

ameliabarrett

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZER

530.401.4730 Direct

OrganizeNevadaCounty.com

AmeliaRBarrett@gmail.com

APRIL ARCHIVED "WEEKLY DISH"

For the week beginning Tuesday, April 29th, 2008.

In honor of Spring Cleaning and my last Weekly Dish article, I've decided to share an awesome tool that every Nevada County resident should have: A list titled: GET RID of items in Nevada County created by my friend and fellow organizer, Shawn Tuttle of Project Simplify. Maybe this will give you that extra "push" you've needed to get rid of that one thing you haven't known where to take!

For the week beginning Tuesday, April 22nd, 2008.

If the spring cleaning bug hasn't bitten you yet, trust me, it's going to happen any day.

With the spring months already here, many of us seem to become overwhelmed with all the cleaning, sorting, purging, and reorganizing tasks on our minds. The impossible becomes even more impossible and you begin to wonder where to start and if the end is ever going to be near.

As an organizer I'm always looking for tips and tricks to make the "not so fun" tasks of maintaining our homes into manageable & realistic chores & responsibilities.

I have found that in order to keep order in my household a "reoccurring daily checklist" is crucial. The tasks that would be included in this checklist will vary depending on the household and its priorities. However, the main concept of the checklist is universal to all households. The goal is to schedule the "not so fun" tasks into blocks of time each day so that they're not stuck in the back of your mind waiting to be "checked-off". For example: every morning between 5:30a.m. and 6:30a.m. I have a "reoccurring daily checklist" that I follow. This gives me time to get the needed chores done BEFORE the day begins. Some chores that are on my list include: take recyclables out, whole house sweep, one room clean (each room in the house is scheduled to be cleaned on a certain day), unload/load the dishwasher, make the bed, and tidy up any forgotten spaces.

When I first began implementing this process all I wanted to do was sleep in and toss this darn "reoccurring daily checklist" out the window...and of course there were days that I actually did just that. But, when the afternoon of those days rolled around I was left saying, "Darn, I wish I would have taken care of this earlier so I wouldn't be dealing with it now!"

Moral of the story: IT TAKES TIME AND COMMITMENT. You have to make it work with you, not against you. Make a plan and stick to it for at least 2 weeks. If it's still not working, tweak it slightly to work more in your favor. Remember, the "reoccurring daily checklist" should be designed to HELP you be in more control over your household duties.

I recently discovered a couple of awesome tools by RealSimple.com that may help you get started organizing your checklist. They have come up with The Keep-It-Clean Plan(<http://www.realsimple.com/realsimple/package/0,21861,1020723-1020737,00.html>) and The Elements of Clean

(http://www.realsimple.com/realsimple/web/pdf/0505/cleaning_chart.pdf). Both of these articles are designed to illustrate just how simple maintaining a household can really be. The Keep-It-Clean Plan offers an easy breakdown of daily tasks that lead to a cleaner house. The Elements of Clean is more of an “overall” picture of how to maintain a house. It breaks down the cleaning/maintaining tasks into how many times a year each should be done.

I printed and laminated The Elements of Clean article and keep it with my “reoccurring daily checklist.” It’s a great reminder of what do and when.

Hopefully this will make your household chores a little less stressful and a little more realistic. After all, who wants to do chores anyways?

For the week beginning Tuesday, April 15th, 2008.

Ever since my son came into the world I feel like I’m queen of multi-tasking. I have to admit, for awhile I even started bragging to my husband about how “I could watch Peyton and clean the house at the same time.” However, when I recently attended a workshop offered by Shawn Tuttle of Project Simplify (<http://projectsimplify.com>) in Nevada City, I gave my “Multi-Tasking Queen” title a second thought. Through the workshop, I learned that although I was getting things done, I was never 100% present with any one task I was dealing with, nor was I focusing on the priority tasks.

Shawn shared an article during that workshop that has forever etched a place in my mind. Her article, Multi-tasking – The Cost (<http://projectsimplify.com/?s=multi-tasking>), is a short and sweet way to inspire people to stop and think about how you choose to operate your day. She stresses that by choosing to multi-task, you’re choosing to “set the stage for a frantic mindset”.

You can read this article by clicking [HERE](http://projectsimplify.com/?s=multi-tasking) (<http://projectsimplify.com/?s=multi-tasking>).

I hope this inspires you as much as it did me!

For the week beginning Tuesday, April 8th, 2008.

This week I want to share a favorite book of mine called [Little House on a Small Planet](http://www.littlehouseonasmallplanet.com/index2.html) (<http://www.littlehouseonasmallplanet.com/index2.html>) by Shay Salomon (<http://www.resourcesforlife.com/library/people/shay-salomon/>).

Salomon writes about how people in today’s society are always consumed with the thought that bigger is always better, especially when purchasing or building a home. She emphasizes the fact that it is possible to live in less space and still be satisfied because “living small can free up your mind, your wallet, and your soul”.

In her book, Salomon shares her traveling experiences about interviews with individuals and families that enjoy living small. In a separate interview by Randy Peyser (<http://www.randypeyser.com/salomon.htm>), Salomon confesses, “I discovered this whole small house movement where thousands of people, for financial, spiritual, psychological, and social reasons, decided to scale way down to improve their lives.” Salomon provides examples and solutions for smart, small, and green living. She stresses the fact that oversized houses take up more of an ecological footprint (<http://www.earthday.net/footprint/info.asp>) and are not good for the planet or our children’s future.

My favorite chapter in the book is titled, “Pay off Your Debts”. Salomon introduces an interesting fact; the word mortgage “literally translates as death pledge” in Old French. She then goes on to say how a small percentage of

homeowners actually own their home outright (no mortgage) because we buy what we can't afford. Of course, Salmon offers wise solutions of how to purchase/build a home in today's market without breaking the bank.

I would recommend this book to anybody. It is an educational tool that will make you stop and think about what is really important in life. It made me realize that all the "excess" things I have are not important, but what is important is that I'm comfortable in my space that I call home. I currently live in a home that is less than 1,000 square feet with my husband and son. I love it. Less to clean and NO CLUTTER! Even if I wanted to buy more furniture I couldn't!
Living small makes you realize what things are most important to you.

I encourage you to check out all of the links above. You can purchase [Little House on a Small Planet](#) on Shay Salomon's website (<http://www.resourcesforlife.com/library/people/shay-salomon/>) or you can borrow my copy, just email or call me!

For the week beginning Tuesday, April 1st, 2008.

The "dish" for this week is a continuation of my Tip of the Day dated January 29, 2008.

CREATE A COMMAND/INFO CENTER

Everybody could benefit from creating a simple command/information center in their home. The most ideal spot is near an exterior door that everybody in the house walks through. Things that should go here include: mail, messages, a calendar, and essential supplies such as pens, pencils, paper, flashlights, and keys.

I have researched many command center solutions and have even installed a few in clients' homes. Recently, I found an article by Karen Droogan on www.organizemag.com explained a little more in depth how to create a command center that will work for you and your family. She addresses the facts that entry ways and dining tables tend to become the "catch-all" of the house. She then goes on to say that key items like: an in box for each family member, stationary supply holders (for items like pens, paperclips, etc.), and a monthly calendar are crucial in eliminating piles of clutter around your house. Check it out and enjoy!

(<http://www.organizemag.com/articles/small-spaces/small-spaces-wall-mounted-command-center>)