for

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individual wellness, but for the global community and the earth as a whole.

Theme	Description
Introduction	Jen Hatmaker reflects on her consumption habits and environmental relationship in Austin amid a commitment to adopt seven green habits.
Initial Attitude	Hatmaker's initial apathy towards environmental issues influenced by evangelical culture, realizing spiritual responsibility for caring for the earth.
Gardening	Begins gardening through the KarpophoreM Project self-doubt and building community while learning about plant care.
Composting	Faces challenges in creating a composting system but embraces the learning journey and importance of repurposing organic waste.
Conserving Resources	Reduces family reliance on cars, encounters logistical challenges, and strives to balance family needs with environmental consciousness.
Recycling	Increases recycling efforts, reduces garbage output, and gains awareness about national waste production and the importance of reducing consumption.
Shopping Thrift and Secondhand	Discovers thrift shopping as a sustainable way to buy necessities, transforming fear into enjoyment while promoting reuse.
Buying Local	Enjoys supporting local farmers in Austin, enhancing culinary experiences while committing to consume local products and reduce driving.
Reflection and Reevaluation	Constantly reevaluates her consumption habits, balancing convenience with sustainability, and engages in internal dialogues.
Faith Connection	Believes caring for the earth reflects faith and stewardship, linking environmental action with theological beliefs.

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Theme	Description
Conclusion	Models a lifestyle transition promoting environmental awareness as integral to faith, urging collective responsibility for future generations.

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## Critical Thinking

**Key Point:** Embrace Gardening as a Community Building Exercise

**Critical Interpretation:** Imagine stepping into your own backyard and feeling the rich soil between your fingers, planting not just seeds but also the very essence of community. This journey into gardening can inspire you to look beyond the simplistic act of nurturing plants; it's about fostering relationships, creating connections with your neighbors, and contributing to a shared purpose. Just as Jen Hatmaker discovered through her novice gardening struggles, you may find that engaging in this act invites collective effort and support. By cultivating a garden, you cultivate not only your environment but also a sense of belonging and responsibility towards the earth and each other. It becomes a beautiful metaphor for life, reminding you that when you care for the earth, you are also caring for your community and paving the way for future generations.

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## Chapter 6: Month Six: Spending

In this poignant exploration of spending within the framework of faith and responsibility, the author recounts a transformative month devoted to reexamining consumption patterns. Initially reflecting on a past riddled with financial struggle, the author highlights a significant shift from extreme poverty to a state of careless indulgence, pointing to the staggering realization that their family spends money in sixty-six different ways monthly. This realization catalyzes a deeper introspection about consumerism, stewardship, and the social responsibility encapsulated in a faith-driven life.

1. The Awakening to Consumerism: Through the lens of her family's financial journey—transitioning from a hand-to-mouth existence to a life filled with excess—the author notes how consumer habits become ingrained in society, making indulgence seem standard and justified. Acknowledging the discomfort of a spending cutback, she admits to grappling with a society that promotes accumulation over modest living.

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## Chapter 7 Summary: Month Seven: Stress

In Chapter 7 of Jen Hatmaker's "7", the author reflects on the overwhelming stress caused by a hectic lifestyle filled with numerous activities, responsibilities, and societal expectations. This chapter serves as a critical observation of the relentless pace of contemporary life and the necessity for rest, particularly through the practice of the Sabbath.

1. Hatmaker begins by documenting an exhaustive list of commitments, showcasing the many demands placed on her family. From conferences to meals, sports events to family responsibilities, the calendar is filled, leaving little room for personal reflection or connection. Despite the busyness, she recognizes that something significant is missing—an opportunity to be present in the moment and enjoy life fully with her family.
2. The author confronts the cultural norm of constant busyness, realizing that many of her friends face similar struggles. They habitually overcommit, thereby teaching their children the wrong legacy of stress and rushing through life. This prompts Hatmaker to consider the biblical concept of rest and the importance of observing the Sabbath, traditionally a day set apart for rest in the Christian faith.
3. Through scriptural citations, Hatmaker reveals her previous disdain for the Sabbath, seeing it as an outdated concept. Yet she acknowledges that

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God instituted the Sabbath as a gift to humans—an essential pause from work to rejuvenate and nourish the spirit. In contrast to a burden, the Sabbath should bring relief and connection to God and each other.

4. In this month of pursuing rest, Hatmaker introduces the idea of "Seven Sacred Pauses," a daily practice of structured prayer throughout the day. Each pause serves a unique purpose, from the "Night Watch" for intercession to the "Awakening Hour" for gratitude. By dedicating specific times to reconnect with God, she believes this structured rhythm can provide balance and refocus the mind and spirit amid a chaotic life.

5. As the Hatmaker family begins to implement these pauses and heartfelt prayers into their daily routine, they find moments of connection and awareness that had been previously overshadowed by their busyness. Hatmaker also emphasizes the importance of community support in this endeavor, sharing her struggles and triumphs with friends who join her in prayer.

6. Through patience and persistence, the practice evolves and begins to impart grace. Hatmaker discovers the profound impact of honoring the Sabbath, going from a chaotic Saturday evening to a restorative and sacred Sunday filled with meaningful family rituals and connection.

7. The chapter culminates in celebrating the virtues of simplicity,

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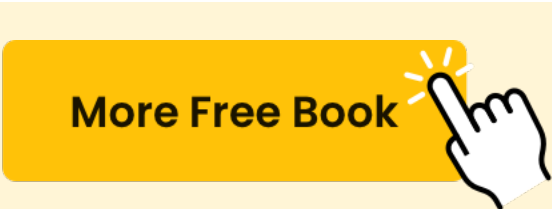


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spirituality, and gratitude. Hatmaker reflects on the lessons learned during this month, noting the importance of intentional boundaries and mindful living. She acknowledges her desire to merge the beauty of a slower, simpler life with the practicalities of family and community obligations.

