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By Tanna Guthrie

De-Cluttering: the painful method

Why is it so hard to throw anything away? The season is changing; time to switch summer and winter clothes. But how can I toss out the brown bubble dress that I haven't worn in two years? It might come back in style. I might wear it again. And Brad Pitt might give up changing diapers and hit the beach with Jennifer Aniston one more time. But the odds are against Jennifer and me.

I called my sister Beki to help stage an intervention. She's now going through a de-cluttering phase. She tossed out 50 pounds of magazines that she meant to read. That's just a start. She has a drawer that she can't open, and hasn't in a year, because it's crammed full of clothes. At least she thinks it is.

Here's how I envision the intervention. I grab all my summer clothes and pile them on my bed. I separate everything into a "keep it" or "toss it" pile. If I haven't worn it in a year, toss it. However, if I waver ... "well, that was so cute when I bought it, I bet it comes back" ...

thwaap! That's when my sister hits me with a rubber band. The sting brings me back to sanity. Toss it.

It's not just clothes. I have pots and pans that I got at a yard sale 20 years ago. I still haven't used them, but I swear, for a quarter, you would have bought them, too! In one kitchen cabinet, I have just five glasses that match. The rest are a hodge podge: the plastic cup from Jerry's Bait Shop, the glass shaped like a boot, the Winnie the Pooh jelly jar that my teenage son hasn't used in years.

Who do my sister and I blame for this? Our mother. She still has issues of *National Geographic* from 1960. Not neatly stacked for posterity. No, they're in the bathroom reading rack for anyone interested in the time period when Rhodesia was still a country.

So, now it's back to the closet. This time, I'm going to be ruthless. No wavering on my part. That gauzy, jeweled blouse that goes with nothing is gone, although it really is cute ... owwww! I forgot. My sister still has the rubber band.

Tanna Guthrie is host of the afternoon show on 98.1 KUDL. She's also a charity fundraising auctioneer and sells real estate for Prudential Kansas City Realty. Just don't ask her to clean your house. To reach her, call 913.568.4888.

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