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## THE BLOG

# Declutter Your Fantasy Self

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Have you ever looked around your home - at the stuff piled in the lounge and bedrooms, the stuff crammed into cabinets and drawers, the stuff spilling out of closets and boxes - and wondered, "Where did all this come from, anyway?"

You spend a lot of time shuffling it around and tidying it up, but rarely find need for it. You vaguely remember acquiring it, but can't remember the last time you actually used it.

Well, that stuff may very well belong to your fantasy self.

If your kitchen is overflowing with pots, pans, gadgets, and gizmos to cook any dish under the sun - but you usually get take-away - that culinary clutter belongs to your fantasy self.

If your closet is stuffed with cocktail dresses, fancy heels, and bags to match - but your social event of the week is going to the pub - that closet clutter belongs to your fantasy self.

If you have boxes of yarn, fabric, ribbons, beads, or other crafty bits and bobs - but rarely sit down to make something, let alone complete a project - that craft clutter belongs to your fantasy self.

If you have a treadmill, yoga mat, Pilates equipment, and a wardrobe of exercise clothes - but your idea of a workout is taking the stairs - that fitness clutter belongs to your fantasy self.

If you have a full set of luggage, a library of guidebooks, and travel accessories for every situation - but prefer to holiday at home - that travel clutter belongs to your fantasy self.

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Now that doesn't seem fair, does it? Our homes have such limited space - why should we have to allot so much of it to the belongings of someone who doesn't exist?

Well, that's the beauty of decluttering: we don't! We're empowered to evict that fantasy self and all her accouterments. It may seem cruel and heartless and difficult at first, but I promise you this - you'll feel a huge sense of relief when she's gone.

Getting rid of that stuff, and the expectations that go along with it, is a tremendous weight lifted from your shoulders. When your fantasy self's formalwear is gone, so is the pressure to attend fancy parties - or the disappointment that an invitation to one hasn't arrived. When your fantasy self's baking supplies are gone, so is the pressure to whip up a cake for everyone's birthday - or the guilt when you don't. When your fantasy self's hobby supplies are gone, so is the pressure to engage in activities you're not all that enthusiastic about.

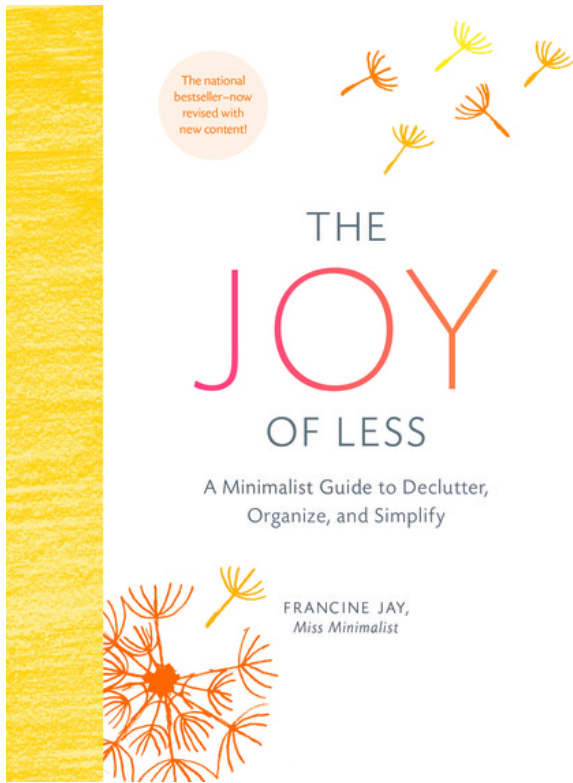
When you let go of your fantasy self, you let go of a cascade of clutter - not only the physical baggage but the psychological baggage as well.

And what's there in its place? Space! Space in your rooms, your closets, your cabinets, your drawers, your heart, your mind, and your soul. Space to celebrate your real self, and explore your true passions and potential.

Such space creates a fabulous opportunity for self-discovery. When we express ourselves through consumer goods, we lose sight of who we are. Furthermore, we're so busy buying things, and paying for them, and organizing them, we have little time to ponder (or pursue) what matters to us most.

Decluttering gives us more than clean closets. It gives us clarity - for what we want to do, how we want to live, who we want to be. So go ahead, give the boot to your fantasy self and all her accessories. It's not giving up on your dreams, it's making way for real ones.

By Francine Jay, author of ***The Joy of Less: A Minimalist Guide to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify***, now available from [Chronicle Books](#).

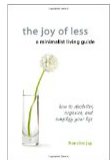


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**The Joy of Less, A Minimalist Living Guide: How to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify Your Life**  
by Francine Jay

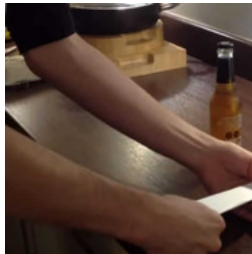


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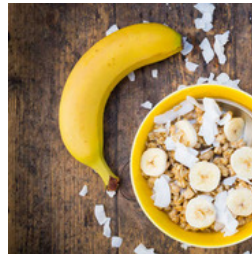
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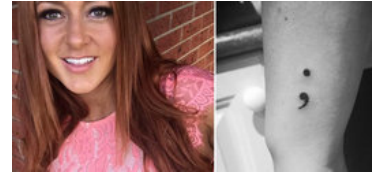
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