



Illustration by Gaia Orion

Using Reiki to Clear Clutter

BY CHELLIE KAMMERMEYER

MANY OF US START THE YEAR with a long list of intentions. One many of us have is to organize our home/office/work area. Organizing is one thing, getting rid of clutter is another. In my experience, the clutter clearing is more effective for keeping your home feeling light and a place that you feel you want to spend time in.

Several years ago (before Reiki), I was a service manager for an auto dealership. One of my employees walked by my desk and said, “If your desk looks like this, I’d be afraid to see inside your brain.” Truthfully, he had a great point. I usually felt as if I were a metal BB in a tin can, going in several different directions and focusing on none. After I learned Reiki that changed—not immediately, but gradually. I still tend to have more on my desk than I really need, but I have learned and implemented systems to keep myself feeling more organized and grounded.

Yet, just about the time I feel as if I have completely learned something, I get reminded it’s actually a journey. Last spring, Mike and I went to Oregon to clear out my parents’ home. My mom had died more than five years before, and my niece had been available to move in at the time. It was an easy way to delay the inevitable. My niece and her husband bought a new home and so we (my younger sister and I) needed to go through the 80 years’ accumulation of Mom’s life and my step-dad’s life too.

My parents retired to Bend, Oregon when they were about my age now. I could still see the appeal of the property: the acreage, the ranch style home, the garden area, the view, and yet the proximity to town. They lived there happily for many years. Then my step-dad got ill and was gone—quickly—too quickly for my mom. And in her grief, I believe, she decided that she didn’t want to remember life without him, and she developed Alzheimer’s. It took some time for Mike and me, co-chairs of the Ostrich Society, to realize that she really had a memory issue. Mom had previously had some issues with her eyes and it was easy to blame that for some of the things we found unusual. In her case, the disease progressed fairly quickly, and she was too soon gone.

When my niece moved into my mom’s home, she put a large bulk of Mom’s household possessions into “the shop.” The shop is a 24 x 40 foot two-story barn-type building that my stepfather had built, with the intention of using it for a picture-framing business. They had a small room built for showing customers different ideas and the larger part was filled with tools and supplies, and then over time, boxes of household items. When I say “filled

with tools,” envision 10-foot-high shelving units filled with tools and the entire floor space barely able to be walked through without tripping—stuff, lots of stuff.

As we were clearing and sorting and deciding what to keep, I tried to keep in mind that my parents grew up during the Great Depression, which means that they lived by the unspoken agreement created during that time: Waste not, Want not. Don’t throw away anything that has any usefulness ... *anything!*

I have taught clutter-clearing classes and really thought I had a handle on the emotional baggage that things can create. However, I realized that I still had work to do on myself. We went up before the scheduled estate sale to take one last look around the place. I felt my heart clench when I looked at my mom’s china set. Did I want it? No. Did I want it to be sold, especially to a stranger? Not really. But what would I actually do with it? It was made before dishwashers were invented. So that meant hand washing, which wouldn’t work at my house. I went through the same process with my grandmother’s teacups—and other items that felt like they themselves were the memories. A few items actually passed the test of me wanting to bring it home.

The estate sale happened and none of us were there. It seemed much smarter to let the professionals handle it and not to see strangers going through our memories. Afterwards, we went back up to Bend and were overwhelmed that there was still so much left. What were we going to do with it all? Fortunately, my daughter-in-law, who is clearly savvier regarding social media, took some photos and advertised them on craigslist and Facebook as FREE.

I could NOT believe the number of cars that started to show up at the house—or the things the people took—or the joy in their eyes when they found something that they wanted or could use. One man said he loved going through the shop more than Christmas morning. He was so excited to find all these amazing things that aren’t available anymore. And I felt so much joy in letting things go to these people who were so excited. It was a win-win. I was a little disconcerted that folks actually jumped into the dumpster looking for more treasures but mostly it was joy to see people take what we didn’t want.

