

How decluttering helps enhance your values

Experts suggest that letting go of possessions can reduce distractions and help people stay focused on long-term goals

You may have asked yourself, "Why did I keep this?", when sorting through old boxes. But for some, the need to keep stuff spirals out of control. Hoarding disorder is a psychiatric condition defined by urges to save items and difficulty discarding current possessions. For adults with 'clinically severe' hoarding disorder, this leads to a level of household clutter that impairs daily functioning and can even create a fire hazard.

Holding on to things that have sentimental value or could be useful in the future is a natural part of growing older. For some people, though, this tendency to hold on to objects grows over time. Age-related changes in executive function may help explain the increase in the prevalence of hoarding disorder as we get older; increasing difficulty with decision-making in general also affects decisions around household clutter.

A study published in August 2024 of adults over 50 with hoarding disorder suggests that altruism, a personality trait of wanting to help others, may explain why some people keep items that others might discard. Compared with the general population, participants with hoarding disorder scored almost universally high on altruism.

Altruism also comes up frequently in clinical work with older adults who struggle with clutter. People often say that they have held onto something out of a sense of responsibility, either for the item itself or for the environment. "I need it to go to a good home" and "my grandmother gave this to me" are commonly held sentiments. People keep things not out of fear of losing them, but because saving them is consistent with their values.



Align with your goals

Taking a values-based approach to decluttering helps older adults decrease household clutter and increases their positive affect, a state of mind characterised by feelings such as joy and contentment. When clinicians used a technique called motivational interviewing to help participants talk through their decisions while they sorted household clutter, they found that having participants start with identifying their values allowed them to maintain focus on their long-term goals.

Too often, people focus on the immediate ability of an object to 'spark joy' and forget to consider whether it has greater meaning and purpose. Values are the

abstract beliefs that we humans use to create our goals. Values are whatever drives us and can include family, faith or frivolity.

Additionally, instead of challenging the reasons a person might have for keeping an item, it is helpful to instead focus on eliciting their reasons for discarding it and the goals they have for their home and their life.

Define consistent values

Although these steps are based on work primarily conducted with older adults, these tips should be helpful for people of all ages. Start by writing out your values. Every object in your home should feel value-consistent to you. For example, if tradition and faith are important values for you, you might be more inclined to hold onto a cookbook that was made by the elders in your family and more able to let go of a cookbook you picked up on a whim at a bookstore.

If, instead, health and creativity are your core values, it might be more important to hold onto a cookbook of novel ways to sneak more vegetables into your diet. Defining value-consistent goals for using your space can help to maintain motivation.

Remember that sometimes your values will conflict. At those moments, it may help to reflect on whether keeping or discarding an object will bring you closer to your goals for the space.

Similarly, remember that values are subjective. If you are helping a loved one declutter, maintain a curious, nonjudgmental attitude. Where you might see a box filled with junk, your grandmother might see something filled with treasures.



Actress Eva Mendes has said she enjoys decluttering because "I like how I feel when things are clean"



Michael Bloomberg wore only two pairs of work shoes for a decade

A shining symbol of tradition

Pitambari Products showcases how perseverance can transform a modest cleaning product into a household staple

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In the expansive narrative of Indian entrepreneurship, there are certain journeys that stand out. The evolution of Pitambari Products Pvt Ltd is one such story: A testament to how integrity, perseverance and innovation can transform a modest household cleaning product into a formidable presence in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector.

Founded in 1989 by Ravindra Prabhudesai and his father, the late Vamanrao Prabhudesai, Pitambari was conceived with an objective to become an integral part of every Indian household. What began as a small enterprise in Maharashtra has grown into a business group with a footprint in over 26 countries and more than 50 million households worldwide.

Humble beginnings, enduring vision

Unlike many modern ventures propelled by substantial capital and infrastructure, Pitambari's journey was rooted in clarity of purpose and disciplined execution. Its first product, Pitambari Shining Powder, was born out of a practical need — to clean and polish brass, copper and other traditional utensils used extensively in Indian homes during festivals and religious occasions.

