



# BREAKING FREE FROM CLUTTER

Spiritual Insights by Janice Lynch



## INTRODUCTION

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I've been cleaning my home office this past week. It amazes me how much "stuff" I've accumulated over the years. Old paperwork, notes from various projects, memorabilia, tarot cards, books... the list goes on!

As I shredded and let go (the Silent Auction for Healing Light Expo is coming up), I discovered special items that had been lost in the clutter. One was a Spring Forest Qigong "Happiness" mug. I couldn't help but chuckle, realizing that in cleaning my office, I had literally found "Happiness." The mug is now in the kitchen where it can be used and appreciated!



I am not alone in my decluttering journey. Over the years Janice Lynch has shared many insights on spiritual and practical life lessons learned while cleaning and decluttering. She has a gentle and realistic approach to this process. Her essays are gathered here in this book for you to enjoy and ponder. May you be blessed and inspired as I have by these messages. (Make sure to check out Janice's 3 Basket Method at the end of this book!)

*Beth Clark*

***For more articles by Janice Lynch visit: → <http://thedivinefellowship.com/>***

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## Resistance is Futile

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I spent most of yesterday cleaning the kitchen. We had purchased a new over-the-stove microwave and the big old microwave was removed and given away. That left a pile of clutter and old dust that just had to go. While I was at it, I tackled another clutter spot filled with notes and pens and coupons. That just had to go, too!

Then there was that other corner that had, well, what was back there anyway?

Clutter removed, dirt cleaned, counters polished (they are old, but when polished they look ok), even the walls got a good scrubbing.



Usually, I stress and anguish about a big job like that for at least a day or two. Grumble, moan about it and generally resist taking action. This time, I felt the resistance and released it. (Thank you, Sedona Method!! If you haven't checked that out, you really might want to give it some attention!)

I was going to sit and glance at the paper for a minute and found myself just getting to it! I was as surprised as you!

I gave myself several opportunities to quit. "I'll do this much today and do the rest another day," sort of thing. No need. I just kept going. For someone who experiences low energy issues, this was such a blessing!

**It surprises me how much energy is spent on resisting, dreading, stressing, or dragging my feet on something. What a huge blessing it is to just get to it!**

It's hard for me to equate stress and resistance as usable energy – life force energy. They seem so different, yet are they really?

It's my energy taking form as tension or as action. My choice how to use that energy. On a low energy day, I can take a bit more time and awareness to release resistance/dread so that I have more energy to do the things I prefer to do.

Some things are still not fun, yet they take half the time and not nearly as much energy. What a deal!

My next task is the pantry. God only knows what's in there. Usable stuff is up front, certainly, but who knows what's been shoved in those dark corners. I have a couple of things still on my counters that really belong in the pantry – but there is no room. So, on my next day-off, the pantry will get my attention. I am already feeling dread and releasing it. I'm already feeling tired and releasing it. I'm already feeling the exhaustion of choosing what stays and what goes and I'm releasing it.

How to release?

Notice what you're feeling. Feeling dread is a pretty normal and appropriate action for a task like cleaning the pantry. I don't have to pretend I don't feel the dread. I don't have to push the dread away in the back of my mind (not really releasing). I don't have to shame/blame myself because it's there. I just let it be there. (What a concept!)

Then I allow it to dissipate or fall away as best I can for now. If the dread reappears, I welcome it and let it go again. And again. The process takes very little energy yet releases a ton of energy for me to use elsewhere.

I have a couple of tasks to do on the computer this morning. These are things I don't yet know how to do and I'm feeling resistance coming up for those tasks as well. I think I'll take a few minutes to notice and release that resistance as well.

**Releasing resistance could be called surrender. Surrender isn't about giving up, it's about giving up the struggle. Once the struggle is released, we slip into the flow.**

In the flow, energy becomes usable, decisions become easier, actions seem effortless, time shifts (things take less time than we thought they would), our minds open, and our spirit soars!

# What to Decide

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I started cleaning my home office this morning.

What a disaster.

They say a messy desk is the sign of genius. I wonder what a disaster of an office means?

I started in the closet. Found some old cool classes I'd forgotten I'd taught. Fun! Reorganized my paper stash. Ooooh, pretty colors!! (Did I really need 3 open packages of yellow paper? Hmm. Must have!) Found some old blank cassette tapes for back when I used to record all my sessions on tape. Does anyone even use cassette tapes anymore? Well, they are no longer taking up space in my world!



