

ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!



IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

5 THINGS TO DO ON A RAINY DAY
 THE MIRACLE OF AN INVENTORY
 FIGHTING OFF THE TIME
 MANAGEMENT MONSTERS!



AUGUST TIP OF THE MONTH



Recently, I purchased a new hands-free headset. The sales men said it had a lifetime warranty – this is a rarity! He said as long as I kept the packaging and receipt I could exchange it for a new one. Sure enough two weeks passed and the hands free head set busted! This is one great example of when to hang on to what appears to be junk... just in case. Be sure to remember this is a RARE occurrence when you are sorting out your spaces!

5 THINGS TO DO ON A RAINY DAY

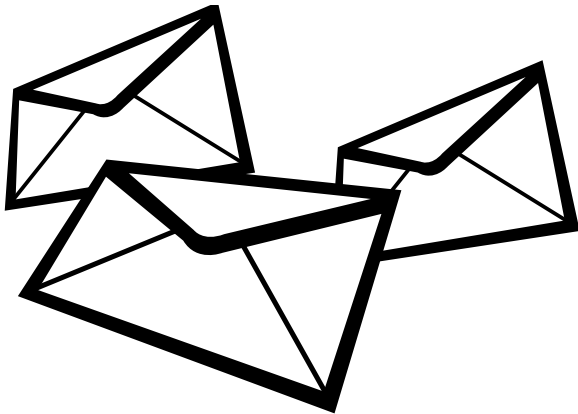
1. DUST – as you dust your many collectibles and other items, carry along a box. While you are dusting consider what pieces you love and what pieces you don't. The items that you don't care for can go into the box for donation or to sell on eBay. When you do this you are getting two things done at once: paring down your collectible collection and dusting your much needed shelves!

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5 THINGS TO DO ON A RAINY DAY

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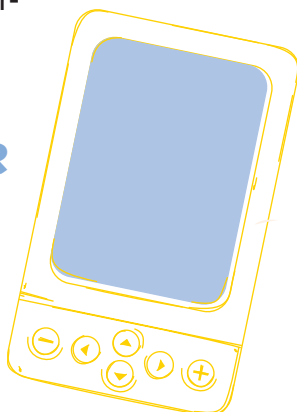


2. GO THROUGH OLD CORRESPONDENCE

– we all have some amount of correspondence that we have collected through the years. Take the rainy day to read your old letters. I have a feeling you will be able to toss almost half of it! If you want to display it, instead of putting it into a shoe box, here are two ways to store it in a visually pleasing way:

- Tie the old correspondence in ribbon. You could even color code it for each family member. For example, purple for you sister, blue for you mom and so on. Just be careful that the new letter-bundles don't take up too much space
- Purchase colorful lidded boxes to display on a shelf. The good boxes will be acid free and have a label slot. Be sure to either go with all the same color, or choose a palette of colors you love. This is a great way to organize your correspondence, either by putting it in a box or going farther and organizing them by event or person.

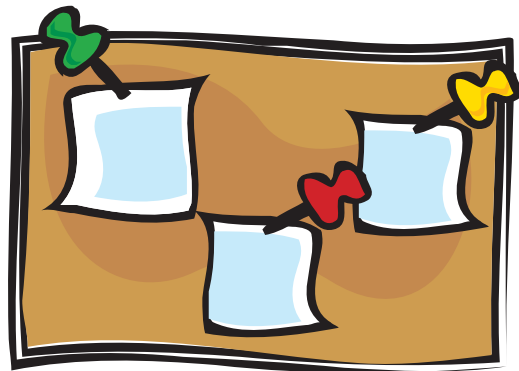
3. LEARN TO ENTER CHARACTERS BY WRITING ON YOUR POCKET PC OR PALM DEVICE – later in this newsletter, I will be



discussing this useful tool more. Most people that have hand held devices use the small key board as a way to enter things. An even faster way is to learn the handwriting style (called “Graffiti” on the Palm) for your hand held device. Practice by replying to an overdue letter. In no time flat you will have mastered the alphabet graffiti style!

4. CLEAR OFF YOUR BULLETIN BOARD

– this is a perfect time to clear off that cluttered useful tool in your office or kitchen. If it is so cluttered you won't actually see what is on there. You could be missing important dates to classes you want to sign up for! Once you have finished you will have a clutter free cork board with a few visual reminders. The less you have on there the better. It is also a great reminder to not take on too much. A lot of people are information junkies. Hopefully clearing off the cork board will remind them to keep it to a minimum!



