UNIT 7

Less Is More

A small house in the countryside of Iceland
THINK AND DISCUSS

1. Read the unit title. What do you think “less is more” means?

2. Look at the photo. Would you like to live in this house? Why, or why not?

PART 1
More Choice, More Happiness?

Listening
Listen for Rhetorical Questions

Speaking
Use Signposts to Organize Ideas

Pronunciation
Intonation in Yes/No and Choice Questions

PART 2
TED TALKS

Graham Hill
Less stuff, more happiness

Note Taking
Record Information in a List

PUT IT TOGETHER

Communicate
Give a Group Presentation

Presentation Skill
Connect the Ending to the Beginning
PART 1
More Choice, More Happiness?

BEFORE YOU LISTEN

A  COMMUNICATE  Work in a small group. Discuss these questions.

1. Look at the photo. Do you like eating at a place that has many choices on the menu? Why, or why not?

2. Do you think that having more choices is always a good thing? Why, or why not?

B  COLLABORATE  You are going to listen to a lecture about ideas from a book called The Paradox of Choice. A paradox is a statement that seems impossible or untrue because it says two opposite things. An example is the title of this unit, Less Is More. Listen to segment 1 of the lecture. Then with your group, discuss the meaning of the book title.
Read and listen to the sentences with words from the lecture. Guess the meanings of the words in bold. Then write each word next to its definition.

a. Social media can **impact** the success of a business. If many people give positive reviews to a product, others are likely to want to buy it.

b. Scientific **research** suggests that people become unhappy if they have too many choices.

c. If you are **aware of** your behavior, you may be able to change it.

d. There are just three **options** at this restaurant: fried chicken, grilled fish, or a veggie burger.

e. **Psychologists** are studying how people react to different kinds of advertisements.

f. Thank you so much! I really **appreciate** all of the help you have given us on this project.

g. Our sales figures have been increasing every month. They are strong **evidence** of the product's popularity.

h. Are you **satisfied** with your new apartment? Is it big enough?

i. An accountant must be a **perfectionist**. Mistakes are not allowed.

j. There are so many choices on the menu! It's so **overwhelming** that I cannot decide.

1. _________________ (adj) causing confusion because something is so great in number or effect

2. _________________ (n) a person who tries to do things without fault or error

3. _________________ (adj) happy with something

4. _________________ (n) choices

5. _________________ (v) be thankful for

6. _________________ (n) information or objects that support the truth

7. _________________ (v) have an effect or influence on something

8. _________________ (adj) conscious; having knowledge

9. _________________ (n) people who study the mind and behavior

10. _________________ (n) the detailed study of something
COMMUNICATE Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.

1. Are you a **perfectionist**? Explain why, or why not.
2. Does having a lot of **options impact** your ability to make a decision? Explain why, or why not.
3. Are some kinds of situations **overwhelming** for you? Explain your answer.
4. Are you **satisfied** with the size of your apartment or house? Explain why, or why not.

LISTEN

**LISTEN FOR MAIN IDEAS** Read the statements. Then listen to the lecture. Check [✓] the two statements that are true.

1. [ ] People generally believe that more choices are not good.
2. [ ] The **Paradox of Choice** suggests that more choices actually make people less happy.
3. [ ] People in societies with a lot of wealth and freedom are happier today than they were in 1945.
4. [ ] Schwartz thinks that people with a certain kind of personality have a harder time making decisions.
5. [ ] **Maximizer** personality types are usually happier than **Satisficer** personality types.
LISTEN FOR DETAILS  Listen to the first two segments of the lecture. Choose the best word or phrase to complete each statement.

