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BEING MORE ORGANIZED

1. **DEVELOP YOUR OWN SYSTEM.** Tailor it to your needs and personality. Go with your natural tendencies. Ignore how someone else thinks you should do it.
2. **“EAT THAT FROG”.** Do the most important and hardest task first rather than the easy, little stuff that robs you of your time. (From Brian Tracy’s book, “Eat That Frog: 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating.”)
3. **“SWISS CHEESE METHOD”.** Break the job into small segments. Then take those small five to fifteen minute segments of time that occur in your day to “put holes into Swiss cheese” and get the job done in small increments. (From Alan Lakein’s book, “How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life.”)
4. **DECLUTTER ON A DAILY BASIS.** Every time you open a drawer, cabinet or closet to get something, look for another item you can toss or recycle right now.
5. **MAKE IT FUN.** Buddy up with a friend to declutter each other’s house together...and on a regular basis. Put on music you love.
6. **PARE DOWN YOUR EXPECTATIONS.** We can’t do it all! As we age, we gather more and more possessions, interests, friends and relatives. Think about what is most important to you and put your time and energy there.
7. **READ BOOKS AND ARTICLES ON ORGANIZING AND DECLUTTERING.** Like playing a sport or learning a musical instrument, being more organized takes thought and practice. The more you read, the more you’ll be inspired to apply an idea and then adapt it to your needs and personality.

Margaret W. Neal, LCSW, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Riverside, CA. Her work focuses on “helping young children and their parents.” For more information, visit Margaret’s website at www.margaretwneal.com.