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Here's this month's edition with organizing and re-design ideas.



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Tips for Hanging Art-work

[Courtesy of the Boston Globe 11/16/08]

- Take into consideration ideal viewing distance for each piece, depending on scale, medium, and quality of the work

- Artwork groupings can be used to define spaces in a large room.



- Pick a frame that goes with the *artwork*, not the room decor. It might eventually wind up on a different wall.

- Track lighting offers the ultimate flexibility, with spots that can be doubled up on a single large painting or redirected to accommodate rehanging.

- Fabric and wall colors should *complement*, not compete with, the art.

Just Get Rid of It

Do you ever have a time when you look at something in your home, and say to yourself "I don't want to look at this anymore"? Or you realize how sick of it you are, or admit you don't like it, or finally

take the plunge and toss it with the intent to replace it with a nicer/better one?

Even Professional Organizers have this moment. It happened for me one time with a plastic bowl, one that I had an intense staring moment with, and then I took it out and put it in a bag to be donated. I'd had it for a gazillion years (it was from my home growing up, so technically I got rid of my *mom's* bowl) and truly never loved it. It was good for holding popcorn but that is really the only time I used it. Well, no more, I said! Easy as that.

This led to some other significant decluttering moments, because, like a snowball rolling down a hill, this experience gains **momentum**. You find yourself in the mindset of discarding other items in your home very easily. You give yourself the freedom to get rid of other things and look around with different 'eyes'.



Here's a reconstructed mental dialogue from a moment with our toaster: "You know, I'm sick of having that up high in the cabinet. I know my husband likes it off the counter, but it's hard to reach up there.



I want to move it closer so it's easier for me. After all, I'm the one making food and in the kitchen more often.

So @#\$\$@#\$ it, I'm moving it! How about lower, like in the island's cabinet, across from the counter I use it on? (*few minutes of moving toaster*) Yes! I like it! Works for me, and that's what matters!!!" *End scene.*

Part of the ability to pare down is allowing yourself the **permission** to get rid of items. Many clients tell me one of the main reasons that our work together gets

the job done is that I'm there to say it is okay to toss, donate or keep something. It's as if they need to be *allowed* to declutter. Sometimes guilt or confusion holds them back. I give a dose of reality that makes the decision-making process easier. Think of any task you find hard to do on your own - isn't it easier when you have a partner doing it with you?

Another component of successfully sorting is **action**. People say that they know such-and-such must be gone through or taken care of, but they don't do it. So it stays in the same place. Procrastination and 'someday syndrome' prevent us from moving forward. Whether it's mental or tangible clutter, consider the effects and make the step to do something. Ask yourself tough questions about whether you really like/need/want to have the item(s). Start small, start big, but just start.

According to Barbara Hemphill, paper management and organizing guru, 80% of what we keep, we never use. If that's true, just think about how **80/20** we'd have to store, clean, manage, and deal with if there were only 20% stuff in our home.

Inspiration from the National Assn of Professional Organizers

NAPO suggested the following "to help individuals prepare for — and even survive — the holiday season. 'Holidays can be extremely stressful, but with the right organizing tools and plan in place, anxiety can be dramatically reduced,' said NAPO President Standolyn Robertson.

Bedroom...

- Decide what you want

at your fingertips; these can be stored in decorative containers

- Go through closets regularly and pull out everything you have not

worn in the last year and donate those items

- Hang like items together—group shirts to-



gether, pants, dresses, etc.

Kitchen...

- Determine the flow of activity in your kitchen before you decide to place items

- Things that work together should be stored together, like baking supplies, plastic containers, pots and pans with lids, and large platters & bowls

- Drawer dividers are a good way to keep smaller items separated

- Place glasses near the sink or the refrigerator

- Put snacks in an easy-to-access drawer or cupboard

Garage...

- Sort, purge, and then decide the proper storage containers or fixtures for [what] you must keep

- Clearly label both the tops and the sides of containers

- Consider floor-to-ceiling possibilities for shelving, racks, stackable drawers, hooks and pegboards, and don't forget the rafters

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR!