5. SLIM DOWN ON YOUR FILES

– most people have an overabundance of files. This usually occurs because they don't know what they can throw away. Visit this web link to get some guidance on the subject: <http://tinyurl.com/7tlkf>

THE MIRACLE OF AN INVENTORY

Recently, I was working with a client and saw she had created an inventory of everything she owned. That way she wouldn't have to go out and purchase those things again. The list included clothes, linens, shoes, and other materialistic objects. She found that before she created the inventory lists, she didn't know what she had. The inventory of all of her household objects helped her to discover what she had too much of and what she had that she didn't need to buy. By the time she was finished completing her inventory lists, she realized she didn't need to buy anything except the bare necessities for at least ten years! Can you imagine not having to go shopping for anything for 10 years? Another client I was working with loved to purchase presents for friends and family. As we organized the numerous gifts she had bought in advance of events, we sorted them into piles by occasion: Chanukah, Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, bar mitzvahs, baptisms, and first communions. We also sorted them by gift receiver: friend, coworker, or family member. After sorting and organizing the gifts we determined that she never had to purchase another gift for her grandchildren again!. She didn't have as many for her friends and coworkers, but I made a deal with her to hold off from buying anyone a gift for at least one year. She said she would try not to.

Consider making an inventory list for one of the following:

- Files
- Wardrobes
- Book collections
- CD collections
- Packed boxes
- Antiques
- Groceries that are stored in kitchen (you can also use this list as a guideline for your next shopping trip!)
- Wine – a friend of mine (well, more than one) has an amazing wine cellar. Each wine

lover will have a different way of inventorying their wine. The most impressive one I saw was wine that had tags on it with a number. The number on the inventory list was attributed to that wine. On the list, he provided additional information about the wine.

- Food – this will save you time when you go to write up your grocery list. You can use your inventory not only as a guideline of what you have, but what you need. It should also have the brand names on the inventory. That way when it does need replacing you know whether it is *Betty Crocker*, or *Sara Lee*.
- Wood – some woodworkers like my husband have a TON of lumber. This is a great tool to use to keep track of what you have, especially if you are making a new wood project. You can also use the list as a guideline when thinking of what pieces to sell to other wood lovers.
- Art – a recent client of mine recently lost her father. She had to have her father's art shipped across country. When she received it, she sensed some of it was missing, but didn't have the inventory to check the contents in the box with.
- Packing boxes – so you know what is in each box and where it is. It may take a bit of time to get the inventory, but I guarantee it will save you time and money.

There's one final great reason to inventory. If something terrible should happen and some of your things are lost, the only way to get them properly replaced by the insurance company is to have a good inventory! For this reason, consider keeping a copy of your inventory lists out of the house, for example at the office.



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FIGHTING OFF THE TIME MANAGEMENT MONSTERS!

I have a friend who was incredibly organized until she opened her own business. She was the master of her schedule and life. When she opened her business all of this changed. She started with a paper planner and moved to an electronic organizer. She found herself running around like a chicken with its head cut off, working all hours of the day, with no time for herself, nor her family. Her life was crumbling before her. She decided to take charge and call me. She wanted to conquer her time management monsters! What we discovered was she needed a new system to manage her time and her business. We created the following things for her to take charge of her business and life.

1. Use a white board

She uses her whiteboard as the repository for her to-do list, but only for things she can accomplish while she's in her office. That way, any time she's in her office, she can easily see what she should be working on while she's there.

In her old system, she would enter things directly in to her PDA. While she still does this for errands and meetings, it's too much effort for all the workday things she needs to accomplish. It's much more natural for her to just jot it on the whiteboard when she thinks of it.

The key is to figure out your habits and work with them, not against them. Too many changes to your natural inclinations could be a disaster when determining a new system for yourself.

2. Try List Pro for your PDA

<http://tinyurl.com/a6ajl>

List Pro is an excellent way to manage lists and clients in a small business. For example, you can take the client's name and put all of their information in the list. *List Pro* is very similar to a filing system, only it is digital instead of on paper. That way she could take her client's information with her anywhere to keep her on track. Plus, she wasn't ruining her back anymore carrying around a heavy bag of folders!

Another client I have has really poor short term memory. She is also an avid list maker, so *List Pro*

was a great tool for her. Now instead of using multiple notebooks, sticky notes and scraps of paper, she has it all stored in one place.

3. Set boundaries

A critical part of getting organized was setting boundaries by creating an "office hours" schedule. Instead of being available 24/7, she decided that there were certain times she could be reached by phone, certain times that she would check email, and certain times she was unavailable. Caller ID allowed her to screen out business calls when her business day was over. This allowed her to feel in control of her schedule, while not cutting her business off from the world. I also helped her practice saying no to her more pushy clients. Just because she runs a small business doesn't mean she needs to put everyone else before herself.

4. Delegate

Hiring an assistant can make a revolutionary difference. Instead of her spending valuable time running simple errands, she had her assistant take care of it. This freed up more time for her to work with her clients and grow her business, which more than paid for the extra hours she had to pay her assistant. It may not be feasible for all of us, but one way or another it's important to ask for help when you need it. I always tell people who are watching their budgets to check out the universities for starving students, who can do great work at cheap prices!

5. Have a personal schedule

Your body works best when it has some idea of what's ahead. She decided to start keeping a regular bedtime and waking time. No more working late unless it was a real emergency. She found that she sleeps better, wakes up more easily, and needs less coffee in the mornings! Perhaps most amazing, she spends fewer hours in bed, because she's using her sleep-time more effectively.

