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JULY 2020 BLOG

MERMAID HOME ORGANIZATION

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The Moment I Started My Minimalist (sort of) Journey

My husband and I just celebrated our eighth wedding anniversary. We married in our mid-forties; both of our houses filled with many life chapters.

My husband purchased his family home of thirty years and it was well appointed with his things and his parents' items left behind (they moved to the city). Many of those items were associated with Rivah life and property care.

My own house was full of many style changes over time, from primitive folksy to rustic to coastal chic. Let just say there are a lot of cloth napkins, linens, and candle holders.

When we married, we combined houses and tried to manage three sets of housewares. (plus, new registry items to fill in the gaps!) In honeymoon bliss mode, this wasn't a worry because life was so good.



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In the meantime, we rented my house as a VRBO and then into a long-term rental to a very lovely person who adores the house and wants to stay forever. In between the VRBO and the rental, we had two days to pack-up the staged house and move everything into the garage. I used to call it Cottage in a Box.

Then the years rolled along, and the weight of both houses grew heavy.

Slowly we were bringing things from the Cottage over to our house, but it never emptied out the garage. We had done small purges along the way, but nothing of real impact.

When my calling to start my own business grew into a loud shout, I knew it was time to start a real journey towards greater peace, to discover our own peaceful spaces and then to finally LIVE in them. We were taking too much time and money corralling and keeping too much stuff.

Is this a familiar story for you or a chapter ahead of you? Here are the steps my husband and I took on the beginning and mid-phases of our journey.

1. We made a commitment to get it done. Both of our careers included project management, so we had the skills and the resources to GET IT DONE. A therapist once told me "You are a consultant; you should apply the same skills you gift your clients with to yourself." He was right.
2. We made an 18-month plan, which coincided with my planned resignation from corporate life to start Mermaid.
3. We helped each other to majorly purge our past life chapters. We kept valuable family memorabilia, but the rest was marked for charity donation and to our church thrift shop. We purged EVERYTHING... garages, sheds, linen closets, closets, the pantry you name it.
4. We did one LAST yard sale. Everything beyond this point is sent to donation. Anytime I hear about a house fire, I send over bags of clothes and items. We have probably donated over 30 boxes to charities in the last two years.
5. We read minimalist gurus' Joshua Becker, Courtney Carver, and others who challenged us to keep searching our soul for what is important and to forget about the past money spent.
6. I signed up for Joshua Becker's 12-week course and it was very helpful in structuring the daily and weekly work of our 18-month plan or obligation to others (e.g., gifts not used).



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7. We took a trailer full of good furniture that was not being used to our daughters' new houses in Texas.

You may have read organizing books or posts that talk about the RELIEF of this disciplined work. I am here to testify and tell you it's all TRUE. We do have peaceful spaces throughout our house now, I love to go into each room and say ahhhh because it feels so good. These spaces are organized in a way that is easy to put back together after a long work week or hard played weekend.

The "sort of" part of our journey is that we had to define what "minimalism" meant to us. We know it's our unique definition and I don't have a 333 closet. Maybe one day I will.

We are much more aware and careful with our spending now and we are each other's watchdog (my husband has his work cut out for him).

This is not a journey that ends after eighteen months; we keep pushing forward and enjoy this third phase of maintenance and improvement. During quarantine, we have been able to dig into the next, next level organizing and tackle projects we have long dreamed about.

One of my favorite Episcopal priests once talked about our journeys, "Your 20s-30s-40s are spent accumulating things and in your 50s and beyond, you spend time shedding your things." It's a crazy cycle, especially for Americans. Mermaid can help you define your minimalism path and provide guidance on how to calm this cycle and make it work for you. We can help you find your peaceful spaces.