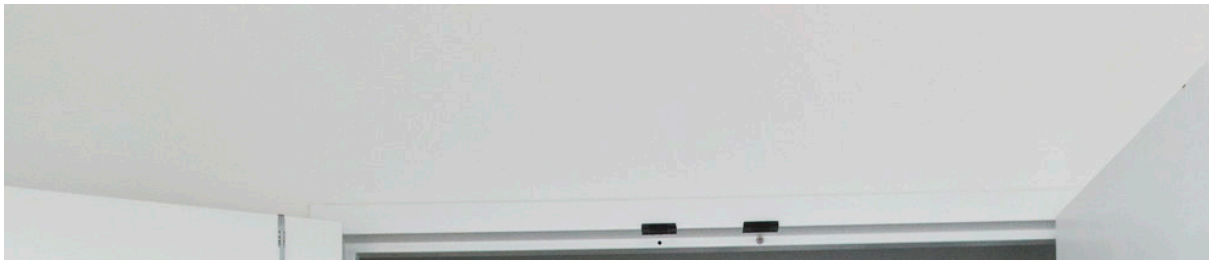


HOME ABOUT CONTACT PRESS LOG **JERA BEAN**

JERA FOSTER-FELL · FEBRUARY 7, 2019

Folding My Underwear Changed My Life







I have always been a relatively unorganized person. Growing up, my mom could not believe how messy my room was. In high school, my locker was overflowing with papers. In college, I would never properly put my laundry away. As an adult, I've accumulated way too many things and most drawers feel like they've become a junk drawer of some sort.

I've done my fair share of spring cleaning and attempts at organizing, but I never knew how much mental energy my clutter was taking up in my mind until

[Lisa Tselebidis](#), a certified KonMari consultant, entered my life.

Lisa originally reached out to me on Instagram ([check out her insta here](#)), and explained that she helps people simplify their homes *and* lives through in-person tidying consultations. As Lisa describes on her website,

“I truly believe that having a home in which you are only surrounded by items you love can be life-changing in many ways.”

And after 35+ hours of working

together, I can't agree with this quote more, and I'm really excited to share this transformative journey with you.

But first things first, what the hell is KonMari?!

The follow explanation is taken from [Lisa Tselebidis' site](#):

The KonMari Method™ is a sustainable and proven decluttering and organizing concept devised by by Marie Kondo- a Japanese Organizing Consultant and best-selling author of The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up.

The KonMari Method™ is guided by the following principles:

- Sorting by category, not by location
- Adhering to the following category order:
 - Clothes
 - Books
 - Paper
 - Komono (Miscellaneous items)
 - Mementos
- First step: decluttering
- Second step: designating a home to each item
- Only keeping items that

- Only keeping items that spark joy
- Doing it completely, once and for all
- Doing it in one go
- Showing gratitude towards belongings

Besides just the aesthetics, having a clutter-free and well organized home can have other positive impacts on your life, such as:

- Improved time management
- Stress reduction
- Career direction

- Improved mental and physical health
- More time for hobbies, family, and friends

So, let's dive in to the experience!

Pre-KonMari

I felt really excited to start this new journey. Even though I've never really been an organized person, it's something that I certainly have wanted to be. I

just didn't know how to do it,
despite my attempts in the past.

On top of my general desire to simplify my life, it actually was crucial for me to do so because at time, I was getting ready to downsize from a two bedroom apartment in Brooklyn to a teeny tiny studio in Manhattan. I knew I had way too much stuff, and I needed professional help to downsize quickly.

Before Lisa came over for our initial meeting, she sent me a Vision Questionnaire to kick off the process. She asked questions like,

“What are the goals you pursue with tidying your home?”

“What do you want more of and what do you want less of in your life?”

“How do you envision your space to look and feel like after tidying?”

Lisa also asked me to send her some inspo pics of what I'd like my home to look like. Combined with my answers to the questionnaire, Lisa put together this vision board for me to

reference:



I want less STUFF. I have so much "stuff". Between the things that I get as an influencer (I'm sent things every day) and things that I hold on to, I have a lot of things I don't need.

