

PRESENTATION OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION - THE CONTEXT	p 2
1 / First observations	p 2
2/ Consequences	p 2
a) environmental consequences	p 2
b) consequences for society	p 3
c) consequences for individuals	p 3
DEFINITION OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 4
ORIGIN OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 4
THE MOVEMENT OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 4
REASONS TO JOIN VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 5
CHANGES INVOLVED BY VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 5
Material simplicity - consumption and alternative activities	p 5
Local and human scale	p 6
Independence - autonomy - self-determination - self-sufficiency	p 6
Exchanges	p 7
Ecological consciousness	p 7
Citizen consciousness	p 7
Personal evolution	p 7
Spiritual opening	p 7
Radiance	p 8
CHARACTERISTICS OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY	p 8
Voluntary simplicity is a choice	p 8
Voluntary simplicity is a path	p 8
Voluntary simplicity is not	p 8
Obstacles to voluntary simplicity	p 9
VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY AT THE COLLECTIVE LEVEL	p 10
Reference texts:	p 10

PRESENTATION OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

Rem : this text has been written in 2006 in French, and translated in English in 2018. Though the content of it is still not obsolete. In addition, the references are sometimes oriented on the French speaking countries and some data have probably evolved. A simple look in the internet can help to find references in your area or in your language.

INTRODUCTION - THE CONTEXT

1 / First observations

Our society is governed by laws that are not written in any penal code, but which all citizens follow with greater obedience than laws that have coercive power. One of the main but not stated rules is:

"What matters is to own, what matters is to consume."

Advertising and the mass media will, through their propaganda, manipulation, create needs to dangle the illusion of happiness.

The political world supports this trend through the continuous search for "economic growth". And each one tries to work more and more so that he can earn ever more, even to the point of getting overwhelmed and losing his health or life.

As a citizen, as an individual, we have a responsibility in this system. 20% of the world's population (mainly in Western countries) consume more than 80% of the world's wealth. The other 80% of the population must therefore "make do with" the remaining 20%.

According to the concept of ecological footprint, most of us are consuming, as if we had 3 to 5 Earth planets at our disposal. This is not the case, however, and we are now sawing the branch on which we are sitting.

2/ Consequences

This planetary situation will lead to consequences as well on the environment , on society, than on the individuals.

a) environmental consequences

- Since planetary resources are limited, they are not available profusely. Yet it is as such that they are considered, and hence looted. The example of oil is the most convincing. In the coming years, we will reach a global production capacity below the ever-growing demand (especially in China and India and in so-called "emerging" countries).
- We always produce more waste. This ranges from the incineration of our detritus (CO2 production) to the spreading of manure, pesticides and chemical fertilizers on agricultural land, which pollute groundwater with nitrates. There is also our non-recyclable nuclear waste for tens of thousands of years that are abandoned in the ocean or buried in the ground.
- In addition to nitrates in water, there are all other pollutions: air, mainly with CO2 (produced by the combustion of oil via means of transport, our heating and industry), water and soil, related to our human activity, our overindustrialization and our lack of concern. We are witnessing the warming of our climate, the consequences of which will surprise us more and more: desertification / famines / floods / hurricanes and other extreme phenomena.
- The release of GMOs into the wild is also likely to confront us with unmanageable situations that have not been foreseen in the (profitable) projects in the short term.
- Climate change, massive deforestation, as well as intensive agriculture, that is, human grip in all areas, also causes a decrease in biodiversity. Hundreds of thousands of species have

already disappeared, and many more are in the process of being.

- Plastic released in the oceans can in short term condemn all form of life in them.

