



TRANSCRIPT

Episode 44: How Decluttering in Midlife Looks Different

CARRIE POWELL *from* METHOD SEATTLE

WELCOME TO THE PODCAST

Tasha: Welcome to the Get Organized HQ podcast. I'm your host, Tasha Lawrence. Every week we share practical strategies for less stress and more peace as we dive into all topics, life and home organization. I'm so glad you're here for this week's episode.

Well, Carrie, thank you so much for hopping on to the Get Organized HQ podcast today. And I just wanted, for anyone who maybe hasn't met you, if you could give us like, your two minute overview of what your career is, what you share about online, how you kind of got there, and why we're talking about decluttering for empty nesters today in the first place.

MEET CARRIE

Carrie: Yeah. Okay, great. Well, first of all, thank you for having me. I'm so happy to be here. I actually transitioned to professional organizing about, four years ago. I started this business after spending 30 years working for Nordstrom. I was an executive in merchandising and, specifically merchandise planning and women's apparel.

And I spent my entire career at Nordstrom. And what was interesting is that the subject of editing, that is, you know, you start with a bunch of stuff and you take things out until you're left with what is an assortment that's important to put out to your customer, to put

on the floors of your stores, etc.

TRANSLATING INTO PERSONAL LIFE

I found that really translating to my personal life because when I stopped working, it was during the pandemic. And I just found, you know, we have been in this house for maybe about 10 years, but we've been collecting things, we raised three kids and we've got a house full of stuff.

And I didn't really realize the extent of it until I was spending a lot of time in my house. And so this idea of editing, down our things to what matters in our life today was just this, kind of pervasive thing that I was sort of noticing as I was going along about my daily life.

STARTING A NEW BUSINESS

Then I started the professional organizing business and realized that, that the organizing part is great. I've always been an organized person since I was a kid. I loved rearranging my room and, you know, cleaning out a closet if I got stressed out, like that kind of thing.

But, but it was actually in my work with clients. It was the decluttering that was the hardest, for the clients. And what I realized was that decluttering solves about 80% of organizing problems. So especially if you're in midlife like I am, where you've just had all these years to accumulate all this stuff.

THE SWEET SPOT

So kind of the intersection of all those things, this idea of editing the, the. The season of life that I'm in right now with my kids growing up and moving out, and, this, learning from doing the professional organizing, that decluttering is kind of the sweet spot in terms of results and transformation.

Those kind of all came together and that's what I started talking about on my social media accounts.

THE FOUNDATIONAL PIECE

Tasha: Yes, I totally agree that it's crazy how little organizing there is left to do once you've decluttered. Not that there's none, or like nothing that you can do to take it to the next level, but you're so right that that is the foundational piece for sure.

So when it comes to your story of like, working through your own home and your things, did you notice any changes in your relationship with the stuff in your home once you didn't have kids living at home anymore?

TAKING THINGS FOR GRANTED

Carrie: Yes, some things you just. I think it was mostly that I took things for granted that they still belonged in the house. Like, for instance, we have a, mudroom that has like, an outdoor section where all the sports equipment is. And I had, you know, two of my three kids were pretty into sports.

And, you know, so you walk out the door every day and there's the lacrosse sticks and the, you know, and the bike helmets and all the accoutrements, that come with raising kids

who are into sports.

NOTICING WHAT DOESN'T BELONG

And, you know, as time was going by when, again, when you, when you start to notice things, it's like you put these goggles on and you start to notice, does that thing really belong anymore?

And, you know, does my kid really still need her lacrosse backpack with the, like, 8 million lanyards attached to it? She's now, you know, a junior in college. Is that really still important to her? I know it's not important to me, and maybe I'd really like to have room on that shelf back.

Those kind of thoughts started occurring to me. And that's when I kind of really started, getting in deep with my own decluttering of my own house.

MOMENTUM IN DECLUTTERING

Tasha: Yes. And I feel like decluttering is such a, it's something that runs so much on momentum.

So when you find those first more obvious things like the lacrosse sticks, and you're like, oh, yeah, nobody's using these, that opens up the door to, oh, well, now I can look more critically at these other things that they weren't going to jump out at you as obvious of like, the next thing to declutter.