I also pulled out a box full of stuff to be shredded. Good grief!

Found some other stuff I think I'll use or share with others. I really thought I'd made some headway until I realized it had taken over an hour just to do the closet. There's still not

any room to put away the rest of the stuff cluttering up the office.

I have this class and that workshop and all the handouts in boxes and totes, but they are strewn everywhere. I will teach those classes again, so I cannot get rid of

that “stuff”. So, I’ll figure out a way to move stuff around so that it’s more accessible and hopefully a bit neater!

I’ve worn out this keyboard. Can’t read but a few letters and some of the numbers on the keys. Phil bought me a new keyboard over a year ago. Time to install that one and there would be one less box under my feet. (Although I admit, it’s kinda fun to glance down at the keyboard and realize I don’t have any visual clues there for what I’m typing. I have to look at the screen and pray for autopilot to take back over. That’s one of those times when auto pilot is a VERY GOOD thing!)

So, lots of decisions to be made in this process. Keep this? Discard that?

Each time we make a choice, we use up some of our brain’s power to control our will power. It will be important for me to be careful to not set myself up to make stupid health choices while I’m drained. I would have severely reduced will power to resist cake, for example. **Research shows that our brain tires with lots of choices and our good intentions fly out the door after we’ve made a morning full of decisions.**

That’s why will power is pretty much powerless, and our good intentions never fly. We are worn out from deciding between this or that little thing – over and over and over. Then we “fail” at something we really would like to accomplish and feel we are bad or worthless or not-good-enough. When in fact, we are just human!

**So how do we accomplish those things we really would like to accomplish? Do them first. Make the plan first. Decide first.**

Then as the day progresses, when faced with a decision to “slip” there is more energy supporting the chosen direction than there is to fall off track and into self-defeating self-indulgence.

Start the day with a plan – a plan that can be flexible when life throws a curve ball – grants us positive energy in the right direction.

Start the day with a prayer – we all could use a little help, right?!?

Start the day with a catch-phrase – a phrase that can catch us when we lose sight of the goal. A good catchphrase might be in the form of an affirmation: **I can do this. With God’s help, I am enough. I am blessed. I’m a blessing and I’m blessed. I walk a sacred path.**

Whatever catch-phrase you may come up with will be instantly on your tongue and in your mind when you need it! Once uttered, it refreshes the body, mind, and soul and allows one the opportunity to reclaim the better path.

What is it you really want your day to look like?

Would you be willing to pray (speak to All That Is) about that? (Not begging for your way to happen, but for the best and brightest way to unfold. Divine Source may know more than you and might have a better plan at the ready!)

What quick catchphrase can you create for yourself?

Our everyday world is filled with decisions left and right. Thank goodness we have the right to make choices. At the same time, those choices drain the will power. Time to rely on another kind of power that will see you through! Hope this helps.

# Decluttering

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Phil and I cleaned out our back room yesterday (Sunday) afternoon. We have a master bedroom, an office/computer room, and a work-out room with weights and stuff.

Well, the “stuff” in that room made it really hard to do anything.

Last year’s Christmas decorations were still on the floor, because I couldn’t get to the closet to put them away. Truth be told, even if I got to the closet, that was so junked up I couldn’t have gotten that box in there!

So, we dove in and got it done.

It took a couple of hours. Much of that time was looking at what was there and asking each other, will we use this ever again? Do we want this? Can we let it go?

Sometimes the answers were easy, and things got move to the give-away pile or into the trash. Why WERE we keeping those bits of junk? Other times, the answers didn’t happen. No, I will never use the hand-made giant bunnies that were my mothers. Can I give them away? Nope. Can I give them to charity? Nope. For now, they got tucked into a bag for storage and redeposited into the back recesses of the closet.

Phil was wonderful about it and didn’t give me a bad time about keeping them. Of course, I didn’t give him a bad time about keeping some old car magazines that he might read again one day.

**The heart just has its attachments to things. As long as we have room for them and they have value to our hearts, they can remain in our world.** It was easy to see what we could release, and those items effortlessly found their way out of the room.

