



Un- clutter Your Soul

OVERCOME WHAT
OVERWHELMS YOU

Trina McNeilly

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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1

LISTEN TO THE SOUNDTRACK OF YOUR SOUL

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

I encourage you not only to read these scriptures but to engage with them, meditate on them:

1. Read the text slowly (Is there a word you want to research?)
2. Imagine it (I envision what I'm reading. I picture myself doing what the Word says.)
3. Read it aloud (Hearing God's Word builds our faith, according to Romans 10:17.)
4. Reflect and listen (What is God revealing, speaking to me?)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

—ROMANS 12:2 NIV

For a more extensive list of promises to meditate on, visit
trinamcneilly.com/unclutterpromises

Reflect

These reflection questions will help you get the most out of *Uncluttering Your Soul*. Consider keeping a companion journal or notebook nearby to chronicle your process and progress. You'll be amazed at the insight you uncover if you'll take time to reflect and respond.

1. What emotions keep surfacing in your life?
2. Do you have a propensity to ignore or numb your pain?
3. What is your soul trying to tell you?

Act

Let's put what we are learning into practice. As I've mentioned, paying attention (observing) precedes change. Yet even when we are ready and willing, sometimes we just don't know where or how to begin. That's why I've created small actionable steps to help you activate change. Sometimes you'll see a prayer and other times a practical exercise. Don't worry, I'm not going to add more overwhelm—I'm here to help you overcome it!

Pray this prayer:

Lord, You know me better than I know myself. I ask that You illuminate the eyes of my imagination and show me what I've been avoiding and what I cannot yet see. Help me not to fear the journey, but rather to take courage as we forge ahead and sort through the clutter together. Thank You for healing my pain and for peace and joy that are available to me every step of the way. Amen.

2

ACCEPT A CUSTOM PLAN

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Now since we have chosen to walk with the Spirit, let's keep each step in perfect sync with God's Spirit.

— GALATIANS 5:25 THE VOICE

Reflect

1. Do you find yourself eager to fix everything all at once? Could you give yourself permission to celebrate progress?
2. Are you more prone to figuring out and forging your own way or following others?
3. Are you willing to take a step, and let the Lord lead?

Act

Pray this prayer:

Father, I want Your custom plan and path for my life. You know my deepest desires and my needs. You know what needs reorganizing and what needs to go, entirely. Continue to shine Your love into the unlit corners of my heart and soul. Lead me to the right programs, people, professionals, books, messages, music, art, and movement that will help me to make progress. Help me not to put my hope in these things or in the promise of people but to continually remember that my hope is anchored in You. May I always keep in step with the Spirit. Help me to step away from the illusion of perfection and embrace the process. Open my eyes to progress and teach me to celebrate the newly created space in my soul. Amen.

3

INVENTORY YOUR CLUTTER



Other types of clutter, some of which are mentioned later in the book, may include loneliness, discouragement, anger, powerlessness, hurt, rejection, and disappointment. As mentioned, this is not an exhaustive list of soul clutter.

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

—Psalm 139:23–24 NIV

Reflect

1. Do you recognize any clutter in your own life?
2. Which clutter is taking up the most space?
3. Is there anyone you need to forgive? Do you need to forgive yourself?

Act

Inventory your own clutter with a “Take Note” template available at
trinamcneilly.com/takenote

4

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BODY

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in every way and [that your body] may keep well, even as [I know] your soul keeps well and prospers.

—3 JOHN 1:2 AMPC

Reflect

1. How is your body speaking? Take time to observe how your body reacts. What is your baseline? What does it feel like when you are worked up or overwhelmed?
2. What could your body be trying to tell you?
3. What helps your body to relax and recover in times of tension?

Act

Take three minutes to put on calming music (perhaps praise or peaceful piano music). Find a comfortable seated position. Close your eyes. Envision yourself whole: body, soul, and spirit. Breathe deeply and imagine your body strong. Picture your soul spacious and unencumbered. See your spirit regenerated and free.

5

KNOW YOUR (EMOTIONAL) AGE

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

And because you [really] are [His] sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, “Abba! Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave (bond-servant), but a son; and if a son, then also an heir through [the gracious act of] God [through Christ].

