Katy Home Organizer's

SUMMER SPRINT

Guest • Dining • Entry • Living

Welcome to Organizing @ Home eCourse.

I am so excited you are here!
It is truly my honor to help you get your home organized. After working with hundreds of people in their homes, I know that getting overwhelmed stops all progress. I am proud to bring you a simple solution to your clutter presented in a format designed to keep momentum, so you can keep making progress.

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organizing@home

the basics

organizing@home | the basics

In this section, I will cover the basics of the eCourse:
– How to get the most out of it
– What to expect along the way
– What you can expect from me
– How Long WIll it Take
– Video Chat information

how to get the most out of it?

1. Be Ready to Make Decisions
Getting your home ready organized will require making decisions and using a systematic approach makes doing so a lot easier. Our goal is to get your home organized without making more work for yourself later. Cramming things into closets and under beds will not be part of this program, so get ready to make decisions!

2. Take Before Photos
You might shudder at the thought, but you will thank me when you have a before and after as proof of the work you accomplished – even if it is just to yourself. Who knows, you might even send it to a friend, sister or your mother.
It's OK to brag a little – you will have earned it!

3. Schedule Time to Do the Work
You made the decision to get organized, and that will require your time, and focused time at that. Be sure to set aside a minimum of 2 hours for each segment of the course. The actual time spent will depend on your home and situation, but NOTHING will get done if you do not plan for it. Put it on your calendar!

I can't emphasize these 3 things enough. Make it a priority and make time for it!

what to expect along the way

Set realistic expectations

Depending on how much time you have and your specific circumstances, you may or may not get your home perfectly organized in the estimated time, so it's important to set realistic expectations.
This course will focus on the main spaces most people want organized:
– the entry / hallway
– living room / den
– kitchen
– master closet
Additionally, you'll get information on what organizing supplies are helpful in all these areas, when and how to use them, and where to find them. I offer an estimate on how long it might take you to get the space organized so you can plan accordingly. I also include simple steps to tame your paper dragon in a short ebook on paper management.

You may be able to complete the tasks in the time allotted or you might find it didn't make a dent. Each person comes with a unique set of circumstances. What's important is to make a commitment to yourself to do it and back that up with actions. Scheduling your work times will support this commitment.

what you can expect from me

Remember I said to be ready to make decisions? This is where I help you the most.
I will ask a lot of questions – I call them Reflective Questions – to help you make decisions that are right for you. Taking the time to answer the questions are the key to making real progress. You will be asked to journal as a way to see clearly what the problems are and how best to solve them.

Many of the questions are room specific but you will start to recognize a certain line of questioning and (hopefully) be able to elaborate the questions as needed, or apply them into other areas of the home.

Some of my tips and advice are general enough to apply to various situations because I wanted to keep it simple. Follow my tips and advice as much as you can and you *will* have a more organized home!

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how long will it take?

Plan to spend a *minimum of 2 hours* each day, and as much as 4 hours for some of the bigger areas. Longer if you have a larger space and/or more stuff. Each area has a "How long will it take?" section to give you a point of reference for how long it might take to complete the space but in the end it will totally depend on:
– how much stuff you have
– how much time you have available to organize
– physical stamina, decisiveness, and ability to stay on task
– any "undoing" that takes place in between work sessions
Hey, this is the reality of it! It's better to know this and prepare for it than to go in blind and get overwhelmed.

your assignment

– Find a notebook for journaling.
– Join the private Facebook Group
– Download the ZOOM app
– Put the ZOOM video chat times in your calendar

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711. Summer Sprint ends July 27th.

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the process

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today's focus:

– Before you begin each day
– The systematic approach
– After we Sort & Purge, then what?
– Homework

Throughout the eCourse you will notice a repeating pattern – a systematic approach – that works no matter what area you are working in. Soon you will begin to anticipate the next step in the process.

before you begin working

1) Eat something – you will need to sustain your energy for several hours.
2) Put on your favorite music.
3) Have trash bags and a box or two (or five depending on the space).

Something you will never regret doing before starting any job is to ask your higher power for help and guidance. Just that little request to the Universe* to assist makes a big difference in how quickly solutions arise. I urge you to try it, and then trust it to be so. The Universe always has your back, you just have to invite it in.

the systematic approach

The systematic approach can be broken into 4 parts:
1) Assess & Reflect,
2) Sort & Purge,
3) Organize, and
4) Maintenance

If you get lost in the process, think about what stage you are on. Have you finished sorting, purging and categorizing? Then you probably aren't quite ready to organize. Have you thought through the reflective questions? Then you might not be finished purging. Has it been a few weeks since you organized? You might be ready for some maintenance.

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assess & reflect

No matter what space you are dealing with you are going to start with an Assessment. Assessment is an analytical view of what is going on in the space while remaining objective – be sure to stick to the facts!

Often, clients will just gloss over everything because it can be too visually overwhelming. It's important to step back and look at everything objectively.
– See things for the objects they are, not for what emotions they cause you.
– Be careful to be analytical and not critical. There is no room for judgment in this process. There isn't time for that. If you want to make meaningful progress, remain as detached as possible from whatever negative emotions you may be experiencing. Stay positive and remain objective to stay on task.

sort & purge

You're going to decide the fate of every item in each space. When people ask us where to start, we usually say:
– search for all the trash (and thus revealing all the non-trash)
– remove all the items that do not belong in the room or area (purge)

It's not important where you start, just that you start. Pick a place an go!
Anything that belongs in that room or area can be left in place (or put in a pile/box/table). Focus on things that are leaving and get it out of your way so that all that remains is what you actually want there.

As you make decisions, you will put items into basically two categories: **Keep** and **Go Away**.

As you go through each item to determine its fate, your **Keep** categories will be wide and varied. Some items will get added to similar piles of that item, other things will be the start of a new category altogether. It's common for me to start using one sized box to group items and then have to upgrade because I ran out of room, or vice-versa.

KEEP

The **Keep** category breaks down into these two sub-categories:

Keep / IN – When working with clients, I suggest limiting what stays in the a room or space to things that actually BELONG in there. Assign each space a job and, as much as possible, stick with it. That means nothing unrelated to that space. The exception would be if there is nowhere else for it to be stored and you must keep it there.
The Keep | IN category means you will KEEP it, and it lives in the room or space you're working in.

Keep / OUT – These are things that you must keep, but do not align with the purpose of the room or space. You do not need to know exactly where they will go right now, just that they will not live in the space you are working in. For today, simply put them in a box labeled **Keep / OUT** and continue on with the task at hand.

GO AWAY

Keep / IN =	this room
Keep / OUT =	other room
Go AWAY =	sell /donate /give
Go TRASH =	trash /recycle

GO / AWAY – This category are items that you no longer want but have life left in them and someone else can use them.

Sell: You may decide to sell them at a garage sale, online or at a consignment shop. When selling online, if it takes more than 2 or 3 minutes for you to post in an online garage sale site, save them all until the end of your scheduled work session. You don't want to lose momentum by continually fiddling with your phone.

Donate: When it comes to donations, my rule of thumb is, if it isn't something that you think people would pay money for in a store, then it's probably better off either in a garage sale or in the trash. It must be in sellable condition, or the donation center will throw it out. It can't be broken or be missing parts.