Open, cozy, funky, jungalow, vintage, intentional, fun, organized, peaceful, joyful, relaxed, full of plants. Like HOME.

I am moving from the two bedroom to a studio and I need to downsize.



I want to be able to look at my space and feel like everything in my home is intentional. That every piece/object is something that I truly want to have in my home.



An ideal day would be sleeping to 7 or 8, having the best latte ever, going to SoulCycle, eating the most incredible brunch afterwards with friends, followed by walking around NYC/shopping, heading home to hang with my dog, and at some point in the evening, reading an amazing book, ordering killer take out, and ending with some Netflix.



I want more time to focus on me, my business, and my future. I don't think I've allowed myself the space and energy to fully dive into this, and I'm at a pivotal point in my life where I need to make that a priority.



Career and finances



I will feel more at peace and relaxed with a home that is tidy and decluttered.



I think the biggest goal would be creating a more peaceful environment to live and work in. Oftentimes my space LOOKS tidy and clean, but behind cabinet and closet doors, it's a hot mess. I want to create a home that's balanced and thoughtful because that will help me feel more balanced and thoughtful.

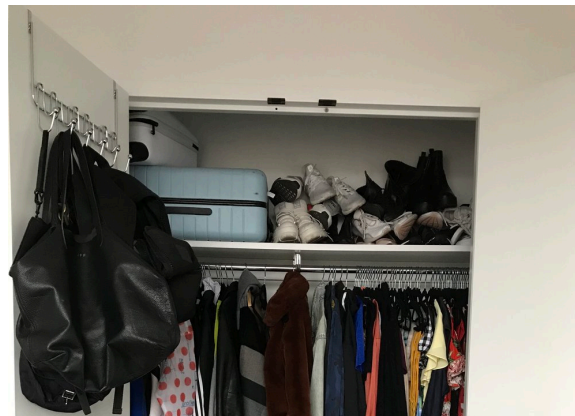
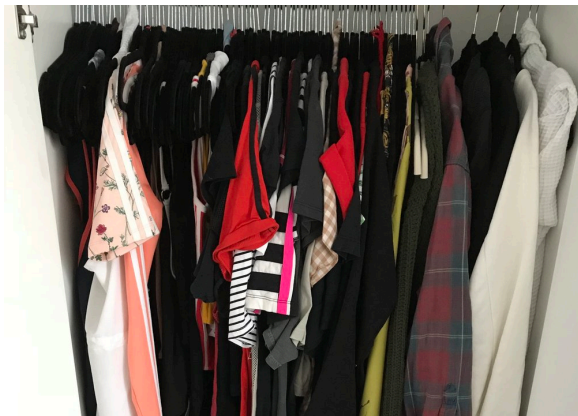


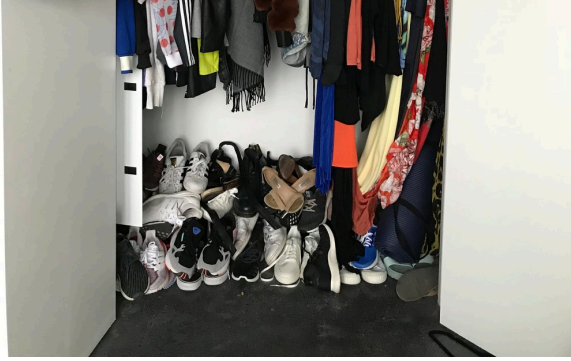
Category 1: Clothing

Lisa came over mid November for our first session and we jumped right into things! The KonMari method has a very specific order of how you go through your items, and the very first category that you tackle is clothing.

Here's a peek into what some of my closets and drawers looked like. As you can see, there

wasn't much order and a lot of things are just thrown onto shelves haphazardly.







Sorting

Lisa asked me to gather literally every single piece of clothing I owned: jackets, workout gear, socks, bathing suits, shirts, etc. from every closet, drawer, and hanger and place it all in one big pile in my living room. The goal of this step is to really see everything you own all in one place. For most people, it's pretty shocking to see the sheer amount of clothing they have

amount of clothing they have,
and for me, it was no different.
Once I saw everything together, I
thought to myself,

“Geez, do I really need all this
stuff?!”





