



# Spring Clean Your Life

## (spiritually, emotionally and physically)

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### Spring is a season for new beginnings

There's something about the early morning birdsong, the melting snow, the rising temperatures, blooming flowers and increased daylight. When spring arrives, we are often hit with a renewed sense of hope and vigor, as well as a sudden desire to clean out our homes! This year, instead of only focusing on clearing out the clutter from our closets, let's focus on clearing things out from our lives that are not serving us well. Instead of focusing solely on washing our windows or picking out new plants for our landscaping, let's bring some attention to what we can bring into our lives to foster joy, hope and spiritual growth. Let's not hang onto things that keep us in a perpetual "emotional winter." Spring is here! It's time to re-evaluate what's working, what's not, and breathe some life back into our days!

### Start your cleaning!

#### ★ Social media

Admit it: you know there are some accounts you follow that just make you feel jealous as you scroll past their pregnancy announcements, bump photos, holiday photos of their kids, or complaints or praises about motherhood. Or maybe it's a group that encourages you to feel bitter about your infertility. UNFOLLOW THEM! You could even try deleting the app from your phone altogether for a couple of weeks or a month and see if you truly miss anything. Remember, YOU have control over what media you consume. If it's making you upset, jealous, envious or cranky or causing you to play the comparison game, YOU have a [responsibility](#) to unfollow what is dragging you down emotionally and spiritually. If it's not serving you, remove it.

#### ★ Your space

Clean up, clean out, beautify. Assuming no baby arrives for you this year, create the space for the life you want in the wait, for the life that God has for you TODAY. What little changes could you make that would bring you a great sense of joy or peace when you walk into the rooms of your home? Create a home, a domestic church, that becomes that little piece of heaven on earth for you and your spouse.

### ★ **Your closet**

Infertility can sometimes make us feel like less of a woman, lead us to have lower self esteem, or even just bring about a lower mood. Ill-fitting, tattered or worn-out clothing doesn't help our self esteem. Give away or donate any items that no longer fit you in this season of life and dispose of those that are too worn out to wear. Replace one or two of them with a flattering item that makes you feel beautiful and confident in the skin you're in. You needn't break the bank or collect racks of items for the sake of retail therapy; simply pick out one or two items that fit your budget and bring a little spark to your step! You could even try thrifting or swapping with friends for a great economical option!

### ★ **Your marriage and social life**

It's easy to feel like you're stuck in a rut. Sometimes it feels like all you do is work, plan appointments and testing, and fit your life around your chart. Make a commitment today to do ONE new thing this month. Try a new restaurant. Go for a walk on a new trail or at a new park. Sign up for an online creative skills class or try one at your local community center. Having something else to think and talk about besides fertility-related things will do wonders for your mental state and your energy levels too! What's more, trying to conceive (TTC) can really take a toll on your marriage too. Pray for inspiration on how to bring joy, love and spontaneity back into your relationship. Take turns planning a date every week. Plan a day trip (or a half-day trip) once a month to explore someplace new. Make a seasonal bucket list together. You'd be amazed at how much your mood and your marriage improves when you have a change of scenery and something to look forward to!

### ★ **Your soul**

Don't neglect your soul! An important aspect of spiritual spring cleaning is *getting yourself to confession*. Infertility can sometimes be a breeding ground for bitterness, envy and doubt and it's important that we don't let this build up in our souls for too long! Let's turn to Jesus and let Him clean out those sins and replace them with the deep and abiding love, mercy and all-encompassing graces that are found in the sacrament of confession. Having trouble drumming up the courage to go? Make it a date with your spouse and go out for a treat afterwards! Other activities that can "freshen up" your spiritual life include making it to adoration once a week, reading one chapter of one of the Gospels every day, taking 10 minutes for spiritual reading by a good Catholic/Christian author each day. Pick just one of these activities to try faithfully this month and watch as your spirits lift and your hope is restored!

## ★ TTC tasks

Take some time to re-evaluate with your spouse what is and isn't working for you in this area.

- Is taking pregnancy tests before your period is due adding to the number of days you feel depressed? Consider making a commitment not to take one until you are at least 4 days late.
- Do you feel like your doctor isn't really hearing your concerns? Look for a second opinion.
- Are you exhausted and cranky from appointments, bloodwork, charting and medication? Consider taking a break for a few months, or even trying something like a rhythm of 3 months with treatment followed by a one month break.
- Frustrated with how your cycle charting method is dictating your sex life? Discern with your spouse and see if you might need to adjust your following of "the rules" for the health of your marriage (ie: using every other day of your fertile window instead of every day, feeling free to have spontaneous sex with your spouse on non-fertile days instead of having sex only on fertile days).

Trust yourselves in these areas. If one or both of you are feeling like you are at your breaking point, or that there is a strain in your marriage, it may mean that you need to make a shift in one of these areas, even if it's just a temporary shift. Your individual health and your health as a couple is of primary importance. Don't let either one be a casualty of the TTC journey.

## My spring cleaning plan

### Example

Using the ideas from previous pages as inspiration, list some ideas in each box for how you can freshen up your life in that area. If you're feeling ambitious, see if you can complete one new category each week. If you'd like to take it slower, try checking off one category each month. Even better, enlist a friend to go through the "Spring Clean Your Life" challenge with you, and hold each other accountable! No need to try all your ideas from each category - just trying one from each will make a difference!

CATEGORY	IDEA	DONE! (Place a checkmark or sticker here!)
<b>Social media</b>	~ unfollow friends' accounts that upset me ~ turn off notifications for TTC Facebook group that encourages my bitterness	
<b>My space</b>	~ potted plant for living room ~ frame photos from our trip	
<b>My closet</b>	~ donate old coat ~ find a new spring jacket that isn't falling apart!	
<b>My marriage and social life</b>	~ sign up for online drawing class ~ try park and ice cream shop in other town ~ plan day trip for next month	
<b>My soul</b>	~ schedule confession for this month ~ read one chapter a day from Gospel of John	
<b>TTC tasks</b>	~ discuss a 1-month break from appointments/meds with hubby	

## My spring cleaning plan

Your turn

CATEGORY	IDEA	DONE! (Place a checkmark or sticker here!)
Social media		
My space		
My closet		
My marriage and social life		
My soul		
TTC tasks		