



Energy magazine™

Sharing Energy - Transforming the World

Subscribe At

www.energymagazineonline.com



Your Clutter Archetype and What It Says About You

Tisha Morris

Do you find that there are just certain items you always seem to have too much of? If so, you are not alone. We each have our Achilles' heel of clutter. I call this your Clutter Archetype and it says more about you than you might think.

Each archetype is an identity we attach to and it shows up in an overabundance of a particular item. Each identity also has a shadow side. The shadow side of any identity is what we fear the most, and so we overcompensate to avoid it. As a result, what we fear is sometimes exactly what ends up happening.

When we grip too tightly or hoard something, we often end up with what we fear the most. Life is meant to be an organic inflow and outflow.

Let's take a closer look at each of these archetypes and see where your clutter intervention needs to take place.

The Beauty Queen: Beauty Products

Are your cabinets cluttered with beauty products? From makeup that was the wrong color, to facial creams that did not smell good, to hair conditioners that made your hair frizzy, to skin toners that dried out your skin, to travel shampoos that might be

needed one day? These are usually stashed in bathroom cabinets and finally get our attention when we run out of space or upon moving.

The excuses for hanging on to these products run the gamut. *There is almost a whole bottle left. I might still use it. I could refill my travel bottles with it. I could use it for travel. Even though my skin broke out when I used it, it might not the next time I try it. It was expensive. I do not want to waste it. I should give it to my sister.* Believe it or not, all of these thoughts are cover excuses for what is really going on.

Most females use beauty products of some sort, but women whose identities are strongly associated with their appearance are more likely to have more beauty products. If your appearance has been an asset or a positive part of your identity, then you are more likely to spend more time and money on that area of life. This is true regardless of whether you *believe* you are pretty or not. In an attempt to hold on to our beauty, we hold on to beauty products. Holding on to these items is an outward manifestation of the desire to hold on to one's beauty or an endless attempt to perfect it.

The Resourceful: Papers, Magazines and Ideas

If beauty products are not your nemesis, then maybe



piles of papers, magazines or books are. Papers can come in the form of mail, household papers, magazines, notes, to-do lists, books or any other resource on paper. You know who you are if this section applies to you. It is a never-ending stack of papers to be dealt with.

For information junkies, being resourceful is very much a part of their identity. It is where they feel valuable and helpful to the world and derive self-worth. They enjoy the exchange of information on the mental level — learning it for themselves or

Achilles' heel, then you most likely enjoy being stylish. Clothing can certainly serve a utilitarian purpose, but those who have an overabundance of clothing usually have an identity around being stylish with an underlying fear of being outdated or irrelevant. If that is true, then why would a stylish person keep out-of-style clothes in their closet? Being stylish comes with a price tag. Trending through clothes can get expensive. If you have spent money on an outfit you wore once to a party, or maybe even never at all, it may have come with an even higher price tag: guilt.

When we grip too tightly or hoard something, we often end up with what we fear the most.

sharing it with others — usually both. The idea of getting rid of these information resources may feel overwhelming.

Papers are certainly valuable, but when do they become too much of a good thing? You most likely know when you are up to your ears in too much paper. There is a desire to lighten their load, but sometimes fear swoops in. *What if I throw something useful away? What if I need it later? Am I throwing away a good idea? I might need that for a future project. My client might need it.*

Resourceful people may fear being out of the loop so much that they hang on to paper and information to the point of stagnation. As a result, they lose their resourcefulness — exactly what they fear.

If this feels all too familiar for you, simply acknowledge that information gathering and sharing is a part of who you are. Life will always bring new and fresh information to you. This will allow new ideas and thoughts to come in.

The Stylish: Clothing

If you feel like an overabundance of clothing is your

Guilt is a common emotion that hijacks our natural process of letting go. The paradox is that if the guilt is active in one's vibration, then you will continue to make ill-advised purchases. And, this is what may ultimately leads to your closet becoming stuffed with items you never wear and wondering why you have such a hard time getting rid of them.

Instead, you might acknowledge that you enjoy being stylish. Be okay with gambling on a dress you might only wear once to a special occasion. Start to let go of items you truly know you will never wear, even if they still have the price tags. Donate them to an organization that you feel makes a positive contribution to its community. This will ease the guilt and help shift you into a place of freedom. Shopping will become less impulsive and you will start to love and wear everything in your closet.

The Good Mother: Children's Toys

If your home feels overrun by toys, determine if it is an organizational issue or a consumption issue. If it is just a matter of better organization, then there are simple solutions. But if you struggle with giving in to your child's whims for more and more toys to the point of overconsumption, then this presents a differ-



ent challenge. Is it the overcompensation for feeling like you are not a good enough parent?

Consider if you feel guilty in some aspect of being a parent. This can also apply to dads who are not around as much as they would like to be. We often use gifts or tangible objects as a replacement for time and attention.

Do you feel like you are not giving your child enough of your time and so you attempt to replace this void with toys? Or, do you feel like you give and give and give and it is never enough? This is a common pattern of those who struggle with unworthiness. It is important to investigate the root of why you give too much to your child.

If unworthiness or guilt is at the root of your interaction with your child, that energy will get passed on. If there is some aspect of your parenting that you do not feel is adequate, clarify for yourself what that is. Is it legitimate? If so, what changes can you make? Or is it an unfounded pressure you are putting on yourself?

The Creative: Messy Environment

In the same way people talk about how dramatic their life is or what a “train wreck” they are, having a messy home is an identity that some people attach to as well. Creative types or artists might also tout their messy space as a way to validate themselves as a true artist. I commend someone for not having shame for keeping their home messy, but it could actually be inhibiting their creative process instead of contributing to it.

Many artists find that the lack of structure enriches their creativity. But perhaps, the more structure you have, the more creative you can be. This is the yin and yang of the creative process; it is well-illustrated by professional dancers and is the case with any artistry.

For creative types, much of the messy environment consists of inspirations, from nature to paper to paints to pictures. But over time, enough is enough

and our stuff starts to dampen the creative process.

The Organizer: Neat Environment

Some people pride themselves on being messy, while others tout having a neat and tidy space. When taken to the extreme, either can be equally detrimental to finding balance. In an overly tidy environment, the analytical left brain is fully in charge, preventing the emotional right brain to develop.

An overly neat space can indicate control issues and a lack of spontaneity. It is also a sign of strict boundaries with other people. Not surprisingly, the space can come between relationships because of the person's strong desire for control and organization.

Organizing is a way of exerting control. The paradox is that those who are the most organized sometimes actually feel the most out of control. Their tidy environment may give them a sense of being in control of their world. But it may also cover the pain of feeling out of control. This could mean not living the life you want to be living or being in a life you do not want to be in.

In the same way the overly messy person distracts their emotions with stuff, the overly neat person might distract through cleaning and organizing. If this feels like you, try leaving items sitting out more often than usual. This may not be a permanent desire for your home environment, but it may trigger the underlying emotions that are really at issue.

With any of the archetypes, finding balance is the key. The goal of a clutter intervention is not to achieve minimalism necessarily, but instead to create a supportive environment for you and your family. €



Author Tisha Morris can be found at www.TishaMorris.com.