One I had everything gathered, Lisa explained that the next step is to pick each item up one by one, and decide whether or not it brings you joy.

If it brings you joy, you keep it. If it does not bring you joy, you thank it, and decide whether or not it's something you can donate or throw away.

This concept of sparking joy is at the center of the KonMari method. I'll admit though, it can

method. I'll admit though, it can be kind of confusing at first.

Here are Lisa's thoughts about understanding whether or not something brings you joy:

Many people feel unsure about what it feels like when something "sparks joy". When you go through the KonMari process, you practice and hone your sense of joy as you start with easy categories and progress to more difficult ones.

It's very important that you create your vision of your ideal home and lifestyle before you start tidying. Keep this vision in

mind as you move through the process and joy check your items. Some questions you could ask yourself:

- Does this item fit into the vision of your ideal life?*
- Do you have an uplifting, happy feeling when you think about or look at the item?*
- Would you buy this item again if you saw it in the store?*

One important thing that I want to point out is that KonMari isn't just about getting rid of stuff. It's

crucial to keep coming back to the concept of joy. I'll never forget at one point, Lisa stopped me and said,

“Jera, I’m watching you go through things, and it seems like you’re deciding on the items that you don’t want, instead of choosing the items that bring you joy.”

And I have to admit, she was right! She caught me. I was looking at a big pile of stuff and picking out the things I wanted to

discard, rather than individually deciding whether or not they bring me joy.

I felt like it was a bigger metaphor for life in general, to be honest. Food for thought.

Once we went through clothing, shoes and accessories was next. And yes, I know, I had A LOTTA SHOES! My goodness!





I'll admit, going through each piece of clothing was truly exhausting. Lisa checked in with me a few times and asked how I was feeling. When I told her that

I felt mentally drained, she assured me that it was totally normal to feel that way during this process.

We tend to hang on to so much stuff. Things that we used to like

five years ago. Things that we think one day we'll wear again but have been sitting in our closets untouched. Things that have memories attached to them. So going through every single individual item, feeling those wide range of feelings, and then deciding if it actually, in this very moment, truly brings you joy, was absolutely an emotionally draining process.

Folding

Once all the clothing was sorted through, the next step was folding. Let me see if I can first I

tolding. Let me say it here first, I was not thrilled about this. My entire life, folding has been the enemy. Why? I don't know really! I guess I've always found it be boring as fuck and I've never felt *any* joy doing it.

Lisa assured me that by the end of our session, I would probably start to enjoy the art of folding that she was about to teach me. I told her she was absolutely loony bananas.

(Spoiler alert, she was right.)

Folding is probably the most identifiable part of KonMari. Now that the Netflix docuseries is

..

live, you've probably seen this very specific method of folding popping up on your friends' insta stories.

The goal is fold each piece into about the same size, essentially a cute little rectangle.

[Check out a video of Lisa showing a client how to KonMari Fold.](#)

Once the pieces are all folded neatly, you should color code them, and they should stand upright in a drawer (or box!) so that every single item is viewable from above.

This is crucial because when it

This is crucial because when it comes to folding and storing clothing, people typically stack pieces on top of each other, making it impossible to see what you have. This usually creates a mess when it comes time to look for a specific piece. Folding the clothes and placing them together vertically makes it so easy to see exactly what you have!

Like this:





With the exception of things that we chose to hang in my closet (dresses, jackets, sweatshirts), we folded everything. Even my socks and underwear. Yes, you read that right. We freakin' folded SOCKS AND UNDERWEAR.

UNDERWEAR, and you wanna know what's crazy?! I kinda started to love it. Oh my god, who am I?!

Underwear:





Bras:





Socks:





Bathing Suits:

Note that most of the time with folding, a small rectangle is the goal, but sometimes there are some pieces that just work better rolled, like a few of these bikini tops.