Segment 1

1. The lecture is about how a greater number of choices can have a negative impact on _________________.
   a. happiness   b. success   c. confusion

2. Yuichi didn’t buy an electric toothbrush online because _________________.
   a. there were none that he liked
   b. there were too many choices
   c. he couldn’t understand the Web site

3. The book *The Paradox of Choice* by Barry Schwartz says that people think they want ________________ choices.
   a. fewer   b. more   c. better

Segment 2

4. The professor tells the students which ________________ has difficulty with decisions.
   a. choice
   b. personality type
   c. number

5. A *satisficer* ________________ about things like his or her hair or clothes.
   a. often worries
   b. doesn’t care
   c. does not worry much

6. Schwartz says that the *maximizer* has ________________ time than a *satisficer* dealing with a lot of choices.
   a. an easier
   b. a better
   c. a harder

7. *Satisficers* have ________________ chance of becoming depressed than *maximizers*.
   a. a lesser
   b. a greater
   c. the same
LISTENING SKILL  Listen for Rhetorical Questions

Sometimes speakers ask a question but do not expect an answer. Often, they even answer the question themselves. This is a rhetorical question. Speakers ask rhetorical questions to:

1. signal a central idea, sometimes an idea that they hope listeners will agree with.
   
   *Can money buy happiness?*

2. signal that an explanation or more details will follow.
   
   *So, what does this mean? First, . . .*

3. engage their listeners and make them feel as if they are interacting with the speaker.
   
   *Have you heard about this?*

Listen for rhetorical questions to help you understand what the speaker thinks is important and to follow his or her argument.

G 2.21 Work with a partner. Read the questions from the lecture. Then listen to each excerpt and write R if the question is rhetorical.

1. ______ “So, are you saying that people are less happy overall because they have more choices?”

2. ______ “What do they mean?”

3. ______ “Does anyone here have trouble making a decision when, say, you are at a restaurant or in a store?”

H THINK CRITICALLY Analyze. Work with a small group. Discuss why you think the professor used each rhetorical question in exercise G. Was it reason 1, 2, or 3 from the Listening Skill box?

A: *I don’t think “What do they mean?” is a signal about a central idea.*

B: Yes, I agree.
AFTER YOU LISTEN

THINK CRITICALLY Apply. Work with a partner. Answer the questions. Use the information from the lecture to support your answer.

1. Name two more occupations that you feel would be ideal for each personality type.

2. Which type of personality, a maximizer or a satisficer, would
   a. probably have a messier home?
   b. be a better leader of an organization?
   c. you want as a parent?

3. Do you think you are more of a maximizer or more of a satisficer? Explain why.
   A: I think I’m more of a maximizer.
   B: Me, too. I always hate having to make choices.

THINK CRITICALLY Interpret a Graph. Work with a partner and discuss these questions.

1. According to the graph, does happiness increase quickly or slowly with a few more choices? Why do you think that is? Does it decrease quickly or slowly with a lot of choices?

2. How are the first and third faces similar? How are they different?

3. Do the ideas in The Happiness Curve support the ideas in The Paradox of Choice from the lecture? Explain your answer.

The Happiness Curve
### SPEAKING SKILL: Use Signposts to Organize Ideas

When speakers want to make several points, they often use **signposts**, or signal words or phrases, to introduce each new point. Using signposts can help you organize your ideas and make it easier for listeners to follow your presentation.

*Too many choices create problems for people.* **First, . . .**

*You can help improve this situation in a few easy ways.* **First of all, . . .**

Here are some common signposts:

- **First** . . .  
  **Second** . . .  
  **Third** . . .

- **First of all** . . .  
  **Secondly** . . .  
  **Finally** . . .

- **Next** . . .  
  **Last** . . .

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#### K 2.22 Listen to segment 3 of the lecture. The professor talks about steps you can take if you are a maximizer. Complete the steps.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIGNPOST</th>
<th>POINT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. First,</td>
<td>just __________________________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Second,</td>
<td>understand that this quality can __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>__________________________.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Last,</td>
<td>do something to __________________________</td>
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<td></td>
<td>__________________________.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work with a partner. What sort of job do you want in the future? Explain your answer to your partner using signposts.

A: I want to be a doctor.
B: Really? Why?
A: Lot of reasons. First of all, it’s a good, long-term career. Second,…

**PRONUNCIATION SKILL**  Intonation in Yes/No and Choice Questions

Intonation is the way the voice rises and falls when speaking. It is the “music” of language. In yes/no questions, the speaker expects a yes or no answer. In yes/no questions, the intonation usually rises at the end. Listen to the examples:

2.23

Would you like coffee?