SMALL SUCCESSES

Carrie: Yeah, yeah. It's so true. The momentum thing is so true. And when you're in midlife, you've had a lot, you've collected a lot of stuff. So it's not one of these things where you're

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gonna go, you know, declutter your house in the course of a weekend project.

It just. Yes. It doesn't work like that. And so you really need to build momentum by having some small successes. And that could look like, you know, just walking through your house and noticing things that you don't use anymore.

THE FEELING OF SATISFACTION

Or it could be picking a small and you know, removing the things you don't need anymore and you know, organizing it and then getting that intense. For me, it's very intense feeling of satisfaction after I've decluttered and organized a space that it just feels so good.

I love to admire it. I love to bring my family, look what I did. Right. They don't really care as much as me.

DO IT SMALL BITS

But and then the, the real, another piece of real satisfaction is bringing that stuff to leave that stuff. Leaving the house and bringing it to donation is another feeling. It just feels so good to have that stuff be gone.

And so when you can do it in small bits, it's really not that intimidating. You can swing by a donation drop on your errand run. It's like it doesn't have to be this huge project.

INTEGRATE INTO DAILY LIFE

I see so many people that that attack a big project, like a garage or something and they end up with bags and boxes of stickers, stuff that they're, that's leaving.

But then it just sits there forever because the

job of removing it from the house is. Feels so big and intimidating and not something I have time for. But if you can keep it small, keep those efforts small, it's really easy to integrate it into your daily life, especially when you're in midlife and kids take up a lot less of your day to day hourly schedule.

WHERE TO START

Tasha: Right. Yeah. So as we kind of dive into the idea of decluttering in this season of life, I actually want to ask you where we should start with this. Because you're the one who's you know, done this and has experience. So you know, we could start on the side of just like decluttering in general.

You mentioned some of the specific difficulties of like, you've got other people's stuff in your house now. So like, is this my stuff to declutter or is it theirs that I need to ask your permission? So like there's logistics of that.

YEARS OF ACCUMULATING

Not to mention, I mean, years and years sometimes of like, accumulated stuff, but not in a bad way. Not in some, oh, you know, I just brought it. It's just what happens as you're living and your kids, hobbies change and your hobbies change and your needs change.

And you used to have younger, kids, and so you still have a few leftover toys in the closet and maybe your nieces and nephews come and play with it, like, all of those things that happen.

LOGISTICS AND EMOTIONS

So you've got the, like, logistical struggles that come, specifically with, like, decluttering in midlife. But then you've also got the fact that

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there's a lot of emotions tied into that. It's not always as cut and dry as decluttering say, like, what's the classic, like the condiments?

Carrie: Like a medicine or

Tasha: Yeah. Or a medicine cabinet or, you know, you're not really attached to this five years, Right. Exactly. And so both when having a conversation about this, but also when approaching the project, do you start with the mental work, of like, working through the emotions of it. Or do you start with. Okay, let's address some of these practical questions.

START WITH NON-EMOTIONAL ITEMS

Carrie: Well, I am, I am for sure a planner at heart. So I always like to be prepared when I, when I'm starting something. And so how I advise clients, and how I advise in my coaching practice is that, you want to start with things that are small and you want to start with things that are not emotional because that gets you into the basics.

And you're. You're basically, I call it build it. You're building decluttering muscle. You know what it feels like, you know how good it feels when you're finished.

And if you can do those things, or if you can practice on areas in your home or categories in your home that don't. That aren't laden with all this, you know, history and emotional baggage, then that's going to better prepare you when you do get to that stuff.

MENTAL PREPARATIONS

And then the other thing is, you know, depending on how sentimental of a person you are, or there could be, like, specific

relationships in your life that are fraught.

Maybe it's. Maybe you're, you know, considering decluttering something, that belonged to someone that you love that's now gone. Those things, there's a lot of them again, you've now lived, you know, a decent amount of your life. And so there's a lot of that stuff, around.

And so doing some mental preparation, knowing that, you know, a simple mantra like my feelings are not going to kill me is really helpful. And even saying it out loud, I feel like, oh, I'm in midlife now, so who cares if I talk to myself? I'm not going to judge myself for saying things out loud.