[**Garage Sale**: Garage sale items can be things that still have a little life left, but may not necessarily make the cut at a donation center. Many of my clients don't want to bother with a garage sale, and I understand, it can be a lot of work but it can totally pay off. It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway, if you are going to have a garage sale, hang onto all the items that were worthy of donating or giving away! Donate and give away after the garage sale.]

Give: You have a specific person in mind already to give it to. In these instances, I suggest you snap a quick photo with your phone and text it to that person on the spot. Just say, *"Hey there! I am organizing my room and getting rid of things I no longer need. Are you interested in this ____?"* It's important you let them know you are working on an organizing project. Stating this will give them a greater sense of urgency in responding, and know it's not time to chit chat (hopefully). They may not reply on the spot, but the underlying expectation would be that you aren't hanging on to it since you are cleaning out the room. Regardless of who it is going to, be sure to give them a deadline for pick up.

GO / TRASH – These are items that can no longer be used or would not sell even at a garage sale. Many items can and should be recycled.

tips for a productive work session

– Schedule time to do the work and stick with it (put it on your calendar)
– Set a timer to go off every 15 -20 minutes to A)mark the passing of time and B)helps to keep you accountable for your time. If you got stuck reminscing the alarm will pull you out of it and remind you to get back on course.
– Stay in the room you are working on until the everything has been sorted and purged OR until the timer goes off. Your time will be whittled away by "putting this away real quick". Stay put and use the box system.
– For best results, set aside a minimum of 2 hours at a time.
– Make quick decisions

then what?

The process of organizing isn't cut and dry, the steps are fluid and overlap, so know that your exact flow might be a little different than what I say here, but it's normal. You might wait until you are completely done organizing the entire room before delivering the **Keep** /**Away** items, in fact I recommend it! However there is no *perfect* way.

When you are finished sorting and purging, it is sometimes necessary to deliver any **Keep**/**Away** items simply because the space it is occupying. When you deliver the items to their destination, don't fall into the trap of having to put them away. If they are easy to put away do it, but if not simply set the items in there and deal with them later. It's important not to get side tracked on another project, but to finish the project you are on. Conserve your energy and stay focused.

then organize!

It's true the process of "organizing" is fluid and a lot of times sorting and purging evolves into organizing without even realizing it. If you haven't started organizing, then it's time to get going. Organizing and what supplies are useful will be covered later.

When you are finished completely, or for the day and you can get donations out of the house right away, do it. Drop it by your favorite charity on your way to the grocery store. If it's for a friend, make a delivery or make plans to meet for coffee and bring it them. Follow through is important here and there's no time like the present. Your project will feel "complete" when this task is completed.

your assignment

Nearly each lesson I will assign "homework". Complete any included worksheets or writing assignments as suggested. Clearing your mind by journaling helps bring focus and clarity to the situation and the worksheets are to help keep you on task.

Action Steps:
– Gather boxes, trash bags and other receptacles to prepare for your first work session so you are prepared and less likely to leave the room

Organizing is more than just moving stuff around to make it look neat,
it's about making decisions and taking action!

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supplies

organizing@home | organizing supplies

today's focus:

– Resourcefulness
– Repurposing
– In-Store Purchases
– Pinspiration

Several of us at Katy Home Organizer have been or still are stay-at-home moms. For many SAHMs that means one income and limits on spending but to get organized you need organizing supplies, they are essential! So when I was a young SAHM I learned to make use of what was around me, and I shopped garage sales too.

resourcefulness

With the multitude of organizing supplies available in stores and online, it's easy for the task to quickly become overwhelming and expensive. Thinking as a professional Organizer reduces the possibility of overbuying and increases your resourcefulness. A simple shift in the way you look at the everyday objects in your home can turn unused items into helpful tools.

Empty Boxes

Why do Organizers love boxes? Because when organizing, *containing* items is important.

When I look at a space to organize, I think "how can I compartmentalize and/or contain these items?" One of the first things I notice is whether there is adequate use of boxes, bins, or drawer dividers.

What kinds of empty box makes for good organizing supplies? Here are some everyday boxes found in all households to consider:

- Tissue boxes: Cut the top off a long box to use in a dresser to hold folded socks or scarves, use square ones as a little trash can on a desk or vanity, and they're also handy in or on a desk to collect receipts.
- Cereal boxes: Cut at an angle like a magazine holder to store notepads, folders, etc., in an office, or cut to be a shallow tray to hold pens, pencils, scissors, etc.
- Snack boxes: When cut down they work well a in desk drawer.
- Nearly any box: Checkbook boxes, cell phone boxes, jewelry gift boxes, business card boxes, shoe boxes in

various sizes meet all kinds of needs. Just imagine the box with all the ends sealed up, look at it from all angles, and think about how it will fit into different spaces or hold different items.

re-purposing

What else do you have around the house that is under-utilized? Plastic shoe-sized boxes are my favorite go-to item. Do you have any that are just holding a random assortment of non-essential items? Could the contents be purged and the box re-purposed?

Baskets

Baskets aren't just for decorations, they can be functional as well. Though they aren't the best solution for all situations, view them as containers to hold a particular type of item or category of items.

This one holds the dog collar, leash, and pet meds. When it's time to walk the dog, this client has no trouble remembering remember the leash is in the basket.

Bookshelves

Most people only think to use these for books, but they are highly versatile. I have used them to hold towels and washcloths when no linen closet was available, and in closets to hold shoes, purses, or clothing.

Do you have any under-utilized bookshelves in your home that can be re-purposed?

store purchases

Where an Organizer shops depends on the specific supplies needed for a project. At Katy Home Organizer, I have my trusted products I turn to again and again, which most often are found at the Container Store or Target.

I suggest to first use whatever you have on hand, but if you must buy, choose clear storage whenever possible so that the contents are clearly visible. It's important to see what you have.

Here is where you can find the best prices for certain go-to items:

Clear is Better!

As an organizer I know clear is better. If you are one of those "out of sight – out of mind" kind of people, clear is preferred. But clear doesn't have to be ugly. Clear can be calming. It may not be cute and that's OK. Sometimes cute can be a distraction, it can obscure, and it can be inefficient.

my favorites

This next section are my tried and true containers that I use over and over and over and over. Most can be found locally, either at the Container Store or Target and for these containers only, I'm including dimensions to help you plan.

For all of the containers I share my opinion about them, what I like and don't like to help you make an educated choice or re-think about things you might already own. No dimensions are included because there are so many similar styles to choose from.

The first items are from the Container Store. *I love* ❤ the Container Store and for the record I do not make ANY money by endorsing the Container Store! I just really trust and believe this product. Most people think the Container Store has expensive products, but these boxes are competitively priced and are of superior quality.

the Our Clear Storage Boxes™

What I like about them:
- They have the most vertical sides I've found. These are the most rectangular and sturdiest small to mid-sized clear containers you will find, and I've looked! Cheap clear boxes at the dollar store are fine if you've got them, but once you try these, you'll never go back. The vertical sides and minimal lip use space efficiently.
- They are super clear! SO easy to see through.
- Several sized boxes available that seem to be just the right size again and again.

