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# Your Stuff or Your Soul?

Releasing Clutter as a  
Radical Act of Self-Care

*The willingness to take an honest look at our inner and outer environments, identify the “stuff” that is truly essential for the healing work we are here to do, and release what no longer serves, is a radical act of self-care.*

Peggy Fitzsimmons, Ph.D.

**A**lthough we are souls first and foremost, our egos continually fight to be in the driver’s seat of our lives. We are individually entranced by the ego, and collectively hypnotized in a like-minded society that promotes the lie that we are not enough, don’t have enough, and need more. As a result, we find ourselves burdened with clutter. Clutter is anything that isn’t in alignment with our true soul nature of peace, expansiveness, joy, connection, harmony, love, and letting go. The willingness to take an honest look at our inner and outer environments, identify the “stuff” that is truly essential for the healing work we are here to do, and release what no longer serves, is a radical act of self-care.

Here are some examples of how clutter might show up in your life:

- I have a lot of stuff that I don’t really love or truly need.
- I purposely avoid certain areas of my home because they stress me out.
- I keep similar items in different places around the house.
- I focus on what I don’t have, rather than appreciating what I do have.

#### TAKE AN HONEST LOOK

When we depart this planet, none of our stuff will go with us. And yet, we hold on tight to what we have and chronically acquire more. Take some time to observe the clutter in your home with curiosity, rather than judgment. Your stuff may be scattered about in full view or hiding in turquoise bins in the office, vacuum-sealed bags under your bed, and fancy cabinets in the garage. If you really look, you’ll be shocked by how many books and suitcases and sneakers and kitchen gadgets and t-shirts and tools and dog toys and skin care products live in your home. You’ll recognize you have more stuff than one person or family could ever use. And you might even glimpse the irony that in your house full of things, in all that abundance, you feel a sense of too much but somehow not enough.

The ego keeps us in past and future time, rather than present time, which leads to stuff accumulating. If you’re hanging out in past time, you’ll observe many things in your home that don’t reflect who you are now– the old files from your graduate work, the “skinny” clothes in your closet, the blankets you once loved but no longer use. If you’re hanging out in future time, you’ll have a lot of stuff you





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keep “just in case,” such as the crutches from your knee surgery three years ago (just in case you have surgery again), the original box for the floor lamp (just in case you move), or the giant packages of toilet paper (just in case there are supply chain issues). Letting go of clutter is an invitation to bring yourself and your home into present time and keep only the things you really love and truly need to share your love with the world.

Here are three ways to declutter that will help you take better care of yourself and your home. Remember to move with soul-centered joy and ease as you begin the process. What could be more fun than a release party after all?! If you’re in any way hesitant to let go of something, don’t. Trust that when it’s truly time for something to let go of you, it will easily go.

### RELY ON THE MAGIC OF 10 PERCENT

The magic of 10% helps us release clutter with ease, because it keeps our ego feeling safe and creates space for energy to flow. Look to release 10% of the things that don’t serve your soul and add 10% of what does. For example, if you’re decluttering your closet, find one shirt out of every 10 that you can part with. Or add 10% more beauty by folding your sweaters neatly or by lining up your shoes. Manageable, right? Small changes like this can make a big difference. Some areas may be more difficult than others. So if you can’t part with 10% of your placemats, but can easily release the old towels in the laundry room, do 20% there. Aiming for 10% makes decluttering fun and do-able. And most people surprise themselves by releasing even more.

### MAKE YOUR SPACE SOUL WORTHY

If someone came to your house, would they immediately know that a magnificent human *being* inhabits the space? This has nothing to do with the kind of dwelling you live in or the amount of

money you have. It has to do with how you honor your possessions, and in the process, honor yourself. For example, are the clothes you bought with your hard-earned money scattered all over your bedroom? Is the crockpot on top of the fridge covered with cobwebs? Are your most treasured photos squashed in a broken-down box in the basement? Is the floor of your closet a mess of dustballs and broken hangers?

The fact that we’ve chosen something to live with us makes it sacred and deserving of a place of honor. So do your best to make every space in your home a soul-worthy, mini-piece of art. And I mean every space: the laundry room shelf, the cupboard under the kitchen sink, and the coat closet in the hall. Make it so everything is easy to see, easy to get to, neat, clean, and orderly. As we beautify space by space, our home becomes a soul sanctuary worthy of us and the things we love.

### KEEP LIKE THINGS TOGETHER

People who struggle with clutter tend to have similar things living in different areas of their home. There are clothes in the bedroom closet and the guest room dresser and on the rack down in the basement. Light bulbs live in the office closet and the kitchen drawer and the dining room cupboard. Office files are in the desk drawer and the file cabinet in the bedroom and the banker’s boxes in the garage. As you declutter, bring things that are alike together to live in the same place. It helps you feel less fragmented, and also makes you less likely to overbuy because you forgot what you have.

You might also notice you have dissimilar things living together in your home. For example, the basket on the kitchen counter holds coupons, old receipts, magazine articles, loose change, and that paperwork you need to sign. The pile on the dining room table contains a few books, some gift cards from your birthday, a package you need to send, an uncashed



check, and your child's homework. As you declutter, sort your things and create dedicated places for them. Photographs in the photo bin. Random cords and computer paraphernalia that you truly need in the technology drawer. Tax stuff on the tax shelf. Loose change in the abundance jar. Sorting reduces chaos; there's a place for everything, and everything is in its place where you can find it easily.

### FREE YOURSELF

As we hold the vision of a soul-driven life, and treat our ego aspect with compassion, we experience a new willingness to live with only what is essential. So enjoy the release party! And watch how this radical act of self-care puts you on the road to freedom and enhances all aspects of your life and work. €

Adapted and excerpted from *Release: Create a Clutter Free and Soul Driven Life*



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