



How to Deal with a Dirty, Little Secret

*(And find peace of mind
at the same time)*

Sensible
Organizing
Strategies

Rhonda McNett
www.SOSbyRhonda.com

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By Rhonda McNett

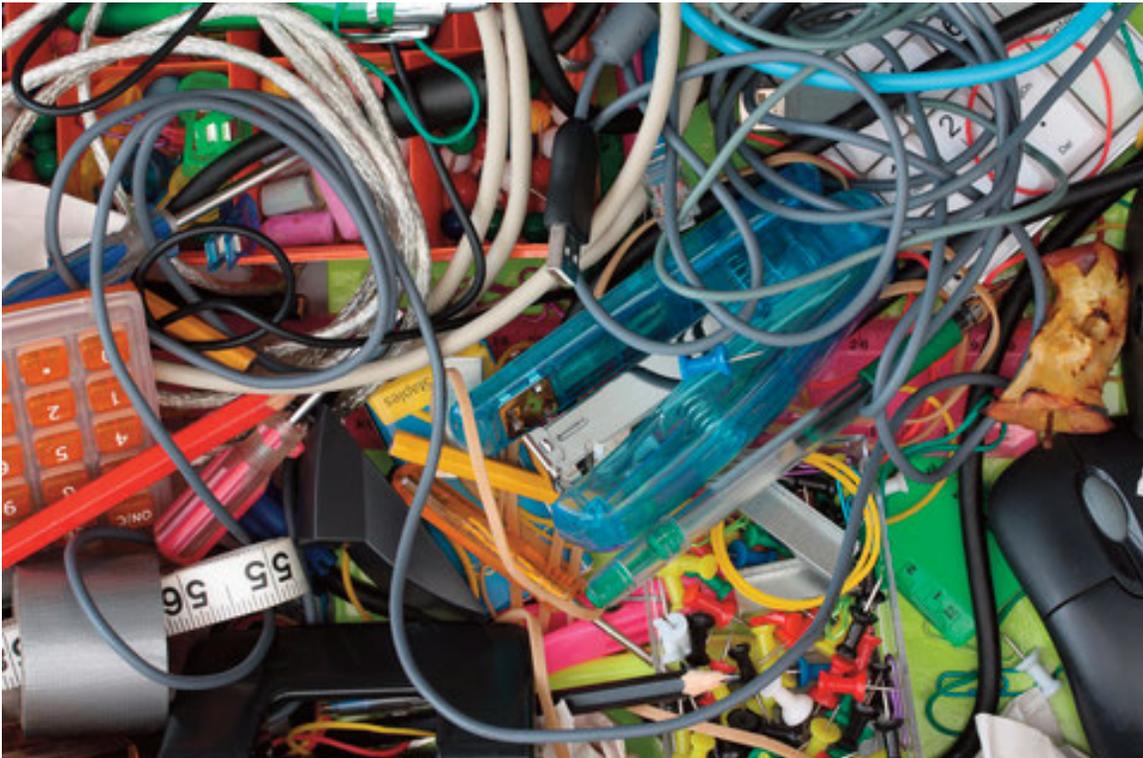
It's time we dealt with a dirty little secret we all share. Something is lurking in your home or office that you've been ignoring for years. Now's the time to expose it in order to change things for the better! In doing so, you'll find that you have more time, space and awareness for that which *really* matters.

Have you ever said things like "sweep it under the rug" or "out of sight, out of mind?" While you may not be sweeping anything under a rug, we all have a special place for hiding what we don't want to deal with. This place is...

- Something that we all have at least one of;
- Where we hide our "homeless" items;
- Where we put things we're too busy to put away correctly;
- Where we store "it," even if we don't know what "it" is, because we might need "it" someday;
- Where objects that get too close may get sucked in and never be seen again...sucked into the Black Hole of your personal space!

HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIRTY LITTLE SECRET

Have you guessed yet what I'm talking about? Yep...the good ol' **Junk Drawer!** We all have at *least* one — in the house, the shop or your office. It's a *temporary* catch-all where things of all manner and description are tossed just to get them out of the way. Well, it's *supposed* to be a "temporary" catch-all, but it almost always becomes "long-term storage." When you can't open or shut this drawer anymore, it's time to do something about it! It's time to get it organized once and for all.



Because a junk drawer is a reflection — a microcosm of a whole room or your whole home — you can use the same organizing principles on it that you would on a larger scale.

But, what does it mean, really, to be *organized*? It is not just neatness or being clean and tidy. Organization is, quite simply, being able to find what you need when you need it — and getting done what you need to in the time frame you have. In addition...

- **Organization** comes and goes, like a pendulum, depending on life's events and circumstances, good or bad (i.e. wedding vs. funeral).

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- **Organization** (or the lack thereof) is *not* a character flaw – It just IS!
- **Organization** is needed regularly in order to keep the “homeless” items, the unwanted items to a minimum. Otherwise, they’ll overwhelm you with an immensity that just grows and grows.
- **Organization** is the way we tackle too much stuff that has no where to be...the perfect definition of “clutter!”
- **Organization** allows you to see your way through all this stuff, so you’ll feel more positive energy, more freedom and have more space surrounding you.
- **Organization** has the *goal* of getting it “good enough.”

