

De-cluttering, tidying, sorting call it what you will,

Firstly, if you are reading this because you hear the refrain of your mothers' voice, then turn the page. If you are reading this because you want to feel less encumbered, to like your space better, want to access things with greater ease or look after your stuff, then explore with me.

The first step is of course taking responsibility for you and your stuff. The second is figuring out how to do it. Here are a few ideas to help, because don't forget our behaviour is not what we need to change, for lasting change we need to change our beliefs, attitudes and values.

The first element I've become aware of is that although we are all whole brained we do tend to process primarily through either the left or right hemisphere of the brain. That makes for a substantial difference in our approach to things. The lefties tend to be more logical, sequential and black and white in what they do. Filing cabinets with listings A-Z are a cinch. The righties do have everything filed – in teetering piles. And they do know exactly where in the pile is the article on the Eruption of Mt Vesuvius; until some helpful person "tidies up", or a window is left open and the pile is redistributed. Of course the A-Z system is the most logical but the more random, associative righties may prefer a decorated box labeled 'Eruptions' in which to file Lancing Boils, Anger Management and the Eruption of Mt Vesuvius. All I'm saying is find what works for you, because even those of us who don't do lever arch files or battleship grey sliding drawers need some order and systems, if only so that the window can stay open. (visit www.learningidentity.co.za)

The second element that I am exploring is around our personality types and our individual ego fixations. That means what you tend to get security and identity from. Could it be that you are so busy helping other people that you prioritise their needs over your own, you help them tidy their mess whilst yours accumulates. Perhaps it's time to serve yourself and create a less stressed environment. Or, do you gather every article, artifact on your subject for fear of not finding it again. Perhaps you should consider if or why you are hoarding. Maybe you are the sort who will avoid emotional pain at any cost and therefore bounces from activity to activity. Is avoiding the de-clutter actually an avoidance of dealing with emotional issues linked to some of your stuff? Or are you the type who lives more in the past than the present and your collections are memoirs and links to those "golden times", is stuff from the past preventing you from living in the present (check out www.integrativeenneagram.co.za for more). The bottom line of this is if you have been trying to de-clutter for the past 10 springs perhaps you need to examine the cause and not just the symptoms.

As Thoreau said *"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away"*. So happy tidying and sorting- in your way.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact Fiona MacCrimmon at fiona@7-summits.co.za or visit www.7-summits.co.za

I've read a few articles on this subject but no matter how motivating and inspiring the article my stuff is still stuff; canoeing, hiking, cycling, fabric painting, photography, beading, mosaic, lead glass work, reading and that's over and above everyday bills, kitchen stuff and clothes.

I'd love to blame my mess on my mothers' lack of training (her filing cabinet and tidy away spot was under the couch cushions). And I'm not alone, a couple of my friends have been "sorting" for the past 15 years. Why oh why does stuff accrue interest but my bank balance doesn't, that's injustice!