Spring Cleaning for the Mind

Airing out your inner space can go a long way toward supporting mental health treatment. Use the following checklist with tips on how to remove unhelpful mental clutter and invite positive changes into your life.

Break Bad Habits
- Tackle one habit at a time.
- Decide on a clear and unshakeable end goal.
- Break it down into incremental steps.
- Choose a start date.
- Enlist the help of your support network.
- Discover your triggers and develop strategies for defusing them.

Eliminate Negative Thoughts and Speech
- Cultivate positive and empowering beliefs.
- Take responsibility for what happens to you rather than blaming others.
- Approach problems as opportunities.
- Take positive action whenever negative thoughts enter your mind.
- Reflect on why a particular person or problem is bothering you.
- Avoid attaching stories to people or experiences.
- Give yourself a time limit for venting.

Clear Your Physical Space
- Make a list of areas in your home, and start with the easiest.
- For each item, ask yourself:
  - Do I like it?
  - Do I use it?
  - How much hassle does it cause?
  - Why am I keeping it?
  - How does it make me feel?
- Give away one item each day.
- Create a “maybe” box for items you’re not sure about.
- Every six months, get rid of any unused items in your “maybe” box.

Cultivate Gratitude
- Make a list of things you’re grateful for—however small.
- Take time to appreciate simple pleasures.
- Write in a gratitude journal.
- Begin and end each day with a moment of gratitude.
- Express your gratitude to the people in your life.

Develop Positive Friendships
- Commit to spending quality time together.
- Listen to each other’s viewpoint without judgment.
- Offer encouragement and compliment each other’s strengths.
- Promote each other’s freedom without possessiveness.
- Forgive each other’s faults.
- Remain sensitive to each other’s needs.

Practicing Mindfulness
- Accept how you feel right now, rather than denying or striving to change it.
- Bring a feeling of warm compassion to your momentary experience.
- Let experiences pass without trying to hold on or push them away.
- Observe what you’re experiencing without judging it as good or bad.
- Improve your capacity for patience.

A mental spring cleaning can be the first step toward deeper healing. To learn more about mental health services, contact Lifeline Connections at one of our three locations in Vancouver, WA.

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