

Her Magazine – January 2022 – Women's Health

Inside the Mind of a Professional Organizer - By Jessi Bushman aka "Organizer Jessi" Making a Fresh Start for 2022

January...the beginning of a New Year, a new chapter, a new outlook and experiences.

The majority of New Years Resolutions focus on going to the gym and eating better. These are excellent goals, but sometimes unrealistic because of time. Most of us feel we need to make sacrifices to do everything we want. But, in reality, its a matter of delegating and time management.

Here is where my "love of lists" comes in handy.

Create a list of "goals" important to you and your lifestyle. This includes frequency and duration to complete. I suspect, spending more time with family, traveling, landing a new job, volunteering, saving money or becoming more organized are goals for many.

As you look over your list, you may realize you've overextended yourself. Now, double down and really identify your priority goals. Its possible, you will need to eliminate low priority items to make way for whats really important to you and your family. Additionally, it may be time to delegate tasks to family members to support the household.

Since tax season is right around the corner, I'll share my thoughts on paper & file organization. As you transition into 2022, improving your filing system is a great place to start... as its a new year of payments and receipts. To accomplish this, you truly only need plastic bins (designed for hanging files), and a box or two of hanging file folders. Create piles of repeat paper items – utility bills, credit card receipts, bank statements, payroll stubs, insurance documents (health, dental, additional policies), tax records, vehicle info., business cards, kids items, etc. If you have something new come up at a later time, simply create a new folder or bin. It may be useful to have designated bins for each family member to store important documents and memories.

Once you have identified your categories, create labels and arrange in alphabetical order. Make a commitment to clean this file out each February as you prepare for tax time. This allows time for all year-end documents to be mailed out.

Place the bin(s) close to where you open your mail. Unless you have a dedicated office, I suggest you rearrange items in a cabinet or closet near your entry door. Along with the bins, keep a pen, calculator, stapler and shredder/recycle tray. Storing documents near your incoming landing area creates a sense of routine and will help minimize misplaced documents, as well as improve your mail process.

Another example to make a fresh start is with your apparel. I think its safe to say, we are living our new “normal”. Fashion expectations have shifted, and our wardrobes should reflect this. Your storage options, accessibility and honest approach are key factors while identifying multiple items and things no longer worn.

I recently downsized all of my T-Shirts from volunteering events. Truly, I went from 16 to 8... still enough inventory to cover an entire week of wearing random T-Shirts (which will never happen)! This was a simple starting point and an easy way to build momentum to downsize clothing, coats, shoes and accessories. Ultimately, our favorite possessions need to fit within our available space, allowing room to grow.

If you can relate to either of these scenarios, I encourage you to make a fresh start this New Year! If making a fresh start is something you need assistance with, I'm happy to help!

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