

# Outer Order, Inner Calm Summary

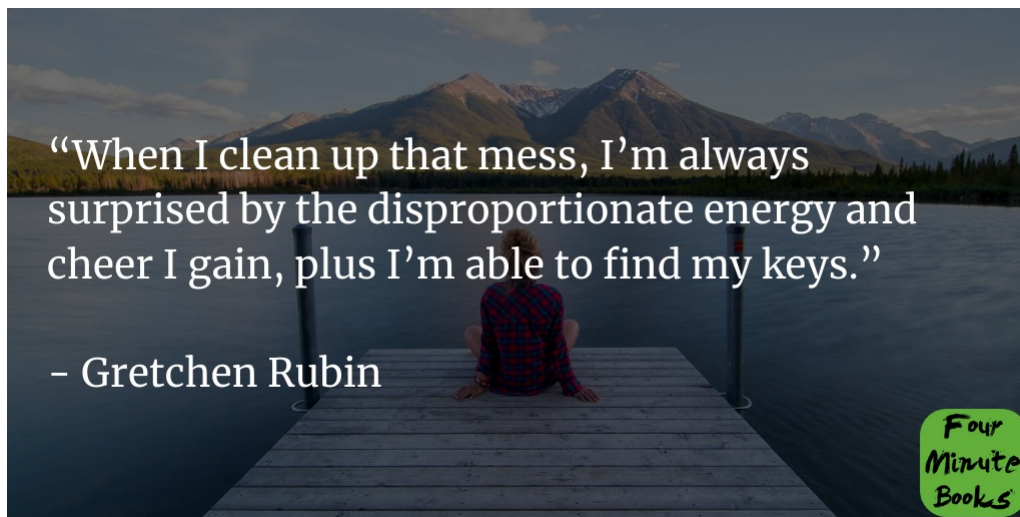
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 [fourminutebooks.com](https://fourminutebooks.com)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Outer Order, Inner Calm* gives you advice to declutter your space and keep it orderly, to foster your inner peace and allow you to flourish.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Is order an issue, considering all the things we have to do in our daily life?

Gretchen Rubin thinks it really is. Orderly spaces can foster your inner peace. And when you are at peace, you can do much better for yourself, the people around you, and the world.

"I finally cleaned out my fridge and now I know I can switch careers," a friend of the author once told her. Order can boost your self-confidence, while disorder is likely to increase your stress.

Often, the mess starts creeping in and you think: "I'm too busy to deal with that now" and just try to ignore it. But the overflowing desk drawers are getting in the way of your peace of mind.

Since she's discovered tidiness is so important for happiness, Gretchen Rubin dedicates time to impose some order even in her busiest days. When she feels overwhelmed by work deadlines, she spends twenty minutes cleaning up her office. It clears her mind.

*Outer Order, Inner Calm: Declutter and Organize to Make More Room for Happiness* is a book about finding the kind of order that better suits you and maintaining it over time.

Here are 3 lessons about creating the right environment for you to thrive:

1. An orderly space can improve your mood and boost your ability to build the future you want.
2. To declutter effectively, adopt a rational approach.
3. If you want to establish and maintain order, you should ask yourself the right questions and use some tricks.

Do you want to achieve a clearer thinking and a better mood? Let's see why and how you can get them through a tidier space.

## **Lesson 1: Tidying up will earn you serenity, focus, and motivation, which means a better present and a better future.**

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Decluttering is keeping only what can serve and represent you now, releasing the past to make room for a better present.

When only meaningful and easily accessible possessions are left, you are able to make better use of what you own, and buy less in the future. You'll feel less guilty about the stuff you've bought and never used. And you'll be empowered by new purposefulness and sense of possibility.

**Since our minds feed on our senses, pleasing them with order is the fastest way to raise our spirits and gain the self-confidence we need to undertake new challenges.**

By keeping your space tidy you can reduce stress. You don't have to waste time searching your house for objects or rush out to buy things that you already own. And there's no more mess to trigger arguments with family, flatmates, and colleagues.

Now that her house is orderly, Rubin's relationships have improved. She's experiencing more harmony with her family. She's no more afraid of people's judgment and doesn't get anxious when friends visit her. She really likes having them around now.

## **Lesson 2: Adopt the right mindset to understand what you need, love, and use and free yourself from the rest.**

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The first step for ordering our space is to decide rationally what to keep and what to throw away.

Sometimes we still feel connected to now useless items and make excuses to not separate ourselves from them. Rubin also finds herself hanging onto clothes too old to be worn that she still loves. In this case, "It can be repaired or altered" is a common excuse. Do you really

want to do it? Then immediately set a very close deadline.

**To make informed decisions while decluttering, for every object, ask yourself: “Is this something I need? Is this something I love? Is this something I use?”.** Starting with the right mindset is important to make rational choices: you need to be rested, not in a hurry, and not hungry. You could also call a friend to help you make conscious choices on what to discard.

The author still keeps a few mementos, especially from her children’s babyhood, but got rid of most of the things that weren’t useful for her and her family anymore.

Unfinished projects are less considered a form of clutter. They take many forms: half-built Lego castles, knitting experiments, puzzles. They’re irritating in themselves because they radiate guilt and frustration but also contribute to clutter because we often leave them in sight as a reminder to finish them.

As the author says, “the easiest way to complete a project is to abandon it”. So you decide: finish it or just throw it away, tidying up your shelves and relieving your conscience.

### **Lesson 3: Self-knowledge and some tricks can help you fight and prevent stress.**

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Sometimes the only thing we want is to spend a relaxing evening at home, so we just try to ignore disorder and chill out anyway. Other times we are busy in our office and don’t feel like wasting time putting everything back in its place. In both cases, chances are that we won’t be able to really relax nor focus in a messy environment.

You should ask yourself: am I making myself feel better by letting the clutter take over my space? **The right questions can help you understand what kind of order you need to work efficiently and truly recharge, and motivate you to maintain it.**

Before starting to clear, understand why exactly you want to tidy up that specific space. Having a clear goal allows you to use your time more effectively and to value the results as you progress.

If you want to declutter your garage to make room for your car so that you don’t have to scrape ice from your windscreen in winter mornings, you’ll go on cleaning up the mess just until you’ve freed enough space for your vehicle.

Once you’ve imposed order, always be on the lookout for impending clutter! Don’t let objects stay for days where they are not supposed to, like on your kitchen surfaces or on the floor. And when you move from one room to another, take objects closer to their final destination: the wardrobe or the bin, for example.

Keeping clutter away with daily habits will save you from more time-consuming big decluttering.

## Outer Order, Inner Calm Review

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In many books, order is depicted as a precondition for productivity. *Outer Order, Inner Calm* shows that tidiness gratifies your senses leading the way for peace of mind, with many nice side effects on every aspect of your life.

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[Learn more about the author >>](#)

## Who would I recommend the Outer Order, Inner Calm summary to?

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The 20-year-old who can't see the point of making their beds, the busy 29-year-old who thinks it's not worth taking care of their houses, the 36-year-old who can't get their children to keep their rooms tidy, and anybody who believes that order is overrated.