



Highlighted Resources: January 2016

The end of the year has arrived and in Japan that means it is time for *O-sōji*. *O-sōji* means 'major cleaning' and it usually takes place on the last day of the year. In the US it is similar to what is known as 'spring cleaning'. Whether you're looking to start now or in the spring, a great book to get you started on your own *O-sōji* is the extremely popular [The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up, by Marie Kondo](#) (call number 142016).

Naturally this book is organized very well. It is divided into 5 main chapters taking the reader on a journey from messy to tidy. Kondo introduces her method for tidying and staying tidy, known as the KonMari method. The KonMari method is simple: if any item does not elicit a strong feeling of happiness when you hold it, it is time to discard it. After you have discarded it, find a space for the items that do spark happiness. Kondo insists you cannot tell just by looking at an object that it gives you a happy feeling.

This method is revolutionary because it has changed the way most people look at organizing their space. Rather than doing it little by little, Kondo suggests doing all of the tidying at once. This way, people are less likely to put off projects they may not want to tackle. She supports this idea with stories of her own struggle to become tidy and with examples of the numerous clients she has helped over the years. While this is a guide book, it is also a book that allows readers to reflect on many different aspects of their lives related to the home. Kondo believes that when you organize your home, you begin to organize your life. She has had clients who have told her that cleaning their home helped them to overcome personal difficulties they had been having in their lives.

The overarching theme in Kondo's book is the idea of living in the present. She encourages the discarding of items because while they may have made people happy in the past, they are doing nothing for them now and that tends to hold people back. By living in the present and only seeing things that make us happy, we are more likely to be successful.

While I didn't get a chance to try the KonMari method while reading the book, I certainly would like to try it in the New Year. Happy New Year and happy tidying!