

# ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!



WELCOME FALL BY GETTING ORGANIZED!



## IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

Closet survival techniques

The importance of individuality

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12 success tips to overseeing a moving company



### Leslie Live!

Personworks' Leslie Straka will be the special guest on Martha Norwalk's "Animal World" next Sunday. Listen to hear the secrets of how to make long-term pet care a breeze! If you're in Seattle, tune to 1150 AM between 9am and 12pm. If you're outside the seattle area, just go to <http://www.newschannel1150.com> and click "Listen Live".

## CLOSET SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES



Assign a job to each closet. For example, the closet closest to your bedroom should be a linen closet. The one inside your bedroom is your clothes closet, and doesn't have any linens in it. If you have a spouse, split the closet in half. If one person takes up more room than the other, this is a great incentive to downsize your closet contents! Keep in mind people generally only use 20% of what they own. This means that 80% of what you have you don't wear. When you have so many items that they're stacked layers deep and you can't see them, chance are that the lower levels will never get worn.

If you do not have enough closets to assign them for every need, you need to get creative. One way to free up your hall closet for your coats is to purchase under-the-bed Rubbermaid containers for your linens. Put the extra sheets into the Rubbermaid containers that correspond to each bed. This is also a great thing to do even if you have room for a linen closet, because you can turn your linen closet into toiletries storage. Just think of all the toilet paper, shampoo, and Kleenex you bought at Costco--wouldn't it be nice to store it somewhere convenient?

# THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUALITY

I watched the original 1975 version of *The Stepford Wives* the other evening and I got to thinking about being organized and individualism. The movie was about a woman who was creative, yet sloppy. For example, she didn't wipe off the counters right away, or put things away in their places. She let things go a bit, but not to the point of disaster. Meanwhile, the other women in town were perfect, well put together with spick and span houses. They focused on cleaning so much that that was all they could talk about. Of course, there was a bit more to it than that... but I don't want to spoil the movie for you!

While being organized is a very crucial and important thing to be, you don't have to be a clone of me, or an organizing machine! Being organized is not about having the perfect home for everything; it is about knowing where everything is at a given time, without searching for hours. It means being on top of things and in control, not being a droid with no fun in life. It is ok to create messes,

as long as you get them cleaned up before they cause stress. It doesn't mean you are disorganized if you have a stacked pile of books to be read. If you can't remember where the books are, or they are buried under piles of paper, this is a problem. Honor your individuality, like being a fun, creative person. If you like color then make your organizational system colorful. If you are into birds decorate your filing cabinet with birds. The point is, be yourself. Yes, there is change coming, but that doesn't mean you have to become rigid, just more self disciplined. As a friend once said to me; "Feel out your rhythm, and you will flow in the right direction."

Getting organized is a crucial process, find a system that works for you stay true to that system and the rest will follow.

## HANGING ONTO THINGS, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO BUY THEM AGAIN

I had a client that was raised in a family where both parents survived the depression growing up. It affected each parent differently; his dad was frugal and his mom was not. He got some of both traits, which had both positive and negative affects. On the plus side, being frugal made him appreciate small things. He got a real kick out of finding a piece of steak on sale, or seeing his kids wolf down every bite of a dinner he prepared. On the other hand, it ruined the joy of gift-giving for him--he felt guilty about receiving gifts, and hid them away in drawers. He felt nervous about having guests over and had a deep fear of running out of food.

Because it was stressful for my client to have anyone over, he began to hoard things as a protective barrier to keep people from coming in. One of the things he tended to hoard was food and office supplies. He was a small business owner and had copious quantities of office supplies, so many that it would be next to impossible for him to use them all in a life time. More importantly, he didn't have adequate space in his home to store it. The supplies were exploding from every nook and cranny. As we started to sort through his office supplies he told me, "If I get rid of this, I am going to have to buy this all over again, and I don't want to for two reasons: It takes up my time to go to the store, it seems wasteful to get rid of something I might use. How can you justify giving away perfectly good items when I will most likely use them someday? "

This is a tough question, and made me think for a long time. Ultimately, I decided (and convinced my client) that he would be better off without. Why?

1. Storage space has value. He needs to think of his as if they were "rented", and he's paying a huge amount of rent to keep all this stuff around. If he gets rid of it, he will stop paying rent for it, so he has the resources for things he really cares about--a bigger bed, an upstairs (and more convenient) washing machine, etc.
2. The clutter was affecting him so emotionally that he could not sleep at night. He stayed awake stressed out about it, until he finally fell asleep only to wake up exhausted again the next day.
3. He dreamed about somewhere with a view, but he couldn't afford such a place unless it was smaller. The space he was using for storage was getting in the way of his dreams.
4. Some of the items had us-by dates and were fast going bad. Some of them had gone bad already. It made no sense to keep a 10-year supply of inkjet cartridges when they only had a 2-year shelf life.

Ultimately, he decided to move from "as much as he could fit" to "as much as he needs in one year". This was enough that he wasn't constantly running to the store or worrying about running out, but not so much that it was taking over everything! And what about the underlying problem, the stress of having over guests? Well, I pointed out to him that with this defense out of the way, he was going to have to address that. Now that he's isolated this problem and cured the symptoms, he can address it directly with a trained professional that he trusts.

# 12 SUCCESS TIPS TO OVERSEEING A MOVING COMPANY

## When managing a move involving a moving company, take care to do the following:

- Write letters to the incoming and outgoing neighbors saying hello and goodbye--this reduces the chances of complaints about parking (from moving trucks), noises (from movers), etc.
- Find out if there are elevators or if you'll need to plan to go up and down stairs.
- Ensure that the estimators actually visit the new location so that they can plan and map the move more efficiently.
- If there is only one elevator be sure to have at least 4 radios, one for moving coordinator, one for the home owner, one for moving lead, and one for the regular movers. This way if there are any questions they can be answered immediately. I would also recommend asking for a quick lesson on radio protocol.
- Always have the movers pad the elevator, including the keypad, all floors, stairwells, and walls so that no damage is done.
- Do a run through of all items that are important to them and describe in detail any damage or lack thereof. Take pictures, or shoot a video of all your objects from all sides.
- Have a checklist of items to be moved and colored tape on items that are not to be moved so that there is no confusion
- Don't allow the movers to work overtime. It costs more and they will take shortcuts to hurry things up.
- Find out where your items will be held overnight if the move takes longer than one day, and make sure that there is adequate security.
- Read the estimator's estimate (and any other moving company paper work you're presented) carefully and slowly before you sign.
- Be sure to check your home owners insurances for adequate coverage before purchasing their insurance. Legally the moving company should insure at least 60 cents to the pound per box, per item, at no charge--make sure this is the case.
- Tell the estimator that the movers must carry only one box at a time. They will try to talk you out of it, since they want to get done faster. This is a great way to get your things broken! Stand firm.



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