Decluttering your spaces can help you feel more in control and less stressed, which can help you lose!
Ahhh! Reducing clutter—physical and mental—can lighten your journey. Streamline your home, your car, your email inbox, and anywhere else in your life (too many to-dos on your list?) that tends to feel messy and unmanageable. Reduce the clutter, and you’re likely to reduce your stress—and that can help you reach your goals.

How does it help?
Organizing your physical space—as well as your mental space—can banish distractions so you can focus on the things that really matter to you, including your health and weight-loss goals. One recent study found that a chaotic environment can leave you vulnerable to making unhealthy food choices. Such disorder also leads to stress—and according to some research, that stress could spike your body’s cortisol levels, which in turn may make your body hold onto excess weight. Beyond the stress-reducing (and potentially weight-reducing) benefits of a clean sweep, you can organize your spaces to promote healthy behaviors, like keeping fresh fruits and vegetables front and center in the kitchen; moving your bicycle from the back of the garage to the front; and creating a clean, serene bedroom. It’s a win-win!

For the research behind this story, please see weightwatchers.com/us/wwwupdates

WHAT TO DO: TRY A MENTAL CLEAN SWEEP

Decluttering your bathroom? You probably don’t need us. Here are some tips for organizing your nonphysical spaces.

 WRITE DOWN YOUR TO-DOS.
No matter how excellent your memory, you’ll free up brain space when you record tasks and reminders on paper or in a digital note. (Now you can strategize how to beat your sister in the family ping-pong tournament!)

 SPEAK YOUR MIND.
In a perfect world, we’d all be comfortable telling others directly when we feel slighted, bothered, or angry. (If you’re good at this, keep it up—mentally rehashing unpleasant situations can be distracting.) But when you can’t let go, try speaking your thoughts out loud, even in an empty room. Voice your opinion, share your feelings, and hear yourself out. Then let that feeling go—and continue with your happy, healthy day.
THINK AGAIN
If your house/car/inbox is messier than you’d like it to be, consider what’s keeping you from decluttering. If time is an issue, reality-check how much time you really need to, say, clear out a drawer. Or whether you truly need to save all those papers….Check these examples of mindset shifts.

UNHELPFUL
“Dirty laundry’s all piled up—including my gym clothes. Guess I can’t work out today.”

HELPFUL
“Dirty laundry’s all piled up. Hmm. I guess I will switch my workout plans—I don’t need gym clothes to get in some activity.”

UNHELPFUL
“Cleaning my bedroom isn’t going to make me lose weight any faster.”

HELPFUL
“Cleaning my bedroom may not make me lose weight any faster—but a clean, calm environment helps me de-stress, and that can help me lose.”

YOUR TURN! What unhelpful thought have you had? Write it down here. Give it a reality check. Now, what is your helpful thought? Write it here. For more info, check out pages 2-3 in your Shift Your Mindset guide.

UNHELPFUL
____________________________________
____________________________________
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HELPFUL
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I REALIZE A LOT OF THE THINGS I’VE HELD ON TO DON’T EVEN MAKE ME HAPPY. IF THEY DON’T MAKE ME SMILE, THEY GET TOSSED! —IIAMS82*

MY BIG WEEKEND PROJECT WAS TO CLEAN THE ENTIRE KITCHEN. I LOVE MY NEW PANTRY AND IT FEELS LIKE A FRESH START! I FEEL SO MUCH MORE IN CONTROL, I CAN FIND STUFF NOW, AND AM SHOPPING IN MY OWN KITCHEN! —PEACEMAMA2015*

KEEPING MY KITCHEN COUNTERS CLUTTER FREE AND CLEAN HELPS ME AVOID MINDLESS EATING. IF FOOD IS IN THE CUPBOARD, I CAN’T SEE IT, SO I CAN’T EAT IT!

STACEY

*Posted on Connect on the mobile app (for subscribers).
Set a large, heavy pot or skillet over medium heat; add bacon and cook to desired crispness. Remove bacon from pot and set aside; leave bacon drippings in pot.

Add garlic and red pepper flakes to bacon drippings; cook, stirring, until garlic becomes fragrant, about 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 10 minutes. Add kale; cook, stirring occasionally, until it starts to wilt, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add broth; cover and simmer over low heat until kale is just tender, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add beans; simmer, uncovered, until liquid is almost evaporated, about 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in salt, vinegar, and sugar; sprinkle with crumbled bacon and serve immediately. Yields about 1 ¼ cups per serving.

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**KALE WITH BACON AND CANNELLINI BEANS**

Serve as a side, atop pasta, or as a room temperature salad.

4 SmartPoints® VALUE PER SERVING // PREP 10 MIN
COOK 32 MIN // SERVES 4

- 3 slices turkey bacon
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 lb kale, stemmed, roughly chopped
- 1 cup canned broth (chicken or beef)
- 15 oz canned cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp granulated turbinado sugar

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