XS - Accessory Box™ 6 ½ x 7½ x 3 5/8
S - Our Shoe Box™ 7 ½ x 13 x 4 ¼
M - Mens' Shoe Box™ 10 1/8 x 14 ¾ x 5 5/8
TALL - Our Tall Shoe Box™ 7 ½ x 13 x 8 ¼
L - Sweater Box™ 13 1/8 x 15 5/8 x 6 ¾
XL - Deep Sweater Box™ 13 1/8 x 15 5/8 x 13 ¼

What I don't like:
- Nothing, they are perfect for nearly everything!

There are a few Dollar Store finds I have used, but they are flimsy, and because the labels are hard to remove it's hard to see through the plastic, plus they are not always available. HOWEVER, there are times when their functionality wins me over! Like when I really need it to fit in a standard size upper cabinet.

Sterilite Purple Latch

My next favorite containers are made by Sterilite, and I buy them at my local Target. If you don't have a Target around, you can order them online.

What I like about them:
• Nice vertical sides and angular corners with little wasted space around the latches
• sturdy clear latching lids stay on
• good for indoor or garage storage

What I don't like:
• Nothing, they are perfect for 98% of household needs

Organizers Note:
When deciding between the Sterilite 27qt and the Container Store XL box, I prefer the XL box.
Why?
The XL box is much clearer, I like the shape better and it's not as bulky. However, when contents are heavier, I need a sturdier box, or require a lid that locks down, I'll use the 27qt.

Honorable Mention:
The Hefty Storage Bin is an honorable mention. Available at Target and Lowes, I love the latching lids. Because I sometimes have a hard time finding the Sterilite 27qt. purple latch, and I LOVE that size, I will buy the Hefty 32qt gray latch.

27qt = 12.75 " H x 11.12 " W x 17.0 " L
66qt= 13 1/4 " H x 16 3/8 " W x 23 5/8" L
32qt= 6 1/2" H x 16 3/8" W x 23 5/8" L
Hefty =14 1/2 " H x 16 7/8 " W x 12.0 " L

27qt

66qt

32qt

Hefty Storage Bin

32qt

bookshelves

When extra storage was needed I've added simple bookshelves in many client closets, and I have a few from IKEA in my own closets. It always makes me chuckle when I suggest a bookshelf to someone as a solution and they light up like it's the most brilliant idea ever. Many of the best ideas are the simplest.

Here are a few different shelving units from Target and IKEA that I have bought for a variety of jobs.

TARGET website photos shown

TARGET Room Essentials Brand Tall & Short Bookcases

What I like:
- Cheap, easy to put together, and readily available at any Target.
- Shelves are adjustable.

What I don't like:
- It's cheap, but what do you expect for a $20-$30 price point? Although totally functional for an adult, I would not put this in a kids space. It's just not as sturdy as I'd like for use in a kids space.
- I generally only nestle these in closets because I feel they less likely to tip over when tucked into a tight space. These are not the strongest, but they are an affordable solution if function is your only concern.

TARGET 6 or 8 cube storage

What I like:
- Again, easily available at any Target, as are the Closetmaid Brand found at Lowes and Home Depot.
- Low price point ($35-$50).

What I don't like:
- Finding storage bins that fit that are clear is a challenge. If clients already have them, I will utilize the collapsible canvas bins sold along side the cube storage. Occasionally I can find a clear box at Target that works, but it's hit and miss. When I find a consistent solution, I will add it to this page.

IKEA website photos shown

IKEA KALLAX bookcase

What I like:
• 15" cube storage space
• The cubes are the perfect size for the Container Stores' Our Clear Storage Sweater Box and Deep Sweater Box!
• Position horizontally or vertically
• Sturdy
• Optional drawers or cabinet fronts available.

What I don't like:
• Nothing, I love them!

IKEA Billy Bookcase Short and Tall

What I Like:
• Easy to put together
• Sturdy – IKEA is pretty reliable if you put it together correctly. Everything I've ever bought has lasted many year and through several moves.
• The shelves in a Billy are 11" deep, 1.6" deeper than the Target bookshelf.
• Shelves are adjustable.

What I don't like:
• Nothing! It is a predictable and reliable purchase. If only IKEA wasn't a mad house to shop in!*

IKEA website photos shown

pinspiration

Pinterest makes it easy to find ideas for organizing every nook and cranny in your house. In fact, there's so much creativity and inspiration on Pinterest, I set a timer so I don't get lost for hours! Check out solutions for the areas of your home you plan to organize, and pick and choose what you like to fit your personal style and budget constraints.Did you know? I have a Pinterest page full of creative organizing solutions? If you haven't already seen it please take a look. But set your timer or you might get lost for a few hours!

Katy Home Organizer

Closets
56 Pins

Bathrooms
39 Pins

Kitchen
73 Pins

What do you like?

I'd love to see what tickles your fancy! Please share your discoveries in our Facebook Group. Having trouble linking a pin to the group page? Click the photo for directions on how to post it from a computer.

Follow this quick guide to post your favorite pin in our Facebook Group.

your assignment

Go on a hunt throughout your home and use the checklist to track what you have that might be repurposed. Look at things with a new perspective.

– Use the following Checklist to help keep track what you have on hand and what you think you might need.
– Use this worksheet to create your Action Plan.

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711. Summer Sprint ends July 27th.

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worksheets

organizing@home | action plan worksheet

Area: _____

What are my top 3 goals today:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #1.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #2.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What are the steps to accomplishing GOAL #3.

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

What might get in my way today and what actions can I take to avoid them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is my big reason WHY? Why am I doing this? What is a big payoff I will experience?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How can I celebrate when I am finished?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Where can I take my donations? _____

Now, go do it! 😉

organizing@home | supply checklist

DIY items on hand (how many)

_____ empty cell phone box _____ empty shoe boxes _____ rectangular or square baskets _____tissue box

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

Re-purposed items (how many / what kind)

_____ clear containers _____

_____ bookshelf _____

_____ storage bins _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

What do you think you need to buy? (how many / what kind/size)

_____clear containers _____

_____ bookshelf _____

_____ storage bins _____

_____

_____

_____

Kitchen Organizing Supplies

_____Clear containers _____

_____ cabinet shelves _____

_____ lid rack(s) _____

_____ multi-level organizer(s) _____

_____ lazy susan(s) _____

_____ 4 sort divider _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

_____ other _____

entry worksheet

Assess

What do you see in this space? What works? What doesn't work and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Reflective Questions

Is there anything that simply doesn't belong in the entry?

_____

_____

Is there a designated place for it? Why doesn't it get brought to its actual home?

_____

_____

If an item never seems to make it to its actual home, can a place be created for it in the entry?

_____

_____

Do you have adequate shoe storage / are there too many shoes? Is it time for a purge?

_____

_____

Are you keeping things you no longer need?

_____

_____

Thinking Ahead What is needed to make this space function better? Think about how to support your routine that exists rather than try to change the habits. What furniture, bins, shelving, hooks would make this work?

_____

_____

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dining room worksheet

Assess

What do you see in this space? What works? What doesn't and why?