Are you happier with more choices?

Some questions offer choices. These have a different intonation pattern. Intonation rises on all of the choices except the last one. It falls on the last one:

2.24

Would you like coffee or tea?

M 2.25 Listen to the excerpts below. As you listen, draw an arrow at the end of each question to indicate a rising or falling intonation.

1. “Luz, do you have a question?”

2. “Aren’t more choices always better?”

3. “Would you prefer this menu or this one?”

4. “Yuichi, do you think more choices are better?”

5. “So, did you buy one?”

N Work with a partner. Take turns saying the questions in exercise M. Use the correct intonation.
Take the quiz. Choose your answer to each question. Then calculate the points to determine your personality.

**QUIZ**

**Are You a Maximizer or a Satisficer?**

1. I often change TV channels looking for something better to watch.   Yes  No
2. I often find it difficult deciding which movie to watch.   Yes  No
3. I often find it difficult choosing gifts for my friends.   Yes  No
4. It is difficult for me to find clothes that I like.   Yes  No
5. I need to write several drafts of an email before sending it.   Yes  No
6. I often think about different ways of living my life.   Yes  No
7. I take a long time doing my homework because I want it to be perfect.   Yes  No
8. I am afraid to speak English because I’m not sure of the grammar.   Yes  No

**KEY:** Yes = 2 points  No = 1 point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSONALITY TYPE</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Satisficer</td>
<td>6 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisficer</td>
<td>7–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little of both</td>
<td>10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximizer</td>
<td>13–15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Maximizer</td>
<td>16 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**P THINK CRITICALLY Interpret Results.** Work in small groups. Discuss these questions.

1. Find out about other people in your group. Ask your classmates if they are maximizers or satisficers. Use correct intonation.
2. Do you think the quiz was accurate? Give some examples to explain your answer.
BEFORE YOU WATCH

A  Read the title and information about the TED speaker. *Edit* usually means improving a piece of writing by fixing problems it may have. What do you think it might mean to *edit* your life?

**GRAHAM HILL**  Writer and designer

Graham Hill is an entrepreneur who studied architecture and design. In 2004, he founded TreeHugger.com, a Web site that promotes a lifestyle that is good for people as well as the planet. He’s currently the CEO of LifeEdited, a project that shows people how to live well with less.

Graham Hill’s idea worth spreading is that we can still be happy with fewer things, as long as we are able to “edit” our lives in smart, practical ways.

B  Read the following statements. Write *A* if you agree or *D* if you disagree. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. ______ It is a good idea to completely stop buying things.
2. ______ Having less space makes life more difficult.
3. ______ We don’t really need most of the things that we own.

“I’m here to suggest . . . that less might actually equal more.”

The sentences below will help you learn words in the TED Talk. Read and listen to the sentences. Guess the meanings of the words in bold. Then complete each question with the correct word. Use the correct form of the word.

a. This appliance saves space because it combines the functions of a microwave and traditional oven.

b. Only pack what you will need during the trip. Don’t include any extraneous items.

c. To make more space in my room, I’m going to digitize my CDs and photos.

d. I got a loan for my large and expensive house. I lost my job, so now I’m worried about repaying this debt.

e. My closet is so full. I have too much stuff.

f. This space is multifunctional. I use it as a garage and a music studio.

g. The majority of Americans—about 60 percent—own their own homes.

h. Coincidentally, I got a job offer on the same day that I found my apartment.

i. If you live in a small apartment, you have to think about space efficiency.

j. My new apartment does not have a lot of storage space, so I left a lot of my books at my parents’ house.

1. When you listen to a lecture, are you sometimes overwhelmed by all of the ________________ information?

2. Many people in the United States have a lot of ________________ from buying houses, cars, or from college loans. Is this true in your country?

3. If you ________________ all of your expenses (e.g., rent, food, etc.), do they equal more than your income? How could you reduce your expenses?

