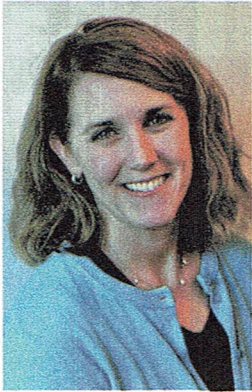


AN ORGANIZED LIFE

Spring into the present moment



Maggie Jackson
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One of the greatest lessons we can learn from nature is that change is a part of our lives. Our goal during this spring season of new beginnings is to organize our thoughts as much as we organize our spaces.

The present moment is such a gift. Being present allows us to use our energy in the most beneficial ways, whether it is connecting with a dear friend during a face-to-face conversation, taking a long walk in our neighborhood or even taking in the colors all around you on your drive to work.

When we focus on the past by ruminating, we increase our anxiety. You have two choices to overcome past events that are weighing you down.

You can choose to forgive, and/or you can choose to learn. Both outcomes have enormous healing properties and, as far as I'm concerned, are a valuable part of spring cleaning.

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When we focus on the future by assuming and predicting, we increase our anxiety. Rather than spending time worrying about what might happen, bring yourself back to the present moment and recognize that we have the power to control only what happens now, not what happens days, hours or minutes from now.

Joining the art of spring cleaning our minds with the science of spring cleaning and organizing our spaces can be very therapeutic. Here are three suggestions to help you begin the process:

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Make a "not to do" list: Yes, you read that correctly. Make a list of what is no longer serving you well. Add check boxes next to each item. Then, systematically check off each item as you let it go. By saying "no" to these things, you are opening up the opportunity to say "yes" to something that really matters to you.

Leave white space in your calendar: Leave time for transitioning from one activity to another. Leave time to do the things that allow you to be present. Leave time for doing nothing.

Stay with your feet: If you find yourself ruminating, predicting, assuming — stay with your feet. Feel the ground beneath you and see what is right in front of you. When you physically put yourself in the present moment, you can free yourself from the anxiety of the past and future. If you find yourself ping-ponging (my term for jumping from thing to thing to thing), again, focus on your feet and your breath and what is right in front of you.

Organizing can be incredibly beneficial when it happens around us, and it has remarkable healing benefits when it happens inside of us. Spend some time kindly organizing the thoughts in your mind and spring into the present moment.

Maggie Jackson is a certified professional organizer who dedicates her days to helping others reach their organizing goals by teaching the value of less. You can find her at organizedlife.us.

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