

## WFWP USA: The Mindful Path - Spring Cleaning

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**Simplicity boils down to two steps: Identify the essential. Eliminate the rest. - Leo Babauta**

A home clean and clear can foster increased productivity, better sleep, decreased anxiety and improved overall health. Clutter, both physical and mental, can impede our life purpose and flow - both our ability to think clearly and move safely in our homes. As a society we are shifting our view of possessions. A 2014 Harris Poll found 78 percent of millennials and 59 percent of baby boomers would pay for an experience or event rather than purchase material goods. Yet, many of us find our

homes crowded with too much stuff. This spring we can put meaning into our cleaning and help create a more spacious environment. Less is more.

Brooks Palmer, a mindfulness practitioner, encourages individuals to begin the process of removing possessions that no longer bring joy or meaning to their lives. Many homes are crowded with items that have outlived their purpose. Spring cleaning can be a mindfulness task. It is invigorating to begin sorting, purging and organizing possessions to move toward a home that is clean and clear. Research suggests decluttering is one of the healthiest tasks we can do for brain health and stress relief. The pile we remove today can be a safeguard from a potential fall tomorrow. Last spring, I took the 2022 challenge and discarded or donated 2,022 items from my home. I haven't missed any of those things.

### Clean and Clear

KC Davis, author of "How to Keep House while Drowning," offers a quick system of sorting a room. She believes cluttered rooms can be sorted into the categories of trash, laundry/shoes, dishes, items that have a place, and items that have no place. The goal is a livable, functional space; it doesn't have to be perfect. Watch the KC magic on this YouTube video: [youtu.be/Pe9NBn67yxU](https://youtu.be/Pe9NBn67yxU).

### Goodbye Clutter

Homes can become overwhelmed with too much stuff. Begin any decluttering project at a time when you have the most energy and patience. Remember, it may have taken years for things to stack up so it can take time to clear clutter away. Try not to get discouraged. A great way to clear stuff from our homes is to sort them into the categories of items to recycle, shred, donate, gift, or discard as trash. Some people like to start with one category, for example gathering all the recycling and remove them before moving onto the next category. Others find it more helpful to get started, by organizing boxes with labels for easy sorting of multiple items. You can arrange boxes with labels such as recycle, shred, donate, gifts, and trash. It is important to get started and stay motivated, so rooms become more functional and livable. Progress is progress. Friends, family, or a professional organizer can often lend a hand so the monumental becomes manageable.

By clearing the clutter from our homes, we can become more intentional about our purpose and realize our personal joy. Decluttering allows us to direct our attention and time to what matters most to us. Clean and clear is achievable one box or bag at a time. May March be the beginning of a fresh start. As you get started, you may want to add a touch of vitality - think fresh flowers or a plant! Happy Spring Cleaning!

Marilyn Halpern is the founder and executive director of Aspen Care Services. This locally owned business provides medical power of attorney, care management and professional guardianship services in the Denver Metro area. For more information visit - [www.aspencareservices.com](http://www.aspencareservices.com) or [www.aginglifecare.org](http://www.aginglifecare.org). Photo credit: Jack Susons

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