The development of human activity, can not go on in its present form without facing ever greater disasters. And remember that all this benefits only 20% of the world population, the other 80% suffering dramatically the consequences of this.

b) consequences for society

- This situation also results in economic and social inequalities, on the one hand, between North and South, and on the other hand between social classes. The rich become richer, the poor become poorer. Between 18 and 20 million people still die of hunger and malnutrition each year. Surviving populations often don't have access to clean water, health care, education and decent housing.
- The struggle for profit and for natural resources makes the balance between the world powers fragile. Many countries live in war or at the threat of war. And injustices are conducive to creating the breeding ground for extremism and terrorism.
- On the other hand, our societies based on the excessive development of technology, are vulnerable by their complexity and the interdependence of these developments at the global level.
- The quality of work is also a victim of the race for profit. A scarcity being maintained, it allows to exploit more workers, it stimulates underemployment. In addition, the division of labor and the ever-increasing specialization generates a loss of meaning among workers.

c) consequences for individuals

Obedience to the order to consume, continual submission to the manipulation of advertising and media propaganda generates the alienation of the citizen. There is an effect of sedating the consciousness to which corresponds his passivity and his acceptance of the situation, with very often also a feeling of helplessness.

- Each individual lives in a continual "need for money" that will lead him to agree to work ever more, to the detriment of the rest: family, affective life, social commitment, health, as well as community life. The stress of this situation is omnipresent, and it may involve a loss of meaning.
- Consumer addiction leads to an escalation of it. Many identify with persons, brands, fashions, and, in parallel, live the frustration of never being able to really look like them. It is the phenomenon of the poverty of abundance: we consume to be happy, but consuming does not make us happy. The commercialization of everything leads to a false respect of the values; the true values (not marketable) being discredited.
- False needs are created from scratch. The tradesmen do not hesitate to appeal to the drives of the customer, in order to satisfy them right away. Some do not hesitate to provoke an exacerbation of sexuality. And the customer is kept in frustration because these needs are not real.
- As consumption is presumed to meet all our needs, the "everyman for himself" becomes the rule and individualism prevails over solidarity.

This is not inevitable

Outside the political and counter-political sphere (activism and anarchism), there are solutions,

- at the national and international levels via alternative organizations,
- at a more regional level via local communities,
- and finally, on an individual level, and also local, the voluntary simplicity, makes it possible to free oneself from the system by acting in one's daily life. This can be done with others and can spread around.

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

Voluntary simplicity is a personal choice that consists of orienting our life

towards a material, intellectual, psychological and spiritual life

which is closer to our real needs and our real values,

for ourselves, for others, and for the planet.

Everyone who walks in this direction does it in his own way, at his own pace, choosing certain priorities over others, it belongs to him-her. If the choice is personal and the action that results is a priori individual, they stimulate solidarity, exchanges, generosity, friendliness.

ORIGIN OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

The term "voluntary simplicity" was first used in 1936 by Richard Gregg (USA)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Gregg_%28social_philosopher%29 .

However it has taken until the 1970s to make the concept known. Indeed it was at this time that Duane Elgin (USA) wrote an important article on the subject. It has been reissued on an American simplicity website simpleliving.net, which now no longer exists.

This text is partly inspired from it. In 1981, Duane Elgin published a book on voluntary simplicity.

In 1985, Serge Mongeau, a Quebec doctor, published (in French) the book "La Simplicité Volontaire". This book has been supplemented and republished (in French) in 1998 "La Simplicité Volontaire, ... plus que jamais" still available today at EcoSociété Publishers.

There are other persons who can be considered as examples : as Thoreau, Gandhi and Schumacher (author of the book "Small is beautiful" 1973) who, if they did not use the expression, or did not make part of the movement as such, have led their life totally according to the values of voluntary simplicity.

THE MOVEMENT OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

We can not really speak of a movement of voluntary simplicity, in the sense that most people practicing voluntary simplicity are not necessarily members of an organization or network. Some may even ignore the expression, living it simply out of personal conviction, without being influenced in any way by texts, or people on the subject.

Everyone walks freely on this path, and it is not necessary to identify with this concept to live it.

However, the number of people involved in the USA and in Quebec is currently estimated at 12-15%. (Rem : the text was written in 2006, so this number may have increased a lot since then.)

In Quebec, Serge Mongeau is a pioneer. His book is a best seller. He gives lectures throughout the region and receives lots of attention by media.

In Switzerland and France, initiatives are burgeoning everywhere without there being a nerve center to centralize or network them as is the case with the RQSV (Quebec Network for Voluntary Simplicity) in Quebec : <http://www.simplicitevolontaire.org/> .