_____

_____

_____

Reflective Questions

Is there anything that 1) belongs in another room 2) can go away permanently 3) needs a better system of organization. _____

_____

If there is laundry piled on the couch (something fairly common), what's happening in the laundry room? Does the laundry room need a makeover? Or a different laundry system? _____

_____

If things made it past the entry and then landed in the living room, what kinds of things are they? Why do they end up here? _____

_____

Are there unfinished projects in this space? How many? Does someone have a habit of starting but not finishing projects? _____

_____

If there are blankets to use while watching TV, how are they stored? Is there an alternate place/way to store them? _____

_____

If you have toys or video games, do you have a place to store them when it's time to clean up? Is that currently working? If not, why not? _____

_____

If magazines are your thing, how many subscriptions do you have? If you are saving them because you haven't had time to read them yet, is it possible you have too many subscriptions and can you cancel some? _____

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living room worksheet

Assess

What do you see in this space? What works? What doesn't and why?

_____

_____

_____

Reflective Questions

Is there anything that 1) belongs in another room 2) can go away permanently 3) needs a better system of organization. _____

_____

If there is laundry piled on the couch (something fairly common), what's happening in the laundry room? Does the laundry room need a makeover? Or a different laundry system? _____

_____

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guest room

organizing@home | the guest room

(Otherwise known as *the storage room)*

today's focus:

– Assess
– Sort, Purge & Organize
– How Long Will It Take?
– Your Assignment

Are your in-laws, siblings or parents coming for a stay? If it's been a while since you popped your head into the guest room, today is the day. We want our guests to feel welcomed, comfortable, and loved when they stay with us, which means all clutter previously banished to the guest room will need to go for it to truly be a place of rest!

The plan is to create a comfortable and inviting room for your guests by thoughtfully and intentionally removing the clutter – and addressing it along the way.

Tips for Success

Before you begin working, set the intention to be productive and truly *believe* you can do it. Spend a few extra moments reflecting on things for which you are grateful. If you believe in a higher power, take a moment to ask for help and guidance as you work. Once you're ready to get started, put on your favorite music to lighten the mood; choose something that really makes you feel love and joy so that while you work in this room positive energy is brought into the space. (It may sound corny, but go with it!) Each of these things on their own are wonderful, but by doing all of these you supercharge yourself for success, in addition to making the process much easier and even fun!

assess

Many items relegated to the guest room are postponed decisions. Today you will decisively make those decisions. Items that wind up in the guest room are often things used infrequently.
Here are some possibilities of what may be hiding in your guest room, and some things to think about:

- Items to get rid of but for some reason you're still holding onto them.
  - When was the last time you used it or wanted to use it?
  - Can it be returned to the store? Or it's owner?
- Items no longer needed or use (but were expensive).
  - Can it be sold on Craigslist, Facebook, OfferUp, NextDoor, Vinted, Tradesy, or other resale site?
  - Is it worth the mental energy to continually shuffle these items around?

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- Unused Home décor
    - If you are hanging onto items that you "might use one day" or really like but never found a good place for, think about whether you will ever really use it. If the answer is yes, hang onto it. If not, let it go.

While the guest room is a good place for home decor. Consider storing it in the closet on the upper shelf or back corner of the closet. An out of the way area that a guest might not use.

In your assessment:

Observe how much stuff there is that isn't contained. Focus on how much of it will go into a container, ignoring what will be tossed and ask yourself these questions:
– Will there be enough storage space?
– Will you need to purchase additional shelving?
If yes, consider how deep will they need to be. Container size may play a role in choosing a shelf depth.
– Will you just stack the containers?

Be on the lookout for "empty space". Space that is underutilized is your ticket to an organized room.

Where to begin? Trash is not typically an issue in a guest room, but if it is start there. Continue working in order from the items that are easiest to make decisions on to the most difficult. If you get stuck move on to something you can make a decision on as to continually make forward progress.

sort, purge & organize it

As you sort and reflect on every item you may need to create boxes for GO AWAY, and KEEP.

If you plan to keep the room clean and free of clutter you will need to create a "home" for everything. Some things may already have a home somewhere else in the house, other things will need to be assigned a home.

The closet and under the bed are your best (and most common) options for storage. If you already have items in your closet, you will want it organized in a way that makes more space.

Here are some tips to help make that happen:

- Framed art can stack tightly - largest to smallest - in the back of the closet, or on a shelf if they are small enough. When possible, corral artwork in a container making it easier to move as a group when necessary.
- If things fit into containers, group by like kind, and secure lids so containers can stack.
- For items that are unable to fit into containers, place them on top of the sealed containers, or on the upper shelf.

- Keep bulky and heavy items on the floor. It's a bad idea to place them up high.
- Tall and slender items like lamps or vases are safer on a shelf than on the floor.

Cardboard boxes are known to attract bugs, and are also more susceptible to water damage. Take this opportunity, as you sort through old cardboard boxes, to replace them with sturdy, longer-lasting plastic containers.

Stick With It! Be sure to **not leave the room** until you are finished making *decisions*! You might be there a while since this room might be a challenge. If you don't have time to completely finish, continue working until you have completed a specific area, that way when you return to organizing it you will easily be able to identify where to start.

case study

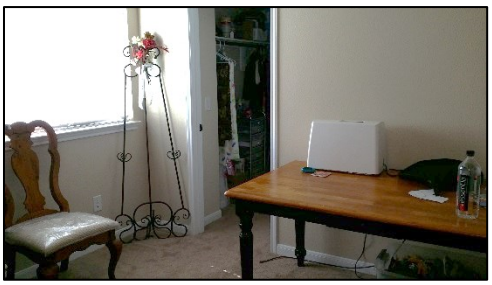
This guest room also served as a craft room. It had gotten out of control and my client wanted to return it to normal so it could be used for guests. As with any project, our first task was to sort, purge, and group like items.

Regardless of what room it is, the process is the same. You must sort, purge, and group!

She already had a dresser but it wasn't being utilized, so we decided to put it to work holding crafting supplies. It could have easily held office supplies, linens, or a multitude of items that end up in a guest room. She also bought a multi-drawer tower for other art supplies.

If your guest room serves double duty as an office or craft room, I highly recommend purchasing the right organizing supplies for that purpose. We used a dresser, plus the multi-drawer tower she purchased.

If you have a lot of small items, like in a craft room or home office supplies, be sure to purchase organizers to store them in. It's important to compartmentalize what you can, from small boxes to storage shelving!



For further information on organizing the office or craft room, please check out the specific ecourses at https://katyhomeorganizer.com/organizing-ecourses/.

Keep your end goal in mind

What's you WHY? Maybe it's a welcoming room for your guest to stay in or a quiet place to read. When we are faced with a task that isn't our favorite, it can be easy to procrastinate. I suggest to spend a few minutes reminding yourself why you are doing this: for people you love and care for. Maybe it's for *you*. Whatever the reason make that your focus. Keep the end result and you will not only make it a positive experience, you will infuse the room with positivity.

how long will it take?

Guest rooms are a mixed bag. Four hours is the magic number when we are organizing clients' homes, but that includes the ability to stay totally focused and on task at all times. If you take the time to do an honest assessment, then plan your shopping trip, the organizing process will go faster because you won't be interrupted to purchase supplies. Remember, you can always return what you don't use. AND YOU SHOULD return what you don't use UNLESS you plan to do more organizing. Otherwise those extra supplies become clutter.

