

[real neat] newsletter

real life. real organized. real simple.

[realneat] NEW YEAR

Phew! We survived another year! Say goodbye to 2007!

Here's to fresh new beginnings...

***FYI:** Did you know that January is Get Organized MonthSM? The National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) sponsors this national industry-wide event. **Get Organized MonthSM** is dedicated to raising public awareness of the benefits of getting organized and of hiring a professional organizer.*

May all your hopes, dreams, and goals be realized and achieved in this New Year!

Michelle

MICHELLE DEO

Professional Organizer

<http://www.realneat.com>

* **NEW BLOG:** <http://www.realneat.com/realorganized/> *

[realneat] SPECIALS

PACKAGE DEAL

Purchase 10 hours of [real neat] organizing services up-front, and I'll throw in an 11th hour **free of charge!**

REFERRAL PROGRAM

Refer a future client to [real neat] and receive 1 hour of organizing services **free of charge!**

BLOG REWARDS

Exclusive offer for newsletter subscribers!

Earn free organizing goodies in any of the following ways:

- Visit the new [real neat] blog & add your two cents (i.e., a comment) to any post,
- Submit a brief description (and photo, if you like) of your current organizing dilemma,
- Share one (or more) of your organizing tips, or
- Schedule your **free consultation** this month!



New Year... New You!

Now that the holiday season is over, take a moment to reflect on the past year. Revisit the very best moments of 2007 and "leave your baggage at the door." Are you ready to move forward and make some positive changes? Me too!

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Time to do some purging! Go through your **filing cabinet** to determine what can be tossed, shredded, or archived. Then, do it! Keep in mind that you'll need to save all tax-related receipts and paperwork for your accountant.

HINT: Store all tax-related documents in an easily-accessible, identifiable, and well-labeled (i.e., name and contact information) file folder for quick and easy transport to and from the accountant's office.

And, to finish it off, create any new files that you'll need for the New Year. Filing your paperwork (including your tax-related documentation) will be a snap now that your files are up-to-date and have room to breathe!

Before you toss your 2007 **calendar**, go through it and transfer all important dates into your new 2008 calendar (i.e., birthdays, anniversaries, conferences, and school vacations). Any other invaluable information that was recorded on your 2007 calendar should be recorded elsewhere (i.e., in your household binder).

Take a quick look through your **wardrobe**. Anything that didn't see the light of day last year should be donated or tossed. **TIP:** Hang all your clothes so that the "question-mark-part" of the hanger faces out from the closet. Then, when you return a piece of clothing to your closet that you've worn and laundered, hang it as you normally would (i.e., the "question-mark-part" of the hanger faces the closet wall). At the end of the year, anything on hangers facing out should be donated or tossed! Easy!

If you didn't do so before the holidays, help your kids review their bounty of **toys**. No doubt, even more toys were added to their collections over the holidays, so now's the perfect time to get rid of anything that they aren't playing with anymore. If you donate the excess to an orphanage or other worthy cause, not only will you bring joy to another child, but you'll also teach your children an important life lesson about charitable giving.

PERFECTLY IMPERFECT ORGANIZING

Somehow, we manage to get ourselves tied up in knots when we look at the "**big picture**." Sure, you'd love to have an **organized home**, but you'll never get there if you don't start working toward your goal. All too often, we manage to think ourselves into inaction. We want things to be done the right way. We want things to be in their proper place. We want things to be perfect. And, in this modern technological society, we want it all NOW!

However, life and all the things that come with it are perfectly imperfect, continually evolving and changing, keeping us on our toes. A perfectly organized home simply does not exist in the real world. Lives change. Families change. Homes change. To keep pace with all these changes, **organizing systems need to be flexible**. Getting organized (and staying that way) is an ongoing process that adjusts to meet our ever-changing needs.

Once you come to accept and appreciate your **perfectly imperfect home** for what it is, you'll free yourself of all that's been holding you back. Inaction will turn into action. You'll finally have both the mental and physical energy to tackle the disorganized areas of your home.

To start, set **small achievable goals** and work toward accomplishing them. "Today, I will clean out the junk drawer in the kitchen." Plan to block off a realistic amount of time in your schedule to complete this small organizing project (i.e., 10 to 15 minutes). Success! Give yourself a pat on the back, and schedule another mini organizing session for tomorrow!

Every small step you take toward getting organized will help you reach your goal. Just be sure to set **realistic mini goals** and block off reasonable amounts of time in your schedule to complete your organizing projects. Use all the resources at your disposal and enlist the help of others along the way: spouse, children, extended family, good friends, or a professional organizer! (Working side-by-side with someone often helps keep me motivated.)

Finally, please don't try to do too much at once. You may inadvertently set yourself up for defeat. What you **want** to complete and what you **actually can** complete are two entirely different beasts. You'll have the most success if you focus solely on what you can realistically fit into your schedule and successfully accomplish.

YOUR PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

Sounds overwhelming, but it'll prove to be life-changing, I guarantee you. First, do a "**brain dump**" of all that you hold closest to your heart. Myself, I brainstorm best with paper and pen, but you can record your ideas on tape or type them into the computer. Simply do what you can to coax your deepest values and goals out of your head and get them into some sort of concrete tangible form.

Next, **evaluate** your list. Are there items that should be taken off the list? Are there items that are far more important than others? Think about how the year of 2007 played out for you. Did your actions and the choices you made throughout the year accurately reflect the core values and goals on your list? Do you need to focus more of your time and energy on your core values this year?

Finally, create a **tangible reminder** of these core values and goals that will be stored in a place and form with which you will have daily contact. Your personal mission statement may be a collage of photos, powerful words, inspirational quotes, and personal items that reflect who you are and who you want to be this year. Or, you may simply post a copy of your favorite inspirational poem on your bathroom mirror. Just find a way to remind you of your personal mission statement on a daily basis.

Now comes the hardest part... When faced with a choice, review your personal mission statement so that you can align your decision with your deepest values and goals.

Live your life purposefully!