

DECLUTTERING: ROOM BY ROOM

General Information & Guidelines

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The topic of this seminar is about how to declutter each room of your home. Listed below are some guidelines and general information that will be the foundation to help you declutter your home. At the bottom of this handout, you will find a quote or practical tip to help prevent the build-up of clutter in your home.

1. WHAT IS CLUTTER?

- A. It is collection of things lying about in an unorganized mass.
- B. Item that you do not use, need or want.

2. OBSTACLES TO DE-CLUTTERING YOUR HOME:

- A. Lack of time
- B. Lack of energy
- C. Decreased motivation
- D. Decreased mobility or strength to lift, sort or move items

3. THE BENEFITS OF DECREASING CLUTTER IN YOUR HOME:

- A. Improve safety by preventing falls or injury from excessive clutter, especially on areas such as floors and steps
- B. Increase efficiency for doing tasks when items are organized
- C. Save money by not buying duplicate items that were misplaced

4. WHY DO YOU WANT TO DECLUTTER?

Identifying your goals for decluttering will help you to prioritize tasks to meet your goal. What is YOUR goal?

- A. To create a new organizational system
- B. To prepare a room for a relative or guest
- C. To get rid of visible objects in an open area

- D. To make your environment safer
- E. To increase efficiency for completing tasks

5. SIX COMMON TYPES OF CLUTTER:

- A. **Clutter without a designated space**: Items that lie around in an area that have not been designated a “home.” Examples: a pile of unopened mail, books or multiple remote controls lying on the coffee table, sofa or nightstand.
- B. **Trash masquerading as clutter**: Items such as: expired food, broken items that you have not fixed in months, old newspapers, empty bottles.
- C. **Bargain clutter**: Items that you bought because they were on sale that you do not really need. Also, an item that you accept from someone, because it was free, but you don’t need it.
- D. **Abundance clutter**: Buying or accumulating more items that you need at a time. Example: Having six jars of spaghetti sauce in your pantry and you only cook for yourself. Signs of abundance clutter:
 - You have several expired items that you never used.
 - You have items that you bought with tags still on them 6 to 12 months later.
- E. **Aspirational clutter**: Items that you buy because you aspire to to be a more skilled or interesting person to others or yourself, but you do not follow through. You buy these items because of what they say about you, not because you use them or love them. Example: You buy a set of golf clubs or skis to take lessons, but they lie around collecting dust after your first lesson. Or, you buy the latest and greatest cooking gadget on

the shopping network to cook healthier meals for your family, but it just sits in the box in your kitchen cabinet.

- F. **Sentimental clutter**: Items that you keep because of memories or emotions conjured by the object. Examples: your baby blanket, your prom dress, every birthday card you ever received.

6. METHODS OF DECLUTTERING:

- A. **The Four Box Method**: A common method in which you label four boxes, bags or containers. Then, you sort items into four designated categories - Donate, Sale, Keep or Trash

- B. **The Purge Method**: A method in which you get rid of items that you do not need, use or want immediately.

- C. **The Quick Sweep Method**: A method in which you go into a room and use a bag or bin to collect everything that does not belong. Then, you place those items in their designated area.

- D. **The Snowball Method**: A method in which you declutter a area in a room with a minimal amount of objects first to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Then, you work your way to areas with progressively more items. Example: Start by declutter your nightstand drawers, then tackle your chest of drawers and then your closet.

- E. **The Focal Point Method**: A method involving cleaning and removing clutter from a focal point in a room to feel a sense of accomplishment and to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the project.

6. QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN DECLUTTERING AN AREA:

- A. Do I use this item?
- B. When was the last time I used this?
- C. Do I need this item?
- D. Do I foresee myself using this item in the next few months?
- E. Is the item broken or damaged?
- F. If so, how likely am I to fix it?

WORDS OF WISDOM

***Every item should have a home - a safe, designated space.
A famous quote by Benjamin Franklin says it best:
"A place for everything and everything in its place."***