

Coming clean: Clutter cures

Written by Marcia Humphrey
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Can you tell that I have lost weight? Although I can't be sure, I think it had to be about two-hundred pounds or so. See I just placed another big load of clothes, coats, shoes, household items, unwanted (although appreciated) Christmas gifts, and other miscellaneous stuff on my front porch. The charity pickup truck from the Lupus Foundation, www.lupuspickup.org, then came and carried it all away. I feel great about it for two main reasons: The donated items will ultimately go towards helping those battling the disease. Also, I have less clutter in my rooms, cupboards, and closets, helping to create a greater sense of order and peace in our home. So together let's wage a war on clutter, set ourselves free, and lose some much-needed weight!

Breaking up is hard to do! It is amazing just how attached we can become to our stuff. In addition, in our minds we can always rationalize why we should keep it, which is why it can be hard to let go. Sentimental memories of a particular time, special events, and favorite people can greatly influence our decision to hold on to things we may not even like. Clutter Rx: Instead of holding on to that huge, dusty collection of stuffed animals that your auntie gave you, take a picture of the animals and tape it to your mirror or put it in a cute frame and set it on your dresser. You can still get to enjoy the good memories of your favorite aunt every time you look at the picture.

Seeing Double In going through your kitchen, do you have two can openers, three identical spatulas, and an overload of ugly serving dishes that you don't use? They're the ones that are oddly-shaped, hard to store, and cumbersome to clean, but are still in good shape. Don't feel guilty, just toss them in the donation box and allow someone else to enjoy them. The same principle applies to duplicate clothes, shoes, purses, etc. you are not using. Clutter Rx: Adopt the motto "All duplicates must go." Keep your best can opener and set the other one free!

School Daze Are you trying to save every certificate, drawing assignment that your child has ever done? Is your fridge plastered with school projects? Maybe you are saving old letters from loved ones. If so, consider using a scanner to scan the important ones into your computer. That way you'll keep the memories safe forever. Clutter Rx: If you don't have an all-in-one printer to scan items onto your computer, visit the library, or your local office supply or

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copy store. For a small fee, get those special items scanned and saved, and then toss those loads of paper in the recycle bin!

If you are one who opens closet doors or cupboards, only to have something fall out and hit you on the head or toe, it's time to come clean! Try some of these simple and free/low-cost solutions. You'll not only be free of the weight of excess stuff, you will feel as though a weight of stress has lifted from your mind. This is a weight-loss plan guaranteed to work. Call to schedule a pickup today. Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.