

Ep025_Memory Boxes

[00:00:00] **Diana Renee:** You're listening to the Decluttered Mom Podcast. A podcast built specifically for busy moms by a busy mom. I'm your host, Diana Renee. And in 2017, I had my second daughter and it felt like I was literally drowning in my home. Okay? Not literally, but I felt like I couldn't breathe with all of the stuff surrounding me.

[00:00:29] Over the next 10 months, I got rid of approximately 70% of our household belongings. And I have never looked back. I kind of feel like I hacked the mom system, and I'm here to share all the tips, tricks, and encouragement. Let's listen to today's show. Welcome to another episode of the Decluttered Mom podcast.

[00:00:53] I'm Diana Renee, and today I wanna talk about something really kind of quick. We're gonna keep this [00:01:00] episode pretty quick because, um, I get this question a lot. What to do with the sentimental items that you do decide to keep when you're decluttering. So I'm not talking about like, how do I decide whether or not this sentimental item is worth keeping?

[00:01:16] I'm talking about, okay, here are the things that I have already decided are worth keeping. What do I do with those? Things. Okay. So that's kinda where the distinction is. And in our home we use two different types of what I call memory boxes. And this is something that we've used for quite a few years now.

[00:01:38] I'm trying to think when we started this. We started, we started, okay. We started one type. The first type I'm gonna talk about, um, when. before my oldest daughter was even born. So this was like pre decluttering life . This was before we simplified and [00:02:00] minimized and got rid of almost 70% of our household belongings.

[00:02:04] So this was something that I already did and I found worked really well. Even with the new lifestyle that we. . But when my kids got a little bit older and they got into school and started bringing more things home from school, I decided I needed two different types of memory boxes. So the first memory box is just, it's literally what we call the memory box.

[00:02:28] Okay. And each person in our house gets their own memory. I use the photo boxes from, I think I got mine from Hobby Lobby way back in the day. I've seen them at Michael's, I've seen them at Home Goods. Uh, they're

just, they're paper, cardboard photo boxes. Uh, and ours are just have different colors on the outside, so I don't remember what colors we have, but basically these photo boxes [00:03:00] are our memory boxes.

[00:03:01] So, Nine you guys. By the way, my oldest turned nine recently, so MS nine, she has one, MS six, she has one. My husband and I each have one, and we put everything in there that is very, very important to us. That is very sentimental. That is not something that we need to be able to access and look at on a daily basis.

[00:03:29] So I just got ours out because I wanted to take a look through them because I know you're probably asking like, what types of things do you even have in these boxes and. So I'm looking through mine right now and a lot of mine currently is things that my daughters have made for me over the years that are just really special.

[00:03:52] They make things for me all the time, uh, and I don't keep everything, and some things I hang up in my office [00:04:00] or in my closet, things like. other things, they just go in the trash after a while. Um, if you're a mom and you have kids that make you things daily, you know what I mean? And then there are other things that.

[00:04:14] They, I, I just know they spent a really, a big amount of time on, or they were very proud of this thing. Or, for example, I'm looking at something right now that Ms. Six made me, and it was the first time she ever drew a heart and she was like so excited about it. . Um, so that's something I kept. There are the first time they did something, so like the first time they wrote their name or the first time they drew a picture that actually looked like a picture and wasn't just a bunch of , a bunch of scribbles, right.

[00:04:53] You know what I mean? , this is where I keep notes that they have written me, the girls have written me over the years that were [00:05:00] really special or like cards that were very special. I don't, again, this may be controversial. I do not keep every card, every birthday card that my kids give me or anything like that.

[00:05:12] I keep the ones that really like just meant a lot and. and were impactful when I got them. And there were things that now when I can look back at them, I'm like touched by them. Right. I have a note in here from MS nine saying, I did your room. I hope you love it with a heart. And I remember that this is when she decided to.

[00:05:37] Pick up my room and make my bed for me, and so just little things like that. Right. I also keep in there notes from when my husband and I did long distance for a year and a half when we were first dating. I was in Michigan, he was in Colorado, and so he would send me flowers and I have saved some of the notes that [00:06:00] he attached to flowers.

