

CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode
notes



EP 3 - Stuff Makes It Tough To Know What's Enough

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My current challenge is trying to purge the excess of stuff I have accumulated over the years. Part of the issue is the time to do it. Breaking it down into smaller jobs hasn't really worked for me. Do I sell it? Do I donate it? Do I throw it into the trash? Do I leave it as a legacy for my children to sort through? All kidding aside: Getting started is easy, seeing it through to the finish line is the hard part.

1. The Nature of Stuff
2. The Concept of Environmental Mastery
3. The Power of Letting Go

1. The Nature of Stuff

- The easy advice: Marie Kondo's - *The Life-changing Magic of Tidying Up*
 - Popularized the idea of "Does this bring me joy?"
 - Wonderful example that mindset is critical to the success of any endeavor.

- And for the asker of our question - ***seeing themselves past the finish line is the challenge.***
- There's plenty of practical advice for getting rid of all the various kinds of stuff: Physical, mental, emotional, whatever.
- Purging stuff gives you the freedom to reimagine the spaces you inhabit. From there, you can redefine
- Reframe the definition of "stuff":
 - Stuff are the things we surround ourselves with.
 - They speak to who we were, who we are, and who we aspire to be.
 - You can think of yourself as always being three people: Past You, Current You, and Future You
 - **Past You:** Worthy of honoring their effort, their history, their visions of the future. Learn their lessons. Understand their limitations. And accept their failings.
 - **Current You:** You can only truly live as this person. This person is a unique opportunity to be your best self, fully realized. This person is not the same as the past or future versions, yet is the bridge between them.
 - **Future You:** Provide them with knowledge, skills, and environment so they may seize opportunities. Know they will turn out differently from what past you and current you expect.
 - Stuff comes not just as a quantity, but with quality too.
 - How are your things organized or stored?
 - Do they have an expiration date?
 - If you were on MTV Cribs: What would viewers think of your space? How would you feel about that portrayal?
 - **Stuff isn't just physical objects.** It's also your longings, ideas, projects, fears, etc...
 - Mental clutter is powerful: It carries the potential of visions, it has notebooks sacrificed in their honor, it is the stuff of daydreams & nightmares. But they

too can stymie us, and many never become products that cross that finish line

- Jonah Lehrer wrote in his book *Imagine*:

Our creativity is impacted by our environment: Mind is situated in a context & culture

- Ask yourself: What is the environment surrounding us? How is it aiding or challenging our ability to produce great work?
- It can be hard to let go of thoughts and ideas.
 - They're not like objects, which are often out of sight & out of mind
 - It's much harder to get rid of old ideas because they were the product of creative effort, our past self manifest.
 - It's worth considering if purging old ideas that no longer serve you could be the trick to achieving the proper mindset to deal with the physical stuff.

2. The Concept of Environmental Mastery

- This is a concept from psychology. **Environmental Mastery** is defined as:
 - The ability to shape environments to suit one's needs & desires.
 - To feel in control of one's life.
 - To not feel overwhelmed by the demands & responsibilities of everyday life.
- You're unlikely to ever have a perfect physical environment, or a laser-focused mentality on one project - The key here is the mentality you have around stuff.
- Consider the destination first: Don't let yourself get bogged down in the early stages of pain & effort it will require to get there.
- With credit to the legendary Maxwell Maltz: Let's do a quick "Theater of the Mind" exercise
 - If you can, get comfortable.

- The movie's about to start - silence your phone and *shush* all those loud kids in front.
- Close your eyes.
- Envision yourself in your personal space: It's in its ideal configuration.
 - Is it clear of clutter & stress
 - It's clean and inviting
- How is the furniture arranged?
- What stuff remains to aid & inspire your journey?
- How does it feel to inhabit it?
- You're excited to work in this space.
- Worth keeping this exercise in mind.
 - You're the director, so play with the scene - try things out:
 - Move the furniture around
 - Try new angles, new viewpoints
 - Change the color on the walls, the decor
 - Explore entirely different rooms
 - It's *your* movie
- As you come back to the reality of your current environment - it should become much easier to carve out a path between the two environments.

3. The Power of Letting Go

- **You are not your stuff**
- Locate (or create) environments that suit particular tasks.
- Let go of what you can to make those environments better suited to where you're headed.
- Let go of the notion that you'll get to a place of perfection with your stuff or your environment.

Episode 3 Quotes:

Some quotes from Stoic philosophy:

"Is it not madness & wildest lunacy to desire so much when you can hold so little?" - Unknown

"It is the mind that makes us rich; this goes with us into exile, and in the widest wilderness, having found there all that the body needs for its sustenance, it itself overflows in the enjoyment of its own goods." - Seneca