Spiritually, we might want to take a look at what we are holding on to. Is it a truth



or concept that serves us and blesses us still? Are we using that principle to guide our lives? Is it an old guilt that no longer serves to restrict us? Is it an old duty that takes the joy out of our service to the world? And the biggest question of all, do we cling to a false

god of fear rather than the Divine Source of Love?

When we really look at that stuff, we can easily see what we are willing to release and what we want to hang on to for just awhile longer. We can notice what's working and has value and keep it close at hand so it's usable to us each day, like prayer, meditation, gratitude, and seeking guidance.

Once we got the work-out room de-cluttered, we could also dust and vacuum. It was a giant allergy pit. Now that it's all clear, I go in there just to look around! I can see my watercolor supplies ready for me to start my next project. It brings me hope and anticipation that hadn't been there in a while.

**Spiritual de-cluttering does the same thing to our spirit! It grants us hope and anticipation that might have been hidden behind the old belief patterns or patterns of thought that no longer serve.**

How does one de-clutter spiritually?

Look to see what's not working so well in your life. There might be a stuck energy around that situation. A "should" or a "got to" or maybe a regret attached. Just notice what's there. Without judgment, just notice. Judging makes it dig in like a tick! You'll never extract that thing! Just notice with an open heart.

Ask yourself if that thought or belief still serves you? If it serves to make you feel badly, you get to choose whether you want to continue to feel badly or if you wish to move beyond that.

**Spiritual conviction implies noticing a behavior that doesn't serve one's self or others and making a conscious decision to change. This in no way requires guilt or shame.** Those are worthless beyond an initial awareness of a wrongdoing. When we get attached to guilt or shame, we don't really change, we just hide, shutdown, and tune out. We get to throw that out and replace it with right action based upon love, joy, and compassion.

Once we got our room cleaned up, unwanted things had to go into the dumpster.

**Spiritually speaking, old patterns go into a spiritual dumpster . . . not into our friend's ear. Toss that crud to Divine Source who can sort and sift through all that and clean it up. The ultimate re-cycling!**

Every sorrow or sorrowful thing we've thought or done can be released and cleared along with all the distorted beliefs and old patterns of thought (like, "I'm worthless." – that one's definitely got to go!!!)

Once that old stuff is tossed, the good usable stuff can be accessed more quickly. And just like the cleaned-out work-out room, a sense of peace descends and rests within us.

It feels good to get clear! It feels great to be free! It feels wonderful to receive peace!

# Scattered Thoughts

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My office is a disaster. I've got notes from three classes spread out over most of the open surface. My file cabinets are full. These are on-going classes, so I choose to leave them out rather than figure out where to put another file cabinet.

I've also got study material in boxes on the floor for a dormant class that I hope to reactivate.

I have in my heart to teach yet another new class (or two) and that material exists in files waiting to be finalized.



Then there's the Healing Light Expo stuff that is an ongoing project that I keep in a file box near my chair in case I need to access that information.

GAH!!! This is a physical representation of my brain! Scattered in all directions.

Each direction has value and purpose and importance!

I'm not even going to mention the cat toys that exist in this space.

And then there's Phil whose idea of filing is stacking things on top of each other. Deepest being oldest. Surprisingly enough, he can find anything by just visualizing how long ago he came across that piece of paper and lifts about 3 months' worth of debris and ta-daaa! There it is! (Kind of amazing, actually.)

Are you laughing yet? I know I am.

So, here's a file I can stow in the Expo box. Here is a piece of paper in my copy stand for the Board of Trustees meetings and here is another for the Board sitting to the

left of the church calendar. I can put those together. Cat toy next to the stapler can go in the toy basket. A button needing to be sewn on an old sweater can go in the mending box. I'll be right back...

Oh, look! A class I had put together that I never had the opportunity to present! I think the weather was bad last winter, so I postponed it. That could be fun! I'll get it on the calendar!

Oh look! A dust cloth! I will put that to use right now. Wonderful I can now see my desk!

Easy peasy!

Ha ha.

Imagine what our brains look like. We hang on to odd bits and pieces of information and experiences as if they were life and death. Just as my trash can is now full and my desk is now clean, I can release those odd bits and pieces from my awareness. Do I really need to keep old church calendars from month's past? Nope. I can let those go.

