

Shelf Assistance

The sun is shining and I have been waiting all week to....organize my kitchen? I am not big on Spring Cleaning but turn that into Spring Organizing and you will have my full attention. On a day like today it might be a little tough, even for me, to get motivated so I concentrate on how great it will feel when I am done. I also think it will be nice not to have to take my life in my hands when I open a cupboard door.

Motivational Tip Number Two - schedule time to do it. Some people equate getting organized with having a tooth pulled. Well, when was the last time you went to the dentist without an appointment? It wouldn't work, right? The same thing applies to organizing. It just won't happen unless you put aside some time to get to it.

I have also tried to limit the distractions. My book is out of sight. The computer is off and the answering machine is on.

You'll notice that I have not attempted to do my whole house in one shot. That's because it is much easier to conquer a large task by breaking it down into smaller ones. Instead of tackling the whole house at one time, try just one room or even a part of one.

The first thing I do is to empty all the cupboards and group all the items into categories. I do this to see what I have. The cupboards are smiling because they know the next thing is to get rid of all the old, multiple and unused items. As a reformed packrat I know how hard this can be. I concentrate on what I am trying to achieve, keeping that in the forefront of my mind. This isn't about my friend being upset because I don't use the gadget she gave me. It's not about how embarrassing it is for me to have accidentally bought three potato peelers and it's not about hoping that someday I will use all those recipes. It's about the here and now. How I am now giving myself permission to let go of the things I don't like or use, I am now going to forgive myself for past buying mistakes and I am now going to be honest with myself about just what I can accomplish. It helps to know that as many items as possible will be going to places like the church rummage sale, the food bank or the birds. (Birds love stale crackers, cookies and cereal)

I am now facing numerous bare holes usually called cupboards. All the items that I have kept are waiting to be assigned a new home. Where to start? Well I only have one drawer that will fit the silverware, so that's a no brainer. The pots and pans go near the stove and the dishes near the dishwasher, so they come next. Food cupboards are the happiest when they are near the preparation area, by the way.

I don't bake very much so the large, heavy jars that I keep flour, sugar and oatmeal in are going on the bottom shelf of a deep cupboard. The cereals are going to go in an antique buffet that sits right next to the table. That's called repurposing and keeps them close to where we use them.

You will notice I have not bought one organizing item or tool. Instead, I have been keeping a running list of items I will need. I will now have to make a trip to the store for these items but if I had gone shopping before I had done all the organizing I would not have known what I really needed. Besides now I will deliver all the stuff to be donated on my way to the store.

I get through Spring Cleaning by considering it Spring Organizing. Contrary to what you are usually told...please try this at home.

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