

the CLEAN & TIDY Report

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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE (A ZEN) HOME!

Where do you go to get away from the daily stress of the world around you? Well, if you're like most of us and can't make it to a secluded beach or a tranquil mountaintop a couple times a week, you probably escape to the



comfort of your home.

To make your house or apartment the perfect Zen oasis, all you need are a few easy modifications. No travel necessary!

Natural colors and fabrics. Create a comforting ambiance by keeping your room monochromatic in a soft, earthy color, like white, gray, beige or pinkish beige. Fabrics, such as linen and wool, are also known for their calming effect.

Simplify furniture. The most relaxing rooms are furnished with pieces that are simple in design and the fewer pieces, the better. (Rooms with less furniture are also easier to clean!)

Soft glow. Direct overhead lighting can not only be harsh, but the direction and amount of light are also fixed (unless there's a dimmer). Lamps and wall-mounted bedside lights will give you more control over the effect you create.

Fresh, natural scents. A room filled with the fragrance of essential oils or candles will relax you at bedtime (just don't



IN THIS ISSUE:

There's No Place Like (a Zen) Home!

Improving Your Quality of Life ...

One Project at a Time

Declutter Your Home.

Declutter Your Life.



DECLUTTER YOUR HOME. DECLUTTER YOUR LIFE.

Clutter is not only hard to clean around, but it can also be hard on your physical and mental health. Here are three important tips to help you cut through the clutter in your life.

forget to blow out the candles) and also energize you in the morning. To keep the aroma of your whole house natural, steer away from harsh chemical cleaners in favor of eco-friendly products.

Less is more (relaxing). One of the best--and easiest--ways to give your home a calming presence is to declutter surfaces and organize closets and cabinets, which will also keep cleaning time to a minimum. See the article at right for decluttering tips.

IMPROVING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE ... ONE PROJECT AT A TIME

The benefits of paring down, minimizing and simplifying your home are countless. But the process to get there is often easier said than done!



That's why you need to bite off those time-consuming and tedious tasks in small, realistic chunks. Say you want to organize the coat closet. Clear off the floor today and then in a couple days, move onto the shelves. By the end of the week, you'll have a perfectly organized closet, and the resulting feeling of satisfaction will make you eager to tackle the next thing on your list.

Another way to make short order of those dreaded projects is to attach a reward to the process. Challenge a spouse or housemate to clear out a certain number of items a week and whoever reaches that number first wins an ice cream sundae, a foot rub or whatever motivational tool you need (except of course more stuff!).

By setting goals, you'll have an organized and peaceful home--with minimal struggle and stress!

Use it or lose it? Turn all the hangers in your closet in the reverse direction, and when you wear something, rehang it facing forward. In a month or two, you'll know literally what's just taking up closet space. You can use a similar strategy to pare down your glasses, sheets and towels, etc.

Joy or junk? Then there are the dust collectors: the vases, figurines, baskets, candles, and pictures. Walk into a room and pay attention to where your eye goes first. Also think about what you'd honestly miss if someone took it. Those are the items you should hang onto. The rest you can live without.

Garbage or Goodwill?

Once you decide you don't need something, then you need to figure out whether someone else might. Sort the items you are bidding adieu into three boxes labeled Trash, Sell and Donate.

Your life is officially decluttered!

*We want to
hear from you!*

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