

Innocent Spirit gardens & interiors

Got Clutter?

The home and the body are reflections of each other. What is not attended to in the personal-body will most likely show up as unattended health in the environment-body. "Environment body" in this sense means the container of space that holds your life – your own body, your workplace, house, relationships, community, etc.

From a feng shui perspective, the space between the things in our home is just as telling as the things in the home. This is why feng shui is often referred to as the science of arrangement - the relationship between things. Energy flows, such as light, electricity, running water and fresh air are common elements of energy. The common body of knowledge in physics talks about strong electromagnetic force and weak electromagnetic force. From large to the small, the results of these forces are visible to the human eye and some are not. So, in feng shui you can imagine the results of a strong current to be obvious and visible, evidence of natural energy forces, while the results of forces such as attention, intention and perception to be more subtle, almost invisible, yet all these powerful forces still exist whether we readily perceive their influences or not. Energies such as intention are brought to the system by its occupants. Where we place our attention, and where we ignore it, are places that bring forth or inhibit balance. Where intention is directed, a cleansing occurs, like water passing over rocks. Where one avoids, stagnation occurs, such as unmoved water in a pool.

Clutter and disorganization in the home speaks to impaction and confusion, both signs of unease in the body and mind. If the clutter is relatively new and one is distressed by it, there may be an acute "inflammation" at work in the body. When clutter is normalized as a lifestyle, one might find a person dealing with chronic systemic toxicity or long term weight issues that are accepted by the person as unsolvable. A direct example of this connection is where clutter forms, these areas are not cleared by air currents. Dust, dander and other lively critters find these undisturbed havens. Not only are the human occupants directly affected by these possible causes of illness, one can assume that as they no longer notice the environmental stagnation, they also do not perceive this type of accumulation in the body. Mental habits may also form that the person may not even realize. Mental clutter takes up a lot of space and time as well, as a person may not realize the thought cycles and eddies they are trapped in.

It is all related, and in that, the changes that happen to one aspect of our lives proves potential help for all aspects of our lives -heart, mind, body and spirit.

For folks who find themselves in this situation, here are some questions to consider:

Where is the clutter most concentrated in the home - all over or in a few specific rooms?

Does the collection of receipts, statements, unopened mail, magazines go back to a specific year?

Does the resident completely ignore the clutter or is the resident in a cycle of clean up and disarray?

Can the occupants work to mitigate the clutter alone or is outside assistance needed?



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When one chooses to address the situation, here are some tips:

1. Don't blame yourself. Clutter is a symptom. It is not a character trait or an intention. Clutter is a clue to what is going on in the person's whole health system, including body, mind and heart.
2. Open your perception. For a long term situation that seems to have no reason, some extra care is needed. Just addressing the clutter without respecting its genesis is like bandaging a mysterious wound without exploring its cause. Take it slow. Be curious. Address the clutter with kindness, and commit your time and energy as you would other endeavors in your life you truly care about.
3. Make a plan. Visualize your space without the clutter. Ask yourself, what would the space be like when the clutter is no longer that, but organized, distributed, in use? Imagine: how will your body feel when the home is clear of obstacles? See the whole picture and plan which area to address first, second, third and so on. A sequence of tasks will emerge. For example, clearing the easy stuff first - like recycling - can make a small area available to sort the more difficult stuff.
4. Write your plan down. You will get confused. Having your plan written and in a place you can see will help you stay aligned. Trust it to tell you what to do next. Check off your accomplishments.
5. Take one step at a time. The overall goal is accomplishment, not to scare yourself off. Remember the description above: In a stagnant system, energies are being sapped, including your own. Remember that your exhaustion and feelings of being overwhelmed are temporary and as soon as your clutter starts clearing, energy will naturally return to you and aid you as you progress. Overcoming that initial inertia is one of the most difficult tasks.
6. Honor your history. As you break up the impacted areas, you may find some gems, things long forgotten and kept safe under the clutter. Put these loved objects aside in a newly cleared area just for them. Create a sacred space where you can see these items. Commit to keeping this area clean and honored. This not only respects what you have been protecting all this time, but readily differentiates what you care about from what you can now let go.
7. Be open to change. As you explore the physical space around you and address it, you will learn things about yourself. Again, be kind. Make notes about what you want to change, and of those, choose 2-3 small commitments you can make to alter the course going forward.
8. Be courageous. As one addresses the health of the home, one can expect their personal health to be affected. Sometimes this is uncomfortable, so don't be discouraged by disrupting the status quo. Keep at it. Be in contact with your health care provider in case you start noticing symptoms in your own body you had been ignoring.
9. Ask for help. If the task is too overwhelming, a fresh pair of non-judgmental eyes can help you come to a more gentle perspective of the situation. Also, when asking for help, communicate clearly only the specific task or tasks you wish from a friend, loved one, or even a paid home service provider. Staying specific helps reduce feelings of being overwhelmed for you and your aid, and they will be better able to help you take steps in the right direction when you take the lead.



Unsolicited advice:

Keep your commitment to yourself, keep it private. Like your own secret that is completely within your control. A person dealing with such pressure as clutter can undo their own best intentions by making promises out loud. Avoid piling another layer of energy pressures on yourself. Know yourself. Be honest with yourself. Keep your commitment to yourself if making such statements aloud works against you.

For those people who are fastidious, a little mess every once in a while can also be healthy. For those of us where unfinished business piles up regularly, we can take heart and know we are not alone. To the extent that unaddressed clutter is related to unmet needs that indicate medical or counseling support, it make sense to look at the situation as a helpful sign that something protective inside of us is activated to encase us, to line the nest with extra layers against something we are concerned about, past present or future. It is time to breathe in the hope and the knowledge that you are strong enough to address what ever that is.