[00:06:01] I've printed out some of the email. that he sent me because I was working full-time when this happened, when we were long distance. And so he would write in in our, and we had a time difference. I was two hours ahead, so he would write me an email every night that I could read when I got to work in the morning.

[00:06:21] And so like things like that, like I didn't print every single email. I just printed the ones that were extra impactful or extra special to me at the time, and I'm really glad. That I have them. I also have, uh, newspaper clippings. Uh, either that I was in myself, I was like actually decent at tennis in high school.

[00:06:44] So I have a couple articles of that. I also have articles I wrote because I was a editor on my high school newspaper. Fun fact, I was the advice columnist for my college newspaper, , and I don't know who decided.

[00:07:00] 18 year old Diana was full of wisdom and life advice, but the editors at our paper did, and so I have some of those saved and printed.

[00:07:10] I from my high school, from my high school newspaper, I just pulled out an article. Titled are Shoulders really Distracting, dress code confusions and inconsistencies of Problems. So apparently I was pushing the envelope and pushing against authority when I was in high school. Um, so these are all the different types of things.

[00:07:34] I have our engagement photos in here. I have, uh, special things from our wedding. So I don't say I didn't save a lot from our wedding. I. One flower. I saved some photos and then my, I can't remember who specifically made it, but I have a little folder that has all of the speeches that were made at our [00:08:00] wedding.

[00:08:00] So, The best man, the maid of honor, my, my mom, um, anyone who made a speech, they printed it out and put it in this folder for us to keep. I also just pulled out, I have two, um, business cards from my dad, and for those of you that don't know, my dad passed away when I was 17. So like, this is kind of a really cool thing that I have.

[00:08:25] a sentimental item that reminds me of my dad. So those are the types of things that I have that's not like an exhaustive list of every single thing, but those are the types of things that I have in my box as far as the girls. . Oh, I also in my box, have their school photos. Uh, and any like special photos, like I have some special photos from high school and college and even from when I was a kid that I have printed out that are in there.

[00:08:53] Not a ton of photos because I have most of those digitally, but I'm always like, what if something [00:09:00] somehow happened digitally? I would want at least a hard copy of like the most, most special. So I would say there's maybe 50 total photos in the memory. And then, let's see. So for the kids, theirs has things like their, the first hat they wore at the hospital, their little teeny tiny brace, hospital bracelet from when they were born.

[00:09:27] I have in here their first outfit. Um, I had. Little hats made by someone on Etsy for newborn photos that have their names on 'em, and they're like the cutest, softest, teeniest, tiniest things. So I kept those in her memory box. Uh, I saved one of, I'm looking at Miss Six's box right now, and I saved one of her my favorite pajamas when she was teeny tiny.

[00:09:58] When she was nine months [00:10:00] old. I don't know, I just like grew really attached to this one specific pair of pajamas and so I saved that. Instead of saving all of her baby clothes, I saved that one thing. I also have, um, some painting she's done when she was, um, like really little and other adults would help her make something for me.

[00:10:22] I have that in there. Um, I have her first haircut. , which that's one of those things you guys, I'm like, I don't know why I am keeping that, but I just am. It's kind of weird and it's kind of creepy in a way, but, oh well. And then, uh, like the program for her first p and l recital and for miss nine, I know in her box it has like her team photo from the first basketball team she was on.

[00:10:53] And so things like that are the things that I. in their memory boxes.
[00:11:00] MS six doesn't have a lot of interest in it. She doesn't really care what I keep in there. At this point, at her age, MS nine definitely has more opinions about it. And so she and I work together, uh, and she'll just ask me, she'll be like, mom, I have this thing.

[00:11:18] that I wanna put in my, she calls it her special box. I wanna put it in my special box. Can I put this in here? And then we'll talk together about whether or not that's something that goes in there or if it's something she can

display in her room. Um, she has right now in her box a couple of like painting thing, like the, you know, you can go to like the paint studio and pick out.