Untaught class material I spent hours creating? Let's keep that!

**So, how do we release all that mental junk? Same way we release physical junk.**

We look at it. We assign it value. Then, depending upon its value, we keep or purge. The trick is the valuation part. When I was 9 years old, my favorite toy had great value for me. That same toy might have some sentimental value but might be something I could allow another child to play with. Looking at it stirs up memories and feelings. When we release a thing, the memories and the feelings may remain, or they may dissipate . . . also depending upon what valuation we gave that

item/memory. Could be that old toy isn't salvageable. Maybe it's worth millions! I get to research and see if it holds value. My valuation may not be accurate.

We tend to give painful memories more value than they are worth.

Why? Because we don't want to be hurt like that again, so we hold on in order to protect ourselves. Unfortunately, two things happen when we do that. One, we often are hurt in different ways as we journey through life, so we hang on to old painful stuff needlessly. Two, when we hold on to old pain, we are telling the Universe – "Hey! This is important! Pain is important to me!" So, the Universe serves us up more because that's the unconscious directive we've issued.

We've heard: "Learn the lesson, then move on." We translate that to: "Keep that pain active and maybe I'll see it coming next time." **What "learn the lesson" really means is: discover your part and heal.** So, if someone hurt my feelings by talking behind my back, I can keep the pain of betrayal active and move into a state of not trusting; or, I can recognize that I didn't see the tell-tale signs of that person's needing approval before I shared myself with them – I now honor myself and recognize my own need for approval when it shows up. This second way offers me the power of choice. I can hold my own council without needing to over-share. When I do find someone, who holds the energy of loyalty and honor, I can share myself more deeply.

Which is freeing? Keeping the pain of betrayal active? Honoring one's self?

What's really cool about all this is that we only need to bring awareness to our part and the energy attached to the pain disengages and dissipates.

Try it yourself!

What's an old pain that still haunts you? Did you have a part in that? If not, you can cut yourself free by recognizing you were innocent. If you had a part in it, how can you honor yourself? Choosing to honor yourself also cuts you free.

**Freedom is like a clean desk. It allows space to create new things or to focus on things of value.**

Just like cleaning my desk, it requires a bit of time and energy, but once done, a lot less energy is expended. Before my desk was clear, I had negative feelings about "all I had to do." I felt overwhelmed and burdened. Just looking at that cluttered desk sucked energy from me. When in truth, there were just a few things requiring my attention for now. It took a lot more energy to look at the clutter than it did to actually process through to a clean desk.

So, too with old pain. The realization that there is old stuff there to look at seems overwhelming. Yet, just like finding three or four pieces of paper scattered all over my desk that related to the Expo, putting them together and putting them in the file took a lot less effort than experiencing the clutter.



Find one thing that you'd like to release and get clear from. Look at it with the eyes of discernment – not the perceptions of a wounded victim. Did you have a part? No? Trash-can that experience and recognize your innocence as a soul. Did you have a part? Yes? Honor the aspect of yourself

that sees the truth of who you are. Be the Sacred Observer and witness your own value.

As you discover your value, the pain falls away. Peace descends upon you and you are free!

My desk is not spotless. I still have a few things yet to sort and file. But for now, I have clear space from which to create. As I bring my attention to those final pieces of clutter, I become freer and clearer. It's a process. I am okay with it not being perfect in this moment.

**As you claim/re-claim honor for yourself, you can relax in not having to be perfect in this moment. You get to be freer and clearer in the process.**

And that's a good thing!

## Clearing Out the Old

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I took a few minutes this morning to clear out my winter clothes and put them away. Gratefully! So glad the cold weather seems to be gone. I pulled out (unearthed) my summer things and, as always, found delight in forgotten garments. Pretty spring colors brought a smile to my heart. I'll find a place to put them after the rest of the winter stuff gets stowed away. In the meantime, there are heaps of clothes here and there. As a Virgo, this is disconcerting to say the least. Yet, life goes on and my time dedicated to the garment shuffle was limited this morning.



I made coffee and homemade cookies and my brother stopped by. Nice! We sat outside in the lovely spring weather. We walked around the yard looking at all the irises in bloom. I noticed that there were a few mums that I had not broken off last year's dead stalks. After my brother and his dog Simon, took their leave, I went out and started to break off the dead stuff. I vigorously went to work braking and pulling dead stuff.