Jewelry

Most of jewelry was in random piles placed throughout my apartment. I had purchased this organizer from Amazon, but had yet to actually use it. I pulled it out to show Lisa, and after I had sorted through my jewelry and decided which pieces bring me joy, we organized it into this nifty

lil thang:





Boxes

A quick note about boxes, folks!

In general, I learned that an important part of organizing with the KonMari method is being

able to compartmentalize and section things off.

For example, in the first folding photo above, you can see my workout pants sectioned off into black pants and then colored/patterned pants. This way, I know exactly what to pull out from my closet when I'm looking for something specific, and I don't have to pull *everything* out in order to find it.

But here's the thing, you don't necessarily need to go out and spend a ton of money for fancy storage in order to make this happen. You can use any kind of box (shoe boxes are great!) to

box (shoe boxes are great!) to make this work.

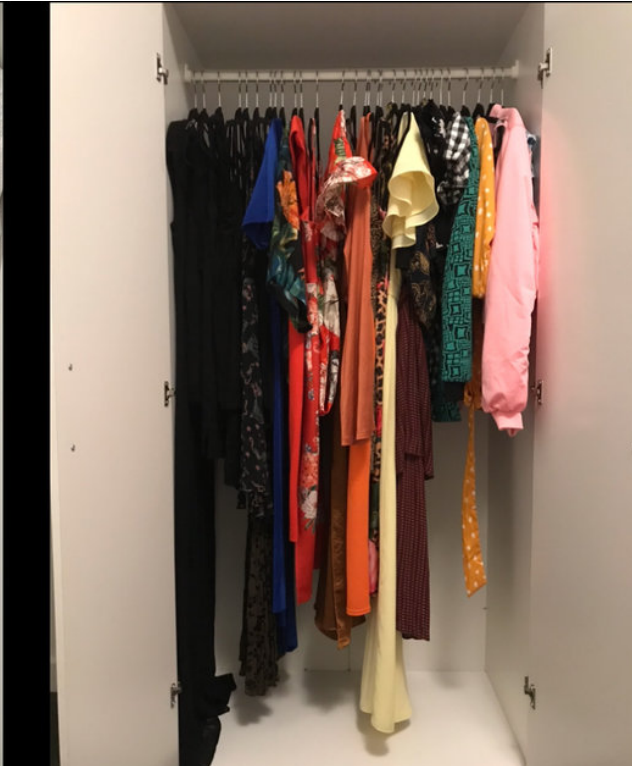
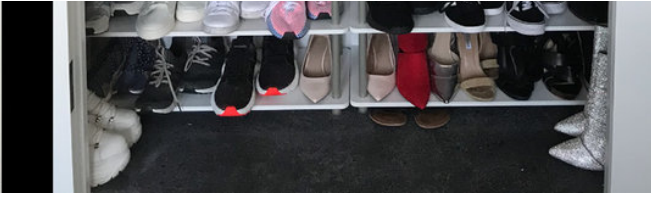
Lisa and I utilized all kinds of boxes that I already owned during this stage. Heads up though, I do plan on upgrading to nicer looking storage in my new apartment. You'll get a peak into that in Part 2 of my KonMari journey!

Closet Before/After

And after all that work, check out this pretty incredible before and after side by sides of two of my closets. All the items in the

photos on the right are pieces that bring my joy. They are also color coded, which makes it much easier to find the piece I'm looking for.







After hours of work and multiple sessions together, the clothing category was complete. Even though we still had a ways to go with the rest of the journey, I already felt this large weight lifted off my shoulders. Knowing that the only clothes I had were items I intentionally kept, and seeing everything so specifically organized and tidy, brought this huge relief. Heck, it freakin' brought me JOY! It was this moment that I started to better understand the magic and transformative potential of the KonMari Method.

Category 2: Books

Next category folks, books!

YEEHAW! I don't own a ton of

books, so after tackling clothing, this felt a little less like a huge ordeal. The same process applies though. Get all your books, pile 'em into one spot, and then one by one, decide which books spark joy.

