

Think Tank May 2015

Focus: Magical House Keeping



Are you surrounded by clutter? No matter where you go, does a mountain of paperwork and other extraneous items follow you around? You're not alone! Many busy, productive people mistakenly believe that it's a lack of *time* that prevents them from staying organized and on top of clutter. But it may actually have less to do with your jam-packed schedule and more to do with your cleaning method.

In her book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, Japanese cleaning consultant Marie Kondo promises if you know how to *properly* simplify and organize your home or work space, you'll never have to do it again. Her system, which she calls the KonMari Method, has helped thousands of clients achieve not only their organizational goals but also a more "calm, motivated mindset that [those goals] can inspire." While some of Mari's suggestions may be a little extreme, especially for the beginner organizer, she certainly gives us food for thought about the real purpose of material possessions. She also explores why we procrastinate on those tasks that would improve our lives. Here are some highlights from Kondo's #1 *New York Times* bestselling guide:

- Tidy a Little A Day and You'll Be Tidying Forever -According to Kondo, "People cannot change their habits without first changing their way of thinking." She also believes that by eliminating clutter completely and in a short amount of time, you'll see instant results that will motivate you to maintain your new, improved space.
- Ask Yourself: Does it Spark Joy? -Kondo advocates getting rid of everything (and she means *everything*) that has ceased being functional, is out of date or simply isn't being used. But she takes it a step further, suggesting you hold every item you own in your hands, from clothes to pillows to pieces of furniture, asking whether it brings you joy. If it doesn't, it's time to "thank the item for being of service to you" and pass it on (donate, recycle, toss, etc.).
- Save Mementos for Last! -Mementos of course are favorite pictures, cherished letters and thoughtful souvenirs but they also include any item that comes with emotional ties or



attachments (a comfy but ratty t-shirt, your mom's stained coffee cup, etc.). These are the most difficult items to sort through and discard. By making the simple adjustment of getting rid of clothes, books, papers and miscellaneous items *first* and mementos *last*, you'll be far more efficient in your process, Kondo maintains.

Whether you're ready to begin a new chapter in your life or simply want to make your home or work space a more beautiful, less stressful environment, clearing out the clutter of the past is certain to make more space to enjoy your present moment.

Reconnect: Adding in Some "Me" Time

It may seem counterproductive to talk about "me" time when it comes to couples reconnecting with each other, but this is an important activity in which every married/ partnered person should engage -perhaps even more important for women. As wives and mothers, women often put their own interests on hold while focusing on their family's needs. While they may enjoy doing things for others, ignoring their own needs often backfires, leaving them feeling physically and emotionally depleted. Take a few moments to regularly and privately connect with the things you feel passionate about -in other words, reconnect with yourself first. This will reenergize you, and give you a renewed sense of purpose. Try viewing this precious resource not as a selfish indulgence but as a proven way to boost self-esteem and ultimately, benefit your relationships.

Bibliotherapy: *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage*

by Haruki Murakami

How do childhood relationships affect the rest of our lives? What do we do with unanswered questions about those relationships? These are the challenges that protagonist Tsukuru Tazaki must address in order to move forward with life as well as his girlfriend in his present world. Several decades earlier, Tazaki was rejected outright by his four closest friends without explanation and has never recovered. Through a series of dreams and nightmares, Murakami weaves us in and out of Tazaki's conscious and subconscious worlds, ultimately reaching a conclusion that draws us closer to a real understanding of the choices he has made. This is Murakami's thirteenth novel.

Time-Out: Building Emotional Intelligence

Without a doubt, today's parents hope to raise academically intelligent children. But intelligence is not just about high test scores -emotional intelligence (EQ) is equally important. EQ includes self-acceptance, being able to understand other people's emotions or points of view and the ability to manage one's own anxiety. How can you boost your child's EQ?



- Teach your child to recognize his own feelings and not to be afraid of them -they're just feelings, after all. Discuss options for dealing with feelings when they show up: He can choose to act on them (or not -and what the consequences might be for either choice), simply acknowledge the feeling, wait for the feeling to pass, decide to deal with it a bit later, etc.
- Really listen to him and respect his feelings and opinions, even if you don't agree with how he expresses them in the moment. For example, you could say, "You seem really angry with your brother for taking your toy, but remember our family rule: We don't hit. How else could you deal with your anger right now?"
- Even though it can be difficult to watch a child struggle with a problem, encouraging independent problem solving, rather than rushing in and fixing things for him, will give him the confidence he will need to later take care of himself (see the example above).

For more insight on how these suggestions can relate specifically to your family, please contact [Laura Elpers](#) to schedule a parent coaching session.

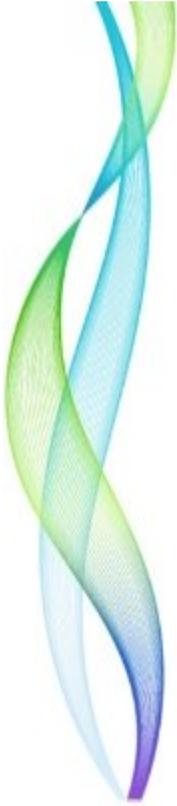


Self Care Strategies: Foot Massage

Our feet do so much for us but until they start hurting, we barely give them the time of day. Why not pamper your peds with a relaxing foot massage? Dallas has many wonderful foot massage salons that incorporate reflexology, aromatherapy, deep tissue rubs, salt scrubs and more. Many also add a clothed, full body massage at the end of the foot treatment that will leave you feeling otherworldly. Short on time? Ask for a thirty-minutes version and you'll still walk out feeling completely rejuvenated.

Take Two: *Seymour: An Introduction*

Seymour Bernstein started playing the piano as a little boy, and by the time he turned 15 he was teaching it to others. He enjoyed a long and illustrious career as a performer before he gave it up to devote himself to helping others develop their own gifts. While Ethan Hawke's gentle, meditative study is a warm and lucid portrait of Bernstein and his exceptional life and work, it's also a love letter to the study of music itself, and a film about the patience, concentration, and devotion that are fundamental to the practice of art. *Seymour: An introduction* allows us to spend time with a generous human being who has found balance and harmony through his love of music. (Review from www.rottentomatoes.com).



Insights Happenings:

Addiction Recovery Aftercare Group Insights has a mixed-gender group for recovering individuals. The group provides support and skills to help with relapse prevention, thus enhancing the odds of long-term recovery. For more information, call [214.706.0508](tel:214.706.0508) or email thinktank@insightstherapy.com

Nourish -Insights will be starting a new mixed-gender on going group on Monday, May 11th for individuals 18 and up that struggle with eating and body image. The group will help separate food and feelings with the support of a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Registered Dietitian. The group will meet on Mondays from 6-7:30pm. For more information, call [\(214\) 706-0508](tel:214.706.0508) or email thinktank@insightstherapy.com

Inner Evolution Group Coaching Inner Evolution Group Coaching is an ongoing women's group designed to enhance a women's fulfillment, harmony, and inner peace. Our mission is to empower women in their emotional and spiritual evolution through education, guidance, and support. The group will be facilitated by Amy Egan and Robin Knuuttila. To read more about this supportive and healing women's group please visit the Insights website. If you are looking for a deeper connection with yourself and other women call [214.356.7646](tel:214.356.7646) or email amy@innerevolutioncoaching.com to reserve your spot.

Our Time is Up: Stay tuned for our June issue...