



THE 14-DAY CHALLENGE

common issues

DAY 2 | CALM & CLUTTER-FREE

Here are some common barriers people come up against when they're trying to declutter – plus some strategies to overcoming them. Which of these sound like you?

issue 1

Keeping things 'just in case'

Just in case of what? Why do you have three potato peelers? Just in case you need to peel potatoes and your first two break and the shops are shut or you don't have a spare \$2 or you can't borrow a peeler from a friend or neighbour in a potato-peeling emergency.

If all this DOES eventuate then you going to kick yourself for donating that third potato peeler!

Seriously though, this is a huge barrier for many of us. I often look at shoeboxes or jars and think 'maybe I'll need this one day'. But the truth is most of the time, that day never arrives and if it does it's no big deal. If one of my kids needs a jar for school – we just eat more jam that week!



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The key is to be very specific about the circumstances where you might need the item and then be realistic about the chances of them happening AND the impact of not having that item.

issue 2

Holding onto things for sentimental reasons

It can be very hard to let go of things from our past or with sentimental value. Even if they've been hidden away in a box at the top of the cupboard, never used and never appreciated.

It helps to remember that memories are not within the objects themselves, so it OK to let them go.

Also remember, you don't have to get rid of everything to live a calm and clutter-free life. If you have a few items with sentimental value, by all means, keep them.

But ask yourself these questions first:

1. Does this item make me happy?
2. Is this item stopping me from moving forward?



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If you're holding onto something that makes you unhappy or stops you from moving on then ask yourself why you are keeping it. Perhaps if you did let them go you'd feel a huge weight lift off your shoulders.

You should also consider your storage options. Do you have the room to store these items? And if these items are so special why are they hidden away?

Here are some ideas for keeping sentimental clutter:

- Keep a token item or a small selection of items.
- Take photos of the items before you donate/throw away.
- Use the photos (or the items themselves if possible) to create a scrapbook or blog.
- Repurpose the items into artworks.
- Just use them. Some items only have value when they're used. For example, Is there any reason to hold onto your old teddy bear? Perhaps it would bring you more joy to see it being loved by your own children.



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issue 3

Feeling too guilty to throw things away

It's hard to get rid of things you've been given. Even the ugly, annoying things you don't want, need or have room to store.

For many of us, we feel guilty getting rid of items that people have chosen for us.

It might help to remember that the object is not the person. And if that person knew that the item they gave you – in addition to all your other clutter – is weighing you down and stopping you from living a calm and clutter-free life, then they'd probably understand that you'd need to get rid of it. They gave you a gift because they love you and care for you – they want you to be happy.

Also - remember that people often have terrible memories. You might be agonising over that ugly photo frame your aunt gave you while she has no memory of it whatsoever! Remember if you don't love it or use it – get rid of it!



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common issues

DAY 2 | CALM & CLUTTER-FREE

issue 2f

Keeping things because they're 'still good'

This is a really tough one for many people. Why would you throw away something that is 'still good'? Good question!

Here are two reasons:

Reason 1: You don't like it.

Reason 2: You don't use it.

Those are two very good reasons! If you don't like something and you don't use it, then you really should get rid of it – even if it is 'still good'.

Of course, getting rid of something doesn't have to mean throwing away or wasting something in good condition. You can donate things to charity, browse through the 'wanted to buy' section on marketplace, sell things online, have a garage sale or even put them up for 'free' on local sell pages – everyone loves free stuff and you might be helping out a person in need.



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common issues

DAY 2 | CALM & CLUTTER-FREE

issue 5

Holding on to the 'maybe' pile

This is the 'unfulfilled dreams' pile. The skinny jeans, the tennis rackets, the untouched craft supplies, that huge book you're never going to read.

Sometimes letting go of this type of clutter feels like letting go of your dreams or admitting you've failed to achieve them.

But in reality this type of clutter is stopping you from moving forward.

It doesn't make you happy to look at these items. They remind you of the past and of a future you imagined.

Look at where you in life now and make peace with the idea that it might not have been where you thought you would be. Maybe it's better and maybe if you let go of the past it has the potential to be even more amazing.

You will find that letting go of these items can be extremely liberating.



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common issues

DAY 2 | CALM & CLUTTER-FREE

issue 6

Keeping things because they were expensive

The leather jacket you paid good money for 15 years ago has been sitting in your cupboard untouched for the past 13 years. It might have cost you a lot then but how much is it really worth to you now?

If you saw the exact same jacket in a shop window today how much would you pay for it?

The answer is probably nothing – you wouldn't buy it. And if you wouldn't buy it, why are you keeping it?

If it is genuinely worth something (and it is always worth checking online if you suspect it might be) then sell it.

The money you get will be worth much more than a dusty old jacket that's taking up precious cupboard and mind space.