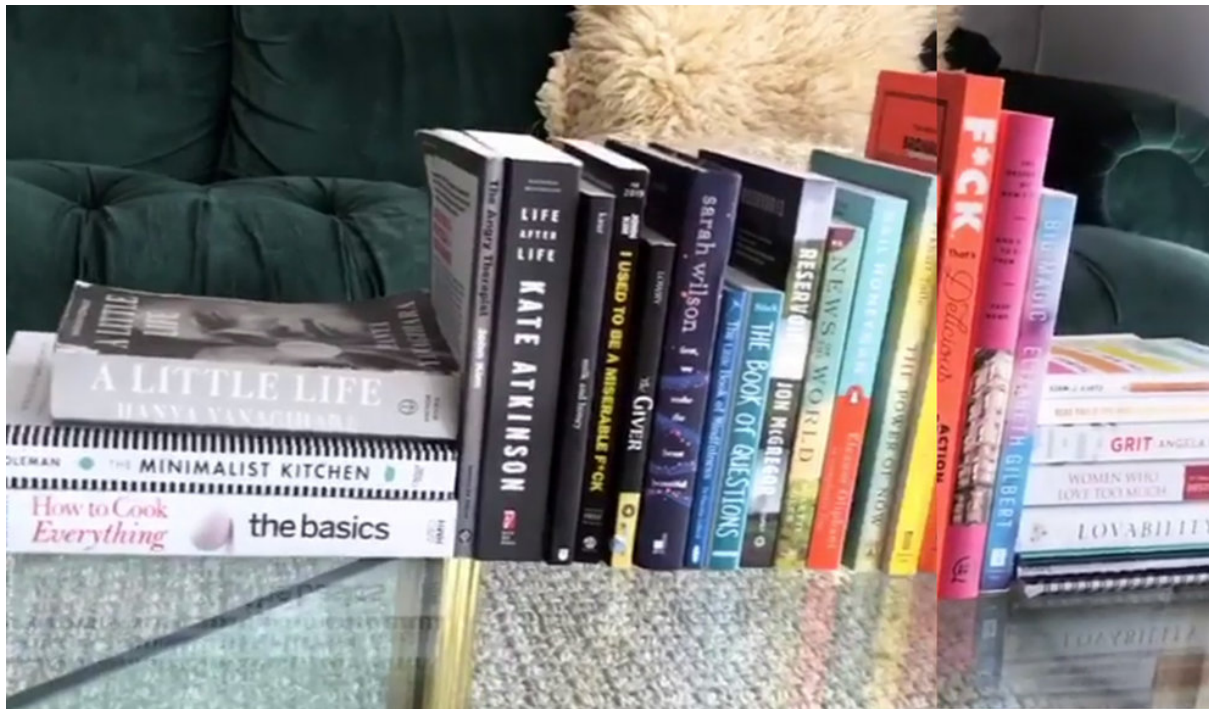
Piling all of my books

together:



The books that I decided
to keep:

The color coding is just SO
satisfying to me!



Category 3: Papers

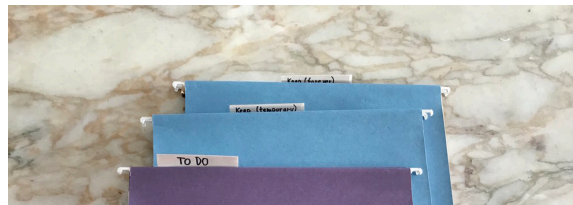
By the time we got to the third categories, I was feeling GOOD! Like I was already a KonMari pro. Lisa asked me to gather all my papers: receipts, manuals, tax records, bank statements... *everything!*

Once everything was gathered, I had to decide what to keep and

what to throw out. Next step was to sort the papers I was keeping

into three categories:

- Pending To-Do (ASAP)
 - For example: a bill that needs to be paid
- To Keep (Temporary)
 - For example: lease papers
- To Keep (Forever)
 - For example: my birth certificate





Category 4: Miscellaneous Items

Things had been movin' real good and smooth up until Category 4, but when it came time to tackle to miscellaneous items, I had a big reality check. I

still had a *shit* ton of work to do.

