

# Frugality

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*Rebalancing Material and Spiritual Values in Economic Life*

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# Overconsumption



Present overconsumption, which is **unsustainable** and **socially unjust**, also causes **welfare-related diseases**.

It is possible to frame sufficiency and frugality as **positive ways** to a better **quality of life**.



**Sufficiency** is not about repressing all our desires. We should focus on how to deal with our wealth, how to satisfy our desires more deeply and how to enjoy a **better life** by **consuming less**. The **Slow Food Movement** is a fantastic example. It is a way toward using more **qualitative foods**, while recognizing the ecological limits of the Earth.

## Consumerism and Frugality – Contradictory Principles in Economics?

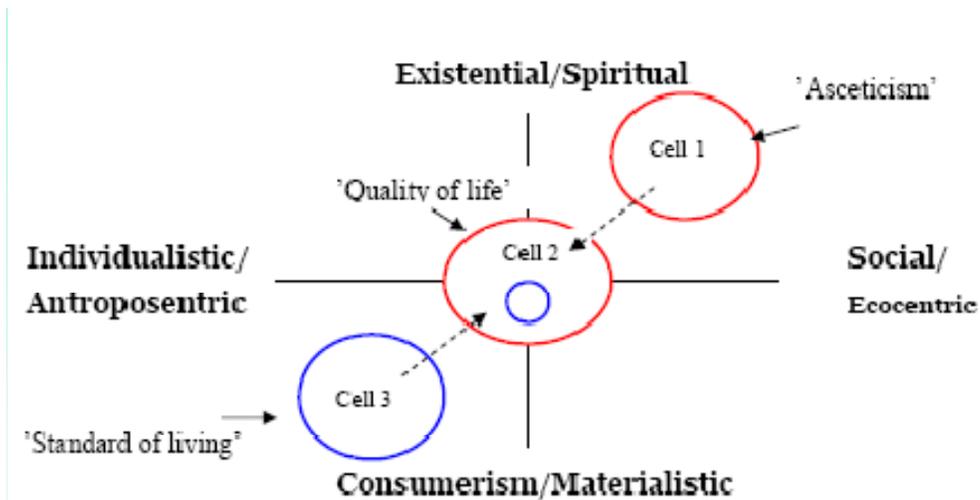
Integration, dynamics and **holism** needed in re-considering the economy with **sustainability** and **life quality**.

An important aspect of frugality is to **reduce waste** by changing habits of consumption.

In the Thomistic tradition, the use of external goods has a **natural limit**.

Material wealth is needed to a certain extent, but it should be used only as an **instrument**.

## Quality of Life – as the Golden Mean



## **Simplicity and non-violence**

### **Simplicity through negation of wants.**

**Less is more, small is beautiful.**

**Marketing should turn into anti-marketing –  
buy less, simple living.**

### **Non-violence (ahimsa)**

**An organic world-view presupposes that when  
you harm other sentient beings or nature, you  
harm yourself.**

**The interplay between economy and ecology  
becomes vital.**



**Herman Daly:**  
**Frugality First**

**Frugality should  
precede efficiency  
in achieving  
sustainability.**



An improvement in **efficiency alone** is equivalent to having a larger supply of the factor whose efficiency increased. The price of that factor declines and more uses for the cheaper factor are found. So **scale continues to grow**. A policy of “frugality first,” induces efficiency while “efficiency first” does not induce frugality. The main task of our age is to **limit the scale** of the **economy** relative to the ecosystem.

## Conclusion

The present **unsustainable lifestyle** of **mankind** requires drastic changes.

Western-style consumer capitalism has resulted in global **climate change**, dramatic **ecosystem degradation** and **biodiversity loss**.

Also, it has caused massive **unhappiness** and **emptiness** in rich countries and **social disintegration** worldwide.

## **TIME Magazin**

### **The Global Warming Survival Guide**

**There is an old path to reducing our impact on the planet that will feel familiar to Evangelical Christians and Buddhists alike.**

**Live simply. Meditate.**

**Consume less. Think more.**

**Get to know your neighbors.**

**Borrow when you need to and lend when asked.**