

We Need to Address Clutter at Home and at Work, Otherwise it Can Become a Real Block in Our Lives

Most of us have a definition of our own regarding clutter. The New World Dictionary defines clutter as: "a number of things scattered in disorder; jumble." However, when we look at the way others describe it, there can be a vast difference in interpretation.

When I asked a close friend of mine about clutter, she was quick to tell me that she had grown up in the middle of endless piles of this and that. The home was clean, but there was never any place to set an article down. Periodic clean-ups and frantic attempts at organization were always short lived. She told me that both of her sisters followed suit while she chose to become a "place for everything and everything in its place" type. She further added that when one of her sisters visited her, she remarked that my friend's home didn't look lived in and resembled a furniture arrangement in store window.

Clutter bugs often say that they can find anything they need on demand. Yet most of us have witnessed them frantically searching for keys, glasses, and paperwork, to name just a few of the things that get lost regularly in a disorganized space.

The need to hang on to everything is often supported by a statement regarding the practicality of possibly needing it at a later date. What often happens is the item can't be found when the need arises and a duplicate must be reluctantly purchased.

Another acquaintance of mine thoroughly enjoys moving on a regular basis because it presents the perfect opportunity to purge closets, cabinets and drawers, not to mention basements and garages. That seems pretty drastic. Why not just schedule a room for purging every three months or so? That way the clutter would probably never reach avalanche proportions.

A recent report on a local TV station suggests that the word "avalanche" is not the overstatement it appears to be. A woman was recently found dead in her home where she apparently suffocated under a monumental pile of trash that fell over on her in a junk-laden room. Fires have also occurred in such an environment where quick escape wasn't possible and death ensued.

We are undoubtedly talking pathology when such situations arise. Treatment may need to be insisted upon by concerned family and friends. However, there is often resistance and a failure to see the danger by the "hoarder." That is the non-clinical description that is used. Clutter can also be a symptom of depression.

When dealing with what can be realistically seen as nothing more than a bad habit, methods of purging can be established. There are those whose homes look as neat as a pin, but don't try to open a drawer or a closet! The Thrift Store solution can be very helpful when purging gets to be emotional, i.e. "But I got this from Aunt Effie" and "What if the other one breaks?" It's possible to donate to those who haven't lived in abundance and who have only a few pennies. Sharing can offer relief to the dumpee as well as the dumper.

The same principles apply at work. A drawer a month...a pile a day...a file drawer a week can make all of the difference in a cramped office and improve the image that is being projected...not to mention efficiency.

Take a look, a fresh look...around your home and workplace to see if you have gotten into some unhealthy and unsupportive habits that can be confronted. If you find a mess, why not do something about it? The greatest benefactor may be you!

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