4. Do you have any ________________ furniture in your home? Describe their different uses.

5. Does your home have enough closets and other ________________ space for all of your things? What do you do if there is no more space?

6. Mario is going to ________________ his photos. This will save a lot of space in his small apartment. What can you put on your computer or online to save space?

7. Have you and a friend ever ________________ bought the same thing or worn the same thing on the same day?
8. A dishwasher that fits inside a drawer saves a lot of space. What other products can improve space ________________ in a kitchen?

9. Do the _________________________ of people in your city live in apartments or houses? Has this changed in the last 30 years?

10. How much _________________________ do you have in your bag? Can you find things easily?

D COMMUNICATE Work in small groups. Take turns answering the questions in exercise C.

A: What’s your answer to question 1?
B: Well, I try to keep good notes in class so I don’t get overwhelmed.

WATCH

E 1.31 WATCH FOR MAIN IDEAS Read the statements. Then watch the edited TED Talk by Graham Hill. Write A if you think Hill would agree or D if you think he would disagree with each statement. Then discuss your answers with a partner.

1. _______ It is a good idea to stop buying things.
2. _______ Having less space makes life more difficult.
3. _______ We don’t really need most of the things that we own.

F THINK CRITICALLY Reflect. Work with a partner. Tell your partner whether you still agree with the same statements in exercise B on page 133. Did your ideas change? Explain why, or why not.

learnmore 1 in 10 Americans has off-site personal storage. Total personal storage space in the U.S. is 2.3 billion square feet—about three times the size of Manhattan in New York.

WORDS IN THE TALK
environmental footprint (n): the effect that a person, business, or activity has on the health of the planet
flat line (v): to remain the same; not increase
NOTE-TAKING SKILL  Record Information in a List

When you take notes, it sometimes helps to record information in a list format. Listen for cues that a speaker is going to list information. Here are some cues to listen for:

* Rhetorical questions
  * Where does this lead?
* Numbers
  * Three challenges/solutions/approaches are . . .
* Signposts
  * First, you can increase efficiency.
  * Secondly, you can edit your stuff.

In your notes, use a heading and numbers, letters, or bullets to show the information clearly.

WATCH FOR DETAILS  Watch each segment of Hill’s talk again and complete the notes. More than one answer may be correct.

**Segment 1**

Too much stuff leads to three problems

1. lots of ____________________________________________________________
2. a huge ____________________________________________________________
3. __________________________ levels flat-lined

**Segment 2**

Less stuff and less space =

1. a smaller __________________________
2. a great way to __________________________
3. __________________________ in your life

**Segment 3**

Three approaches to live “little”

1. you have to __________________________ ruthlessly
2. we want __________________________ efficiency
3. we want __________________________ and housewares
EXPAND YOUR VOCABULARY

Watch the excerpts from the TED Talk. Guess the meanings of the phrases in the box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>let it go</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vast majority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by all means</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I bet (that)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take a second</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make room for</td>
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</table>

WATCH MORE
Go to TED.com to watch the full TED Talk by Graham Hill.

AFTER YOU WATCH

THINK CRITICALLY

Infer. Work with a small group. Discuss these questions.

1. Hill says, “We’ve got to clear the arteries of our lives.” The word artery is usually used in a very different context. Explain how it is usually used and why Hill uses it here.

2. Hill suggests, “Less stuff and less space are going to equal a smaller footprint.” How could changes in lifestyle and behavior lead to a smaller environmental footprint?

COMMUNICATE
Work with a partner. Discuss your answers to these questions.

A: One way I’d edit my life is to clear out my closet.
B: I hear you! I have way too many clothes that I never wear.

1. What might be your answer to the question “What’s in your box?”

2. What is one way you might “edit” your life?

3. Think about Hill’s small apartment. Would you be able to “edit” your life in the same way that he did? Why, or why not?

A "tiny house" in Richmond, Virginia
THINK CRITICALLY Interpret an Infographic. Work with a partner. Look at the infographic below. Discuss these questions.

