



The Clutter Remedy: A Guide to Getting Organized for Those Who Love Their Stuff

Marla Stone

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Marla Stone's *The Clutter Remedy* approaches the issue of possessions that overwhelm people's lives in cohesive and compassionate terms, addressing the root causes of clutter and suggesting holistic methods of emotional healing and behavioral modification.

Clutter turns homes into hovels; the book suggests that having too much may be attributed to a cocooning need for self-protection, or to past experiences with lack and scarcity. In many cases, maintained items have sentimental value; they may represent aspirations, too, as with garages full of athletic equipment or slews of art supplies gathered by a person who longs to paint or draw.

Stone encourages honesty in assessing one's relationship to clutter, and insists that people allow for self-care and time to reflect. Once individual motivations are explored, a plan for phasing out clutter can be developed, along with exercises like visualizing ideal environments and working to maintain an organized, but not sterile, living space.

Beyond this psychological approach to disorder and excess are intriguing suggestions for "decluttering" feelings and speech patterns. Being more forthright about personal needs is encouraged, as is speaking in direct terms, such as saying "I will" as opposed to "I'll try" or "I might." The book suggests redecorating in a way that keeps vital energy flowing, with mirrors polished for truthful reflection and dried or artificial flowers discarded. It even suggests that portraits of celebrities who died tragically be avoided so as not to attract negativity or addiction.

At the core of *The Clutter Remedy* is a strong message of empowerment: that, while controlling a morass of ever-growing stuff may seem hopeless, all can be managed with effort, focus, and the desire to live an emotionally and spatially healthier life.

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