

SPRING-CLEAN YOUR LIFE - GET RID OF CLUTTER

One step forward, two steps back. Doesn't life often feel like we are wading through mud and getting nowhere fast, fighting the current incessantly? We daydream helplessly yet hopefully about less work, more holidays, improved energy, increased earnings and constantly accumulating more 'things' on our never-ending quest for 'more'— all things that are considered a normal part of existence as we chase our dreams.

moon without the sliver – why then do you expect to always be getting 'more' without releasing the old? It's time to make space and live large.

DEFINITION OF CLUTTER

How do we make sense of clutter and contemplate the ways that clutter that affects us so that we can put them together in one definition that works for it all? We need to look at the underlying energy of clutter. Whether we are referring to outdated clothes, messy paperwork, limiting beliefs that clutter our mind, a congested lymphatic system or bad circulation in our bodies, we can put all clutter under the same useful umbrella definition: 'Clutter is anything that no longer serves you, for whatever reason.'

Yet, how often do we consider the more natural order of life, the concept of letting go before we add another layer? The concept of creating 'space' so that we can move forward in our lives? You would never apply night cream to a dirty face, or expect buds to blossom before the old leaves have died off, or to see the full



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(aka the Quick Shift Deva) will bounce into your life to help you to live light, live large. She is an expert in large-scale clutter work in homes and offices, inspirational speaker, writer, life coach, and runs mastermind groups and e-courses on clutter. Find out more on <http://www.kate-emmerson.com>

Physical clutter – inspired to get started?

Here are some basic rules for all your physical clutter:

- Each room has a **MAIN FUNCTION** – e.g. your bedroom is just that and not a dumping ground for everything else. Keep what is relevant for its function in that space, and nothing else if possible.
- Every item you own has its **OWN HOME** – i.e. the place that it lives and everyone who lives in the space **KNOWS** its proper home.
- You always keep and store **LIKE WITH LIKE** – e.g. all the animals' stuff together, all batteries together, all linen together, all gift wrap/cards/sticky tape together, to keep it easy on the mind and eye.
- Use small plastic/wooden/wicker **CONTAINERS** to keep like with like and to stop all things morphing and meshing together in a drawer.
- You store stuff for **RETRIEVAL** – it doesn't matter how much stuff you have, but that you **KNOW** where it is and can find it in your mind's eye – and thus physically – within about 30 seconds. It should take not an ounce of energy or thought to locate what you need.

This definition of clutter is all-inclusive, regardless of shape or form. If anything is not adding any value in some way to your life anymore, it is classified as CLUTTER!

When I give public talks, I always pose the question at the beginning: 'Who has clutter?' On average 65% of the audience put up their hands. However, when I ask again, after sharing the definition and the three categories with them, this shifts up to 98%. We all have 'stuff'; it just comes in different forms.

THREE CATEGORIES OF CLUTTER

It never matters which category you choose as your point of entry for transformation, as they are all inextricably intertwined. Your outer world reflects your inner world, so choose one area to start, and get stuck in.

Physical clutter – defined as the stuff we can see and touch. This category is usually the easiest to start with because we cannot deny it, although we may ignore it. It is all around you as disorganised chaos, mess, piles, too much stuff in too small an area. It also means that belongings are not in their correct 'home', as everything that you own ideally has a place where it lives. 'Like' lives with 'like' and it should take you no more than 30 seconds to be able to locate an object you are looking for. The average time wasted looking for things every day is 55 minutes! Imagine what you could be doing with that time and energy.

The easiest place to start is your bedside table, as it can be accomplished in an hour and you will see instant rewards of a clear space. Your bedside table is one of the most intimate spaces, and is often the only space that is truly yours, where no one else will venture, but be careful to have only that which belongs next to your bed inside it. And a maximum of two books!

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Energetic clutter – this one deals with the tricky stuff, as it encompasses emotional, spiritual and mental clutter that keeps us playing small and makes us feel bad about ourselves. It keeps you stuck and stagnant and makes your solar plexus churn with anxiety. This type of clutter is generally referred to as 'baggage'. It keeps you stuck in the past and never allows you to be deeply engaged in your life now.

The following fall in this category: unfinished projects, resentment, anger, grief, friends past their sell-by date, commitments not fulfilled,

Physiological clutter – this is the heavy body clutter that steals our energy, our va va vooom, and stops us from being full of beans and vitally alive. Refer to the article on detox for more information on this aspect of clutter (See page 52). Tackling this aspect of clutter will give you the clarity of energy to tackle the other two categories.

Do I LOVE IT? Does it ADD VALUE? Do I USE IT?

Teach any staff to stick to your new rules/systems/homes for items – it is up to YOU to ensure it goes into the proper place.

‘It’s time to make space and live large’

courageous conversations outstanding, broken agreements, letting yourself down, lack of integrity, bad habits, self-limiting beliefs, staying friends with people on social media platforms rather than having clear boundaries, poor time management, etc. It’s a big list making you feel bad about yourself, dull, stagnant and boring, and keeps you looking over your shoulder.

The simplest way to get started is to make a list of all the things that are in some way draining your energy. Then prioritise them. Make a commitment to do the one that is listed as number one – yes, usually the hardest one to do, but its completion will release heaps of pent-up energy to tackle the next, and so on. Don’t be tempted to start with the small, niggly ones – go for the big one first!

Never underestimate what kids are capable of doing with their rooms and items if you guide them – EXPECT them to put stuff back.

ONE STEP AT A TIME

The best way to tackle anything is a little bit at a time. I encourage you to do an hour a day, and make a start today. The trickiest emotions to handle with clutter are procrastination and the feeling of being overwhelmed. To help my clients tackle this head on, I created a step by step drip-feed course (Spring-clean your life) that offers you bite-sized tasks to tackle daily. You can handle all your clutter and free up energy to get on with living your awesome life. No longer weighed down by feeling awful every time you walk into your home, face your desk or think about the emotional baggage, you will have a spring in your step within 28 days. ●