

DECLUTTERING YOUR HOME: ROOM BY ROOM

General Information & Guidelines

By Davette Rucker, B.S. OTR/L
(Session 1 – May 19, 2020)

The topic of this seminar is decluttering your home room by room. 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 collection of things lying about in an unorganized mass
- Items that you do not use, need or want
- A lot of disorganized stuff in one place

2. OBSTACLES TO DE-CLUTTERING YOUR HOME:

- Lack of time
- Lack of energy
- Decreased motivation
- Decreased mobility or strength to lift, sort or move items

3. THE BENEFITS OF DECREASING CLUTTER IN YOUR HOME:

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

4. WHY DO YOU WANT TO DECLUTTER? WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

Identifying your goals for decluttering will help you to prioritize tasks to meet your goal.

- To create a new organizational system

- To prepare a room for a relative or guest
- To get rid of visible objects in an open area
- To make your environment safer
- 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** - Examples: expired food, broken items that you have not fixed in months, old newspapers, and 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 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, and 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 an 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, and 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.

7. QUESTION TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN DECLUTTERING AN AREA:

- Do I use this item?
- When was the last time I used this?
- Do I need this item?
- Do I foresee myself using this item in the next few months?
- Is the item broken or damaged?
- 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."***

DECLUTTERING YOUR HOME: ROOM BY ROOM

Decluttering Your Bathroom

By Davette Rucker, B.S. OTR/L

(Session 2 – May 26, 2020)

The topic of this seminar is decluttering your home - room by room. This is part two of the seminar. We are going to briefly review the general information and guidelines for decluttering from part one of this seminar. Then, we will discuss how to declutter the bathroom using those guidelines.

1. WHAT IS YOUR GOAL? WHY DO YOU WANT TO DECLUTTER YOUR BATHROOM?

- To organize bathroom items
- To improve efficiency to find item when bathing or grooming
- To improve safety/prevent injuries
- To minimize clutter due to guests or family visiting

2. DO YOU NEED HELP TO BEGIN THIS TASK?

- Who do you want to help you?
- What day is the person available to help you?

3. WHICH METHOD(S) WILL WORK BEST TO DECLUTTER YOUR BATHROOM?

- The Four Box Method
- The Purge Method
- The Quick Sweep Method
- The Snowball Method
- The Focal Point Method

4. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN YOU ARE DECLUTTERING THE BATHROOM.

- Do I use this item?
- When was the last time I used this?
- Do I really need this item?
- Do I already have one?
- Do I foresee myself using this item in the next few months?
- Is the item broken or damaged? If so, how likely am I to fix it?

5. ITEMS TO THAT ARE USUALLY CONSIDERED CLUTTER IN THE BATHROOM.

Old, broken or expired make-up	Make-up you do not like or use	Almost empty & empty bottles	Slivers of soap
Old towels or towels with holes	Old or dried-up nail polish	Lotions you dislike or do not use	Soaps you dislike or do not use
Broken mirrors & other broken items	Old or frayed toothbrushes	Perfumes you dislike or do not wear any longer	Samples or trial size items you do not use or want
Old and expired cleaning supplies	Old bath toys, if you have children	Duplicates items (Duplicates can be kept in a bathroom cabinet, supply closet or similar area.)	Old or worn bath mats and rugs

6. ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- After you have decluttered and cleaned your bathroom, look for bathroom organizers and containers at stores like: Bed, Bath & Beyond or The Container Store. Try to find items that will help you to create a designated space for the items that will you have decided to keep in your bathroom.
- Before buying organizers or containers, take measurements of the area first.
- When shopping for items online and in the store, be sure to check the length, width and height of the item to ensure that it will fit the area.

- Save you receipts until you are sure that the item fits the area and meets your needs.

WORDS OF WISDOM

***“Simplifying your space doesn’t need to happen in a day.
Set a goal. Take it step by step. You’ll gain momentum!”***

- The Unclutter Angel

DECLUTTERING YOUR HOME: ROOM BY ROOM

Decluttering Your Kitchen

By Davette Rucker, B.S. OTR/L

(Session 3 – June 2, 2020)

The topic of this seminar is decluttering your home - room by room. This is part three of the seminar. We will discuss how to declutter the kitchen.

1. WHAT IS YOUR GOAL? WHY DO YOU WANT TO DECLUTTER YOUR KITCHEN?

- To organize kitchen items
- To improve efficiency to find item when preparing meals and cooking
- To improve safety/prevent injuries
- To minimize pests
- To improve the appearance of the kitchen because guests or family are visiting or you are hosting an event.

2. DO YOU NEED HELP TO BEGIN THIS TASK?

- Who do you want to help you?
- What day is the person available to help you?

3. WHICH METHOD(S) WILL WORK BEST TO DECLUTTER YOUR KITCHEN?

- The Four Box Method
- The Purge Method
- The Quick Sweep Method
- The Snowball Method
- The Focal Point Method

4. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN YOU ARE DECLUTTERING THE KITCHEN.

- Do I use this item?
- When was the last time I used this?
- Do I really need this item?
- Do I already have one?
- Will I have the money to replace the item, if I get rid of it and need it in the future?
- Am I worried that I will not be able to replace it if I get rid of the item?
- Am I keeping this item to hold onto the past?
- Do I foresee myself using this item in the next few months?
- Is the item broken or damaged? If so, how likely am I to fix it?

5. ITEMS TO THAT ARE USUALLY CONSIDERED CLUTTER IN THE KITCHEN.

Mismatched containers	Old spices	Expired food items	Unused cookbooks
To-go or used product containers	Excessive food storage containers	Plastic shopping bags or an excessive amount	Old cleaning products or products that are no longer used
Chipped or cracked dishes	Plastic utensils	Take out menus	Old jars & vases
Odd cups or an excessive amount of cups and glasses	Damaged pots and pans	Odd utensils or an excessive amount of utensils	Melted or stained plastic food containers and lids
Specialty dishes you no longer use	Old or unused kitchen gadgets or appliances	Broken kitchen gadgets and appliances	Cups and containers with missing pieces
Condiment packets	Old dish cloths	Food that you do not like or want	Old coupons
Excessive or old kitchen decorations not of value: knick-knacks, what-knots	Broken tables or chairs		

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To-go containers	Excessive food storage containers	Plastic shopping bags or an excessive amount	Old or poor cleaning products
Chipped or cracked dishes	Plastic utensils	Take out menus	Old jars & vases
Odd cups or an excessive amount of cups and glasses	Damaged pots and pans	Odd utensils or an excessive amount of utensils	Melted or stained plastic food containers and lids
Specialty dishes you no longer use	Old or unused kitchen gadgets or appliances	Broken kitchen gadgets	Cups and containers with missing pieces
Condiment packets	Old dish cloths	Food that you do not like or want	Old coupons
Old kitchen decorations not of value (knick-knacks, what knots) or an excessive amount.			

6. ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- Decrease the amount of dishes, utensils, cups and glasses for your current household size and lifestyle. If you no longer host events and parties and there are just two people in your household, you probably do not need twenty glasses, dinner plates or forks.
- Remove all items from kitchen drawers. Use a vacuum cleaner with the nozzle attachment to vacuum any debris or small particles from inside the drawers, instead of trying to remove them. Then, wipe the inside of the drawers with a clean, damp cloth or paper towel.

WORDS OF WISDOM

“Clutter is anything that doesn’t belong in a space – whether it is because it belongs elsewhere in your home, or it doesn’t belong in your home any longer.”