It didn't take long before I realized I was pulling up the new sprouts with the old stuff. I had to slow down. I had to look before I yanked. I had to discern what was dead and what was alive. As I started getting rid of the dead stuff, the new growth and the new blooms just seemed to pop and look alive! They already were alive, but they were lost under the shroud of the dead stalks.

So, too, we have things die in our world. Old dreams. Old relationships. Old careers. Old perceptions.



So, too, it's important to look before we discard the old. Is it totally dead? Is there new growth to nurture? Is it making everything else in our world look grim and dried up?

**Instead of vigorously attacking what we are getting rid of, perhaps a better approach would be vigorously using rigorous attention to the task at hand.**

As I was breaking off the old mum stalks, weeds could be seen. I had to pull the new growth apart so I could get to the root of the weed and pull it out so it would not regrow. This rigorous attention allowed me to remove the weeds while leaving the flowers undisturbed.

**Whether you are just cycling through seasonal changes or you are taking out aspects of your life that have died, take your time. Look at the good stuff first. What's good and growing in your life right now. Identify and nurture those things. This will grant you energy and strength for the task ahead.**

As you look at that which remains and must be removed, check to see if there lies any value left. Sometimes, in our moments of distress we tend to rip out the good stuff along with the unusable. We tear out the flower bed of our hearts and leave it bare – where weeds will soon take over.

Instead, apply that rigorous attention. Recognize the value that might remain and remove only that which is truly dead. Remove it gently. Remove it with honor. It served its purpose. It lasted as long as it could. It blessed in its own season.

Clearing our old heartache may seem a more difficult task. Yet, with honor, rigorous honesty, and gentleness, that which no longer serves can be pulled out of our awareness. Then the new, bright, joyous flowering moments of growth can flourish. It, too in its own season.

## JANICE'S 3 BASKET METHOD FOR DECLUTTERING

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Decide to take on the task. That could take a while. Once the decision is made, it gets easier! Ask yourself, do I want to feel free? If the answer is yes, proceed.

Call Angels and guides to assist you. (Yes, you get to have spiritual help!)

Choose a room or an area of a room. Acquire and bring three boxes, sacks, or baskets into that room.

- One basket for throw away (I'm done with this),
- One basket for other locations (It has a home in my world, just not here), and
- One basket for give away (this item is useful, but not useful for me anymore).



## USING THE 3 BASKET METHOD MESSAGE FROM THE ANCIENT ONES

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Did you notice how many choices already have been required? This is the hardest part of de-cluttering! We often avoid making these little decisions because we have so much on our minds anyway. So, stop. Breathe. Bring your awareness into this room, into this moment. Set all other decisions aside for now. You are at the precipice of freedom. (You are doing great if you've made this many decisions already. Many would give up at this point. It gets easier from here!)

You know who you are! You know what is important to you! If an item is important, it requires a home in your home. Give it a place to exist so that you can access it

when you choose. Don't have a place for it yet? Put the item in the "Other Locations" basket. Make the decision of its home location another time and move on to the next item. Not important, or not important anymore? Then either toss it or set it aside to give it away.

Perhaps this item used to be important to you or to a loved one. Honor the item. Acknowledge its sacred value. If it no longer blesses your journey, you may release it with honor. To do this, take a deep breath and blow 3 times on this item. Once to acknowledge the value it used to have for you. Another breath to release YOU from IT. And another to release IT from YOU. We create energetic connections to the things we own. In exchange, those things energetically attach to us. Breathing on the item with intent allows the release in both directions. Now it's easier to set it aside in the giveaway basket or throw it away.

Notice as you process an item, your mind, body, emotions, and your spirit are all being activated! All aspects of 'self' get involved. With each decision, you free up mental space, emotional space, and spiritual space as well as the physical space itself. With this process, may you enjoy a new level of freedom!

"Your world is filled with things. What you own, and to which you have attachments, take up space in all aspects of your being. Filling space with items of value helps you feel full and fulfilled. Too many things may cause the human form distress on many levels. You get to choose what to include in the space of your life, your mind, your heart, and your spirit. There is no wrong choice. Choice is a great spiritual gift given to you. May your gift of choice bless your efforts and move you into a higher state of freedom."

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