



# nothing chipped, cracked or broken

**Have you turned on the TV lately** to almost any channel and found the program to be some kind of decorating show? On the weekend there must be five or six channels that feature how to sell your home, how to flip (buy low and sell high) a property, how to create curb appeal or how to make a small space seem larger...the possibilities are almost endless.

For those of us that love this new option for TV viewing it is fabulous, for others; usually the husbands who think everything is perfect the way it is, it is the worst thing that has happened to TV. Husbands think if we watch these programs we will want to replace everything that he still thinks is perfect with all the current styles. I have dealt with several clients in whom the husband has firmly stated that I may not, in any way, touch the family room or his den. In husband language, this almost always means something stuffed and staring blankly is in the room somewhere.

I have also had the opportunity to meet people that have told me they thought it would be easy to redecorate the living room because they watched HGTV all day on Sunday and it seemed so easy. The first and most difficult job when redecorating is editing or decluttering the space. As we travel through this life we all accumulate many memories in the form of "stuff", many of these memories end up crowded onto bookcases or jammed into closets or basements. It can be extremely difficult to separate the memories from the object.

How many friends do we have that received a gift they did not necessarily love? Then, the worst thing happens, they leave said gift out in the home. As friends come over and see said gift sitting on the bookcase they think "they must collect cat ornaments, now I know what I can get them for their birthday" and a collection is born. I cannot tell you how many times I have seen this as a decorator.

A decorator/ redesigner can be very helpful in these cases to assist with the editing process. Our job is to determine the items that are still absolutely loved by the homeowner and those that are there because they have always been there. This is actually not as difficult as it sounds when you have a professional that has no emotional attachment to your possessions, to help you make decisions.

The focus of the TV programs is often on the decorating and not the editing, in my opinion that is why many people have difficulty with decorating. You cannot just push the furniture around and think it is going to look completely different without removing a few items from the space because as we live in a home we add layers and layers of "stuff."

I have a few rules to try to keep clutter to a minimum, I do my best to live by them and I suggest them to clients:

-all chipped, cracked, and broken items must go

-no dried flowers because they are "dead", this should also extend to taxidermy but rarely does the husband allow this to happen

-if you bring something home that is new, try to get rid of something you already have but perhaps don't care for anymore. It could be given to a friend that admired it the last time they were visiting, donate it to charity or have a garage sale.

The process of de-cluttering is an ongoing challenge because we are a society of collectors. The urge to accumulate "stuff" can be overwhelming; we must simply learn to keep only select items we love. I am not suggesting getting rid of everything in your home and living in a totally minimalist space, just eliminating items that don't inspire you in some way.

People enjoy different levels of clutter; some of us love the Victorian look while others are completely minimalist. Others are traditional and even more of us have a mixture of several styles because of the layers and memories we have added to our homes over the years.

A redesigner/ decorator can be invaluable in assisting you to make your home look and feel they way you are hoping but editing is the first step to achieving this. So if you, like me, enjoy all those decorating shows keep watching and if you need a little help don't be afraid to call...

