

## JANUARY IS NATIONAL GET ORGANIZED MONTH!

### Part 2 - Organizing 101 – The Basics

Okay, if you took the quiz last week and you think you really could use some help getting organized – where do you start?

Many people begin with a huge project in mind. They decide to clean out ALL their closets in their home in one afternoon. Or they decide to literally “chain” themselves to their desk until they go through every paper pile on it and make a decision on each piece.

When you decide to do an organizing project in your home or office, you have to realistically look at how much time you have and how much time the project will really take. I always recommend starting off slowly. Set aside a specific amount of time to work on the project and break it down into very small parts that can easily be worked on in little bits of time.

How about using a timer? Have you ever heard of the game “Beat the Clock” (if you have, you’ll be showing your age)? Contestants had to accomplish some funny task in a certain amount of time in order to win. This is what you can do when planning a new organizing project. Set your timer for just 15 minutes and start working on your project. Many people are amazed at what they can get done in 15 minutes of concentrated effort.

When the timer dings, you can clean up what you’re working on, take a deep breath and relax knowing you will come back to it later that day or continue the next day. This organizational problem you are dealing with did not happen overnight and it will not go away overnight. By breaking the job down into small chunks that are easily doable and using a timer to control the time spent on the project, you should be able to achieve some degree of success. As you become more successful and less stressed you can always increase the time spent working on the project. You’ll feel as though you are finally getting somewhere.

Another point to keep in mind is that convenience plays a huge role in organization. As human beings we know that if something is easy to do, put away or file, we’ll be more inclined to do it than if it is inconvenient. When you have to move five boxes and climb over stuff to put away whatever it is you have in your hand, more than likely you’ll just set it down and remind yourself to put it away later. Unfortunately “later” doesn’t seem to come around and the next time you want to use that item, you can’t find it. Think about the convenience factor when deciding to store items or set up files.

Giving items “homes” or somewhere to live will help in setting up systems in your home. If you have 10 or more pairs of scissors but you can never find any, set up a special place to keep them. I know that if you are reading this and you are the happy parent of a wonderful child who “borrows” various items around the home and never puts them back, then you have another issue to deal with. However, children, young children especially, can really relate to the idea of putting things in their homes or back where

they “live.” For example, with young children, you can introduce this concept by having them put their toys back into their homes before they go to bed.

Please remember that the best way to get started organizing is by deciding to start and then following through and actually picking up that first pile of papers or donating the bag of clothes that has been stashed in the corner for six months. “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Take that one step today toward getting organized in 2007.

Check back next week for Part 3 - Is the Paper Monster Living in Your Home?

Don't find yourself saying, “I've got to get organized!” again. Make 2007 the year you set a new goal and develop a plan to change your life. Simplify and reach your goals with help from S.O.S. Please check the calendar at [www.organizeclutter.com](http://www.organizeclutter.com) for classes in the area and information on the clutter support group starting in January as well as the next scheduled Simply Organized three hour seminar.