



# Clutter Busting Your Life: Clearing Physical and Emotional Clutter to Reconnect with Yourself and Others

*Brooks Palmer*

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## **Clutter Busting Your Life: Clearing Physical and Emotional Clutter to Reconnect with Yourself and Others** Brooks Palmer

After many hours spent clutter busting with clients and responding to emails sent by the readers of his first book, Brooks Palmer realized that many people were curious about some of the deeper manifestations of clutter—how it crowds the mind and thought processes and how it can even interfere with relationships. Although this distracting bulk never serves us, it can provide the illusion of insulation from our essential fragility, a quality that Brooks sees as essential to existence but also the root of many futile efforts to build power that would obscure it. Alas, these tricks never work, but the clarity of awareness can prevent the clutter-building part of us to learn to appreciate space not as void, but as a life-giving resource that renews us. Brooks illustrates these points through anecdotes, gentle discussions, and abstract jokes and cartoons, never forcing the reader to accept his thesis but prodding the subconscious with subtle suggestions that bring about deep change with the absence of blame. In Western society, we've accepted that more is always better, and our houses and garages, basements and storage lockers, are jammed with things we never use but feel we need to hang onto until some future event will prove their usefulness, or because they were valuable to someone we loved (or hated). Brooks Palmer's advice: "cut the crap." Cut the crap of pretending that we need these things and cut the crap of the way we talk about clutter, both emotional and physical. By clearing physical clutter and acknowledging the lack of inherent value in many of the possessions we cling to, we also learn to cut the crap around relationships and emotions and discover who and what really matters in our lives. For example, if someone hangs on to their great aunt's bureau, a white elephant but a family heirloom, they may also be hanging on to repressed feelings about their own worth, hoping to demonstrate that they care about family, or tha

## **Clutter Busting Your Life: Clearing Physical and Emotional Clutter to Reconnect with Yourself and Others Details**

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## From Reader Review Clutter Busting Your Life: Clearing Physical and Emotional Clutter to Reconnect with Yourself and Others for online ebook

### Susan says

This is a great book for anyone trying to declutter their lives.

Palmer introduces the book by saying that he used to just say 'if you love it keep it, if you don't then don't' but he realized, and his fans let him know that that is not good enough. 'What about the vase that I hate but that the sister I love gave to me?' and so on. This book addresses the underlying emotional reasons people have for holding onto clutter, as well as the true emotional impacts that unwanted items have on individuals.

Palmer's main theme is that clutter disconnects us from ourselves, and from other people (e.g. keeping that vase actually puts a negative feeling between you and your sister). He gives some innovative exercises to get to the root of the emotions, e.g. having tea with your fear. His approach is non-judgment and compassionate. He is always clear that what you keep and what you remove from your life is entirely your choice.

He moves from the easier, decluttering things, then adds the layer of things attached to people. The more difficult chapters, at least for me, came later, how to declutter your relationship with yourself and how to declutter your relationships with others (including, occasionally saying good bye to a relationship). I had many 'aha' moments, and gained a great deal of insight along the way.

For me the only drawback was that I got the book from the library so had to work through too quickly to process and do the exercises fully. My plan? Buy the book, do the decluttering, then donate the book or pass it along to someone who needs it.

Overall a very useful resource that supports people who are working to 'clutter bust their lives'.

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### Artemisia Hunt says

In a world of too much clutter, too much stuff, too little time, and too much complication in general, there are probably over a thousand different books on simplifying life in one way or another. Usually these books focus on the "too much stuff" aspect of our modern lives in a overly consumerist society. In Clutter Busting Your Life, comedian and professional "clutter buster" consultant, Brooks Palmer specifically combines clutter busting all that extra stuff with relationship advice on how to do this when we share spaces spaces with loved ones but don't always share the same idea of what is trash and what is treasure. With compassion and humor, Palmer takes us through the basics of using understanding, encouragement and honesty to help couples and families cope with their clutter problems together in ways that create self-awareness and clarity on why we hold on to things the way we do and how we can reconnect with what is really important in our lives beyond all the stuff.

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### Lisa says

life. changing. Completely shifted my perceptions about clutter and the best ways to approach getting rid of

it. I've only tackled a couple of areas in my house, but I'm excited - for the first time in my life - to sort and purge this baggage I'm living with.

Great, specific examples, and written in a very accessible tone.

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### **Ruth Everhart says**

I loved this book. I am a fan of Brooks Palmer and his gentle, effective way to get to the bottom of clutter. He uses the term "clutter" in the broadest possible sense, here applying it even to relationships.

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### **Andrea says**

Recommended August by Dad

This is possibly the best "self-help" book I have ever read. By defining "clutter" as not just the tangible material goods that we are used to referring to, but also *\_emotions\_*, *\_thoughts\_*, and even *\_people\_*, the author has changed my perception of how I live.

For the clutter of material goods, I really like the rule of getting rid of anything you don't immediately love. If you hem and haw about to rid or not to rid, you don't love it and should get rid of it. Also, if you wouldn't buy the thing *\_right now\_*, you should also get rid of it. Doesn't matter if you loved it before.

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### **A says**

Throw away things (and relationships) that act as false armor and allow yourself to be fulfilled in the moment, in your natural presence.

3.7/5 stars. Helpful advice on decluttering, but about 70% of it would be most useful to a person in a cluttered relationship and it took me almost a year to finish.

