

Why I choose and chose to live below the US Poverty Level

It is a fact that individual persons living in the USA who have incomes classified by the US government as “below the poverty level” are indescribably rich as compared to the vast majority of humans currently living on Planet Earth. Even those USA citizens who, like me, are classified as having incomes “below the poverty level” consume vastly more of this Earth’s resources and riches as compared to humans living elsewhere on Planet Earth. According to [Scientific American](#):

“It is well known that Americans consume far more natural resources and live much less sustainably than people from any other large country of the world. ‘A child born in the United States will create thirteen times as much ecological damage over the course of his or her lifetime than a child born in Brazil,’ reports the Sierra Club’s Dave Tilford, adding that the average American will drain as many resources as 35 natives of India and consume 53 times more goods and services than someone from China.”

It is this fact, which has been well known for most of my lifetime, that motivated me to embrace and practice what some call “voluntary poverty” but which I call simply living on something approaching my fair share of the Earth’s goods and resources. It is also true that I abandoned this voluntarily simplicity lifestyle while I was married and raising a family. During that period I generated a middle class income, bought one home and then built another for my family and in hopes of generating what these days is called *inter-generational wealth*. Now that my kids are gone and I am single again I’ve returner to my version of a fair share lifestyle.

The logic of what I am doing is simple: Planet Earth can not continue to exist as I know and love it if some humans continue to insist on consuming vastly more than their fair share of the Earth’s products and services, that is, of the Earth’s wealth.

My income is below the US Poverty level. And yet I live an incredibly wealthy life as compared to most humans. If the rest of the Earth’s humans strive for the same level of consumption as we in the USA enjoy, and if even a fraction of humans attain US poverty level consumption, the Earth as we know it will fade and maybe even cease to exist. And so, in light of this stark reality, I practice what some call [voluntary simplicity](#) and which I call living on my fair share.

I encourage all my fellow humans to try doing what I am trying to do, that is, to live on a fair share of the earth’s products and services. I believe you will be happier on balance if you do it.