SHIFTING YOUR MINDSET

That kind of stuff really works. Understanding and thinking about the fact that, just because you are letting go of something that belonged to someone that you love, that is not a reflection of how much you loved them.

And so if you're thinking about those things and kind of, shifting your mindset, and thinking about it from a new angle before you start the decluttering, it really helps you when you're in the moment. And I have found in just my own work, as well as work with clients, that that is really effective.

ATTACHMENT CHANGES OVER TIME

The other thing that's interesting that I found definitely for myself is that I have kept some things for a really long time that I, you know, that are. That, you know, you would consider sentimental that I hadn't seen in a really long time.

And then when I get in there and come across

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it, I realize, oh, actually, I'm not attached to it anymore. It's like, it served a purpose for a time, but now it's, you know, I'm done with it, and that's okay.

And so just because you've saved something for a time doesn't mean that it needs to stay with you forever. You know, things have seasons and things serve you for a time, and sometimes they're there forever, but a lot of times they're not.

And when they're done, when it's done serving you, it's okay to let it go.

IT ISN'T ALWAYS HARD

Tasha: Yeah, for sure. And I would be curious even among our listeners. Everyone talks about sentimental decluttering, right. As this really stressful kind of decluttering. And it is. It does carry a lot of emotions. And you're going through all of these things.

But for those who have worked through some of those bins and totes and boxes and closets that were stuffed with the sentimental things, I am curious just how many other people, because I've had the same experience, have gotten into that and realized maybe, like 20% of this was difficult to make decisions on.

GREETING CARD EXAMPLE

But a lot of it actually was way easier than I thought. And I really just didn't know what to do with it at the time. I mean, I remember every single card we got from our wedding, even if it was one of those, like, you know, generic cards.

And it was like Best wishes for your life together. And then it was like signed with two people's names and they didn't say anything

like at all personal. And like I didn't want to get rid of any of the cards.

TIME MAKES IT EASIER TO LET GO

And then like years later I was like, why? Like, I mean, maybe it was my grandparents handwriting or something. Like, maybe I. But like, why do I need this card from these people I met four times?

Or like my husband's job, you know, and everyone he worked with signed the card and it was so much easier to let go of it because it wasn't so close to. The event that felt, that just had everything jumbled about what was important. And so in some ways, sometimes sentimental decluttering is not as scary as we make it.

IT'S SCARIER IN YOUR HEAD

Carrie: It's way scarier in your head. It's way scarier in your head than it actually is. Another thing that I find that is really true and helps people let go of things that they know they need to let go of is, is telling the story behind something.

And I find this with clients all the time. I just helped my dad, downsize, sell his house and move into a new space spot. And this was true with him too, where you know, I'm asking him a question, you know, do you want to keep this or not?

STORYTELLING

And he wants to tell me what it is, how long he's had it, how he got it, what it does. And I don't actually helping him really need to know those things. I just need to know if he wants to keep it or not.

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But that, but the act of sharing, information about that thing helps him get to the place of Yeah, and now I don't need it, and now I can let it go. It's like once you've. It's like a ritual or something.

And I see it all the time with clients. They just want to tell me about the, tell me about the object that meant something to them, and then they're okay to let it go after that. So it's really interesting.

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Tasha: Yeah, definitely. Well, you mentioned starting in small places. Are there any specific places you found that people typically have success with starting out when decluttering in this season of life?

Carrie: Oh, well, I don't know. Small spaces, I feel like applies for any stage of life of decluttering.

But you know, we talked about a medicine cabinet, a handbag, your handbag, your car, your, your nightstand. Any place that's small, you could just pick a single drawer in your kitchen. It's like, you know, any place that's small and intact, that you can do fairly quickly.

TIME BOXING

Another, another thing I like to do, and this works too, even if you're working in a larger area, is to set a timer. I call it time boxing.

And you're like, I'm just going to declutter for 20 minutes, and I'm going to see how far I get and I'm going to, you know, see what's in here and I'm going to pull out some things I don't need and I'm, I don't even have to finish the job of that drawer. I can put everything back when

I'm done.

But, just the fact that you've put a time cap on it, just, it makes it more, it makes the project more approachable. And so if you're kind of out of small places but you're still feeling like, you know, doing a big room or doing a scary closet or something is, is out of your reach.

