

Book Club Discussion Guide

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Decluttering at the Speed of Life by Dana K. White

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Tackle your home's clutter, inside and out, with clever tricks, humor, and realism.

QUOTE | "I have opened random doors and slammed them shut, feeling completely and totally overwhelmed, and then opened them again and worked my way through the clutter inside."

QUESTION | Are you currently overwhelmed by your clutter?

QUOTE | "There will be moments when you love what I say, and there will be moments when you hate my guts."

QUESTION | Did you resonate with the author's tone and overall approach?

QUOTE | p. 3 - "Decluttering is stuff you don't need leaving your house."

QUESTION | What is one thing you don't need.

QUOTE | p. 4 - "I define clutter as anything I can't keep under control. If a space in my home consistently gets out of control, I have too much stuff in that space. I have clutter."

QUESTION | What type of item do you find most difficult to control?

QUOTE | p. 9 - "Living now means giving now preferential treatment over the future or even the past."

QUESTION | Can we apply this to how we approach our memory keeping projects?

QUOTE | p. 14 - "Accept the limitations of the space you have, and declutter enough that your stuff fits comfortably in that space."

QUESTION | Does your scrapbook stash currently honor the true limits of your space?

QUOTE | p. 22 - "As a super-duper planner of all future possibilities, I grabbed things because I saw their potential to solve a future problem."

QUOTE | p. 29 - An amazing bargain that ultimately makes my life more difficult isn't an amazing bargain at all.

QUESTION | Is there a scrapbook supply or tool that you regret purchasing?

QUOTE | p. 23 - "I had no idea how much I would love open space because I'd always filled every space that was mine."

QUESTION | Do you prefer open spaces or to be surrounded by stuff?

QUOTE | p. 31 - "Declutter that most visible area first, every time. The Visibility Rule serves as both a short-term strategy and a long-term strategy."

QUESTION | How would you apply this to your scrapbook supplies or creative workspace?

QUOTE | p. 36 - "I dealt with the clutter level by boxing it up in the garage or shoving everything in the master bedroom and locking the door until whatever event I was cleaning my house for was over."

QUESTION | Have you done this?

QUOTE | p. 38 - "Procrasti-clutter, by definition, is made up of things that require no decisions. You already

know exactly what to do with procrasticlutter; you just haven't done it."

QUESTION | What kind of scrapbooking "procrasticlutter" do you have?

QUOTE | p. x - "Piles and stacks sat in the open, waiting for their Ideal Decluttering Method to happen. Once I made the decision to donate everything, I felt incredible freedom, and I was able to move through my clutter so much more quickly."

QUESTION | Where can you donate scrapbook supplies?

QUOTE | p. 51 - "So the point of decluttering isn't to get rid of things you want to keep; it's to identify those things and then to make space to enjoy those things."

QUESTION | What area of your home comes to mind as a space you want to declutter in order to enjoy the things that remain in it?

QUOTE | p. 55 - "I am a more-than-typically-distractible person, so I created strategies that keep me from ever getting into a situation where, when something distracts me from the decluttering project, I'm worse off than I was before I started."

QUESTION | Have you ever attempted a decluttering project that left you worse off?

QUOTE | p. 56 - "To declutter at the speed of life, you have to accept that life happens. By making a final decision about the fate of each item as you pick it up and then acting on that decision (trashing it, donating it, or taking it where it goes immediately), at any point when you get distracted, you've made progress."

QUESTION | Does the author's approach appeal to you? Why or why not?

QUOTE | p. 58 - "Give yourself permission to just declutter. Don't worry about getting organized, and focus on getting the things you don't need out of your home."

QUESTION | Have you ever tried focusing just on decluttering and not on organizing?

QUOTE | p. 72 - "My goal is to be able to find what I need in the moment I need it, without trying to re-

member what I might have been thinking in the midst of a crazy and frantic cleaning session."

QUOTE | p. 131 - "I stopped putting things in super-logical, well-thought-out places, and instead put them where we look for them."

QUESTION | Have you ever repeatedly looked in one place for a particular item?

QUOTE | p. 76 - "Just like any pile of clutter, a pile of paper seems to be a pile of decisions to be made, and paper decisions are the most overwhelming."

QUESTION | Besides unused patterned paper, what kind of paper clutter develops in your hobby?

QUOTE | p. 82 - "Irritation over the existence of procrasticlutter can make easy stuff feel like it's not easy."

QUESTION | How does procrasticlutter get in the way?

QUOTE | p. 84- "The decluttering questions work because they deal with reality only. Not possibilities, potential, or emotion."

QUESTION | Have you tried using the decluttering questions yet?

QUOTE | p. 95 - "I came up with a system that isn't the least bit complicated but totally works: I put lids on containers as I take them out of the dish-washer (or off the dish drainer when I hand wash) and stick them in the cabinet."

QUESTION | Is there an unconventional solution that works or might work in your scrapbooking?

QUOTE | p. 98 - "Throwing away food should hurt. Let the intense feeling of regret change how you shop in the future."

QUESTION | Has decluttering your scrapbook stash in the past already impacted how you shop?

QUOTE | p. 100 - "In every pickle jar or childproof medicine container, I saw not only dill slices or pills; I saw the future."

QUESTION | Do you typically save random items for future craft projects?

QUOTE | p. 124 - "Their homes stay cluttered with clothes they know they don't want, because they can't get rid of those clothes for fear they're doing it wrong."

QUOTE | p. 124 - "And that is the only thing that truly is not an option at all: to keep stuff you know you don't want because you're so stressed out over the best way to get rid of it."

QUESTION | Do you struggle to know the best way to discard your scrapbook supplies?

QUOTE | p. 129 - "This is a common trait among people who struggle with clutter: they're interesting, and they like interesting stuff."

QUESTION | Do you think the reverse is true? Think about someone you know who has little to no clutter.

QUOTE | p. 131 - "Sometimes (lots of times) hobby rooms become rooms of randomness. Cool stuff gets shoved in the hobby room because there isn't another place for it in the house, or maybe your brain thinks of this as the wouldn't-that-be-cool room instead of the scrapbooking room."

QUESTION | What other categories of items live in your creative workspace?

QUOTE | p. 134 - "Except that we're talking about living comfortably within the house you have, and making this space usable. Usable for crafting. Which involves much more than paper. There has to be a limit to how much paper you can keep because you need room for other supplies, and you need room to work."

QUESTION | Do you need to declutter some of your patterned paper?

QUOTE | p. 154- "People matter more than stuff. Don't sacrifice years of love and life lived together over a disagreement about a toaster that won't work. Just don't."

QUESTION | Do you ever clash with family members over clutter?

QUOTE | p. 164 - "Playing is a child's work, and having too many choices is paralyzing. Just like I experienced Decluttering Paralysis, my kids experienced Playing Paralysis."

QUESTION | How can you apply this to the play we do in crafting?

QUOTE | p. 204 - "'Less' is a strangely effective decluttering mind-set change. Do you need all of the things you've collected for this dream, or could you survive with less? Having a few stamps was fun, but having two grocery sacks full of stamps was making life more difficult."

QUESTION | Is there a category in your stash that you would be perfectly fine to have less of?

QUOTE | p. 206 - "I'm all about living with intention, but living out that intention doesn't mean the details look exactly like I thought they might."

QUESTION | Can you think of an example?

QUOTE | p. 216 - Commit to creating a home that makes living now fun.

QUESTION | What is your next baby step on your decluttering journey?

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