

Chaotic Times

Organised Chaos Newsletter

"Creating SPACE -
Restoring ORDER"

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Living with untidy people!



Dear Friends of Organised Chaos

Welcome to the June edition of **Chaotic Times!**

There's one question that regularly pops up when I meet other small business owners, or when I'm giving a talk on decluttering.

The question revolves around the fact that the clutter a person has at home is not of their making. They themselves are inclined towards being tidy and organised, but those they share their home with are the exact opposite. Not surprisingly, this can be a cause of friction.

Do you have untidy people in your life?

So, whether it's untidy children, partners, or housemates - this problem has the potential to sour an otherwise harmonious relationship.

What can be done?



Well, it may sound like stating the obvious, but it really is impossible to control someone else's habits. This is why I would only ever work with a client who understands the benefit of decluttering for themselves.

But, that's not to say you can't influence others. This needs to be a subtle process, and as such results will be far from instant. But surely, any improvement is worthwhile?

Tips for encouraging others to be less cluttered

Lead by example! After all, if you can't take your own advice - then you can hardly expect others to do as you ask.

Don't nag! Tempting, I know - but this kind of approach often has opposite to the desired effect.

Take time to explain how you feel. This will appeal to their better nature. How *do* you feel surrounded by their muddle?



Be firm about shared areas. If you live alone then clearly you have free rein to be as untidy and disorganised as you like. However, if you share your living space with others then you must realise this brings with it a degree of responsibility.

If someone habitually clutters up shared living space then in my view it's time to be firm and honest with that person. Tell them (in whatever way feels appropriate), that it's fine with you that their own room is untidy, but that you do not want their stuff strewn around the rest of the house. This takes me neatly on to my next point.



**Consider - one cluttered bedroom
Preferable to a cluttered living room?**

Shared living space is always about compromise. The only way you will get a home the exact way you want it, is to live alone. As soon as you share your space there has to be an element of compromise. So, if you live with Mr, Miss, or Mrs Clutterbuck then it's worth considering giving them one room where they can indulge their untidiness. That might sound like madness, but surely that's better than you constantly nagging them that they've left piles of their stuff all round the house when you've just tidied?

The compromise also applies to you, the tidy person! It may be that in order to reduce stress levels you have to lower your standards regarding your required level of tidiness. Seek action on those things that *really* drive you mad and try to let go of the others.

Untidy children. Now, I'm not a parent, so I realise I'm walking on eggshells here! But these are my observations having worked for clients with children.

Most children appreciate a sense of order. Don't get into the habit of always clearing up after them - get them to at least help you! Invite them to declutter old toys. Kids love the idea that they've grown out of stuff. Make it easy for you children to put away their toys. In other words storage media that works for small hands. In this instance as a parent, you're in charge. So, establish some tidiness rules - but don't go overboard and become dictatorial. This is where leading by example is a great help.

If you've ended up with messy teenagers you do have to respect their space to a degree. So, if their own room looks like a bomb has gone off, just let it be. Provided the chaos doesn't spill out into other areas, it will be manageable and your teenager won't feel that his or her space has been violated by adults!

I look forward to hearing how you've tackled the challenge of a tidy family home. Maybe you're the untidy one - how have others reacted to your untidiness? Please post on my Facebook page, link below!

*Best regards,
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