—GALATIANS 4:6–7 AMP

Reflect

1. What repeated response(s) do you have to stress, overwhelm, or pain?
2. What is your emotional age? Think of the different stages of a person (baby, toddler, child, teenager, young adult, mature adult) and the typical behaviors of each stage. Which best matches your emotional responses?
3. Are you repeating behaviors or responses? Do you mirror anyone in your family of origin?

Act

Pray this prayer:

Father of Lights, I give You permission to search and sort through all my soul clutter—whether I’ve tucked it away or find myself tripping over it daily. Reveal what I cannot see and what I might be repeating. Help me to observe without judgment. Help me to observe with anticipation and expectation of growth and emotional and spiritual health. I ask You today to parent me. Teach me what I have not yet learned. Give me the grace to not rear up, run away, or retreat. Rather, Holy Spirit, help me to stand up and grow up into the son/daughter You are calling me to be so that I may participate in Your kingdom. Thank You for sending the Spirit of Your Son into my heart that cries out: Abba, Father. I no longer identify as a slave to sin or my past way of living; I recognize that I am a son/daughter and, therefore, an heir. In Jesus’ name, amen.

6

SAY GOODBYE TO COMFY CLUTTER

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
prisoners in affliction and in irons.
Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress.
He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
and burst their bonds apart.

—Psalm 107:10, 13–14 ESV

Reflect

1. Have you mistaken familiarity for comfort? What familiar things, places, or people have you sought comfort in?
2. Are there certain types of soul clutter that have become your identity? Name them, surrender them, and ask God to help you live in the identity of the victorious daughter/son that you are.
3. Have you been praying for freedom yet resisting the process that God is trying to walk you through? Get honest. Is your pain propelling or paralyzing you?

Act

Create a vision board (or Pinterest board) of what change you anticipate and what your clutter-free future *could* look like. For me, I wanted to visualize a future home, so I created a “One-Day-Someday House” board on Pinterest.* I wasn’t anywhere near being able to make a home like the photos I was pinning, but the Holy Spirit was expanding my heart to trust by dreaming. Your vision board may have nothing to do with home. Consider where your heart and soul need expansion. Could you find imagery to help you envision the change and future you long to see?

* You can visit my “One-Day-Someday House” board at: pinterest.com/lalalovelyblog/one-day-some-day-house/.

7

DON'T FORGET THE BOXES IN THE BASEMENT

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

—2 CORINTHIANS 10:4–5 NKJV

Reflect

1. Give yourself a moment to reflect on your life. Think of your parents, your grandparents, and your siblings. Do you see any similarities? Any patterns in outlooks, behaviors, how you deal or don't deal with life?
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there are any strongholds in your life and to identify them.
3. How has this particular type of clutter, or stronghold, been affecting your life?

Act

Work on creating new beliefs. Find a truth in God's Word that specifically counteracts the lie and commit it to memory. When that stronghold tries to entangle you again, use the mighty weapon of God's Word—the sword of the Spirit—taking the thought captive by speaking the truth. Not only are you pulling down the stronghold, you are also creating new neural pathways in your mind (which we know is part of our soul). In my life this hasn't meant that I never feel afraid; it means when I feel afraid I tell fear it has to leave because God has given me a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Other weapons we can use are prayer, fasting, and worship.

Pray this prayer:

Lord, I repent for any place that I have given to the Enemy who has pushed and shoved and worked for a place. Today I knock down this stronghold. I evict fear and anxiety [name your stronghold here] from my life—from my soul (mind, will, emotions) and my body. I create space for Jesus. I am Your place and You are mine.

8

GO THROUGH TO GET OUT

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

“He is wooing you from the jaws of distress
to a spacious place free from restriction,
to the comfort of your table laden with
choice food.”

—Job 36:16 NIV

Reflect

1. Do you fantasize about running or escape? Do you notice any patterns in these thoughts?
2. What are you avoiding going through or getting into? Why?
3. Who have you expected to rescue you? Are you willing to accept that only God can rescue and save you, and you are the guardian of your own change?

Act

Make a list of what you desire to see, even if (especially if) you can't see a way. Declare Jesus is the Way after each desire/prayer.

9

PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LIFE

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

*By Him you were called into companionship **and participation** with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

—1 CORINTHIANS 1:9 AMPC (EMPHASIS MINE)

Reflect

1. What has been overwhelming or exhausting you?
2. What have you been avoiding? Why?
3. What holds you back from taking action and participating in your life? Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal what you haven't been able to see—the root, the source of your pain. Write down what He shows you.

