

4 Reasons Why People Keep Things

Intrinsic – Beautiful

The intention is to create something out of it somehow.

A lot of creative people can fall into this category. They see something and think about an art project they can use it for. Sometimes, the projects get completed, but often, projects get postponed continuously because of the need to organize beforehand. Too much raw material and unorganized supplies make it hard to declutter.

Look for items like:

- Craft Supplies
- Scraps
- Leftover Decor
- Old Art Supplies

Helpful Hint:

Write a list of 7 projects you want to do – when organizing, if an item will not be used in one of those 7 projects, let it go.

Sentimental

Emotional connection to the memory that the item creates.

Sensitive people can be afraid that releasing an item will then cause them to forget the memory. They can also feel like they've been nominated the family historian and feel a sense of obligation. They might feel like they're doing the right thing, even if they don't really like some of the items.

Look for items like:

- Photographs
- Childhood Memorabilia
- Old Papers
- Family Records

Helpful Hint:

Offer items that you no longer want in your home to other family members or friends. Be sure to give them a specific time frame. If no one responds by the deadline, let the item go. Consider taking a picture of the item and writing the story about the item for future reference.

Useful

Practical people – Keeping things just in case it might be helpful in the future or trying to repurpose items.

They may have a desire to give things to specific people, or may feel wasteful if they just donate the item or throw it out. Some individuals experience green guilt – the desire to not fill the landfills – which can cause them to keep things they really do not want. Therefore, things do not leave the home, making it become cluttered.

Look for items like:

- Plastic Bags
- Boxes
- Containers
- Jars

Helpful Hint:

Consider limiting your purchases. If it never comes home with you, you will not have to worry about contributing to the environmental issues. You can also donate items to schools, donations centers, or senior centers. The longer you hold onto an item just in case, the longer it is being kept out of the hands of someone who could use it now, so a new one doesn't need to be made!

Knowledge – Information

The desire to read things before letting them go or keeping them for future reference.

Growing up, education and knowledge may have been a top priority in the home. They may also have a desire to learn as much as possible in case the topic comes up in a conversation. This can cause a backlog of things they feel they “need” to read, to the point that it would take weeks or months to read it all.

Look for items like:

- Out of Date Textbooks
- Old Papers or Projects
- Journals
- Magazines

Helpful Hint:

Consider letting go of reading materials older than 3 months. We read so much information from our computers and phones, that most of the times we do not get to the backlog of paper copies. New information pulls our attention with current issues or interests.

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