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Spring cleaning a bit of a memory cleanse

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It's kinda weird going through one's old personal belongings and piles of socked-away items. A recent weekend cleanup revealed my life in a nutshell.Talk about seeing your life pass by your very eyes in a matter of minutes!I must say, it wasn't really much of a show. I?much prefer the old classic ViewMaster, where you insert the circular disk of photos of the world's natural wonders, and click each one to advance.Recently, I've witnessed many vivid and rather peculiar dreams. One involved a large, talking one-eyed lemur who was chasing a floating outhouse down the river in our former back yard. Another involved me driving an electric scooter through a crowded high school hallway.Apparently our brains string together random fragments from both our memories and imagination, to create dreams. Our cortex is highly active during REM?sleep so it's on with the show. Researchers believe dreams are the brain's attempt to file, organize and make sense of all the chaotic information our brains process. Hence the lemur, or maybe the outhouse.He kinda resembled Buck, the ?slightly unhinged??weasel on Ice Age.Back to my spring cleaning. I can hardly wait for my next batch of mental movies, after our afternoon of cleaning, and going through old memories.I have been a bit of a pack rat in the past, and I do ?collect??certain things. My cabinet at home and even my desk at work is littered with knickknacks ??a series of tiny airplanes, some Star Trek devices, some ancient artifacts and a few plastic figures made famous in the 1963 classic, Jason and the Argonauts. Oh, and there's a lava rock that my daughter brought back from Iceland and a few ancient Roman coins.My cabinet and roll-top desk in my bedroom at home contain all sorts of goodies, from hand-painted aircraft, spacecraft to some spent World War II?bullet casings.My mom used to call such things ?dust-catchers??and my wife refers to them as my silly toys. But I am adamant these are ?valuable collectibles? and will form a large part of my kids' inheritance one day! Plus, some are cool models from childhood TV shows and movies ? the original Thunderbirds, the British sci-fi series UFO and Lost in Space. These tiny trinkets were never available in my youth, so I snatch them up today, whenever I come across one.We cleaned out a rather large cubby hole under the basement stairs, in our ongoing effort to clean and renovate our basement. It's a work in progress.Out came roughly a dozen boxes filled with my belongings that date back to the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s.For some reason I kept tons of old work-related documents ??agendas, reports, copies of articles I wrote 20+plus years ago. I also kept dozens of issues of newspapers I?worked on. And a snarky letter from one of my former bosses.Out they went, into large, contractor trash bags.They were followed by books, some old photos and other stuff. I tried to toss a small collection of old doodles and drawings I did in high school, but my youngest wanted to keep them. I also wanted to pitch an old photo album of mine ? I dabbled in photography in my high school and college days. Again, this was intercepted by one of my offspring.I was about to toss my high school yearbooks, but the kids wanted to flip through them to make fun of our clothing and hair styles!Fortunately, other things were destined to never see the light the day ever again. Really, do I need a photo of myself when I graduated college? When would I?ever use my old binders containing 20-year-old resumes and references? I worked on an art magazine called Arabella and out went dozens of these issues.Some trinkets and photos of my long-gone family members headed into the great beyond, too.Maybe the reason I wanted to toss everything had to do with this type of chore. I?had the unfortunate responsibility of clearing out the belongings of several family members who passed away. Going through other people's stuff was weird, uncomfortable and even unsettling. It's one of those duties I don't wish on anyone.When I did my uncle's apartment, I came upon some odd-looking trinkets that made me smile and laugh, but most of this ritual cleaning was depressing.It really hit home that our lives can be boiled down to a few dozen boxes, shelves and cupboards filled with junk.My recent exercise also led me on another ?hunt.??And that is to assemble the cool things I've collected over the years, dust them off, and try to find suitable places to display them properly. Of course, this task will require a lot of input from my wife.My assortment of goodies includes framed pictures from our travels, including a hand-woven rug by indigenous people of Cartagena. I also have a collection of 12-inch LP?picture discs from the 1980s.I?doubt my assortment of tiny spaceships will leave their perch, but you never know.I?always wanted a life-size suit of armor but the jury (wife) is still out on that one.Technology today allows us to make digital memories on a daily basis. We can capture our lives in chronological order and replay such images at our leisure.As a visual creature (I heard that men tend to be optically sensitive), I?like to look at my collectibles.They make me smile.Thanks for the memories!As for the rest of the stuff, RIP!


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