



COINS of the world

Q. Kerry, I'm sitting with my neighbour and she has two big containers of coins from around the world - what in the world would a professional clutter coach tell her to do with this "collection"?

I'd ask her:

- If she needed big containers of coins from around the world, where in a perfectly organised home would she look for them first?

Wherever she would look for them first, I'd tell her to take them there now.

That's their home.

If when she takes them there, the space is already full and there's no room left for her containers of coins, I'd ask her:

- Do you value the containers of coins more than the items currently taking up the space where the coins belong?

If she said Yes I value the coins more, then I'd ask her to donate, sell or trash the items that are currently taking up the space where the coins will live.

Evict them so her coin collection has a home.

If she said: No I value the items more than the coins, then I'd suggest she donate the coins.

If in answer to the first question she said "in a perfectly organised home I wouldn't ever look for containers of coins from around the world", then I'd recommend she donate them. Qantas has a program for giving these coins to charity and their One World partners may participate in that program too, or a collector might like them.

Your neighbour can keep anything not everything. Her space is finite. All her containers are limits. Whether that container is a jar of coins, a drawer, a cupboard or a closet. The size of the container limits what it can hold. She doesn't need to justify keeping the coins. She only needs to understand that saying yes to the coins is saying no to something else.

Whatever items she chooses to keep must have a designated home if she wants a clutter free environment. The best designated home is always the place you would intuitively look for an item first. If you keep items in places you would naturally look for them you have a much better chance of finding them there. As an added benefit you use much less mental bandwidth. Knowing takes less mental energy and space in your brain than remembering.

This is different to a "logical" place for them, or the classic "I put them in a safe place" which I'm pretty we've all done at some point and it didn't turn out to be that safe after all. Your intuitive place doesn't have to make sense to anyone else. Just you.

So how much of her home with its finite space does she want to devote to coins from around the world?

Perhaps a small jar for a few favourites, perhaps her two big containers for all of them, perhaps no space at all and she will keep none.

Prioritise your space constraints first and your storage decisions become clearer.





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The real answer here is that there's only one thing to do with her collection.

Give it a home.

In the process of giving items a home everything else becomes clear.

All her items have to live somewhere, including her coins.

Her bedroom floor, her entryway console, her oven, a cupboard, the fridge, a coffee table, it doesn't particularly matter where she decides they belong, but they do need to belong somewhere.

With items we describe as miscellaneous we often end up either shoving them somewhere that ends up annoying us, putting them somewhere we forget about, or leaving them out on a flat surface why we try and think of a good spot for them. Then if we're lucky we get clutter blind and stop seeing them there, or worse they irritate us as a daily reminder that we're not on top of our home or our To Do list.

So we use Step 4 and the questions I describe on the previous page to give our belongings their due.

When we envision our ideal home, the one that's easily managed, organised and clear of clutter, we start to hone in on what we truly want when we are living that version of ourselves in that season of our life. Where would that person look for her "collection of coins" first?

Contemplating that question for your items, you will realise that:

- you wouldn't look anywhere, or
- you will discern a spot using your intuition, or
- you will immediately know.

If you wouldn't look for it, you may as well not have it. If you would, there will likely be one, maybe two spots you would automatically look for the item in question first.

By following through on that thought and taking your item to its new home immediately you will gain more clarity because there will either be space for it, or there won't.

If there's no space you find yourself weighing up what you value more, or deciding what's your favourite of the two items competing for the same space.

You can't keep both, so which do you prefer?

If you fight against making this choice you will end up stuff shifting, misplacing and losing things, creating clutter, and possibly spending even more money on "storage solutions" all while draining yourself of your limited energy and bandwidth.

It's a delayed decision you'll end up making it at some point. So make one now because it's not worth another second of your finite time. And trust me your time is more valuable than your space, and it's infinitely more valuable than your belongings.

Through repetition and seeing the results of making these choices, this part of Steps 4 and 5 becomes much easier. A relief even.

So that's the truth. There's only ever one thing to do. And that holds true for every belonging we own.

Give it a home.

Or let it go.

