



## Curing Clutter



Many of us enjoy apartment living and globally it is rapidly growing as a preferred lifestyle due to the desire for a more simple way of life. All you need to maintain is the floor space that falls within your apartment and there is no worry about garden or exterior property maintenance. However, limited floor space is usually a challenge and many apartments end up looking “full” as storage and placement of personal and decorative articles tend to overwhelm a space. The cure is to remove the clutter. People tend to not see their “clutter” and live in denial – “Who me? I don’t live in a mess – I need to have what I have!”. Many of us are trapped in the vortex that is “Mass Consumerism” and forget to see that the space we live in is finite, at some point nothing else will be able to fit! Ending clutter can be the key to a happier soul and a healthier bank account. To be cured, try to see your space and your possessions from an unbiased point of view – when you walk into this home, does the space feel inviting or visually distracting? If you can’t see it for yourself, ask a discerning friend to bring a fresh view and let them know that you now want to present your apartment with a clean sense of style, warmth and order, yet not lose your personal stamp on the space.

The best way to begin is to pretend you are about to move to a new home and then follows these simple guidelines:

Step 1: Take EVERYTHING out of the room! Do this one room at a time or it may be too overwhelming!

Step 2: Bring back the most important things for the room, for example: in a living room - the sofa, chairs, TV, stereo, side tables, etc.

Step 3: Consider where all the important things sit in the space. Move them around so the space flows and you can now move freely around the room. The original placement may not have been the best, and moving the pieces around in different configurations can create a fresh perspective of the space. Then sit down, have a look around, breathe in - how do you feel? Not having competing multiple colors and textures around the room should give a feeling of liberation and freeness. Stop and think, what are you now really missing from this room?

Step 4: Start layering. Select a few things at a time to bring back into the room to help decorate it. Paintings, pictures, a vase, a rug, lamps. Do it slowly and feel how the space is changing. Pick out the best items that you want to show, but don't use all you had before. Edit for yourself, select the best things and enjoy them. It is important that the room expresses the personality of the owner, but you don't need your whole life story in one room!

Step 5: Stop! Don't go any further. You know the saying “Less is more”; well it is true, less is better in a room. Who hasn't seen an episode of TLC's “Hoarding: Buried Alive”? Put all the remaining items in storage until you are happy with the new space. Then after a few weeks, sort through it all, keep what is reusable and donate the rest to a good charity.

Clutter can quickly creep up on you; make sure if you are going to add new things, that you do it slowly and really consider their impact on the space. You may have to take something out to make room for it!

Be happy, live clutter free!

