



- ✿ Happy New Year!! What are you doing to start your year off on a positive note?
- ✿ When was the last time you took a good hard look at your luggage? If it's heavy before it even has anything in it, doesn't have wheels, or has any tears, consider giving it up. Luggage is fairly reasonable to replace and is available at most discount retailers.
- ✿ Have a bunch of extra blankets or towels you really never use? Consider sending them off to your local animal shelter. They are always put to good use. The furry friends will really appreciate it.
- ✿ I'm not a fan of holding onto papers, but some definitely do need to be kept. With that in mind, consider using colored folders/hanging files to make them easily identifiable. Perhaps you use green for money related categories (taxes, 401K, etc.) and blue for relaxing ones (planned vacations, spa/gym memberships, etc.).
- ✿ In Cindy Glovinsky's "Making Peace with the Things in Your Life," I think she nails it when she says, "Things are like people. Most of us leave our homes to go other places all the time, sometimes remaining away from them even for years. Yet when we go home, we always go to the same place." This should be true for your items. They each need a home and should go back there when you are through with them. Otherwise, they will be lost and frustration will come about.
- ✿ When you are sorting through items, don't give yourself too many options. Limit yourself to something like the following:
  - Keep
  - Donate
  - Trash/Recycle/ShredGiving yourself too many options will make your decision making very difficult and may cause you to stop or not even start at all.
- ✿ When you have a large project to conquer, break it down into small tasks. Make a list of the to-do's that need to be done to reach that end goal. Looking at it as one huge project, rather than many small tasks, can keep you from ever getting started.

- ✿ I love this tip from Damon Zahariades in his book "To-Do List Formula"... "If you're having trouble completing to-do items, check whether they can be broken down to smaller tasks."
- ✿ It's not only important to set goals, but to reevaluate them as well. Once a week, check on your progress and adjust accordingly. Once a month, be sure the goals you set are still things you want to accomplish and delete and add as needed.
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- ✿ Feeling overwhelmed and don't know where to start? Set a timer for 15 minutes. Use those 15 minutes to walk the house with two bags in your hands -- one for trash, one for donate. As you wander, put items in each bag. When the timer goes off you're done. Do this every day for a week. You will be shocked by how much clutter you clear.
- ✿ If you consistently can't find a particular item, then you are not keeping it in a logical place for the way your mind works. Just because most people keep their gloves in the same place as their coats, doesn't mean you need to do so. If you like to keep a basket of them in your trunk, then do that. Do what makes the most sense for you.
- ✿ If you have magazines and newspapers that are over 3 months old, it's time to recycle them. It's OK that you didn't get the time to read them. You can look it up online and a new one is surely on its way to you.
- ✿ Your day may not go as planned. Maybe it just didn't go as you planned.
- ✿ Keep some paper or sticky notes and a pen in your car. As thoughts come to you, jot them down at the next red light. It will be a good way to keep track of thoughts without texting while driving.
- ✿ In all the rush of the day, it's easy to get caught up in everything except taking care of yourself. Be sure to be a good listener and hear what your body is telling you, even if that means not completing your to-do list and going to bed early.
- ✿ Is finding the right cooking tool annoying every time you prepare a meal? Pull all the utensils out. Pitch the burnt, bent and otherwise useless ones. Then sort by type -- spatulas, large spoons, ladles, etc. Reposition in drawer by type and frequency of use and it will be much easier to find what you need when you need it.
- ✿ Procrastination only puts on added pressure and almost always makes you end up not doing your best work. Is that really what you want to do to yourself? If you truly don't want to do, whatever project/chore it is, consider if you can delegate it. If not, schedule some time and get it done.
- ✿ Do you still have VHS tapes, DVD's and CD's lying around and taking up valuable space? Do you use them? If you no longer use them, don't let them take up valuable space in your home. It's OK to let them go. You can either donate or sell them. If you do use them, consider paring down your inventory to give yourself some extra space if needed.
- ✿ How long are you going to save those empty printer cartridges? Put them in a plastic bag and get them in your car. Next time you're driving past a Staples, take two minutes to go inside and drop them off for recycling. You get rewards credits toward store purchases, they are not put into a landfill and they stop taking up space in your drawers.
- ✿ Decide what's important to you. Then spend your time doing that. Don't waste time trying to find stuff. Clearing clutter will allow you to spend more time doing what you love.
- ✿ Take a minute each day and pause for what you are grateful for. Sometimes it's nice to do this as a family over dinner or just before bed depending on your family's schedule and when you are together. It helps when things are really tough and lets you know there are still things to be grateful for. It also can be super fun with little kids to hear what they're grateful for.

- ✿ If you have the time, leave a nice note or a joke in your child's lunch bag or on his pillow. It will be a fun unexpected way to start or end the day.