

**WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for November 14, 2022**  
**Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.**

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about decluttering, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

When we think about healthy living, decluttering may not top the list. But there are several ways that a cluttered home environment can affect our mental and physical well-being. Now I'm not suggesting that we all need to live in homes that could easily grace the cover of Better Homes and Gardens or the latest pin on Pinterest. Those are unrealistic and impractical to be considered normal by any means.

My colleague Patrice Powers-Barker, OSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences educator in Lucas County, wrote an excellent article for the OSU Extension Live Smart Ohio Blog called "Good-Bye Clutter." Today I'd like to share some of her very useful tips for reducing clutter. As our attention turns from outside chores to spending more time in our homes, this could be a good time to tackle a decluttering project in your home.

Research has shown that there is a downside to living and working with too much clutter. It can cause emotional stress, conflict between household members, and distraction. Clutter can waste time and money. It can affect indoor air quality and increase accidental falls and trip hazards.

On a positive note, there is also research that some clutter can increase creativity. How is your quality of life in relation to clutter? The Clutter Quality of Life Scale is an online assessment that asks 18 questions about your attitude, emotions, and experiences related to clutter. You can find that at [go.osu.edu/clutterscale](http://go.osu.edu/clutterscale).

If you are ready to say good-bye to your clutter, keep these things in mind. Where to start? Decide on a space such as a whole room or even a single drawer. Consider working on a theme, like decluttering all toys, holiday decorations, tools, or cleaning supplies. Be realistic about your goals and the amount of time it will take. Decluttering a basement with twenty years of collections is different than decluttering the bathroom closet.

Take action to eliminate clutter. I've heard it said that clutter is simply an unmade decision. Clutter requires us to decide what to do with it. Six common options are to keep, share, discard,

sell, return or the very last option, to postpone the decision. Consider if someone else you know could use it better or if it could be donated to a charity. If it is broken, will you ever fix it? Gather all the items you have borrowed and return them to the owner, even if it has been an embarrassingly long time.

For those items where you really do not know what to do, consider these questions:

- How long has it been since I used this?
- Do I like it?
- Does it work properly? - Is it broken?
- Do I have more of this kind of thing? How many do I need?
- If I keep this, what will I get rid of to make room for it?
- Can I locate this information somewhere else (probably on the Internet) if I need it?

For all items you will keep, there are two major steps. First, decide where that item belongs. Some call it a home for every item. Next, after clearing the clutter, it is important to maintain that space. Sometimes there is some emotional pain or discomfort in parting with our clutter. It is helpful to keep your overall goal in mind. Decluttering takes some time and effort, but the action of removing clutter will save you time, effort, and added stress in the long view.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. Be on the lookout during November for special posts on our Facebook page - OSU Extension Coshocton County.

There is a free, self-paced online course to help participants learn, share, and chat with health professionals about successfully managing diabetes. The course, *Dining with Diabetes: Beyond the Kitchen*, focuses on carbohydrates, fats, sodium, vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The easy to follow three-module course includes interactive presentations, videos, activities, and access to trusted resources and apps. Sign up at our website [Coshocton.osu.edu](http://Coshocton.osu.edu).

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at [coshocton.osu.edu](http://coshocton.osu.edu). Make it a healthy day!