



REASONS TO DECLUTTER OR GOOD GUY # 1: KEEPING YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE Compiled by Elizabeth Barr: Peer Counselor at MHASF

*This document is inspired by the Book "Buried in Treasures, Help for Compulsive Acquiring, Saving, and Hoarding, 2nd Edition," By David F. Tolin, Randy O. Frost, and Gail Steketee on pages 37 and 54.

"One thing we want to emphasize is that in the end, you want to be able to celebrate the things you own and use them to achieve your goals. This prize is worth keeping in mind." (Buried in Treasures, 2nd Edition, page 54).

I am a peer with lived experience with hoarding behavior (HB) and I conduct groups for others with this issue. The following is a list of reasons to change our behavior in regards to our "stuff". This list was created by members of The Mental Health Association of San Francisco Hoarding Behavior Program. Often people with HB struggle to find compelling enough reasons to let go of their possessions. The difficulty in decluttering can feel overwhelming, even in the light of potentially tragic consequences (such as an eviction from an apartment or a privately owned home being condemned). It is our hope we will be able to remind those folks with hoarding behaviors, that the rewards of decluttering outweigh the reasons that prevent progress. We encourage people to come up with their own motivational reasons to declutter!

Footnote: Please consider putting your own reasons for decluttering on a piece of paper and posting it on your refrigerator or on your mirror. We have found it helpful to be reminded on a regular basis why we want to face the sometimes challenging process of decluttering. The rewards are worth it!

1. I want to find things when I need them.
2. I want to entertain.

3. I want to enjoy my hobbies.
4. I'm tired of being afraid of eviction.
5. I want EMTs to reach me if needed.
6. I want to save money
7. I don't want to leave this mess for someone else to have to deal with.
8. I want to move to a senior living community and I have to downsize.
9. My husband is screaming about my "stuff" and I want to save my marriage.
10. I don't want things to fall on me during a quake.
11. I want to get my loved one off my back!!!!
12. I want to stop feeling shame over my home.
13. I want to see beauty instead of chaos.
14. I want to enjoy my favorite possessions.
15. I want to feel better about myself.
16. I want to leave the smallest footprint on the planet that I can.
17. I want to be able to move to another home.
18. I might want to have a romantic relationship and I don't think I can have a true relationship if I can't have my partner into my home.
19. I want to be a good role model to my children/loved ones.
20. I want room to exercise.
21. I want to be able to cook.
22. I want to organize my closet so I can dress nicely.
23. I want to be on time.
24. I want to park my car into the garage.

25. I want to be able to enjoy my yard.
26. If I declutter, I will finally improve my relationships.
27. I don't want to continue to pay the high price of clutter anymore.
28. I am getting older and I don't want to trip and fall on my belongings.
29. I want go back to school & spend money on tuition instead of on my monthly storage fees.
30. I want to have a "garage band" in the garage instead of my old junk.
31. I want to declutter so my landlord can come and make repairs.
32. I need to declutter so I can keep Adult Protective Service off my case.
33. I want to declutter so I can make room for a housemate who can help defray my monthly expenses.
34. I want to create a better environment for my cat to live in.
35. I want to find my important paperwork when I need it.
36. I want to declutter so I can have enough room to get a puppy.
37. I want to clean up my home so I can put holiday decorations up.
38. I want to let go of my excess belongings so I can have a house bursting with guests for Thanksgiving instead of a house bursting with stuff.
39. I want to declutter my dining room table. Currently, I use it to sort through things. Then I clear it to have a meal. Then I fill it up again. I just want it clear and have it be ready for meals at all times.
40. I've been working from home since the pandemic. I'm tired of having a huge section of my home be devoted to unorganized work papers.
41. I'm an artist and I want to create a dedicated corner for my creativity.
42. I'm a senior citizen, and I'd like to make room in my home for a caregiver to live with me.

43. I'm a piano teacher. I'd like to earn money by having piano students come over to my house, but I need to declutter first.

44. I need to have a hip replacement. I need to declutter in preparation of my operation.

45. I want to declutter so I can get really large bookshelves to store my beloved collection of books.

46. I want to replace a broken refrigerator with a new one, but I can't do that until I first declutter. until I declutter.

47. I don't want to fall ... again.

48. I just want to know what it feels like to live in a decluttered space.

49. I am a home-owner and my next door neighbor has reported me to the fire department. I need to keep the city government off my back.

50. I have a bunch of stuff that I have acquired that I could sell. If I declutter, I would gain the space and I might be able to make some money too.