At a time when multi-national brands were entering the Indian marketplace, Pitambari asserted its Swadeshi identity with

confidence. The founders firmly believed that 'Made in India' products could equal, and even surpass, global standards — provided they embodied the Indian values of purity, trust and consistency.

National footprint

Pitambari gradually expanded into multiple verticals, including homecare, healthcare, food products, puja essentials, *agarbatti*, agricare and agro-tourism. Today, Pitambari offers 95 products across 195 SKUs and is available in 28 states and nine Union Territories across India, supported by exports to over 26 countries.

The company's distribution architecture is both extensive and robust, comprising 217 super stockists, 3,183 distributors and more than 3,15,375 retail outlets. With seven manufacturing units located across various states and a DSIR-approved research and development centre at Rabale, Navi Mumbai, Pitambari has institutionalised innovation and quality assurance at scale.

Beyond its core FMCG operations, the company has diversified into agro-tourism through initiatives in Sakhaloli (Dapoli) and Talavade in Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra. The project features Ayurtej Garden, along with integrated resort facilities designed to promote agro-tourism and rural engagement.

As part of its rural development focus, Pitambari has also introduced the 'Pitambari Shoppo' franchise business model to empower shopkeepers and aspiring



Ravindra Prabhudesai (left, seated) and his son Parikshit Prabhudesai entrepreneurs with over 140 Shoppo franchise outlets across Maharashtra.

Leadership and institutional continuity

The company's operating philosophy places long-term value creation above short-term gains, supported by ISO 9001:2008 certification and manufacturing facilities across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Bhiwandi (Angaon) in Thane district and Ratnagiri, Maharashtra. Standardised quality protocols and structured R&D processes underpin its scalable operations.

Digital expansion

With the growth of quick commerce in India, Pitambari has expanded its digital distribution footprint across leading platforms such as Blinkit, Flipkart, Instamart, Zepto, Amazon and Reliance's retail ecosystem.

In parallel, the company continues to deploy traditional sampling initiatives, including newspaper-based product distribution across India.

A brand across generations

Over three decades, Pitambari has transformed from a single-product household brand into a diversified FMCG group. The next phase of growth is being shaped by Parikshit Prabhudesai, vice-chairman of Pitambari and son of Ravindra Prabhudesai, who has been associated with the company for the past 14 years.

Focused on adopting new business models, technology integration and global market expansion, Parikshit Prabhudesai represents the generational shift driving the company toward wider international reach and modern retail formats.

Built on trust and driven by innovation, Pitambari stands today as a symbol of purpose-led growth.



Rohit Gandhi + Rahul Khanna bandhgala set ₹88.5k

Racing greens

Celebrate the start of Formula 1 season with its classiest shade etpanache@timesofindia.com



Charles Tyrwhitt the lions print pique polo shirt, available at The White Crow ₹6k onwards



Ferragamo race print silk tie ₹25k



Selected jersey suit-set blazer ₹10k

Philip Plein chrono royal



46mm Price on request

HOW TO

- British racing green (BRG) looks its most regal when paired with warm, earthy tones rather than stark blacks. Instead of black trousers, go with tan, cognac or khaki.
- Pair a silk tie with a polo and an unstructured

blazer for a sporty spin on formalwear. If you're wearing a watch, ensure your sleeve hits just above the wrist bone.

- Combine shiny elements such as metals or silks with matte or rugged textures such as leather, corduroy or suede, just like a motorcar.



Armani Exchange 44mm chronograph with a sunray dial Price on request

Calming 'nature nooks' help you relax

Have you dreamed of creating a calm and cosy spot at home to relax? Just one corner will do, with warm lighting, a cosy chair and some plants, says interior and plant stylist Hilton Carter, who specialises in 'nature nooks' — tiny wellness sanctuaries that calm the mind, body and spirit.

Nature nooks, he says, improve a home emotionally as well as aesthetically. Create a nature nook with as few as five plants.

