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Rid your house of clutter

Some people fill their homes with memories, packing room after room with objects that have some connection to their past but no purpose in the present.

There's nothing wrong with saving a few mementos that recall people we have loved or victories we have achieved. But too much "memory clutter" can interfere with the enjoyment of our lives and our homes.

Examples: Your guest bedroom is so full of boxes of children's clothes that your now-grown children can't sleep there when they visit...or you dislike your living room furniture but continue to use it because you inherited it from your grandmother.

Here's how to get rid of memory clutter...

POWER OF THE PAST

Objects have power, and those linked to important events and people from our past have more power than most. Some of us unconsciously fear that if we dispose of these possessions, we also will lose the memories that we associate with them. These could include memories of grown children...deceased relatives...or long-ago accomplishments.

Occasionally, we keep objects from our past not because they are linked to our memories but because they are linked to our dreams. Getting rid of such things can feel like we are surrendering these dreams.

Example: A man in his 50s still has all of his college textbooks and term papers. He studied English in college and hoped to become a novelist but instead ended up in real estate. The college coursework is all he has to connect himself to the world of writing. Throwing it away would mean confronting the fact that he never will be a writer.

Objects inherited from people important to us often are saved even when these objects are unloved and unused. Heirs feel that they have been entrusted with inherited possessions and that disposing of them would

represent a violation of this trust.

Example: A woman kept all of her departed grandmother's possessions in a storage unit for 26 years.



CLEAR YOUR THINKING

Attempts to remove memory clutter from a home often fail. Though homeowners might resolve time and again to get rid of these things, the memories and emotions come flooding back as soon as the old boxes are opened. Faced with these strong feelings, they can't follow through.

We must adjust the way we think before attempting to clear away memory clutter. Rather than focus on the objects themselves, focus on the space that they occupy.

- Stand outside the room in your home that is most filled with memory clutter. Imagine the role that you would like this room to serve in your life.

Think of a few words that best describe what you want from the room. With a master bedroom, these words might include "peaceful" or "intimate." With a basement, they might include "exercise space" or "workshop."

Step into the room, and remove anything that does not help you achieve this vision.

Example: If the boxes of mementos in your basement take up the space that you would like to use as a workshop, those boxes must go. If there's heavy furniture you want to get rid of, put a "stickie" on it and arrange for it to be removed from the room later.

Repeat this process with each room in your home.

(Continued on back page)



Let's Talk

Dr. Christine Gonzalez,
Integrative Pharmacist

A Perfect Cleanse

Have you been feeling sluggish, congested, constipated, or bloated?

Perhaps you have difficulty losing weight, joint pain, blemished skin, body odor, or unpleasant smelling stools? With spring coming to an end and summer approaching, now is the ideal time to consider a detox with the help of a cleansing program. As always, we are here to support you during this process. For the month of June, Uptown will be offering a free booklet full of simple and easy whole-food based (detox friendly) recipes when you purchase the "Perfect Cleanse" kit by Garden of Life. I have personally researched this product and believe it offers you, our customers, the convenience and results you have been looking for.

Detox (short for detoxification) usually refers to a regimen for removing environmental or dietary toxins from the body to support good health. As a result of living in today's society, we are exposed to many sources of toxins--from diets full of processed foods, bad fats, artificial ingredients, and alcohol to pharmaceutical residues and pesticides in our water supply. While our liver (the body's natural detox organ) does its best to keep filtering out toxins, sometimes it just can't keep up. Over time, our intestines get backed up and this can cause the body to reabsorb toxins instead of eliminating them out of our system.

