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Here's this month's edition with organizing and redesign ideas. Past eNewsletters are available on www.OrderlyManor.com



HAPPY SUMMER!

What would I bring to a deserted island if I could only bring 3 things related to organizing? (In other words, organizing products I can't live without...)

1. My Palm Pilot (PDA)
2. My labeler
3. Plastic bins with lids

Actually Doing the To-Do's

It's great to have a To-Do List or plan of what you want to do. But the critical step is the *action plan* of how that To-Do List or plan is going to *get done*. Often I see clients who make tons of lists or reminders or talk about how they've thought of all the things they would like to organize, do, make or whatever. These lists, once written or thought of, however, do not always get accomplished. The paper is put on the refrigerator or stuffed somewhere and end up becoming a piece of clutter to be disposed of. Just looking at the list gets us frustrated or overwhelmed, and we end up saying 'never mind'.



Here are some suggestions for going that extra step:

1. Be realistic. Definitely put

down things you want done, but keep money, time and resources in mind.

2. Be specific. Don't include multi-step, complicated projects on your list; break them down into specific, easier-to-do tasks.
3. Put accountability in place. Make specific ways to check as to how you're doing on the list. Have regular reminders or dates to keep you on task.

You might be interested in a book I've written, a compilation of all the organizing and redesign tips I could think of by the time of publication.



Check out "**Common Sense Organizing**", a

downloadable e-book, at Lulu.com.



Emotional Causes of Clutter

See if any of the following reasons apply to how your or a family member's clutter is caused:

>Fear of not being able to get something again – Most people who have this fear have been impacted by what they had/didn't have as children or by their "Depression Era"-minded parents. They learned not to throw anything away. Although keeping everything may have served others well years ago, the mindset of "let's keep it all in case I need it" no longer serves them.

SOLUTION: It is important to understand that almost all material objects can be bought again. Especially with the Internet, it is unlikely that we would be truly unable to get something again should the need arise.

>Inability to make a decision – Many times the inability to make a decision about keeping or discarding an item can be overwhelming. You waffle back and

forth, and are afraid you're going to regret your decision.

SOLUTION: This is, however, a learned skill. With regular exercise, the decision-making "muscle" can become stronger and easier to use. When in doubt, throw it out!



>Feeling guilty – Often when we either spent a lot of money on something, it was given as a gift, or it once served a purpose, we feel guilty getting rid of it. Actually, holding onto it just keeps bringing back the negative feelings associated with it & thus prolongs the problem.

SOLUTION: Think about the control the guilt is having on you, and instead take back the 'power' by ridding yourself of the item. You can keep things that were gifts, but you don't have to keep things just *because* they're a gift.

>Not fully considering a purchase – You buy things on sale, in bulk, or because you think you've run out, just to find the duplicate later and/or extra stuff getting dusty on the shelves. You may find clothes with the tags still on that haven't been worn; when you find them, they don't fit or are out of season.



SOLUTION: Don't buy things without some real purpose in mind. Ask yourself, "What will I actually do with this?" at the time you are considering making the purchase. Getting something because it is on sale, or you were "out shopping" is not a good enough reason to buy it. Avoid places where you impulse-buy.

>Not enough space for everything – Clutter sometimes occurs because you don't know where to put something. And since there's no room for it, you 'temporarily' store it somewhere else or delay making a decision on it. Items become old/useless or lost among items they have nothing in common with and are forgotten. If you don't find them,

you will most likely end up buying another!

SOLUTION: Everything needs to have a home. If something doesn't have a place to be put away then either create a place, or don't keep the object. Do not have junk drawers or "misc." files because that doesn't help you to determine what goes in there and what IS in there.

>Grieving clutter – It can be incredibly difficult to let go of material things when you have experienced a severe loss, and possessions are serving a purpose for you. Or you feel like throwing away items means throwing away memories of a person.

SOLUTION: Tangible items only represent the loved one; you'll still remember them even without the actual item. How about holding on to 1 piece of a set or a part of a larger item to display in your home and remind you of that person? Consider taking a photo of the items, making a scrapbook or shadow box. How about donating it to someone less fortunate? Remember: the memories themselves are most important.

>Right-brain thinkers – To a highly creative & energetic person, their 'stuff' represents opportunities. What makes them successful (creativity) also makes it hard for them to organize their surroundings (analytical skill). Their internal dialogue often says, "I better not throw that away, because I might do something with it someday".

SOLUTION: Think about how if environment is too cluttered, you might never find the item and thus will never use it. Clean, open areas allow imagination and creativity to be fostered; your mind and space are not cluttered.

— PM