Just put a time box on it and then you can do another 20 minutes tomorrow or you can do another half an hour next week or something. And I find that to be a very, effective strategy for people.

SHORT BURSTS ARE EFFECTIVE

Tasha: Yeah, I really, I really like the timer because it kind of, it helps you both limit the scope of the projects that you're going to work on, but it also shows you how much you can get done in such a short amount of time.

I think sometimes it's easy to think, oh man, like, I need a Saturday to work on this closet. Well, actually if you worked on it for 15 minutes, I mean, maybe you wouldn't be done, but you'd probably be further than you thought.

SMALLER, CONSISTENT EFFORTS

Carrie: Yeah, so true, so true. And a whole day, yeah, man, a whole day of decluttering. That's a lot. I limit my, I limit in my in person client work, I limit my sessions to three hours because it's a lot even for me who's not attached to their stuff.

So I think smaller, consistent efforts over time, is the most effective strategy no matter who you are. But definitely if you're in midlife and you just have had a lot of stuff, you've had a lot of accumulation over the years.

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AVOIDING BURNOUT

It's way better for your mental, for your mental health and it ensures that you won't burn out. I've seen so many people flame out because they try to like tackle the whole thing.

I'm going to do this big project and then they never end up finishing, because they took, they bit off more than they could chew. And then it doesn't leave positive associations with decluttering in your brain when you approach it that way.

PROTECTING DECLUTTERED SPACES

Tasha: Right. So do you have any advice for, for keeping a space decluttered and especially when we're talking about like starting in these small spaces and like you mentioned, maybe you have a house that's accumulated all of this stuff and you clear off your nightstand, you clear out the nightstand drawer.

Like now it's empty, but the rest of the room still has stuff in it. And I feel like that's like the prime time for all of the rest of the room stuff to kind of creep over to the now cleared out nightstand because there's room for it there.

And it's like mildly helping, you know, the dresser that we're getting some stuff off of it, but it turns into kind of like clutter shuffling almost over time.

And so how do you kind of like protect your decluttered spaces while you're still in the process of decluttering the other spaces?

VALUING OPEN SPACE

Carrie: Well, I guess a couple things. Number one, again, kind of back to this like, shifting of

perspectives and sort of mental preparation when you're getting ready to work on a decluttering project.

And one of the things I talk about a lot with clients is valuing space, valuing open space. You don't have to fill up everything, nor should you, because that open space is important, to just how a room feels, how you feel, in a room.

PROTECTING YOUR OASIS

And so when you, after you have decluttered and organized, an area in your home, a small one, like the nightstand example is good, then you should feel protective of.

It should be. I mean that, it's a small space, so it's a really tiny little oasis. But if the rest of your bedroom needs work, your nightstand is your oasis and it should be your inspiration for moving on to the next space.

Maybe your dresser is next, and the surface areas, when you can get the surface areas, cleared off, decluttered and, and have more open space available to interact with, then again you're going to be feeling better in your bedroom.

MOVING TO DEEPER CLUTTER

And then, and then it's going to take you to. Okay, now what's next? Now maybe I'm going to go into this sock drawer that, you know where it's got socks living in there. There's millions of singles in there.

It's just like, it's been an intimidating place for quite some time, but I'm feeling calm in my room now because of surfaces are clear and decluttered and so that I can get in and do this deeper stuff.

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Because especially in a midlife home, it's the even there could be homes and I have lots of clients that their home. When you walk in, it feels organized, it feels decluttered, it feels lovely place to spend time in until you open the storage, until you open the closets, until you open the cabinets.

DECLUTTERING HIDDEN SPACES

And so that deeper, that deeper decluttering, getting into the storage spaces, into that, that clutter that's hidden, is, is I think something that's really it's gotta be part of your decluttering project if you are in midlife.

Because you've just had, you've just, you know, crammed all your spaces full of stuff in order to keep your, you know, your your surfaces and just your day to day life in your house, you know, calm and relaxing.

Tasha: Right, for sure. No. And the just piece of feeling like, oh, I can go open that closet and find what I'm looking for and not have like a small avalanche of lacrosse sticks falling out. Yes, for sure.