If your plan is just to get everything to fit into the guest room closet without any purging, it will take less time, but at least take the time to sort and group like items together to make better use of the space. By sorting and grouping, tight spaces can accommodate much more than you think.

If your room is full and the closet is full, chances are it will take longer than 4 hours to sort and purge.
My case study room took 8 hours to complete with 2 people working diligently.

This guest room and closet took about 6 hours to complete. Although it wasn't a very large space, there was a lot going on. By taking the time to make decisions about what to purge , the client freed up much needed space in the closet. When we were finished, the closet was organized and functioning, but there were many items to distribute to her adult children, family and friends. She immediately sent texts to coordinate pickups and deliveries to expedite getting everything out the door.

your assignment

– Completing your action plan worksheet
– Assess, then purchase supplies
– If you have a good friend who will NOT DISTRACT YOU, ask for help to speed it along.

organizing@home

dining room

organizing@home | the dining room

Have you been asking your higher power for help?

Have you felt or experienced a difference in the results?

Remember to ask for guidance!

today's focus:

– Dining Table: Assess & Reflect, Sort & Purge
– Linens: Assess & Reflect
– How Long Will It Take?
– Today's Homework

The fabulous meals carefully planned and prepared for the holidays and other special occasions deserve an equally fabulous space in which to eat them. It's important the dining room is clean and uncluttered to ensure the most enjoyable meal for both you and your guests. If your dining room is currently a cluttered mess, make the decisions TODAY to clear the space, and you'll thank yourself tomorrow!

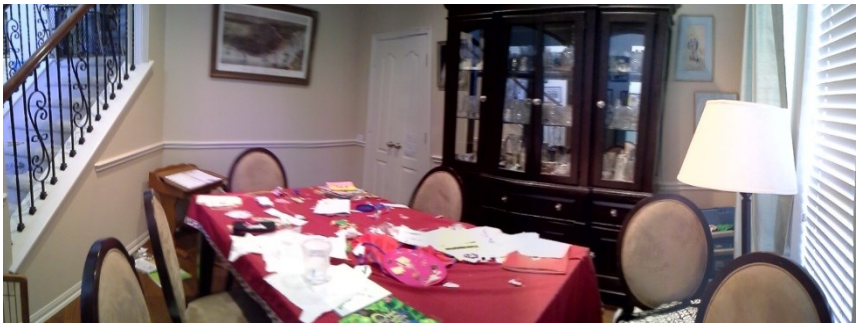
Now, grab a trash bag and boxes / trays for sorting and put on some music!

assess & reflect

The dining room can often become a dumping ground, completely overrun with too much stuff. While decluttering the dining room, take time to contemplate where things really belong. Remember to be kind to yourself (and to others who helped create the mess). Honor yourself for taking the steps now to fix the problem!!

Here's a list of what might be in the dining room:

- table, chairs, linens, centerpiece
- papers
- plastic shopping bags with unknown contents
- computers or laptops
- clothes or laundry
- toys
- makeup
- sports uniforms/gear
- moving boxes



This is no time to become judgmental. The solution is in your hands RIGHT NOW!

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reflective questions

The dining room table is one of the most common surfaces to attract stuff. Unfortunately it's not magically attracting gourmet meals prepared by professional chefs; just junk. As you sort through it all, ask yourself these reflective questions:

- What belongs in another room? Which room? Why did it end up here?
- What prevents it from getting to its real home? Does it have a home?
- Are there unfinished projects in this space? What's the likelihood that they will be completed?
- Is this where paper and mail end up? Is there a consistent place to put the mail? Is it out of the way from your normal pathway when you enter the home? (See Organizing the Entry for mail help.)
- If there are clothes / laundry, why is it here? Do you have a laundry system that works? Are there people in the house lacking the discipline to get their clothes to where they belong? Is the laundry room disorganized / dirty?
- Are there shopping bags here – what do they contain? Why are they still on the table?
- Is the dining table the only place to do homework/work? What other space can be used / created?

In reality, there is not much organization required in a dining unless it contains a side board. If so, sort through it to see what it contains and determine if there is a better use for the space. By asking yourself these reflective questions you'll discover what you really need to keep. Remember, getting rid of what is unnecessary makes room for what is necessary.

Linens:

- Do you love it? (tablecloth, napkins, napkin rings, table runner, placemats, etc.)
- If the answer is no: Can you get rid of them?
- If the answer is yes or no:
    - Is there a way you can use it in a new and different way to make it more interesting?
    - Can you modify it by sewing, ironing, or hot gluing additional elements? (Pinterest is always good for inspiration!) Would that be something you would even do?
- Is it still in usable condition, or does it need repairs? Is it salvageable, and will you take the time to do it?
- If it is a keepsake that is no longer intend for use for fear of ruining it, can it be re-purposed as a alternate decoration? Should it be stored in a keepsake box?
- Do you have enough napkins, placemats and tablecloths for your table?
- Are the linens the correct size for your table?
- Do they coordinate with your dishes?

Silver or Serving Ware:

- Do you like them? Will you use them?
    - If not, and they are a family heirloom, can you give them to a relative?
- Is it still functional? Is it something that you will be using in the future?
- Is it in good working order?
    - If not, can it be, and will you get it repaired?

Candles and other items:

- Does it bring you joy? (notice how I always go right to that?)
    - If not, give them away. Life is too short for things that don't bring us joy.
- Do you have too many?
- Will you use it / them? When was the last time you used them?
    - If it's over 5-7 years, it's been too long.

Did You Know?

Shopping bags have little invisibility cloaks around them that keep you from noticing their presence. Really. That's why you can't find the thing you know you just bought. Get your purchases out of the bags ASAP!

← Can you tell me what is in those bags?

Stick With It!

Do not leave the room until you are finished making *decisions*! This means you might be there a while since the majority of items probably belong somewhere else. Don't get distracted taking items out of the dining room until you're finished deciding the correct home for everything. Take your time, put on some enjoyable music and just get it done.

sort & purge

It's time to take action! Start with…. you guessed it, trash. Then….right again, grouping like items. Since in this case you will most likely have groups of items that belong in other rooms, so your sorting boxes or trays will be categorized by location. If there are items waiting to be returned to friends, make arrangements for that to happen ASAP and put them in your car, or on the doorstep.

how long will it take?

Most dining rooms that contain a lot of stuff can be cleared out in as little as an hour but may take as much as 4 hours. It will depend on whether or not the items actually have a real home.

your assignment

Print and fill out the Entry worksheet, Supply Checklist and Action Plan.

P.S. If your linen closet is now a disaster, use what you have learned through this eCourse to organize it. You've got this! Trust your new-found skills.

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711. Summer Sprint ends July 27th.

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organizing@home

the entry

organizing@home | the entry

Part One

Today's Focus:

– Assess & Reflect
– Sort & Purge
– How long will it take?
– Homework

When you open your door to greet family and guests, they see what you see.
What *do* you see when you open your front door?

– Piles of mail and paper?
– Coats, purses, and shoes spilling onto the floor?
– Stacks of Amazon boxes?
– Backpacks?
– Shopping bags?

How would you like it to look?

Coats, purses, and backpacks hung neatly on hooks, shoes corralled in a tasteful manner, and the stacks of mail replaced with and a simple and stylish inbox?

