

# Creating calm out of chaos

**W**e can learn an important lesson from the way the daylight shortens as we move toward the winter months.

The change does not happen in one day or even one week. It takes months, six to be exact, from the spring to the autumnal equinox. Making changes in how we organize our homes and work spaces also takes time, and that is the best way to approach the process.

As I have mentioned in my previous columns, organizing rarely is about the objects or the thoughts flowing through our minds. It is more a matter of our behaviors and our willingness to make changes that will truly benefit our daily experience.

Slow change is powerful. As I work with my clients, I constantly remind them that sometimes all we need to do is make one small change to produce a powerful impact.



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Certified Professional Organizer

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A couple of examples of this approach include:

## **Establish a location**

Establish a location for items that constantly are getting lost — like your keys or your wallet — and put a bright sign to mark the spot. Each day, work to place those items in their “parking spot.”

## **Play the name game**

Name every drawer, cupboard and closet in your home or office environment (*use Post-it notes for the learning period*) so everyone knows where things live. Each day, gently remind family members and co-workers who are not able to locate something to read the labels.

## **Make time for follow-up**

Schedule time after appointments and meetings to complete any follow-up work or promises you have made. Doing so immediately requires less time and energy because the information still is fresh in your mind. Each day, check your calendar to make certain there is breathing room for this activity.

As you can see, these slow practices require daily attention. Not a lot of attention, moments actually, just like the moments that the light gradually adjusts between the seasons. Practice creates new habits, which, in turn, reduces frustration and chaos.

Chaos seems to be an increasing part of our daily lives, but we can counteract its effects by increasing our focus on ways to calm our minds and our environment. What slow change can you start making daily to adjust for a new, calmer season?

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