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Print this article back-to-back with The Mental Clutter Flow Chart for a fun, unique, inexpensive, educational handout.

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Is it **Mental** Clutter?

What is **Mental clutter?** If you are worried about something, but aren't doing anything about it -- or *can't* do anything about it -- it's Mental Clutter. For any persistent, worrisome thought, ask yourself: **Can you do something about it?** If you think so, or if you don't think so, or if you're not sure -- think again just to make sure. **If the answer is yes -- you can do something about it -- great! Do it!** The pure fact that you are doing something about it will help you to not worry about it so much.

Why can't I part with my **Mental clutter?** Here are some reasons why this is difficult:

I'm afraid of not having, or being, enough. Is this because you are comparing yourself to others? Stop it! Have a little faith in yourself.

I'm anxious about the future. Being prepared for likely events is the key to a peaceful mind.

I regret the past and feel guilty. Forgive yourself and move on. Yes, it's easy to say, but very important to do. In the words of Maya Angelou, "When you know better, you do better." You know better now.

I'm concerned about what others think. Follow Dr. Seuss' advice: "Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind."

Are your fears realistic? You probably think they are, and you may need a second opinion on this.

The bottom line: If you can't do anything about it, it's clutter.

What should I do with my **Mental clutter?** Stop worrying about the things you

cannot change (such as someone else's behavior). Put your focus on things you are grateful for, and on the things you can change (such as your own behavior). Examples: preparing for emergencies; planning for your financial future; repairing (or releasing) damaged relationships; addressing health issues head on. If the task ahead seems daunting, break it down into smaller steps. Do them one at a time until you are finished, or feel prepared, or have established the new habit that will improve your life and help you worry less.

What if, despite my best intentions, I am still living with **Mental clutter?**

If a week (or other self-imposed deadline) has gone by since you decided to try not worrying about things you cannot change, ask for help from a friend, therapist, clergy member, professional organizer, or someone who can help with your specific situation, such as a doctor, financial planner, personal trainer, or attorney.

Congratulations, you are on the road to becoming **Mental clutter-free!**