Act

Create your own participation list, then begin to work the list and participate in your life, starting today.

10

IMAGINE SPACE

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

He reached from on high, He took me;
He drew me out of many waters.

He rescued me from my strong enemy,
And from those who hated me, for they were too
strong for me.

They confronted me in the day of my disaster,
But the LORD was my support.

He brought me out into a broad place;
He rescued me because He was pleased with me and
delighted in me.

—Psalm 18:16–19 AMP

Reflect

1. Where do you feel tight? What exactly does it feel like to you?
2. Dust off your imagination and imagine space in your soul. What does it look like? How do you feel?
3. Do you have a propensity to look back or look ahead? Why do you think that is? Ask God what “new thing” He wants you to see. Trust Jesus to be the Way.

Act

Imagine space by meditating on the truth of the scriptures in this chapter. Read them out loud. Read them slowly. Close your eyes. Imagine yourself doing what the Word says. Imagine the way through. Imagine God as space, enlarging your inner home amid the clutter.

11

TELL YOURSELF THE TRUTH

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Blessed and greatly favored is the man whose
strength is in You,
In whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Passing through the Valley of Weeping (Baca), they
make it a place of springs;
The early rain also covers it with blessings.

They go from strength to strength [increasing in
victorious power];
Each of them appears before God in Zion.
—Psalm 84:5–7 AMP

Reflect

1. Are you more apt to blame or take responsibility? If your soul clutter did not originate with you, are you able to take responsibility for your response and removing the chains that Christ has broken?

2. Have you been finding comfort in delusions? What are they?
3. Are there any areas in which you are being complicit in your clutter (contributing to your stress, worry, anxiety, etc.)? How?

Act

After prayer and pondering, create your own list of what you need to begin owning. This doesn't mean you have to tackle everything at once. This means you have found the courage to tell yourself the truth.

12

EMBRACE MYSTERY

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us!

—1 CORINTHIANS 13:12

Reflect

1. Are you living your life or just trying to solve it?
2. What open-ended question(s) or mystery has your soul clutter presented you with?
3. Have you been leaning on your own understanding? Do you need to trust God more?

Act

There is nothing foggy about the fact that life will be filled with mystery. In fact, God is quite clear about it. Our understanding in the here and now is simply incomplete. What is clear is that God understands everything about you. Ask Him for clues! Thoughtfully answer the questions listed below. This week begin to be a sleuth of your soul by looking for the clues God has hidden just for you, and then take the next right step.

Here are a few questions to get you started:

1. What would You have me learn from this inconclusive situation?
2. What could I have done differently?
3. What are You speaking to *me*?
4. What is the fruit? Is there *evidence* of God's work in me (Galatians 5)?
5. What details do I need to see? The mysteries we need to give our attention to are the secrets hidden in God's ways.
6. What is my next step?

13

BE A THOUGHT LEADER

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

And we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

—2 CORINTHIANS 10:5 AMP

Reflect

1. Are you leading your thoughts or are your thoughts leading you?
2. Where are your thoughts leading you? What is causing you to spiral?
3. Who in your life can help you lead your thoughts when you need support?

Act

We can't always help when a thought pops up, but we can own our response to it. We can recognize when we are spiraling and ask for help.

1. Reach out to someone if your thoughts are overwhelming you.
2. Be intentional to notice and make note of what is good and right in your life.
3. Try taking a walk to clear out mental clutter.

14

DECLARE YOUR DECISIONS

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

“You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.”

—MATTHEW 5:8

Reflect

1. What thoughts or beliefs have you had about yourself as a leader or boss?
2. Give yourself a review. What areas are you winning in? Which need improvement? Bosses are into metrics and reports. Profit-and-loss statements are a must. When it comes to the soul, fruit is our great metric. Would you report gains (a harvest of fruit according to Galatians 5) or a loss?
3. Who or what have you allowed to boss you? Social media? A well-meaning friend? Bad beliefs?

Act

Take action. Tackle one thing, big or small, that you have been avoiding. Make a decision. Take a risk. Practice what you've been putting off because you want it to be perfect. Not sure what you have been avoiding? What is that one thing that keeps rolling over day after day, week after week, on your to-do list? What is one thing you would do if you weren't afraid to fail?