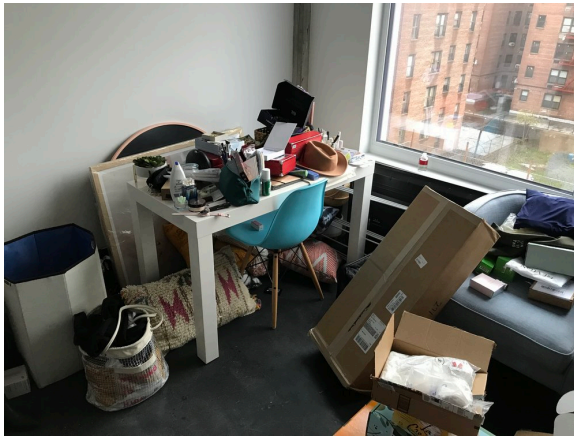
Category 4 is when it's time to tackle almost everything that's left, which depending on the person and apartment/house could include: bathroom items and products, junk drawers, kitchen, garage, etc.

When Lisa first arrived to my apartment a few sessions prior, I explained to her that I had a "room of shame". Essentially a room where I kept all the stuff that's sent to me that I really let

get out of hand. Check it out below. Very cringe worthy, ugh!

Beauty Products

“The Room of Shame”



But just like the other categories, we approached the items (mostly beauty products) in a similar way. I went through each one, one by one. I organized them into categories like hair, beauty,

and skin, and then once everything was categorized, I went through everything again and decided which brought me joy, and which did not. The items that I didn't keep, we sectioned off into two groups: products to use in giveaways on Instagram, and products to donate.

Some screenshots of the sorting process from my Instagram

Stories:





Here's a little side by side of the before and after of my Room of Shame. The items that you see in the original photo were either

placed into bags to donate or organized into drawers and shelves.



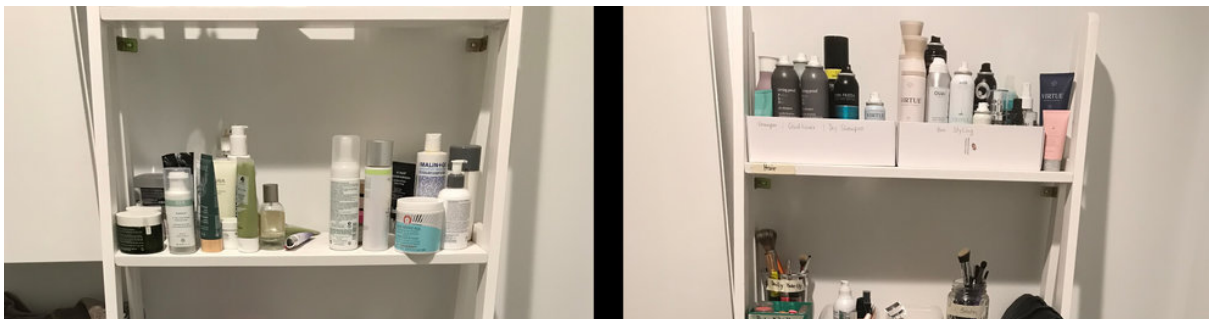
[@lisatselebidis](#)

