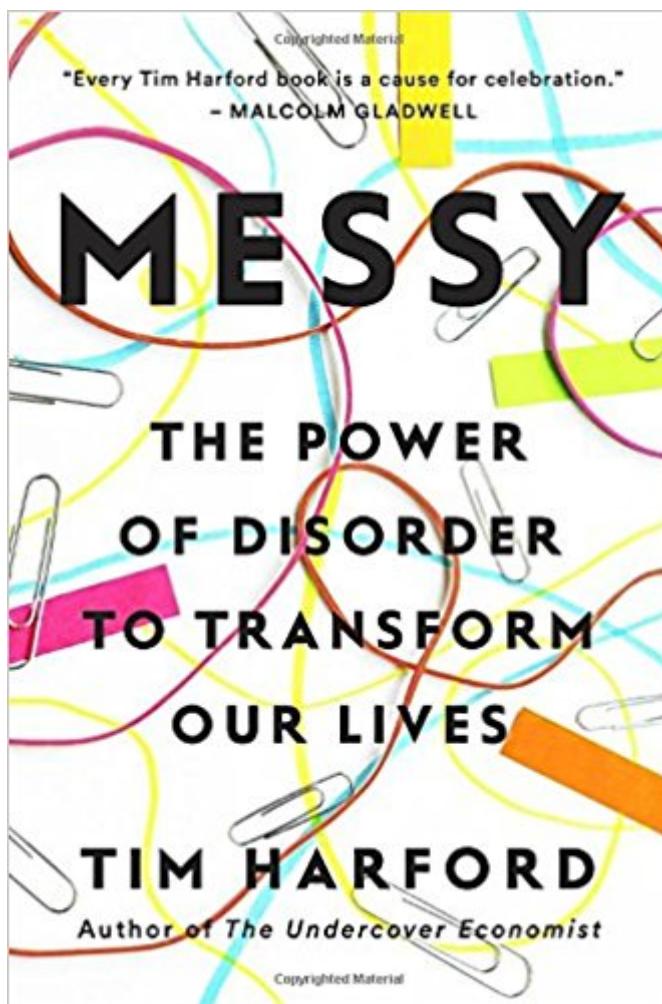


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# Messy: The Power Of Disorder To Transform Our Lives



## Synopsis

âœUtterly fascinating. Tim Harford shows that if you want to be creative and resilient, you need a little more disorder in your world.â•â "Adam Grant, New York Times-bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*âœEngrossing.â•â "New York TimesFrom the award-winning columnist and author of the national bestsellerÂ The Undercover Economist comes a provocative big idea book about the genuine benefits of being messy: at home, at work, in the classroom, and beyond. Look out for Tim's next book, *Fifty Inventions That Shaped the Modern Economy*.*Messy: The Power of Disorder to Transform Our Lives* celebrates the benefits that messiness has in our lives: why itâ™s important, why we resist it, and why we should embrace it instead. Using research from neuroscience, psychology, social science, as well as captivating examples of real people doing extraordinary things, Tim Harford explains that the human qualities we value â€“ creativity, responsiveness, resilience â€“ are integral to the disorder, confusion, and disarray that produce them. From the music studio of Brian Eno to the Lincoln Memorial with Martin Luther King, Jr., from the board room to the classroom, messiness lies at the core of how we innovate, how we achieve, how we reach each other â€“ in short, how we succeed. In *Messy*, youâ™ll learn about the unexpected connections between creativity and mess; understand why unexpected changes of plans, unfamiliar people, and unforeseen events can help generate new ideas and opportunities as they make you anxious and angry; and come to appreciate that the human inclination for tidiness â€“ in our personal and professional lives, online, even in childrenâ™s play â€“ can mask deep and debilitating fragility that keep us from innovation. Stimulating and readable as it points exciting ways forward, *Messy* is an insightful exploration of the real advantages of mess in our lives.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An Best Book of October 2016: For those who think that a spick-and-span desk is an indication of high productivity, Harford's fascinating investigation of how disorder can spark innovation will open your eyes to all kinds of situations when tidiness is not a virtue. From Brian Eno's fury-provoking Oblique Strategy cards that wrung a new sound from already talented musicians to how mixing differently talented teams can help them find solutions and keep their eye on the goal, *Messy* bolsters the theory that disorder creates heightened alertness. That alertness, in turn, fuels creativity, problem solving, better driving, resilience, innovation, and much more. But if the only thing you get out of *Messy* is peace with the level of disorder at your coworkers', staff's, or spouse's workspace, then that alone is priceless. --Adrian Liang, *The Book Review*