1. Which country has the highest HPI? Which country has the lowest HPI?
2. What do you think people consider when they rate their quality of life?
3. Do any of the HPI results surprise you? Explain your answer.
4. In what ways do you think the HPI relates to the idea of less is more?

A Happy Planet?

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) measures the degree to which people in each country live long, happy, sustainable lives.

It is a combination of three measures:
1. longevity: the average age they are likely to live
2. happiness: the quality of life they report on a scale of 1–10
3. sustainability: their environmental footprint

Source: http://www.happyplanetindex.org/data/#sthash.eI13C1Jq.dpuf
A  THINK CRITICALLY  Synthesize. Work in small groups to complete the chart with information from the lecture in Part 1 and Hill’s TED Talk in Part 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART 1 LECTURE</th>
<th>PART 2 TED TALK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What ideas do the lecture and the TED Talk have in common?</td>
<td>too many choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>don’t increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>too much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>doesn’t increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What kinds of problems does this cause?</td>
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</table>

B  THINK CRITICALLY  Reflect. Work with a partner. How do you think having “too much stuff” relates to having “too many choices”?

COMMUNICATE

ASSIGNMENT: Give a Group Presentation
You are going to give a group presentation about the topic “less is more.” Your presentation will address the question: Is having lots of choices or a lot of stuff always a good thing? Review the ideas in Parts 1 and 2 and the listening and speaking skills as you prepare your presentation.

PREPARE

PRESENTATION SKILL  Connect the Ending to the Beginning
Speakers sometimes end a presentation by referring back to something they said at the beginning. Creating these “bookends” gives a clear structure to your presentation. It can also emphasize an important idea in an interesting way. Try one of these techniques to help you connect your presentation’s beginning and ending.

- Ask a question at the beginning of the talk and answer it at the end.
- Start a story at the beginning of a talk and finish it at the end.
- Repeat a theme at the beginning and end of a talk.

Hill begins his presentation by talking about the box on the stage and returns to the box at the end of his presentation. Watch it again.

1.34 “What’s in the box? It doesn’t really matter. I know I don’t need it. What’s in yours?”
C Work in small groups. Choose one of the topics below, or think of other ideas. Then answer the questions below about your topic.

☐ It is very easy to get credit (borrow money).
☐ Your idea: ________________________________

☐ There are so many classes and majors to choose from.
☐ Your idea: ________________________________

☐ Big stores and online sites make it possible to buy a lot of stuff for less money.
☐ Your idea: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>YOUR NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the benefits of this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why is this a problem? What impact does it have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What are some possible solutions?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

D COLLABORATE Include the following parts in your presentation. Decide who will present each part.

• Introduction: What is the first “bookend?” Will you
  • begin a story
  • ask a question
  • make a bold statement (e.g., Money cannot buy happiness.)
• **Your topic:** Briefly describe your topic.
• **Impact:** Explain the benefits and problems that this situation causes. Consider using signposts to organize your ideas.
• **Solutions:** Give possible solutions.
• **Conclusion:** What will your second bookend be?

E Read the rubric on page 183 before you present. Notice how your presentation will be evaluated. Keep these categories in mind as you present and watch your classmates’ presentations.

**PRESENT**

F Give your presentation to a small group. Watch your classmates’ presentations. After you watch each one, provide feedback using the rubric as a guide. Add notes or any other feedback you want to share.

G **THINK CRITICALLY** Evaluate. As a class, discuss what each presenter did well and what might make each presentation even stronger. Decide which two things you did well and which two areas need improvement.

**REFLECT**

Reflect on what you have learned. Check ✓ your progress.

I can

- listen for rhetorical questions.
- use signposts to organize my ideas.
- use intonation in yes/no and choice questions.
- record information in a list.
- connect the ending to the beginning in a presentation.

I understand the meaning of these words and can use them.
Circle those you know. Underline those you need to work on.

- appreciate
- aware of
- coincidentally
- combine
- debt
- digitize
- efficiency
- evidence
- extraneous
- impact
- majority
- multifunctional
- option
- overwhelming
- perfectionist
- psychologist
- research
- satisfied
- storage
- stuff

PUT IT TOGETHER 141