



WEEKLY QUESTIONS - GRATITUDE

Week 1: Section 1

The questions below are intended to make you think about the material you are reading and how it applies to your own life, as well as where you can make changes. You can answer these questions on your blog, in a journal, or in our [Facebook group](#) – or all of the above! If you are behind, don't worry. All the information will be there for you to come back to at your own pace. No stress. No judgment. No guilt!

One note: Whether you have a spouse, partner, or kids, the same principles that JK suggests are applicable. Apply them to the people in your life!

QUESTIONS:

1. When you read through the plan that Francine Jay has for us in the intro, what are your feelings: Fear, excitement, anticipation, anger, worry?
2. Have you seriously tried decluttering in the past? If so, what were the results?
3. Useful stuff, beautiful stuff, emotional stuff. Read through the descriptions in Ch. 1 and give an example of each from your own household. Then read about “other stuff's stuff” and “other people's stuff” (end Ch. 1) and “aspirational stuff” (beginning Ch. 2) and give examples of those as well.

4. Jay says we are victims of marketing in a mass-media world. Do you find yourself victim to mass-media beliefs like those she lists in Ch. 2 (pp. 20-21 of written edition)? If so, which ones?

5. Craft hoarders get called out in Ch. 2! “The activities themselves, not the materials, are what’s essential to our enjoyment and personal development.” Agree? Disagree?

6. I’m tempted to object to FJ’s premise that stuff causes a lot of stress in our lives. I’m trying to keep an open mind, but I have to say at first pass I don’t identify with the description of the stress caused by stuff in the beginning of Ch. 3. I LIKE shopping. I LIKE researching. I LOVE washing my car. To me, caring for stuff is infinitely easier than caring for the people in my life! ;) I also wasn’t more “carefree” in my early adulthood, compared to now, at least around stress. The stress in my life now is 80 percent from parenting, 20 percent from work. What do you think? (PS I’m battling to keep an open mind...)

7. I don’t relate to a lot of the scenarios she’s presenting in Ch. 5. I’ve moved cross-country and have no desire to do it again. I’m not moving overseas at this point in my life. And I HATE camping... BUT I can relate to the idea of not wanting to leave piles and boxes of stuff for my kids to deal with. For me, that’s the biggest motivation right now. I want to surround myself only with stuff that is beautiful and useful, or things I plan to use in the immediate future – and release the rest. What about you? What is your motivation to declutter?

8. “Ask Why before you buy.” I love this phrase!!!! I challenge you to put it to use this week.

9. In Ch. 8 FJ writes about enjoying without owning. What do you think about the concept? I agree that I don’t need to own everything... but we certainly do love having a resort-like backyard! It allows us to entertain and enjoy the outside more frequently. At the same time, I don’t need a baseball diamond or soccer field in the backyard.

10. "Cultivating an attitude of gratitude is far more conducive to a minimalist lifestyle." SO funny that this comes up after our month of gratitude!!! Do you see a connection?
11. YOUR BIG ASSIGNMENT: Take the challenge at the end of Ch. 9. Make a list of everything in your house... or in one room... or one drawer. (I will do my closet and share my results in the Facebook group. Will you do the same?)
12. What are your biggest takeaways or "Aha!" realizations from this section?

"Our stuff exists to serve us, not the other way around." (Jay)