When considering a cleanse, one of the most convenient methods is to use a 10 or 14 day kit. These will come with specific formulations (fiber, probiotics, and herbal supplements) to take and will guide you step-by-step through the process. The most noticeable effect from a

Things Only Women Understand

10. Cats' facial expressions
 9. The need for the same style of shoes in different colors
 8. Why bean sprouts aren't just weeds
 7. Fat clothes
 6. Taking a car trip without trying to beat your best time
 5. The difference between beige, off-white, and eggshell
 4. Cutting your bangs to make them grow
 3. Eyelash curlers
 2. The inaccuracy of every bathroom scale ever made
- And the number One thing only women understand:*
1. OTHER WOMEN

cleansing program will be an increase in bowel movements. I recommend the "Perfect Cleanse" product because it does not contain any stimulant laxatives and therefore, will not interfere with your daily schedule. Keep in mind that you must also eat a clean, whole-food based diet during your cleanse. This means eating whole grains, quality protein, and lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. You should refrain from caffeine, alcohol, and artificial ingredients during this time.

While it is true that restoring normal bowel function through a cleanse will help shed some pounds initially, detox should be thought more as a way to reset and prepare for better habits. It is equally important to make dietary and lifestyle changes that will reduce your exposure to toxins after your cleansing program. This is why we are offering you the free recipe booklet with each "Perfect Cleanse" purchase to help keep you going on this path. As the staff Integrative Pharmacist, I am always available for questions or support. At Uptown, our mission is to provide our customers with solutions for improving their health.

Common Medication Mistakes

Many people unknowingly decrease the effectiveness of the drugs they take--or worse, cause themselves significant harm--by mismanaging their pills.

MISTAKE #3:

TAKING DRUGS THAT MAY INTERACT

Nine out of 10 pharmacies now have sophisticated drug-dispensing software that screens for drug interactions. Every time you come in with a new prescription, the pharmacist will run a computer check. If the drug does interact with any other drug you're taking, the pharmacist alerts you. But such systems work only if you have all your prescriptions filled at one pharmacy. If you patronize different drugstores, you risk subjecting yourself to side effects and/or not receiving the drug's full benefits. You may even fail to discover that you have two prescriptions for the same drug from different doctors—and are double-dosing yourself.

Self-defense: Stick to one pharmacy. If you're taking several drugs and are uncertain about the interactions, ask your pharmacist or doctor for a "brown bag" session. Put all the drugs you take in a bag and bring it in. Review the name and dosage of each drug and what each is for.

Be sure to schedule your brown bag session in advance. Otherwise, the pharmacist or physician may be too busy to spend enough time with you.



Hints from JoAnn

CLEAN LAUNDRY

We know that dirty laundry is germ-laden. In fact, it has been associated with outbreaks of salmonellosis and hepatitis A, along with rotavirus, the most common

cause of severe diarrhea. But seemingly clean laundry also can be loaded with bacteria and viruses.

Fact: The average pair of used underwear contains 0.1 gram of fecal matter, one of the main sources of infectious organisms. Up to 99% of the organisms are killed during an average wash cycle, but that still leaves about one million infectious agents.

Self-defense: Wash undergarments in hot water (140°F or hotter)—about 95% of American households use cooler water. Add bleach to the wash cycle for whites—three-quarter cup per washer load. It will kill an additional 90% of the organisms. A 45-minute dry cycle can kill the majority of any remaining pathogens.

Also important: Wash your hands immediately after transferring damp clothes to the dryer. Damp clothes are more likely to harbor germs than dry.

RESTAURANT TABLETOPS

Every year in the US, there are about 76 million cases of food-borne gastroenteritis, with symptoms ranging from mild diarrhea to serious liver or kidney disease. Many of these cases originate in the home, but restaurants also can be bacterial hot spots.

When swabbed restaurant tabletops were examined, it was found that 70% were contaminated with coliform (fecal) bacteria, such as E. coli, organisms that are commonly found on meats as well as on vegetables and in water and soil.

In the same study, it was found that the bacterial load on tabletops was 45 times greater after the tables were wiped. **Reason:** The damp cloths used in restaurants are supposed to be sanitized between uses, but this usually is not done. The cloths tend to stay damp for long periods, which encourages bacterial growth. More than 89% of restaurant dishcloths were contaminated—and the bacterial level on bar dishcloths was even higher.