15

DESIGN NEW PATTERNS

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

I am convinced and confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will [continue to] perfect and complete it until the day of Christ Jesus [the time of His return].

—PHILIPPIANS 1:6 AMP

Reflect

1. What patterns do you notice in your life? Is there a pattern to how you react or respond?
2. If you were to trace your pattern back to its origin, what would you find? Can you name a core wound? Does your pattern point you to any false beliefs?
3. Are you numbing in any way, shape, or form to cope? Do you disassociate from difficult situations or decisions?

Act

Make a decision to create a new pattern. Write out how you would like to respond when met with pain or hurt. Or, map out a response pattern for when you feel anxiety arising. What healthy coping mechanisms could you begin to enlist?

16

CONFESS YOUR EXPECTATIONS

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

—HEBREWS 6:19 NIV

Reflect

1. Who or what have you put your hope in?
2. Where are you in the process of expectations (review four stages)?
3. Have you ever wanted God's pity more than you've wanted His freedom or healing?

Act

Write Proverbs 23:18 on a 3 x 5 card or a sticky note. Tape it to your fridge, a mirror, your bedside table, or in your car—somewhere you'll have to face those words every day. Remember, hope is not a risk; it is an anchor.

17

TALK ABOUT THE THINGS YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

“For all that is secret will eventually be brought into the open, and everything that is concealed will be brought to light and made known to all.”

—LUKE 8:17 NLT

Reflect

1. Is there something that you “can’t talk about”?
2. Have you experienced ambiguous loss? Grief without closure? What has that looked like?
3. Who can you talk to? Who in your life is a sit-shiva friend—who could be? Who can you offer comfort to?

Act

If you’ve been holding something, if there are words on the tip of your tongue—find a counselor, a trusted friend, or a confidant and share with them.

18

BE AT HOME WITH YOURSELF

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Read Psalm 139.

Reflect

1. How are you finding yourself in the process? How are you feeling at this juncture of the journey?
2. What progress (no matter how small) are you proud of?
3. Are you starting to notice purpose in your process? What are you noticing?

Act

Take a moment to close your eyes and envision this journey that you are on. See yourself putting one foot in front of the other. Take in the scenery—beautiful or untidy. Notice how far you have come. How much more space you have created. Notice that you have not been uncluttering alone—God’s strong and kind presence is with you. Conclude by taking four deep, cleansing breaths:

1. Inhale calm. Exhale chaos.
2. Inhale clarity. Exhale clutter.
3. Inhale progress. Exhale perfection.
4. Inhale peace. Exhale overwhelm.

19

TELL YOURSELF A NEW STORY

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

This is what GOD says,
the God who builds a road right through the
ocean,
who carves a path through pounding waves,
The God who summons horses and chariots and
armies—
they lie down and then can't get up;
they're snuffed out like so many candles:
"Forget about what's happened;
don't keep going over old history.
Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something
brand-new.
It's bursting out! Don't you see it?"
—Isaiah 43:16–19

Reflect

1. What are some of your stories? What lines do you repeat in your mind like a mantra? Like a soothing insult? What past experiences keep showing up in today?

2. Who are you giving too much headspace to? Has someone else assigned a role for you? Has their narrative seeped over into yours?
3. Do you have a propensity to try to overcome in your own strength? How can you yield to the Spirit in your everyday life?

Act

Write out your storylines for clarity. Then seek out a scripture that you can use to speak to your soul. Feel free to start with Psalm 42.

20

TAKE YOUR POWER BACK

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

—2 TIMOTHY 1:7 NKJV

Reflect

1. Would you consider yourself a powerless or powerful person? Be honest.
2. Where or how have you felt helpless or powerless? Why?
3. In what ways can you begin to live like a powerful person? How can you turn your focus onto taking command of your own life?

Act

Pray this prayer:

Lord, I thank You that I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind. Uncover the areas in my life where I am feeling victimized or have been a victim. Thank You for healing my wounded soul; I want to begin to live powerfully, starting today. Amen.

21

TRUST GOD WITH YOUR TIME

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

“The LORD is my portion,” says my soul,
“Therefore I hope in Him!”