It's time to create the entry you and your guests will love!

the plan

This space is designed to be worked on in two work sessions, in this first session you will be clearing out and setting up your entry so it's *functional*. You'll remove what doesn't belong, then bring in organizing supplies to make the space work as it should.

assess and reflect

The first step in clearing out your entryway is to assess the space to determine what belongs. Stand in your entry (or hall) and think through the answers to the following reflective questions, as well as any others you may think of that are unique to your situation. Use the worksheet and/or a journal to help find the answers.

– Is there anything that doesn't belong in the entry?
– Is there a designated place for it? If so, why doesn't it make it to its designated spot?
– If an item never makes it to its actual home, can you create a place for it in the entry?

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– Do you have adequate shoe storage? Is this where you store shoes or does your bedroom closet need work?
– Are there too many shoes (here and/or your closet)? Is it time for a purge?
– Are you keeping things you no longer need? Sometimes things accumulate, or we just keep things out of habit so try to look at things with a new pair of eyes.
– What is needed to make this space more functional? What is missing?
– Think about how to support the routine that exists rather than try to change habits. What furniture, bins, shelving, and/or hooks would make this work?

After answering the reflective questions, you should have a better idea about what is happening in this space and what needs to be done.

sort and purge

Roll up your sleeves, grab a trash can and a box (or two), and start making decisions! It's time to dive in!

The easiest way to get started is with the trash. Even if you feel overwhelmed it's easy to decide if that empty plastic bag or old receipt is trash. As you pick up and move items around to find trash, decide if what is in your hand is trash as well.

When sorting, it's important to group like items (in categories) and place them in a box. Categories can be anything that makes sense to you, and multiple categories can occupy the same box.

For example:
Joe's shoes, dirty laundry and Angie's stuff can go in the same box because all belong upstairs.
Papers to look at and new printer cartridges can go in the same box because they belong in the office.
Backpacks, jackets and shoes that you want to stay, can stay put for the moment as you make decisions on the rest. You can group and categorize them too of course.

Continue to make decisions on each item.
Try not to get hung up on "where will it go?" since this will only slow you down. Focus on the immediate task – sort and purge!

when are you done?

ONLY when you are done making decisions on all the various items in the hallway and entry that DO NOT belong there, can you leave the area and distribute items to their rightful place. Everything that is earmarked to leave the house should be taken away so all that's left is what actually stays in the entry.

Remember your categories…
Is it trash? Go/Trash
Does it belong elsewhere in the house? Keep/Out box
Does it belong to a friend? Make arrangements to get it to them. Go/Away Box

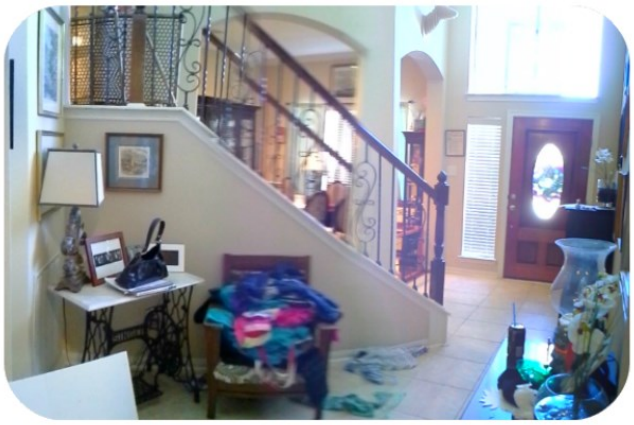
How long will it take?

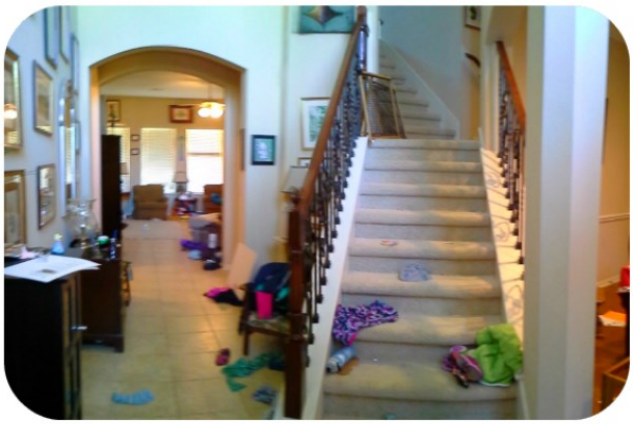
The sorting and purging process takes about 1-2 hours, if you begin prepared and stay focused. Areas that have more than what's shown in the photos below may take longer.

Tip | Stay in the area you are working in until you are finished sorting and purging!

Before & After

This entry was sorted and purged in about 1 hour and took about 1.5 hours to set up, I also added cute bins on the stairs for stuff going upstairs. Paper and mail are handled in the kitchen…





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what to do about paper?

In the entry, paper and mail can quickly take over a space if it's not managed consistently. Immediately when paper comes into your house make a decision about what it is. If it is junk mail, immediately recycle it.

There are a few basic categories with paper:

1) Resource/reference: Information you may need to retrieve later that has a deadline, like an upcoming party. For these types of papers, I recommend first entering the event in your calendar with a reminder alarm set well in advance if there something you need to do to prepare. After you've entered the data into our calendar you can either toss the paper, photograph it, or place it in your mail box until the event passes.
2) Bills: Most clients I meet now have some form of automatic online billing in place and only use their paper bills as a reminder, or to verify the bill was paid. Once the bill is paid it can be tossed. If you pay online, there is a digital record, eliminating the need to keep a paper bill.

   Think about your preference – would you rather have the paper reminder? Just be sure to toss it each month. Don't want to paper clutter coming in each month? Anything you pay monthly can be set up automatically, if not via the bank or utility company, then definitely through your bank.

3) Store coupons: Coupons are a tricky lot. If you are a serious coupon user, you don't need me to tell you what to do with them. For the rest of us *passive* coupon users, I suggest asking yourself what the likelihood is that you'll use the coupon before it will expire? Are you planning a purchase at that store in the near future? If you might, or aren't sure, then hang on to them but be sure to sort through your mail box monthly to clear out unwanted or expired coupons.
4) Junk mail: It goes straight in to the recycling bin – don't even set them on the counter!

Get a mailbox

If there are several members in your household who receive mail, give each one a mailbox. I like to use magazine holders because they are vertical, take up less space, and come in plain as well as decorative styles. Label each one and let each person manage it.

Be sure to maintain it monthly by sorting through it.

For mail collection, vertical beats horizontal! A magazine holder makes a great mailbox, get one for each adult plus one for kids' papers that need attention

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organizing@home | the entry

Part Two

Part two of this space is about organizing it! You will utilize the resources you found in your home earlier this week.

Now that the unnecessary items are out of the space, what you are left with should be just what you want to remain. So, what's missing?
– What kind of additional storage or organizational elements are needed to make this space work? It could be shoe storage, purse/backpack storage, key storage, etc.
– Can you fit a piece of furniture in this space?
– Do you have something that can be repurposed? A bookcase, cabinet, or dresser – think outside the box. If you like the piece don't limit yourself on where you can put it in the house.
– What about hooks for jackets? Can you hang items on the back of the door using an over the door rack? Or hooks on the wall?