DEALING WITH OTHER PEOPLE'S STUFF

So I feel like we would, you know, be missing a big chunk of this to not kind of circle back to that question. What do you do with all of the stuff that isn't 100% yours to decide what to do with?

Because there can be a lot of that and just so many challenges with first of all, not wanting to like ruffle feathers or hurt feelings by getting rid of something important.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Also the opposite problem of feeling like it's not yours to get rid of and like, your kids are in college and they're busy and they're hanging out with their friends and they don't really want to spend an hour on FaceTime being like, keep this, get rid of this. So like how do you tackle all of that?

Carrie: Well, I do a lot. I make sure I'm doing a lot of communicating which includes again back to the pre planning topic which includes discussing or letting people in my family know what I'm doing.

Hey, I want you to think about this. I just put it out on the family group text. I'm going to be, I'm going to be decluttering the, you know, the outside mud room. And so you know, you be thinking about what you want to do, whether you want to keep something.

CONSULTING FAMILY MEMBERS

I don't get rid of things that people in my family want to keep. They're really not interested, most of them in doing the work of decluttering. So they're kind of fine to have me do that as long as they're consulted. And, and what I have found.

This is another really interesting thing, what I have found to be true in my family and in the families of clients, in the families of, of within my community on social media, is that there is definitely a divide, in how we, I'm Gen X.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GENERATIONS

So how like maybe Gen X, maybe older millennials, definitely boomers, think about our things and how attached we are to our things

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and keeping things for sentimental value, et cetera. How different that is from Gen Z. And definitely as Gen A is coming up, they're just not as attached to stuff.

And that doesn't mean that they don't. That they want to get rid of everything. It just means that the amount of stuff that we saved for them because we thought that they would want it is significantly bigger than the amount of stuff that they actually want to keep.

A SURPRISING DISCOVERY

So I just find communication to be the best, strategy. And I have been surprised in my own journey about how much they're fine with me getting rid of.

So. And yeah, there was a little FaceTime here and there. There were, you know, there were some pictures going out. What about this? You know, are you attached to this?

REPURPOSING OLD SPACES

But, you know, my son's room, he's been out of the house for three years now. He's living in a different, city in a different state. And he is happy to come home to his room and stay. It's now it's a second guest room. It's completely wiped of his whole, you know, childhood identity.

But he's happy to have a nice, calm, relaxing room to come home to. And we saved the stuff that he want to save. I have for him. I have one, bin that is, the stuff that I saved for him for his, from his childhood that he wouldn't even necessarily remember.

NOT KEEPING A SHRINE

And then we have a bin of stuff that he wanted to save that that meant stuff to him. And he's, you know, like I said, he's in an apartment in a different state right now. He's not in a place to be able to take that stuff with him, but we'll save it for him until he is.

It's just not a whole room full of stuff. I'm not keeping a shrine to my kids, not keeping their bedrooms, you know, as a shrine. They're definitely going to evolve.

NOT LETTING GO OF THE MEMORY

Tasha: Yeah. No, and that's great. And I feel like it's worth saying on the flip side of the emotional aspect of this.

So we talk all the time about how letting something go doesn't mean you're letting go of the memory of it. And also just to acknowledge that, like, there's probably going to be some surprises of, like, what your kids are okay with letting go of.

IT'S NOT PERSONAL

Like, oh, I was so sure, like, they were so into, this thing or this hobby, or, like, this was a really special family thing, and they're like, oh, I don't need the thing.

And, like, that also isn't them saying they didn't value it at the time or that they don't appreciate the memory or

Carrie: It is not a reflection of your parenting skills or how happy they were in their childhood.

WHO WAS IT SAVED FOR

Tasha: Exactly. Like the fact that, like, you put all this time and effort into them playing a certain sport or an instrument or something like, that was still worthwhile and valuable to them, even if they're like, yeah, I don't actually need the violin.

Carrie: Yeah. The question comes up all the time is actually, who is this sentimentally saved for? Right. Is it the kid that's attached to it? A lot of times the answer is no, it's actually you.

GREAT THINGS ABOUT MIDLIFE

And which, you know, then just kind of goes into. It's, you know, it's a. It's a transition when your kids start to leave. You know, you're also facing up to that. That stage of your life is over. And that can be, you know, that can be difficult to navigate. But let me tell you, there are a lot of great things about midlife, too.

