Essential Questions to Declutter

So you have committed to decluttering. Great! You have already started the process by simply making the decision to commit. Now let’s get to work.

To declutter long-term, it is essential to understand why you are cluttered. You might start by asking yourself:

1. What is working well and not working well in my life right now?
2. What is making me feel overwhelmed?
3. How/where is the clutter paralyzing me from moving forward?
4. What clutter am I managing that I don’t need to be?
5. What’s the 1st decision/step I can make to start dealing with it?

Now you are ready to act to remove the clutter. You may want to use these questions as a guide.

Q. Have I used this in the last six months?
   A. If the answer is no, it is time to dispose of it.

Q. Am I holding onto this out of obligation, expectation, or because I “should’?”
   A. If so, acknowledge the feelings and then let them go. Don’t let other people’s expectations (or your perception of their expectations) dictate what you keep in your life.

Q. Is this something I use regularly?
   A. If not, do I have a realistic plan to use this? Am I saving this just in case? Be honest with yourself, “someday” is not a plan. Have a concrete plan for use of the item, schedule it/set a deadline, and if the day comes and you haven’t used it, toss it.

Q. Do I have multiples of the same thing? Could something similar I own serve the same purpose?
   A. Be strict. Minimize repetitive items. Multifunctional is optimal here.

Q. Is this item worth the time, energy, and/or space it takes up?
   A. Be honest. Acknowledge how you are feeling and act according to your priorities.

Q. Is this something I love? Am I holding on to it for sentimental reasons?
   A. Tough love. Be strict and keep only a few of these items. Place them in a specific container. Take pictures of any mementos and then throw them away.

Q. Does this fit in my space? Does this fit with who I am today?
   A. Remember, your space is sacred. Think hard about these answers. While you may feel attached to the item, it may not actually suit your space or who you are now.

Want to learn more?

Call the Lawyer Assistance Program for free, confidential assistance at 202.347.3131