

After ignoring her bulging wardrobe for years, self-confessed hoarder, Asha, decided to take urgent action. Would it change her life?



My untidy under-bed drawer

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lasping a bobbly red jumper, I thanked it sincerely and then flung it into the rapidly expanding sack on my bedroom floor.

'That was tough,' I sighed, remembering all the times I'd reached for my trusty, but increasingly threadbare knit, to keep out the chill.

'You're doing really well,' a calming voice wafted over from behind my mini-sock mountain.

I didn't usually talk to my clothes, nor did I usually invite a woman I've never met to rummage through my knicker drawer. But my clothing situation had reached crisis point.

Before we go on, I have a confession to make. I'm a clothes-a-holic!

I love expressing myself through what I wear and the way I feel in each outfit.

Each dress, top or skirt I own tells a story — the fabric imbued with memories. From the sunshine-yellow dress I wore on the first date with my boyfriend, to the cloud-soft cream jumper my baby nephew snuggled up against when I held him for the very first time.

But after indulging my passion for years, I'd accumulated so many clothes, I'd begun to dread

opening my over-stuffed drawers.

And I'd panic every time I had to put my washing away — knowing I'd used up every inch of storage I had in my small flat.

The last straw came when my dad had to reinforce the rail in my cupboard after it collapsed.

I'm obviously not alone in feeling as if I'm drowning in possessions. The Netflix series about decluttering queen, Marie Kondo, has got everyone talking about tidying.

In it, she teaches families how to organise their items into categories and remove those that don't 'spark joy'. Now,

consultants trained in her famous KonMari method are helping people all over the world to spring-clean their homes.

One of them is Katrina Hassan, who has just asked me to tip every single item of clothing I own — including socks, coats and PJs — on to my bed.

'All of them?' I ask, terrified. 'Everything,' she smiles. I stare at the huge stack, speechless.

'We call it the shock of the pile!' Katrina says.

It's certainly a big wake-up call

**'We call it the shock of the pile!'**

— and a little overwhelming, but Katrina is a calming influence.

'It's a positive process,' she says. 'Less about what you want to get rid of, and more about what you value and want to keep.'

Katrina has motivational mantras: 'A place for everything and everything in its place', and 'don't

put it down, put it away'.

Next, Katrina asks me to pick up each item in turn and see if it 'sparks joy' within me.

If it doesn't, I thank it and add it to the charity shop bag. If it does, I keep it. I'm surprised at

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# She came, she saw, she KONDO-ED!

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Marie and Katrina

how much lighter I feel as the pile gets smaller.

I sigh with relief knowing I can keep those tatty but sentimental band T-shirts I've held on to since I was 15 — since they still spark happiness.

Meanwhile, Katrina arranges my dresses by colour on my rail. It makes me smile just looking at them.

Another eye-opener is how Katrina folds my clothes.

She folds everything into a rectangular shape and stores them standing up vertically. It means I can see at a glance what I have when I open the drawer.

Everything is folded in this way — even socks.

After a lifetime of balling them up, it's a revelation!

No wonder people are looking up videos of Marie Kondo folding things on YouTube.

Katrina discovered Kondo's book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying*, after a trip to Japan.

When she was pregnant with her first child, she wanted a home birth, but needed to make her living space a peaceful

sanctuary.

Katrina and her husband followed the principles in the book and, after four months, they'd decluttered their entire house.

Two years and two successful home births later, Katrina swapped her teaching career to train under Kondo herself.

She now has her own business, Spark Joy London, and almost 40,000 Instagram followers.

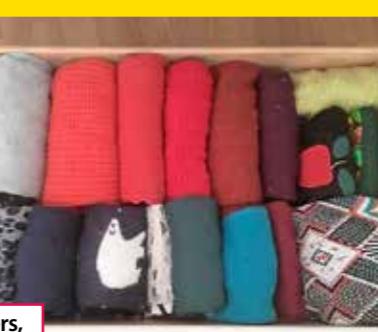
After six hours,



she's helped me fill an incredible eight sacks with clothes to donate or sell. When she leaves, I finish organising my underwear, then I take a photo and send it to Katrina.

I never thought I'd send a virtual stranger a picture of my smalls drawer, but seeing them neatly filed by colour is a thing of joy.

It may not have changed my life, but I'm definitely a Kondo convert!



## Katrina's top tips

● The KonMari Method is made up of five categories — clothes, books, papers, komono (miscellaneous such as crockery) and sentimental items.

● Tidy up in one shot — give yourself a deadline and stick to it.

● Ask yourself: What does each item mean to you?

Does it spark joy?

● Tidy by category rather than location.

● Store like with like.

● Don't buy fancy storage — use what you already have. Shoeboxes, iPhone containers and chocolate boxes can all hold everything from T-shirts to socks, and keep things from sliding around.

● You can stop clutter before it begins by simply placing items in their proper spot as soon as you've finished using them.

To book a consultation with Katrina, visit [sparkjoylondon.com](http://sparkjoylondon.com)