So I, you know, if you're. If you're wanting to use space in your house for something different that used to be used for something related to your kids or raising your kids. Actually, I think feels really good to do that and to move forward and have something that's for yourself.

Because the greatest thing about midlife is that now you have more time to do what you want to do.

THE FEAR OF EMPTY SPACE

Tasha: Yeah, definitely. So one more question before we kind of start to wrap things up here. You talked about, like, how important space is and creating and allowing for that space in your home.

But when you're going through this transition into the empty nest, I also think space can be one of the things that feels scary. Like you don't want your home to feel empty because it's already feeling kind of empty because of less people being there all the time.

And so how do you kind of grapple with that, and grow that appreciation, for maybe, like, what you deep down might know that you want. But combating kind of the fears of I don't want my house to feel lonely and empty.

MAKING ROOM FOR NEW THINGS

Carrie: Yeah. Well, I like to think of the space as, as you know, now I can fit things in my space that I didn't have room for before that mean something to me that are, or that are important for this stage of life.

This is probably not an example that applies to everybody but like I said, my dad recently downsized and moved, sold his house and we got his, well, it was my parents grand piano that is now, we're the third generation to have this piano.

It's a big grand piano. I had open space in my house that I knew frankly that this was going to be coming at some point. But you know, that was open space that is now filled with something that I am excited to have, that doesn't have anything to do with my kids.

RELEVANT FOR YOUR LIFE TODAY

We tried to get them piano lessons when they were little and it didn't really stick.

But anyway. But there are, there are things you can upgrade. Things that you never upgraded before because you were so busy again. There

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was so much focus on the kids.

So I'm a big believer in trade ins like upgrading something that you dealt with for a long time but now you have like the Mercedes Benz version of that right thing. It could be something stupid like a blender or you know, it's.

There, it's. If you are turning your focus, there are things you can refill space up with that are relevant for your life today. And I really, I really find open space personally to be very calming and relaxing for me.

CURATING AND EDITING

So I'm not in a hurry to fill up my space. And actually I was a little nervous about that piano coming. Like how is it going to feel in our living room? But luckily it feels wonderful and it feels like it's always been there.

But anyway, it's just, you're, you know, you're just looking at things differently and I don't think you ever want to declutter to the point.

I am not a minimalist. Yeah. And I, I don't advocate for getting rid of everything. My, my approach is more about curating. And how are you curating and editing the things that you have so that what's left is the things that are important to you that you enjoy, that you like to look at, that you use.

LOOKING FORWARD

And having those things handy and available and not squished together, whether it's out in your house or whether it's in a closet or a drawer. So anyway, that's how I look at it.

Tasha: Yeah. And really, what I kind of hear you

talking about is a vision that's looking more forward to, like, what are you doing with your time and your life?

And you even mentioned your son coming home and him staying in a room that he feels comfortable in. And so much of the kids stuff, can really almost be holding back. Like, looking back at a time that we're not going back to.

EFFECTIVE FOR FAMILY TIME NOW

It's not what we're living in. And the honest truth, like, if we got really, really real, like, you don't actually want your son to still be in high school and not to be, you know, on his own and, you know, whatever it is in college, finding his career, like, whatever your kids are doing, like, you're celebrating that they are moving forward, and so can celebrate that, too.

And making a space, like, okay, what is going to be most effective for family time now that this looks different, now that it looks like coming home for visits, like, how can I set this up? Instead of, like, them stepping over all of their old high school medals and trophies and not having anywhere to put their suitcase.

KEEPING WHAT BRINGS JOY

Carrie: Right. It's so true. It's so true. And again, I'm not saying get rid of all their stuff. Yeah. And especially I'm a sentimental person, too, and I have stuff that I saved that's not for them. That was theirs.

You know, I have this stupid Buzz Lightyear. It's like a. I don't know, you squish his legs together and it swirls around that we got at Disneyland the first time. My son was 4, and we took him to Disneyland, and it was his favorite thing, and he doesn't care about that thing.

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But I kept it because I love it. And it's actually in a cabinet behind me, and I can go visit it sometimes, and it makes me happy.