âœHarfordâ™s argument goes beyond aesthetics, resurfacing over and over in his engrossing narrative.â • âœThe New York Times Book ReviewâœUtterly fascinating. Tim Harford shows that if you want to be creative and resilient, you need a little more disorder in your world. It's a masterful case for the life-changing magic of cluttering up.â • âœAdam Grant, New York Times-bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*âœ[*Messy*] goes beyond the well-worn discussionâ over messy desks asâ a sign of creativity. . . Rather, heâ tackles the notion more conceptually, examining whyâ rigid targets can wreak havoc, how unpredictable leaders get ahead, and when flexibility and improvisation matter more.â • âœThe Washington PostâœMasterful.â • âœThe EconomistâœMessy is neither a broadside at Marie Kondo and her cult of minimalism nor a case for the hidden virtues of hoarding. Harford, an acclaimed economics journalist, isnâ™t so much extolling squalor as questioning the notion that order is inherently preferable for creative endeavors.â • âœTimeâœ[*Messy*] plays to Harford's prodigious strengths: the ability to tell engrossing human stories, and the ability to use those stories to convey complex, statistical ideas that make your life better.â • âœBoing BoingâœIt's a very, very good book,â full of wise counter-intuitions and clever insights.â • âœBrian Eno, musician and record producerâœA book that presents itself as an impossibly simple account of the virtues of a messy workspace, then builds to something extraordinary.â • âœThe AgeâœThis absorbing book offers a different approach from instructional decluttering manuals by celebrating the successes derived from the unplanned, unscripted, and unknown.â • âœLibrary JournalâœWeaving together lessons from history, art,

technology, and social and scientific research, Harford's theories have many potential benefits for individuals and businesses seeking to remain on the creative cutting edge, as well as profound implications for society. "Publishers Weekly" Harford presents the strategies of disorganization as unique and enlightening and convincingly offers reinforced encouragement to those who may find themselves 'tempted by tidiness' to instead 'embrace some mess instead.' "Kirkus" Ranging expertly across business, politics and the arts, Tim Harford makes a compelling case for the creative benefits of disorganization, improvisation and confusion. His liberating message: you'll be more successful if you stop struggling so hard to plan or control your success. *Messy* is a deeply researched, endlessly eye-opening adventure. "Oliver Burkeman, author of *The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking*" Tim's best and deepest book. "Tyler Cowen, New York Times-bestselling author of *Average Is Over*" Praise for Tim Harford "Every Tim Harford book is a cause for celebration." "Malcolm Gladwell" One of the best writers who also happens to be an economist. "Stephen Dubner

Ã¢Âœ*Messy*Ã¢Â• isn't so much an encouragement to disorder as it is the Life-Changing Magic of Coping with Mess. Most of the time, it's a classic non-fiction book celebrating the power of disorder, difficulty and disarray to inspire creativity, with many an example from music, tech and art, rather than a how-to guide--presumably on the assumption that most of us don't need one of those! But certain sections, like those describing the problems with a rigidly fixed approach to an organized environment as opposed to the successes that seem to come from a workspace or playspace that you can essentially destroy at will, might inspire you to embrace mess instead of just tolerating it. My favorite chapter involved the power of working on multiple tasks (not multi-tasking, but just having different things going on in different areas), which Harford says can encourage breakthroughs and unusual approaches.

From time to time I get a yen to live in an orderly world. Suddenly aghast at the junkheap of notes, papers, post-its and books that my desk has become, I tidy it up, binning some things and carefully sorting other items into files. Then I survey the neatly arranged pens and single new notepad with satisfaction, only to discover that I can no longer find the things that were previously there at my fingertips. The problem is not that our minds are messy, but that we don't accept that as a good thing. So we try to impose order on our working environment and in doing so risk stifling the creativity that can come from serendipitous connections. In *Messy*, Tim Harford shows how disorder

takes many forms and can be stimulating and productive, whether in life, the workplace, the battlefield, or the mind. Every book of Mr Harford's is filled with insight, humour, erudition, intellectual delight, and refreshingly laser-focus logic, and this is no exception.

Absolutely loved this book. Lots of great research and great stories from multiple angles. It will really make you look deeper into the reality behind seemingly logical and effective solutions to problems.

Well written, easy to read and most important, very enlightening

All true, but not that deep.

Great read.

Having trouble getting into this book

Having loved Tim Harford's book 'Adapt' I was excited to get hold of 'Messy' as it looked like being more of the same. It doesn't disappoint. In a similar style it sets about convincing the reader of the central idea - that disordered or uncontrolled things can be beneficial - via an eclectic collection of well told and well researched stories. As with the author's public speaking (TED talk recommended if you haven't seen it) you're well entertained throughout as well as hopefully having learned something.

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