

MONTAGE
INSURANCE SOLUTIONS

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Wellness and Safety News

Monthly Newsletter for the Employee

LET THE EXPERTS HELP YOU DECLUTTER FOR THE NEW YEAR

5 Ways to Organize Your Life

Source: <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1812185,00.html>

The Biggest Challenge Is Simply Getting Started

Organizing experts Julie Morgenstern and Peter Walsh each have their own approaches to decluttering, but they agree that the key to a successful purge is defining what your ideal life should look like and then deciding which of your belongings still fits in the picture. Both are also trying to draw attention to different kinds of clutter: physical, emotional, even temporal clutter. Some stuff keeps you stuck in the past and I-might-need-it-someday clutter keeps you from focusing on the present. Here are a few of their tips figuring out what to keep and what to toss:



1. Define your vision

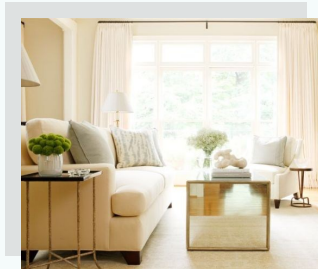
In her new book *When Organizing Isn't Enough, SHED your Stuff, Change Your Life*, Morgenstern advises people looking to declutter to come up with a theme. "No one lets go without reaching for something else," she says. "You need to come up with a theme for the next phase of your life. Giving a name to what you want to do or feel or express will help dislodge you from your current state of stagnancy." Some common themes are creating a nurturing home, striving for career excellence, and focusing on self-expression and enrichment. Walsh agrees. "If you focus on the stuff, you will never ever get organized," says Walsh, author of the bestselling *It's All Too Much: An Easy Plan for Living a Richer Life with Less Stuff*. "The starting point has to be, 'What is the vision you have for the life you want?'" he says. "Then you're in a position to ask, 'What do I need for this space?'"

2. Define the clutter

Once you have your vision or theme, separating the treasures from trash should be a little easier. Ask yourself: does this item help me get there? What doesn't fit gets purged. Morgenstern emphasizes that clutter doesn't have to be messy. "A perfectly organized closet or drawer is clutter if it is filled with clothes that you haven't worn for years," she says. And clutter doesn't have to be made of stuff. "It can be any obsolete object, space, commitment or behavior that weighs you down or distracts you or saps your energy," she says. "It can be bad habits that take up too much time."

3. Start small

Purging can be very emotional. "It's a big mistake to dismiss clutter as junk," says Morgenstern. "These piles are things that were once important to you, to who you once were or who you wanted to be." To help ease you into the process, she suggests starting in the room you are least attached to. If books are your great love—and clutter weakness—don't start your purging project by the bookcases. Move to a less emotional area, like the kitchen or hall closet. Once you are successful in those parts of the house, it may be easier to tackle the rest. "And be ready for the panic," she warns. Every once in a while you will be overcome with thoughts of "what if I really need that later?" If that happens, just take a deep breath, remember your goal and keep going.



4. Let your good riddance help others

It might not be as difficult to say goodbye to your belongings if you're giving them to organizations that can really use them. For instance, those books that are gathering dust in your home could be page-turners at a library, school or senior-citizen center. And those old clothes that you'll probably never wear again; take them to a charity shop or shelter.

5. Examine all aspects of your life for clutter

Morgenstern points out that poor uses of time, outdated commitments and bad habits can all be defined as clutter and are worthy of purging. Walsh makes the case for a strong mind-home-body connection in his latest bestseller, *Does This Clutter Make My Butt Look Fat?* "If you think about it, the reasons why a lot of people buy stuff are exactly the same reasons why a lot of people run out and eat inappropriate food—to make themselves feel better," he says. "The parallels are amazing. Our homes, heads and hips are connected." At the end of the day, experts agree that there are many different types of clutter, and they all rob us of peace and harmony.

THE ORGANIZED WORKSPACE

Source: <http://www.searchamelia.com/a-clutter-free-space-is-a-happier-place>



Assuming you work 48 weeks in a year and spend just 5 minutes of each hour of an eight-hour workday looking for things, you will waste 160 hours per year! Here are some tips to help save time and frustration:

Pens, if they do not work, throw them away. If you do not like them, donate them to someone that might like them. Some items can be re-purposed. For instance, coffee mugs can become holders for some of the many pens, pencils, and highlighters.

Only the things you use on a daily basis, such as the stapler, paperclips, and pens, should be on top and within easy reach. The things you use weekly should be kept nearby in easily accessible file cabinets or bins. Instead of stacking files on top of your desk, you should place them in an inclined desktop sorter so they stand upright and are easy to see.

You should deal with mail as soon as it arrives and discard or shred the junk mail immediately. Once a month, you should sort through your papers and magazines and discard anything you do not need.

Energy Boost *Warm-Up*

Before working out, you should start with a gradual warm-up for about 5-10 minutes. Stretch your muscles first, and then gradually increase your level of activity.

For example, begin walking slowly and then pick up the pace.



Facts About Thyroids

As many as 27 million Americans may be affected by thyroid disorders, although more than half remain undiagnosed. Thyroid cancer is one of the fastest growing cancers in America and one of the most curable. This important gland located in the neck, is essential. The hormones it produces deliver oxygen and energy to every cell in the body.

January is Thyroid Awareness Month

Hyperthyroidism develops when the body is exposed to excessive amounts of thyroid hormone. This disorder occurs in almost 1% of all Americans and affects women 5-10 times more than men. In the mildest form, it may not cause recognizable symptoms.

Hypothyroidism or underactive thyroid, occurs when the thyroid gland produces less than the normal amount of thyroid hormone. The result is the "slowing down" of many bodily functions. Of nearly 25 million people suffering from a thyroid condition, most have hypothyroidism.



Hashimoto's thyroiditis (also called autoimmune or chronic lymphocytic thyroiditis) is the most common thyroid disease in the United States. It is an inherited condition that affects approximately 14 million Americans and about 7 times more common in women than in men.

Early Detection

There is a great way to increase early detection of the thyroid nodules, by performing a simple Thyroid Neck Check developed by the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE).

Thyroid Neck Check

All you need is a glass of water and a handheld mirror.

1. Hold the mirror in your hand, focusing on the lower front area of your neck, above the collarbones, and below the voice box (larynx). Your thyroid gland is located in this area of your neck.
2. While focusing on this area in the mirror, tip your head back.
3. Take a drink of water and swallow.
4. As you swallow, look at your neck. Check for any bulges or protrusions in this area when you swallow. Reminder: Don't confuse the Adam's apple with the thyroid gland. The thyroid gland is located further down on your neck, closer to the collarbone. You may want to repeat this process several times.
5. If you do see any bulges or protrusions in this area, see your physician. You may have an enlarged thyroid gland or a thyroid nodule and should be checked to determine whether cancer is present or if treatment for thyroid disease is needed.



To find out more about symptoms and treatments visit:
<http://www.aace.com>
<http://www.empoweryourhealth.org/THYROID>