

# Dusting Off the Cobwebs

Part II of a three-part series on you and your home

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Recap: Part I of our series covered procrastination, de-cluttering, updating and lightening of your home. These are the first steps to revitalizing both you and your home. Kudos to those of you who didn't procrastinate and took advantage of the free pocket guides! You'll be steps ahead of everyone else. Are you ready for more? Let's pick up where we left off...

## **Brightening**

As we approach the fall and winter seasons, our daylight diminishes, creating a more lethargic atmosphere. Before rolling back the clocks, begin brightening your environment so you can stay energized during these times of the year.

Dusty light fixtures reduce light. They can also cause eye strain & headaches for some individuals, especially in areas that already have less than adequate lighting. Sheers and curtains attract dust and need to be inspected and cleaned as needed. Clean walls at least once a year to bring back the original color. Removing dust brightens any area and it goes without saying that the air will be cleaner as well.

Have you ever spent time at the ocean or in the mountains? If you have, think about how your body felt when you breathed in that fresh outdoor air: a deep breath invigorates and boosts your energy. Get fresh air into your home. Open the windows as soon as the temperature allows and refresh your living space. Negative ions will move in, cleaning your stuffy indoor air. Be sure to turn off your air conditioner while the windows are open. Fresh air will also help to reduce odors that may have accumulated in your home when it was sealed up during the summer months.

Changing decorative pillows each season or adding fresh flowers gives your home a lift and a different look at a very affordable price. It will brighten your spirits as well.

When it comes to the outside of your house, give visitors a warm and fuzzy feeling. Remove debris in your yard and on your lawn. Get your curb appeal to a level that makes you look forward to coming home. Add some seasonal color with flowers or plants. If you don't like playing in the dirt, container plants and hanging baskets are simple solutions. Maintain clean lines in your flower beds. Refresh mulch and pine straw as needed.

If you're the creative type, make something for your home and proudly display it. Woodworking, sewing, furniture refinishing, drawing or painting, crocheting, sculpting, writing or any talent you have been blessed with gives you the opportunity to really add that finishing touch. For those who are creatively challenged, hang around the creative folks, make a pouting face, and maybe they'll create something for you. Wouldn't that brighten your day!

## **Cleaning**

A thorough cleaning of your home should be done at least once a year. This means starting with ceilings and working your way down the walls and eventually to the floors. Don't forget to include wall fixtures,

fireplaces, closets, framework and all molding. Although this step requires additional labor it will reduce your daily and weekly cleaning efforts substantially. If this thorough, deep cleaning is something that turns your stomach, consider hiring professional cleaners to take care of this component. It's a great gift to give or to receive. If you do hire someone, get a detailed breakdown of what is included in the package. Window cleaning is usually an additional charge and only includes your home's inside window surfaces.

What do you clean off your floors, carpets, walls and furniture? Dust and dirt of course; tracked in regularly from outside. Save about 200 cleaning hours a year by using the right mats both inside and outside your home. For outside entrances, synthetic grass-types or a rough textured mat with a rubber back are good choices. A mat that allows three or more steps is preferred. Place these mats at all entrances to your home. Keep dirt where it belongs – outside.

For inside entrance areas, a commercial grade, vinyl-backed nylon mat is your second line of defense. Janitorial supply stores and some home improvement stores carry these indoor and outdoor mats. If you want to keep a decorative rug at your front door, remember that it will not trap dirt as well as the nylon mat. Whatever you choose, rug or mat, be sure to put something at all indoor entrances. You'll notice your floors and carpets will stay cleaner for a longer period of time. Less dirt means less cleaning.

## **Maintenance**

There is no right or wrong way to maintain your home and surroundings. There are, however, methods that are efficient, give you more free time and can save you money. Vacuuming high traffic areas daily or every other day instead of once a week keeps dirt from getting ground in. This means less carpet cleaning and spot removal. Open today's mail before tomorrow's mail arrives; the goal is no piles. The better you maintain your living space today, the less you need to do when you are ready to sell.

Take 15 minutes a day to quickly put things away and wipe down countertops in the kitchen and bathrooms. For those of you with children, you have the added burden of toys, papers and other issues relating to a child's world. If your children are of an age to help, (over 3 years), make them participate in the cleanup process. Obviously very young children may not save you much time, but training at an early age will benefit you and your child as they get older. Your child may someday surprise you and clean up without being asked!

Part Three of the series helps you take a look at creating a home scene that sells, furniture placement, accessorizing and curb appeal. Although some areas are applicable to living spaces, the primary focus is on helping you get your home ready to sell by creating a selling space.

All of us at Homes in Motion are here to help you so don't hesitate to contact us. If we can't provide the solution, we have many resources that can.

For more information, call Ann or Karen at 919-781-4887 or email us at [info@homesinmotion.org](mailto:info@homesinmotion.org)