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Spring clean your life

Traditionally Spring has been the perfect time to clear out the cobwebs and clutter in the house in preparation for summer and the onslaught of family and friends over the holiday period. However this Spring, why not extend the de-cluttering task to include a clear-out of everything that no longer serves you in other areas of your life? A mighty task, but one that is definitely worthwhile. Research has proven that eliminating clutter helps to de-stress, increase productivity and improve your overall mood.

This newly created "space" will open up room in your life for new and inspired activities. Perhaps a new hobby, straightening out your finances or a diet and skincare makeover...

So where do you start and how do you make the time?

Map out your schedule

Many of us do not effectively plan or schedule our priorities, leaving little time for tasks that we would like to pursue. Rather than let time slip away unnoticed, work out how you can effectively organise your time. Here are a few suggestions:

- Start with a daily plan: Create a list of priority tasks that you would like to have completed by the end of the day. This way you are setting yourself goals and your intentions are clear. As you complete each goal, cross it off your list, giving you a sense of satisfaction and motivating you to continue.
- Set a time frame to complete: It's easy to procrastinate and get distracted so set yourself an achievable timeframe and be conscious not to cut into your reserved time.
- Use a calendar daily: Utilise alarm reminders, colour code various tasks and set to-do lists. These are all tools to help you become aware of how you are spending your time, especially if you are a visual person.

Pursue a new hobby

We tend to push aside our interests and passions in place of household chores and our busy everyday commitments. Add fun back into your routine and find a new hobby.

- Schedule a time in your week for your hobby.
- Designate a place in your home devoted to your hobbies or projects.
- Get friends involved: Motivate one another.

Straighten out your finances

If you cringe at the sight of a bill, it may be a great time to rethink about your finances. Don't ignore the situation, work at finding a solution.

- Set yourself a realistic budget you are able to stick with.
- On the first day of a new month, make it a habit to grab a receipt for everything you purchase. Stack and review receipts at the end of the month. This will help you see where your money is going.
- Make it a rule to never purchase expensive items on impulse. Wish lists and carts are great places to hold items to allow you at least 24 hours cooling off, before you pull out the credit card.

De-stress

It is only natural to experience stress however, stress can easily get out of hand if we forget to take time out for ourselves. Why not try;

- Yoga, meditation or visualisation exercises to quiet the mind and help to encourage calm, focus and clarity.
- Spend time outdoors, go for a 10 minute walk or attend an exercise class.



- Take short breaks every two hours if you work in front of a computer.

Organise your diet

Whether it's caused by lack of motivation or habit, we often end up eating the same meals over again with little variation. If we stick to a particular diet we may be missing out on beneficial nutrients and minerals.

- Where possible, choose organic.
- Make or prepare your breakfast the night before.
- Thicken soups or sauces with cauliflower instead of cornflour.
- Freeze bananas or berries for a quick breakfast smoothie.
- Pre-plan meals during the weekend and freeze large portions ready for the new week.
- Cook something new each fortnight

Eliminate clutter

Clutter can make a space look and feel disorganised, making it difficult to clean. We need to ask ourselves, what exactly is causing the clutter?

- If the clutter is due to paperwork and bills, purchase a filing cabinet or binder.
- Say goodbye to unused items you "might" use: If you haven't used the item or even opened the box, donate it, give it to a friend or if it is not salvageable throw it out.
- Create a space in your home or office for essentials; keys, wallet, phone and stationary.
- Unsubscribe from mailing lists: Unsubscribe from emails that will end up going straight into your junk folder or remove any 'club cards' which you do not use that take up space in your wallet.

Spring is the perfect time to declutter, re-organise and clear out what causes us distress or grief. If you think you are in need of a spring clean in an area of your life, chose the area you want to focus on and make it happen.

