

# New Minimalism

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Decluttering  
and Design  
for Sustainable,  
Intentional  
Living

Reader's  
Workbook



We created this workbook just for you,  
the readers of *New Minimalism*,  
the book!

We put so much thought and effort into our  
journaling and self-reflection exercises from the book  
that we decided to gather them all up in one easy-  
to-access place. Either complete this workbook using  
your computer, or print it out and fill-in by hand. In  
either case, by doing so it will absolutely enhance the  
experience of reading our book!

WRITE THE ANSWERS  
TO THE FOLLOWING  
QUESTIONS IN A  
JOURNAL:

What is something that I really want in my life and do not have right now?

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What is preventing me from trying to get it?

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What do I currently have in my life that is holding me back —  
beliefs, objects, relationships, et cetera?

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What am I willing to let go of to obtain or achieve what matters  
most to me? (pg. 29)

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What is your “why”?

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## WHY AM I DECLUTTERING?

Do you want your home to be a sanctuary, a place you associate with rest and rejuvenation? Do you desire an open and flexible furniture layout so that you can easily host a group event? Or do you need your home to be perfectly suited for family life so that everyone's essential items are accounted for and can easily be put away?

Having a firm grasp on the reason behind your decluttering effort is the best way to keep your head above water when you are deep into sorting your things. To determine your "why," try the following exercise:

Take a moment to select from the words below. Choose the words that intuitively jump out at you and are deeply motivating.

## HOW I WANT TO FEEL:

When I walk in the door of my home, I want to feel ...

Relaxed	Calm	Inspired	Creative	Comfortable	
Healthy	Clean	Rejuvenated	Energized	Ordered	Simple
Lively	Peaceful	Grounded	Balanced	Proud	

Play around with these words—perhaps you want to change relaxed to serene or maybe even take a moment with a thesaurus to find the exact word that feels right to you.

## 3 WORDS TO DESCRIBE MY HOME:

Now go back through your selected words and pull out the most important three.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Write your three selected words on a sticky note, and place it somewhere prominent in the room in which you are decluttering.



**ARCHETYPE #1:  
CONNECTED**

**SHADOW SIDE:** Clinging

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**BLOCK:** Sentimentality

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**HAS A HARD TIME LETTING GO OF:** Gifts, handwritten cards, travel souvenirs, ticket stubs

**ASK YOURSELF:**

Do you value your close relationships above all else?

If you were stranded on a desert island, would you bring companions over objects?

Do you consider yourself to have a strong emotional attachment to more than half of the items in your home?

Do more than half of the items in your home remind you of a particular person, a place you traveled to, or an event you attended?

Do you feel as though you need to keep every piece of memorabilia associated with a positive experience in order to honor the experience and retain the memory?

Do you commemorate experiences from other people's lives?

Does it feel sad, scary, or disrespectful to let go of something that was given to you as a gift, regardless of whether you use or enjoy it?

When you put on an item of clothing, do you often remember who you were with or where you were when you purchased it?

If you answer yes to more than half of these questions, you exhibit Clinging tendencies.



**ARCHETYPE #2:  
PRACTICAL**

**SHADOW SIDE:** Limited

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**BLOCK:** Usefulness

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**HAS A HARD TIME LETTING GO OF:** Art supplies, craft supplies, electrical cords, old nails and screws, scrap materials

**ASK YOURSELF:**

Are people often impressed by your ability to bootstrap or come up with creative solutions?

Are you the go-to person for technical or strategic problems?

Do you find it hard to get rid of items that are in some way or another “useful”?

Do you conjure elaborate hypothetical future scenarios in which you might need a certain item?

Do you keep a variety of cords, plugs, and chargers around, even if you don’t know what they go to?

Do you strongly identify with your ability to make do and find creative solutions to use what you already have instead of buying something new?

Do you feel that an object’s usefulness is more important than anything else?

Do you like to collect bits of information, in the form of magazines, clipped articles, newspapers, et cetera, in case you might want to refer back to them someday?

If you answer yes to more than half of these questions, you exhibit Limited tendencies.



**ARCHETYPE #3:  
ENERGETIC**

**SHADOW SIDE:** Scattered

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**BLOCK:** Saying go

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**HAS A HARD TIME LETTING GO OF:** Projects, personal and social commitments

**ASK YOURSELF:**

Do you have a number of hobbies or activities you are passionate about?

Are you known as a Jack- or Jill-of-all-trades?

Do others often compliment you on your vibrant energy?

Is your to-do list long and unwieldy, some might say unrealistic?

Do you find it hard to say no to commitments of your time and energy, even when you know that you are being stretched too thin?

Do you find yourself often running five to ten minutes late?

Do you often underestimate the amount of time a project will take, forcing you to leave it incomplete as you move on to other obligations?

When you find yourself with free time, do you feel burdened by the need to wrap up a number of things you've already begun?

If you answer yes to more than half of these questions, you exhibit Scattered tendencies.



**ARCHETYPE #4:  
FRUGAL**

**SHADOW SIDE:** Scarcity

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**BLOCK:** Money

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**HAS A HARD TIME LETTING GO OF:** Anything with monetary worth or perceived rarity

**ASK YOURSELF:**

Are you deeply intentional about how you choose to spend your money?

Do you have a budget in place for your expenses?

Do you frequently check your bank accounts or credit card bills?

Do you tend to plan and save up for a while for special items or trips that are very important to you?

Do you hold on to things you don't need because you worry you won't be able to afford to repurchase them in the future?

Do you save receipts, even for minor purchases, in case something happens to an item?

Do you feel guilty if you don't use up every last bit of an item?

Do you tend to save and put off using valuable items for future use, often causing them to go bad or become obsolete before you ever find the time to use them?

If you answer yes to more than half of these questions, you exhibit Scarcity tendencies.

ENVISIONING YOUR  
NEW SPACE

What is the number-one activity that will take place in each room? Is it a place to entertain guests or a place to recenter and rejuvenate? Whatever your selected primary activity is, the redesign of your space should support this first and foremost.

Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

Next, consider the bones of your specific space, the fixed elements. Step back and assess. What architectural elements would you like to highlight and what would you like to hide? Maybe you have some oddly placed heating vents that you can camouflage with paint. Or perhaps you have some unfortunately colored floor tiles that you can draw less attention to with an area rug.

Elements to Hide: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Elements to Highlight: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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