[00:11:40] Uh, little statue and then you can paint it. So she has a couple of those in there right now. And so we've talked about how as she grows, we may need to like, Edit this box and take out some things because hers is getting pretty full. And so she knows that we probably will need to kind of every year go [00:12:00] through it and decide what we're going to keep and not, but she is my sentimental girl and she.

[00:12:05] Asks at least once a quarter if she can look through the box and she'll pull it down and she'll sit down and she'll just spend two hours like going through each item and talking about it and showing me and FaceTiming grandma and showing her and then FaceTiming Nana and showing her. And like, so she's, she really values these things and so I try to honor that by letting, giving her a little bit more space in keeping.

[00:12:31] More items than I probably would keep for her if it was only my decision. Okay. And then the other type of memory box we have is a school memory box. And I realized really quickly, I, I pre-kids in school, Diana was very sure that all I would need were our normal memory boxes, post kids being in school.

[00:12:56] Diana is like, no, because there are, [00:13:00] they get sent home with so many things every single day, which we don't keep very much. , but there are things in there that I wanna be able to keep and that are, that I think will be important to them later on to look back on at least, at least maybe earlier on in their lives.

[00:13:18] I knew when they're in college or young adults. They will look back and appreciate those types of things. The school memory box, I wish I have a really hard time describing visual things and so, um, I will try to describe this to you, but essentially they are, they each have their own and they're small.

[00:13:37] Filing boxes. They're clear plastic, see through whatever, and each one have their own. And then inside there is a hanging file folder for each grade. So there's a preschool and then a pre-K, and then a kindergarten, and then first grade all the way to 12th grade, senior year of high school, which feels really far away and like tomorrow at the same time [00:14:00] with how fast they are growing.

[00:14:01] Everybody tells you that, right? Everyone's like, they grew up so fast, and you're like, oh yeah, that's, that's. That's wild. And then like you have kids and they start growing up and you're like, oh, they were right. Um, and so in this, in this school memory box, we just keep the things that are really important for that specific year.

[00:14:20] So these are just things that come home that they are extremely proud of, that they, that the teacher says, they put so much time and effort into this. An award that they won at school that they were proud of or something, they were, their name got put into the school paper because they did something really kind like, these are the types of things that we keep in the school memory box.

[00:14:42] So it's, anything that's school specific goes into that memory box and it's, they're nine times out of 10, like a piece of paper or something flat. So we were able to put them into, If they come home with a project that they worked on, like, uh, MS nine had a [00:15:00] diorama that was, she was really proud of, and she spent weeks and weeks on, and that was something that did not even fit into the school memory box.

[00:15:08] We take a photo of it and we print the photo and we put it in. There for her to be able to look back on. So she still can hold onto that. Um, and she can still look at it and reminisce about it and be proud of it, but it's not something that we have to actually keep the actual physical item. So that is what the school memory box is.

[00:15:28] It's a little bit more straightforward. Uh, let me know. Send me a DM on Instagram if you want to hear more about how we handle kids artwork and. The 18 bajillion quadrillion things that are sent home from school every single day in their backpacks, . Um, I get it. It's, it's good because they obviously are doing a lot of fun things and they're learning a lot at school, but, I know as a mom it can feel overwhelming to get all of that sent home at the end of the day.

[00:15:59] And so, [00:16:00] um, let me know. I'm curious if that's something that you guys would like to hear more about what we do and if so, then maybe we can do a future episode on that. I hope this was helpful. Um, I hope that maybe this will give you an idea of what to do with those items to keep them in one space. I know that if we ever had to like leave our home quickly, the memory boxes.

[00:16:23] One of the very few things I would grab before we go. Uh, so hopefully this is helpful you guys and I will see you on next week's episode.

Thanks for hanging out and listening to the Decluttered Mom podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, it would mean the world if you could write a review or share this episode with a friend or your Instagram.

[00:16:46] And if you're on Instagram, be sure to follow me@thedecluttered.mom and send me a DM to say hi. I'd love to hear what you thought about today's episode. I hope you'll come back next week and hang out with us again.[00:17:00]