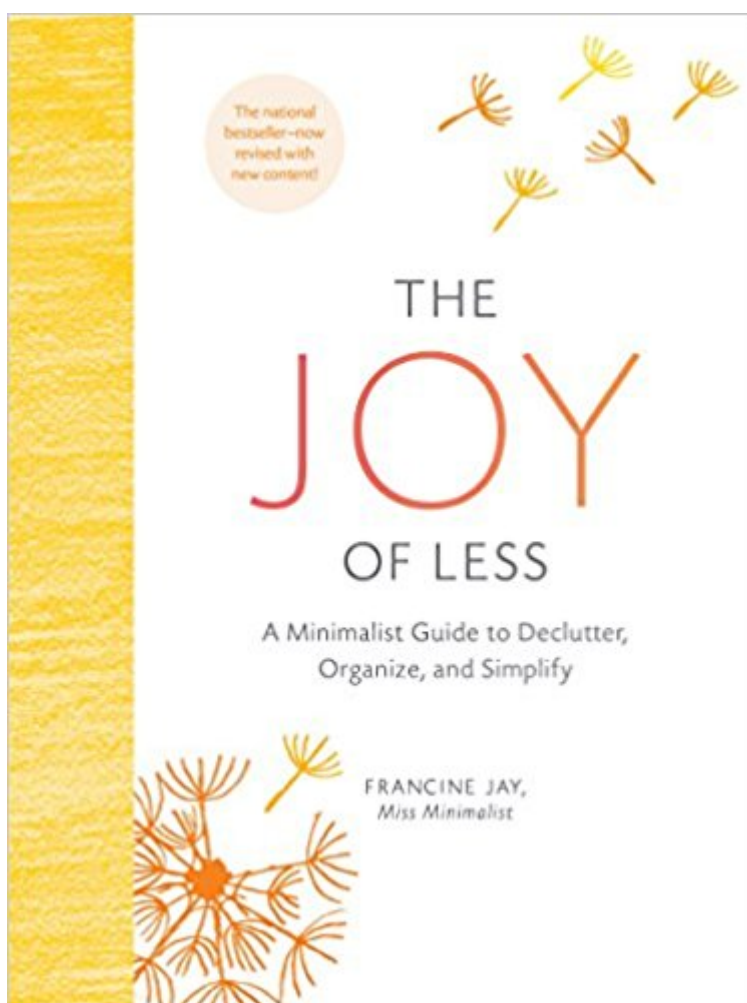


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# The Joy Of Less: A Minimalist Guide To Declutter, Organize, And Simplify (Updated And Revised)



## Synopsis

Francine Jay pioneered the simple living movement with her self-published bestseller, *The Joy of Less*. In this fully redesigned and repackaged edition featuring never-before-seen content Jay brings her philosophy to more readers who are eager to declutter. Rather than the "crash diet" approach found in other tidying up books, Jay shares simple steps to cultivate a minimalist mindset and form new habits, paving the way to lasting success. Her easy-to-follow STREAMLINE method works in any space—from a single drawer to a closet, room, or entire house. What's more, it can be called upon during clutter-inducing life events such as moving, getting married, having kids, or downsizing. With an airy two-color interior design and lovely hardcover package, *The Joy of Less* is a refreshing and relatable approach to decluttering that belongs in every home.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An inspiring read for anyone wanting to downsize, finally park the car in the garage, or just clear out a few closets." - Rachel Jonat, [TheMinimalistMom.com](#)"Stuff and stress go hand in hand, and *The Joy of Less* demonstrates how letting go will make room for a happier life." - Courtney Carver, founder of [bemorewithless.com](#)"I loved the many words of wisdom in this book. *The Joy of Less* puts power back into the hands of all who feel like objects have overtaken their home or life." - Holly Becker, author and founder of [decor8blog.com](#)"An invaluable tool for the veteran and budding minimalist alike." - David Friedlander, contributor, [LifeEdited.com](#)

Francine Jay is the bestselling decluttering expert and founder of [MissMinimalist.com](#). She has

helped hundreds of thousands of people organize their homes and simplify their lives, and has been prominently featured in national media.