8. Overall, Hatmaker emphasizes that practicing Sabbath and intentional pauses is not only a biblical command but also a necessity for spiritual wellness in modern society. Recognizing the barriers and misconceptions around rest, she encourages readers to embrace these practices as a transformative pathway to finding peace amid life's demands, reinforcing the timeless nature of divine wisdom in navigating contemporary challenges.

Key Themes	Description
Overwhelming Stress	Hatmaker describes the stress from a busy lifestyle filled with commitments, leaving little time for personal connection.
Cultural Norms	She confronts societal pressures of constant busyness, recognizing the negative legacy it creates for children.
Importance of Sabbath	Hatmaker explores the biblical concept of the Sabbath as essential for rest and rejuvenation, reframing it from a burden to a gift.
Seven Sacred Pauses	Introduces structured daily prayers to reconnect with God amidst chaos, promoting a balanced rhythm of life.
Community Support	Emphasizes the role of community in practicing intentional pauses and shared prayer.
Transformative Impact	Details how honoring the Sabbath leads to meaningful family connections and a shift from chaos to restoration.



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Key Themes	Description
Lessons Learned	Highlights the value of simplicity, spirituality, and gratitude through intentional living and boundaries.
Modern Necessity	Encourages embracing Sabbath practices as a necessary pathway for spiritual wellness in today's fast-paced world.

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## Chapter 8 Summary: Conclusion

In the conclusion of Chapter 8 from Jen Hatmaker's "7," the author reflects on the profound transformations stemming from her Simple & Free experiment. This undertaking has significantly reshaped her life, leading her to re-evaluate her thoughts and priorities. She grapples with an abundance of ideas, including community development and the three Rs: relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution. Hatmaker emphasizes the myriad lessons learned, including insights into economics, sustainable practices, and a deepening understanding of faith's role in addressing societal issues. The experience has catalyzed a shift in her appetites, moving her away from consumerism toward a more thoughtful existence.

1. **Transitioning Mindsets:** Despite readers' anticipation for a dramatic ending—perhaps a radical lifestyle change or public persona—Hatmaker candidly admits that her family's journey is ongoing and undefined. Rather than achieving a finish line, this exploration has been akin to necessary preparatory work before making more significant life changes. The process has allowed them to let go of excess and face deeper issues.

2. **Personal Paths to Holistic Change:** Recognizing that each person's journey is unique, Hatmaker stresses that there is no universal template for change. Each individual's context—geographical, socioeconomic, and spiritual—shapes their path. She offers essential principles as guiding truths:

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the importance of loving God and others, caring for the poor, and recognizing the destructive power of materialism. These core tenets encourage readers to examine their lifestyles in light of faith.

**3. Fasting and Transformation:** Hatmaker recounts a recent fasting experience that reaffirms the changes in her own heart. This practice serves as a discipline that fosters mastery over desires and impulses, indicating that true transformation goes beyond habits to the core of one's being. The discipline of fasting shapes character, emphasizing the importance of intentionality in spiritual growth.

**4. Identifying the Audience:** Hatmaker appears to target middle- and upper-middle-class families who may feel tension between their comfortable lives and awareness of global suffering. She empathetically addresses their struggles with guilt and the dissonance of living in relative luxury while others face dire circumstances. Importantly, she reassures them that the journey to reconciliation with these realities does not have to be fraught with self-condemnation.

**5. A Call to Action:** Rather than being mired in guilt, Hatmaker encourages readers to engage with their faith actively. The church is depicted as an awakening entity, rallying together to confront injustice and promote healing. She inspires individuals to take baby steps toward change, emphasizing that God calls each person to their unique role in seeking

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justice and restoration, thus fostering a sense of belonging in the grand narrative of faith.

**6. Reflections on Growth Over Time:** A decade after initiating the Simple & Free journey, Hatmaker reflects on her earlier misconceptions rooted in privilege. She acknowledges the need for accountability and humility as her understanding of justice and advocacy evolved through exposure to diverse perspectives and social justice movements. This journey underscores that the principles taught during Simple & Free remain relevant as they continue to inspire her advocacy against injustice.

Through these experiences, Hatmaker concludes with a reminder that life is fleeting, and the imperative is clear: to construct a more equitable world by challenging systemic oppression while recognizing the sacredness of each person's role in that endeavor. Rather than merely existing, she calls for active participation in creating change, reinforcing that what truly matters is how we engage with love, justice, and community.

Key Themes	Description
Transitioning Mindsets	Hatmaker discusses her ongoing journey of transformation, emphasizing that life changes are preparatory rather than definitive.
Personal Paths to Holistic Change	Each individual's journey is unique, shaped by personal circumstances; core principles include loving God, caring for the poor, and resisting materialism.

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Key Themes	Description
Fasting and Transformation	Fasting serves as a discipline for self-mastery and spiritual growth, affecting deeper personal changes beyond mere habits.
Identifying the Audience	Hatmaker addresses middle- and upper-middle-class families navigating guilt about their comforts amidst global suffering.
A Call to Action	Encourages active engagement with faith and justice, promoting participation in creating change without guilt.
Reflections on Growth Over Time	After a decade, Hatmaker reflects on her growth and accountability regarding justice and advocacy, emphasizing ongoing relevance of the Simple & Free principles.
Conclusion	Hatmaker concludes that life is fleeting and emphasizes the importance of creating an equitable world through love, justice, and community engagement.

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