In Belgium (French speaking part) until 2005, voluntary simplicity was virtually unknown. The

association "Friends of the Earth" organized conferences on the subject, which allowed to create a good dozens of groups, mainly in the regions of Liège and Namur.
<http://www.amisdelaterre.be/spip.php?article127>

However, the values of voluntary simplicity are spreading. We also meet them through (in France and Belgium) :

- SELs (Local Exchange services)

http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Système_d'échanges_locaux

- RES or RERS (knowledge exchange network)

https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9seau_d%27%C3%A9changes_r%C3%A9ciproques_de_savoirs

<http://rers.be/content/les-r%C3%A9seaux-dechanges-r%C3%A9ciproques-de-savoirs-francophones-de-belgique-0>

and other local initiatives of all kinds.

REASONS TO JOIN VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

There are many reasons to take an active interest in voluntary simplicity and as a result, it can reach people who are very different in age, culture, social level, political, philosophical or religious orientation. The four main reasons are:

- • Simply lack of money. However, the possible confusion exists to pretend to make voluntary simplicity whereas the real attitude consists in looking for "cheap" at any price, at the price of quality, ethics, ecology, etc., which is rather contrary to the path of voluntary simplicity.
- Others approach the voluntary simplicity to get out of stress and this crazy life that no longer makes sense.
- Many are those who come to voluntary simplicity in order to act more responsibly in the face of today's environmental and social context.
- Another reason that can lead to it, is the aversion to consume, a refusal of life by proxy through television and advertising.

All these reasons are cumulative and interwine, without excluding other possible ones.

CHANGES INVOLVED BY VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

Voluntary simplicity will affect all areas of the life of the person who practices it. It will make evolve the perception of values, needs, and lead to changes in both behaviors and choices.

However, it is not necessary to make these choices and changes to endorse the direction that they are leading to.

In fact, it can be observed that these changes occur little by little, but they occur naturally. The areas of action outlined below do not represent a path to follow. Rather, they are the areas of change that can be observed in people who have traveled along on a path of voluntary simplicity. One can then notice there is a kind of common core.

Material simplicity - consumption and alternative activities

The consumption pattern will change little by little according to real needs and not to conditioned and phony needs: buying less, differently, finding other ways to meet our needs, getting rid of all that we have accumulated in the past as consumers (decluttering), and this will soon affect all other themes of consumption such as our means of transport, our choice of leisure, holiday, our work (duration, orientation), as well as our management of water, energy. These changes necessarily involve a gradual clarification of needs in the broad sense : physical, social, affective and spiritual needs. A priori, we all

have pretty much the same needs. But our situation, our age, our culture, our personality, will determine our choices in the way of meeting them.

In the same vein, in taking distance from overconsumption, we will give more attention to the **choice of our purchases**. In addition to choosing **quality** and paying the **right price** (and not the cheapest), we will be more and more concerned to: buy **local, ethical** (and fair), to **recycle**, to consume **healthy products** (natural, organic, non-polluting, sustainable, quality), to **repair**, and to keep them (rather than buying "disposable"). We will do without the superfluous more and more, and more and more easily. We will choose **second hand products rather than new ones**.

Detachment develops with respect to the **consumption system**. A more committed, responsible attitude towards acquisitions is being built little by little. Our attitudes are no longer "consumptive" either.

Instead of passivity and the consumer's dependence on advertising, television, etc., we are trying to **create our own** activities, outside the constraints imposed on us.

In the same way, just as what we buy is more and more matched to our real needs, paid **work** now aims to **provide** for living **expenses**, and no longer depends on the expectations of those around us, and even less of a social status to maintain. It becomes possible to get rid of all these devices, systems, prepared products, which save time; time that we used to work to pay for them.

One last characteristic of this material simplicity is the **worry of the impact on the world**, via consumption, which will also guide all our choices.

The consequences of material simplicity are diverse. We focus less and less on material wealth. Autonomy increases. It also opens up more to share between the people involved and also with the entourage, the neighbors. A new balance arises between the material and the non-material.

Local and human scale

A second evolution encountered on the path of voluntary simplicity is the local and human scale. Voluntary simplicity leads us to no longer look for what we can find nearby. We will seek a living environment and a workplace on a human scale while getting away from macro-institutions and large companies, so as to be less dependent, to take back in hand, the management of what concerns us or to entrust it to people we know, rather than to complex and impersonal structures.

