

The Year to Be Organized

By Angelique York
SOUTHLAKE JOURNAL CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If you resolved to make 2008 your year to get organized and declutter your life, you're not alone. Getting organized ranked No. 4 on a list of top 10 resolutions from the Web site, www.rismedia.com, and on another site, www.about.com, getting organized came in at No. 10.

However, making the resolution and actually getting it done are two separate things. It's not uncommon to be overwhelmed by the task of organizing a room or home. That's why home organization specialist Tyler Norsworthy of An Extra Pair of Hands is offering several tips to help the average person get extraordinary results from home organization tasks.

Her Southlake-based business is designed to help people organize their lives. The tricks and tips she has perfected can be used by anyone with the time and desire to complete a reorganization project.

"Most people aren't disorganized," she said. "It's just that they have 50,000 things to do."

To get started, Norsworthy recommends beginning with a single room or area. The area that bothers you the most is the best place to start.

The most frequent trouble spot for her clients seems to be their closets.

Norsworthy suggests taking everything out and starting from scratch. Go through each piece of clothing individually to see if it still works for you. If not, toss it, or donate it to charity. Only keep what you will really use. If you haven't worn it or used it in two years, get rid of it.

Another frustrating area is the home office.

"Our biggest problem is the overflow of daily mail," she said. "It's out of control. Don't even bring it into the house. Throw junk mail in the recycling bin before it hits your office. Only bring in the things you absolutely need. And for those, you need a filing system."

To organize a kitchen, begin with the pantry. Throw away anything that is outdated. Removing expired spices and older food items can make room for fresher products. Then move on to the rest of the kitchen, going cabinet by cabinet, getting rid of unnecessary items. Norsworthy also suggests putting dishes and glasses in the cabinets directly above the dishwasher to make putting them away easier.

ORGANIZE

From 1B

Procrastination is the enemy of organization, she said.

Instead of putting things away, they are often set on a countertop to be handled later.

"Do it right then," Norsworthy suggests. "If you get your new insurance card in the mail, take it out to your car right [then]. You waste a lot of time searching for things that aren't in their place."

Sometimes, the best course of action is to hire a professional.

Organizers such as Norsworthy not only have a natural eye for the way things fit together, they can focus on the project without distractions.

"People start a project and then the phone rings," she said. "Or they realize their child has forgotten their school lunch. That's why people hire help."

At times, Norsworthy works on a project on her own, but most often the client will work with her. That way, she can teach them how the project is done and how to maintain the system once it is in place.

For those who choose the do-it-yourself method, Norsworthy likes home improvement shows. She cautions that although the television programs offer good ideas, the execution is unrealistic.

"They have great ideas, but don't forget there are 20 people behind the scenes making it all happen. Don't get frustrated when it doesn't get done as quickly in real life."