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Don't we all dream about having a house with rooms beautiful enough to be featured in a magazine? Yet for many of us, creating a presentable home feels like an impossible dream. We read self-help books that teach how to clean and how to organize, but they end up lost in the pile of books beside the bed as we still struggle with cluttered homes. Why do we continually battle messy rooms? We have too much stuff! We need to start getting creative by finding new ways to kiss the clutter goodbye.

Top Ten Creative Ways to Declutter

1. **Kris Kringle.** Instead of hiding those unwanted Christmas gifts in the back of a closet, give them away. Don't wait until next December to re-gift them. If your friends can use those items, give them away today! Consider donating them to your church's women's ministry to use as door prizes at special events.
2. **"Cluttercise."** You've heard of Jazzercise? Same principle. When you have lots of stuff to sort, de-junking your home can be a tougher workout than *Abs of Steel*. Make de-cluttering a fun workout. Listen to your favorite CDs. Find a buddy to "spot" you as lift the weights of clutter and remove the junk from your home.
3. **"Home Repo Store."** Take a walk around the house and confiscate items cluttering the floors, tables, counters, and other flat surfaces. Family members pay a fine in order to reclaim their possessions. Be gracious, lest someone "repos" your stuff too. The goal is to have fun while encouraging people to put things away.
4. **The "Terminator."** Your mission is to destroy clutter. Find a trash bag and fill it with junk littering your home. Toss it immediately and say, "Hasta la vista, baby!"
5. **General Contractor.** Who says you have to do it all? Delegate duties. Hire a cleaning lady or professional organizer.
6. **Cleaning Party.** If other people throw painting parties and moving parties, why not have a cleaning party? Invite a few friends over to help get the house in order.
7. **"De-cluttering Olympics."** Have contests. Award prizes for the person with the neatest room, the person who got rid of the most clutter, and the person who cleaned the fastest.
8. **Freecycle™.** Join your local Freecycle™ community at www.freecycle.org. Post items available for others to pick up for free. This is an excellent resource for bulky or heavy items and collections that charities don't accept.
9. **The Minimizer.** If you're not ready to completely part with a collection, consider downsizing. Instead of holding onto every trophy you ever won, keep only those you treasure most. Remove the patches from your Girl Scout uniform and put them in a scrapbook or shadowbox. Toss the uniform and sash.
10. **Prayer Warrior.** Yes, pray for help to let go of excess possessions. Decluttering is a spiritual battle. As we let go of the stuff overloading our homes, we simultaneously create room in our hearts for God. The space in our minds once consumed by caring for clutter is now available for more important thoughts—like tending to relationships with loved ones and God.