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



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Happy 2009!

I cannot remember where I found this list of excuses for not getting organized, but I think it is apropos to share in the New Year.

YES, BUT...I WANT TO FINISH IT THE DAY I START IT

The greatest mistake is to do nothing because you can only do a little. Do what you can. Whether it's picking up a single paper to file, sorting and organizing one drawer, or cleaning out one shelf, starting the project with tiny steps is powerful. One step leads to ANOTHER, and then another.

YES, BUT...I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

It doesn't matter WHERE you start! Write out a list of "to do's" that you've been procrastinating about, and then write them on 3 x 5 inch cards or scrap paper. Put them in a box or bag and pick one. Start there and work 5, 10, or 15 minutes a day, 5 days a week until you've FINISHED it.

YES, BUT...I'D RATHER WAIT UNTIL I CAN DO THE JOB RIGHT

Remember that any start is better than no start.

YES, BUT... THIS ISN'T A

GOOD TIME TO START

Do not wait: the time will never be 'just right.' Start where you are, and work with whatever tools/time you may have. There are a 101 ways to find an extra 15 minutes in a day. Organizing is a priority INVESTMENT that reaps extra minutes, if not hours, eventually.



YES, BUT... I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET MOTIVATED

You have to get the juices flowing, which motivates you to work on your goals. Getting momentum going is the most difficult part of the job, and often taking the first step is enough to prompt you to continue. In other words, to FEEL like doing it, you have to START.

It wouldn't be January without a review of my 'Professional Organizers'. These never expire and should be helpful all year!



- Just because you have it, doesn't mean you have to use it -- this applies to containers, space, closets, furniture. People sometimes feel compelled to keep things either because they've bought it, used it in the past, it exists, or for emotional reasons. If something does not work for you, why keep it?
- When in doubt, throw it out -- while this may seem extreme, in 99% of cases it holds. If you don't think you'll use

something or don't know where to put it, get rid of it. Things that offer no use to us are clutter, and can be thrown or given to someone who'll use them.



- Honestly, there's only 2 options: less stuff or more storage -- Building another room or closet or buying more furniture isn't always realistic or in the budget. Better to start off reducing your inventory (purging) then using existing storage more effectively.

- Do you know what's in there? How long has it been there? --



Think about the box that's on the top shelf or the stuff in the attic. If you haven't accessed the container in a while, and furthermore don't know what is in the container, the contents cannot be that important. Deal with it.

- There's only 3 things you can do with paper: File, Act, or Toss -- Toss is easy. The harder part seems to be getting used to a system for Filing and Acting. Filing including both short- and long-term files, and Acting is anything you need to do (i.e. invitation RSVP, catalog order, bill paying). Address mail and incoming paperwork accordingly.
- If items are important to you, they should be displayed or stored with respect, not away or in a box waiting for 'someday'. It is

amazing what people have in storage (sometimes not knowing what the exact contents are). Then they see the item and say how important the item/s is/are. How important can it be if you're treating it like that? Use/display it now!

- It didn't get like this overnight; it's not going to get fixed overnight -- Things don't change without effort, progress, and adapting new habits. Like a diet must become a lifestyle, organizing must be learned and applied to daily life. It definitely takes work, but it's SO worth the effort!

- What's the worst thing that would happen if you got rid of it? Between buying a replacement, finding it online, or realizing you can live without it, you could function. You may even find it liberating! You



have the power over your things, not the other way around.

- "Procrastination is really just postponed decisions". Often people become stuck in indecision; the question of 'keep or get rid of' is difficult. So they keep clutter in order to reduce anxiety. Ultimately, once you face the decision and move on, you'll feel better.

