

Disorganized? Get a divorce!

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I am proud of my meticulous organizational skills. Yes, my spice rack is alphabetized. The clothes in my closet are separated by length of sleeve and arranged according to the colors of the rainbow. I own a dozen full-sized file cabinets alphabetized and cross-referenced for business and personal use. My “to do” lists are prioritized and color-coded. Books on my shelves are lined up by height. Dishes in my cupboard are stacked by size. There simply must be order! Little in my life is out of place—except...

...my photos. Nomadic as I am, I am also an enthusiastic amateur photographer. I frequently shoot one roll of film for each day on the road. Eager to see the results, I have the film developed and then pack the snapshots lovingly into a shoebox. Oh sure, the shoebox is labeled and stacked with all the others arranged geographically. Of course, there is an order, but I must admit that my photos are obsessively filed and shelved only to collect dust!

Obviously, I am also a pack rat. Every scrap of paper is saved and filed for easy retrieval. I can put my fingers as easily on a client's W-2 from 1999 as I can on my eighth grade worm dissection report.

Years ago, when Byron and I moved to northern California, Byron was overwhelmed by my abundant collection of boxes. Dependent upon him to lift the cartons, I acceded to his demands: He asked that I number each box on a scale of one to three—from highest to lowest importance. He allowed me to move all of my boxes this time, on the condition that I would dispose of any “# 3” box not unpacked before the next move. It sounded reasonable.

Byron and I have since split up, allowing me to make further moves on my own—with all of my boxes. The # 1 boxes have been unpacked; 2's and 3's are stacked numerically in my garage, ready to be moved again.

And, in the meantime, if you want to see a copy of a letter I wrote to my sister in 1974, I can easily get that for you!