Independence - autonomy - self-determination - self-sufficiency

In parallel with the evolution towards a local and human scale, a search for independence from the system, which involves "doing oneself", is emerging.

At the material level, we find a search for self-sufficiency, by cultivating and producing as much as possible ourselves,

At the administrative level, self-determination implies greater independence vis-à-vis public and commercial institutions: fewer subscriptions, contracts, registrations, etc.

At the financial level, this also allows for a release from repayments and other fixed costs (for example, any regular contractual payment).

At the level of information we will get rid of television, even mass-media in general, looking for alternative information elsewhere.

At the professional level this can lead to a change of career choice: taking a job or training for a job that really interests us, and pays less, or choosing a work that implies a more socially, politically or else

involvement, where we feel more useful for the community. And finally, it may also be the choice to reduce the working time, to earn only what is needed in money, and have more time for ourselves, for our entourage, for the community.

If there is professional change, it will depend on local scale, human size, independence from the system, schedule, but also from a greater autonomy in the work itself, which is the opposite of the current trend towards hyper specialization, and the division of labor.

At the psychological level, the value of self-determination also leads to take more psychological independence from those around us. Because pretty often, when it is not advertising or fashion that pushes us to consume, it is a pressure of guilt of our loved ones, our friends, our colleagues, who leads us there.

Exchanges

In parallel with this individual path, a desire to share the path emerges very quickly, both to obtain and to give support between people being on the same path, to obtain alternative information, even to learn and also to exchange and share goods and services.

Ecological consciousness

A fifth important development related to voluntary simplicity is ecological consciousness. The individual feels connected to natural resources and to his natural environment. The ecological consciousness will also push towards a search of proximity with nature and in parallel, an opening to human diversity.

Citizen consciousness

Empowerment in front of consumption and ecological consciousness leads to citizen consciousness. There is an awareness that the Earth is limited and that our rights and duties as human beings are dependent on this to preserve the living, to limit pollution, and to respect the integrity of nature. This consciousness also touches on the thirst for the restoration of more justice between individuals and between nations. This opening of consciousness generates individual empowerment towards the community for the equitable sharing of resources. We wake up as citizens, both local and global.

Personal evolution

One of the last important developments on which voluntary simplicity founded, is personal evolution. Concrete questioning, followed by changes in behavior, also questions the meaning of things in life. It begins with a lightening of the mind following the lightening of the possessions. This affects time management due to increased autonomy, reduced working time and the search for self-sufficiency. Other themes, such as coherence between our discourse and our way of life, authentic relationships, the quality of communication, non-violence, can also become concerns.

Spiritual opening

Personal evolution and ecological and citizens' consciousness lead necessarily to evolve and modify the objectives and projects of life. Beyond the survival and perpetuation of the species, other reasons are emerging. By evolving consciousness, an understanding of being part of a whole is emerging, that also drives empowerment and solidarity.

This level of evolution is not necessarily perceived, even accepted by those who are starting. However, it appears as indispensable thereafter. And invariably, despite various religious orientations, agnosticism or atheism for some, these values mostly meet the precepts encountered in many philosophical and religious currents.

Radiance

Finally, beyond the path made as individual and in group, a form of radiance appears, via the testimony and the information that we are able to transmit around us, or simply because we serve as an example around us, from the moment when our choices and actions are lived with happiness, and in a visible way. Interest in activism diminishes proportionally with the ability to radiate around ourselves. It is no longer a question of going to teach on a large scale the theories that are outside of us, but much more to share the testimony of what we are living, the strength that comes from it, and the meaning and the happiness, which are the fruit of it.

CHARACTERISTICS OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY

Voluntary simplicity is a choice

Choosing a direction inherently implies giving up one or more other direction (s). But choice, unlike imposition, strongly nullifies or decreases feelings of frustration. Contrary to asceticism, in voluntary simplicity, we do not force ourselves, there is no deprivation. The changes are made gradually and according to the consciousness that is ours. Practicing voluntary simplicity is more related to a state of mind than to well-defined rules. There is no requirement, only we decide the step to take or not. So we advance by motivation, conviction, desire for consistency, and so ultimately with taste and pleasure.

