

Are Marie Kondo and Jordan Peterson Using the Same Method to Build Their Audiences?

About a month ago, my social media feeds were suddenly filled with pictures of aesthetically pleasing and space-conserving methods of folding laundry. Sale posts also skyrocketed as people cleaned out items that did not spark joy, and many of my millennial friends had a renewed interest in “tidying up.”

The reason for these trends? The Netflix series *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*, which places the [KonMari](#) cleaning method at its center.

Naturally, I was curious. While I still cannot understand the urge to spend hours binge-watching a reality show about cleaning houses, I do see why people are so drawn to Marie Kondo. In each episode, Marie comes in, bubbly and excited, and, like the cleaning fairy that your mom always told you doesn't exist, clears the clutter and brings order to chaos. As a viewer, some of the messes she happened upon caused my jaw to drop, but Marie simply smiled and exclaimed, “I love mess!”

A couple of episodes showed families overwhelmed by the state of their living space, feeling powerless to remedy the situation. Individuals expressed frustration and a failure to “adult” and keep their house clean, understanding how a chaotic home environment was affecting the rest of their lives.

As these households began to employ the KonMari method – which

consists of organizing storage and tasks into maintainable systems and getting rid of items that do not spark joy – the people on Marie Kondo's show are consistently moved by Kondo's method of finding joy, significance, and sacrament in simple everyday tasks that often get overlooked.

Not long after the KonMari sensation started sweeping the internet, I saw a [satirical headline](#) about Jordan Peterson and Marie Kondo joining forces for a new show. It made me laugh, but it also got me thinking that perhaps the *Babylon Bee* was on to something. Maybe the reason that Jordan Peterson and Marie Kondo both have such a strong appeal with audiences is that they share the same message.

Take, for example, Peterson's seventh rule of life: pursue what is meaningful, not what is expedient. Sound familiar? Put another way, could his rule be "Keep only what sparks joy"?

In essence, Marie Kondo and Jordan Peterson are encouraging and equipping people to pull their lives together.

I think this says something about today's society. Many individuals, especially young people, are [anxious](#) and [tired](#) and want to feel capable of pulling themselves together. Both Jordan Peterson and Marie Kondo are telling them that they can:

- Pursue what is meaningful.
- Keep what sparks joy.
- Implement a system in which everyone is responsible for cleaning up after themselves.
- Compare yourself to who you were yesterday, not who someone else is today.

Their advice is simple and straightforward, and yet it resonates deeply with their (mostly millennial) audiences.

Yet what is also striking about Peterson and Kondo is how they interact with those they help. They never treat them as victims, nor do they excuse or ignore significant problems. Instead, they treat people as individuals who matter and who should be expected to take personal responsibility to improve their lives and their surroundings. Both frequently have their audiences in [tears](#), but these tears don't arise out of self-pity. Could it be that the message people really need to hear is not that they are victims, but that they are capable of taking personal responsibility for their own lives?

By eschewing a victim mentality, Kondo and Peterson are able to encourage and [empower](#) people in a way that actually brings about [lasting change](#). Maybe their popularity says something about what our society really needs right now.

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