

Chaotic Times

Organised Chaos Newsletter

"Creating SPACE -
Restoring ORDER"

Issue 57 - November 2013

Time to get emotional?

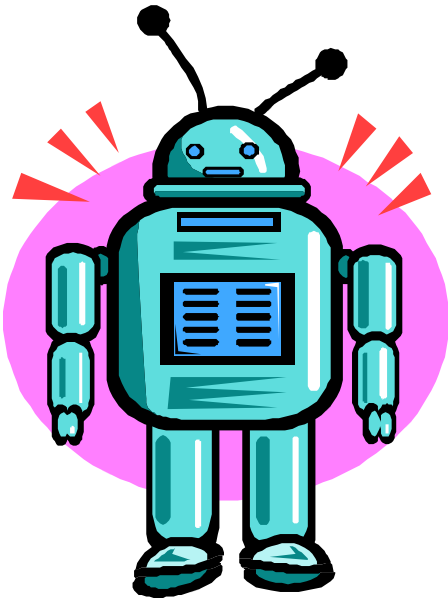


Dear Friends of Organised Chaos

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

I often meet people who tell me they just can't understand why anyone would end up with a home full of clutter. These people are operating from a logical perspective and can see only the negative impact of clutter on a person's life - so, why would anyone allow themselves to get into 'that state'?

The thing is, humans are not automatons, we have the capacity for logical thought, but this is *not* our only driver. Emotion plays a huge part, and I believe this to be a good thing on the whole.



Decluttering is *often* an emotional exercise. I suspect this is why many people resist it - because they don't wish to face their emotions. The thought is simply too scary to handle.

This makes me realise - my clients are a brave bunch of people!

Yes, they tell me they're scared, sometimes they even tell me they really don't want to tackle their clutter. But ultimately they understand that their fear is a temporary block standing between how they feel 'now' and how they *want* to feel.

I work hard to ensure my clients feel safe with me and that includes them feeling able to express exactly how they're feeling. It's important for me to know what resistance is coming up for them.

Some clients are most apologetic if they get upset. I hear them using self-critical language, judging themselves to be 'stupid' for allowing emotions to surface.

However, I simply view our emotions as a different level of human intelligence, and as such they need to be respected.



After 6 years of working with clients who want to declutter I have quite a bit of insight as to how emotions get tangled up with possessions.

Not surprisingly, it is best to 'feel' and engage with an emotion when it arises. Our society however sometimes deems that to be unacceptable. We have to be 'brave' and carry on - when the reality is that we feel devastated. So we put on a brave face and suppress our emotions.

Do you have something that you've kept which has painful associations? A recent example from a client is a dress worn to her father's funeral. Logic might have told her that the dress would be useful, that it was expensive, etc - but ultimately it was hanging in her wardrobe subtly reminding her of her father's death.

Think about your own experience. Do you have any particular painful life events that you prefer not to dwell on?

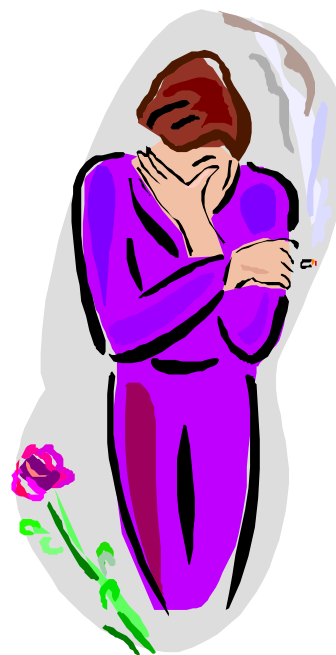
Locating any items that are connected with this event will inevitably trigger your feelings. So, deciding to part with such an item is not avoidance - but acceptance, and a desire to move on.

Maybe you think you haven't got any items like this in your home? Often such things are tucked away in the back of drawers, in the loft, or packed away in sealed boxes that haven't been opened for years.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that because you can't see them they don't have any hold over you. Imagine parting with these things. Now how do you feel?

Of course this doesn't have to be about getting rid of everything connected with the past. But it's my belief that we should aim to keep things that are a trigger for happy memories, rather than sadness and regret.

Actually allowing yourself to feel the emotions which come up when you open those boxes and drawers will help you unravel their story. It's up to you what you keep, and yes, maybe tears need to be shed.



How I can help

Maybe you have friends and relatives who have offered to help you declutter? They are perhaps more organised than you, and happy to give their time.

Sometimes this can work - but can you be sure they don't have their own agenda around what you keep and what you decide to declutter? Whether that be their own personal attachment, or their views on value, expense, waste, or charitable donations, etc - be aware that this could potentially damage your relationship.

When you hire me my sole focus is that *you* get the result that *you* want, the result that is best for *you*.

I ensure this result by talking to you about your aspirations, about what does and doesn't work for you.



Of course, if you get emotional, that's just fine by me.

Well, I would love to hear from you - does this subject strike a chord?

*Best regards,
Judith*

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