I will probably pick up the original.

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### **Heather says**

I found this to be very helpful.

The only shortcomings of this book were Palmer's interjected stories. Useful stories that seemed to be resolved by a simple phrase or reassurance. Though I assume he was summarizing relatable situations for the sake of the reader, it's just hard to believe that every conflict he came across (especially those where clients had years long feuds) were resolved with him saying things like "try to understand each other" and "let's be more loving".

However, that isn't to say his advice is any less solid. Because if you have a lot of emotional/relationship clutter or you keep trying to organize but find yourself overwhelmed by emotion this is the book for you.

I did not read his first title on the topic of Clutter Busting, however, I have approached myself and my

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partner's clutter with a larger breath of understanding as well as being more gentle and kind to myself and my partner. With this change from frustration and feeling overwhelmed to patience and gentle guidance with one another we have been able to slowly clear away the clutter.

I appreciate Palmer's gentle approach and know that if it were just as simple as "throw it away" we would have done that. There's attachment in multiple forms which usually involves holding onto some form of the past, whether that be a deceased loved one, an argument, or even the idea of who you think you "should" be. Love that he eventually discussed the word hoarder and how it's not a helpful term (those who embrace it are usually lost in their ways or are judgemental such as "well I'm not as bad as those hoarders on tv" or "I'm a hoarder, it can't be fixed"). He is trying to take the judgement and negativity out of it. Force, anger, hate, or any kind of negativity rarely forges long lasting positive change, instead it causes resentment, fear, and a whole load of other negative emotions.

In order to change you need to heal and be kind, especially with yourself.

As for the exercises to try: I tried some but not all. I may go back and see if any of these can help me when I am feeling stuck. Overall, I would have appreciated these exercises at the end in an index.

I think this book along with "New Order: A Decluttering Handbook for Creative Folks (and Everyone Else)" by Fay Wolf have been significant in helping me organize my home, life, and mind especially from a lot of limiting beliefs and clutter that was conditioned at an early age.

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### **Melissa Hedges- Rankin says**

Actually bought this book and the initial book because I was faced with moving from our house we've lived in for 17 years. However, ended up moving before reading, (but wish I had read these books before the move: would have saved me some time and anguish. Helpful book, easy to read and appreciated the inner and psychological workings of why we hold on to items we no longer need. Looking forward to reading the first book.

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### **Carol says**

Not sure how this book arrived on my shelf but since it was there I decided to read. A very easy read that tackles how we can deal with our "stuff," material as well as relational. The author has approached the topic from a compassionate and "keep it simple" perspective. The book helped me understand how and why others have dealt with their "stuff" the way in which they have. It has also given me perspective on why people don't deal with their "stuff." I'd like to think I am pretty good at clutter busting but I am looking around me and my domain with a different perspective and perhaps will continue to lighten my load, physically, mentally and emotionally. I really enjoyed the simple cartoon and one liners that the author used to open each chapter.

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### **Julene says**

Love this book which is a great companion to his first Clutter Busting book. This one works with relationships and reinforces how to coach yourself to get rid of what is no longer serving you. Simple, clear and with some great exercises.

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## **Peggy says**

I read Marie Kondo's Tidying up book and Julie Morgenstern's Shed your stuff book and now Brooks Palmer on Clutter busting. Needless to say, things are flying out of my house these days. I enjoyed all of these books but Clutter Busting Your Life appealed to me the most.

Brooks Palmer is thoughtful, kind and Zen-like when he helps clients clutter bust. He practices reading body language throughout the process and slows the process down to stillness as needed.

He recommends readers do the same, carefully monitoring their emotions and physical discomfort and disengaging gently if the "busting" becomes overwhelming.

I especially liked his suggestion to "feel" the space within oneself and then in the room, and then tap into anything that disturbs that space; for me: the bathroom scale, why isn't it in a closet, that old bamboo candle holder stained with blue wax, those two mismatched bathrooms rugs...

Thanks, Brooks, I feel better already!

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## **Claire Burlap says**

I kinda rate this book up for the simple reason that it made me want to do stuff. I've already been on a life-cleaning kick, but I was looking for a push in the right direction and this did it for me. It's a quick read but it was actually really hard to focus on a lot of it because I wanted to go home and clean out my closet so bad. I'm the kind of dweeb who gets excited about organization and goes through phases of minimalism because she secretly HATES material possessions.

There are some helpful tips and interesting insights in here, although not all of it will be relevant to everybody. (I skipped the parts about marriage.) The writing is simple and uninteresting, but it's a self-help book and they're not really known for their exciting creativity.

Worth a read if only because it's short, semi-helpful, and has these really bizarre illustrations that I don't understand.

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## **Kevin Powe says**

Some of the thinking in there seems a little magical and woo-woo, but there's important advice. And I've experienced those kinds of instantaneous results in the past myself.

Now off to start the mother of all culling sessions!

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## **John says**

This book reaches beyond just organizing and eliminating physical clutter. The author deals with the thinking and emotions that cause us to hang on to "things" that really hinder us from living fully in the present

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## **Glawton says**

### **Amazing tour of the psychology of clutter.**

Really appreciated the way it looks at the metaphor of clutter as a life principle. Insightful tour of not only our clutter, nut what we perceive as the clutter around us.

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