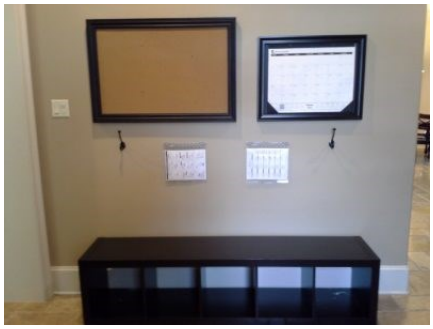
how to implement the organizing elements

In your entry you might have shoes, purses, backpacks, or laptop bags that need to regularly come and go. Have you brought in the right elements for the job?

Shoe storage can be shelves or a decorative basket, or a bench to sit on and store shoes underneath.
Think about what you have had in the past and what made it work or not. Why?
Was it too far away to walk over and put the shoes in?
Was it too deep and your shoes got lost?
Was it too small for all the people in your family?
Use this information to find new ways to solve the problem.

Do you have/want hooks for purses and jackets?
Over-the-door hooks make excellent entry hooks. Alternatively you can buy hooks to hang on the wall. Look for hooks that are big enough to actually hold one or two things on each hook. If it has multiple hooks, be sure they are spaced at least 6 inches apart. When hooks are hung too close together their effectiveness is reduced. More hooks is better than not enough hooks, and hooks that are too big beats hooks that are too small. When in doubt go for the bigger hook with more spots to hang things, just be sure to attach them to a stud or use toggle bolts to ensure they are sucure.

What about cubbies for backpacks?



Cubbies for backpacks are probably a better option than hooks. I know hooks look neat, but for a kid to

successfully hang their backpack – that's a tall order! But not impossible. (If you are going to hang it – then all is well!)

Cubbies are easier for kids to negotiate since they can easily tuck their backpacks into it. Think about your habits and that of your family and try to work with the current habit. If you think that they are up for the new challenge of hanging backpacks, I say go for it! You know your family best!

The trick to organizing is trying organizing elements in different ways. Test out, rearrange, set it up again and interact with it on the spot. In short, PRETEND. Go through the motions of putting away your shoes, purse or backpack. Ask yourself, "Is this easy enough that I, or someone else, will follow through?" If it's not, then try something else. It doesn't mean the whole solution is a bust, just a little fine tuning. Continue trying different solutions until the right solution appears.

In situations where I think it's a struggle – ANY situation, even trying to come up with the right storage solution, I ask my higher power for a little help and by golly I get it. It's amazing. So don't be shy and think your request is too silly or insignificant – there is no such thing! Just ask.

Are you stumped and left without ideas?

Join us on our next ZOOM call and get some help! That's what it's there for to help you solve your organizing dilemmas!

You can always ask online in our Facebook Group. Ask questions, and post pictures. You are not alone!

your assignment

Before setting out for the task of organizing and creating your space, stop and think about what you really want it to look like. Have you checked out Pinterest for ideas? Have you created a vision in your mind of what you are aiming for? If you haven't, pause to come up with a vision. It doesn't have to be super detailed, just enough to point you in the right direction. Once you have that,

Print the entry worksheet and supply checklist and get started!

You can do this! Stay focused on the rewards (an organized space you'll be proud to have guests in) make that your reason for sticking with it!

organizing@home

living room

organizing@home | the living room

Part One

Today's Focus:

– Getting Ready
– Assess & Reflect
– Sort & Purge
– Today' Assignment

get ready

Organizing is not just physically taxing, it's hard work for your brain. Make sure to drink plenty of water throughout your organizing session to ensure you stay hydrated and working to your body's full potential. And remember to turn on music before you start working to make the experience much more fun and enjoyable! It's totally OK to have some fun while you are working! (I won't tell anyone!)

I know for me, my best time to work is first thing in the morning, right after having coffee. Coffee is my friend. ❤ Depending on your other obligations, your best time of day might not necessarily be the time you have available to work on this project. If this is the case, it's important to accept your personal circumstance and decide what time of day you will be able to work on your space.

Throughout this ecourse my goal is to help you know "what's my next step" so that if you are unable to work for two hours you will still know what you are doing next and pick up where you left off.

Remember to be kind to yourself.
Talk to yourself as you would a friend and avoid any negative self-talk.
Say a prayer asking for help and guidance!

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get set

Grab a trash can and some boxes…. *what!!* all out of boxes? Some good box replacements are paper bags and trash bags. I use white kitchen trash bags for donate and black trash bags for trash, that way I won't get the bags mixed up. Plastic grocery store plastic bags are good in a pinch, but only in a pinch. In general I do not like grocery store plastic bags – however I am a fan of grocery store bags you purchase. Those are a good replacement too.

The goal is to clear out the living room by sorting and purging then organizing everything into place thus creating a living room that functions as you need it to.

Feeling anxious?

Wondering, what you are going to do with all this stuff? *RELAX - the answer will come.*

GO!

The living room can accumulate a variety of random things.
Your living room might have:
– baskets of laundry – folded or unfolded
– blankets
– magazines
– papers / mail (it's everywhere!)
– video game components / games
– bags of mystery items (it's everywhere too!)
– toys
– other random things (car parts, musical instruments, volunteering supplies just to name a few random items I have seen)

asses & reflect

While in your living room, pull out your notebook and living room work sheet and go through the Reflective Questions:

– Is there anything that can go in another room?
– Which room or rooms?
– If there is laundry piled on the couch, what's happening in the laundry room?
– Does the laundry room need a makeover?
– Or a different laundry system?

– If things made it past the entry and then landed in the living room, what kinds of things are they?
– Why do they end up here?
– Are there unfinished projects in this space?
– How many?
– Does someone have a habit of starting, but not finishing projects?
– If there are blankets to use while watching TV, how are they stored?
– Is there an alternate place/way to store them?
– If you have toys or video games, do you have a place to store them when it's time to clean up?
– Is that currently working?
– If not, why not?
– How many magazine subscriptions do you have?
– If you are saving them because you haven't had time to read them yet, is it possible you have too many subscriptions and can you cancel some?
– If this is where your paper and mail ends up, review the section on paper/mail in Organizing the Entry.

Use these questions to get your brain clicking and allow other reflective questions of your own to surface. If you want to delve deeper, take time to *really* think about why you have what you have, and *why* things are the way they are. Use your journal to help reveal more insight. Just start writing and see what comes out!
The best path to real and lasting change is through awareness.
(And purging. And compartmentalizing.)

sort & purge

The process is the same no matter what the area, so grab your supplies and start.
– As you know, my favorite place to begin is with the trash because it's the easiest thing to identify.
– As you are searching for trash, you'll find other things which you'll need to decide if it's worth keeping, and if so is it something you want to keep in the living room. Chances are it belongs in another room, so have a tray earmarked for Keep/AWAY.

After you have sorted and purged everything in the living room you can move on to the next step. If this is it for you today, it's a good idea to deliver those boxes to the other parts of the house. You don't have to put everything away – it's ok just to set the box in that room – especially if you are going to work on that room later on (after you've finished the living room of course). Deliver the Keep/AWAY boxes and any donations can go to the car to be dropped at a donation center asap! If there are items that need to be returned to a friend, schedule the time to drop them at the doorstep. If you are giving them away to someone, give the recipient a deadline for picking them up.

