

semi-minimalist lifestyle

Semi-minimal lifestyle: a thought between the regular and the digital nomad way.

I've been searching for digital nomad^[1] articles again; the topic somehow still interests me even though I cannot imagine myself in that much of a vagabond lifestyle.

I hate 9am-5pm sitting in front of a computer - the problem is not with sitting in front of it for 8-10 hours, and I definitely not the computer itself. **It's that I don't want to work in a shady office all the time the sun's up.** I understand that a long, long time ago this was a necessity due to the lack of proper lighting, but today?

When I was still at university and working as a freelancer beside it working during the night was good, really good, for me: my brain was emptied enough to code and I still had some daylight as spare time. Entering the regular, 9am-5pm job market is a trauma for nocturnes like me and it still hurts me.

Thus when I first heard the terminology "digital nomad" I thought it's finally something I'm looking for: working from wherever I want, whenever I want. It quickly turned out to be something about "exciting life" and constant travel and not about the kind of freedom I'm looking for.

Yesterday I ended up on an entry on minimal lifestyle from Mark Manson^[2] - he has some really good and useful points. When we moved from Hungary to the UK we needed to get rid of tons of stuff (*when you have lots of space and a light tendency of hoarding it's a brutal surprise when you realize the amount of useless things in the flat*) yet we still ended up renting a self storage. A fairly large portion were books, but it included furniture, tools, materials, clothes and stuff. The last time we went home we got rid of some leftovers and I'm well aware that I need to throw the majority of the clothes to a charity bin. (*The books will stay though, it's extremely hard to find some and it's Hungarian, so no digital version at all.*) With the move I promised myself I'll only keep those things around I use, including clothing, tools, everything. Yet I still have a crazy amount of possessions compared to Mark's extremely short list.

Did I break my promise? What are those things I'm still found of? Some examples:

- photography equipment
- leather materials, leather crafting tools
- screwdriver set, some small saws, a cordless drill
- electronics parts (resistors, LEDs, etc.), an Arduino Mega^[^3] with some shields, some spare replacement parts for our laptops

This is not a bad list and definitely not hoarding. All the things I'm not using any more I'm selling on eBay. So it led me to another question: **those who keep believing in digital nomad lifestyle don't have any hobbies?** Probably not; the hobby is the lifestyle itself, with all the travels and the interaction with the world.

I like doing things. Working with leather, electronics, crafting something. I repair most of our things that's not beyond saving to avoid buying a new one. (It's not the money, I try to avoid making trash) So I need tools and materials. Even if you can be part of a local hackerspace community^[^4] - if there is one - you still need the material you're building of, and you might need some special instruments the hackerspace don't have. Mark's list of owned things does not even include a set of precision screwdrivers which I would be lost without within a week.

There's a significant amount of truth in minimal lifestyle and certain important points in the digital nomad lifestyle but they seem to be an overkill; the proper approach would be somewhere in the middle.

- Have the possibility to work whenever and from wherever you want to work but that does not mean you need to travel as well.
- Own those things you use and those that does actually makes you happy - because there are things like this, no matter what some say. Books, with their smell, pictures, hand crafted/self made things you did can easily be in that list.

And that's it. Lighter, cleaner life but not without some necessary anchors.

Links

1. <https://www.google.co.uk/#q=digital+nomad>
2. <http://markmanson.net/minimalism>
3. <http://arduino.cc/>
4. http://www.hackerspace.org.uk/view/Main_Page

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