Underlying the joy, though, there was this deep sense of exhaustion and sadness. **Why was there so much STUFF?** To empty out the house and shop so that we could have it cleaned and new carpeting installed felt like we were moving a mountain. We had the estate sale, then the free giveaway. We filled a SIX-TON dumpster, a 15-foot U-Haul, and at least two pick-up loads with garbage that went to the landfill. We had an entire pick-up load of electronic

waste and another of hazardous waste. We took loads of items to the local charities. My son said I missed my calling as a javelin thrower because I got very adept at tossing things into a dumpster that was over my head. So much stuff, so many memories, going away. Typically, I am the first to say that things do not equal memories, but in the days of this process it didn't feel that way.

During the "Free Sale," I fell. I got out of the passenger side of our car in a hurry because the driveway was filled with vehicles. I stepped on a pinecone, twisted my ankle and fell flat on my face. Throughout that day and the ones that followed, I continued to remind myself that this was a process. I consciously gave myself a break because of all the emotional baggage I was carrying due to past events with my parents. I also realized that I was being told to slow down and to truly recognize that stuff did not equal memory. We would have the memories whether we had the old blanket/teacup/book (insert any number of things) or not.

I came home feeling fired up. I wanted to throw everything away—until I got back to California and started to sort through MY stuff—which was so much cooler than my mom's stuff. I mean seriously, I have some awesome crystals and great resources in books. Who would want to get rid of those?

Now that I have some perspective, thanks to time, I thought I would share some ideas with you on how to clear out clutter from your home. I believe that your outer circumstances are a reflection on how you feel about the world.

First, Reiki. (That probably seems obvious, but in the throes of clearing out our things, sometimes our emotions get clouded. This is a huge help!)

Second, sit in meditation and ask your home, "What do you want to have in you?" This may seem a little odd at first, but the more you connect with your home, the more you figure out what actually belongs there.

Third, do a little at a time. Maybe a kitchen drawer or a shelf in your closet is enough just now. All this stuff didn't show up in a day, so getting rid of excess doesn't need to happen immediately. To paraphrase William Rand, sustained effort over time will give results.

Fourth, you ask yourself, "Is this something I truly need or does it make me happy?" This can be a huge sticking point. If you have something that your Aunt Geraldine gave you, feeling guilty about not loving it and getting rid of it is a tough place to be. But if you take a day out of my journey, you can remember that it will be going to someone who truly does love it and you can free up space for the things you do love. Imagine the joy it will bring someone who loves receiving it. If you love it, keep it. If you loved the person who gave you the item, but not the item, the love doesn't go away if the item is gone. Really it doesn't.

Fifth, if you have items to go as donations, take them immediately. If you have items to go in the trash, do that immediately. Do not have piles lying all over the place creating more clutter.

Did I mention Reiki? This is crucial. Letting go of what no longer serves you makes way for what does. The more you do this the more you will notice your life mirroring this.

Then, do a ceremony for your home. When we got my parents' home ready to go on the market, Mike, my husband, Adam, our son, and Sofia, our granddaughter went through the house and talked to the spirit of the home and the land. We did Reiki, drumming, saging and ringing a bell. Sofia, who is 10, kept track of her dad and grandpa to make sure they drummed in all the corners and rang the bell even in the closets. We promised the house and the land that a family would move in and take care of it. And we requested from Spirit that a lot of love would be there—that people who would care for and improve the space would come and spend years there.

As I am writing this article to be submitted for the winter issue of the *Reiki News Magazine*, it is 97 degrees in California. We have hot weather and right now with the other weather issues going on in the country, I'm okay with it. There are fires burning in other areas of California and all over the Northwest. Hurricane Harvey hit last week and Hurricane Irma is imminent. It reminds me of a question I received when taking a clutter-clearing course...if there were an emergency, what are the three things you would take from your home? So, just take a quick second and think about that.

My mom's house did sell to a family with small children. I believe we kept our promise to the home and the land. I drove by when we went up after the house sold. The house already seemed to have life and joy returning to it. Our house in California?—well, we are always clearing. I try to take something out when I bring something new in—try being the operative word. I have a strong feeling that the journey is continual. And my three things? Two dogs and a photo of my parents. ❁



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On her website, you will find information about the class she teaches on how to clear the "stuff" that you no longer need. Chellie can be contacted by email at chellie_kammermeyer@aol.com, through her website at www.innercompassreiki.com or by phone or text at (510) 499-4332.