The end goal today is to have a de-cluttered space by removing what doesn't belong in order to make way for what does. You will have clarity as you begin the next step if these other things are cleared away.

It's OK to set and achieve your own goals and ask others to help and respect that.

Sometimes there are others around us who aren't in any hurry to collect their stuff. I've seen all kinds of reasons as to why you "have to" keep other peoples' things. I know the answer isn't always simple or clear cut. Do your best to make progress and remember it's OK to set and achieve your own goals and ask others to help and respect that.

how long will it take?

Progress always depends on your ability to make decisions.
An average living room takes 1-2 hours to complete if you put your game face on and start prepared.

your assignment

– Use your journal and the living room worksheet to record the answers to the Reflective Questions.
– Sort and purge to clear out the clutter.
– Take your donations to the donation center.
– Contact friends with a deadline to pick their things up.
– Consider if additional furniture or organizing supplies are needed and if they are note the measurements of your room and the available space for the new piece of furniture and bring in your shopping trip.

See my video on How to Measure a Room for guidance.
– Use the Action Plan Worksheet to get even more focused.

Indecision is your enemy!

Be ready to make decisions. Channel your inner decision-maker!

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Part Two

today we will discuss:

– Storage ideas
– How to Use the Organizing Supplies
– The Result

Living Room part 2 is about organizing. After moving out what doesn't belong in the living room in Part 1, it should be easier to determine what is now missing I the way of storage.

Your homework was to give some though as to what kind of additional storage or organizational supplies you might need.

Below are a few ideas that have worked in the past for me, perhaps they will spark an idea in you.

storage ideas

Storage items you might need:

– toy storage
– a reliable place to put blankets
– magazine holders to contain your favorite magazines
– decorative baskets to hold video game controllers and other items you want out of sight.

Here are a few suggestions:
– Oversized ottomans with removable lids available in variety of attractive possibilities.

Avoid small footstool sized ottomans since they are very limiting and have limited usable space. If you purchase a very large ottoman, compartmentalize and categorize – especially if there are small *and* large items to be stored.
– Great for storing toys, blankets or pillows
– Doubles as a coffee table

Adult shelving

– I use IKEA furniture a lot because it is reasonably priced and readily available here in Houston. The Kallax is a popular choice because of it's modern look and functionality.
– Coffee table or side tables, with storage space

– Floating shelves are functional and decorative – they can hold storage bins or boxes and can perform the same tasks as a bookcase. (see bookshelves)

Toy Storage

– Scale back the toys to be stored in the living room and rotate toys out from what is stored in the child's bedroom or playroom.
– Limit toys to what can comfortably fit in the storage you have.

These suggestions aren't just for people with kids!

Decorative Containers

– Normally for a kids space (playroom, bedroom) I encourage clear containers to hold toys, but in the living room, it's the opposite. To keep your living room looking *adult*, choose tasteful opaque containers.
– Video game controllers just look sloppy with cords squiggling everywhere! These are perfect in a decorative basket.

– When using opaque containers or baskets, be sure to only put things in them that you will remember are there and make sense in that space. It's no use to you if it's *out of sight – out of mind*.

– Don't overstuff baskets. Leave enough room to make retrieving and putting away items easier.

Furniture Placement

Furniture doesn't have to always line the walls. Couches can float in the middle of a room to create a space for hidden storage behind them. Behind this couch are two handsome bins for toy storage. The couch used to be against the wall but by floating the couch we were able to add storage and make it easily accessible to the kids.

Searching for new furniture?

Search from your phone using your favorite online retailers, Google images or Pinterest.

Bookshelves

For some reason bookshelves are often overlooked and underutilized. Bookshelves aren't just for books but can hold baskets, magazine holders, neatly folded blankets, decorative items, knick-knacks, decorative storage boxes (which opens up all kinds of possibilities of what the bookshelf can hold), and of course, books!

When considering what size and shape bookshelf to use take into consideration

A) what would look the best

B)what your needs are

In my living room for example, I have limited wall space and my couch floats in the center of the room. If I were to add a tall bookcase, there's only one place where it would go, similar to the bookcase showing in this photo –

it could only go in that location. However, a lower bookcase offers a wider array of options – at least in my living room.

Invite a friend over to brainstorm with and see
what a fresh pair of eyes will do to help breathe new life into your living room arrangement.

remember...

– One key to organizing is to try different arrangements for the best solution. Test out, rearrange, set it up again and interact with it on the spot.
– Ask yourself: "*Is this easy enough that I, or someone else, will follow through?*"
– Continue trying different solutions until the right solution appears (did you check in with your higher power before beginning today?).
– Stay the course; keep only what is essential to the space.
– Group like items, containerize and compartmentalize!
– Have measurements of the available space on your phone when you go shopping.

your assignment

- Print the living room worksheet and supply checklist to get started.
Good Luck! ☺

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maintenance

maintenance

Staying Organized

today's focus

- Regularly Declutter
- Monitor
- Modify
- C3 & Zoom

regularly declutter

It might seem obvious to include regularly declutter as part of Maintenance but it must be mentioned. Even though we totally wish they would, things just don't put themselves away. Just like the weekly chores we had to do when we were little, decluttering is a weekly event - or it should be. Regularly sweeping through the house to gather up stray items and put them away where they belong is how to stay on top of the clutter problem. By regularly decluttering you will be able to keep tabs on the situation.

monitor

In order to really know if your system is working it must be monitored. Monitoring is simply observing and making a mental note of what you see. If it seems cumbersome to pull things out of the cabinet or you notice that your family has gotten even worse about putting their shoes away, it's time to re-assess the situation.

Ask yourself reflective questions, ask your family reflective questions, to get to the root issue - and sometimes it's not what we think.

modify

When there is clarity about what isn't working and why, then it can be modified. Try a new arrangement or set up, and play with it for a bit. Walk by it, interact with it, turn it, move it. The solution is often just a tweak away. Don't be discouraged if you don't get it right the first time, give it some time to gel and if it doesn't work keep trying. And don't be dismayed if it doesn't look like the picture on Pinterest, those are momentary snapshots in someone else's home. It's unfair and unrealistic to compare your life to the mystery occupant of that photo.

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ask Questions

If your situation just isn't working out and you can't figure out why, ask us. You can contact us through the Facebook Group page or the Katy Home Organizer Facebook page. We'll be happy to help.

c3 video chats

By signing up for the SUMMER SPRINT you have access to the Clutter to Clarity Club [C3]. They are Real-Time LIVE Video chats during which you can ask me for suggestions and advice about your most bothersome areas. THESE ARE NOT PRE-RECORDED THEY ARE LIVE! Join me via smartphone or computer for your chance to get that special attention you need while learning from others as well.

And if you need me to see your space, I can! That's what I love about ZOOM. I can asses and evaluate your situation in real time.

If you have any questions, comments or thoughts, reach out in the Facebook group AND

BE SURE TO JOIN US on our daily ZOOM video calls – check Facebook group for times, or for daily reminders and inspiration text **SPARKLY** to 57711.

ZOOM → https://zoom.us/meeting/549977691

FACEBOOK GROUP → www.facebook.com/groups/simpleorganizing

Until next time…

Have a super sparkly day!

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