Self-defense: When you go to a restaurant, carry disposable disinfectant wipes and clean the table yourself. If you're at a bar, wipe the area in front of you with a disinfectant wipe—or spread a paper napkin to rest your elbows on. Also, clean your hands with a disinfectant wipe after touching restaurant menus and those gadgets that vibrate when your table is ready—both are very rarely

Honey and Cinnamon

(Sixth in a series)

According to Weekly World News, a magazine in Canada, research by western scientists supports honey and cinnamon's use in the following health conditions

PIMPLES:

Make a powder paste with three tablespoons of honey and one teaspoon of cinnamon. Apply this paste on the pimples before sleeping and wash it next morning with warm water. If done daily for two weeks, it removes pimples from the root.

SKIN INFECTIONS:

Applying honey and cinnamon powder in equal parts on the affected parts can sooth eczema, ringworm and all types of skin infections.

WEIGHT LOSS:

Drink honey and cinnamon powder boiled in one cup of water daily in the morning 1/2 hour before breakfast on an empty stomach and at night before sleeping. If taken regularly, it can help support a healthy weight. Also, drinking of this mixture regularly may help reduce fat from accumulating in the body even though the person may eat a high calorie diet.

Uptown Drug & Gift Shop offers a large selection of both elegant and eclectic jewelry. Stop by to pick out that perfect gift of jewelry for someone special!



It's going to take me a little longer to answer my e-mails now...



(Continued from page 1)

PICK AND CHOOSE

Think about the person, event or accomplishment that these objects recall, then sort through the clutter in search of the one or two items that best represent this to you. The items that you select should put a smile on your face and make your heart sing. It could be an old chest that your father refinished or your mother's favorite china. If an object rekindles problems from the past, save something else instead.

If you have numerous small items, mount the ones that you have selected in a shadow box--a type of picture frame that is deep enough to hold objects, not just photos. Shadow boxes can be purchased almost anywhere that picture frames are sold. Hang the resulting display on a wall in your home where you will see it every day. If your memory clutter involves mementos from more than one person or event, repeat this process with a new shadow box for each.

Example: A woman's fondest memories of her grandmother were of the time they spent cooking together. From among the many possessions that she inherited, she chose a few recipe cards written in her grandmother's handwriting...and two kitchen tools that she could picture in her grandmother's hands. The woman mounted these objects together in a shadow box and hung it in her kitchen. It makes her smile each time she sees it.

Displaying one or two objects in a prominent place in your home honors and preserves your treasured memories far better than keeping a great number of items in your basement or attic ever could. This can free you to get rid of the rest of your memory clutter without feeling that you are throwing away a treasured memory or dishonoring a departed loved one.

GIVING IT AWAY

For objects that you would like to give away, contact relatives and friends who might have fond memories of their own related to your memory clutter. Ask these people if they would like the mementoes. It often is psychologically easier to give such things away to others who will value them than it is to dispose of them in some other way.

Examples: Your siblings or grown children might value objects that have been in your family for generations... old friends might want mementoes related to the experiences that you shared with them.

When others express interest in taking some memory clutter, schedule a date when you will drop it off or they'll come to pick it up. Otherwise, you might be forced to hang on to this clutter for months on their behalf.

Offering family-related items to relatives before disposing of them frees you from any need to feel personally responsible for failing to preserve these things for future

generations. Your relatives' decisions not to take these items into their own homes are tantamount to a family-wide agreement that they were not worth saving.

If your memory clutter includes antiques, collectibles or other objects that have monetary value but that you do not like, sell these things and spend the money on something that you will enjoy. Doing this does not dishonor the person or event associated with the original item--it actually preserves the memory. You will be reminded of the person or event whenever you use the new possession. Alternatively, you could spend the money on an experience that you will remember fondly.

Example: Two brothers sold the furniture they inherited from their mother and spent the proceeds on dinner at a fancy restaurant on the anniversary of her death. They shared stories about their mother all evening. The dinner is a memory that they still treasure.

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