Wow! If you are looking for a comprehensive handbook on minimalism, decluttering, streamlining, and essentially re-wiring your preconceptions about why you have the stuff you have, this is the book for you. Francine Jay, aka Miss Minimalist to those in her blogosphere, has written *The Joy of Less, A Minimalist Living Guide: How to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify Your Life*, her second book on achieving the good life by consuming less. She's a minimalist after my own heart, and unless I'm projecting too much of my own experience onto hers, appreciates the epiphany one gets by suddenly having lots of space and just a few true treasures. Francine starts right out with the mindset, the philosophy/attitude one needs to have before seriously tackling a reduction in clutter and possessions, likening this important step to changing one's eating habits as opposed to simply going on a diet. If you don't get in the mindset, you'll just backslide. I know all too well what she means by this, having done binge-purge decluttering several times over the course of my adult life until a few years ago. This book is a well-structured, wholesale plan of attack, as opposed to loads of personal stories or autobiography. Part One tackles the the relationship we have to our stuff and why we think we have to own it. As Francine puts it: "In pursuing a minimalist lifestyle, we need to resist the temptation to recreate the outside world within our abodes." She then cites examples such as media rooms and bathroom "spas," and the dreaded home cappuccino makers. Oh yes. The section concludes with her challenge to make a list of every single thing you own-right down to every single thing in every single drawer. My brain wanted scream at the prospect of doing that-AND I've already decluttered!!! The woman isn't taking prisoners. Part Two is entitled **STREAMLINE**, and each letter of that word stands for a step in the author's minimalizing process. We are to remember that "the idea is not to choose the things we'll get rid of, but to choose the things we'll keep." This perspective turns the usual decluttering process on its head, by literally getting everything out of each room and only bringing back in the most essential, and the most worthy of our precious time and space. This section is the strategy session before the big game, as it were, illustrated by some of the many quote-worthy passages: ...the things with which we choose to surround ourselves tell our story... ...take responsibility for the entire life cycle of what we buy...(from how it was made to how it will need to be disposed of) Think of all the things we can't do when our surfaces are cluttered:we don't have room to prepare a delicious dinner, we don't have a place to sit down with our families and enjoy it, and we don't have the space to play a board game afterwards. We don't have a spot to pay our bills, do our homework, or enjoy our hobbies. In some

cases, we may not even have a place to lie down at the end of the day. Re books: Perhaps the bigger our library, the more intellectual we feel. Re crafts (and this one made me feel the pain): ...reality check: do you enjoy doing the craft as much as collecting the materials for it? If not, perhaps you should rethink your hobby....One of the concepts Francine writes about is the idea of Limits, and it is here that I sense the heart of her minimalist passion: you may initially think that limits will be stifling; but you'll soon discover that they're absolutely liberating! In a culture where we're conditioned to want more, buy more, and do more, they're a wonderful breath of relief...you'll be inspired to apply them to other parts of your life...the possibilities are, well...unlimited!Part Three is the down to brass tacks stuff, sectioned room by room, and while the methodology of uncluttering each room is pretty much the same, there's plenty of perspective on the specifics, such as, when uncluttering our wardrobes, we wonder how we acquired so many unwearable things: ...often, such excess is the result of chasing perfection....The "chasing perfection" also applies to buying grooming and beauty products which promise perfection, and sucker us in every time. There's also lots about how to keep on top of clutter, especially the clutter created by family members who are not yet with the program. A firm but gentle persistence is urged, and with the hope that once there's not so much crap laying around, it'll be fairly easy to keep on top of things, and thus easier to get the rest of one's household to participate of their own free will. This is the other usefulness of preparing your mindset before actually tackling minimalism-it will help you resist the laggards in your own family as well as the pressures of a consumerist society.Part Four considers life outside of your home in your schedule and in the impact on the world by your purchases/lack of purchases. Francine encourages us to apply the word "No" with courage even if we are naturally people-pleasers, in order to retain time for ourselves and for the most important things in our lives. She also, in a telling autobiographical example, encourages us to embrace the concept of "good enough:" when her young inner-perfectionist self stared in horror at carpeting her husband hadn't quite perfectly laid he said, "it's good enough." Fortunately the message got through and she's embraced it ever since, as should we.A greater mindfulness about what we purchase and consume leads in turn to better things for the world around us, as we consider what something is made of, who has made it, how it is packaged, and how it can be recycled or disposed of when its usefulness is over. Francine adds to these benefits the beauty of sharing possessions and of setting a happy example of treading lightly on the earth as "minsumers," her own word for minimal-consumers. She concludes that sometimes minimalism can feel like swimming upstream, but the personal liberation we will feel once we step back from consumerism will be enough to sustain us and gently inspire those around us.