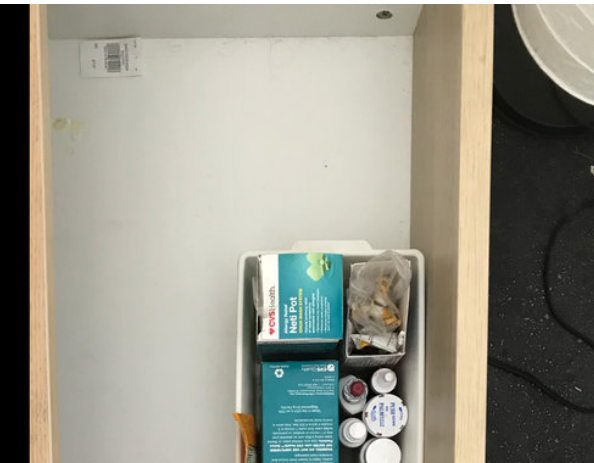
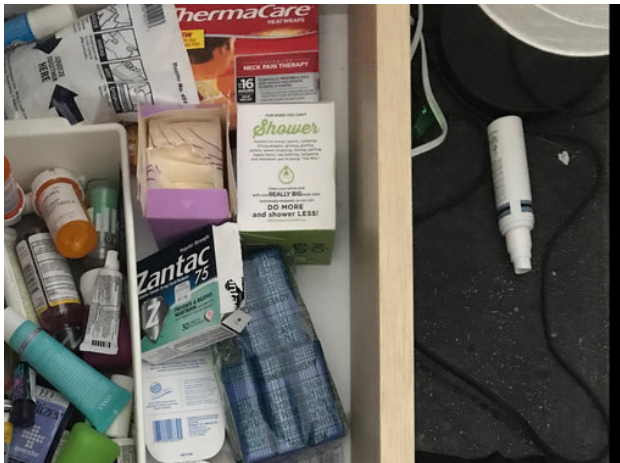
...that the products that are currently organized into bags which will be transported to my new apt. Once I get there, @lisatselebidis will help me figure out where and how to store those items most effectively.

Once the room of shame was done, we moved onto the bathroom and pharmacy products that were kept in a variety of places, and we used the same principles for sorting through and organizing. As you can tell by this point, I have A LOT of products that were stored in a wide range of places, so this part was one of the most mentally exhausting for me.

Here are a few before and afters

featuring the shelves in my bathroom, and one of the drawers I use for products/pharmacy items. Keep in mind again that this sorting/organizing was a temporary solution until I moved to my new apt. Also take note of how Lisa used boxes I already had to create a sense of order and separation.







Here's a close up of how Lisa organized my lipsticks. A key take away, which you've also seen applied to clothing, is to face everything upwards so that

you can actually see what you have. When things are stored on top of each other, it may look ok initially, but you'll end up digging through your items to find them, ultimately creating a mess.





Credenza Drawers

Oh boy. My credenza drawers. Essentially these nine drawers were a catch all for all kinds of items: papers, workout equipment, tools, travel items, notebooks, books, electronics, etc.

I always thought that it was impossible to have these types of drawers organized. Like I was

essentially destined to have several junk drawers for the rest of my life. But Lisa proved me wrong! Take a look at a few before and afters below.











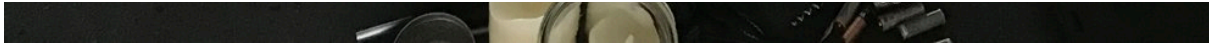
The Kitchen

The last section Lisa and I decided to work on which would finish up Category 4: Kimono, was my kitchen. My apartment had a *ton* of cupboards, drawers, etc. and you bet that I filled 'em all up with all kinds of stuff!

Similar to when I had to take out all of my clothing and put it all into a single pile, I could not believe the amount of things I had that came out of my kitchen! My mind was blown. Below you can see me beginning to sort through some items, followed by some before and after kitchen shots.









After 35 hours of working

together over the course of two weeks, Lisa and I had completely Categories 1-4 before I moved, and decided to finish Category 5: Mementos once I got to my new apartment.

Here are some important lessons that the journey has taught me so far:

- There's a difference between just "getting rid of items" and instead choosing to keep items that bring you joy.
- Realizing that each of my items has a specific home in

items has a specific name is really freeing. For example, I come home and take off my shoes and coat. I know that not only do I need to put my coat in the closet, but there's a specific section of the closet that it goes in. Same for my shoes. Makes it so much easier to stay organized.

- I honestly used to despise folding but after being taught how to properly fold, and that folding is a way of appreciating your items, I'm starting to come around to it.

- I realized I'm really motivated by seeing the end result. Like seeing my items stored neatly in my closet, or seeing my booking organized by color feels SO good and peaceful, and makes me want to work hard at maintaining this new order.
- I've learned how much mental energy my clutter and disorganization took up in my mind. I don't want to return to that state.
- KonMari is truly life changing!