Voluntary simplicity is a path

- *Path*. Voluntary simplicity is a challenge that never can be completed. It's something we decide to start one day and never really reach. Especially, the more we advance, the more we discover reasons to go further, the more the complexity of the path appears, and the more the motivation increases.
- *Direction*. The aim of simplicity is not an end in itself, it is a direction, the end never being determined.
- *No prerequisites*. One of the great advantages of voluntary simplicity is that it applies right now: here and now. No need to toy with a project, we can directly take first actions.
- *Flexibility*. Voluntary simplicity is not an irrevocable path, we can take a step back when we have advanced beyond our capabilities. And we can also accept to make concessions on the way. It is therefore a path that can be done with flexibly, without forcing, without rigidity.
- *Positive effects*. Voluntary simplicity brings much satisfaction, both material and psychological: to be freer in one's space, in one's time, in one's mind. There is the satisfaction of making things on our own, of respecting our commitments, of finding a certain coherence.
- *Individual but social*. Voluntary simplicity is an individual but not individualistic path. It leads to others through sharing, exchange of support, information, goods, and also through the awareness of "being part of the whole".
- *Opening*. The voluntary simplicity allows to discover other ways of living, which will stimulate personal growth and involvement in alternative collective actions.

Voluntary simplicity is not :

- First and foremost: voluntary simplicity is not a means of living for "**cheap**". It can often save money because we buy less, because we do it ourselves. However, alternative consumption (organic, ethical, fair, local, artisanal) is, in most cases, certainly more expensive than what's proposed by supermarkets.
- Voluntary simplicity is not **an easy option**, nor a search for complexity, but things do not always look as easy as it seems, and voluntary simplicity sometimes requires openness, creativity, research, inner strength in order to move forward.
- Voluntary simplicity is not **asceticism**. It is not in itself the search to deprive oneself of material pleasure. On the contrary, it generates satisfactions, pleasures, improvements, evolutions, etc. Pierre Rabhi calls it "happy sobriety".
- Voluntary simplicity is not **poverty**. Poverty is forced by circumstances, which among other things, makes it painful. In addition, poverty changes life into a struggle to survive, and nothing else, while voluntary simplicity helps to make sense.
- Voluntary simplicity is not a simple **return to nature**. It does of course involve an ecological

dimension, but it also involves the economic, political, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions. And many people practice voluntary simplicity in an urban setting.

- Voluntary simplicity is not a **relic of the movements of the sixties** (May 68, Vietnam, hippies, power flower). If people who have participated in these movements find common values, other people find interest for it in very different circumstances.

- Voluntary simplicity is anything but **a fashion**. This is not something that is considered transient, by identification with a trendy fashion. One practices it by personal conviction, otherwise not.

- Voluntary simplicity is not **an American movement** (from North America). The needs and motivations of those who practice it are the same regardless of the continent. However, the movement has grown very strongly in the USA and Canada, while in Europe, we hardly see the beginnings (in 2006).

- Voluntary simplicity is not a **throwback**. If in many cases it leads to refuse some technical progress, it is not the progress in itself that is refused, it is :

- * on the one hand the means to obtain it: use of non-renewable and polluting energy - blind exploitation of planetary resources - excessive exploitation and maintaining in misery of the majority of the world population;

- * on the other hand the dependence on these new technologies, and the destructive effects they have on us, on our health, on the environment;

- * and thirdly, the rebound effect which consists in creating new technological means to make life easier for us, to consume more and to look for even more technological advances, in a sort of headlong rush (for example, the use of the computer and the printer should have allowed a reduction in the use of paper, yet the effect is totally the opposite, it generates a huge waste of paper, which still goes on growing.

Other technical and technological progresses are sought,

To better understand the voluntary simplicity compared to the defenders of technical progress and traditionalists here is what korrotz says on the forum

<http://simplicitevolontaire.bbfr.net/index.htm>

"I think that for many people there is a global misunderstanding as to the voluntary simplicity that is perceived as a regression in terms of quality of life, whereas on the contrary it is an improvement of this quality of life, through the disalienation it allows.

