



## SYNOPSIS

# Episode 34: Where to Start When You Want to Tackle it All with Taylor Flanery

TAYLOR FLANERY *from* HOME STORAGE SOLUTIONS 101

## STARTING SMALL TO AVOID OVERWHELM

When we feel overwhelmed by the state of our homes, it's tempting to want to fix everything all at once. But trying to declutter, clean, and organize an entire space in one go can lead to burnout or make things even worse. Taylor Flanery encourages us to avoid “choking on our homes” by taking small, manageable bites—15 minutes at a time—rather than trying to overhaul everything in a weekend.

## THREE LEGS OF THE STOOL: DECLUTTER, ORGANIZE, MAINTAIN

Taylor frames her Declutter365 method around three key components: decluttering, organizing, and maintaining. First, you get rid of what you don't need. Then, you organize what's left. Finally, and perhaps most critically, you build simple maintenance habits so your progress sticks. Without that final step, even the most beautiful spaces can revert back to chaos.

## PICK A PAIN POINT—AND START THERE

Don't start with your attic or sentimental keepsakes. Start with something that's causing daily friction—like your kitchen counters, entryway, or cluttered closet. These “pain points” are where decluttering makes the biggest immediate impact. Once you've made one area about 80% functional, you can move

on to the next.

## WHY DECLUTTERING COMES FIRST

While a beautifully organized pantry or color-coded closet may be the dream, Taylor reminds us that you can't effectively organize clutter. Decluttering makes it easier to visualize and implement organization that works. And it doesn't have to be perfect—function matters more than aesthetics when you're in the thick of overwhelm.

## SMALL STEPS, BIG PROGRESS

Taylor emphasizes the power of 15-minute tasks. If you work in short bursts and always allow time to clean up afterward, you avoid the demoralizing “messy middle.” Even just 90 hours of decluttering over a year—15 minutes per day—can completely transform your space.

## THE POWER OF THE CLEANUP STEP

Decluttering sessions should always end with a few minutes of cleanup: putting things back, throwing away trash, placing donations in the car, and restoring order. This small but critical step ensures you're not left with piles that drain your momentum and turn one problem into another.

## DAILY TIDYING IS THE SECRET SAUCE

Beyond decluttering, the number one maintenance habit Taylor recommends is daily

tidying. Simply putting things back where they belong keeps your space functional and prevents relapse. It's also easier than you think—most tidying takes less than 15 minutes when done regularly.

### WHAT TO AVOID AT FIRST

Stay away from sentimental items, deep storage spaces, and piles of old paper—at least until you've built confidence and cleared more functional areas. Starting with these more emotionally or logistically complicated tasks can stall your momentum and leave you feeling defeated.

### MAKING PEACE WITH “GOOD ENOUGH”

One of the biggest mindset shifts is learning to stop at “good enough.” You don't need every drawer perfectly labeled or every shelf styled like a magazine. If a space is 80% functional and saves you time or frustration, that's a win. Taylor reassures us that the polish can come later—after the chaos is under control.

### WHEN YOU'RE READY TO ORGANIZE

Once decluttering clears the way, organizing becomes easier and more natural. You'll be able to see what you actually use, how much space you really need, and what kind of containers or systems fit your lifestyle. That's when it's time to bring in the spice jars and pretty baskets—if you want to.

### DON'T JUST PILE IT IN THE GARAGE

Decluttering isn't done until the items are out of your house. In her Get Organized HQ Virtual session, Taylor teaches where and how to donate responsibly—including what not to donate and how to gift items to people who

truly want them. Don't let “good intentions” keep donation boxes stacked in your hallway for months.

### TAYLOR'S GO-TO PRACTICE FOR PEACE

When asked what brings her less stress and more peace, Taylor shared her daily habit of morning journaling. Each day, she asks herself: “What is my big picture for the day?” It's a gentle reminder to focus on what matters, enjoy her “one wild and precious life,” and let go of unnecessary stress.

### WHERE TO LEARN MORE

Taylor Flanery runs HomeStorageSolutions101.com, where she offers a free Declutter365 calendar to all newsletter subscribers. She also leads the massive Declutter365 Facebook group with over a million members. Whether you want a daily checklist, community support, or a full program, she's already done the thinking for you—so you can just take action.

Taylor Flanery