Green peace

First, choose your site. Assess the corner's lighting to determine which plants will thrive and whether you need artificial light. For grow lights, some have two-coloured tones, some replicate daylight and others are inviting warmer lights. Bring this information to a plant shop for guidance. Place an accent chair



Choose plants from places you have a positive emotional connection to



Your corner's natural lighting determines the kind of light fixtures to add

facing either towards or away from the light, whichever brings you joy.

"Be self-aware about your ability to care for plants," Carter said. If you don't take the time to care for the plants, your nook will look terrible within weeks.

Choose plants from places that trigger happy memories, such as favourite vacations. "Get a sense of what you want to replicate and where you want to be transported to," Carter advised. Also consider how foliage will look together. Don't

overlook pots; a beautiful terracotta planter can set the mood.

Consider the height of your tallest plants, the ceiling and the windows. Use planters that will protect the floor in case water drains out. It is crucial to consider toxicity towards children and pets.

Once your nook is in place, create a routine. Maybe drink your morning coffee there or read in the evenings. Using the space regularly will be transformative.

Boarding call

Nigeria's longtime business centre, Lagos is gaining attention for its youth culture and Afrobeats music scene. The city is largely split into two main hubs: The Mainland and the Island. This guide focuses on the Island, in a cluster of coastal neighbourhoods — Ikoyi, Victoria Island, Lekki and Lagos Island — with thriving arts and nightlife scenes.

Friday 7 pm | Dine under the stars

Recover from travel in the peaceful garden of NOK by Ajara. Try the whole tilapia and grilled plantain, perfectly charred on the outdoor grill, along with their *jollof* (rice cooked in a flavoursome tomato stew).

9:30 pm | History transformed

The Old Federal Palace Hotel hosted the signing of Nigeria's Declaration of Independence. Restored in 2025, the former lobby and ground floor have been transformed into Nahous, an exhibition space with stalls by popular Nigerian fashion brands. Bar 77, in the former kitchen, features the original fixtures.

Saturday 10 am | Stroll through treetops

Drive to the impressive Lekki Conservation Centre, a serene nature reserve home to tropical vegetation, a mangrove forest and mona monkeys. Weaving through the centre is a canopy walkway that is the longest in Africa.

11:30 am | Arts and artisans

Further down the road is Lekki Arts and Crafts Market, with handcrafted ornamental sculptures and furniture you'll want to ship home. From there, visit Nike Art Gallery, one of West Africa's largest art galleries with over 20,000 pieces. The artworks are primarily from Nigerian artists and others from across Africa.



The Cathedral Church of Christ is located in the city's business district

36 hours in Lagos

Nigeria's lively financial hub has thriving arts and nightlife scenes, perfect for city-lovers



The Cathedral Church of Christ is located in the city's business district



A local artisan at work in Lekki Arts and Craft Market

3:30 pm | Discover Yorùbá culture

The J Randle Centre for Yorùbá Culture and History explores the history and culture of the Yorùbá, a group ethnic to Lagos, including religious beliefs, traditions, textiles such as the elegant *aso oke* fabrics and artwork.

5 pm | Classic vibes only

Indulge in live gigs and author readings at Jazzhole, a beloved haunt in Ikoyi of 35 years. Browse



stacks of records, archival material, books and posters. At the back is the cafe, usually stocked with fresh fruit juices, coffees and freshly baked cakes.

8 pm | Dance the night away

Victoria Island offers diverse restaurants, including the Latin American-inspired SLOW; the Italian-meets-Japanese Vici; Dough Pizza Bar with New York-style pizzas and tacos at La Taverna. Later, party at mainstay RSVP, speakeasy-inspired venue Boho, restaurant-turned-club ZaZa or the rooftop bar at Kaly.

Sunday 9:15 am | Cathedral views

Visit the Cathedral Church of Christ to see the cathedral's grand exterior up close, right in the heart of the bustling business district, which features some of the city's Afro-Brazilian architecture.

Noon | Destressing with snacks by the sea

Head to your nearest Milk and Honey cafe and grab doughnut-style bites known as puff puff. Head to Tarkwa Bay Beach from jetty locations in Victoria Island and Ikoyi. Stretch out, catch the sun and enjoy the coastline.

— The New York Times