And here are some questions submitted on Instagram that Lisa kindly answered:

How do you organize with a children at home?

I think it's important to have designated areas/rooms for where your children's things belong and where your things belong.

If you'd like your kids to tidy up according to the KonMari Method make sure you complete

method, make sure you complete your tidying first. Then you can encourage and help your children to begin the process as well.

I don't know how old your children are but according to Marie Kondo, children as young as 3 years are able to decide what brings them joy.

How do you deal with the nostalgia of getting rid of that thing you've had for 15 years?

Mementos (sentimental items) is the 5th and last category in the KonMari Method. And it is the last one for a reason. It's the

last one for a reason. It's the most difficult one because of the memories attached to things. It's important to stick to the category order and deal with Mementos last as you practice making decisions and really hone in on what brings you joy along the way. Once you arrive at the very last category, making decisions about your sentimental items should have become easier.

How do you meet Marie Kondo and become a certified consultant?

Hi! You can find more

.....

information on how to become a certified consultant on konmari.com. I met Marie Kondo at the consultant seminar (one of the 7 steps of the certification process).

Is there a certain amount of things you should own per category?

No, there's no certain amount/number of things you should own per category. The only defining factor of whether you want to keep or let go of an item is if it sparks joy for you. If it sparks joy – keep it. If it

doesn't – let it go with gratitude.
That's the only deciding factor.

(Now with that said a certain amount of something might spark joy for you. E.g., if you have space constraints, you might only want to keep an amount of clothes that nicely fit into your closet. Because your ideal vision of a home that sparks joy may include not having an overstuffed closet, for instance.)

Does you recommend keeping sneaker boxes or getting a rack for shoes instead?

.

In general, I recommend removing packaging from your items as much as you can. So instead of storing your shoes in shoeboxes, you'd want to put them on a rack or shelf (depends on your home and what you have available). If things are out of their packaging, they're visible and easily accessible. You're more likely to wear them and don't forget about them.

What is the ultimate goal of the method? To improve overall happiness through organization?

The goal is to create an environment that sparks joy and supports you in living the life you envision to live. Our environments have a huge impact on how we feel, function and operate. Creating a home in which you're only surrounded by items that speak to your heart is a foundation that can help you live the life you desire to live.

To wrap this all
up...

What's next? Well, I am officially in my new apartment! And I can't tell you how thankful I am for the work Lisa and I put in before I moved. My new apartment is so freakin' small, I would have been so screwed and overwhelmed had I not KonMari'd my life beforehand.

But! There is still work to be done. Lisa and I still need to tackle the Mementos category. And once that's complete, we get to put the finishing touches on everything by purchasing some storage items to replace the various boxes that you've seen in the photos throughout this

in the photos throughout this post. Can't wait to show you the final result in my new place.

Resources:

Lisa Tselebidis:

[Website](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Free KonMari Category Checklist](#)

KonMari:

[Website](#)

[Instagram](#)

And to see my KonMari journey in action, head to my [instagram](#)

and click on the “KonMari” highlight!



Comments (0)

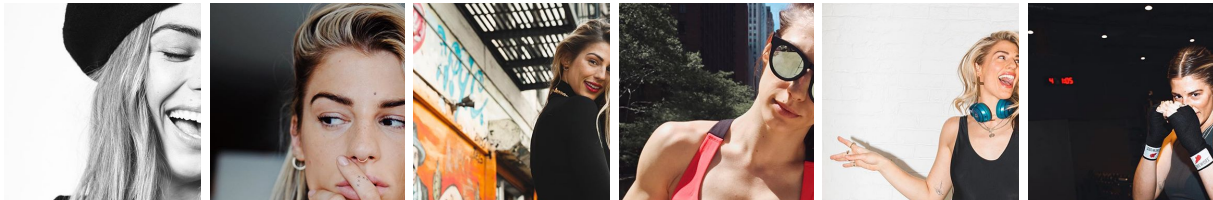
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