

COVID Cleanliness



There are two things I have come to realize about myself during this pandemic. The first is that I definitely like to live in a neat and tidy home, and the second is that I have depths of patience that I did not know I had (although my family would probably beg to differ on that).

I have been fortunate to have had a housekeeper for the last few years as my disease has progressed, and I have become especially reliant on her for many things. When the pandemic hit and we went into our first lockdown, it was decided it would be best for everyone if we took a break from that until things got better. Flash forward nearly a year later and things have only gotten worse, meaning amongst a whole slew of other things, we still do not have a housekeeper. I know, I know. I'm just trying to make light of what, by all accounts, has been a pretty bad year.

Despite using a wheelchair, I am still able to do a few of the household chores, like load and unload the dishwasher, wipe down counters. But the vast majority of the duties, especially the more demanding ones, have fallen to my husband. At first, he very gingerly mopped the floors and wiped down the counters on a regular basis. A year later, and I'm pretty sure a small child has wandered in and is buried under our pile of laundry. Don't get me wrong - I completely get it and appreciate all he's done while still working full-time from home. We're all just hanging on as best we can and hoping for an end to this.

In order to maintain my sanity, I try to play games with our untidiness. Just how bad can things get before someone besides me takes notice? A few years ago, I bought a big, beautiful stainless steel trash can for the kitchen. It very quickly became my best friend. Not

only did it look great, but it could hold and even hide the trash that no one seemed to be in a particular rush to take out. Because we're the Lukas family, we couldn't just take the trash out when it was full. That was boring and predictable. We were certainly up for a more exciting challenge. Instead, we fabricated what has become a reverse form of Jenga. Cautiously teetering one discarded item on top of the next without causing the whole thing to topple over. Could the empty jar of spaghetti sauce nestle in between the used carton of milk and the banana peel?

We all watched anxiously as the jar was placed with the precision of a surgeon. There was a round of well-deserved applause and high fives for my son, who's placement was masterful. We have found though that pizza boxes are absolute deal breakers, as there's just no way to place one on a stack of orange peels and avocado seeds without there being certain disaster. That usually prompts someone to take the trash to the dumpster because as much as they hate taking it out, they hate picking it up off the floor even more.

When I got my big, luxurious wheelchair a few years ago, it lifted me up so that I am unable to pick up items from the floor. The other day, my favorite pen slowly rolled off my lap, causing a slow motion comedy of errors.

"Nooooooooo," I cried as I tried to catch it with my clumsy, numb hands. I sat forlornly looking at it, immediately missing all the good times we'd had together - all the grocery lists we'd made, all the drawings we'd doodled. So long fair vessel, I will see you in a few weeks when the floors are swept.

I know I'm speaking for practically everyone when I say the administration of this vaccine can't come fast enough. I've got way more lists to make and obviously need to do more shopping for whatever the next catastrophe might be, but most importantly, I need to bow down as best I can and properly welcome my housekeeper back into my home as the goddess she is and the true keeper of my sanity.