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## Organizing is Not Always About Just Getting Rid of Stuff

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Professional Organizer, Jennifer Raftis, CPO(r) founded Efficiency Matters, LLC to help you with all of your organizing needs for your home and business. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and an active board member with NAPO, National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals. She is also an independent representative for The Container Store and has expertise in designing closets, garages, pantries, playrooms and more. In addition, she is a Corporate Organizing and Productivity Consultant and has worked with Fortune 500 companies across the U.S. Another large part of her business is move management especially working with seniors who are downsizing. She and her husband have lived in Moraga for 30 years, raising 3 kids and working countless volunteer hours with many local non-profit organizations and schools. Jennifer@efficiencymattersllc.com, 925-698-3756 www.efficiencymattersllc.com

2. Arriving Late: Arriving late to an event or appointment is stressful!

Solution/Habit: Plan ahead, look at your week and know where you have to be. Map out how long it will take to get there and add 20 minutes to the time. Better early than late! You might want to gather the items that you'll want to take with you the night before. I personally always have a podcast or some type of work (knitting, crossword puzzles, phone game apps, etc.) with me if I arrive too early.

3. Managing Passwords: This is probably my biggest frustration. This can be especially frustrating if you do not live alone and someone else has the ability to change your passwords (and adorably does not tell you).

Solution/Habit: Set up a password manager on all of your devices and make sure everyone who uses your devices knows how to save passwords to the password manager. Many of my clients also keep a written copy of their passwords in a notebook or address book, and some of my clients keep them in their phone.

If your previous attempts at getting organized have failed, it might not be all about getting rid of your "stuff". It could be about a need to develop a few simple habits to help you manage your home and life.

People often claim, "if you get organized, you will save time and money so you can concentrate on what really matters". That, of course, is partially true, but what you really gain is peace and calm instead of frustration and STRESS!

I know that feeling frustrated is my number one reason to stay organized. Frustration about lost passwords, being late, losing an important paper, etc. Being frustrated makes me crazy and I will go to great lengths to make sure I don't have to experience that feeling.

I always encourage my clients to let go of the things they no longer use or need, but that's not going to totally eliminate your frustrations. So, how do you eliminate, or at least minimize, feelings of frustration? It's not necessarily because you have too much stuff (not necessarily is the key word here), but it might also be because you need to create habits to keep you organized. A few simple changes can make all the difference!

When people call me to get help with organizing, I will ask them what isn't working in their home. After listening to the answer, I instinctively know if it's because of their habits. For example, regularly putting things back in the correct place takes less time than searching for something you didn't feel like putting away at the time. Habits!

Here are 3 of my organizing client's top frustrations and suggestions on how to create new habits to fix them.

1. Not Being Able to Find Your Things: Do you know where to find items in your home when you need them?

Solution/Habit: All of your belongings need a home; every single item you own should have a place where it lives in your home and everyone in the home should know where that is (and return the item to where it lives after they use it). It's not as hard as you might think - remember that everyone always knows where the forks are located and that the forks get returned there after they are washed.

The next time you are feeling frustrated about managing your home or life, remember to focus on cultivating a new organizing habit - this might just be the solution you need.

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