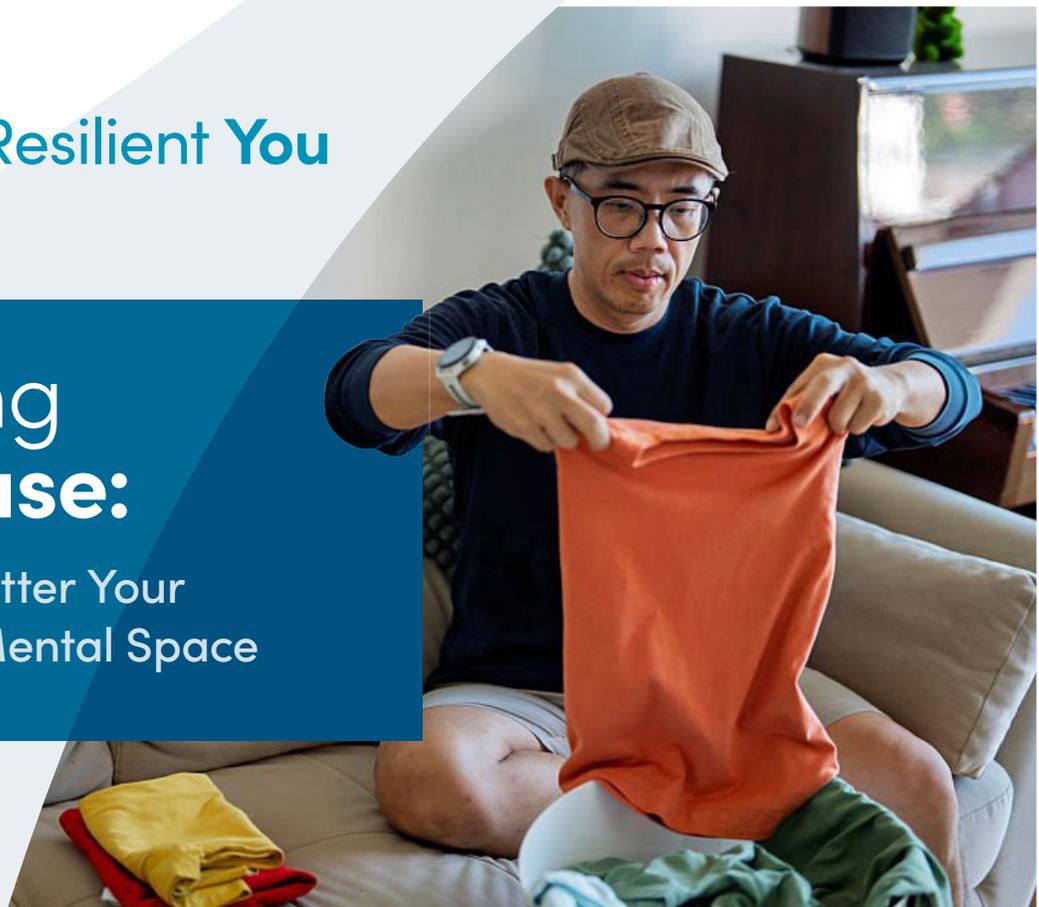


Resolving to **Release:**

How to De-Clutter Your Physical and Mental Space



It's a new year, the holidays have come and gone, and you're 100% committed to turning your resolutions into reality. But between the new presents and old keepsakes, do you even have room for the new you that you want to become?

This year, instead of resolving to bring more into your life, consider taking stock of what you already have, determining what you really need, and letting go of what's getting in your way.

Your Brain on Clutter: It's a Traffic Jam in There

For some, clutter is the two dozen mugs in the cupboard; for others, it's the outdated encyclopedia that still lists Pluto as a planet. Whatever the culprit, if it's not positively contributing to your life, it can become a decision-making drag. Every time you ask, "Do I keep it? Toss it? Donate it?" you're expending mental energy. The longer that question goes unanswered, the more you fall victim to **decision fatigue**.



DECISION FATIGUE:

When your brain becomes so overwhelmed at the thought of making a choice it just says, "I'm over it," and shuts down.

Decision fatigue compounds with clutter, making choices more difficult in all areas of your life. If you've ever struggled to send an email because the mess on your desk keeps catching your eye, you know the feeling.

Clutter hits your brain's inbox like visual spam, demanding attention. It can cause a neurological traffic jam that redirects your focus and blocks important signals. Like real traffic jams, this gridlock can spike stress hormones, leaving you in a constant state of low-grade, clutter-induced anxiety.

Break the Clutter-Stress Loop (Before It Breaks You)

As clutter grows, so does stress. We get overwhelmed, avoid cleaning, and get stuck in a vicious cycle. To break it, you have to shift from being a passive keeper of the past to an active curator of your future.

Decluttering isn't about erasing history or deleting memories. Just the opposite. By clearing space at home and minimizing distractions, we improve focus and cognitive function, helping us relate to our past, present, and future in healthier ways. Think of decluttering not as losing stuff, but as freeing mental bandwidth for the people, items, and peace that matter *now*.

Your Recipe for a Lighter Life

Parting with objects that might have sentimental value is never easy, so it's important to start slowly. Streamlining your surroundings is a process, and these habits can help you master it.

 **First, find your “why”** — Before touching a single item, take time to reflect and define your “why.” Ask: “How do I want to feel in my space and in my life this year?” (e.g., Peaceful? Focused? Light?). Let this vision be your filter for every decision.

 **Start small and build momentum** — Overwhelm is the enemy of progress. Commit to a “5-minute daily declutter” of one drawer, one shelf, or one digital folder. Small, consistent wins build confidence and create a tangible sense of accomplishment.

 **Sort with intention, not guilt** — As you handle each item, move beyond “Does it spark joy?” to more focused questions: “Does this support the person I am becoming?” and “If I didn't own this, would I buy it again today?” Remember, you are not just tidying; you are reducing the cognitive load that impairs your brain's ability to process information.



Give everything a home — Chaos creeps in when items are left homeless. The final step for any kept item is to assign it a specific, logical home. This reduces future decision fatigue and makes your space inherently easier to maintain. An organized environment helps your brain relax, [lowering stress and making it easier to think clearly](#).



Ritualize release — Transform disposal from a chore into a meaningful ritual. Thank items for their service before donating them. Write down limiting beliefs or regrets about the object and safely burn or shred the paper. This ceremonial act provides powerful psychological closure.



Protect your peace — Once a space is clear, defend it! Light a candle, put out a flower, or just admire the emptiness. By enjoying your clear space, you're less likely to refill it.

PRO TIP

If your home is already clutter-free and your real aim is to liberate mental space, simply substitute a draining thought or behavior for “item” or “object” in almost any of the instructions above. When self-talk or habits no longer serve us, it's time to give them the boot.

Remember: Rome wasn't built in a day, so don't worry about clearing away your empire of accumulated stuff in a single afternoon. Start small, proceed with intention, and celebrate every act of de-cluttering as a success.

For customized tools and resources, visit Concern's Digital Hub by logging in to employees.concernhealth.com, and selecting the “Get Services” button in the upper right menu.

This newsletter is intended for informational purposes only, and should not be used to replace professional advice.

If you find your level of stress is impacting your wellbeing, you can contact us for additional help and support.

Call: 800.344.4222
employees.concernhealth.com