Now, let’s take care of that junk drawer and all that’s hiding in there!

You first want to...

- **ENVISION AND PLAN** based on your junk drawer’s purpose and the space available. You need to design little “zones” inside it, just like you would in a larger room. For instance, an area for your pens and pencils; paper clips and rubber bands; tape measure or ruler. Is this a space where you will also store plastic bags, foil and other wrap? Allow a place for those items also. If you can’t see finding a “home” here for all your stray screws, buttons, business cards, coasters, tools, etc., plan to move them to another, more appropriate place in your home or garage.
- **PURGE:** How did you get to this point in the first place? We all generally have too much stuff! We buy-buy-buy and have minimal control. Often, we buy duplicates because we forget that we already have an item or it’s lost and “homeless.” It’s a vicious cycle, with lots of time and money wasted! So:
 - **EMPTY** everything out and give the drawer a good wiping down.
 - Do a **QUICK SORT** of garbage and broken items so you don’t waste further time and attention on them. Yes...throw them away!

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- **SET ASIDE** everything that belongs in another place. Don't go there right now – just *focus* on the task at hand and get to that later!
- **SORT:** Initially, put everything into various piles: like-with-like, by use, category, season or topic. What *belongs* here? What would fit better somewhere else in your home or shop or office?
 - There is *no* right or wrong – sort and decide based upon what's right for *you* – and those who will also use the space.
 - As you sort, ask yourself: Do I *use* this? Where? How often? Do I *love* it? If so, show respect and give it a place of honor.
 - Now, even though a junk drawer *is* just a smaller version of a larger area, you may not find much here to donate or sell. However, on a recent segment of "Good Morning America," it was shared that there are over *15 billion* unused gadgets, cell phones, chargers, computers and CDs in America's junk drawers! That could *really* add up to some nice pocket change from sales on Craigslist, Ebay or other sites! This may not be too pertinent to a junk drawer discussion, but definitely keep *selling* in mind if you are organizing a closet, china cabinet or garage. *Donating* specifically benefits in several ways: you help others; you may qualify for a tax deduction (get a receipt!); and you free up space.
- **CONTAINERIZE:**
 - Find a "home" for the items you have decided to keep in this space.
 - Make sure they are in something you can see into. If you use a container where you can't, be sure you label it.
 - Group items as you intend to use them: "office stuff," "tools," etc.

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- Repurpose containers you may already have, like old checkbook, business card and candy boxes. There's no need to rush out and buy a lot of fancy plastic dividers until you know exactly what you need. Doing that will likely cause you to just end up with other future garage sale items!

● MAINTAIN & MODIFY:

- Whatever systems you have set up will need to be fine-tuned from time to time, as your life changes, events happen and *you* change. What's working? What's *not* working? If you find you aren't using the organizing system you planned, it's time to tweak it a bit. This way you'll be more efficient and happier with that space.
- Keep it up! It is better to have small, regularly-scheduled purging sessions than to wait until the drawer doesn't close anymore. Otherwise, your junk drawer becomes a junk room!
- Maintenance might not be too exciting, any more than house-keeping is, but the benefits are so worth the effort! Keep it simple. Focus and stick to the task at hand. Do it when you have time to be methodical and unhurried.

You *should* have somewhere to just toss things on an interim basis, but not long-term!

There is nothing in any of the organizing process that deals with perfection — *there is no such thing!* In fact, there is a case to be made that *some* disorganization is actually good for creativity, so remember the phrase "good enough." That doesn't mean to be sloppy in your project, just not to over-analyze it.

So, keep on organizing all of your spaces – one step at a time. Some tips:

- If you see a pile, deal with it.
- Watch out for flat surfaces – they have a tendency to collect anything and everything.

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- If you're done with something, put it away.
- If you don't have any more room for certain items, it's time to begin the process of purging and sorting again.
- Give yourself some shopping parameters: one thing in/one thing out, or better yet, one in/*two* out.

After dealing with just this one little secret — this one little drawer – you'll feel more effective, efficient, confident — and in control. Relax and reward yourself for this accomplishment. Now you're ready to take on the next project. The peace of mind you've found in achieving this one task can be multiplied by every other drawer, surface or room you choose to put in order!

Happy Organizing!

Where do you go from here?

For starters, please visit my website, www.sosbyrhonda.com, get acquainted with me a bit, check out the resources available for you there and then give me a call or an email with questions, thoughts or a request for additional information!

Warmest wishes,

Rhonda

Rhonda McNett

Sensible Organizing Strategies

P O Box 1545

Walla Walla, WA 99362

509-876-4919

rhonda@sosbyrhonda.com

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Sound like you?

- ✓ If **clutter** has taken over your life and you just can't get it together...
- ✓ If you have too much **stuff** in too small a space and can't decide what needs to go...
- ✓ If you're **frustrated and stressed** because you can't find your keys, your wallet, your checkbook...
- ✓ If you're **inundated** with paper and getting buried in piles of it...
- ✓ If you would like **less** confusion, stress and frustration and more peace, order and serenity in your life...

Great News!

You'll find **relief** at Sensible Organizing Strategies.

Get more free organizing tips and information from **Rhonda McNett** at...

www.sosbyrhonda.com.

*Find the peace and harmony hiding in
your home or office!*



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