NOT GETTING RID OF EVERYTHING

So it's like. It doesn't mean. Just decluttering doesn't mean you're getting rid of everything. It just means you're prioritizing and you're. And you're hanging on and, cherishing the things that matter and making space for them so that you have room to appreciate them.

Tasha: Yes. Man, I think. I'm so glad you said that. And I think that's a perfect point to kind of wrap up on that. Decluttering does not mean that you're getting rid of everything.

KEEPING WITHOUT GUILT

I think that we can get that impression and we can get the impression that, like, well, I don't need this Buzz Lightyear light up toy. And so I am keeping clutter because, like you said, it is making you happy.

It's just making the decisions so that your house isn't overrun with, you know, light your toy. Because he's buried under 12 million other things that aren't as important. Yes, definitely.

No, I think that is just such an important thing to remember. That, like, you shouldn't feel guilty for deciding to keep something. Like, if this is something that you've decided is important and you have the space for it, that's not a failure. It's. There's no award for whoever got rid of the most things.

SENTIMENTAL DOESN'T MEAN CLUTTER

No. No. For sure. Well,

Carrie: It's okay to be sentimental. It's okay to keep things for sentimental reasons.

Tasha: Yes. Just because something. We talk so much about sentimental clutter. Just because something is sentimental does not mean it's inherently clutter. Yeah. It's just if there's.

Carrie: If you love it, if you use it, if you appreciate it, if you, If you display it, it's not clutter. But there's plenty of stuff in your house that does not meet that criteria.

And that's the stuff. That's the dead wood that you can slop off to make room for the stuff that does matter.

THE SANDWICH GENERATION

Tasha: Definitely. Absolutely. Yes. So I know that you talk more in depth about all of these topics, and we didn't even really get that much into. You mentioned getting things from your, parents downsizing. That's a whole other topic of conversation.

You're like, it really is. We talk about the sandwich generation. Right. Of, like, you've got stuff from your kids and you've got stuff from your parents, and you're trying to help both of them.

WHERE TO FIND CARRIE

And I know you talk far more about all of just the aspects of this and midlife decluttering, online. Where is the best place for people to go to hear more from you.

Carrie: I am on Instagram and Facebook. Those are my two main platforms. A little bit on TikTok. I'm too old, I think, for TikTok and I do have a YouTube channel, but it's. There's not.

Carrie Powell

It's not super built out. So really, Instagram and Facebook are the best places to connect.

Tasha: Okay, well, we will link to your Instagram and Facebook so people can go and find you.

LESS STRESS, MORE PEACE

Okay, so one question. I'm going to kind of put you on the spot, but we ask all of our guests here on the Get Organized HQ podcast. This as a kind of last question. What is one thing that is giving you less stress and more peace right now?

So that can be like a literal thing that you're using, or it can be like a habit or a routine. But like, one thing that is bringing you less stress and more peace.

Carrie: Less stress and more peace. Well, does it matter if it doesn't really have to do with decluttering?

Tasha: No, not at all. Not a bit.

NATURE BATHING

Carrie: I would say that, is. It's getting outside. I call it nature bathing. I live in the Pacific Northwest. I live in the Seattle metro area, and we have lots of nice outdoors.

And I find it works if I'm stressed out. It works if I'm, you know, kind of feeling down. It's most recently worked for me when I was jet lagged and coming back from a big trip. And the jet lag really hits you in midlife.

GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH

And getting outside and walking. I have a dog, and so I have to get outside. And that, I swear,

is like a cure all for me. It really helps me relax. It helps my mental, my mental health, stay healthy, I guess. I don't know.

So my house right now, my house is fairly decluttered. Trust me, there's always more to do. But, so it's not really decluttering things. I feel like I like my house to be a haven.

So right now it's kind of the outside the house that is the thing that's resonating with me right now in terms of keeping me calm and happy.

WRAPPING UP

Tasha: Absolutely. Well, I love that. Thank you so much for just sharing some of your time with us and your expertise on this topic with us.

I know it's a question, we often hear about, so I'm glad we were able to cover it today.

Carrie: Thanks so much, Tasha. It was really fun.

Tasha: Thanks so much for tuning in to this week's episode of the Get Organized HQ podcast. I hope you found something that you can start applying right away for less stress and more peace in your life and home.

Can't wait to see you next week.