I'd honestly give this book 2.5 stars. The good: I love the acronym STREAMLINE, and what it stands for. I think it's a motto anyone can get behind, even those not destined to become "minimalists." Yes, much of the information meant by STREAMLINE is info you can find elsewhere, but I think it helps to read the information presented in different ways. In my quest to become organized, I have started with the Marie Kondo's "The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up" and "Spark Joy," and have noticed that in some ways, the message in this book is much the same. For instance, the authors emphasize focusing on what you'd like to keep as opposed to what to get rid of in both books. But this book only says this, and seems to go on to contradict this advice. Which brings me to the bad: This book seems to advocate a minimalist for the sake of minimalism message. That is, just have less stuff for no other reason than to brag about that, and call yourself a minimalist. Where Marie Kondo's books advocate only surrounding yourself with things that spark the joy. The difference is subtle but important. I have embarked on a journey to become more organized, which has largely meant having less stuff, in order to lead a more streamlined life (no pun intended). My goal has never been to be able to count the number of possessions I have or to live in a bare home. Rather, I want a neat home, but one that has the things I love and use. In this, the author specifically mentions how little she is able to live comfortably with, as if this should be the goal. I am sorry, but I've worked hard to get to a place where I can have what I need and much of what I want, and I don't intend to get rid of those things I use just to make due using some substitute all for the sake of having less. I wholeheartedly get behind the idea of getting rid of excess, but not in getting rid of things just to be a minimalist. Now onto the ugly: Once you're read and understand the concepts of STREAMLINE, the rest of the book is basically useless. It is repetitive and does nothing to expand on the concept, which honestly isn't needed, but reading on is just fluff, or excess. She goes through each room/section of your home reiterating the concepts of STREAMLINE. So to sum up, the underlying theme or concept is useful, but the ideology behind it, not so much. Reads like a rich person trying to make due with less just for fun or bragging rights. With the minimalist movement, this book exemplifies everything that I dislike about it. I'd recommend Marie Kondo's series instead, which does less to emphasize minimalism and more to create an atmosphere of gratefulness and contentment as opposed to in acquiring more.

This is the BEST book ever written about how to declutter! I would HIGHLY recommend this book to anyone wanting to get a different perspective on your "stuff". It's not written to help you get rid of everything....just have a proper perspective on it!! And a GREAT way to actually simplify! Her

strategies WORK!

I think this is the best book ever for figuring out how to simplify your life and your stuff. It explains how and why your life will be improved by gaining more space and it goes room by room with practical steps to thinning out the stuff that seems to sneak in when we are not paying attention.

This book has started me on my way to de-cluttering my house and my life! At 75 years old, I really need to do this....

I wish I was able to implement this lifestyle for myself... my husband supports capitalism though.

This is a great book filled with practical ideas covering both the why and the how of decluttering your life and home. I just finished a course on decluttering and started this book about halfway through as an added resource. While I'm not ready to plunge into a strict minimalist lifestyle, I certainly benefitted from the ideas I learned here. I would say my life is less stressful and more joyful as a result of reading this book and applying its principles. Definitely worth the read!

Inspired me to get rid of the burden of a lot of stuff I was keeping. Including, ironically, the book which I sold. Not to say I didn't like it, just that I learned the lesson. The human condition is to try and get more stuff because that's a reflection of the ego. So your tendency will be to accumulate more junk even if you got rid of it all. So it's important to keep culling your stuff as you buy more if you buy more.

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