

AN ORGANIZED LIFE

Learning to swim in new, uncharted waters



Maggie Jackson
Certified Professional
Organizer

I recently realized that the calendar sitting on my desk was still showing the month of June. Somewhere along the way, several months had passed since I last felt the need or desire to check the date.

Many of my clients have commented that they, too, have lost a sense of time. Routine tasks are taking longer as we take our chosen precautions when we are out in public. Items we need may not be readily available, requiring longer searches either in person or online. Preparing to take a call requires

planning and assurances that other family members, including pets, do not also offer their opinions.

A collective weariness is evident as I survey family and friends. I recently responded to the common question of how I was doing with "I feel like I am swimming in high tide with a very strong undertow and I am ... exhausted."

Since that conversation, I have been acutely aware that I need to make some changes to adapt to the new waters I find myself in so I can regain some strength and direction.

Here are three things that have helped me tremendously:

- Focus on your schedule for this week only.
One aspect of the COVID-19 pandemic and the more recent derecho windstorm is that it has drained a tremendous amount of energy and time with constantly shifting schedules and plans. I compare it to being on a never-ending rollercoaster. Up, down, up, down, upside down. By planning and focusing on only this week, I am not changing as many appointments or expectations. I also can keep my focus close to the present moment.
- Stay connected, preferably not through technology.
I always have been a prolific letter writer. It brings me great joy to sit down and use a pen and paper to stay in touch

with family and friends. Dave, our letter carrier, says I may be the one who can keep the Post Office going! Take time to connect with others by writing a note, making a phone call or taking a walk with a friend. These actions are quite different than sending an email, using social media or texting. There is a human component and a higher level of connection. As you get in touch with important people in your life, consider taking some time to update your address book.

- Perhaps Plan B is a better option.
When I originally chose a bee as part of my company logo, it was because of my admiration of the industriousness and efficiencies bees employ as part of maintaining a healthy hive. Now, I choose to focus more on Plan B. Having a Plan B softens the pain of watching Plan A dissipate, as so many of us have had to do this year. Explore other options with optimism and creativity. Doing so gives you two gifts — the opportunity to be brave in considering new possibilities and the opportunity to build up your resilience.

One individual who was masterful at this was U.S. Rep. John Lewis, the civil rights leader who passed away in July. He thoughtfully considered every option in each scenario he and his fellow activists would encounter. I would like to close this article with a lovely quote from this great man who dedicated his life to making a difference.

"Do not get lost in a sea of despair," he said. "Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

Maggie Jackson is a Certified Professional Organizer who dedicates her days to helping others reach their organizing goals by teaching that a simple life is a good life. In addition to working side-by-side with her clients, she also provides virtual coaching. You can find her at www.organizedlife.us

H