

Message from Marcie

If you asked most people what they want more of, they would probably say either more time or more money. If you have worked with a professional organizer, you know that you can save both time and money.

I can help most clients gain two hours a week. When you stop wasting time searching for things and you can limit the agonizing choices that you have to make, you find time to do the things you really want to do. In addition, when you prioritize the things that have the most meaning for you and eliminate those that have no value, you minimize wasted time.

Calculate your hourly salary and multiply it by the amount of time you could gain each week. How much would that be worth to you annually? A small investment of time with a professional organizer can set you up for success in numerous ways. Learning new skills and practicing them takes time before they become habits. Once you have the new habits; however, your life will change in profound ways.

Marcie's Maxims:

Get rid of empty boxes. They take up space, attract bugs and mice and they don't add any value to your life. If you're saving them in case you need to mail something, you can buy the appropriate sized box should you really need one.

It's Not About the Stuff

Clutter is created because people don't make decisions about things. Sometimes it seems easier not to make decisions than to experience what the clutter suggests.

Organizer Peter Walsh says "If you focus on the stuff, you will never get organized. You may get stuff into place but you will never get any long-term sustained change."

In other words, buying containers to store your things so that they are "organized" doesn't make your life better.

If you really want to change your relationship to your stuff, you need to look at why you're holding onto it.

People buy things that they think will change their lives. The promise of flatter stomachs, smoother skin, cleaner homes, keeps people

buying. When the product doesn't deliver, people feel often like failures.

You have spent money on things that don't add value to your life and now you can't part with them.

On the other hand, your clutter may represent love or comfort or abundance to you. You might think that if you get rid of something, you are losing a part of yourself or a precious memory of a loved one.

Things take up physical and psychological space. As long as you hang onto things that you really don't need, you will never be able to move forward. Once you free yourself from the feelings associated with your clutter, you will be able to let it go and enjoy life more fully.

The Authentic “No”

You can clutter your calendar with things you don't want to do if you are unable to say “No” to people. You might be afraid you will hurt someone's feelings by not accepting an invitation to participate in an activity or take on another project; however, you need to preserve your personal time and space.

Only you can decide the causes you wish to support and how much time you can give to others. When someone asks you to do something you don't want to, make sure you give an authentic “No,” not a “*We'll see*” or “*I'll think about it.*”

When you don't answer people directly, they hear what they want to; that often means you are going to be stuck doing something you really didn't want to do.

Here are some phrases you can use to avoid taking on responsibilities that you don't have time for:



“Thanks for asking, but I don't have time for that right now.”

“I appreciate your thinking of me, but I can't work it into my schedule right now.”

“I don't have time to give that my full attention right now.”

The important thing to remember is to maintain your conviction. If you really don't have the time or desire to do something, don't allow yourself to be talked into taking on another responsibility.

If you do want to be involved in the activity, but you don't have time right now, you can always say something like “I would be happy to help you with that, but I won't have any time until next week.” If the person accepts your offer, you both win: the other person gets the help he or she needs and you get to do the activity you enjoy during a time that works for you.

Feng Shui

Feng shui is an ancient Chinese theory of design and placement that literally means *wind* and *water*. You don't have to become a certified feng shui practitioner, however, to benefit from some of the basics.

One of the tenets of feng shui is that people should be able to move freely in their environments, just as wind and water move freely.

Clutter is confining and keeps you from fully utilizing your space. It also depletes your energy, making it more difficult to get things done.

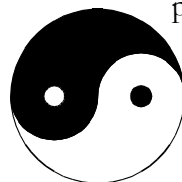
Feng shui principles help create surroundings that minimize negative energy and maximize

the flow of positive energy. Choose some of the ideas to create a more harmonious home or more productive work environment.

Arranging furniture properly generates positive energy. Too much furniture keeps you from moving around in a room and creates energy stagnation.

Too many decorations on shelves and walls create confusion, giving your eyes nowhere to rest.

Think about the life that you truly want to live and consider allowing parts of the feng shui philosophy to have an effect on your lifestyle.



Garage Sale Time

Whether you're trying to raise some money or make space in your house, you may be tempted to hold a garage sale this summer. I rarely recommend them to my clients because they are usually a lot of work for little reward; however, if you are determined to have one, here are some things to keep in mind:

People who shop garage sales are looking for bargains, so keep your prices in line with what thrift shops charge. It doesn't matter what you paid for an item, it is only worth what someone else wants to spend on it.

See if you can find someone to sell with you so you can have a "multi-family" garage sale. This will help you save on advertising expenses and allow for more people to work the day of the sale.

Advertise in the newspaper, on Craigslist and community bulletin boards. Send an email to people you know and ask them to forward it to anyone they know who might be interested in the things you have. Post your yard sale on Garage Sales Tracker, which even has an iPhone app, to draw more people in www.garagesalestracker.com. You can post on Facebook, too. If you have something unusual or desirable, make sure

you mention it in your ad. People often look for collectibles, furniture and toys.



When you put up signs in your neighborhood, make sure the date and address are big enough to read from a moving car; not everyone will know about your yard sale from an ad.

Put out everything you don't want, even if you're not sure if it will sell. You know what they say about one man's trash...

If you can't bear to part with something for the price offered, ask the person to leave contact information and call if the item remains unsold at the end of the day. You may realize by then that you're not going to get what you hoped.

If you still have a lot of things toward the end of the sale, slash prices. You're not going to get rich off your yard sale and you want to get rid of as much as you can.

Don't bring home anything that is left. Either have a charity pickup scheduled right after or drive the unsold merchandise to a thrift shop that day.

Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task

– William James

How's Your Memory?

What about your attention? There are a lot of video games that claim to improve your memory and concentration. While their claims haven't been proven, the games are a

fun way to escape for a few minutes. Check the website www.happyneuron.com, where you can play a few games for free or join and get access to more games.

Gift certificates

If you want to give a meaningful gift to a friend or family member, consider a gift certificate from ***Organized by Marcie***.

Instead of creating clutter or giving a gift that might not be “just right,” give the people you love the gift of organization.

Perfect for new parents, newlyweds, graduates, birthdays, anniversaries or any



occasion, you choose how much time you want to give, beginning with a three-hour minimum.

Call 301/219-3789 or email info@organizedbymarcie for more information about purchasing gift certificates.

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