The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,
To the soul who seeks Him.
It is good that one should hope and wait quietly
For the salvation of the LORD.

—Lamentations 3:24–26 NKJV

Reflect

1. Are you in a season of waiting? What are you waiting on?
2. Are you afraid of stillness? What part? Would you be willing to accept the invitation to get still?
3. Ask God what He would reveal in the stillness. What might God be asking of you in this moment (obey, stay, go, battle)?

Act

Practice waiting. Here are a few ways you can do that:

- Continue to participate in your life—don't stop living.
- Take time to sit in God's presence to listen and observe.
- Journal/write down anything and everything you are learning.
- Read the Bible. Study those who waited on a promise.
- Surround yourself with friends who can see where you're headed—even when you can't.
- Hope and dream anyway. Don't believe the lie that you'll be disappointed.
- Take steps toward the future you are waiting for.
- Surrender as many times as you must, embracing mystery.

22

PURSUE PEACE

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.

—ROMANS 8:6 NIV

Reflect

1. Are you overwhelmed with input? What forms of input could you eliminate or cut back on?
2. Who or what has the greatest input in your life?
3. How can you personally pursue peace and practice stillness?

Act

Where do you need focus and freedom? Think about this and create your own More or Less List.

23

ENGAGE TO FIND A BETTER WAY

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

—PHILIPPIANS 4:8 NLT

Reflect

1. How do you react when met with stress or overwhelm? Do you notice a pattern?
2. Do you ruminate on negative emotions or situations? Be intellectually honest.
3. Do you need to repent?

Act

Download a brain game on a device (my favorites are *Tetris*, *Word Trip*, and *Wordscapes in Bloom*) and try using it to engage your rational brain and switch your attention. Tip: Use this tool as a bridge by setting a timer for five to ten minutes. When the timer is up, engage and get on with your day.

For a list of my favorite breath prayers, visit
trinamcneilly.com/breathprayers

24

NURTURE AND NOURISH

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

A sound mind makes for a robust body,
but runaway emotions corrode the bones.

—Proverbs 14:30

Reflect

1. Are you inactive in body and overly active in mind? What small changes can you make to create a shift?
2. What type of movement do you enjoy? How does your body like to move?
3. What is your relationship with food? Are you giving your body nutrients and nourishment?
4. Are you getting enough sleep? What is hindering you from the sleep you need?

Act

1. Try *uitwaaien*. Take a walk in the wind.
2. Add three nourishing foods into your meals this week.
3. Create a bedtime routine.

For my morning movement video, visit
trinamcneilly.com/morningmovement

25

ASK FOR HELP

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
—Isaiah 41:10 NIV

Reflect

1. What is your history of help? Take a look back at your parents and grandparents to see how the way they lived has influenced your perspective.
2. What do you need help with? Who can you ask or hire?
3. Who can you help?

Act

This week, take action by getting help with whatever you need help with. Then find one way to offer help.

26

SEE EVERYTHING AS A CHOICE

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

“I have set before you life and death, blessings and curse. Therefore choose life.”

—DEUTERONOMY 30:19 ESV

Reflect

1. Where or how do you feel like you don't have choices?
2. What kind of choices are you making by not choosing?
3. Name three choices you can make this week (they can be as small as taking a shower or walk).

Act

Follow through on the choices you wrote down. Before you do them, say,

"I choose to _____."

"I choose to forgive _____."

"I choose to take a shower this morning."

"I choose to be present in this day."

*"I may feel obligated to love this person, but it's my choice, and
I choose love."*

And then do it. Hearing yourself acknowledge choice is powerful.

27

GROW IN PEACE AND JOY

CREATE SPACE

Meditate

For you shall go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall break forth into singing,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their
hands.

—Isaiah 55:12 ESV

Reflect

1. Do you feel like you are going in circles? What have you been circling around?
2. Do you need to draw a sacred circle? What do you need to draw it around?
3. Do you tend to look back or always long for what's ahead? What brings you joy?

Act

Create your own strategies for joy. Plan for and schedule joy into your calendar this week. *Bonus:* start smiling and high-fiving yourself in the mirror.

A BLOOM IS FIRST A BUD

Download Trina's Uncluttering Celebratory playlist at
trinamcneilly.com/celebrateplaylist