

Local author sees danger signs in clutter Author sees problems with clutter-filled lives

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After Stephanie Bennett Vogt of Concord left the teaching profession 11 years ago seeking to rediscover "what would make my heart sing," she became fascinated when the act of cleaning a bookshelf left her ill.

"That in itself was a big revelation," Vogt said. "It was so clear my whole life was out of balance."

Since then, Vogt has studied clutter and how it affects people who may be caught in a web of material possessions, desires, and fears.

Even those who are seemingly tidy aren't necessarily clutter-free, in both its physical and emotional manifestations.

"You can be neat, but still be carrying around thoughts, worries, and mementos that weigh you down," said Vogt, founder of SpaceClear, a private consulting and teaching practice. "Everyone can relate to clutter, but I'm looking at the big picture of how we can move through life with ease and vitality."

Vogt said her new book, "Your Spacious Self: Clean Your Clutter and Discover Who You Are," is an autobiographical account of her gradual understanding that it is not material possessions but the act of holding onto them that clouds perception and blocks growth.

"For some, the journey may involve letting go and not being so hard on themselves. For someone super-organized like me, it's allowing myself to make mistakes and not take everything so seriously. I've become a big believer in less is more."

The book, "Your Spacious Self," is available online and at the Concord Bookshop. For more information, visit spaceclear.com.

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