Abstractly, it can be represented as a triangle with in the lower left corner the former ways of life, in the lower right corner modernity (or "development"), and in the top corner the voluntary simplicity.

What opposes on the one hand former ways of life and voluntary simplicity, and on the other hand modernity; is the ecological impact: weak in the first two cases, it is unsustainable with regard to progress.

What opposes on the one hand modernity and voluntary simplicity, and on the other hand former ways of life, is the comfort. For, with the former ways of life, it was rough, I do not teach you anything in saying that.

What opposes modernity and former ways of life on the one hand, and voluntary simplicity on the other hand, is alienation. Formerly, alienation by very heavy social and family hierarchies, by the unspoken, by the difficulties of access to many knowledges. Today, alienation by the management, by the economy, by the objectification of oneself (the CV, the social status etc.), by the ideology of "always more, always faster", by the injunction to "realism", by the loss of control over one's livelihood.

From the modernity point of view, if we do not know well the voluntary simplicity and if we do not see the current alienation, we then just see the aspect "low ecological impact", which evokes the former ways of life, to which it's then easy to assimilate the voluntary simplicity. "

Obstacles to voluntary simplicity

- **Fears** : There are mainly 3 fears related to the practice of voluntary simplicity.

First of all the fear of what people will say related to the affirmation or visibility of a new way of life, not always well understood in the consumer society.

Then there is the fear of the real shift , which can isolate when we do not meet people following the

same path, even if paradoxically this path leads to others by proposing exchanges, sharing, services. Moreover, if the convictions are real, the testimony, although offbeat, can strongly challenge and create curiosity, and sometimes even the approval of those who do not practice it.

And then, there is the *fear of insecurity*. It may be related to earning less, or choosing to terminate certain insurance policies, or having less money in savings, to no longer participate in a pension plan and so on. This insecurity is however quite relative, engendered by the prevailing individualism.

- **Passivity** : The feeling of helplessness, the lack of perseverance can indeed lead to inertia. However, the motivation, linked to the first results of the changes that we makes in our life, will greatly reduce the risk of passivity, as well as any contact with people doing the same path.

VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY AT THE COLLECTIVE LEVEL

There are various collective actions related to voluntary simplicity. Some are not necessarily undertaken by people committed to voluntary simplicity, but many of those who participate are involved in voluntary simplicity.

- **Voluntary simplicity groups**: support groups, working groups, sharing groups. These are places where connections are created, giving support and motivation, enabling the exchange of information, goods and services, and thus facilitating the direct realization of voluntary simplicity. Much less local, the forums of voluntary simplicity on internet have a bit the same role.

- **The collective vegetable gardens** : also allow the exchanges of knowledge, services, and goods, with opening on new working methods, and direct application of the "doing oneself" towards the autonomy. They also are involving to stay at distance from commercial channels, and are the ideal way to consume organic and local.

- **Purchasing groups** : also allow meeting (for ordering, distribution and organization). They also have an economic vocation (which is not the first motivation), allow local purchases and direct contacts with producers, while avoiding distribution channels, packaging and overpackaging, advertising phenomenon, etc.

Local Exchange Services (SEL : Services d'Echanges Locaux, in French) or Universal Exchange Gardens (JEU: Jardins d'Echanges Universels, in French), Knowledge Exchange Networks (RES : Réseaux d'Echanges de Savoirs, in French)) and collective kitchens, the Transitions Towns Network, the Incredible Edible, which seem to be ideal places for the practice of voluntary simplicity.

Reference texts:

See the list of those texts (in French) on the page :
<http://sechangerso.be/4Articles/SV01.htm#reference>

Claire De Brabander

December 2006

translation October 2018

site : <http://sechangerso.be/EN/EN-home.htm>

page : <http://sechangerso.be/EN/4EN-Articles/VoluntarySimplicity.htm>

This text has been written originally in French and has been translated by the author (who is French speaking). The translation quality is therefore not guaranteed. Don't hesitate to report any error. See more details <http://sechangerso.be/EN/EN-Translation.htm>

© Reproduction of this document (for non-commercial purposes only) is free and welcome, under the condition : not to make any change, and to mention the author, the website, and the page.