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***Don't Wait, It's GO month!***

Doug gave his wife a gift certificate for four hours of my organizing services. When he called me, he explained that she had made it a New Year's resolution a year ago to get better organized and things were worse, not any better. They have three young sons and they live in a nice, but small house. Doug said that she was very frustrated and exhausted and just simply didn't know where to start. The morning of our session, Doug took the kids on an outing and we went to work. I can't give you all of the details of the morning, but the basic, end result of our efforts were as follows:

We created a space for her.

She had no place to keep her paper work. She had been using her dining room table as a home office, which meant that they never used it for family dinners and entertaining. We set up a table in the "front room" with her laptop, stand up file to hold important papers, bill paying folder, bins for her magazines, school papers, scrapbooking, etc. She even had a designated place for her purse, keys and cell phone.

We created a space where the kids could play

The front room was one big pile of toys. There were so many that there was no space to actually do anything, never mind find anything. We found three large empty bins and lined them up so each son had one with their name on it. This was their space for their toys. Mom picked out the favorites, and what didn't fit went into another storage bin with all the other toys. This big bin, labeled "EXTRAS", went into the garage. The floor was empty, each kid had a stash of toys to choose from and clean-up would be easy for everyone.

The family room became the family gathering place.

Now that there was a designated place for the toys and papers, the family room became a place that was clutter free and under control. She also decided that the laundry needed to be folded somewhere else, so there wouldn't be the perpetual pile of laundry in this room.

We managed to accomplish a lot in the four hours. She was thrilled and when she said, "Why didn't I do this sooner?" it was music to my ears. She had a plan, she had experienced "instant gratification", and she was motivated to do more. We did a walk through of the house and I gave her ideas for how she could adjust things to create the

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same feeling of control in other areas of the house. Her husband was speechless and the kids were delighted with their "new" play room.

I am happy to report that it has been a year since our first session and this family has made great strides towards a clutter free, more organized household. I keep in touch and I have done a few more sessions to help with other areas of the house. They have built on

my ideas and have come up with many of their own to keep the clutter under control (a challenge with three small boys). Mom spends less time looking for things and more time enjoying her kids. They have done some entertaining and enjoyed the dining room and clutter free family room. She now has a pretty secretary desk with a file drawer. They even shared with me the fact that they saved money this year by Christmas shopping in the bin labeled “EXTRAS”, stored in the garage.

The National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) has designated January as “GO” (Get Organized) month. Statistics show that being better organized is one of the top New Year’s resolutions. I want to encourage people to make it more than just a fantasy. If you want to have your garage back, find clothes in your closet, use your dining room table to eat off of, and stop wasting time looking for things, GO and get started!

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#### About the author

Betsy Peterson is a local professional organizer, a Certified Relocation and Transition Specialist and owner of Space and Time, LLC. In addition to assisting in clearing away the clutter and organizing areas of the home and office, she specializes in Senior Move Management; assisting older adults with transition, downsizing, and aging in place. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), National Association of Senior Move Managers (NASMM), and National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization (NSGCD). Betsy can be reached for questions at 207-7295 or by e-mail at [bpeterson@space-and-time.com](mailto:bpeterson@space-and-time.com).

That was a year ago and I'm happy to say that the results of our session started her on the road "to recovery"